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**THE MICROPOLITICS OF  
A FACULTY-LED SCHOOL REFORM**

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**THE MICROPOLITICS OF  
A FACULTY-LED SCHOOL REFORM**

by

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this dissertation to my husband, Will, whose unfailing love and support kept me going throughout. And to my loving children who didn't complain despite having far less of my attention than usual, Sean, Joel, Heidi and Max, you inspired me to learn more about education, and how best to serve different learning styles because you are each so unique and beautiful. And to my parents, Tootsie and Jack Steele, who taught me to turn my stubbornness into strength. And I can't think of anyone who was more stubborn than my own Grandma Great Olive Steele who showed us that women could do great things. And to all my sisters whom I love unconditionally, Sheryl, Linda, Lou, Starr, Dixie, and I must include Sandie, Missy, and Dottie in this group because you all encouraged me and assured me I could finish this. And to Dr. High thanks for your love and for sharing your title with your daughter-in-law. Also I wish to dedicate this to Dottie High, my mother-in-law, who passed before because she was a very special and inspirational figure in our family. Further, to my many friends who have been so supportive and understanding knowing I have had little time to offer them in return. I wish to thank you all by dedicating this to you.

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**THE MICROPOLITICS OF  
A FACULTY-LED SCHOOL REFORM**

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This study was designed to identify, describe, and categorize the strategies used by teachers to influence change at elementary school. The study employed action research with a micropolitical perspective. The researcher used an Interactive Qualitative Analysis (IQA) 1) to inductively observe emergent micropolitical behaviors of the teachers; 2) to deductively code the meaning of the identified behaviors; and 3) to theoretically code or analyze the cause and effect relationships of those behaviors (Northcutt, Miles et al, 1998). The outcome of the IQA process is illustrated in the Systems Influence Diagram (SID), a graphic model or mindmap describing the perspective of the teachers in this study of ideal behaviors necessary to implement reform at their school. In this study, the IQA was used in a pre-test and post-test design to indicate changes in micropolitical behaviors over time. The volume of the

micropolitical behavior of the teachers increased as they became more confident and successful.

The researcher focused not only on constructing an effective reform, but on the micropolitics of the school. Research showed that schools tend to initiate new programs without proper planning and follow through. It was also determined from the research that new programs need to be incorporated into the school by making a connection to existing programs because when teachers do not understand the purpose for change, the programs can become valueless and unnecessary

Since a well-planned reform is easier for stakeholders to support, it was believed that a faculty-led reform had a better chance of gaining support by the teachers who must employ the strategies. The inclusion of teachers from the beginning generated a reform that was better designed, developed, and implemented and produced change that was effective, flexible, and lasting.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

*If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom, and yet deprecate agitation...want crops without plowing up the ground. They want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters.*

Frederick Douglass, 1857

The national and state accountability movements in education have placed increasing demands on schools. For example, during the last decade in Texas, schools have been under continuous and unrelenting pressure to achieve ever increasing levels of student performance on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS). In response to this demand, school districts and individual schools have looked for, identified, and adopted programs of change and improvement that focus primarily on the goal of increasing student achievement.

In their quest to increase performance, some schools have looked outside of traditional education for models for change. Some schools have selected and used improvement models similar to those developed by and for business organizations. For example, some schools have adopted the concepts of continuous improvement and teambuilding (Lieberman and Miller, 1999), both instruments of Total Quality

Management (TQM) (Kinslaw, 1992). Other schools have implemented programs or models developed by and specifically designed for educators such as *Principles of Learning* (Evans, 2001).

Today, many reading and math programs are commonly developed outside of schools, purchased by school district administrators, and delivered to the schools in a top-down directive style (Meier, 1995). The teaching staff is generally not consulted when choosing which program is best for the school (ibid). Additionally when professionals in schools do recognize the need for change and select a model, they may lack the resources or allocate insufficient resources to bring about that change (ibid). As a result of the demand for immediate improvement, some school reforms are brought about haphazardly, that is: they do not have a strategic plan; they do not have a vision; they do not have a set of clear goals and objectives; and they do not have the full support and commitment of the teachers. Consequently, many reform efforts fail (Meier, 1995; Lieberman and Miller, 1999).

Schools can learn to manage reforms more effectively. They can develop a strategic plan; they can write a vision statement; they can write clear goals and objectives (Meier, 1995). However, if schools' plans for reform are not understood or valued by the teachers, then the micropolitical dynamics can be set in motion to block the reform. All school participants have "pocket veto power" therefore the teachers may choose to support or reject a school reform and may have the power to bring about failure or success (Iannaccone, 1980 as cited in Marshall and Scribner, 1991).



Administrators should consider this power before dictating new policies and procedures to teachers. “Such innovations take time, patience, and commitment...the most efficient strategy for rapid change is undercutting the natural layers of resistance, not trying to bludgeon people into then accepting change” (Meier, 1995).

### **Overview of the Study**

In the section, *A School in Need of Reform*, Central Elementary School’s demographics, performance history, and desire to improve are described. This drive to improve resulted in eliciting help from a major university in building a collaborative school improvement project. In *Early Collaborations Between the School and the EPC<sup>1</sup>*, the initial meetings between the research team from The Educational Productivity Council (EPC) and the principal and teachers of Central Elementary School in early 1999 were described. The principal wanted to increase the school’s achievement scores on the state examination. As the improvement project idea unfolded, the principal and the research teams learned about the teachers’ perceived barriers to reform. This is described in *Central Elementary Barriers to Reform*.

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Terry Clark, Director of the EPC headed the research team that taught how to interpret TAAS data. The EPC research team initiated the research project on school improvement. Dr. Clark also participated in many school meetings.

These barriers led to the uncovering of the micropolitics that were at play at Central. This insight caused the researcher<sup>2</sup> to wonder about the micropolitical impact on the improvement project. This relationship is described in the section, *Reform and Micropolitics*. It was becoming increasingly clear that a research project in micropolitics was in order and that is more fully described in the section, *Emergence of the Need for a Qualitative Study*.

The latter part of the chapter describes the *Background of the Problem*, followed by the *Purpose of the Study*, which includes the research questions and the definition of terms. The *Significance of the Study* gives way to the *Assumptions* and the *Limitations* of the study. Finally, the *Summary* of this chapter describes the remaining chapters.

### **A School in Need of Reform**

Central Elementary School (a pseudonym) is part of an urban school district located in central Texas with a student population of about 400 students that is predominantly minority, 95% or more Hispanic. More than 85% of the students come from low-income families, many are in the free or reduced lunch program. The school serves students in pre-kindergarten through grade six (TEA, 2001).

In the school year of 2000-2001, almost one third of the students were enrolled in bilingual education at Central. A very small percentage, less than 4%, was enrolled in

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<sup>2</sup> The researcher refers to the author, Cynthia High.

gifted and talented programs. Twelve percent of the student population was enrolled in special education services. The per student cost of education at Central was \$5,962. (TEA). On average the teachers had relatively small classes ranging from 11-22 students. The one larger exception of 28 students was in grade 6. The attendance rates for any group was never lower than 95% (TEA, 2001).

Between the fall of 1993 and spring of 2000, Central Elementary School's student achievement scores have remained low performing as reflected in its Texas accountability system's rating of "acceptable" for seven consecutive years. In Texas, there are four distinct ratings, which can be given to schools: Unacceptable, Acceptable, Recognized, and Exemplary. In response to the push for excellence in schools and the accountability movements of recent years, the principal at Central decided that the student achievement scores should be higher.

The district also acknowledged the school's development need for its at-risk population and therefore bestowed extra teacher development days on the teachers at Central. The principal seized the moment. As a result, he set one very challenging goal for the school: *to become a top-performing, exemplary school by the spring of 2002-2003.*

### **Early Collaborations—Central Elementary and the EPC**

The Educational Productivity Council (EPC) within a major university's College of Education has conducted extensive research on the state annual achievement test

entitled the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS), which was implemented in 1994. Every year under a Texas Education Agency (TEA) grant, the EPC analyzes the TAAS data from approximately sixty participating school districts and places the results into books containing easily understood tables, bar graphs, and charts. The schools find the data analysis useful because it illustrates change over time by school, by classroom, by student, and by TAAS objective.

Every year, the EPC conducts workshops for teachers and administrators on how to interpret their tables, graphs, and charts. By studying the test results, teachers are able to identify their school's cumulative areas of strength and weakness. The data is confidential, so only data without names are presented to the school. Teachers can see how their scores compare to other Texas schools. The teachers and administrators tend to be particularly interested in data from schools with similar demographics. To protect the teachers and students from being publicly scrutinized, the individual results are presented in a confidential manner so that constructive improvements may be suggested without embarrassment.

Individually, teachers are presented the confidential data, which pertains to their classroom. When teachers analyze the results by objective, they can identify where to focus attention to increase their classroom scores as a whole and also where to devise a plan to meet individual student needs.

The principal can use the data to recognize the effectiveness of teachers. The principal can use the data to identify master teachers and build a plan to capitalize upon

their strengths. These “master” teachers can become resources to help other teachers teaching them to improve by offering teaching tips in a workshop setting or by co-teaching in the classroom. Shared teaching can offer another viable solution to maximize the use of teachers’ capabilities. Teachers can trade classroom responsibilities and share their strengths. For example, Teacher A with high math skills might be willing to teach math in Teacher B’s classroom if Teacher B with high reading skills could teach reading in Teacher A’s classroom.

In the past, the EPC had worked with Central Elementary School on several occasions to present the latest TAAS results. It was based upon this professional relationship that the principal, and the teachers, and the EPC had built a rapport. Taking that relationship into consideration, and knowing that the district and the teachers wanted higher test scores for their students, the principal invited the EPC to help in another area of research to find a method to increase student achievement at Central Elementary School.

### **Central Elementary Barriers to Reform**

The principal invited the research team<sup>3</sup> to help create a strategy to improve student achievement scores so that the school could achieve Exemplary (90% passing in each subject area) status within a span of three years (TEA, 2002). To reach this goal,

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<sup>3</sup> The research team members at this point in the study were Dr. Clark and Cynthia High.

the school had to increase its low performance rating from Acceptable (55% passing), through Recognized (80% passing), to Exemplary status (ibid).

When the research team and the principal met the faculty in a staff meeting to inform them of the proposed idea to help the teachers increase student achievement, many of the teachers reacted negatively. From prior experience, they were “fed up” with failed academic programs. The thought that the research team was offering another “project-of-the-month” upset them. The teachers’ reactions included negative remarks about “stealing” their time, and “why bother, nothing ever changes,” and pointed to other programs where a lack of commitment led to failed efforts and were ultimately considered a waste of time. One teacher summed up their thoughts, which was the defining crux of this project, when she stated, “I don’t mean to offend you, but we [the teachers] didn’t invite you to help us. The principal invited you.”

At Central, the principal and the research team were surprised by the teachers’ reactions. An assumption had been made that the teachers would welcome an opportunity to improve the achievement scores. The research team recognized that the teachers needed to come to terms with this new idea and responded by first acknowledging the teachers’ concerns. The research team agreed with the faculty: “It’s true. You didn’t invite us.”<sup>4</sup> The research team then expressed the desire to work with them on the project, preferring to be invited by both, *the principal and the faculty*. The

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<sup>4</sup> Dr. Clark stated.

teachers were specific; they wanted the option to say “yes” or “no” to work that directly affected them. The teachers wanted to be involved in all decision-making processes that led to changes affecting their school and their students.

It became evident that, to create effective and lasting change at Central, a new approach was necessary. The researcher studied the lessons learned from many educational studies while working with the teachers to build a new model specific to the needs of Central. In addition, the researcher monitored the micropolitical behaviors of the teachers as they planned their school reform.

### **Reform and Micropolitics**

Researching the complexity of school reform success increases when the school’s micropolitics are studied. It is expected that monitoring the power and culture structures of the school will help determine the pulse of change towards success or failure in a school reform process. According to Miles, when schools go through the reform process, political activity increases (cited in Moorehead & Griffin, 1992).

In any change effort, ambiguity and uncertainty arises and increases opportunities for micropolitical activity. Pfeffer (1981) described the activities that people engage in to attain, augment, and use power to achieve their preferred outcomes. Further, Pfeffer describes political behavior as power that people try to use to make gains (ibid). Morgan (1986) states,

By recognizing that an organization is intrinsically political...ways must be found to create order and direction among people with potentially diverse and conflicting interests, much can be learned about the problems and legitimacy of management as a process of government and about the relation of the organization to society (p. 142 as cited in Marshall and Scribner, 1991).

Morgan also states, “People with competing values or competing priorities seek to have their priorities and values prevail” (ibid, p. 349). Therefore the policy process is on the “actual allocation of values—the processes of arriving at decision, policies, regulations, and decrees emanating from power relationships and conflict situations” (ibid, p. 349). From the discovery meeting with the teachers, it was clear that the lack of teacher involvement and commitment at Central could be the very reason that previous school reforms failed. It was clear the teachers needed to be committed and involved to this change effort. As explained by Marshall and Scribner:

All school participants have “pocket veto power” (Iannocone, 1980), and numerous researchers (e.g., Sproull, 1981; Weatherley & Lipsky, 1977) have documented the ways that street-level bureaucrats revise policy as they try to make it fit their site. Some have noted that teachers are policy brokers. Control of change is seen as an important political skill for school administrators (Wiles, Wiles & Bondi, 1981) (1991, p. 351).

At Central, the principal had to find a way to gain the teachers’ support for the reform. One way to create orderly change is to build upon the existing programs,



strengthening it before adding new programs. It is expected the teachers would be more accepting of changes when a reform is introduced gradually and with their full knowledge and consent. Because teachers have the ability to support or reject changes, they need to feel supported during a reform. The micropolitical behaviors of the teachers should be closely monitored because if they feel they are not being supported, the teachers will increase their political activity (Pfeffer, 1981).

Politics have also been defined as, “‘who gets what when and how’ (Harold Laswell), ‘the authoritative allocation of values’ (David Easton), and ‘turning personal troubles into public issues (C. Wright Mills),’” (as cited in Scribner and Layton, 1995, p. 175). The research indicates that monitoring the micropolitical activity will give insight to the way teachers in schools think and act during a school reform. Studying their rationale, commitment, and actions will perhaps indicate how a reform can be better managed.

Marshall and Scribner (1991) describe the central themes for micropolitical analysis as:

We need to define micropolitics in order to identify (a) the delineation and the relationship between the study of bureaucratic management and the study of micropolitics, (b) the prevailing themes and concepts in micropolitics, (c) the relationship between micropolitics, change, and the implementation of policy, and (d) the functions of micropolitics. Finally, and less obviously, we need to explore the ‘quiescent political processes of day-to-day allocation of stakes

[which] are largely routine consequences of decisions made by persons in their organizational roles' (Iannaccone, 1980, p. 32 as cited in Marshall and Scribner, p. 350).

Iannaccone (1975) described one micropolitical theme as exploring the *ideologies and values of subsystems of teachers and administrators* (as cited in Marshall and Scribner, 1991). Political conflicts between professional expertise and teacher autonomy will arise (ibid) because they see things from different perspectives. *Boundaries and turf* is another theme in constant negotiation between teachers and administrators (ibid). The theme of *maintenance of bureaucratic myths* has been a source of collusion to assert bureaucratic rationality at the site-level (ibid). Most important to this study is the theme of *policy remaking in site-level implementation* (ibid).

In addition to these micropolitical themes are the *mobilization of bias in organizational life*, where bias is taken for granted, unstated or ignored; *reality creation* where people use power to define reality (Brown, 1978 as cited in Marshall and Scribner, 1991); and *privatization of conflict*, which Schattschneider (1960) described as staying within the walls of the site, within the subgroup or within insiders in the subgroup (as cited in Marshall and Scribner, 1991).

Finally, the theme, *salient structures and tasks around which people, then leaders, then coalitions and loyalties develop*, is key for creating a successful reform. This theme readily emerged in this study. When the subsystems (i.e., teachers forming

groups by common interests) were observed linking together to work on intertwining tasks, a set of common ideologies, a common language, a set of values, priorities, and political power emerged (ibid).

Studying the behaviors discloses micropolitical themes. Synthesizing the knowledge gained from these micropolitical observations can yield a new paradigm for designing and implementing an effective school reform. To achieve successful and lasting reform, schools need an approach that is designed to meet the needs of each individual school (Meier, 1995; Lieberman and Miller, 1999). Studying the micropolitics may yield information that is unique to the school culture and can help build a reform that will reflect that individuality.

### **Emergence of the Need for a Qualitative Study**

Many reforms fail, so the researcher wanted to construct a model for reform that would also monitor the micropolitics so that teachers could positively influence change. Many factors influenced the model design including:

- The expressed desires of the teachers in building a faculty-led reform.
- The continued demand for accountability in public schools.
- The lessons learned for developing effective school reforms.

These considerations and the observance of resulting changes in the roles of the teachers and their relationship with the administration indicated the need for an in-depth study. The study identified and described the means in which teachers manipulate and

maneuver through a bureaucratic system. Although there are studies that examine the management of schools by principals, few programs have empowered teachers to lead school reforms despite the expectation that teachers must embrace all changes (Lieberman and Miller, 1999).

Some studies (Campbell & Neill, 1994; High, R., & Achilles, 1986) describe behaviors of teachers at work in their classroom. Generally, these studies have omitted how empowered teachers have worked collaboratively outside of their classroom to create and achieve whole-school academic achievement. To determine how teachers worked together on school reform, one needed to study the manipulating and maneuvering tactics used by the teachers to create change within the school setting. Therefore, a micropolitical analysis of teacher behavior was warranted to generate the thick description needed to further expand knowledge of teachers' influence on the principal and the school during a faculty-led school reform effort.

### **Significance of the Study**

Teachers have always influenced change in schools but seldom in a reform effort has the faculty been given a leadership role and the responsibility for the academic achievement of the school (Meier, 1995). Because of teacher-principal disputes, often teacher influence is more covert (ibid). In addition, school reforms have experienced a high rate of failure causing teachers to become cynical regarding change (ibid). When top-down directives dictate change and faculty do not support the effort,

studies have shown a high incidence of failure (Meier, 1995; Pettigrew, 1973).

Therefore, it is determined that teachers must have a legitimate role in the school reform if it is to be successful (Meier, 1995). In this study, the teachers' perceptions and opinions were noted and observed for their impact on the outcome of the reform.

As a contribution to research, outcomes from the research may verify that school reform must include stakeholder participation, teacher leadership, and teacher commitment, and may prove to be significant for those reform efforts that had previously been tried and failed and for future reforms. In addition, the micropolitical behaviors in this study were verified through the inductive, deductive, and theoretical coding as provided by the Interactive Qualitative Analyses (IQA). As defined by Glaser and Strauss (1967), this study generated a grounded theory at the school level, one that was inductively developed from action research.

### **Background of the Problem**

Theories of school leadership do not explain the complexities of school organizations and everyday school life. Chronic problems such as limited resources, the demands for increased educational accountability and "quick fixes," such as school choice and site-based management have drawn attention to the politics in schools (Marshall and Scribner, 1991).

Site-based management and other school reforms have initiated dramatic changes in the relationships between teachers and principals. Principals who are used to

dictating policy are finding their policies overtly and covertly challenged by teachers. Yet, there are few data on the micropolitical contributions of teachers or principals (Anderson, 1991). There is however, increasing research of micropolitics in education (Ball & Bowe, 1991; Ballenger, 1996; Blase, 1987b, 1988b, Donmoyer, 1985; Hargreaves, 1991; High and Achilles, 1986; Ogawa & Hart, 1985; Smylie & Brownlee-Conyers, 1990), but few have contributed to the strategies teachers use to influence change at the school organizational or programmatic level in low-socioeconomic (low-SES) elementary schools. More studies on the micropolitical behaviors of teachers are needed to contribute to the research.

A few studies have looked at teachers as leaders of reform and at teacher empowerment (Frymier, 1987; Lieberman & Miller, 1999; Ovando, 1996). However, little is known about teacher-led school reform. Empowering teachers with the additional responsibility of the overall development of the whole school should benefit their students academically over time.

While the approach for school reforms must change and become more inclusive of teachers and their expertise, care must be taken by administrators to recognize and manage the micropolitics that accompany change. The micropolitical behaviors of the teachers can predetermine whether a school reform will be successful because teachers have a choice: to support or resist change.

A well-planned reform with clear benefits is easier for stakeholders to support. Therefore, a faculty-led effort has a better chance of gaining support by the teachers

who must employ reform activities and efforts. Allowing teachers to participate in the reform design and implementation minimizes negative micropolitical tactical maneuvering that could otherwise thwart the change effort. Lieberman and Miller described that the inclusion of teachers from the beginning generated a reform that was better designed, developed, and implemented, produced change that was effective and flexible (1999).

### **Purpose of the Study**

Schools are calling for stronger leadership and simultaneously for greater collegiality, which on the surface seem conflicting. So if schools are to significantly improve academically, then these two factors will have to be reconciled. As the pressure to produce higher and higher student test scores increased, teachers expressed a mounting fear of change and loss of security when the demographic composition of their classrooms changed from year to year.

Teachers need to have the capacity, agency and efficacy; that is, the power to do the required job (Reed, 2000). Schools need to make a commitment to the development of their teaching staff (Meier, 1995). Teachers need to learn to work together and become committed to their students and their school (Meier, 1995). Teachers need to share a school vision as well as goals and objectives for increasing student achievement (ibid). The research suggests that in order to gain the teachers' support, schools should provide them with clear and relevant training (Meier, 1995).

According to Fulbright (1988, p. preface), “Schools are searching for dramatic new ways to effectively meet the needs of all children.” Care must be taken to select programs that will be right for the students and the teachers. Therefore the traditional top-down approach for school reforms must change and include teachers (Lieberman and Miller, 1999; Meier 1995). Additionally new programs need to be incorporated into the school by making a connection to existing programs so that teachers will support them. When teachers do not understand the purpose for change, the programs can be valueless and unnecessary (Lieberman and Miller, 1999; Meier 1995).

“When edicts for change come from above, practitioners on whatever level they operate can and will undermine innovations they consider foolish, unnecessary, unpopular, dangerous, or wicked. With the support of parents and students they can outwait the reformers” (Meier, 1995. pp. 100-101). Teachers have always influenced change in schools but seldom in a reform effort where the faculty has been given a leadership role and the responsibility for the academic achievement of the school.

In this study, the teachers’ perceptions and opinions were observed for their impact on the outcome of the reform. Perhaps, the inclusion of teachers in the improvement planning process could provide better designed, developed, and implemented strategies promoting a more effective means for change. When teachers are involved and can clearly see the benefits of change, they may be more apt to commit time and effort to the reform (Lieberman and Miller, 1999). The researcher noted the first in a series of lessons learned. Lesson one: *involve teachers in the approach to*



*reform. Involving teachers in the initial approach to reform helps create an environment for success by diminishing negativity.*

According to Lieberman and Miller,

When teachers work together to transform themselves and their schools, they rediscover why they came into teaching in the first place and why they have persisted. They demonstrate that with adequate resources, both human and material, realities do change (1999, p. 90).

However, “The process of change is never smooth, rational, or linear” (ibid). To successfully create a reform, teachers and administrators have to discover what process for change will work in their particular school. Therefore, it is important to involve the teachers in the decisions so that the reform will be embraced and supported. The researcher noted a second lesson: *Involving teachers in the reform process increases participation and motivation to participate while it defuses the ‘not-invented-here’ syndrome.*

In a study of one thousand schools, Goodlad (1984) indicated that elementary schools have remained the same structurally but have varied significantly in behavior. These differences in behavior imply that not all schools will be receptive to all reform programs. However, Goodlad believes that the techniques employed by teachers and principals in effective schools would have a positive effect on students (ibid).

The researcher believes that in order to help create successful school change, administrators and teachers must approach school reform by first acknowledging that

schools do have different cultures and behaviors. Administrators and teachers must consider customizing reform programs to fit their particular school. School administrators must commit time and energy to blend the reform with their school culture. The researcher noted a third lesson: *By recognizing that not all programs will work in all schools, programs should be adaptable and amenable to the school's individual culture.*

Low-SES schools have been long held as strong indicators for academic improvement (Lieberman and Miller, 1999). However, studies of effective schools indicate that low-SES students in low-SES schools have academically outperformed low-SES students in other schools. This implied that school effectiveness, not socio-economics, was the differentiating factor (Brookover & Lezotte, 1979; Edmonds, 1979; Venetzky & Winfield, 1979; Weber, 1971). These findings suggest that the leaders of the school play an important part in the development of an effective school. The researcher noted the fourth lesson: *Many problems associated with low-SES can be overcome with good leadership.*

Traditionally speaking, the school principal is automatically considered a school leader. And teachers are most certainly leaders, but they may find it difficult to assume leadership roles in creating and maintaining an effective school because of the traditional role of the principal. The bureaucracy within a school system often stifles attempts to develop a community of leaders that includes teachers (Schanker and Roberts, 1987). Since, teachers have the autonomy to practice and improve their

pedagogy on a daily basis in the classroom, it would seem reasonable to take full advantage of the expertise that teachers have. Logic should dictate that teachers should be consulted on the following questions: *“How do you teach? What works for you and your group of students?”* *“How can we best use your expertise to help the students in other classrooms?”*

Oftentimes, instead of asking the faculty of the school to develop new and improved techniques, the school district or schools will purchase new programs developed by others (Meier, 1995). Then the teachers, who are not the authors of the innovations, are expected to implement these programs and cure the school’s academic ills (ibid). How can the teachers in a school be held accountable for the quality of instruction when the techniques of instruction are developed elsewhere and forced upon them through directives from administration?

When new programs are adopted by a school district, the district administrators expect that all teachers will earnestly embrace the program and students will enthusiastically learn from it (Lieberman and Miller, 1999). Furthermore, teachers often resent the authoritative directives as well as the new program; they begrudgingly tolerate training offered; and they go back to their classrooms, shut the door, and teach in the manner that works best for them and their students (ibid). Some argue that schools and school districts need to move beyond the directive approach to implementing new programs that involve teachers in the planning stages to ensure that the improvements are right for the school, the faculty, and the students (Boles, 1992;

Lieberman and Miller, 1999). The researcher noted a fifth lesson: *When teachers are involved in the reform process and asked to share their vast expertise and knowledge of the school experience, teacher commitment increases.*

Considering these lessons, this study was designed to identify and describe the micropolitical behaviors of the teachers. The study also was designed to determine how a faculty-led school reform affected teachers, students, and a school's policies and procedures. Finally, the study was developed to ascertain what factors facilitated and what factors impeded a faculty-led school reform. Finally, the data was used to develop a grounded theory of reform at the school level.

### **Research Questions**

The purpose of the study was to document the school reform building process while simultaneously determining the micropolitics employed by the teachers. Three questions guided this qualitative research:

1. How does the micropolitics of faculty-led school reform get played out in the school setting?
2. How does faculty-led school reform affect teachers and a school's policies and procedures?
3. What factors facilitate and impede faculty-led reform in a school setting?

## **Definition of Terms**

### **Definition of Terms**

**Faculty-led school reform:** A change process in which the faculty assumes a leadership role in directing a reform effort within their school. An Interactive Qualitative Analysis Technique enabled the research team to engage participants (subjects) in a change process that 1) is rigorously empirical and reflective (interpretive); 2) allows participants to actively engage in the research process; and 3) results in some practical outcome related to their work within their school.

**Micropolitics:** The study of power, conflict, and policy in and around schools. In this study, the decisions and the interactions of the teachers, campus administrators, staff, students, and parents were critical to the micropolitics in the small setting of an elementary school.

**Micropolitical behaviors:** The observable behaviors of stakeholders (teachers or administrators) as they work to either support or undermine a policy, in this case, in a school. The behaviors can be cynical, controlling, calculative or they can be positive, empowering, or collegial depending on the desired outcome.

**School policies:** Includes school laws, as mandated by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), which govern each campus in areas such as academic grades, attendance, and

time-on-subject, as well as the school's policies and procedures established within the school. There are other formal laws created for the school by many outside agencies at the district, state, and federal level. Finally, there are many informal rules that emerge within the school's culture, which often become regulations, guidelines, and the general framework for "accepted" practice at the school level.

### **Assumptions**

In this study, the following assumptions were made by the researcher:

- Involving teachers in the initial approach to reform helps create an environment for success by diminishing negativity.
- Involving teachers in the reform process increases participation and motivation to participate while it defuses the 'not-invented-here' syndrome.
- By recognizing that not all programs will work in all schools, programs should be adaptable and amenable to the school's individual culture.
- Many problems associated with low-SES can be overcome with good leadership.
- When teachers are involved in the reform process and asked to share their vast expertise and knowledge of the school experience, teacher commitment increases.
- Controlling for these assumptions, helps control the political activity minimizing political activities that can derail a reform effort.

## **Limitations**

The case study described the change in one urban school and was verified from different perspectives to ensure that a reliable study was produced. Repeating this reform process at another school in future research may prove to be useful.

A limitation of the study may result from the use of large group consensus. The decisions made in the large groups may result in groupthink (Johns, 1996). Groupthink happens when group pressure damages the mental clarity people have when others in the group present opposing ideas. Others may disagree but are not willing to debate the group. Although each person has multiple opportunities to bring forward their ideas, they may hesitate to do so in the large group. When using the Interactive Qualitative Analysis (IQA), an effort to minimize groupthink is employed by the use of the silent nominal group technique, a brainstorming tool that encourages individual and group participation.

Other staff developmental programs implemented at the school, as part of the school district's initiatives, may also partly contribute to the behaviors of the teachers. This study took place in a living and vibrant school and unknown factors may have influenced the behaviors of the teachers.

A limitation in the study might result from the principal's actions. Although the reform design was faculty-led, the principal might still have been using authoritative power by politically maneuvering behind the scenes to influence the teachers' positions.

Superior and/or subordinate perceptions can be manipulated by a number of factors: self-concept, disposition, attitudes, and personality (Moorehead and Griffin, 1992). The principal and the teachers could have used these tactics and not revealed them to the researcher. Therefore, it was important to verify responses from several data sources. The structure of this study verified the data by using multiple methods of triangulation.

This study moved forward on the basis that Central Elementary School needed and wanted whole school improvement. The plans for improvement were taken directly from the faculty's focus group in the first IQA. There was no guarantee that their ideas to improve the school would be successful in terms of academic improvement for the students but the majority of the teachers thought their plans could be effective. The teachers chose the programs for improvement because they believed the school would benefit. The study was limited to one school, one case study, and a faculty group of 30 full-time teachers. There were multiple candidates for completing interviews. In addition, many large and small group meetings provided the researcher opportunities to observe teachers at work as they exhibited diverse micropolitical behaviors.

Both Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Miles and Huberman (1984) documented the strengths and relevancy of case studies for research purposes. However, case studies do have a lack of transferability. One case does not precisely fit another, so the outcomes cannot be guaranteed when a study is replicated. In addition, researchers recognize that qualitative studies do not give precise conclusions about the external validity. However,



they do serve a purpose in generalizing about theories and suggestions for further research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Miles & Huberman, 1984; Rocha, 1993; Yin, 1989).

Despite these limitations, a single case study design is appropriate because it furthers the study of the micropolitics used by teachers in an elementary school setting. The data collected was analyzed for strategies and tactics that teachers used to influence change during the implementation of a faculty-led school reform. The behaviors illuminated the factors perceived by teachers necessary to be in place as they worked towards improving organizational and programmatic practices at Central Elementary School. The strategies used created a customized design intended for this school only, however, the same strategies for creating another customized design can be used to create change in other schools increasing transferability of strategic planning from one reform to another.

### **Summary**

The sections, *A School in Need of Reform*, *Early Collaborations Between the School and the EPC*, and *Central Elementary Barriers to Reform* described the issues and the early decisions made, which culminated in the research study on micropolitics. The sections on *Reform and Micropolitics* and the *Emergence of the Need for a Qualitative Study* described the relationship between the development of the reform and the micropolitical forces that were so evident. Then the *Background of the Problem* is

described as well as the *Purpose of the Study*. In the section describing the purpose are the research questions, which guided the research:

1. How does the micropolitics of faculty-led school reform get played out in the school setting?
2. How does faculty-led school reform affect teachers and a school's policies and procedures?
3. What factors facilitate and impede faculty-led reform in a school setting?

The *Significance of the Study*, the *Assumptions*, and the *Limitations* of the study followed. Finally, the *Summary* concludes the chapter as it further describes the remaining chapters.

The review of related literature follows in Chapter II. The literature is categorized in the following groups: teachers as leaders and reformers; micropolitical influences on teachers, action research in schools; and theories of action. Chapter III describes the methodology and data analysis of the study. The single case study approach to research includes a multitude of interviews, and observations.

In Chapter IV, the case study report is presented. Chapter V includes the findings, interpretations, and analysis of the data, followed by the summary, conclusions, and implications for theory and practice. Finally, a recommendation for further research concludes the study.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

#### **Introduction**

In this chapter different methods and models for change will be discussed in *Approaches to School Reform*. A section follows on *Teachers As Leaders and Reformers*, and another on *Teachers Managing the Principal*. A discussion on *Micropolitical Behavior Within Schools* follows with additional supporting sections on *Power Within A Shared-Governance*, and *Conflict Versus Collaboration*. Finally a *Summary* closes the chapter.

#### **Approaches to School Reform**

New rules and expectations for education are becoming more demanding and schools are trying to respond. In an attempt to make schools more accountable, efforts to heighten student and teacher accountability are being reduced to teaching to achievement tests, such as the Texas Assessment of Academic Standards (TAAS) in Texas. Such mandated site-based management require teachers, administrators, and parents to learn and use new skills (Webber, 1995). But the reality is when school reform meets teacher resentment; reforms fail (Boles, 1992; Pettigrew, 1973; Meier 1995). When teachers are faced with a reform they do not support, they can band together and derail the program (ibid).

For more than a decade, school leaders, governors, and educational organizations have been experimenting with school reforms, building various new models and methods for change (Lieberman and Miller, 1999). Lieberman and Miller described two approaches to school change, procedural and principled (1999). The former consisted of reforms that emphasized collaboration, a vision, and an assessment of the outcomes (ibid). The procedural approach includes changes made at the state, district or local level. Some allowed schools to rethink their schools while others offered staff development or increased planning time. In New York City, Chapter 1 funds (federal aid program to help students get an early start) were used to negotiate a union agreement for a school-based option to restructure schools when 75% of the teachers and the principal agreed on a focus to better meet the needs of the students (ibid). In Chicago, state legislation organized local school councils to oversee an “ambitious and controversial school change effort” (ibid, p. 3).

The principled approach relied more on values that allowed for individual variation to school reform as in Ted Sizer’s (1988) approach using *10 core principles* in his Coalition of Essential Schools (as cited in Lieberman and Miller, 1999). Using this approach, schools established goals that pertained to all students and stressed that students achieve mastery in a number of essential skills and knowledge. Boyer (1991) involved the school as a community developing a coherent curriculum and a climate that encourages learning (ibid). Goodlad (1984) established a clear agenda and a set of

principles to change teacher education and public schools (ibid). The focus on core values set the parameters for the principled approach to reform.

The procedural and principled approaches, however, do not allow for compromises on their core beliefs and preferred practices (ibid). Each helps the school to identify with new ideas, those that are larger than the individual, the classroom or the school (ibid). Either way, a common language and understanding develops and that is key to beginning a reform (ibid). Lieberman and Miller found that most school reforms fall predominantly within these categories but the authors posit to sustain change, both approaches are needed (1999).

Further support for collaborative support comes from Sarason who states, “Salvation for our schools will not come from without but from within” (cited in Anyon, 1997 p. 10). Kyle posits one way to make schools effective is to collaboratively share resources (1985). Resources may be mobilized through the collaborative efforts of school staff including teachers, principals, and others to ensure the maximization of student retention (ibid). Bennett (1986) found factors common in effective schools to include: an emphasis on recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers, the setting of goals with high expectations, strong school leadership, the teachers recognized as professionals, and had adequate resources (as cited in Wilson & Corcoran, 1987). Duttweiler’s (1989) review of research found the following significant factors common in effective schools, shared leadership and a positive school climate (as cited in Ballenger, 1996).

Webber described common factors in change efforts for successful schools (1995). Webber attended an educational change conference in which the participants summarized successful change as follows:

- 1) Successful change to education systems should be based on a thorough and accurate understanding of existing conditions, the advantages and disadvantages of available alternatives, and positive experiences in similar learning contracts.
- 2) Sustainable school change should be based on input from teachers, parents, students, and community members; no important interest group should be excluded from the change process.
- 3) Significant educational change should be implemented over a period of time that most teachers feel is necessary.
- 4) Change agents should expect conflict to increase as innovations are introduced, especially when stakes are high and perceptions are polarized.
- 5) Change initiatives should include resources for staff development for those responsible for implementing the reforms (Webber, 1995, p. 10).

Mindful of these suggestions, the researcher speculated that a bottom-up reform approach would create new strategies for the way teachers participate in their daily educational activities. The researcher also posited that successful reforms would result if teachers were included in the development of a reform project. The success of a

program might depend on the teachers' support of the program. This is where monitoring the micropolitics of the teachers' becomes critical to instituting a successful reform. If teachers are unhappy and unsupportive of a reform, then the change initiative will follow failed reforms of the past (Boles, 1992; Pettigrew, 1973; Meier 1995). Therefore, the researcher further posits a school reform and a school's micropolitics should be viewed as a hand-in-glove relationship; both need to be well-supported.

### **Teachers as Leaders and Reformers**

According to Weiss, "Increased teacher participation in school leadership generates a sense of ownership, advances professionalism, and 'allows for greater control over the decision process'" (cited in Ovando, 1996, p. 30). Weiss also posits that teachers need autonomy to affect cultural changes in their school (ibid). Autonomy enables the teachers to critique and challenge each other to raise their level of skills. This behavior is seen when an increasing amount of trust is present (ibid). This environment of self-critiquing teachers increases accountability for the school (ibid).

When teachers are involved in the decision process, they become committed to shared values, conceptions, and ideals; and they begin thinking in terms of *my school* rather than *my classroom* (Ovando, 1996). According to Miller and O'Shea "...when teachers take leadership in matters of instruction and school organization, authentic change happens" (cited in Ovando, 1996, p. 30).

For example, in a study by Couchenour and Dimono (1999), teachers were given a voice in the selection of the new teachers. In this case, teachers carefully considered whether or not the new candidates would embrace and, therefore, strengthen the school's vision. Because all the teachers were united in their vision, it was easier for them, rather than the principal, to convey this philosophy to the new teachers. By involving the teachers in the selection of the new teachers, the school was able to maintain a strong vision and raise the overall performance of the school (Meier, 1995).

Teacher empowerment should be increased in schools because the benefits to the school and its community are essential to school improvement (Meier, 1995). Teachers have experienced increased motivation to change, increased self-esteem, creative problem-solving, increased assertiveness, a commitment to the students and the school, a better understanding of children's needs, and a higher regard for professional development (Meier, 1995).

Boles found that the faculty needs to work in teams to eliminate the "isolating nature of classroom teaching (1992, p. 174). When the concept of change is conceived, designed, and developed from within, as through a team project, reforms will have a much higher rate of success (Boles, 1992). The research has shown that successful reform comes from the combined efforts of teacher participation, vision, voice, and teamwork. It is also essential to study the approaches used in successful reforms so as to eliminate future reform failure.



Effective approaches to change might include establishing goals based on some significant values, standards, or beliefs; outlining the procedural means to accomplish these goals; and putting in place an organizational structure that provides continuous support and learning (Lieberman and Miller, 1999, p. 2).

After all, Hargreaves states, “The quality, range and flexibility of teachers’ classroom work are closely tied up with their professional growth – with the way that they develop as people and as professionals” (Blase and Anderson 1995 p. vii).

Teachers and administrators come to schools with ambition, ideals, and the enthusiasm to make a difference (Meier, 1995; Lieberman and Miller, 1999). They bring different perspectives and different leadership styles (ibid). But many become dubious about their profession after their efforts are dashed year after year by administrative constraints, budget cuts, unsupportive parents, or by policy changes that lessen their ability to bring creativity and inspiration to the classrooms (ibid). Teachers and administrators can become dulled after their creativity is thwarted (ibid). Teachers may become resigned to the notion that nothing can be done to improve their situation, so they comply halfheartedly with the state and district change initiatives, and they may become overwhelmed by the day-to-day requirements of the job (Lieberman and Miller, 1999; Meier 1995).

Teachers bring to school their individual needs and different perceptions of their roles as teachers (Hughes and Ubben, 1989). Since organizational needs and individual needs are not always congruent (Schein, 1977) and since one teacher’s strength is not

the same as another's, a school reform has to address these differences to be successful (Lieberman and Miller, 1999).

Each development effort helps the teachers to identify with the whole school, ideas larger than the individual or the classroom (Lieberman and Miller, 1999). When there is a set of guiding principles, teachers can form a common language for conversation and common understandings to motivate action (ibid). Teachers need to work together to find some very creative solutions to school problems. Therefore, it would seem reasonable to conclude that school reform should involve all faculty members who were affected by the change.

### **Teachers Managing the Principal**

While the leadership of the principal (directing subordinates) is vital to the success of a school (Brookover & Lezotte, 1979; Edmonds, 1979; Weber, 1971), the converse process of directing up, which is when teachers surreptitiously manage the principal, may be just as critical (Gabarro & Kotter, 1993; Von Bergen, Soper & Rosenthal, 1996; Dobson & Dobson, 2000). As stated by Gabarro and Kotter, "This process does not entail political maneuvering or apple polishing [controlling, ingratiating, manipulating] but rather emphasizes the establishment of a strong collaborative relationship in order to work more effectively for the benefit of the employee, the boss, and the company" (1993, p. 1). When principals choose to lead

reform within a school through a purely directive style, failure of the reform is likely (Meier, 1995).

Nias, Southwest and Yeomans (1989) found in their study that administrative inefficiency, poor communication, lack of clear goals and the means to achieve them, and inadequate supervision adversely affected the [teachers'] work environments (Blase and Anderson, 1995, p. 9). Blase (1987a) describes several characteristics of principals that teachers viewed as 'closed and ineffective including inaccessibility, lack of knowledge or expertise, indecisiveness, lack of direction, lack of follow-through, authoritarianism, non-support or avoidance of conflict, favoritism, unwillingness to give credit or rewards, being overly critical, and use of intimidation. Such characteristics were correlated strongly with increases in teachers' feelings of frustration, anger, insecurity, confusion, and apathy, as well as negative effects on key aspects of the teachers' performance with students (ibid). Fuchs (1967) describes actions by principals that routinely violated professional and interpersonal norms (e.g. overloading teachers with extra responsibilities) and that led to feelings of exploitation and alienation among teachers.

Conversely, by empowering teachers through the process of shared governance or shared decision-making, principals are more likely to gain the support and commitment of teachers towards school-wide reform (Blase & Blase, 1997, pp 138-64; Liontos, 1994). The research shows that successful school reforms are found when principals empower teachers to lead, allow teachers to capitalize on their experience and

expertise, listen to teachers' voices and encourage teachers to interact with one another (Blase & Anderson, 1999; Meier 1995).

### **Micropolitical Behavior Within Schools**

In this section, the micropolitics of a school reform is discussed because it is yet another element that may underlie the success or failure of reform in schools. As Scribner, Reyes, and Fusarelli (1995) describe:

The nature of the playing field is determined by where the game of educational politics is played, how it is played, and who wins and loses...Reforms come and go in the United States despite institutional continuity because of changing playing conditions resulting from recurring conflicts over fundamental values in schools and society at large. Knowledge of the conditions under which the game of educational politics is played assists us in understanding the focus of education reform (in Scribner and Layton, p. 202-203).

Iannacone first described the politics that takes place within and around the school as the *micropolitics of education* (1975). Politics have been defined as, “‘who gets what when and how’ (Harold Laswell), ‘the authoritative allocation of values’ (David Easton), or ‘turning personal troubles into public issues (C. Wright Mills),” (as cited in Scribner and Layton, 1995, p. 175). Blase defines micropolitics in the following way: “Micropolitics refers to the use of formal and informal power by individuals and groups to achieve their goals in organizations” (Blase, 1991, p.2). Micropolitics are all

about using influential strategies to maintain, regain, or obtain power in an organization through both legitimate and illegitimate means (Ball, 1987; Mayes & Allen, 1977; Morgan, 1986). Other definitions focus on the strategic use of power by individuals and groups (Bacharach & Lawler, 1980; Ball, 1987; Blase, 1989; Hoyle, 1986; Pfeffer, 1981).

Despite knowledge of its existence, “it was not until the 1980s that theoretical and empirical work in micropolitics proliferated in the fields of both management and education” (Blase and Anderson, 1995). Blase found the complexity increases when studying micropolitical behavior (1991) and that will affect a school reform. Perhaps by understanding the micropolitics within the school, one can gain insight to the success or failure of a new school program. Political analysis helps us to understand the world and to make better choices and influence changes that are inherent in all organizations (Dahl, as cited in Scribner, 1995). As Hargreaves states,

We are beginning to recognize that much more than pedagogy, instruction or teaching method is at stake. Teacher development, teachers’ careers, teachers’ relations with their colleagues, the conditions of status, reward and leadership under which they work – all these affect the quality of what they do in the classroom (cited in Blase and Anderson, 1995, p. vii).

So why study the micropolitics of school? Blase says it well, “The micropolitical perspective of organization provides a valuable and potent approach to understanding the woof and warp of the fabric of day-to-day life in schools” (Blase,

1991, p. 1). Micropolitical influence can be strategic, conflictive, ideological, legitimate, and illegitimate, and may consist of self-interested manipulation (Hoyle 1986; Ball, 1987; Blase and Anderson, 1995). Blase states, “The micropolitical perspective represents a radical change from traditional-rational approaches to organizations” (Blase, 1991, p. 2). Therefore the rational models of organization of Weber (1947), Taylor (1947), and Fayol (1949), and the system approaches from Parsons (1951), Getzels and Guba (1957) have been criticized for their omission of micropolitics (as cited in Blase, 1991, p. 2).

Later models of organization, such as those proposed by Comstock (1982), Pfeffer (1981), and Tushman, (1977) have been criticized because of the emphasis placed on the power of authority but not on the power in organizational settings (ibid). Bacharach & Mitchell (1987) and Mangham (1979) questioned the idea that organizational behaviors such as span of control, differentiation, and roles could be ultimately controlling (ibid). Research has shown that in large part, political actions result from perceived differences between individuals and groups coupled with the motivation to use power to influence and/or protect (Blase and Anderson, 1995). Although such actions are consciously motivated, any action, consciously or unconsciously motivated, may have political “significance” in a given situation (ibid).

Other actions and processes including cooperative and conflictive ones are part of the realm of micropolitics (Blase and Anderson, 1995, p. 11). While power and political maneuvering can be viewed as negative within an organization, Hoyle (1986)

chooses to describe micropolitics as a continuum. On one end, individuals within organizations use resources to influence decisions for the better of the organization; and at the opposite end, individuals are only interested in self-gain. According to Hoyle, micropolitics is most often focused "...on interests rather than goals, coalitions rather than departments, influence rather than authority, and strategies rather than procedures" (p. 129). Allowing for all of these actions and processes when planning for change can help to create a more democratic, shared governance style of leadership. Micropolitics can then be used to build a cooperative principal-teacher relationship of "power with" rather than "power over" (Blase & Blase, 1994).

Bailey, as cited in Hoyle (1986), distinguishes this kind of "power-with" micropolitics as a legitimate, democratic form of decision-making (p. 149). Micropolitics is about the give and take between the teacher and the principal to distribute resources in exchange for some other reciprocal form of support (ibid). Developing "more robust designs that probe actor relations, the conditions that produce, perpetuate or precipitate shifts in patterns of politics and the consequences of these styles of play for the distribution of valued outcomes would bolster our ability to interpret the politics in school" Malen (as cited in Scribner, 1995, p. 160).

### **Power Within A Shared-Governance**

The traditional hierarchy of power that exists in most schools is built on the premise that principals control school policy, teachers control instruction, and parents

provide support (Scribner and Layton, 1995). Malen describes micropolitics of schools as a disparate field, elusive, yet at times, all-inclusive, “where human interaction is a political interaction, every conversation is a caucus, every move is a maneuver that somehow affects/reflects the politics of the site” (Scribner and Layton, 1995, p. 159).

Malen continues:

If power is a key component of politics, then attending to the relationship between the three faces of power constitutes another challenge. One way to view the relationship is to see the faces as complementary. To illustrate, the first face concentrates on overt political action in decision arenas, on how power is activated and exercised. The second and third faces uncover the subtle precursors of political action such as how political orientations are formed, political efficacy is acquired, power resources are accumulated, public issues are defined and how broad structures as well as actor strategies converge to regulate the flow of influence. Taken together the three faces give a fuller understanding of political processes. Recognizing that there are other ways to attend to the multidimensional nature of power, the point to be made is that diverse efforts to map power relations in schools are important steps. But these efforts might yield a more comprehensive, coherent account of politics if the ‘faces’ of power were integrated effectively (Scribner and Layton, 1995, p. 160).

Similarly, Pfeffer (1981) describes organizational politics as the “activities taken within organizations to acquire, develop, and use power and other resources to obtain



preferred outcomes in a situation in which there is uncertainty or dissension about choices (as cited in Blase, 1991, p. 7). Pfeffer describes politics as a conscious endeavor to achieve goals, expand power, or extend the effects of power (ibid). Blase states that, “Political activity is undertaken to deal with resistance or opposition; to Pfeffer, this is the *raison d’etre* of all political behavior” (1991, p. 7).

Roberts and Dungan (1993) provided the following guidelines for adopting an integrated, shared-governance, distributed-power model of decision-making within a school:

(1) attain some degree of cohesion prior to implementation; (2) build in sufficient preparation time; (3) plan ongoing group development; (4) clarify roles and responsibilities; (5) maintain fair representation and accurate reporting; (6) focus on collaboration across all parties; (7) combine easily resolved and long-range goals; (8) design conflict resolution channels; (9) have realistic expectations; (10) maintain a low profile in active decision making; (11) be willing to surrender power; and (12) realize that shared governance is a process for instructional improvement (p.7). It seems important to realize that shared government is but one part of politics and by working together a team develops “a keener understanding of the complexities and the consequences of power relations and political processes” (Malen as cited in Scribner, 1995, p. 160).

## **Conflict Versus Collaboration**

Conflict can be the result of consciously motivated actions that are intentional, calculated, strategic, or purposive (Blase, 1991). Conflict can also result from unconsciously motivated actions (ibid). Furthermore, routine actions and negligence, and other actions that prevent others from participating in decision-making may cause conflict especially when the resulting decisions are opposed by those affected by them (Blase, 1991).

Conflict is often considered “aberrant and pathological, something to be managed or remediated” (Reed, 2000, p.7). However, it seems that to develop successful relationships and solid political processes, people would have to learn to recognize and attend to conflict before learning to collaborate. Conflict in micropolitics can result from a variety of actions (Blase, 1991) and the causes must be addressed, not ignored.

Reed described Schattschneider’s (1960) position on “conflict as the root of political behavior and politics as the socialization of that conflict, the procedure through which the varied and often opposing interests of groups are organized” (2000, p. 7). Reed observed this behavior in a formal teachers’ meeting where groups used political maneuvering to push through their agenda. She saw that several teachers “periodically left our monthly meetings to gather in the hallway outside the meeting room to strategize. Then they returned to the meeting and used their strategy to overwhelm the will of the group” (2000, p. 12).

Conflict in schools is commonplace because the values of the students, teachers, and principals are often in disagreement (Blase, 1991). Ball states:

I take schools, in common with virtually all other social organizations, to be arenas of struggle; to be riven with actual or potential conflict between members; to be poorly coordinated; to be ideologically diverse. I take it to be essential that if we are to understand the nature of schools as organizations, we must achieve some understanding of these conflicts (as cited in Blase, 1991, p.9).

Gronn (1984) has distinguished different types of conflict and described them on a continuum of action-inaction. He describes *overt* conflict as that which is obvious at the action end of the continuum, such as teachers working together on a reform. Then he describes *covert* conflict found in groups who choose to suppress their desire to dissent; *latent* conflict where issues may be seen as personal; *inaction through self-censorship* where groups in conflict may refrain from political action because of the power of others and; *inaction through the failure of an idea to take hold* as when people who may inwardly disagree accept their situation unquestioningly (Gronn, cited in Blase, 1991).

Hoyle (1986) describes two systems theories that fit on opposite ends of his micropolitical continuum, one being the strong or functionalist position and the other being the conflict approach. "Functionalists perceive social systems as characterized by valued consensus, solidarity, cooperation," etc., while "...conflict theorists perceive

social life as based on conflicting interests which can only be resolved by the coercion of those without power by those with power...and only temporarily since social systems are inherently unstable” (p. 9). Conflict theorists believe that systems with interrelated components are just as likely to be in conflict as in coordinated effort (Hoyle, 1986). For example, “teachers purchase discretion within classrooms by relinquishing their opportunity to influence school policy” (Corwin as cited in Scribner, 1995, p. 155). Another example is when micropolitics are used to separate groups within the system, the result can be lots of activity creating the illusion of progress with new solutions replacing new solutions; people are busy but no real progress is made (Hoyle, 1986). And Iannaccone states:

...Conflicts which escalate into realignment of coalitions and a redirection of policies, are reflections of ‘intrinsically unresolvable issues...But precisely because they are irreconcilable, at least within the limits of their current circumstances and technology, the new mix of issues and related ideas provides an illusion of solving the old conflicts (cited in Scribner and Layton, 1995, p.1)

Donaldson (1993) agrees with the functionalist point of view. He describes a “cycle of progress” in which a school staff can begin accomplishing reform. The cycle requires that the staff of the school becomes a community responsible for setting and reaching community goals and capable of managing community resources. As the formal leader of this group, the principal must not control, monitor, and direct, but must treat this group as a responsible community of adults.

Teachers and principals who have previously divided responsibility for decisions unequally, reserved “final say” for the principal, and expected the principal to ride herd on “quality control” cannot overnight begin to share responsibility and collaborate as a community (Donaldson, 1993). They must start by working together as a team to lay the groundwork on which future collective action can occur (ibid, p. 4).

Fullan and Hargreaves (1991) reiterate that the process of building a collaborative culture within the traditionally organized school is not an easy one. “Building collaborative cultures involves a long developmental journey; there are no shortcuts” (Fullan and Hargreaves, as cited in Donaldson, 1993, p. 1). To become collaborative means that certain obstacles must be overcome. It means first, that the teachers and principal must share recognition of the problem areas. Second, the teachers and principal must be willing to conduct a self-examination so that each person understands his/her own needs, strengths, weaknesses, and working styles. Third, the teachers and principal need to carefully plan and set goals. Finally, the teachers and principal must agree to a sincerely committed effort combined with evaluation in the form of honest self-reflection concerning the effectiveness of that effort (Donaldson, p. 2-3; Gabarro & Kotter, 1993, p. 155).

### **Cooperation**

In 1975, Iannaccone was among those who described the presence of micropolitics in public schools (as cited in Blase, 1991). He discussed teachers’

demands for autonomy as a political ideology. Further, he described how such teacher demands interact with the interests of school administrators and the public (ibid).

Cooperation with the teachers was considered necessary to getting the job done.

Cooperation was described in several other studies as an integral part of micropolitics. Hoyle's study (1986) stresses strategies used by individuals and groups to use authority and influence to achieve their goals (ibid). This strategizing seems to indicate that political maneuvering was used to come to agreement rather than outright cooperation.

In his study, Ball (1987) emphasized group-level analysis and conflict dynamics (ibid). Ball (1987) focused on the interests of actors, the maintenance of organizational control, and conflict over policy. Ball's study also indicates that conflict exists between the actors and the organizational control and policies indicating that one does not necessarily support the other. These studies seem to suggest that when studying micropolitics, cooperation is the end result of a struggle (conflict) and the bargaining or compromise of power.

And in his study, Greenfield contends that cooperative and consensual relationships may be as important to micropolitics as conflictive relationships (as cited in Blase, 1991). Greenfield believes that leadership by principals may depend more upon interpersonal influence rather than on formal authority and control structures (ibid). Greenfield concludes that the micropolitics of leadership in schools may rely

heavily upon the beliefs of teachers and the principal regarding their perceived duty to serve the best interests of children (ibid, p. 161).

### **Interest Groups**

“An interest group is an organized body of individuals who share some goals and who try to influence public policy” (Berry, 1984, p. 5). Perhaps the most intriguing political interaction happens at the federal level by special interest groups (SIG). As described by Madison, special interest groups play a “check and balance role” in federal decision-making (ibid). The government and, ultimately, the people benefit from hearing conflicting viewpoints of issues presented by special interest groups (ibid). The government representatives have to sort through the rhetoric and carefully look at the legal ramifications so that policy changes are constitutional, and the outcomes are intended for the good of the people (ibid).

Micropolitics at the school level include parents, teachers, administrators, and the school board as players. Each player has powerful influences over the future of the students who attend their schools. Parents may be influential when they are concerned that the TAAS may limit their children’s success. In the classroom once the door is closed, teachers have total control over what they teach. School principals can also be influential as Reyes and Capper determined (1991).

Reyes and Capper described an example of the powerful influence of principals (ibid). The political ideologies of a group of principals were found to be partially

responsible for the success or failure of dropouts (ibid). Principals defined dropout, and the causes thereof, and were in a position to blame the students, the school or community for the failures of racially diverse students (ibid). Reyes and Capper concluded that dependent upon how a problem is defined at a school can directly affect how to address the problem (Scribner and Layton, 1995).

This tactical example can be tied back to school reform. Any of the players can redefine a reform to suit their needs. They can form their own special interest groups and can assert positive or negative influence in many discreet ways. The principal, teachers, and administrators can choose to support or not to support a school reform, and ultimately affect its success or failure. Players can choose to have a negative attitude towards a reform, and through inaction subvert its success. These disagreements can lead to further debates about a reform within a school.

Sroufe reasons that educational debates never end because the debates are, in effect, evidence of political symbolism (Scribner and Layton, 1995). And special interest groups play a major role in ensuring that policies do not change without a challenge (Berry, 1984). For example, the National Education Association (NEA), as a SIG, supported President Clinton in his election because they wanted to *end the discussion of private school choice* (Scribner and Layton, 1995). Special interest groups are largely responsible for the accountability in schools then and now.



## **Accountability**

In the 80's, as the accountability movement gained momentum, big business formed their own special interest groups and tried to influence state agendas in education (Scribner and Layton, 1995). Big business found they were held at bay by teachers' unions and other special interest groups who gave opposing views on career ladders, testing of teachers, and school choice (ibid). In the 1990s, Business Roundtable representatives stepped up their involvement in state education issues, as did educational associations (ibid). The most powerful were the National Education Association (NEA) and American Federation of Teachers (AFT) (ibid).

More recently in Texas, the accountability movement has made significant strides. The Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS), which was begun eight years before, primarily tests math, reading, and writing skills, and has expanded to include testing at grades three, four, five, six, eight and ten (TEA, 2000). Beginning in 2002, the 11<sup>th</sup> grade will also be tested as the state adds new tests in history and science (ibid).

Due to its high-stakes, (students who do not pass, do not graduate from high school) schools, parents, and students are watching it closely. Texas has a high dropout rate in its urban neighborhoods of 50% or more (TEA, 2000). To increase the academic achievement rate, the TEA has mandated testing and set new academic standards for passing (ibid).

## Summary

The review of the literature indicates in the *Teachers as Leaders and Reformers*, a strong need for teachers to become involved with school reforms to ensure success. As Sarason stated, the solutions for schools will come from within the school (cited in Anyon, 1997). Teachers who are asked to participate in shared leadership and support the reform efforts have been found to contribute to school success (Lieberman & Miller, 1999). When top-down reform is forced on teachers and the teachers resent the change, they can use their political behaviors to subvert the effort (ibid). However, if they are invited to participate in the reform, they can unite to support the effort (ibid).

In *Teachers Managing the Principal*, teachers were found to be far more effective when empowered within the process of shared decision-making. Principals were more widely supported and within school reforms, the teachers were more committed according to Blase & Blase (1997) and Lontos (1994). The power found within the school at the principal level and the teacher level are the basis of the micropolitical power found within a school. Understanding that there is a power struggle within the school explains why micropolitics and school reform go together hand-in-glove. When this *Micropolitical Behavior Within Schools* is better understood by the players, teachers and principals can work together towards a positive school climate.

In *Power Within a Shared Governance*, Roberts and Dungan (1993) describes the steps to adopting integrated shared governance within a school, which will help

promote a positive school climate. And in *Conflict Versus Collaboration*, Blase (1991) explains that conflict in schools is commonplace due to conflicting values of the teachers, students, and principals. Therefore the studies (Hoyle, 1986; Ball, 1987) indicate that schools have to work at collaboration in order to work with interest groups who may oppose the school's agenda and to be accountable to the public.

The literature review emphasizes that the school's values and micropolitics must be considered when building a school reform if it is to be successful. These ideas form the basis for the next chapter where the methodology for studying the micropolitics in a faculty-led school reform was described.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Introduction**

This qualitative case study at Central Elementary School will employ action research, which is "...knowledge that can be used to produce action while *at the same time* contributing to a theory of action" (Argyris, Putnam, and McLain Smith, 1985, p. ix). Lewin (1947 as cited in [fau.edu](http://fau.edu) website) has described action research as a three-step spiral process including planning using reconnaissance; taking actions; and exploring the facts following the action. Corey (1953) describes action research as the process practitioners use to scientifically study, evaluate, and make corrections to their own problems. In education, action research according to Glickman (1992 as cited in [fau.edu](http://fau.edu) website) is the study in a school setting of the activities to improve instruction and their results by members of the school. Calhoun (1994, as cited in [fau.edu](http://fau.edu) website) states, "Action Research is a fancy way of saying let's study what's happening at our school and decide how to make it a better place."

In an attempt to make Central Elementary School a better place for all, action research was employed. It was used in combination with the scientific Interactive Qualitative Analysis (IQA) approach (Northcutt & Miles et al, 1998) to contribute to the micropolitical theory as described in several studies (Ballenger, 1996; Britton, 1993;

Detorie, 1993; Hammond, 1993; Howard-Miller, 1993; Johnson, 1994; Wallace, 1993; Young, 1998) of the influence behavior of principals.

These methodologies allow the researcher to identify, observe, and describe micropolitical behaviors of organizational members such as a principal, teachers, and other staff members as they construct their own reality in a complex, real-life situation (Argyris et al, 1985; Northcutt & Miles et al, 1998; Yin, 1989). This blending of methodologies was chosen because it offers an additional dimension of analysis to compliment the traditional qualitative research methods that will be used such as interviews and focus groups.

Qualitative methods are selected for this study because of their inclination towards discovery and inductive logic (Patton, 1990). An evaluative approach implies that the researcher studies, and then draws conclusions based on the observed phenomenon, being careful not to obscure the data with preexisting expectations (ibid). Inductive analysis begins with basic observations and builds toward more general patterns (ibid). From this data further observations, decisions, and adjustments to a plan can be made.

Since these plans are developed from studying the observed phenomenon, they are described as grounded in real-world patterns (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The data collected will be used to develop a model of reform based on the study of the observed phenomenon or grounded theory (ibid). By studying the micropolitical behaviors, the researcher wishes to understand the social, cultural, and organizational setting as well as

how change influences how teachers and administrators interact (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Marshall & Scribner, 1991b).

### **Site and Participant Selection**

When the principal introduced the research team and the idea of initiating a school reform to raise academic achievement to his staff, several of the teachers protested requesting that their time not be used to work on another failed reform. But when they were asked to participate in the design and development of the project, many asked to be actively engaged in the project. It was this interaction, although it is unclear whether it was due to the teachers' lack of trust or their need to be in control during a school reform that illuminated the need for a micropolitical study around teacher empowerment and participation. Many of the teachers wanted to be involved in all decision-making processes that led to changes affecting their school and their students. With that insight, the plan for a qualitative research project became action research based with a focus on the micropolitics within the school.

Central Elementary School is part of an urban school system located in central Texas with a student population of about 400 students, predominantly minority, with 95% or more Hispanic. More than 85% of the students come from low-income families. The school serves students from pre-kindergarten through grade 6.

Central Elementary School has a history of seven consecutive years as an Acceptable school. The principal acknowledged the need to become exemplary per the

state mandate, within three years. The principal invited the research team to construct a school reform aimed at raising student achievement scores.

The school had some accountability issues as it had reached a plateau in student achievement scores. In addition, it has a predominantly low socio-economic and minority population. Studies show that Hispanic and African-American students historically have a longer road to travel to become exemplary (House, 1999).

The principal of Central Elementary School was of Hispanic heritage and had been the principal for 17 years. The faculty consisted of approximately 30 full-time teachers, and 20 part-time teachers, and support staff. Of the 30 or so teachers, four were new teachers having up less than three years of classroom experience. One teacher in this group had a Master's degree. Seventeen teachers had more than ten years of teaching experience and almost half of those had greater than 20 years in the classroom. Six of the very experienced group had completed a Master's degree program. The majority of the teachers were Hispanic and bilingual. There were some Caucasian teachers and one African American teacher in the mix. The bilingual teachers easily switched from English to Spanish and back again. This mixed population of teachers formed the faculty that was observed as they engaged in a reform of their school.

Involving all of the full-time teachers added credibility to the study because the reliability was increased when all the teachers contributed their opinions and biases. The initial three teacher development days designated for this reform project were paid

staff development days providing an avenue for mandatory attendance. The mandatory element ensured the teachers were fully involved on those days.

Since teachers were the driving force of the reform at Central, their enthusiasm for change kept them fully engaged. As the reform ideas were developed, accepted and implemented, there was a high incidence of teacher involvement throughout the study. The teachers' behaviors were observed in large and small group meetings, as well as in interviews.

The school was ripe for research. Patton states, "The logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting *information-rich* cases for study in depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research..."(1990, p. 169). Central was an ideal source of rich, thick data.

In this study, unlike traditional research but similar to the total quality management (TQM) approach, the participants and the researcher collaborated on an inductive and deductive analysis to problem solving. The qualitative IQA method that was used in this study produced significant data in a relatively short period of time that was immediately used for decision-making in strategic planning and implementation of change.

The IQA was used as a needs assessment to analyze the data or as a pretest of the ideal social system at Central Elementary School. The systems influence diagram (SID) or mindmap specifically illuminated the instructional practices that required



reform in the action research portion of the study. Improving instructional practices including the methods and techniques that teachers use to improve student performance were constructively reformed as part of the action research of this study. Because reform or change in a school is one of the most stimulating reasons for micropolitical acts to surface much activity was observed at Central.

The University of Texas Office of Sponsored Projects approved an application for the Review of a Project involving Human Subjects before any fieldwork was initiated (Appendix A. Application for Exemption).

## **Design Overview**

### **Action Research Using Interactive Qualitative Analysis (IQA)**

An IQA provides a systems approach to qualitative research. The approach has evolved from the theories of both phenomenology and post-modernism. Phenomenology suggests, “how the people experience and perceive the experience of the phenomenon under study,” (Glesne, 1999, p. 7) while post-modernism contends that reality is socially constructed (Scheurich, 1997). Northcutt & Miles (1998) describe IQA as a systems approach to qualitative research which seeks to capture the “lived reality” of people and involve the participants in the study of the meaning of their stories, the identification of constructs and relationships, and the development of theory. IQA begins with group process methods adapted from the Total Quality Management (TQM), a system to produce and analyze qualitative data (Kinslaw, 1992). Glaser and

Strauss' work on grounded theory inspire the development of the IQA (Northcutt & Miles et al, 1998). The systems perspective views social constructs as interconnected parts with the whole being greater than the individual parts (ibid). Creating change in one area leads to changes among all areas and the system itself (ibid). Beneficial effects from using this group process include the enhanced elements of team building and organizational communications (ibid).

To create change, the IQA uses both inductive and deductive group processes to generate factors. Factors are terms or phrases related to a common meaning or theme. The analysis of the data uses coding activities. The factors are grouped and arranged from the particular to the general and assigned a range of meanings from the general to the particular. Systematically, these relationships are explored to produce a comprehensive picture or model, also referred to as a mindmap.

The participants generate the data and analyze it. This is unique because, typically, the data analysis is research-driven. In this study, it is participant-driven. In fact, the development of the reform process cannot be planned ahead by the researcher; it must be facilitated *collaboratively* with the participants. The result is the participants define the meanings and the reality of their own views and are better connected to the development strategies. The participants are fully aware of the why, how, what, when, and where they must create reform. Thus, they become fully engaged in the paradigm for change. Lincoln & Guba state that “realities are multiple, constructed, and holistic” and the “knower and known are interactive and inseparable” (1985, p. 37). Therefore,

IQA is relevant and applicable in research methodologies for it follows the constructivist axioms that are part of the naturalistic theory.

The qualitative study employs a single case design (Stake, 1994) using the comprehensive IQA. To blend a micropolitical focus to the study, a method suited to studying political behavior was needed. “The database for political perspectives rests primarily in case studies. Such studies have provided a richly textural and lively account of organizational politics in action,” (Bolman and Deal, 1984, p. 217). Yin (1989) states that a single-case study is appropriate when a case is unique as in a faculty-led reform.

The IQA makes an assumption that the participants’ accounts of their sociology are somewhat accurate and reinforced by those in the group, which allows for the identification of relationships among constructs to induce a grounded system from the data (Northcutt & Miles et al, 1998; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The micropolitical study should help to verify that notion. The IQA method provides for increased involvement of the participants, which should expose some micropolitical behaviors among the participants.

In this action research study, the teachers participated in the IQA to list factors and identify emerging themes from the factors that influence the outcomes of increased student achievement. The themes were verified through focus groups and were used to construct a mindmap or theoretical model of causal effects in a Systems Influence Diagram (SID). The data analysis collectively identified the teachers’ perceptions of the factors that affect student learning.

This first IQA provided a benchmark as in a pre- and post-test design. The second step in the action research designed an intervention of teacher-training programs to develop areas of weakness, and to build on strengths discovered in the model. After the training programs were completed and a year had passed from the initial IQA administration, a post or longitudinal IQA was again administered and another mindmap or model was created. The pre- and post-SIDs (mindmaps) were compared to measure change in the models. Change was expected to take place inside of a year, yielding copious data. Thirteen teacher interviews were conducted to capture information pertaining to the reform after the second IQA was administered.

### **Micropolitical Behaviors Research**

The micropolitical behaviors of the faculty were observed and analyzed at the organizational level. Behaviors such as strategizing, and tactical maneuvering were among the factors under study as were teacher outcomes, such as compliance, commitment, and resistance. The researcher looked for incidences of those tactics and strategies, and noted when they were used frequently, infrequently, or not at all. The research at Central Elementary School was at the organizational (faculty and administrators) and the programmatic (school programs) level. The classroom level was not considered as the researcher did not assist or observe teachers in their individual classrooms.

The researcher began the identification of behaviors by studying specific incidences in the data and analyzing it. Using a “start list” derived from the school administration, micropolitical research, and organizational management, the researcher coded strategies and tactics.

This study employed the use of qualitative methods and tools that use non-numeric textual data. Both quantitative and qualitative methods are empirical and systematic, and qualitative data can be transformed and measured numerically such as in frequency counts; however, it is the assumptions and approaches that make qualitative data unique. According to Patton (1990), generally qualitative methods are inductive and naturalistic and are assumed to take place in “open systems” within a dynamic (rather than static) reality.

Researchers choose qualitative research for various reasons. It provides an opportunity to explore a topic about which little is known and captures the experience of participants and creates meaning (ibid). It can provide a means to understand the success or failures of a program or intervention. In this qualitative study, these combined reasons provide the motivation and the justification for using the grounded theory approach for research. Argyris describes grounded theory as a theoretical framework that will emerge from the data providing either a theory of action or a theory-in-use (Argyris et al, 1985).

## **Research Procedure**

The research questions are most reliably answered by qualitative rather than quantitative methods. Using a single case design allowed the researcher to build rapport with the participants and allowed for greater time in the field, necessary for conducting micropolitical research. Multiple sources of data can be found in one case allowing for more opportunities to triangulate the data adding validity to the study. The first question, “How does the micropolitics of faculty-led school reform get played out in the school setting?” was addressed over time through the analysis of observations, and direct interviews. Also, the study depended heavily on the validity of multiple participant perspectives and their evaluation to address the last two research questions: “How does faculty-led school reform affect teachers and a school’s policies and procedures?” and “What factors facilitate and impede faculty-led reform in a school setting?”

### **Research Implementation Plan Phases I-IV**

The study will answer the research questions using the previously mentioned combination of qualitative methodologies. Because strategy development is an arduous and lengthy process, this research procedure was organized into a four-phase approach for school reform:

Phase I. IQA Goal Setting (with SID #1, mindmap)

Phase II. Reform Planning and Implementation (Intervention)

Phase III. Second IQA Goal Setting (with SID #2)

Phase IV. Evaluation (with interview SID #3)

In the first goal-setting phase, all of the teachers participated in the IQA. The teachers were challenged to set goals for performance improvements to achieve the district's "exemplary school" status. The teachers participated first in a silent nominal group to answer the questions, "*When you think about the challenge you've been given, to achieve exemplary status, what comes to mind in terms of what it will take to accomplish this goal? What tools will be needed, what barriers will be faced?*" The objective was to help the teachers within this school's social system discover where their attention should be focused to accomplish their goals. One important benefit of the methodology is the opportunity for many stakeholders to participate in the interactive process, which increases the ownership of the reform process across the participant population.

The participating faculty members of the focus group nominated, coded, and synthesized data to develop a table or an inter-relationship diagraph (IRD) as part of the IQA. To ensure that all voices were heard in the planning and implementation phase, each participant contributed individually by writing their ideas on cards. The individual contributions prevented hierarchical influence and intimidation from other more vocal participants in the group. These were collectively shared with the group. The teachers were asked to then group the cards. This exercise illuminated both the positive and negative factors that teachers felt affected achievement.

Next as a whole, the group established the direction of cause and effect relationships. In this process, the faculty identified the most important reform factors. The researcher<sup>5</sup> applied a mathematical formula to each factor and determined the value of importance of each factor. This information was placed in the interrelationship diagram (IRD) table. The value of each factor was later weighted through a mathematical calculation. These calculated values determined the order in which to place the factors in the System Influence Diagram (SID) or mindmap. When all the values were placed, the SID became an illustrated blueprint, or model, for creating an improvement plan of the educational system at Central.

Phase II began the planning and implementation stage of the improvement plan. With the researcher's help, the faculty analyzed the results and made decisions on how they wanted to proceed in their faculty-led design.

After many discussions with the faculty, administrators and the researcher team, a vote was taken. The faculty decided to incorporate activities aimed at achieving their goals. In this phase, the teachers took control and decided to work on eliminating the weaknesses displayed in the model. With the researcher facilitating, the teachers developed an improvement plan, and requested training to work on their specific needs. All steps in the design, development, and implementation of the training project was planned and approved by the faculty before any program development took place. No

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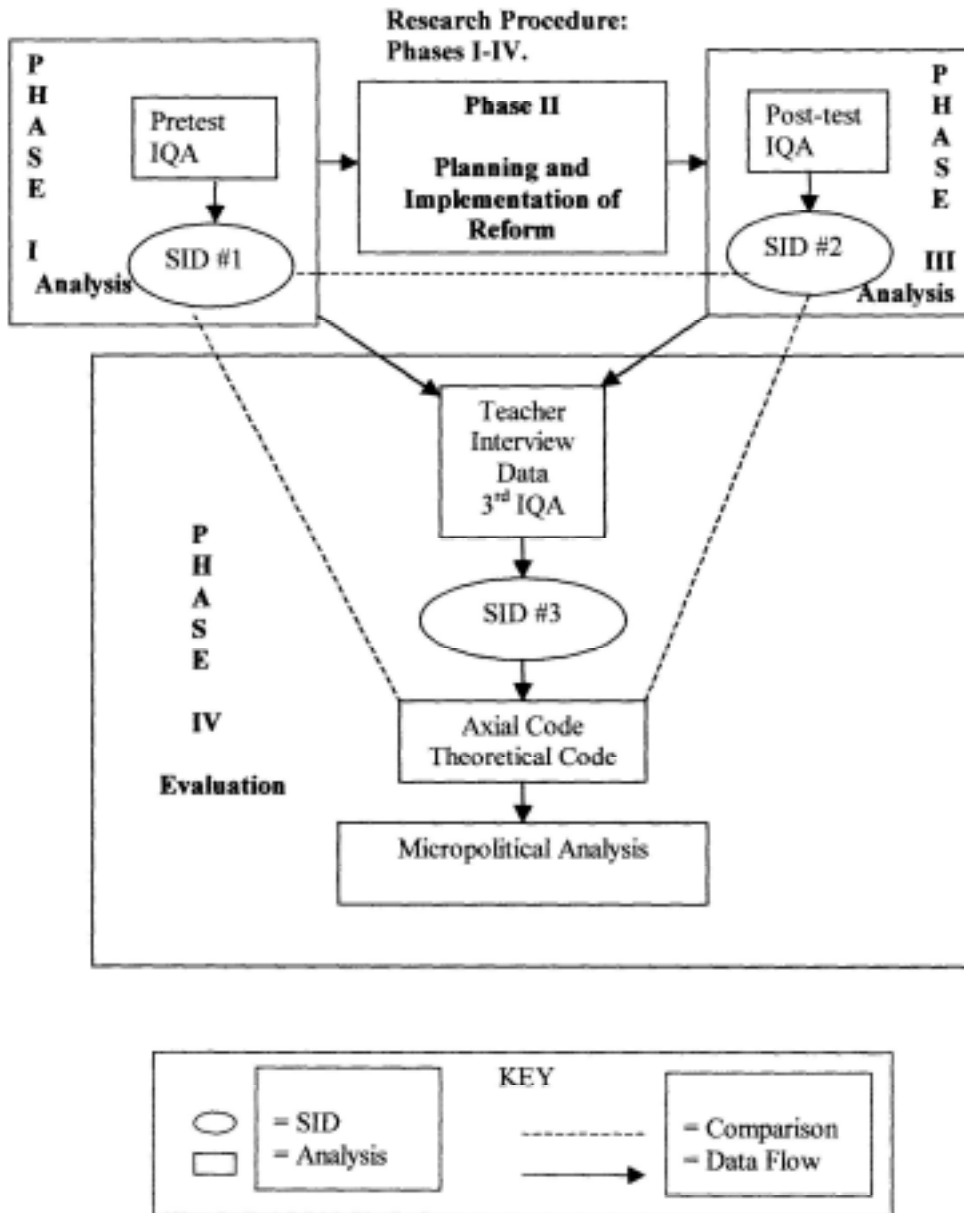
<sup>5</sup> Mary Faria, then a graduate student, ran the first IQA with the research team in assistance.



steps for reform were taken without approval by the whole faculty. The researcher provided the training they requested. This process of design, development, and implementation continued for the year.

Phase III was evaluative. Using the interview results, the researcher analyzed that data using another interactive qualitative analysis and built a third SID (mindmap) from those factors. The researcher could compare the outcomes and look for change over time from the SIDs. For further analysis of the micropolitical behaviors, data gleaned from the interviews and observations was studied. With this information, the researcher sought to gain an understanding of the issues, strategies, and micropolitical behaviors used by the teachers during the faculty-led reform. See analysis model that follows.

**Figure 3.1: Research Analysis Model with Interactive Qualitative Analyses (IQA) and Systems Influence Diagrams (SID)**



### **Research Analysis Model**

The pretest IQA represented the first focus group analysis that took place at Central. The focus group concentrated on the factors that would hinder or enhance academic achievement at Central. It produced the first Systems Influence Diagram (SID) see SID #1. This mindmap provided the framework for building a plan for the school reform. The second phase was the planning and implementation phase. This phase called for developing a plan for improvement. The teachers selected areas for training that were specific to the model.

A year after the first IQA was completed, a second IQA was conducted based on the same analysis question about which factors improved or hindered academic progress at Central. As in the first IQA, the second phase resulted in the SID, diagram #2. This model also built a framework for a plan for school improvement, one that would be used to maintain focus on the goal. The teachers would be able to use it as a means to stay on track to improve their school.

In the research, the second SID (mindmap) marked an end in the involvement of the researcher as facilitator and advisor to the teachers. The researcher used this point as a time to compare change over time. After a year of interventions, comparisons made between the mindmaps, SID #1 and #2 yield pre- and post- changes in the reform model. The evaluative interviews were conducted after the second SID was completed. The data from the interviews was used to create a third SID. The three SIDs were compared for changes across all the models.

Finally, to further analyze the micropolitical behavior, deductive and theoretical coding was conducted on the IQAs. This analysis produced the micropolitical behavior analysis. This process provided significant data on micropolitical behaviors of teachers.

The IQA method was used in the past to provide organizations with significant decision-making data. An additional benefit of this study is the evidence that IQA has a strong team-building element (Northcutt & Miles et al, 1998). In a faculty-led reform, working as a team offered a new challenge for teachers who normally do not work together as a group.

After a year of developmental work, interviews were conducted to gather analytical data. The researcher evaluated the progress made toward achieving the reform goals while evaluating the micropolitical behaviors and their impact on the process. The data was gleaned from all the compiled data: the IQA focus groups, observed behaviors, and teacher interviews. Three lenses were used to evaluate the data; first the data was observed inductively for the emergent micropolitical behaviors of the teachers; then it was deductively coded to discover the meaning of the identified behaviors and, finally, it was theoretically coded or analyzed to look for relationships. Three SIDs (mindmaps) gave a greater opportunity to determine the differences or similarities in micropolitical behaviors among teachers as they progressed through the reform.

### **Length of the Study**

The study has taken over a year to complete due to the action research design using a pre- and post- administration of the IQA. The reform initiatives were administered throughout the year as teachers continued to be involved in the planning and participation in workshops designed to address the need to increase student achievement. After the second IQA was administered, a thorough analysis and evaluation of the action research with a third IQA and the added implications of the micropolitical behaviors was conducted. A shorter study might not have enabled the rapport between the teachers, principal and the researcher to develop.

### **Data Collection**

#### **Instrumentation**

Patton (1990) describes the primary instrument in most qualitative studies as the researcher. The researcher has the advantage of interpreting and responding to interactions with the subjects. This ability to instantly process information enables the researcher to ask further probing questions in an interview and get clarification and feedback on ideas presented (Lincoln & Guba, 1985)

Furthermore, the researcher is known to all in the study, participating as a facilitator in some activities, or as an observer in others. The researcher is qualified to be a researcher-instrument because of the professional experience as an educator at the elementary level, and as an instructional designer with experience in strategic change.

The researcher knows, from prior experience how to work with adults to ease them through the change process, and understands the complexities of working in a bureaucracy. The researcher understands the role of the teachers, and has built a rapport with them. This rapport was critical to evaluating the research.

### **Interviews**

Yin states that in data gathering for research, the interview is the most important source of information (1989). Therefore, interviews with open-ended questions were used as a primary method of data collection. Interviews were planned so the researcher could evaluate the teachers' perceived opinions of the effectiveness of the reform efforts. It is important to discover whether teachers felt that their voices were heard in the reform process, that progress was being made, and that the research efforts were effective.

After the first year, it was important to conduct interviews to gain the perceptions of those who experienced the research effort to learn about the changes in their school over time. Because the research was ongoing, the plan had to meet the teachers' needs at all times. The instruments were set to measure the perceptions of teachers at the onset of the research, during the research, and finally, after a year had passed to measure any change in their perceptions. (See appendix B for the interview instrument.)

Additionally, the interviews gauged the perceived effectiveness of the faculty-led school reform. The interviews revealed the thick or in depth description (Patton, 1990) behind the micropolitical behaviors in the school. Thirteen final interviews were conducted across a wide variety of participants including the teachers of varying experience, skills type, demographics, and grade levels. The administrators were involved only peripherally in the reform project because the teachers stated that they would not be comfortable speaking openly in a focus group with the administrators present. The principal agreed early on to support the teachers as leaders in their change effort.

### **Participant Observation**

The second method of data gathering was the use of participant observations. The researcher was in a unique role as facilitator in the teacher development workshops and a participant/observer in the many committee and faculty meetings as observations were gleaned from both large and small group interactions. Each opportunity offered a new perspective and an additional opportunity to build rapport.

### **Field Notes**

“...Field notes offer subtle and complex understandings of these others’ lives, routines and meanings,” (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995). The researcher kept a log of field notes throughout the study describing participant observations. This form of record

keeping added details that might be missed when writing a report much later. The teachers and the researcher had access to electronic mail and elicited informal responses in the form of correspondence through electronic mail that was added to the field notes.

### **Data Analysis**

Qualitative research methodology collects and organizes text or other non-numerical data. Coding is the acceptable method chosen by qualitative researchers to sort and organize data. The IQA uses three types of coding, inductive, deductive, and theoretical which are explained more fully below. In this study all three types of coding was used. What was unique in this methodology was the additional dimension offered by using three different lenses to study the same data.

The first lens was used to look at the data for micropolitical behaviors using inductive and deductive coding. The second pass at the same data but through a different lens looked for cause and effect relationships or theoretical coding. A third lens examined the interview data for the description of changes the teachers said they experienced during the school reform study. In the interviews, the teachers described the micropolitical activities that they planned and implemented. This was the first time an IQA was used to evaluate data in this manner.

### **Inductive Coding**



Inductive coding is also called emergent coding. In this study for example, the IQA process provided baseline data which emerged when the participants were questioned about what specific factors were found in a school reform effort. Using the nominal group technique, the investigator provided the group with a means to explore their answers. When participants were asked to write their factors on cards and hang them on the wall, the participants studied the cards and began to see common themes emerge from the data. The participants were asked to sort and code the factor groupings with new labels. The participants sorted and resorted the cards until the whole group agreed on the order of the factors and their group labels. If agreement among the group became difficult, then multi-voting--the method of giving participants a small number of votes to choose from among the categories—was used to allow for a democratic resolution to gain consensus (Northcutt & Miles et al, 1998).

### **Deductive Coding**

The use of deductive coding was necessary for participants to sort the codes at a secondary level when asked the same question, ‘What are the factors?’ As participants shuffled and reorganized the cards on the wall, they looked for sub-factors for their groupings. As they looked at the meanings, they sorted the cards in a hierarchical manner. The data was then placed into an factor diagram that simply sorted the answers by themes. One thematic heading became an factor; the remainder of the group formed the sub-factors (ibid).

### **Theoretical Coding**

Theoretical coding answered the question, ‘How do the factors relate to one another?’ Based on the factors identified in the nominal group technique, participants were asked to create if/then statements, i.e., if (statement about factor a) /then (statement about factor b). The group had to agree on the statement before it was adopted. The use of if/then statements helped the participants discover the causal relationships between factors. An Interrelationship Diagraph (IRD) was drawn from the statements using arrows indicating directional influence of the factors. This was repeated until all factors were studied for influence. The results were graphically tabulated in Tables 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3 illustrating which factor had the strongest and the weakest influence. Different degrees of influence were also indicated within Tables 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3. The data was then pulled from Tables 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3 and labeled as the

strongest influence as the drivers and the weakest as the outcomes with subcategories of primary and secondary labels in between (ibid).

The drivers and outcomes were mapped in the System Influence Diagram (SID). The SID model exhibited a blueprint of the group perceptions of the relationship of the identified factors. This method was useful for building a model of an existing system that was generally too ambiguous for participants to describe unaided.

After all of the interviews were collected, an IQA was conducted on the interview data providing a third lens from which to study the data. This third lens revealed how participants connected the micropolitical behaviors in a perceived causal sense. This theoretical data analysis revealed the links between the perceptions of the teachers and the changes they experienced in the reform project.

### **Standards for Qualitative Research**

Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommend that qualitative studies have the criteria of credibility, transferability, and dependability.

#### **Credibility**

The case study examines a single site but the method built credibility by accessing multiple sources of data. There were approximately 30 full-time and 20 part-time teachers on staff at Central, which allowed for many opportunities to expand the data collection. Observations, interviews, document reviews were triangulated to

strengthen the credibility and validity of the research (Patton, 1990). Marshall and Rossman state, “the goal of credibility is to demonstrate that the inquiry was conducted in such a manner as to ensure that the subject was accurately identified and described” (1999, p. 192). Results of the qualitative data will be analyzed and triangulated for common themes and findings across the research. Other validity checks include prolonged engagement, member checking of interview transcripts for clarification and verification, and the use of rich, thick descriptions (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Creswell as cited in Glesne, 1999).

### **Transferability**

In quantitative studies, external validity supports the researcher when making broad relationships about the research findings. External validity can come from randomness built into a study. But in qualitative research, external validity is not always possible. In qualitative research, people and settings are rarely chosen at random. In this case, the school and its participants were not randomly chosen. In qualitative studies, transferability rather than external validity refers to the ability of the findings to be generalizable from one situation to other similar situations. Therefore, the responsibility for making the transfer applicable between studies is that of the researcher’s (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Marshall and Rossman, 1999).

In this case study, the researcher in conjunction with the teachers, developed a theory of reform that was proven to be effective academically. Studying the elements of

the micropolitics at Central helped identify what the teachers perceived to be their needs in order for them to successfully increase student academic scores. The researcher believes that the ensuing grounded theory model is transferable to other schools that wish to employ the same strategies for reform.

### **Dependability**

It is important to establish dependability in a qualitative research study, therefore, records and notes must be kept in a conscientious and systematic manner. Yin (1989) recommends that an audit trail be kept including database files, data strips for developing codes, original field notes, transcripts, audio recordings, analysis summaries, etc. Another benefit to good record keeping is the opportunity to cross reference the data for recurring patterns that converge into meaningful categories (Patton, 1990).

### **Summary**

In most organizations, when a change is requested from senior leaders, key stakeholders at the front lines do not have the opportunity to share in strategy development and strategy implementation; therefore, accomplishment of the desired organizational change is weak, at best. By combining two methodologies for change, the research has a strong base from which to build its strategies. This study evaluated the effectiveness of the reform as well as change over time using observations and

interviews of the faculty to gather qualitative data. The effects of a faculty-led school reform on teachers, students, and on school policies and procedures will be described in the next chapter. The project identified the factors that facilitate a faculty-led school reform and to identified the barriers that impede progress. This study helped to determine whether the success or failure of the faculty-led reform effort to increase student achievement could be correlated to the micropolitical behaviors of the faculty and administration of Central Elementary School.

In Chapter IV, the researcher will describe the results of the analysis.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **FINDINGS**

#### **Overview**

The findings of this study are the result of observing and analyzing micropolitical behaviors of teachers during the design, development, and implementation of a faculty-led school reform. Using an Interactive Qualitative Analysis (IQA) process, the teachers thoroughly analyzed their everyday working environment, and then constructed a new model of their ideal working environment. The deconstructing/reconstructing technique enabled the teachers to identify the resources and structures needed to raise the academic achievement of their students. This process ultimately enabled the teachers to create a model for academic improvement that was designed to meet their specific needs at Central Elementary School. The IQA methodology provided the basis for developing a grounded theory of reform. When the teachers became involved in the construction of a new model, action research at the campus level was begun.

The focus of this study was on the micropolitical activity that occurred during the design, development, and implementation of the faculty-led school reform during a year of research with the teachers. The IQA process created ample opportunities for micropolitical activity to surface. Micropolitical activity was observed at the

organizational and the program development levels during various school meetings and the workshops.

### **Introduction**

This study identified how the micropolitical interplay of the teachers provided the parameters for an effective faculty-led school reform. The factors, which affected the faculty-led reform both positively and negatively, are identified in the analysis. Finally, the study looked at how applying change in a faculty-led school reform affects teachers and the school's policies and procedures. Analysis of the data answers the following research questions:

1. How does the micropolitics of faculty-led school reform get played out in the school setting?
2. How does faculty-led school reform affect teachers and a school's policies and procedures?
3. What factors facilitate and impede faculty-led reform in a school setting?

### **Data Analysis**

The study began with the first workshop and followed a four-phased approach that seemed to be the most logical way to demonstrate changes in the micropolitical behavior of the teachers as they experienced school leadership for the first time when



designing, developing and implementing their faculty-led school reform. The study was described chronologically because it helped identify the grounded theory as it emerged from the data. The data description begins with an initial meeting of the principal, the research team, and the staff, and continues with goal setting using the IQA technique.

The IQA approach was used to collect, code, and analyze data. It produced the focus group factors and later the interview protocol (see Appendix B). Other outcomes included the interrelationship diagraphs (IRD), which is a table that displays the influence of the factors on one another. This data is used to construct the evaluative systems influence diagrams (SID). The SID (mindmap) displays the relationships among the factors in a flowchart. Using these tools, the participants learned to identify their ideal working environments. That was the beginning of Phase I. Each phase with an IQA was analyzed deductively, theoretically, and once again for micropolitical behaviors.

In Phase II, the study revolved around the reform implementation and the workshop interventions. The identified micropolitical behaviors were summarized at the end of the section. In Phase III, the study revolved around the analysis of the second IQA process. Phase III provided focus group data in a pre- and post-test design, yielding data from the comparisons of two IQAs. This second IQA marked the endpoint of the research period at Central.

Phase IV, the evaluative phase, involved a third IQA process, which was constructed using the interview data. This methodology offered a verification of the

textual data to the factor analysis of earlier phases. Finally, the data from each of those phases was used to answer the research questions. The first research question was answered by comparing the theoretical codes along with analyzing the action research results. The second question was answered by deductively coding to discover the meaning of the identified behaviors. The third question was answered by examining the theoretical codes or analyzed to look for relationships. The results are described in the section on Research Questions. The summary concludes the chapter.

### **Micropolitical Behaviors in Project Start-Up**

Central Elementary School had a history of little academic improvement over a seven-year time frame. This lack of improvement was indicative of a larger unidentified problem. But the actual problem was illusive. Central had a low teacher turnover rate. This may have indicated that the school had a somewhat congenial work environment, which might be enough to eliminate teacher unhappiness as the cause for lack of improvement.

Further, the problem didn't seem to be caused by the lack of talented or uncaring teachers; there was observable concern and talent exhibited by the teachers. The principal had been there for 17 years during which time the school had previously been rated well. Perhaps the problem was not attributable to the principal as the teachers suggested. However, despite the many talents and expertise of the teachers and

principal, their attempts to create programs to raise the TAAS scores of their students were unsuccessful.

Therefore, identifying the cause of the school's mediocre TAAS scores was less important than it was desirable to build a school reform that would create an atmosphere for increased learning. The district was beginning to apply pressure for academic improvement, and the staff at Central knew they needed to change. They were willing but they did not know what to change. The teachers said they had tried numerous programs over the years but each failed to improve the students' achievement scores.

Apparently, programs that were previously tried did not have lasting beneficial effects. The research suggests the following reasons for failed programs. Hoyle (1986) explained that school programs are often put into place as a quick fix with new solutions replacing new solutions. People are busy, but in reality no progress is made (ibid). Iannaccone suggested that many conflicts surround issues that are irreconcilable within their own context; therefore, reforms appear to be resolving issues, but in actuality they do not (cited in Scribner & Layton, 1995). School reform, it appears, needs something more than a good program to become a lasting and effective reform. The researcher suggested that a cultural change was needed. The researcher was able to provide a view of Central's existing culture when describing the behavior of the teachers during the introductory meeting.

### **School Meetings**

Initially, when the research team and the principal met the faculty at a staff meeting to inform them of the Principal's proposed plan to involve the research team to help the teachers increase student achievement, many of the teachers' eyes literally rolled back in their heads. Some teachers openly welcomed the opportunity, but others became increasingly vocal in opposition to another interruption at their school. They explained, from prior experience, they were "fed up" with being the "guinea pigs" of failed academic programs. The thought that the research team was offering another "flavor-of-the-month program that-always-fails" upset them.

The teachers' reactions included negative remarks about "stealing" their time, and "why bother, nothing ever changes," and pointed to other programs where a lack of commitment led to failed efforts and were ultimately considered a waste of time. One teacher summed up their thoughts, which was the defining crux of this research initiative, when she stated, "I don't mean to offend you, but we [the teachers] didn't invite you to help us. The principal invited you."

At Central, the principal and the research team were surprised by the teachers' reactions. An assumption had been made that the teachers would welcome an opportunity to work on improving the achievement scores. They had agreed they wanted academic improvement but the teachers felt it was the administrator's responsibility to come up with the improvement, not something they had to do by giving up their time. It was obvious that the principal's goals, the organizational goals,

and the individual goals of the teachers were not in alignment. The researcher recognized that the teachers needed to come to terms with this new idea and responded by first acknowledging the teachers concerns.

The research team agreed with the faculty, “It’s true. You didn’t invite us.” The research team then expressed the desire to help them with the project idea, preferring to be invited by both the principal and the faculty to do the project. The research team proposed to meet them on their terms and allow them to determine the path of the reform effort since they were the ones who knew the school best. The research team asked the faculty to please consider the proposition, and to make a decision to either proceed or not proceed with the proposed project. Before leaving the research team agreed to return if the faculty decided the project was what the faculty wanted.

The research team headed out of the building to encourage unrestricted discussion before the teachers took a vote to decide on whether to work with the research team on an improvement plan. The research team left the building to avoid interference with this democratic process. The research team was told that within minutes, there was a vote of 93% *for* the project. The research team was invited back with a near unanimous vote.

This vote indicated the teachers’ strong commitment to learn how to improve their school. It was at this point that the proposed project became a faculty-led school reform project. Further, it defined the moment when the emerging factor of micropolitics in schools became critical to this research.

The teachers knew from prior experience that flavor-of-the-month programs were ineffectual at Central and they, understandably, did not want any more time wasted on similar efforts. The teachers at Central knew that top-down directives to change are not always accepted by the teachers (Meier, 1999; Pettigrew, 1973). Perhaps from their experience, the teachers at Central realized they must have a legitimate role in their school reform for it to be successful. Perhaps it is why they asked to be the final decision-makers on all steps of the reform. They knew they needed buy-in. The vote helped congeal the group. Otherwise, the teachers might have harbored a not-invented-here syndrome that can plague any change effort.

Studies suggest the teachers were right to insist that they be involved in the change effort (Argyris, 1985; Nias, 1989). It is their school, their students, and their time that was going to be affected. The teachers became assertive and insisted that they would agree to the research project if they could have final say on everything in the project as it affected their time and effort. The research team agreed with the approach.

The researcher hypothesized that effective school reforms should meet two criteria: 1) the reform must be specifically designed to meet the needs of the teachers at Central and, 2) the reform must be supported by the teachers who use the program. One way to eliminate the “not-invented-here” syndrome, and to acquire greater buy-in is to increase ownership and responsibility by involving teachers in the actual creation of the reform. Sarason stated that salvation for our schools would come from within not without (cited in Anyon, 1997).

Central teachers and the principal agreed to move beyond the directive, top-down approach to find what was best for them and their students (Boles, 1992; Lieberman and Miller, 1999). To do this, the principal had to move to a role of teacher support, away from the role of control, and empower the teachers to find a creative solution to their school's problems (Frymier, 1987; Moore-Johnson, 1989). In this reform, the principal gave up his authoritative power-over to the teachers and participated in a new role, power-with. He took a back seat and let the teachers run a faculty-led school reform (Blase and Blase, 1994). This was very difficult for a principal working in the same school for 17 years; but he, too, recognized that something different had to happen and he was willing to cooperate with the teacher-led reform.

Goodlad studies showed that the inclusion of teachers in school decisions and choice of certain techniques employed by teachers and principals had a positive effect on students (1984). Other studies have shown that in some low-SES schools, students have outperformed comparable schools, indicating that leadership is key in the success of a school reform (Brookover & Lezotte, 1979; Edmonds, 1979; Venetzky & Winfield, 1979; Weber, 1971). Throughout the school reform, the leadership at Central was being reorganized and tested. The teachers participated in an IQA focus group, which was facilitated by the research team to help them begin planning the reform.

### **Micropolitical Behaviors in Phase I Goal Setting**

When the research team conducted the first IQA, the principal was not invited to attend. The teachers needed to be able to speak freely and would not have spoken freely if the principal were in the room. The teachers' assertiveness was just the beginning of the many micropolitical behaviors observed including: supporting, monitoring, questioning, communicating, rational persuasion, mobilization, and commitment.

In this session, the teachers described Central's many barriers to reform. They began by naming and blaming the administration for the majority of the school's problems. They complained that they were not being treated professionally. They felt they were left out of important planning decisions while uninformed leaders made the decisions for them. They explained they wanted decision-making power and to be included in the management team.

The teachers deconstructed and reconstructed their ideal work environment in the focus groups. Many of the teachers were assertive and expressed not only their needs but what was needed to do a better job of teaching at Central. They were all engaged in the IQA exercise, but some participated more than others. Some still considered this exercise as a waste of their time and minimally cooperated. The rest tried to be supportive even when they felt they were not supported most of the time. Most teachers tried to identify their school's problems but some focused on venting, complaining, blaming and naming.



The teachers tried to move on, enlist cooperation from the group, and became enthusiastic about making the best out of the one opportunity they had to make important changes at Central. Many teachers displayed hope and trust, and they questioned those who were unwilling to commit to a chance to make things better. Those who stayed in the background listened but resisted, stating that change was never going to be possible in this school with this principal. Some thought they knew the principal well and declared, ‘he would just revert back to his old ways in a few days anyway.’ Most felt that the administrator had to be changed for the school to improve. Recognizing that option was not viable since the principal had been there for 17 years, the teachers decided to work together to improve their school’s academic achievement and willingly participated in the IQA procedure.

### **Focus Group IQA #1 Procedure**

On January 2, 2000, approximately 50 faculty and staff members participated in a focus group; this was the starting point of the faculty-led school reform. The participants were asked, “*When you think about the challenge you’ve been given to achieve exemplary status, what comes to mind in terms of what it will take to accomplish this goal? What tools will be needed, what barriers will be faced?*” The participants answered the questions by writing their answers on cards. The information on these cards provided the factors that were organized and sorted for the next step of the IQA, the interrelationship diagraphing (IRD). The grouping and naming process for

the factors was based on three principles including homogeneity, variation, and interpretability.

The cards were hung on the wall, and then the participants again were involved. They were reminded not to speak to each other and, as a group, they were asked to go to the wall and group the cards into like-topic areas. The cards were sorted and re-sorted as each participant took a turn at regrouping the cards. When the card sorting finally settled down indicating some agreement, the participants returned to their seats. There were now about 25 or more categories organized on the wall.

The facilitator then worked with the group to clarify the meaning of the factors in an effort to collapse the 25 categories into fewer but more encompassing categories. It was critical that each card's message be clear. At times, the author of a card was asked to clarify its message. Usually they responded; other times they did not want to own up to being the author leading to supposition of the meaning. The card was placed into the correct category. The participants proceeded through the re-grouping process until they reduced the number of groups to twelve categories. Trust and lack of trust in each other and the administration was obvious in this interaction.

As previously stated, the whole faculty had to be in agreement with the categories and their contents before moving forward. These factors provided the open coding that also served to answer the third research question, 'What factors facilitate and impede faculty-led reform in a school setting?' The 12 factors were:

*Knowledgeable and Effective Leadership, Administrative Support, Teamwork,*

*Curriculum Alignment, Parental Involvement, High Expectations, Student Challenges, Time, Realistic Goals, Teacher Challenges, Resources, and Holistic Learning.*

These categories formed the twelve factors used in the next step of the exercise. More definitive information was needed from the group. If/then statements were used to verbalize the relationships between each of the twelve factors. Systematically, a factor was matched with a second factor, then a third, etc. until all were paired. The participants created if/then statements, which described each of the paired relationships. This process was repeated until every possible factor-to-factor relationship was recorded and described with an if/then statement. In some instances where several if/then statements were created, the one that the faculty supported best was recorded.

The participants were now finished with the data gathering process. The research teams used the results of the focus group to produce the Interrelationship Diagram (IRD) for theoretical (relational) coding. The factors identified by the faculty and their sub-factors are summarized below. The detailed list of sub-factors can be found in Appendix C.

### **Focus Group IQA #1 Deductive Coding Summary**

#### **1. Knowledgeable/Effective Leadership**

Twenty sub-factors supported the knowledgeable and effective leadership heading. (See Appendix C.) This factor encompassed the teachers' concerns with the leadership practices at Central. The factors expressed the teachers' concern that the

administrators, both at the campus and district levels, were unfamiliar with the day-to-day classroom activities of the teachers, yet they continued to regulate the educational direction of the classrooms with new programs while offering little or no additional support to the teachers.

As a result the teachers were overwhelmed by too many new demands, changes in directions, and little accountability on the administration's part. They also felt their principal should have reacted less emotionally (he sometimes yelled) and should have treated them more professionally. Because of these issues, the teachers felt new leadership was needed at Central. Some expressed the desire to replace the principal. Teachers vented, complained, and expressed that they needed to be treated more professionally.

## 2. Administrative Support

In this factor grouping, the teachers again expressed a desire for more leadership. They felt there was no consistency in the discipline program and asked for a zero tolerance plan. They wanted better overall management. This grouping was supported by 15 sub-factors.

## 3. Teamwork

The teachers expressed a desire to have a strong team among the faculty. This was supported by a desire to have more congeniality, collaboration, unity, and increased communications. A school newsletter was suggested as an attempt to reach others across the school. This factor was supported by 14 sub-factors.

#### 4. Curriculum Alignment

In this factor, the need for curriculum alignment was expressed several times. The teachers desired a curriculum that was vertically aligned and effective. The student needs identified included after-school tutoring and test-taking skills. Seventeen sub-factors were written.

#### 5. Student Challenges

Some teachers expressed their deepest concerns about their lowest performing students. Some believed that for Central Elementary to achieve 'exemplary' status within three years was impossible, given their at-risk student population. (Questions: Is this belief reflected in their teaching to "these" children? Does this outlook conflict with the 'all students can learn' philosophy they espouse?) Other teachers had a more positive approach and wanted to work on achieving exemplary by first increasing the reading levels of their below-level readers. Many teachers voiced student motivation was needed in order for Central to become exemplary. Conversely, teacher motivation was only referenced once in the list of 19 sub-factors.

#### 6. Parental Involvement

Parental involvement is highly desirable as evidenced by 26 teachers' opinions in the sub-factors. Suggestions ranged from community involvement to strengthening the mentor program and gaining cooperation from parents. Some expressed the effort as one that required teaming between the parent, student, and teacher and others saw it more globally as needing to build a sense of family/community pride in the school.

## 7. Time

Time was considered most difficult to manage according to 32 references in the sub-factors. Teachers wanted more time to plan and to teach and overall better time management. Planning time was one of the biggest concerns for the teachers as Central.

## 8. High Expectations

Both sides of the high expectations issue were voiced. Some teachers were concerned that the special education population could not perform at high levels. But others believed that all grade levels needed to have higher expectations for their students. One of the five sub-factors stated the important philosophy that “all students can succeed.”

## 9. Realistic Goals

The teachers at Central wanted realistic, attainable goals set for them. They found that some goals set by the administration were too daunting. They questioned their own abilities when they made statements such as, “Is this goal too high for us?” Some were concerned about giving up good teaching skills for rote TAAS preparation. Others were optimistic and suggested that Central needed ‘a good plan’ and it would be nice to be ‘exemplary.’ There were 11 sub-factors in this grouping.

## 10. Teacher Challenges

Teachers do have a lot of challenges. The challenges ranged from making a commitment, to having faith, to being unbiased, to being understanding and having a commitment to their own well-being and endurance. Some felt teachers needed a

morale booster and incentives. These ideas were mentioned on eighteen cards. These teachers agreed that teaching has many challenges.

## 11. Resources

This topic held the most weight in terms of sheer volume of responses. There were 59 responses. These responses indicate the strong motivation for teachers to gain additional resources. The responses reflect the fact that these teachers have often had to make do with the limited resources allotted at Central. They indicated in their responses that they also wanted to learn how to teach at-risk and diverse populations of children. They wanted content mastery resources, more books, teaching materials, computers, teacher aides, smaller classes, and more support for struggling students and teachers. The responses indicate the teachers believed they could deliver a better quality education if these needs were met.

## 12. Holistic Learning

Teachers support holistic learning because they want their students to become life-long learners and to become thinkers. They wanted less of teaching-to-the-test for TAAS because the teachers believed that whole learning wasn't just about TAAS. Eight sub-factors supported this category of holistic learning.

The teachers believed that, if the 12 factors they identified, *Knowledgeable and Effective leadership, Administrative Support, Teamwork, Curriculum Alignment, Parental Involvement, High Expectations, Student Challenges, Time, Realistic Goals, Teacher Challenges, Resources and Holistic Learning*, were properly managed and

controlled at Central Elementary, then they would experience a successful school reform. The teachers believed the lack of control in these identified areas actually impeded progress. The teachers hypothesized in the first SID (mindmap) that if a school district could meet all of their needs, their students would experience gains in academic achievement.

### **Focus Group IQA #1 Theoretical Coding Summary**

When relationships between factors are described, it is called theoretical coding. When the focus group describes relationships between factors using if/then statements, this is also a form of theoretical coding. This exercise helps to determine whether each factor is *influencing* other factors or is *impacted by* other factors. Open and deductive coding is used to address the categories or factors of the data. Theoretical coding and action research were used to answer the second research question, “How does faculty-led school reform affect teachers and a school’s policies and procedures?” Adding the dimensions of observations and interviews helped to answer research question #1, “How does the micropolitics of faculty-led school reform get played out in the school setting?”

At Central, the ideas generated in the first SID model created the ideal teaching arrangement for teachers. It provided the groundwork for a direction for change. During the process, the focus group participants were asked to find the relationships between each factor pair. They were asked to construct an If/Then statement and draw an arrow



from the cause to the effect. Each theoretical if/then statement is recorded but only one hypothesis, which best captures the nature of the relationship, is kept. Participants must reach group consensus on these statements; sometimes this requires the use of the multi-voting technique. An arrow showing the direction of the influence represents the relationship between the factors. These are captured in Table 4.1.

Each kept hypothesis is then charted as an arrow in a table. Column one identifies the item number of the factor. Both column two and the header row identify the twelve factors. The arrows display the direction of influence of one factor towards another factor, which corresponds to the hypothesis. An upwards-pointing arrow in a row indicates the factor identified in the left column of that row *influences* the factor found above the arrow in the header row. This is recorded as an IN arrow. When the arrow faces left, it is because the factor found in the left column is *influenced by* the factor found above the arrow in the header row. This is recorded as an Out arrow. Two columns follow the charted arrows in the table. Each displays the totals of each type of IN or OUT arrows found in a row. In the final column an evaluation of the delta of these IN and OUT arrows is displayed. See Table 4.1.

A mathematical evaluation of each factor determined the placement of the factor in Figure 4.1. The factors with the most number of out arrows became the primary drivers. The factors with the most number of arrows pointing in towards the factor determined primary outcomes. The factors whose arrows were shown to be a mixture of both in and out directions determined intermediary factors.

The mathematical evaluation of the delta of the arrows determined the factor placement as a primary driver, intermediary driver, a primary outcome or an intermediary factor. Simply speaking, the factors in the row with the most number of arrows pointing up, became the primary drivers, see the column marked OUT. Those factors with the most number of arrows pointing left, became the primary outcomes, see the column marked IN. Those factors whose arrows were shown to be a mixture of both *up and left* directions determined the intermediary factors. The blank cells indicate no relationship.

Primary drivers influence all other factors. They have only OUT arrows and no IN arrows. See item 1 in the second row, Knowledgeable and Effective Leadership (LD), this is the primary driver.

The delta of factors is found in the last column. The deltas with positive numbers such as item numbers two, Administrative Support (AS) and three, Teamwork (TW) become the intermediary drivers. Intermediary drivers are infinities that are influenced by primary drivers. Intermediary drivers influence factors that have a lower mathematical value such as those intermediary factors and the primary outcomes.

These data are used to create the focus group Systems Influence Diagram (SID) or mindmap. The SID identifies the patterns of influence or causation among the factors in the system (Northcutt et al, 1998). See Figure 4.1 for the first SID, which was developed from the first IQA with Central Elementary teachers and staff.

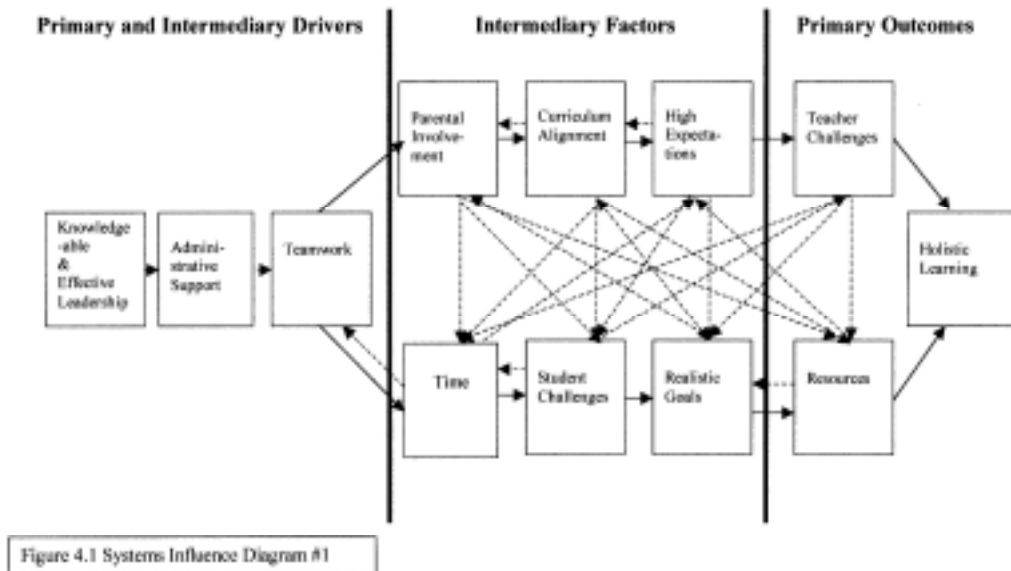
Table 4.1 Tabular Interrelational Diagram for the Focus Group

**LEGEND**

<b>HE</b>	<b>High Expectations</b>
<b>LD</b>	<b>Knowledgeable and Effective Leadership</b>
<b>PI</b>	<b>Parent Involvement</b>
<b>TW</b>	<b>Teamwork</b>
<b>CA</b>	<b>Curriculum Alignment</b>
<b>RG</b>	<b>Realistic Goals</b>
<b>TC</b>	<b>Teacher Challenges</b>
<b>SC</b>	<b>Student Challenges</b>
<b>R</b>	<b>Resources</b>
<b>T</b>	<b>Time</b>
<b>AS</b>	<b>Administrative Support</b>
<b>HL</b>	<b>Holistic Learning</b>

		<b>HE</b>	<b>LD</b>	<b>PI</b>	<b>TW</b>	<b>CA</b>	<b>RG</b>	<b>TC</b>	<b>SC</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>AS</b>	<b>HL</b>	<b>IN</b>	<b>OUT</b>	<b>Δ</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>HE</b>		←	←	←	↑	↑	↑	↑	←	←	←	←	7	4	-3
<b>1</b>	<b>LD</b>	↑		↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	0	11	11
<b>4</b>	<b>PI</b>	↑	←		←	←	←	↑	↑	↑	↑	←	↑	5	6	1
<b>3</b>	<b>TW</b>	↑	←	↑		↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	←	←	↑	3	8	5
<b>6</b>	<b>CA</b>	←	←	↑	←		←	↑	↑	↑	←	←	↑	6	5	-1
<b>9</b>	<b>RG</b>	←	←	↑	←	↑		←	←	↑	←	←	↑	7	4	-3
<b>10</b>	<b>TC</b>	←	←	←	←	←	↑		←	↑	↑	←	↑	8	3	-5
<b>7</b>	<b>SC</b>	←	←	←	←	←	↑	↑		↑	↑	←	↑	6	5	-1
<b>11</b>	<b>R</b>	↑	←	←	←	←	←	↑	←		←	←	↑	8	3	-5
<b>5</b>	<b>T</b>	↑	←	←	↑	↑	↑	←	←	↑		←	↑	5	6	1
<b>2</b>	<b>AS</b>	↑	←	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑		↑	1	10	9
<b>12</b>	<b>HL</b>	↑	←	←	←	←	←	←	←	←	←	←		10	1	-9

**Systems Influence Diagram #1 Model for Increasing Student Academic Achievement**



**Micropolitical Behavior Summary:**

The SID in figure 4.1 depicts the following hypothesis: Central teachers believe that if they had knowledgeable and effective leadership as well as administrative support, the teachers would work as a team to overcome the intermediary factors and ultimately better manage resources and teacher challenges so that their students would experience holistic learning (and increased academic achievement). The solid arrows represent positive relationships between drivers and outcomes. The SID illustrates the focus group’s interpretation of factor cause and effect. The dotted line arrows represent a negative direction of influence. There are recursive or feedback loops evident in this

model. They are loops formed by combining forward-moving arrows with dotted-line arrows, which proceed back through two or more boxes forming a circular flow or a loop in some of the boxes. The few in this model can explain an emotional or other response to the negative relationships between factors.

When a loop is formed in a negative feedback loop, the dilemma can distract teachers. Note the loop that formed beginning with the teamwork box. Follow the solid arrow to the parent involvement box. Now follow the dotted-line arrow down to the time box and again follow the dotted-line arrow back to the teamwork box. A readily recognized dilemma emerges. Teachers will tell you that if they had teamwork, they would have more parental involvement and, in turn, have more time. Conversely, they will tell you that if they had more time, they would be able to create more teamwork and elicit more parent involvement. In fact, they could tell you that if they had more parent involvement, they would have more time and be able to form teams.

The importance of the recursive loops is not so much what they mean, but what one does to break out of the loop to move on. Teachers who get distracted by the loop may not be able to get out of it without some intervention. The research team assisted the teachers to look for ways to move on beyond the loops.

Looking at the primary driver, factor #1, *Knowledgeable and Effective Leadership*, the teachers in the focus group suggested that if their leaders were more in tune with the daily operations of a teacher, they would be more effective at guiding them through the many changes and challenges that they continuously face.

The second intermediary driver, factor #2, *Administrative Support*, indicated that the teachers felt they were not being supported in their jobs. Combining leadership with administrative support, the teachers indicated this solid foundation was necessary for everything else they do in their job. The third intermediary driver, factor #3, *Teamwork*, clearly indicates that the teachers, who generally work in isolation in their classroom, prefer to have some contact with each other to share skills and to learn from one another.

In the next grouping, six intermediary factors are identified. The fourth factor is *parental involvement*. If the teachers had been able to establish a reform that gave them good leadership, administrative support, and teamwork, it would be logical to include the parents as part of the team. The fifth factor, *Time*, is the one item teachers feel they have no control over. They feel that mundane tasks takes time away from planning and teaching. It is no surprise that they feel if they could eliminate the mundane tasks that are required of them, they would be able to teach more lessons in the classroom.

The sixth factor, *Curriculum Alignment*, supports this belief. If the teachers were able to share skills, they would also be able to compare and correct gaps in their curriculum within their school from grade to grade both vertically and horizontally. Factor #7, student challenges, having equal weight with the previous factor, is of particular interest to teachers who want to know the best way to help their students who are performing at the lowest levels. Factors eight and nine, *High Expectations* and *Realistic Goals*, are two closely-related factors. Teachers want to have high

expectations but realize that realistic goals must be set for students who are performing at low levels when considering limited resources and support.

The primary outcomes include three factors because the data found they are greatly influenced by the other factors. They include *Teachers Challenges*, *Resources*, and *Holistic Learning*. Each of these three factors was shown to influence factors on an occasion. Therefore none of these factor analyses were as solid as that of the primary driver where there were only *influencing* and no *influenced by* factors in the equation. Therefore the three of these factors are considered to be primary outcomes because mathematically in the data analysis, they are weighted in very close proximity to one another. The message the teachers convey is that if all of the previous factor issues, those in the primary and intermediary driver group and the intermediary factors were resolved then all three outcomes would benefit from the changes.

Factor #10, *Teacher Challenges*, includes many of the teachers concerns over the problems of their students, the lack of parental support they receive, and the added responsibilities given to teachers that take away from teaching time.

Factor #11, *Resources*, could also be considered a teacher challenge since the request for resources is often turned down and teachers find they have to struggle to supplement their class materials with personal resources. The final outcome is factor #12, *Holistic Learning*. The teachers suggested that if they were able to accomplish

school reform by addressing the identified issues, holistic learning would be a natural outcome.

The teachers worked very hard during the IQA session. The process required a full 8-hour workday but the process was condensed to fit the school's agenda and was completed in six hours. It was a paid staff development day. All the teachers were required to be present. It was grueling work, but they persevered and got through it despite the time crunch. Some teachers thought the workshop would not apply to them so they gave a half-hearted effort; others saw the opportunity to change and put a lot of work into the process. The micropolitical behaviors observed during this workday included: *assertiveness, communicating, supporting, mobilization, and commitment*. More specifically, the observations included: *venting, questioning, decision-making, supporting, cooperation, enthusiasm, complaining, fully-engaging, blaming and naming, problem identifying, complaining, trusting, unwillingness to trust, wanting change, goal setting, wanting curriculum alignment, compliance, not all committed, resisting, and holding back and not contributing*.

### **Micropolitical Behaviors in Phase II: Reform Planning and Implementation**

In Phase II, the reform took shape and change began at Central. At an IQA follow-up faculty meeting, the teachers were presented with the completed SID model. Using this mindmap as a guide, the teachers devised an action plan. The teachers used the SID model to determine which factors needed to be addressed to move toward



achieving their goal to increase student achievement. The model showed three Primary and Intermediary Drivers in descending order as identified in the data analysis: Knowledgeable/Effective Leadership, Administrative Support, and Teamwork. The Intermediary Factors were Parental Involvement, Time, Curriculum Alignment, Student Challenges, High Expectations, and Realistic Goals. Finally, the Primary Outcomes were Teacher Challenges, Resources, and Holistic Learning.

The faculty agreed that the model correctly reflected their concerns and the problems at Central. After asking clarifying questions, the faculty consented to follow the model they had collaboratively devised for reform at Central. They promised to stay committed to the project providing they could continue to have final approval in the ongoing process.

The facilitator presented the results of the faculty-driven data and suggested that teachers should focus first on the primary and intermediary drivers-- Knowledgeable/Effective Leadership, Administrative Support, and Teamwork. The diagram offered a direction in which to begin to create a plan of action. The teachers felt the drivers needed to be well developed before addressing the remaining factors.

They agreed to work on leadership and teambuilding to achieve their desired outcome of increasing the academic achievement at Central. Although the teachers did not all believe it could happen, they adopted the push for excellence so that the school could become “exemplary” by the state’s standard in three years. As Central developed strategic plans to address each factor or factor in the performance improvement system,

the faculty would continuously reflect on the details of each factor to stay true to the course of action. With the teachers' approval, the researcher developed and facilitated the Leadership and Teambuilding Workshop.

People began to buy-in to the project once they had an understanding of their issues as provided by the SID. The teachers were still not all committed to the reform; however those who were not supportive before began to see the value in the process. There was one cohort that was very excited about the prospect of change and they were extremely supportive; many of the school leaders were in this group. These teachers told the researcher that there was a negative contingency that was holding back and being less than supportive, but that they were clearly outnumbered. The activists regarded them as "always negative about everything" so they just decided to move ahead with developing a plan for reform.

The behaviors seen in this phase included: assertiveness, questioning, supporting, cooperation, enthusiasm, wanting change, positive attitude, goal setting, compliance, not all committed, resistance, fully engaged, hanging back, forming cohorts, curriculum alignment, blaming and naming, identify problems, complaining, some trust, and some lack of trust. They were categorized as assertiveness, supporting, commitment, mobilization and communicating.

### **Leadership and Teambuilding Workshop.**

One of the teachers found a church that was willing to donate space for the workshop on leadership and teambuilding. The workshop was arranged on a faculty development day in February. It was scheduled six months after the school year began. The workshop involved teachers participating in a series of teambuilding exercises that got progressively more difficult and challenging. The teambuilding exercises were interspersed with lessons on leadership, building trust, and teambuilding.

Some barriers were uncovered that day. The researcher found that the core group of thirty teachers in attendance did not know each other's name. It was easy to understand, knowing that classrooms were clearly separated and teachers did not have time to visit. But it seemed that six months was much too long for this relatively small group of teachers not to know each other by name as they met at least monthly at faculty meetings.

Barriers were removed as people took advantage of the opportunity to get to know one another as they participated in the teaming and leadership activities. Teachers had long held that educational problems experienced at Central were due to a lack of administrative leadership, particularly on the part of the principal. The teachers admitted that they had always thought they could not question administrator or district decisions. Despite their past experience, and the belief that leadership had to be top-down, the teachers learned that they could take on shared leadership and participate in many decisions in the school. They learned that they shared many of the same concerns

with other teachers at Central. They decided that if they wanted improvement, their voices had to be heard and they had to participate in the reform.

In the workshop, they began to develop trust and learned that they could count on each other, as well as themselves, to make changes. One teacher summed it up, “I just felt like all of a sudden, the faculty’s eyes were opened and we finally thought, ‘oh, my gosh, there are possibilities here,’ when before people were just content and just sat back because that’s what we thought; that was the way it was supposed to be.” Another teacher stated:

Now, I talk to Kindergarten teachers I never would have talked to. I really gained a lot of respect for the faculty the day of the cards. I thought, ‘What in the world are you fools doing here for all of these years?’ And now I know; they love the kids, and they love their job, and they’re willing to put up with whatever else there is, to do what they love to do. And so, in that respect, I gained a whole lot of respect for them.

This particular teacher expressed that day what she felt the other teachers’ attitudes and feelings were at Central. One teacher said about the teachers, “I don’t know that we’re a nice fuzzy warm environment, but we are a pretty tight family here.”

In this workshop, teachers were asked what they wanted from the researcher. Some stated they wanted to be better informed about the latest educational research ideas and thought the researcher could be a resource for that. One way to do that was to invite graduate students who were enrolled in educational administrator programs to

work with the teachers. It was a mutually beneficial idea. The teachers later decided to invite the students from a university research class to meet with them to discuss the latest research findings.

A discovery in that workshop was the fact the teachers' were unable to agree on a single definition of the word "exemplary," the state's goal for their school. Another key outcome of the workshop was the consensus that better communication was needed. In keeping with the faculty-led decision-making concept, the group voted on and planned for a communications workshop for the next teacher development session. The researcher developed and facilitated the workshop according to the faculty's specifications.

The observed behaviors ran the gamut of micropolitical behaviors in this workshop. There was cooperation and support in abundance; there were those who were uncooperative. A small group spoke in negative undertones, low enough not to be heard by the facilitator, but loud enough to bother those sitting in the same vicinity. This was reported to the researcher by some of the attendees privately. The principal and assistant principal attended which affected the interaction. There were three teambuilding activities in this program. The first two ran smoothly. The third exercise had an unexpected turn of events.

In the *Save the Children* exercise, teams were deliberately given inadequate supplies and were assigned to build a bridge to cross the river to save the dying children on the other side. They were supposed to team build and figure out how to join forces.

This exercise actually has a strong relationship to actual practice but in order for teachers not to readily recognize the solution, it was deliberately set in the jungle and outside of their area of familiarity.

In schools, teachers share resources everyday, but when the teachers were assigned to work in a new environment, on the edge of the Amazon River, the teachers missed the connection. When the exercise became difficult, one team “committed suicide” and chose to abandon the exercise by jumping in the river. They had been warned about the schools of piranha swimming in the waters, but they jumped anyway. In this suicidal group were the assistant principal and several model leaders from the faculty. The remaining teams were not happy with the renegade team’s decision to quit. They felt let down.

When this group quit, one member from another group tried to take the suicide team’s resources. They were entitled to them, but another group said that wouldn’t be fair. So one way to solve the problem was shot down by the group. Meanwhile the rest of the teams kept their resources and didn’t share. That was the point where the group failed. The rest of the faculty tried but was unable to figure out the objective within the time limit and the school failed the final exercise of the day.

Just as the exercise got underway, one teacher told the researcher the correct solution. The researcher thought they would figure it out based on his foresight, but he was unable to move the group to work together to complete the exercise successfully.

In the debrief, none of those who quit told the researcher why they chose not to play. However, some teachers stated that they felt the time spent in their private discussion after quitting was extremely valuable. But the teambuilding point was missed. The researcher recognized that Central teachers still desperately needed to learn more about working as a team.

Much later in the interviews, the researcher asked why this team had quit the exercise. At that time a member of the group explained that they considered their private conversation that day to be more important than to work on what they considered a non-relevant exercise in the workshop. Although they felt they had a successful day, this group missed the point that working together is how you solve large problems in a school environment. In an interview later on, a teacher described her behavior and feelings of the day:

Oh ... there you are one more time, you are more of a go-along than an initiator' because really, we thought we could have figured it out. We felt we were absolutely as smart as the other groups of people. And it got back to a conversation that we haven't had, that we wanted to have, because before we had gone outside we had been discussing several issues and our group really wanted to keep on talking. That was part of the suicide pact and we felt that we had made really good use of our time by abandoning the game, but we didn't stay on task, we didn't try...And so we talked about literacy...But truly I think we would have played the game and we were a little disappointed in ourselves,

and I thought, you know, I even saw a possible solution. I didn't say anything and I thought, 'You wimp.'

Prior to going into the communications workshop, and a few weeks after the leadership and teambuilding workshop, a teacher made an interesting comment to the researcher about learning to work together to create change.

We suffered another large detour in our work to make our campus faculty-driven. But thanks (in part) to your help and the work that we did at the January 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting [IQA 1], we as a faculty have decided not to let it slide anymore...I wanted to let you know what is going on for two reasons. One to thank you, if we hadn't heard several times that teamwork is the key to change, I doubt we would have even thought to tackle this from our end instead of waiting for him [principal] to change.

The other reason is I thought you had the right to know what is going on so when you walk in...and the atmosphere is different you will know why...It was only after I had thought about the whole thing for a while that I realized we [faculty] can make the changes ourselves...It goes back to what you said once about people thinking that teamwork is the most important driver for implementing change. I didn't see how that could possibly be true when you said it. But I sure do now.



The micropolitical behaviors observed that day included: *cooperation, questioning, willingness, supporting, disenfranchising, negativity, camaraderie, teaming, venting, leading, breaking away, helping, communicating, bantering, and resistance.*

### **Communications Workshop.**

The communications workshop was brief because of limited time on the part of the teachers. After developing a 3-hour workshop for an after-school session, only two hours were allotted by the principal due to another school conflict; rather than postpone, the teachers agreed to have an abbreviated session.

Upon arrival for delivering the workshop, the researcher was stopped by a couple of teachers who explained that the principal had made the whole faculty angry. They were warning that the teachers were ready to just give up on the reform project because the principal was not willing to let them make decisions as he had promised. The researcher thanked them for the warning.

Walking into the room where many of the teachers were already assembled, the researcher could feel the tension in the room. There was no way this Communications Workshop was going to be heard with the teachers in this angered state. This problem with the teachers had to be addressed immediately, but any chance to have a private conversation with the faculty was precluded by the principal's attendance. The power struggle between the teachers and the principal was out in the open.

The researcher drew on a favorite quote that aptly applied to the change process and wrote it on the board. “If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom and yet deprecate agitation...want crops without plowing up the ground. They want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters” (Frederick Douglass, 1857 as cited in Lieberman and Miller 1999).

This had an immediate calming effect on people. The tension melted away. Many teachers stopped and wrote it down. The researcher explained that, in any change effort, there would be mountains and plateaus. Sometimes you have to stop and negotiate a barrier, but in the end your perseverance pays off. After that the teachers were ready to focus on the agenda at hand. The workshop emphasized listening skills and respect for one another. The teachers expressed their concern over the difficulty of communicating across the school. Many of the teachers came up after the workshop with thanks for sharing the quote saying how that saved the day for them.

A steering committee was created to become the communication tool for keeping the reform project on task, recognizing the difficulty of meeting with the entire faculty every time an idea needed to be discussed. It was agreed that the committee would serve as a two-way mouthpiece for the project. A team was created, paying careful attention to membership equity and access with regard to full representation of grade levels, gender, disciplines, and other demographics.

From this point on, ideas would be brought up at either the faculty or the steering committee meetings, but they would not be approved for implementation until the larger faculty voted. The committee's role was to discuss new ideas, to present them to the rest of the school, and to implement decisions.

Another important outcome was the direct result of the faculty's inability to agree on a definition for "exemplary." The need to write the vision statement became clear. How could individuals in the school expect to unite if the dialogue of their visions is not the same? The teachers determined that the next requirement in the development of their reform plan was to write a clear vision statement. A workshop for developing the vision of the school was agreed upon. The researcher developed the vision-writing workshop and facilitated it within the next two months.

For the most part, the teachers were attentive and learned lessons about communications during this workshop. Teachers tried to get consensus on the word "exemplary" but it was still elusive. There was not enough time for resolution and it was tabled for another workshop, where teachers would write the vision for Central. The workshop still had some resistance displayed in undertones by a small negative coalition of teachers. After the session, a few teachers spoke to the facilitator and asked whether they should try to handle the negative group themselves or not. They decided to wait it out. Behaviors seen that day included: *cooperation, conspiring, questioning, communication, listening, supportive, clarifying, and resisting, no consensus on "school vision," or terminology i.e., "exemplary."*

### **Committee Meetings**

One of the components of the faculty-led design was the formation of a steering committee, which met approximately every two weeks. The researcher attended the meetings as an observer and, at times, was asked to step in as an advisor. At the school meetings, the researcher easily observed the micropolitics at play. As the relationship with the teachers and the researcher grew, greater trust was developed between the faculty, the principal, and the researcher. With the increased trust, teachers would share insights they considered valuable to the researcher when working with the committees. The researcher heard interesting stories that are shared throughout this chapter.

Approximately once a month, the principal held a faculty meeting. When attending meetings, the researcher's role was adapted to the needs of the situations that arose in the meeting. Sometimes the researcher's role was as an observer, sometimes as a presenter, sometimes as a mentor, or sometimes just to help the teachers garner support for a new phase of the research project.

The platform provided an additional opportunity to communicate with the faculty members who did not attend the steering committee meetings on a regular basis. There were many side discussions after the meetings were concluded. The researcher noted many micropolitical interactions during these meetings. The researcher observed who the friends were and who supported various ideas. The researcher also observed coalitions being formed.

Behaviors observed in faculty meetings included: *principal-led, most teachers attending, questioning, supporting, decision-making, consensus building, authoritarian, communicating, bantering, complaining, clarifying, compliance, complacency, and resistance.*

The teachers formed a steering committee and scheduled meetings approximately every two weeks. Volunteers attended the meeting regularly. The curriculum specialists generally conducted the meetings and took notes. The steering committee was diligent about keeping records of the meetings, making transitions to new ideas easy. The meeting was open to anyone who wished to attend. Old and new ideas were welcomed and discussed. The format operated as a sounding board.

The steering committee was the ideal place to present and sort through new ideas to present to the rest of the faculty. Many ideas were eliminated but those that were selected were presented at the next faculty meeting for their consideration. Observed behaviors in these committee meetings included: *leadership, discussing, listening, considering, questioning, support, and cooperative.*

### **Graduate Student/Teacher Research Teams**

Graduate students in a *School Restructuring and Renewal* class at the University were invited to work with the Central Elementary staff. The students accepted the faculty's invitation and took Central on as part of their class project. To guide the project, the researcher asked the teachers what were the specific topics they had most

interest in having researched. A list was compiled and sorted into like categories by the teachers. The professors<sup>6</sup> of the class used the IQA factors to develop a table. Using the table as a guide, they condensed the teachers' list into five categories, which related to the factors: *Restructuring and Organizing for High Student Performance, Parental Involvement and Collaboration, Student Discipline and Behavior, Leadership and Governance and Culturally Relevant Curriculum*. The graduate students were asked to form five research teams under the identified categories and work with the teachers. The teachers signed on with the team where they had the most interest. Some teachers were so enthusiastic, they signed up to work with more than one team.

The students were asked to compile the research materials with executive summaries into five topic-specific notebooks to be given to the school as a resource. These notebooks were circulated amongst the teachers so everyone had access to all of the reading materials. They discussed the materials and shared their insights with their teams.

One of the professors wanted his students to be more involved with the school and asked the principal if his graduate students could hold their class sessions in the Central Elementary building. The students were because it gave student members of the team the exposure to the working of a school during the school day; it provided greater

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<sup>6</sup> Drs. Terry Clark and Lonnie Wagstaff were the professors in the *School Restructuring and Renewal* class.

access to the team members; and it provided an open invitation for the teachers to participate in the class anytime they were able to attend. This arrangement strengthened relationships between teachers, and the research team, the students, and the professor.

It was a mutually beneficial arrangement. The teachers were exposed to the graduate students who for the most part were studying to be educational administrators. The teachers learned something about the administrators' perspective of teachers in schools. The students gained on-site experience as they witnessed the inner working of the school while learning from the teachers about a typical school day. This experience helped them to gain a healthy perspective of their careers as administrators and underscored the need to incorporate teachers' opinions when setting administrative policies in the future. This team arrangement worked so well that the teachers invited the graduate student teams to help the teachers write their campus improvement plans.

The teachers worked in groups and were cooperative. Because the teachers were working in areas of their choice, they were fully engaged in the project. Some teachers felt they did not have ample time to do the reading and were happy to see the executive summaries provided for them. Others made the time to read because the subject matter was important to them. Observed behaviors included: *supportive, cooperative, teaming, engaged, learning, attentive, and a positive attitude.*

## **Campus Improvement Plans**

Historically, the teachers were not involved in writing the campus improvement plan (CIP). Occasionally a teacher or two might be invited to help the principal write the plan therefore the teachers never seriously considered the CIP as the school's plan because in reality it was not *their* plan. Prior to this experience, the job of writing a campus improvement plan was callously regarded by the teachers, and considered to be busy work. It was regarded as one of those unpleasant but necessary tasks required to satisfy the school district's initiatives. The attitude of the teachers toward the CIP generally was that no one would seriously follow it through and that their approach would simply be executed lip service.

The principal offered the task to the faculty as he regarded the faculty-led plan seriously. For the first time, the CIP made sense to the teachers, and they took on the assignment with vigor. They invited the graduate students to help write the plan. The plan involved writing goals and objectives for each grade and required a skilled perception of where the school could improve. The teams worked together and developed a plan that all the teachers could support. This was the academic plan they would use in the next year at Central.

For the first time, the teachers knew the academic direction they needed to focus on for the next year and fully supported it. They wrote the plan, debated it, and re-wrote it until they had a plan with which the group concurred. The CIP for the school year



beginning in 2001 was, for the first time, the *faculty's plan*. The teachers were quite proud of their work. Behavioral observations included: *cooperation, supportive, engaged, learning, attentive, positive attitude, teaming, and bantering*.

When the CIP was finished, it was getting late in the spring semester and it was time for the vision-writing workshop to be delivered.

### **Vision-Writing Workshop.**

The Vision-Writing Workshop was held just before the summer intersession. After brainstorming about the meaning of “exemplary,” and writing its 200 definitions on flip chart sheets, the teachers finally wrote a statement with which they could unanimously agree. Within a couple of hours, the teachers wrote and voted to accept the school’s new vision statement.

The newly developed vision statement was: “Central Elementary maintains a positive supportive school climate where students, parents, and teachers know what is to be learned, value learning, and share responsibility for learning in order to achieve success for all.” The Vision Writing Workshop was the first workshop where all the teachers seemed to be fully engaged. There was no negative contingency.

Perhaps this marked the time when the large majority of the teachers accepted the reform project to be one that was beneficial to the entire school. The teachers agreed that the vision would become their lens to determine whether new plans would fit the

school's reform. If it did not fit through the lens, then the plans were tabled for a more appropriate time.

Behaviors observed included: *attentiveness, teamwork, commitment, fully engaged, helping, supportive, and patience.*

### **Maintaining Shared Leadership**

A group of teachers told the researcher the following story as a way to illustrate that teacher leadership was changing for good at Central. In preparing for the fall schedule, the principal was extremely proud of the management of his budget and made an announcement during a staff meeting that he had found enough room in the school's budget to hire one other teacher. He announced that he intended to support the teachers by hiring a technology person to fill a void where the school lacked sufficient computer technical assistance.

To his surprise, the teachers told him that they did not want a tech person. Instead, based on the projection for classes in the fall, they felt another fifth grade teacher was needed. His initial reaction was anger and disappointment, and a disinclination to give up the technology person. The teachers held their ground; they reminded the principal that they were involved in a faculty-led reform that he supported. The teachers felt that the additional classroom teacher was what was truly needed to stay within the parameters of the school's vision for improving student achievement. The technology person was not in their immediate plans to improve. One of the

professors was in attendance and acted as a moderator. The principal listened to their concerns and ultimately agreed that another fifth grade teacher should be hired.

This was a turning point, micropolitically, for the teachers and the success of the reform. This effort changed the teachers' and the principal's perception of leadership. It was also an example of the principal accepting a shared leadership role, and demonstrating a willingness to share power with his teachers. That day, he earned the faculty's trust because he listened to his faculty, showed respect for their opinions, and ultimately, supported their decision.

Soon after, the teachers recounted another leadership story to the researcher. When school began in the fall semester, there were a few teacher-staffing changes and the assistant principal had left the school. When she cleaned out her office, she tossed out the campus improvement plans that the teachers had so diligently developed. This was not a happy departure on her part.

When the new assistant principal took over, there were no notes or plans left from the year before. As the CIP deadline approached, she did not know that the teachers had already written a CIP. As is the norm, she drafted a new set of CIP plans to send over to the district office so Central would not be delinquent in meeting the deadline.

In the next faculty meeting, the assistant principal presented the teachers with the new campus improvement plan. The teachers became upset when they learned their plans from the spring had gone missing. These were a different set of plans than the

ones they had written. The teachers became angry and stated, “These aren’t our plans!” When the teachers found out that the plans they put so much work into were missing, they were adamant about getting them back. They appreciated the new assistant principal’s attempt to write new ones but these plans were not the same as the ones they had worked so hard to develop. Instead of returning to their previous callous attitude toward the CIP, they felt responsible for recouping the missing plans. They knew their work was essential to the school improvement plan. The teachers took a leadership role, and for the second time reconstructed the CIP plans and forwarded their plans to the district office in time for the deadline.

This marked a defining moment in the leadership of the teachers at Central. The teachers had, in just seven months or so from the first IQA session, turned the corner and become responsible for their school, their curriculum, and their teaching. They had gained power and knew *when* and *how* to use it. Observed behaviors included: *responsible, ownership, teaming, cooperation, leadership, shared leadership, taking action, and planning.*

### **Curriculum Alignment.**

Fall start-up found the teachers fully engaged in teaching and learning about their new students; thus there was not as much time to meet with the researcher. However, the faculty in keeping with their newfound responsibility and leadership, decided to continue to use the steering committee to address other school issues

(without the researcher as facilitator or participant). One of the factors listed in the SID (mindmap) was curriculum alignment, and teachers felt it was time to begin that work. Beginning in September, meetings were set for Tuesdays to address the curriculum issues. The intention was for the teachers to meet on a regular basis to discuss the vertical and horizontal teaming for the school curriculum.

This demonstrated increased leadership on the part of the teachers; they did not wait for the researcher to come in and guide the process. They took this role upon themselves, showing strong leadership and teambuilding initiatives. During this process, some discovered the curriculum was better aligned than they had previously thought. These teachers credited their curriculum alignment to good planning by the state's Texas Education and Knowledge Skills (TEKS). Others found there were still some gaps that needed to be closed. Teachers began to work on those issues. The difference now was that they knew how to use their teams to set goals and move toward those goals without the advice of the researcher. Meanwhile a *Directed Research*<sup>7</sup> class of new students was started at the University and there was some exposure to new students from the class who came to learn about Central and school reform.

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<sup>7</sup> Dr. Terry Clark of the EPC periodically brought his class to study Central's school reform.

### **Time Management.**

Teacher development days were reduced for the new school year and finding time for the reform project was extremely difficult. A time management workshop taught the teachers to work together even better and to discover new ways to plan for meeting times. It was decided that several goals could be accomplished by dividing into smaller teams that were arranged according to individual team meeting time availability.

The teachers took the lessons to heart and met without the researcher at a follow-up meeting and planned their time management strategies. Five options were created by the committee and presented to the teachers. They discussed the options at team level meetings and the teams were free to choose from the suggested times. The teachers also realized that they were not limited by these suggestions and could create variations from the options that best suited team needs.

The five options the teachers suggested to be explored further were:

1) Parent Volunteer Plan – (one and one half-hour to two-hour time blocks, one per month). This would be the most difficult to plan.

2) Special Areas/Librarian Plan -- (2.25 to 3-hour time blocks, once a month).

This would be easy to arrange but would take the most teamwork and cooperation. [Teachers share coverage of classes.]

- 3) Team “In-House-Subs” Plan – (all-day team planning, one day a semester).

This would be easy to implement but teachers would need to provide plans for substitutes.

- 4) Start Faculty Meetings at 2:55 – Teachers agreed that the faculty meetings had been starting once everyone arrived. The teachers decided that one teacher per grade level (on a rotating basis) and aides; could monitor the students until the end of the day until everyone had left the campus.

Teachers have 8-10 minutes to get to the faculty meetings by 2:55. Meetings would begin 10-15 minutes earlier and could end by 3:45, or even 3:30.

- 5) Lunch Meetings – The teachers decided 20-30 minutes was all that was needed for grade level business items. Committees may use lunch monitors and teacher aides to accompany the students to the cafeteria, get his/her lunch, and have 30 minutes to discuss matters of the team. This may occur on an as-needed basis, or once every two weeks; the team would decide.

Ironically, during the time management meeting, in a perceived act of defiance, the gym teacher (one of the last holdouts against the reform) brought her shipment of field hockey sticks to the meeting and proceeded to label them one-by-one in the meeting. She tossed them noisily about. It was clear she was sending a message that she had other things to do, but she did not bring it up so it was not addressed. After the meeting, a group of teachers complained to the facilitator about her obvious non-support and negativity. They thought about addressing it directly. One teacher recalled

that the gym teacher had previously tried to get a nutrition program started and she worked hard at it. The faculty felt they were too busy so they did not support her. The teachers perhaps feeling that this lack of support was their fault, decided not to address the issue. This was another valuable lesson learned, that to get support, and you must be willing to give support.

Everyone was aware of the many lessons taught in the first year but not everyone knew how much was actually learned. The researcher had observed the vast personal and professional growth, many of the teachers and the principal exhibited at the end of the first year. So after working with the teachers for a year it was proposed that the IQA be repeated to determine whether the model had changed for Central, to assess whether the teachers continued to focus on what was important to Central, and to look for overall changes in the data.

### **Principal Coaching**

The researcher often met with the principal after meeting with the teachers. She informed him of the outcomes of the meetings, and discussed what she learned from the teachers. Also she discussed points that she observed about the impact of some of his decisions and how the teachers responded to some of the policies in place. The researcher would make suggestions for improvements for the school as well as for the principal on a wide variety of points. The discussion subjects ranged from the principal's directive style, to discussing the difference between management and



leadership, to policy implementation. The researcher assured him that he was doing the right thing by allowing and supporting the teachers as they made decisions about their work. He generally accepted the advice and worked to make the adjustments to his leadership style.

At the same time he was attending a leadership training session outside of the district. The leadership training along with the constructive criticism given about leadership seemed to reinforce one another. The teachers reported to the researcher, that he learned to stop yelling at the teachers and became much more supportive and trusting of them.

### **Micropolitical Behavior Summary of Phase II.**

The teachers began the leadership and teambuilding workshop with anger and infighting. They vented. They had been unhappy for years because they were waiting for the district and their principal to do their job right and provide perfect leadership for their school but it never did. This made them more angry and mistrustful of the administrators. They stated the administrators were not doing their jobs. They also stated, they needed a new principal and more administrative support.

Because the educational system is constructed in a top-down style, teachers' professionalism is often ignored when new policies are constructed. The teachers and administrators are taught to expect top-down decisions to run the school smoothly and to fix all of their academic ills. The policies and initiatives teachers receive are often

met with disdain because they do not fit their school's culture and they cannot fix their academic ills. The teachers expressed dislike of the district policies and ignored them when they could get away with it. But at the same time, they expectantly waited for the right policy to come down from above.

Then they learned about leadership and teambuilding. They learned that administrative leadership doesn't always work well when policies are provided *to the faculty*. They learned that these one-size-fits-all policies are only tools and they have to be adapted *by the faculty* to fit their culture. They learned that it is okay to do that. They also learned they were not working together as a team. They had to become a team first to begin to actively participate in school leadership. They learned that developing these skills were important to school improvement. The teachers learned about needing to support one another. They learned that none of this could happen until they built trust between each other and the administrators.

In the workshop, they developed new friendships and were introduced to new teachers. They discussed, debated, and listened to each other. They learned about respect for themselves and others. Some teachers tried to derail the effort with covert negativity. One by one, the negative coalition began to lose membership. The vast majority ignored these behaviors. They worked through the teaming exercises. They were successful at most of the exercises but failed at one.

Some left the workshop with mixed feelings because they expected that they would walk out feeling completely changed. Others walked out armed with new

information and a new perspective about themselves and their work and lots to think about. But changes at the school level could not happen until the teachers applied the new information. Teachers, within seven months or so, took control and learned how to lead themselves. Throughout this phase, teachers began to question all they were asked to do. They learned not to be compliant or complacent but to think first and then make choices about what was right for their students in their classrooms and for the school as a whole.

They devised a plan to attend more professional development workshops. They learned about being better communicators. They learned to set goals and create a plan to go after them. They extended the teaming concept to creating a steering committee to keep them focused toward their goal to increase student achievement. Their attitudes became more positive; many of the original non-supporters became supporters. There was less unconstructive venting and less blaming. The teachers learned that bantering with their principal was an acceptable way of communicating and he enjoyed it. Many changed their attitude towards the principal and had newfound respect and appreciation for him. The teachers found the primary problem at their school was their own individual attitudes. They learned that by working together they could take control over those attitudes and work towards effective change for the school.

The behaviors observed were: *leading, questioning, clarifying, supporting, cooperating, some negativity, teaming, helping, intent on change, positive attitude, resisting, learning, being attentive, being responsible, teaming/forming committees,*

*arranging curriculum alignment, venting, bantering, communicating, and listening.* They were categorized as *assertiveness, supporting, commitment, mobilization and communicating.*

### **Micropolitical Behaviors in Phase III Goal Setting**

Since Central did not have the district-funded development days for the second year, all training related to the reform project had to be scheduled during teachers' free time. The success of the reform relied on the willingness of the teachers to continue to support the effort. In the first year, the IQA process was performed at a rapid pace and took over five hours to complete. This second year, the teachers could only allot two two-hour sessions after school for the second IQA focus group. In order to accommodate teacher schedules, the IQA #2 workshop had to be modified. This event took place during the final week before Christmas break. Teachers had much on their minds, but squeezed this into their calendars because they felt it was important to complete this exercise. Two after-school sessions were generously scheduled.

The first day's goal was to organize the cards and sort them into common factors. The second day was set aside for writing the "If/Then" statements. Because we could not have teachers attend an all-day workshop for brainstorming, this time the same question used in the first IQA was posed ahead of time in written form. Teachers were given the question one week in advance, and asked to think about their answers and to prepare cards for the first after-school session.

### **Focus Group IQA #2 Procedure**

Two afternoons during the week before Christmas break, approximately 30 faculty members came together to participate in a second focus group. Due to another commitment, a few teachers who wanted to participate, but knew they couldn't, wrote their cards and sent them in to be evaluated with the rest. The procedure remained the same as in IQA #1 and began with the posting and organization of the cards.

The teachers put their cards on the wall. During the first year's workshop, over 250 cards were generated. In this second year, teachers generated about 85 cards. There were some contributing factors to the difference in volume. The participative group was smaller for one. This was due to several reasons. One reason was that the date was not planned well in advance; therefore some teachers had conflicting appointments. Secondly, during the first year some staff and teacher aides attended the first IQA workshop but they were not present in the second year IQA workshop.

Thirdly, the participation was voluntary and not offered during regular work hours, so the faculty was not required to participate as they had been the year before. However, the core group of 30 teachers was well represented in both workshops. Although numbers may not have been exactly the same, the synergy was still there. There had been little teacher turnover and change in personnel at the school during the year, the impact on the reform project was minimal.

Another difference between the two IQAs was that in the previous year, a few teachers were unable to attend the workshop and had no participation in the initial

start-up of the project. This year, teachers who could not attend yet wanted to were still able to write their cards ahead of time and be included in the final analysis. This allowed for their voices to be heard despite their absence. For these reasons, the change in numbers should not have significantly impacted the results.

As the cards were being put up on the walls, the teachers commented on their surprise and pleasure upon seeing the change in the messages presented in the cards this year. Last year, the teachers were at the 'blaming and naming' stage. This year, they expected to see a repeat of blaming the administration, for many of the school's problem. Previously, the teachers stated that the principal was the one who needed to change. They complained in the first year that the principal often yelled at them, and teachers would leave staff meetings 'feeling shaken up' and 'not respected.' One teacher stated, "My first year in the building I would leave shaking from the faculty meetings because we would be screamed at and [now, there's no screaming] that's probably the biggest change I have ever seen and I have never been screamed at before in a faculty meeting." These circumstances explained their desire for more administrative support. It explained its prominence as a driver in the first SID model.

During the second year IQA process, the teachers noticed that their expressed needs were in terms of what they could change. The change went from an atmosphere of "you need to" to "we need to." Teachers comments ranged from, "Look at that; this is so different!" to "We have come a long way" to "Wow, there is no more blaming the

principal; now it is about shared leadership.” The participants proceeded through the re-grouping process until they reduced the number to seven categories.

The card sorting reached group consensus so quickly, that the second day session was canceled, it was clear the project could be finished immediately. While some teachers reluctantly had to leave before the session ended, they were confident the remaining teachers would complete the process and agreed to allow the process to continue without them. This indicated a high level of *trust* and *confidence* in their team. Within the next forty-five minutes, all of the If/Then statements were written that completed the data collection necessary for creating the second SID model. The teachers were delighted with the progress.

The results of the focus group were used to produce the second Interrelationship Diagraph (IRD) for theoretical coding. The results of the focus group produced seven factors: *Collaborative Leadership, Shared Vision, Commitment to Change, Best Practices, Resource Management, Time and Parental Issues*. The following are the factors with their sub-factors, and an interpretation of their meaning.

### **Focus Group IQA #2 Deductive Coding Summary**

#### **1. Collaborative Leadership**

Collaborative leadership was the culmination of the teachers’ concerns for getting the job done. They expressed concerns for more teamwork, vertical meetings, better communications, and listening. The difference between this model and the prior

one is in the teacher acceptance of responsibility to lead. They were not looking to be led as they were in the first model; they were looking for ways to lead and to work as a team. They exhibited a remarkable change in attitude. Solid growth was seen that day. The factor was supported by a dozen sub-factors. The sub-factors are listed in Appendix D.

## 2. Shared Vision

Teachers did not talk in terms of a vision before working on the reform. Shared vision was a new concept for the teachers. When the purpose was fully understood, they embraced it. The teachers previously spoke about teachers wanting to use best practices but they did not know how to implement them so they could achieve their goal. They now valued the idea of being focused on the same primary goal. They now believed that everyone must be accountable for academic achievement, and in addition that students must be motivated to work towards excellence. The teachers used the vision as a lens to determine whether they were on track with the project. When ideas were presented that did not fit the vision, they were tabled for another time. The factor was supported by twelve sub-factors.

## 3. Commitment to Change

Factor number three, commitment to change, was a new category not mentioned in the first IQA. It indicated a change in attitude that evolved as teachers gained confidence once they experienced success in the reform process. Teachers believed



more strongly than ever that they were the ones responsible for student success.

Teachers recognized that those who carried negativity to the job made everyone else's job more difficult, and offered nothing in the way of helping the children learn. Now teachers believed that it was their job to go the extra mile. This factor was supported by 12 sub-factors.

#### 4. Best Practices

Teachers wanted the best for their students. This was evidenced by their drive for best practices, factor number four. They expressed that consistency in best practices was necessary for students at all levels, and that ineffective methods should be tossed. Best practice was commonly discussed when the teachers wanted to be informed about the latest research. This factor had seven sub-factors.

#### 5. Resource Management

Factor number five, resource management, was more focused than the request for more resources as suggested by the first IQA. Teachers still wanted more materials. There seemed to be a chronic shortage of supplies, but this time they want resources to be better managed. It seemed to be a request for more equitable distribution for the children who need the help the most. The factor was supported by 18 sub-factors.

#### 6. Time

Factor six; time has always been an issue for teachers. Sub-factors mention a range of topics from allowing time for planning, for meetings, and for having time to do the work, and using it wisely. The main difference in this IQA was that teachers seemed

to be wanting to control their time better, “How can we best use our time?” asked one teacher. Another suggested using creative scheduling to “free up” time, and another suggested no “busy work.” Sixteen sub-factors supported the time factor.

## 7. Parental Issues

In the second IQA, fewer teachers wrote cards on this factor. One card suggested that parents should be educated about local and state expectations for students entering school. It was a logical assumption that parents would want their children to be prepared for school, but how to ensure that they were continued to be elusive. Another teacher suggested conducting an increased number of home visits. It was suggested for this population, home visits might need to be made years before a student enters school. If that could happen early on, then perhaps fewer visits would be necessary when these children become students. The teachers again have demonstrated wisdom. As the Department of Education study reported in the Austin American Statesman:

Schools need to do a better job of explaining themselves to parents and not simply as a feel-good exercise. A Department of Education study found that reading and math scores of low achieving students rose 40 percent when teachers reached out to families throughout the school year--not just when the child was in trouble (Chase, 2002).

Unfortunately, when “more” was suggested an issue around increased resources emerged. The bottom line was parental issues were a valid concern for teachers.

## **Focus Group IQA #2 Theoretical Coding Summary**

When relationships between factors are described, it is called theoretical coding. When the focus group describes relationships between factors using if/then statements, this is also a form of theoretical coding. This exercise helps to identify each factor as an *influencing* factor or as an *impacted by* factor. Open and deductive coding is used to address the categories or factors of the data. The comparison of the theoretical coding of the two IQA models further answers the second research question, “How does faculty-led school reform affect teachers and a school’s policies and procedures?” At Central, the ideas generated in the first SID model created the ideal teaching arrangement for teachers. It provided the groundwork for a direction for change.

In the process, the focus group participants were asked to find the relationships between each factor pair. They were asked to construct an “If, then...” statement and draw an arrow from the cause to the effect. Each theoretical if/then statement is recorded but only one hypothesis, which captures the nature of the relationship best, is kept. Participants must reach group consensus on these statements; sometimes this requires the use of the multi-voting technique. An arrow showing the direction of the influence represents the relationship between the factors. These are captured in Table 4.2.

A mathematical evaluation of each factor determined the placement of the factor in Figure 4.2. The factors with the most number of out arrows became the primary drivers. The factors with the most number of arrows pointing in towards the factor were

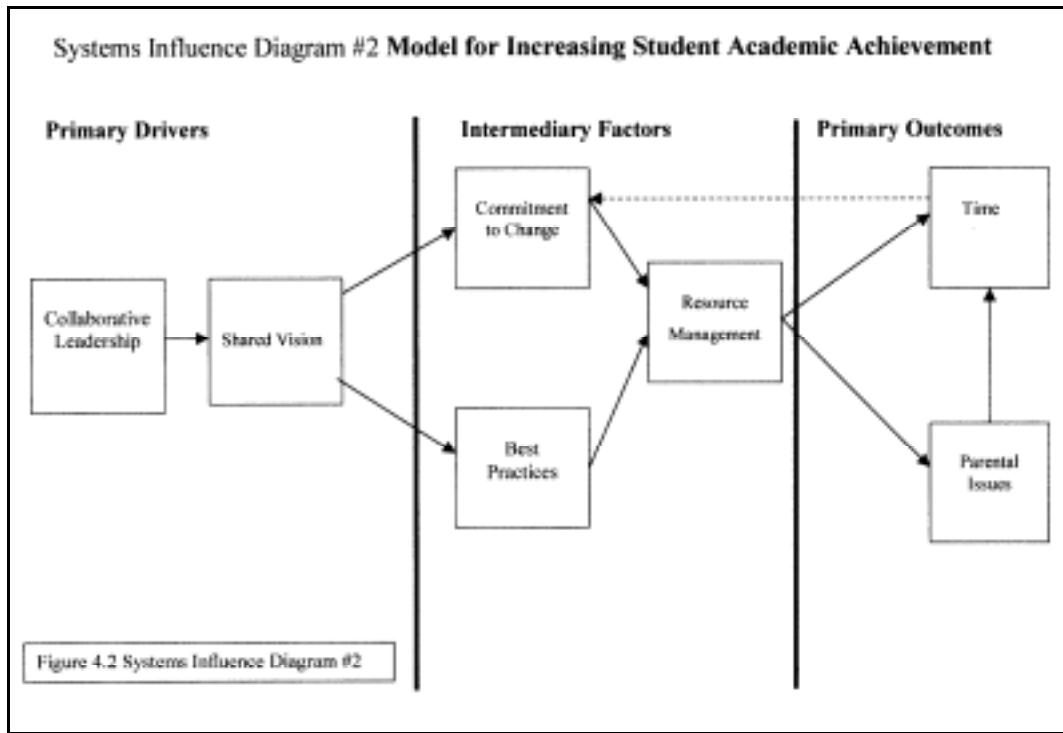
determined to be the primary outcomes. The factors whose arrows were shown to be a mixture of both in and out directions determined the intermediary factors.

**Table 4.2 Tabular Interrelational Diagram for the second Focus Group**

#		CC	SV	RM	CL	T	PI	BP	IN	OUT	Δ
3	CC		←	↑	←	←	↑	↑	3	3	0
2	SV	↑		↑	←	↑	↑	↑	1	5	4
5	RM	←	←		←	↑	↑	←	4	2	-2
1	CL	↑	↑	↑		↑	↑	↑	0	6	6
6	T	↑	←	←	←		←	←	1	5	4
7	PI	←	←	←	←	↑		←	1	5	4
4	BP	←	←	↑	←	↑	↑		3	3	0

**LEGEND**

CC	Commitment to Change
SV	Shared Vision
RM	Resource Management
CL	Collaborative Leadership
T	Time
PI	Parental Issues
BP	Best Practices



### **Micropolitical Behaviors: A Walk Through the Focus Group SID #2**

After working together on the school reform project for a year, a new SID (mindmap) was created. This SID in Figure 4.2 depicts a view that is considerably different from the SID model constructed one year before. The way in which teachers would construct the ideal arrangement for teaching in their school had a different, more responsible approach. Looking at the primary driver, Factor #1, *Collaborative Leadership*, teachers now think that leadership should be a team effort, whereas in the first model, they expressed the desire to be *better led*. Teachers recognize that they are capable of getting their voices heard to make the improvements they feel are necessary in their school.

The second intermediary driver, Factor #2, *Shared Vision*, indicated that teachers recognized a strong need for unity and teamwork in accomplishing the goals for raising academic achievement levels of their students. There were three intermediary factors commitment to change, best practices, and resource management. Teachers recognized that many of their previous program failures were due to the lack of commitment and disjointed efforts without follow-through. Regarding best practices, the teachers expressed a concern that many teaching ideas are not effective and they want to be effective teachers. Regarding the third factor, teachers expressed that they needed more resources and better management of those resources.

The primary outcomes indicated that time and parental issues were two areas that would be improved when the rest of the model was working. An interesting connection was that the teachers believed that they would have more time if parental issues were resolved. Another interesting find in the model was the recursive loop connecting time to commitment to change and resource management. The teachers also believed that if they had more time, they could make a solid commitment to change, and they would be able to manage resources better.

According to the model, teachers hypothesized that with collaborative leadership and a shared vision, they would be able to create change in their school and increase student academic achievement. Teachers do this by creating a change to which they are committed, managing their resources well, and using best practices to teach. This method for change supports teachers' effective use of their time and allows them to

manage parental issues. One teacher explained the model as follows, "...If we can lead ourselves and work together and use...effective leadership, shared leadership, then we can address...time and the time problems." When all of those issues become non-issues then there would be enough time to better teach the students and work through the parent issues.

In terms of effectiveness, one teacher said:

I didn't really notice a huge difference because in the process of doing things I don't think you notice change. I didn't notice a difference until we met again these past few weeks to do the cards....When people had a chance to say whatever it is...the cards were very different from where they were before. They weren't as negative. They were more curriculum motivated or they were more about what we are here for instead of a gripe and moan session.

Regarding the second IQA session, another teacher who was against the reform from the start stated:

Actually it went better than I thought. And I...think we probably hit what needed to be hit even though it didn't look like maybe we would do it. I think it is pretty much on target and for me being as antagonistic as I was about doing it at this period of time, I think it turned out pretty well.

The micropolitical behaviors seen in this phase included: *assertiveness, shared leadership, shared decision-making, excitement, no venting, few complaints, enthusiasm, camaraderie/teaming, goal-setting, positive attitude, most committed, stand*

*up for beliefs, full engagement in exercise, few still not committed, accepting responsibility, owning problems, trust, curriculum alignment, buy-in, trust, no fear, increased communications, and no naming and blaming.*

### **Micropolitical Behaviors in Phase IV Evaluation**

Thirteen teachers agreed to be interviewed for the evaluative stage of the reform. They were randomly selected. The researcher interviewed teachers representing all demographics of the full-time teachers at Central. Their interviews were recorded on tape then transcribed. One teacher did not want to be recorded, and that interview was taken with hand-written notes. All transcriptions and notes were member-checked for verification by the teachers. The results were used by the researcher to construct the SID model #3, which follows the section on theoretical codes. The sub-factors are listed in Appendix E. The results were deductively coded in the same manner as the other SIDs, which were coded by the researcher.

#### **Focus Group IQA #3 Deductive Coding Summary**

##### **1. Communications.**

The teachers described an atmosphere with greater harmony; people were happier and communicating more. Before the reform process teachers felt they had to try to read the principal's moods and they were afraid to speak up. After the reform process, teachers felt that people were 'listening and talking more.' Communications



were generally improved, as people made an effort to ‘communicate without offending.’ As a result of improved communications, time spent in meetings was more useful. People’s attitudes changed to ‘speak up or sulk.’ Best of all, teachers were ‘being honest and felt empowered.’

One teacher described her experience regarding communications in the school, I’m a new teacher...a lot of teachers have been in the school for a really long time and sometimes I feel like they don’t really listen to me and I sometimes get apprehensive to say anything because I think they have more experience and know more, but I do feel like my voice was heard especially in the card activity. I think that is a wonderful way to get everyone’s voice heard.

Twenty-four statements characterized this factor. Since there were only 13 interviews, this factor held a lot of weight for these teachers.

## 2. Esprit de Corps

Sixteen comments support the factor *esprit de corps*. The teachers told of their newfound respect and empathy for both the principal and for their school environment. They spoke at length about the value they now have for the principal when just a year before they had little respect or patience for him. During the school reform process, the teachers learned a lot about the principal and his role and had gained a ‘new respect for him.’ In fact, one teacher confided that she was ready to quit and move to a new school, but since the reform, she appreciates her fellow teachers and principal and feels that

Central has a lot to offer. She is now very supportive of the principal and grateful she has stayed.

The teachers and the principal are more respectful towards one another. One teacher felt that Central Elementary was well on its way to reaching their goal of becoming an exemplary school, “I think an exemplary school should mean that you can bring your child to our school and just not pick what class and what teachers [you believe are the best] because you know all of them are just as good.”

### 3. Support for Reform

In the beginning of this reform effort, the teachers support for the reform project was somewhat divided. There were more teachers that supported the effort but there was a negative contingency that tried to rally support away from the effort. In the interviews, some teachers explained that some teachers just didn't understand the intent of the reform and were unwilling to be supportive. But others told of their support.

One teacher told of her conversations with her husband about the reform.

As I say, I was pretty skeptical last year. I would take these dog walks with my husband, who would say, ‘it’s not going to happen; it will stop; you are wasting your time.’ And I’d say, ‘but these are issues that are important and we’re never going to get the chance if we don’t go forward.’ He’d hear me frustrated and he’d say, ‘Well, we’ll see.’ Then you all would show back up again as things were getting tense and we’d take another dog walk. He’s a good teacher-

husband and he's the more surprised between the two of us because he is more skeptical than I, but I always was hopeful that we could grow as a group.

Then she added.

I think [a teacher] said it at one point last year, 'I don't think we will ever have the kind of achievement we could without it.' And we won't have it unless we are united, we just won't. Being a group of talented people is not going to get us there because we've been there for years.

Teachers shared stories about the internal power struggle going on between the Principal and the Assistant Principal at the time the reform started. Others told of another power struggle they perceived between the curriculum specialists and the teachers for the principal's support. Teachers told of a deep mistrust among the teachers and the feeling that the change effort would be fruitless. Also there was unprofessional admonishment (yelling) in the staff meetings. Teachers would leave the meetings physically shaken. There were a lot of problems and Central needed to change.

A year later one teacher who earlier belonged to the negative contingency described her change in mind towards supporting the reform,

It's a long tough haul but I think that one of the most interesting things that speaks to that is that last year all the fingers pointed to administration for the problems of this school... We have almost come a full 180 degrees saying, wait a minute, we are the ones who can make the changes and the differences here. That is real huge and I think it is a real positive change to know that finger

pointing isn't going to do a thing. You can only change what you can control and that happens to be yourself and your curriculum.

Overall, the mood changed at Central, as teachers understood their roles more clearly. Also the air was cleared in some issues. Many ongoing arguments were being settled, people began to trust one another, and they felt the reform was a 'catalyst for positive change.' In the second year, there was also an administrative change. A new assistant principal was hired. She had previously been a teacher in the school and had an existing good relationship with many if not all of the teachers. That change helped smooth out relations between administrators and the teachers. One teacher stated:

The [new assistant principal] is a peacemaker and highly respected. We are so lucky. And we also trust [the curriculum specialists], they have such strengths. And yet they were perceived as not getting much done at one point...They didn't fold after people said, 'hey, your job is on the line' ... They came back and said, 'okay, let's make it stronger.' I see all of that as highly positive.

Feeling more comfortable with each other, teachers learned to explore alternatives and began to think outside of what they perceived to be their parameters. They felt the reform kept them on their toes. Teachers stated they were grateful for the reform.

#### 4. Collaborative Leadership

Every one of the 38 comments made about leading and teaming were positive. Teachers were now very much aware of the breadth of change that occurred at Central.

They realized that the leadership and teambuilding workshop was the stepping-stone to getting them started to working together as a team. They recognized the leadership qualities displayed in individual teachers, in the principal, in the steering committee, in the teams, in the meetings and especially in the efforts to improve curriculum alignment. They realized how each one of these pieces is integral to the whole process of teaching and ultimately essential to improving student achievement. A teacher stated,

I think [the principal] thinks now about what he is going to say....He is really trying to make an effort in giving the teachers a say....He really is trying to make it a group decision....He is informing us on what is going on and listening. He seems to be listening.

Another teacher stated:

I think definitely having the atmosphere where people are a lot nicer to each other and calmer...I think that has definite effects. You know when someone is on the stage yelling at you...this trickles down to the classroom and it goes down to the kids. So I think having the leadership work together with us and the curriculum alignment...[it] fits to me.

##### 5. Assertiveness

Assertiveness was mentioned twelve times. This indicated a change in attitude that teachers experienced during the reform project. They expressed that they were 'no longer afraid to speak up,' 'teachers were more relaxed,' that their 'voices were being heard,' and that teachers were 'no longer afraid to voice their opinions.' But there

remained some doubt voiced by a few teachers that this power sharing might be short-lived, that the principal might 'revert back' to his old directive ways.

## 6. Empowerment

When the reform project got underway, there were a lot of issues at Central. The first meeting with the teachers was purposefully set up without the administrators so the teachers could speak freely. It quickly became a venting session. Teachers felt they had a lot to complain about and ticked off all of their complaints. The teachers brought up these issues later in the interviews as evidence of observed change, which helped illustrate the difference a year of work had made at their school.

The teachers felt that before they were overwhelmed by the many demands put on them. They were also angry that they were not included in making the decisions that affected them. This caused resentment, mistrust, skepticism, and caused some teachers to just shut down. So when the reform idea came up, some teachers felt they were pressured into 'another waste of time' project by the principal. Rather than have a confrontation with the principal where they felt sure they would lose, some teachers went 'through the motions' of the reform project. One teacher put it precisely,

Sometimes we feel like 'why bother, it's not going to happen, okay?' And it's not that they don't want to say anything, it's just that why should you expend your energy and your stress level when something may not be happening? We have too many things to do. Our primary concern is the students. And if we

think we are doing the best we can do in our classroom, let the room revolve. I have to take care of my classroom and myself.

This same teacher added, “We have a good group of students in here...yes, they are poor, but they are working poor and we could be a lot further ahead but the teachers, we ourselves, are impeding that progress.” Others were concerned about teachers who wallowed in hopelessness and were unmotivated to change or grow. The supporters of the reform had privately discussed with some of their colleagues how to get the rest of the teachers on board quickly. They felt that this was their one chance to take control of their situation and make a sincere effort to improve the way the school operated. They were afraid of experiencing more failure. They spoke with the researcher who explained that the reform program was like a bus, first everyone had to get on board before it could begin to move forward and people needed to get on board at their own pace. Empowerment was going to take time and the teachers were ready to embrace it at different rates. They began the project at the lowest level of empowerment. One teacher described the decision-making process, “The decisions were top-down decisions and sometimes they gave us lip service so we could make some decisions but they were never decisions that would steer the school.”

So when the teachers went through the first IQA they experienced a glimpse of what could be different. One teacher told about the effect the first focus group had on her. “The day of the cards was very eye-opening for me...I thought it was me alone in the middle of nowhere on this island and I found out everybody, no matter where you

were in the building, didn't feel like this was the most supportive environment to be in.” Teachers were feeling unsupported and powerless.

The teachers knew that Central had to change. The teachers learned that day, that they were the ones that could facilitate that change. They saw they needed to move away from the status quo and restructure their environment. They learned they needed to gain power in order to make meaningful and effective decisions if they wanted their students to experience gains in academic achievement. Approximately thirty times these issues were listed.

### **Focus Group IQA #3 Theoretical Coding Summary**

The focus group theoretically codes the factors for relationships to determine if any of the factors influenced other factors or were impacted by any of the other factors. Open and deductive coding is used to address the categories or factors of the data. Theoretical coding combined with the action research results answers the research question, ‘how does faculty-led school reform affect teachers and a school’s policies and procedures?’ Adding the dimension of observations and interview results to this data analyses helps to answer research question #1, ‘How does the micropolitics of faculty-led school reform get played out in the school setting?’

At Central, the ideas generated in the third SID model (mindmap) was created from the textual data and used to confirm the factor data. It confirmed the direction for change identified by the teachers in IQA #2. The researcher studied the data to find the



relationships between each factor pair and constructed “If, then...” statements just as the teachers had in the earlier IQAs. As before, an arrow illustrating the cause to the effect was drawn. Each theoretical code was written with one hypothesis kept, which best captured the relationship. An arrow showing the direction of the influence represents the relationship between the factors. These are shown in a table, see table 4.3.

A mathematical evaluation of each factor determined the placement of the factor in the table. Simply speaking, the factors with the most number of arrows pointing up, *out* away from the factor became the primary drivers. Those factors with the most number of arrows pointing left, *in* towards the factor determined the primary outcomes. Those factors whose arrows were shown to be roughly an equal mixture of both *in and out* directions determined the intermediary factors.

The IN arrows point to the left while the OUT arrows point up. The blank cells indicate no relationship. Primary drivers influence only and become the drivers or factors that influence all other factors; they have only out arrows and no in arrows. The delta of factors with positive numbers becomes the mediating drivers or outcomes depending on their number of in and out arrows. Mediating drivers are infinities that are both influenced by the primary drivers and influence other lesser factors.

Again the textual data was used to create the final System Influence Diagraph (SID). It is developed using a set of formalized rules that serves to remove redundancies and ambiguities from the system. The SID identifies the patterns of influence or causation among the factors in the system (Northcutt et al, 1998). See figure 4.1 for the

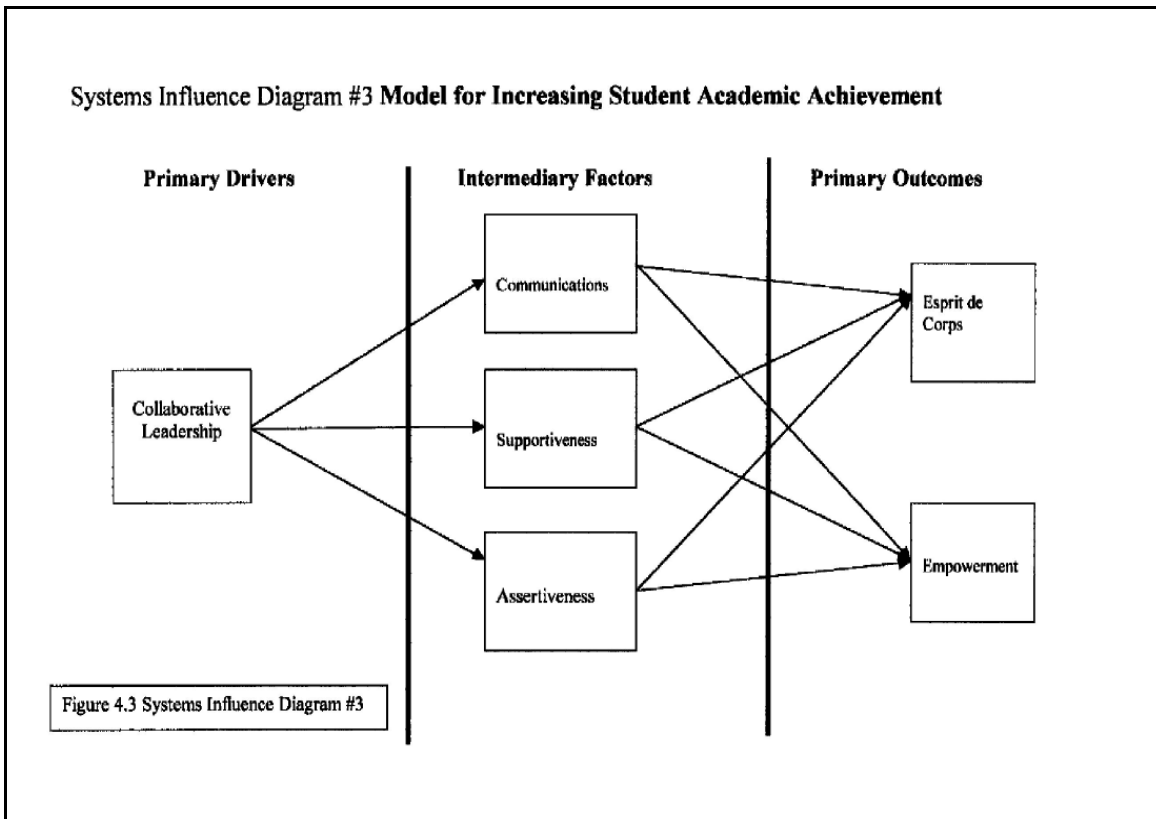
first SID, which was developed from the first IQA with Central Elementary teachers and staff.

**Table 4.3 Tabular Interrelational Diagram for the second Focus Group**

#		C	EC	S	CL	A	E	IN	OUT	$\Delta$
2	C		↑	↑	←	←	↑	2	3	1
5	EC	←		←	←	←	↑	4	1	-3
3	S	←	↑		←	↑	↑	2	3	1
1	CL	↑	↑	↑		↑	↑	0	5	5
4	A	↑	↑	←	←		↑	2	3	1
6	E	↑	←	←	←	←		4	1	-3

**LEGEND**

C	Communication
EC	Esprit de corps
S	Supportiveness
CL	Collaborative Leadership
A	Assertiveness
E	Empowerment



**Micropolitical Behavior Summary**

The interview (mindmap) supports both of the previous SID models by having the same primary driver, *leadership*. The teachers who were interviewed verified that the changes in leadership were the single-most important factor to be addressed. Leadership had to be developed before any other change could be successful at Central. Those interviewed unanimously agreed that the ‘leadership has changed.’ Teachers agreed that there was now a different feeling in the school and that the ‘teachers are relaxed.’ More than one teacher remarked that ‘people are nicer’ and ‘there is no more yelling.’

Because people felt they were being listened to and that their opinions mattered, they were more willingly communicative. That is why the intermediary factors included communications, supportiveness, and assertiveness. The supporting and assertive behaviors went hand-in-hand with communications. Therefore these three factors have been equally weighted in this model. Because the teachers feel they benefited from good leadership, they feel they were supported and could be supportive of others. For the same reason, they could be more assertive because the trust levels increased.

They built up their relations with one another. They built committees and participated in teams. People were no longer afraid to speak up and voice their opinions. And because they had been respected and listened to, they had learned to be more careful about what they say and how they say it. Teachers have stated they were trying to learn how to ‘give an opinion non-offensively.’

Another very interesting result was the *lack* of recursive loops in this model. After a year of working together, the teachers expressed a better idea of where they needed to improve as stated in the interviews. In this IQA, the teachers did not write the if/then statements, but they expressed them in the interview data. The researcher merely pulled them from the interview text. They expressed that they know what they have to do and they now have a better understanding of how to get the job done through leadership and teamwork. When they have issues, they try to work them out with the group. This is indicative of strong leadership and teams.

Another difference in the model was in the primary outcomes. There were two outcomes, esprit de corps and empowerment. The teachers stated in the interviews that they were grateful for the reform project. They felt a new sense of camaraderie; that the whole school benefited from the lessons learned. The change in leadership was pronounced. Teachers stated they were 'proud of the principal's changes.' They had newfound appreciation and respect for him and for their fellow teachers.

When the reform project began, there was a lot of infighting. One teacher in an interview stated:

I felt we were fighting each other, administration against the teachers. There were a lot of things that were said and done that just didn't make a lot of sense. And things got to a point where they were really volatile in terms of us rebelling because we didn't like the decisions that were being made because they didn't make sense. We were angry, a lot of us were angry about that and it just wasn't a good atmosphere to work.

Teachers were skeptical and rightfully so given the history of failed or abandoned projects at Central. Teachers expended a lot of energy on complaining, on undermining projects by being complacent, resentful, and generally being unsupportive. There was a lot of anger.

The teachers questioned the use of the curriculum specialists. They didn't understand the need for one, let alone two, curriculum specialists. Early on, it was suggested that their roles be abolished and the specialists be sent back to the classroom

to teach like they did before their roles were changed. Teachers previously did a lot of unconstructive complaining. They stated they believed they couldn't question district initiatives or principal directives. It seems nobody had told them they could.

After the reform was developed, the teachers learned how to best use the curriculum specialists to support teaching in the individual classroom and learned to appreciate their roles. Teachers learned to support one another. By communicating more, the teachers learned that all of them agreed on many things, especially on wanting improvement. Teachers chose not to go back into their classroom and sulk about the things they didn't like at Central; teachers learned how to constructively resolve their problems and to work together. One teacher described the reform effort as, "They have come a long, long way." The teachers interviewed all stated they were happy with the progress and what they learned from the school reform project and all wanted to continue to work on more ideas for the reform. One teacher shared another insight:

I have questioned myself, and that was another thing in coming back for the second year when I really wanted to leave last year. Another thing I tell myself is thank, God, I'm here again this year because I wouldn't have had these exact experiences other places and they have made me a better teacher and a better person.

The micropolitical behaviors seen that day included: *assertiveness, questioning, leadership, sensitivity to others, trust, respectful, enthusiasm, camaraderie/teaming, support of reform, support of committees, support of principal, supported by principal,*

*most committed, wanting more change, speaking up/being heard, understand big picture, understand strategic plan, few still not committed, see advantage to reform, curriculum alignment, problem solving, and hopeful.* These were categorized as the others were in *assertiveness, supporting, commitment, mobilization, and communicating.*

### **Comparisons of IQAs 1-3**

The following section details the changes in the IQAs as the research project progressed. These are discussed in terms of the Drivers, Intermediary Drivers, and the Outcomes. It shows the growth the teachers experienced as the reform moved forward through their plan. A table (4.4) is shown below the text.

#### **SID Drivers.**

The teachers experienced a great deal of change between the first two models. In the initial meeting, the teachers blamed the principal and district administrators for all of their problems, hence the drivers called for Knowledgeable and Effective Leadership, Administrative Support, and Teamwork. The teachers were feeling as if they were not treated professionally, that they were only given an opportunity to share decisions on token issues. They resented that administrators who were not in their classrooms were making decisions about what their work should be and how it should be structured. The teachers felt they knew the kids best and felt they should be asked about issues pertaining to instruction. They wanted to be part of the management team so that

decisions would be better made and would support them in their work. Teachers were feeling that they rode in the backseat of the school bus while the principal and the district administrators were in the driver's seat.

In IQA 2, the teachers experienced shared leadership, were involved in making important decisions, and used teams and committees to get their work done. They were far more sophisticated in goal setting and had successfully created plans that worked as seen in the time management plans the teachers constructed and applied, and again in the curriculum alignment meetings where they created plans, which they implemented. It was not don't known specifically which individual plans were most responsible for change but some of their plans were successful because the student's academic achievement increased.

They learned about team building and created a shared vision. This vision became the lens from which goals were set. If an idea did not align with the vision, then the idea was not used at Central. IQA 3 confirmed the lessons learned in working from the perspective of collaborative leadership. They learned how to drive the education at Central.

SID Intermediary Factors.

In the first IQA, the teachers were able to discern many of the factors that facilitated and hindered student achievement at their school. They agreed that they needed to have the curriculum aligned so that many gaps could be closed vertically and horizontally. At the same time, they knew they were faced with serious student



challenges because the predominantly minority, low socio-economic population was considered at-risk. They expressed a concern about the lack of parent involvement in the home life of the students. Many parents were not highly educated about school issues and were not able to provide the educational assistance their children needed. Therefore teachers needed more time to work with the children who start school with less support.

There was also the dilemma caused by high expectations. Teachers have high expectations and say they believe all children can learn but found they were often faced with lower performing students who don't grasp the academics as well as the others. So realistic goals were something they desired especially when working with special education children.

In the second IQA, the teachers had fewer intermediary factors discussed. The factors discussed at this time addressed having a commitment to change, which was radical since the teachers were talking about what they had control over and what they could change. They indicated a responsible and professional approach to teaching. Further they felt they should use best practices to teach. In the interviews the teachers gave examples of how they learned to work within the system to make Central academically improved.

Teachers learned to share teaching expertise across their particular areas of strengths. One teacher was using best practices by creating an arrangement she explained that she had worked out with a team teacher. She had expertise in math and

took the students who needed extra help in math from the team teacher's class for a short time each day. In turn, the team teacher who excelled in language arts took time to teach the students from the other class who needed extra help in language arts. These teachers learned how to problem solve within their teams without the district or the principal telling them how to do it. They also learned that the resources needed to be better managed and that they could help control that to some extent in-house.

Teachers were also very committed to change as evidenced by their determination to get another fifth grade teacher hired, rather than a technology teacher. A year ago they would have been compliant and angry because they wouldn't have challenged the principal in his decision to add a technology person. Having an additional fifth grade teacher ensured far more individual attention to all fifth graders and fit within the lens of the school's vision for improvement. Although they would have benefited from the technology person, this choice did not fit their immediate needs of helping them raise their students' academic achievement scores. They felt they needed more individualized classroom time to increase the academic scores.

In the third IQA the intermediary factors included increased communications, supporting the reform and being assertive. The teachers learned what it took to increase achievement at the school level and many of those factors needed to be in place to get the goal accomplished. By being assertive, they no longer were compliant or complacent about changes that were dictated to them. They learned to weigh their options, consider the impact, and make the right choice for their school's vision.

### **SID Outcomes.**

In IQA 1, the outcomes were to resolve teacher challenges, have resources and attain holistic learning. The teachers believed that with the curriculum aligned, student challenges addressed, more parent involvement, more time, high expectations, and realistic goals, they would gain additional resources that would help relieve some of the teacher challenges. Taken together that would certainly help the teachers to focus on holistic learning.

In IQA 2, the teachers took a different tack. They believed that if they managed their resources, committed to change and used best practices, they would have more time, enabling them to resolve some of the parental issues. This indicated a far more responsible approach and one in which they had some control over the methods and the outcomes.

In IQA 3, the teachers seemed to be more assertive, gain more support for the reform, and increase their communications across the school to become empowered and to form a team with *esprit de corps*. Again, the focus was on teacher responsibility and control rather than being controlled by the principal and the district.

**Table 4.4: IQA I-3 Comparisons**

GOAL: To Increase Student Achievement	IQA 1 SID Results	IQA 2 SID Results	IQA 3 SID Results
Drivers	Have Knowledgeable & Effective Leadership	Have Collaborative Leadership	Have Collaborative Leadership
	Have Administrative Support	Have Shared Vision	
	Have Teamwork		

<b>Intermediary Factors</b>	Have Curriculum Alignment	Have Commitment to Change	Increased Communications
	Have Student Challenges	Use Best Practices	Have Support for Reform
	Have Parent Involvement	Manage Resources	Have Assertiveness
	Have Time		
	Have High Expectations		
	Have Realistic Goals		
<b>Outcomes</b>	Resolve Teacher Challenges	Have Time	Have Esprit de Corps
	Have Resources	Resolve Parental Issues	Have Empowerment
	Attain Holistic Learning		

## Research Questions Results

The results of the research questions from the study follow.

**Research Question 1:** How does the micropolitics of faculty-led school reform get played out in the school setting? To answer that question, all the data had to be first theoretically coded then examined for micropolitical themes. A table was built to display and categorize the micropolitical behavior. See table 4.5.

At the beginning of the reform project, the teachers believed that classroom problems belonged to them while school level problems belonged to the principal. Therefore the teachers operated from within their corner of the school. The teachers had expected that the principal and the district would fix the school's problems and were disappointed that they were unable to do so. After having the same principal in power for 17 years, the teachers felt justified in wanting a change in leadership since there was no marked improvement in the student achievement scores for many years. The leadership and teambuilding workshop was the result of the teachers' request for a change. The teachers wanted more say in changes that affected them.

The teachers had to gain autonomy to have a say in leadership that affected their work. They built a collaborative leadership team so that they could work together, gain autonomy, and make improvements at the school. The teachers knew without this solid footing, the reform would fail, so they would settle for nothing less than a faculty-led school reform that they helped design, develop, and implement.

Many teachers wanted change, but did not want to put in the work to make it happen. They rationalized that they had too much to do already. They countered that prior experience demonstrated that reforms always fail and their teaching time was too valuable to waste. It was much easier for those not interested in work to hope a new principal could come in and solve the school's problems. But a group of teachers saw this as the first opportunity they have had to make needed changes at their school. They worked hard to sway the majority of the teachers to support the reform effort. They reasoned that they would likely never have this same opportunity again.

Having a lot at stake, the teachers learned to work together while using a full range of micropolitical behaviors ranging from assertiveness to trust building (see table 4.5, column Phase I.). There were a lot of micropolitical behaviors displayed throughout the reform including direct questioning, supporting and cooperating behaviors, forming cohorts, enthusiasm, exhibiting a positive attitude, and setting goals for improvement. Most teachers had made a commitment to the reform process, but some were not committed at all. This latter group resisted change and displayed negativity by minimally participating in the meetings and the workshops. They formed a negative cohort, but it became smaller over time as teachers became convinced that the reform was worth the effort. The teachers, overall, displayed more confidence as they won small successes. They exhibited more assertive behavior and leadership in increasing amounts as they progressed through the reform effort. They looked for more opportunities to address and resolve the school's problems.

Before the end of the first year, most teachers had learned that they, not the administrators, were responsible for the results of the educational programs at the school level. They learned they had to be the problem solvers. Their whole attitude and approach to school problems changed. They began to work collaboratively. Their focus broadened from the children in their own classroom to the well being of all the students in the building. Many teachers had become school leaders and used their micropolitical behaviors in a positive way to make change happen. For the most part, they were no longer followers. As a result of this change in attitude, they experienced personal and professional growth as they learned to become more positive, more helpful and to work together for the whole school's benefit. They found strength in teams, found they could trust their administrators, and discovered camaraderie at Central. The micropolitical behaviors played out in the end with improved teacher attitudes and a culture of collaborative leadership.

In the next phase, the teachers as a group became stronger as they displayed increased team and leadership skills. They now questioned everything. They needed to see that new ideas generated still matched their vision and goals. In fact, they wrote their own vision ensuring that everyone on the team knew the big picture and the goal for their students' achievement scores. They went through several professional development workshops, which helped build their teaming, communicating, visioning, and time management skills.



The teachers became stronger leaders and better managers. They became more competent and less complacent about education for their students (see table 4.5, column Phase II.). The teachers worked towards holistic learning across the entire school. Before the reform, the teachers felt threatened in their jobs if they exposed their weaknesses, so they struggled through their deficiencies quietly. During the reform, they learned to share resources and skills and helped each other out, something they seldom could do before.

By Phase III, the teachers had worked for a year on the reform and had made remarkable progress. They had learned how to work together without offending each other. They learned to appreciate, respect, and trust their principal and in turn, and they realized the principal supported them. They learned that shared leadership and shared decision-making was key to positive change. They learned they had to be committed to their vision and use best practices to make change happen for their students.

It was these skills that enabled them to align their curriculum, and it was these skills that helped them to choose a fifth grade teacher when they needed one most. As they developed trust and a team they could support, they gained power and developed a strong esprit de corps (see table 4.5 columns, Phases III and IV).

All of the identified micropolitical behavior categories of assertiveness, supportiveness, commitment, mobilization, and communicating were represented in each of the four phases (see table 4.5). What changed at Central from phase to phase was the volume of observed behaviors under each category. As the teachers progressed

through the reform during the year, the negative behaviors diminished and were replaced by more positive behaviors. The teachers, who were interviewed, despite being chosen at random, unanimously wanted the reform to continue and expressed that it was successful. There was no unanimous support for anything at the beginning of the project.

The behavioral observations suggested the research needed to be participative to be successful and that a faculty-led design was very effective with this group. Micropolitical tactics are likely to be covert when the group who is power-under has to contend with those who have power-over. It is very likely that many failed reforms were due to covert actions. When reform meets resentment, failure is the likely winner (Boles, 1992; Pettigrew, 1973; Meier 1995). The teachers expressed in their interviews that they thought there was no other way to make this reform project successful; the best way was to charge everyone on the faculty with the responsibility of change. And one of the biggest attitude changes was observed in the teachers' reversal of wanting to replace the school principal. After they saw the school change for the better under his leadership, they believed that he was good for the school and should stay as the principal. The reform effort was faculty-led, and it would have failed if the principal acted differently. At any time, he could have stopped the effort and slipped back into his old paradigm of director-led leadership, but he did not. He continued to support the teachers and they respected him for that.

The teachers put a lot of effort into planning and implementing this reform. The teachers employed some of the techniques proven to be effective in studies by Kyle, 1985; Bennett, 1986 in Wilson & Corcoran, 1987; Duttweiler, 1989 in Ballenger, 1996 and Webber, 1995. These techniques included mobilizing their resources, setting high expectations, shared leadership, understanding the big picture, and change based on input from teachers. And instead of a director-led model, the school cooperated under a collaborative leadership mode of operation.

**Research Question 2:** How does faculty-led school reform affect teachers and a school's policies and procedures? Table 4.4 below shows how the teachers created a goal to improve student achievement at Central. Each column can be interpreted as an IQA goal; *using the drivers as tools to address the intermediary factors gives these outcomes.*

Looking at each column representing the three IQAs shows how the goal changed over time from 'we need' to 'together, we can' as the teachers learned what they could do when they were empowered with a faculty-led school reform.

**Table 4.5 Observed Micropolitical Behaviors in Phases I-IV.**

<b>Observed Micropolitical Behaviors</b>				
<b>Goal: Increase Student Achievement</b>	<b>Phase I: Goal Setting IQA 1</b>	<b>Phase II: Reform Planning &amp; Implementation</b>	<b>Phase III: Goal Setting IQA 2</b>	<b>Phase IV: Evaluation IQA 3</b>
<b>Assertive Behaviors:</b>	Asserting/need a new principal	Leading	Asserting/working for reform	Asserting/working for reform
	Questioning	Questioning	Sharing in leadership	Sharing and questioning
		Clarifying directions	Sharing decision-making	More teachers leading
<b>Supportive Behaviors:</b>	Supporting	Supporting	Expressing excitement	Expressing enthusiasm
	Cooperating	Cooperating	No venting	Very trusting
	Enthusiastic	Teambuilding	Enthusiasm	Respectful
	Wanting change	Creating change	Committed to change	Committed to change
	Appearing positive	Displaying positive attitude	Appearing very positive	Camaraderie expressed
	Setting goals	Helping	Setting goals	Sensitive
		Some negativity	Principal/teachers supporting	Principal/teachers supporting
<b>Commitment to Reform:</b>	Complying	Complying	Very committed	Very committed
	Some resisting	Some resisting	Fewer resisting	Fewest resisting
	Some committing	More teachers committing	Most committed	Very committed to reform
	Many engaged	Many engaged	Most engaged	Very engaged
	Some not engaging	Accepting responsibility	Fewer not committed	Very few not committed
				Believing in change
<b>Mobilization:</b>	Teaming/forming cohorts	Forming committees	Supporting committees/teams	Committees/teams solving problems
	Requesting curriculum aligned	Aligning the curriculum	Owning/Acting on school's problems	Accepting responsibility/Creating plans
<b>Communication:</b>	Naming and blaming	Venting	No naming and blaming	No more naming/blaming
	Identifying problem	Playful bantering with principal	Trusting	Trusting
	Complaining	Constructively critiquing/analyzing	Communicating in steering/faculty meetings	Expressing hope for continued success
	Some lacking trust/fear of speaking out	Communicating with teachers/administrators	Expressing confidence	Display win/win Communications
	Some trusting	Listening to others	Accepting of change	Supporting others

Three levels of effect were discovered: the teacher's level, the school policies level and the school procedures level.

### **The Teacher's Level**

At the teacher's level, the reform instilled major changes in attitudes at Central. The teachers previously had a fairly negative attitude towards administration and felt incapable of doing any better teaching than they already were because of such things as limited resources, no administrative support, and student challenges. The teachers' effects included displaying positive attitudes toward change, assuming leadership roles, appreciating the limitations of their principal's responsibilities, building trust, accepting responsibility for academic improvement at the school level, sharing resources, skill development, and staying committed to the reform process by continuing the steering committee meetings which the teachers later called the *comite avance*.

Teachers had blamed their problems on the administrators because they believed that part of the administrator's job was to resolve school problems. The teachers learned about leadership and to build teams before stepping into a shared leadership and decision-making role.

The teachers stated they wanted to be treated more professionally. They learned when they had an issue with the principal; they needed to handle it right away. The teachers stated generally that before the reform, they were somewhat afraid to bring up issues with the principal such as requesting travel money for a field trip or money for certain supplies. So instead of getting into a confrontation, the teachers would let it go

and not ask the principal for what they needed. Instead they would go back, grumbling, into their classrooms. They also believed that the resources were doled out unfairly. During the reform, they saw it was important and healthy to address these types of issues as they came up.

The teachers recognized they needed more skills in order to work together. They went through several workshops, which would help them to achieve their academic goals. These workshops better prepared the teachers for implementing the changes they planned. The teachers learned they had to work to make the changes they wanted because only they really knew what was needed. They learned that answers to their problems weren't just going to suddenly come from the administrators. So another change was that the teachers accepted responsibility for teaching at the organizational and programmatic level, not just at the classroom level.

### **School Policies Level**

Additionally, at least three policy changes occurred. The principal and the teachers found the faculty was not only capable but also willing to write quality plans for the campus improvement plan (CIP). The teachers better understood how district policies and CIP goals affected them on the job. They learned that they could adapt the initiatives to suit their lesson plans to make them work for them. They also wanted to be included in policy changes that affected them. So going forward it is expected that the teachers will likely be involved in writing the next set of CIP goals. The teachers now

respect the need for CIP goals, something they discounted as busy work before the reform.

Another policy change was around staffing issues. Staffing directly affected the teachers, so they asserted themselves when the principal brought up a staffing change. They made sure that all needs were considered before the decision was made as to what kind of teacher was brought in to join the staff at Central. The teachers will likely ask to be involved in any staffing issues after this experience. The teachers have asked to be treated more professionally and that has also happened. The teachers, the principal, and the school were affected in a positive manner as a result of the reform since they began to work together implementing a more productive approach.

### **The Procedural Level**

At the procedural level, the teachers became a team. Collaboration and a team spirit were embraced across the school. The teachers became involved in aligning curriculums across the grades to close the gaps in education. Previous to the reform, the teachers had no say in the way the curriculum of the school was planned beyond the daily lesson planning completed within the confines of their classroom. By teaching and planning in isolation, the teachers taught curriculums with gaping holes but they didn't know where the holes were or how to fix them. The TEKS attempted to guide teaching from grade-to-grade but the individual teachers found they needed to make the fit

tighter. So one commendable change was the willingness of the teachers to create teams to look at vertical and horizontal curriculum planning more closely.

The teachers told the researcher that some grade teams examined their curriculums and were satisfied that no changes were needed. Others found gaps and addressed them by making adjustments to their curriculum. A second grade teacher found she was teaching things in the first two weeks of school that should have been taught in the first grade in math. She brought that up in a team meeting and found the first grade teachers had thought that particular lesson was a second grade lesson. When they worked it out, the first grade teachers realized their error and built that lesson into their curriculum.

**Research Question 3:** What factors facilitate and impede faculty-led reform in a school setting? The teachers answered this question when they constructed the SID (mindmap) IQA #1. The teachers believed if the 12 factors they identified (*Knowledgeable and Effective leadership, Administrative Support, Teamwork, Curriculum Alignment, Parental Involvement, High Expectations, Student Challenges, Time, Realistic Goals, Teacher Challenges, Resources, and Holistic Learning*) were properly managed and controlled, Central Elementary would benefit from a successful school reform. The teachers believed the lack of progress in these identified areas would actually impede reform. The teachers hypothesized in the first IQA that if a school could meet the defined needs of administrative support, leadership, etc., then their



students would experience gains in academic achievement. Most of these factors were found to either facilitate or impede depending on the issue or situation. However, three constant factors were considered to be the strongest drivers. They were knowledgeable and effective leadership, administrative support, and teamwork.

The teachers determined that in order to increase student achievement in a faculty-led reform, the school needed to improve in some specific areas. They believed that, first and foremost, the faculty needed knowledgeable and effective leadership. At the beginning, teachers believed that leadership had to come from the administration in a top-down manner. It was the only kind of leadership they knew in the workplace, and it was weak. The teachers thought they needed more leadership, when in fact they needed a different kind of leadership; a collaborative effort was needed. The teachers at Central discovered that top-down leadership was an impediment to increasing academic achievement.

The teachers felt they needed administrative support to enable them to do their job better. But as the teachers learned that leadership was not the sole responsibility of the principal, they became leaders themselves. They began to develop realistic expectations of their administrators and found that working as a team was essential to achieving the school's goals.

Looking at the intermediary factors, several were identified as being impediments to the students' academic achievement from the lack of curriculum alignment to the lack of parental involvement in their children's education. The teachers

were certain they needed curriculum alignment; the lack thereof appeared to be an impediment. They found many gaps between the grades both vertically and horizontally. For example because of individual differences in teachers, two second-grade teachers in the same school would not teach the exact same curriculum. This could only happen if the teachers wrote identical lesson plans and used the same exercises with the same emphasis day-to-day, but the teachers stated they did prepare their lessons together in practice.

Other challenges were considered impediments as well. The teachers expressed frustration when they could do little in a single classroom to help the many students who came with individual student challenges such as such as learning and emotional problems of students or below grade level readers. But they found through their discussions with their peers that many teachers supported addressing many of those issues as a team. The teachers recognized that student challenges had to be dealt with if they wanted to facilitate an effective reform.

They also knew a weakness or impediment was due to the lack of parental involvement across the school. They explained that many of their children's parents were not bilingual and therefore could not support studies in the English language. Plus the parents were unfamiliar with the expectations of the school regarding their child's learning and practices in the home.

The teachers also wanted more time to teach; the lack of time is always an impediment. They did learn that they could share responsibilities through a team effort and could manage their time more efficiently.

The teachers expressed that high expectations were considered an impediment because they couldn't always perform at this demanding level. The teachers wanted realistic goals to be set for them; the lack of realistic goals was a barrier to teaching effectively.

In addition, teacher challenges and the lack of sufficient resources were problems they faced together as teachers. The lack of a holistic learning approach was also an impediment to increasing the students' academic achievement.

As a result, the teachers were willing to work on many of these impeding factors. For example, the teachers determined that if curriculum alignment and parent involvement were addressed, these factors could facilitate rather than impede student learning. If the impediments became facilitators then the high expectations would then become realistic goals for the teachers.

Perhaps one of the barriers to good teaching might be the very top-down structure of the organization itself. Teachers are confined to the lower echelon of the organization chart and further isolated within the limits of their classrooms; the teachers in practice, rarely shared needs, resources, ideas, trust or skills. It was only after the perceived classroom walls came down, and when the teachers were challenged to find a better way to teach, did the teachers become empowered, learned to trust one another,

and unite in their common goal to improve academic achievement at the school level. When they understood the problem was theirs, they worked hard to resolve it.

As the teachers expressed in their IQA analyses, if all of these challenges could be managed better, they would be able to help their students increase achievement at Central. The teachers believed in this model and created a plan for improvement.

### **Additional Findings**

The teachers at Central inverted the organization chart and created a bottom-up reform, which changed the way they participated in some daily activities. The teachers learned to be collaborative and use teams to problem solve. The teachers recognized the need for curriculum alignment and did something about it. The teachers needed to find ways to give them more time to plan and they found ways to do that. They shared knowledge and improved their pedagogy. This process created ownership as described in Weiss (cited in Ovando, 1996). Teachers became more responsible for the instruction in their school as evidenced by the action teachers took to rewrite the CIP after their original version proved to be missing.

A critical moment was observed when it was time to bring on board another staff person at Central. The teachers weren't invited to give their opinion when the principal created his plan for a new teacher. He expected the teachers' would approve and support his plan for expanding their resources. When the faculty heard that the plan was to hire a technology teacher and not the 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher they felt they needed, the

teachers challenged the principal on his plan.<sup>8</sup> They made a valid case and the principal relented. This was clearly a case of teachers taking ownership and making sure they were included in the hiring of a new teacher. This was good for Central and helped keep class sizes consistently small throughout the school. The actions were supported by s (1995) that found that teachers that participated in the interviewing of teachers for hire strengthened the vision of the school and raised the overall performance of the school.

This approach resulted in a grounded theory, which reflects the teachers' plan for educational success for their students. The following hypotheses were formed from the data gathered at Central:

Hypothesis 1: The empowering of teachers creates an environment that is conducive to professional development and to building a faculty-led school reform, which improves teaching and increases academic success.

Hypothesis 2: Monitoring the micropolitics of a faculty-led school reform helps identify the political give and take that teachers experience when considering implementing changes at their school.

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<sup>8</sup> Dr. Clark was in attendance and acted as a mediator. The teachers were thankful for that.

Hypothesis 3: The IQA methodology improves the chance for success in a school reform by conducting a needs assessment and implementing a program based on those needs targeting the factors that facilitate a reform while diminishing those factors that impede a reform.

In practice, the teachers' actions seem to have supported all of these hypotheses. It appears from the data collected that at Central Elementary School student achievement at the school level was improved when teachers became leaders, built teams and gained administrative support. Then working as a team, the teachers demonstrated that to achieve continued success, the teachers would have to be committed to open communication, collaborative leadership, and mutual support. They had to move away from complacency and teaching in isolation to continue to be assertive and provide the best education for their students. As a result of their hard work, they have experienced an esprit de corps and several victories.

The empowered teachers formed a leadership team, which ultimately created a successful model for a faculty-led school reform. The results at Central showed the state test TAAS cumulative scores rose several points above its 7-year average of 72% and Central became a "Recognized" school with a cumulative score of 89.1%. This score was just a point shy of the 90% minimum for being classified as an "Exemplary" school. The teachers were very pleased with their own accomplishments and proud of their students.

From the beginning, the teachers felt that leadership was their number one obstacle. They felt strongly that the principal needed to be replaced. They felt the school district who made the decisions impressed upon them were unrealistic and out of touch. They felt the administrators were just not leading in a supportive manner to help the teachers achieve their goals of increasing academic achievement. In fact they stated at the beginning of the reform that they felt the added responsibilities from the district tended to steal their time and thwart their efforts to teach well.

Also at the beginning of the research, the teachers were disgruntled and felt they were not listened to despite the fact that they were the professionals working in the classroom with the students. They felt their professionalism as teachers was under appreciated and under utilized. It was because of these issues that the leadership and teambuilding workshop became their first priority. Teachers learned what leadership was in the workshop and then slowly learned how to use its power as teacher-leaders.

Teachers learned that they could become leaders in the school. The teachers began to change and take a proactive stance in all the decisions that pertained to teaching. They no longer thought of their domain as being limited by the walls of their classrooms. They became interested in having a say in who was hired, how classroom teachers are used, how budgets are allocated, and how to share their time and resources.

During the reform process, it was discovered that when teachers became part of the reform construct, leadership became expanded and collaborative. The collaboration was what kept the teachers involved and committed to building a better school in which

to teach. As the teachers developed the change process, they became more participative as team members and their trust levels soared as described in their interviews.

It was determined that school reform decisions must move away from using the top-down administrative model. District office personnel and school principals should no longer be the sole decision makers of a school's policies and procedures. Policy-making should include teachers as leaders because they know the issues and the culture of the school. They are the ones who are invested in the outcomes of the policies and who will turn the policies into actions at the school level.

When teachers are empowered and allowed to become an integral part of the policy decision-making arena at the school level, the teachers will be able to better support decisions made. Teachers, who have influence over policy enforcement, will understand the reasons why decisions are made the way they are and will be in a better position to support new ideas. The administrators must learn that they gain power and will make fewer mistakes when they work *with* the teachers not over the teachers.

District administrators should stop looking outside for solutions when many answers can be found within the school. The administrators should ask their own internal experts, the teachers, about the school's culture and their teaching needs. Perhaps the state's TAAS failures are not a failure of the teachers or the students but a reflection of the system and how it is not used to maximize its potential. This study showed that an administrator who listened and gave the teachers what they needed did maximize the teachers' potential as he cultivated a successful school reform. To do this



in other schools, administrators must first ask what it is that teachers need. Teachers need to be provided the support they need and the time to develop in those areas. Additionally, principals need to be developed as those who lead as opposed to those who manage. Goodlad studies showed that the inclusion of teachers in school decisions and choosing certain techniques employed by teachers and principals had a positive effect on students (1984).

One of the effective tools developed by the teachers was the school vision. The statement became the lens from which all plans for change were scrutinized. If an idea did not fit that lens, then the idea was tabled for another time. The teachers became fully focused on their goal to increase student achievement. The teachers learned that if a new policy was developed and it didn't fit the school vision, that they should question the administrators who created the policy.

The teachers should get clarification and an explanation about the discrepancy when a conflict arises between the new policy and the vision of the school. If the creators understood the school's position, then perhaps the policy could be adapted to better fit the school's needs. The teachers were initially surprised and asked if they could really do that. Around this time in the program, the teachers told the researcher that many of the skeptical teachers appeared to have changed their minds and were becoming more supportive of the reform as they saw positive change developing in the school.

Another observation was that the culture was changing at Central. Originally the teachers blamed the principal and the district administration for all of their problems. But the teachers soon learned that those problems were their problems too. They learned to become collaborative leaders and began to resolve the school problems.

Much of the change at the school was due to the increased teacher involvement. In prior research teacher involvement has also produced a negative effect. This has been documented in prior research where teacher leadership studies report that as teachers are assigned teacher-led duties, teachers may encounter obstacles, and loss of collegiality (Yager & Lee, 1994). To offset that loss at Central, teachers were taught to work in teams and to make group decisions ensuring every voice had an opportunity to be heard whether written or orally, privately or publicly, in large or small meetings.

One of the most striking changes found at Central was in the teachers' attitudes. Many issues were easily resolved when the teachers learned they had power and realized they were the ones who could make a difference in their students' academic scores. An expected outcome of this teacher-led reform included improved teacher morale and job satisfaction. Several teachers documented these changes in the later interviews. The teachers expressed that there was no more anger at Central this year. For an angry school to become a happy one is a considerable change.

One teacher admitted that she was so unhappy before the reform that she was ready to leave the school at the end of the year. But because of the reform and the camaraderie she now felt, she changed her mind and was very happy she chose to stay

at Central. In addition, a sixth grade teacher said she was surprised that she found she had things in common with a kindergarten teacher. As the teachers assumed greater responsibility for their students' academic performance, their own expectations about their professional participation also expanded. They gained newfound respect and admiration for their principal and for each other. The teachers learned each other's names. They learned that a way to increase resources was to share expertise. An additional benefit was that the teachers became interested in exploring new methods and programs. In an interview with the researcher, one teacher expressed a desire to take on her own action research project within her own classroom in the next year. The teachers were beginning to see they were not as restricted as they had previously thought.

### **More Victories**

There were more individual victories. During the year of research work, one of Central's teachers won the Elementary Teacher of the Year award and then later went on to win the district level's Teacher of the Year. She then enrolled in a Ph.D. program at a local university. Another teacher enrolled and completed the district's leadership program for teachers. Yet another enrolled and completed the district's Kindergarten Academy.

The school librarian worked with the parent coordinator and the librarian at the neighborhood branch library in a program to increase family literacy, which won a state award for expanding their neighborhood membership. The teachers helped educate the

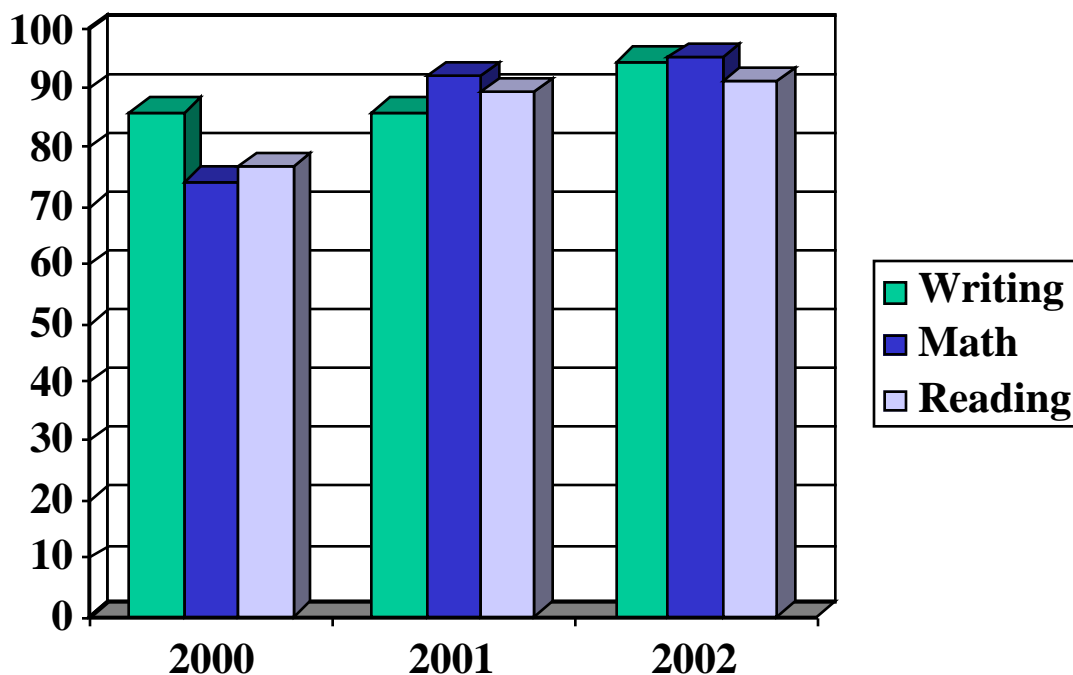
parents, who were mostly first generation in the United States, to learn about getting a library card for their children. For parents who have little money for home resources, this is an invaluable card.

This same year there were still more victories. Having experienced their first real success as collaborative leaders, the teachers were motivated and continued to practice what they learned. After the researcher had finished collecting data and left the school in December,<sup>9</sup> the students were again tested in spring 2002. The teachers continued to meet and work to resolve school issues. When the TAAS results came in, it was the first time the school had passed the 90% mark, see table 4.6 below. Central Elementary had become an “Exemplary” school. It was one of only two east-side schools to attain Exemplary “in an area where schools have struggled academically for years” (Martinez, 2002).

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<sup>9</sup> Dr. Clark continued to bring classes into the school to work on related projects.

Table 4.6: TAAS Changes Over Time



The teachers had not only met but also exceeded the principal’s challenge to become exemplary in three years by achieving it in just two years. The principal was pleased and remarked to his teachers about his pleasure in seeing the increase in achievement in Central especially because of the predominantly minority and low socio-economic population of the school, which he described as a group that people said couldn’t succeed. The teachers proved a high minority population *could* and *should* be expected to learn at a high level. The teachers were very happy and proud of their accomplishment.

When the first indicators came out about their success, the principal held a school wide party for the students, teachers, parents, administrators, and staff complete with food, clowns, and a mariachi band. The school's exemplary news was celebrated along with other schools' gains at a press conference complete with the cheerleaders and beating drums held at Central Elementary School and attended by the district superintendent.

The victories continued at Central. The teacher, who previously won Teacher of the Year, was nominated to compete against other teachers statewide for a grant awarded by a supermarket chain for Teaching Excellence. She won. She was awarded \$25,000 for a personal scholarship, and her school, Central Elementary, was awarded a matching grant of \$25,000.

Some teachers told the researcher about their appreciation for their principal and his cooperation for moving from the directive role to the supportive role during the reform. They determined that he is a good principal and were glad he was there at the school. This change in emotions documented a radical change in attitude from teachers who previously expressed about him that "we need a new principal."

Central School had learned to rise to the challenges presented to them. They learned how to work together and how to tackle problems as they arose. The teachers at Central experienced a cultural change; they have not given up on the process and gone back into isolation in their classrooms to leave the leadership decisions to others. They have continued to meet frequently at the *Comite Avance* meetings, the new name for the

steering committee. Central is their school and they are committed to its continuous improvement.

### **Summary**

In summary, through the IQA process the faculty changed the policies and procedures at Central to better suit the students. It took a year of hard work on the part of the teachers to create the changes that would support the academic achievements they gained. They were willing to give up their time to work on the issues they felt were so important for the future of their students' academic achievement.

After teachers figured out what changes they needed to put in place at Central, they had to garner support from the principal. He was not left out of the loop; and he supported the teachers because he believed in the concept of faculty-led change. The teachers stated they felt that it was difficult for the principal to learn to share power with them after 18 years of being the school's principal and the sole owner of all of the authoritative power. He supported the effort and did his best to take a back seat to the faculty-led changes. There were times where he would step back in and take over but the teachers explained they did their best to manage him, help him to share power and encourage him to listen to them.

The principal did a very wise thing when he decided to share power because the teacher empowerment provided support to all, especially the students. By his letting go

of total control, the teachers were then further motivated to keep up the pace of the demanding work required for reforming their school.

The teachers used their autonomy to be creative and innovative in their approach to reforming their school. They asked for the latest research and became better informed from their readings about education and new programs. In addition, it is important to note that this reform did not happen in a vacuum; there were other learning opportunities ongoing at the school during the reform, such as the Principles of Learning project. District initiatives were also put in place.

For the first time, the teachers no longer judged these as separate time wasters. They learned that they could take the best from each of the programs presented and adapt them to their teaching styles. Previously, the teachers told the researcher they thought they had to take each initiative and apply it exactly as prescribed. That didn't work for most teachers. The teachers said making the adaptation to suit their individual classroom, was a good way to sharpen their skills.

The teachers, who didn't know each other's names before the reform, now had animated discussions about changes and educational programs. They used graduate students as a resource and also as sounding boards for their new ideas. They learned to be creative about looking for resources and asking for help. The teachers learned new skills in leadership, communications, vision writing, time management, and how to work together as a team. They used a steering committee to keep them focused and then worked on things they knew to be important such as curriculum alignment.



They became problem solvers and were not afraid to try new solutions. A teacher stated, “I think the steering committee has helped to steer [the school] into making some decisions that were good for the school and I guess they took the bulls by the horns in terms of some very tough issues that were addressed last year.” Above all, they learned to share teaching skills and how to trust one another.

The faculty was successful in this project largely due to their having a well-planned reform with clear benefits that was easier for the stakeholders to support. Therefore, a faculty-led effort has a better chance of gaining support by the teachers who must employ reform activities and efforts. Encouraging teachers to participate in the reform design and implementation minimizes micropolitical behaviors of negative tactical maneuvering that could otherwise thwart the change effort.

The inclusion of teachers from the beginning generated a reform that was better designed, developed, and implemented, and produced change that was effective, flexible, and lasting. Leadership in schools needs to expand and include the teachers who are the key decision-makers in relationship to student learning and success.

See Chapter V for the research summary, conclusions and recommendations.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

In this chapter, the summary, conclusions, and recommendations are described. The sections that follow include the summary of the study, research methods, summary of the findings, implications for practice, implications for future research, and the conclusions.

#### **Summary of the Study**

The study sought to identify, describe, and categorize the teacher strategies, which influence change at both the organizational and programmatic level in a low-socioeconomic elementary school. A micropolitical perspective was employed to observe and analyze the teachers' behavior as they built and implemented a faculty-led school reform (Ball, 1987; Ballenger, 1996; Blase, 1987; Hoyle, 1986). The researcher worked as a facilitator and mentor with the teachers to help them attain their goal of increasing their school's academic achievement.

The review of the literature indicated that past reform programs often failed due to a lack of planning, vision, and commitment by those who must conform to the change (Kaufman, 1995; Dalrymple and Drew, 2000). A new model for change, one that was carefully planned, shared a vision and a commitment by the teachers as well as

by the principal had to be developed. At Central, the teachers did not want to experience another failed program.

Since a school reform required teachers' time and energy, they requested and were given the autonomy to give final approval of any plans that affected them. With that guarantee, they agreed to participate in a faculty-led school reform. The new model evolved from this agreement. The teachers and the researcher made a commitment to work together to find an effective methodology to improve academic achievement.

Three research questions guided the research:

1. How does the micropolitics of faculty-led school reform get played out in the school setting?
2. How does faculty-led school reform affect teachers and a school's policies and procedures?
3. What factors facilitate and impede faculty-led reform in a school setting?

These questions were answered by employing the following methodology.

### **Research Methods**

Employing action research techniques helped meet the requirements of the research project. Action research allowed for changes in the reform as the teachers' needs were identified and addressed. A grounded theory was produced from the research.

To get the participants working together on this action research project, the researcher used a tool, the Interactive Qualitative Analysis (IQA) 1) to observe the behaviors of the teachers; 2) to deductively code the meaning of the identified behaviors; and 3) to analyze the cause and effect relationships of those behaviors (Northcutt, Miles et al, 1998).

The outcome of the IQA process is illustrated in the Systems Influence Diagram (SID), a graphic model or mindmap, describing the teachers' perspective of the ideal behaviors necessary to implement increased student achievement. Using this technique, the 'teachers' world as seen by them' was mapped out in the pre-test or analysis phase. This mapping technique guided the teachers so they could create a plan of action by focusing on removing the barriers to reform and discover the resources they needed to resolve those issues.

By addressing the most important problems first, a course of action was constructed for improving academic achievement at the school level. The teachers worked for a year with the researcher as facilitator/mentor, trying to resolve many of the identified problems. Workshops were developed and implemented as required to address the staff development needs identified by the teachers. At the end of the first year, a second or post-test IQA was repeated to indicate changes over time in behavior, perception, and cause and effect. The researcher looked for changes between the two plans. The researcher also looked to see if there were positive or negative changes in the teachers' perception of "their world" a year later.

Field notes were taken and placed in a notebook along with the workshop materials, survey results, interview results, and email messages. The study was triangulated or verified by comparing the results from the IQAs, the interviews, and the observations by the researcher. Three random interviews, A, B, and C, were conducted before the second IQA. The evaluative interviews, D-P, were conducted with 13 additional randomly selected teachers who were in attendance at the first two IQAs. The results of the evaluative interviews are presented in a table in appendix F.

There were about 30 or more teachers present at each IQA workshop. Thirteen teachers were interviewed, which represents over one third of the target population. Teachers from all areas of the school were represented in the interviews, including all demographic areas as well as primary and upper grades teachers. Special area teachers such as music, parent coordinators, and curriculum specialists were also interviewed.

The researcher, in conjunction with the teachers, developed a grounded theory of reform that was effective academically for Central. The researcher believes that because the grounded theory model using action research was constructed by meeting the unique demands of the entire faculty, the methodology is transferable to other schools whose faculty could also build their own distinctive model for reform.

Using grounded research guidelines, the data was analyzed. The relationships between the data and the theories emerged from the IQAs, the observations, and the interviews. The conceptual framework was adapted from a study using interactive qualitative analysis by Northcutt (1998). The theoretical micropolitical framework was

adapted from the studies by Ball (1987); Blase (1989); Hoyle (1986); and Pfeffer (1981) on the use of power in organizations to achieve preferred outcomes.

### **Summary of Findings**

The three research questions that guided the research along with the results for each are summarized below.

1. How does the micropolitics of faculty-led school reform get played out in the school setting?

At the beginning of the reform project, the teachers believed that most school problems belonged to the administrators and the classroom problems belonged to the teachers. The teachers individually operated, within that small area of responsibility within their own classroom. Just as the teachers understood they were responsible for their job in the classroom they expected the principal should be responsible for the school level performance. They complained to the researcher that if the school as a whole had problems, then It was the principal's problem. If the school had problems it was likely because the principal was a poor leader or was not being responsible. They were disappointed in the principal for not resolving all of their school issues. Therefore the teachers felt justified in asking for a new principal.

Teachers wanted change, but many did not want to work at it. They reasoned they had enough to do. From the teachers' perspective, it was easier for the teachers to

continue taking care of their classroom responsibilities and to ask for a new principal.

The new principal could come in and solve the school's problems.

But some teachers saw this project as an opportunity to make needed changes at the school. These teachers worked hard at trying to sway the rest of the teachers to sign on and support the reform effort. They reasoned, that they would never be given another chance to be a part of the solution. Others argued, based on prior experience, that these types of reform projects always failed and their teaching time was too valuable to be wasted.

There were a lot of micropolitical behaviors displayed, throughout the reform. The teachers became more confident as they won small successes. The researcher observed the teachers exhibiting assertive behavior and leadership in increasing amounts as they progressed through the reform process. They looked for more opportunities where they could address and resolve the school's problems.

Teachers displayed several micropolitical behaviors including direct questioning, supporting and cooperating behaviors, forming cohorts, enthusiasm, exhibiting a positive attitude, and setting goals for improvement. Most teachers made a commitment to the reform process, but some were not committed at all. The latter group resisted change and tried their best to display negativity by minimally participating in meetings and exercises. They formed a negative cohort, but the group membership became smaller over time, as non-supporters became supporters. By the end of the second year, it appeared the negative cohort had shrunk significantly.

Before the end of the first year, most teachers learned that they, not the administrators, were responsible for the results of the educational programs at the school level. They learned they had to become the problem solvers. Their whole approach to problem solving at the school level changed and they began to work collaboratively. They became interested in the well being of all the students in the school not just the students who sat in their classrooms.

By the time they moved into the second year of the reform, the teachers had learned to become leaders, had learned to problem solve, and continued to use their micropolitical behaviors in a positive way to make change happen. They became teacher-leaders, not followers. They experienced personal and professional growth as they learned to become more positive, more helpful, and to work together for the good of the school. They found strength in teams, found they could trust their administrators, and discovered camaraderie at Central. The micropolitical behaviors played out in the end with improved teacher attitudes and a culture of collaborative leadership at Central.

Whereas the teachers originally wanted to replace their principal, the teachers learned to respect his leadership and no longer felt he had to be replaced. Instead, a true collaborative mode of operation became the norm.

2. How does faculty-led school reform affect teachers and a school's policies and procedures?



Three levels of affect were discovered: one) at the teachers' attitude; two) at the school policies level and; three) at the school procedures level. The reform instilled major changes in teachers' attitudes at Central. The teachers' effects included displaying positive attitudes toward change, assuming leadership roles, appreciating the limitations of their own principal's responsibilities, building trust, accepting responsibility for academic improvement at the school level, sharing resources, skill development, and staying committed to the reform process by continuing the comite avance steering committee meetings.

At the policy level, at least three effects were evident: hiring policies, CIP policy setting, and the adapting of district initiative policies. The teachers influenced the hiring policies. When the principal wanted to hire a technology person, the teachers felt strongly that an additional 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher would better help the school attain its increased achievement goals. So the teachers became involved in staff hiring policies.

Also the teachers became involved with writing the Campus Improvement Plans (CIP). The principal found the faculty was not only capable but also willing to write quality plans for the campus improvement plans (CIP). The teachers better understood how policies affected them on the job. They wanted to be included in policy changes that affected them. The teachers now respect the need for CIP goals and participate in their construction, something they discounted as "busy work" before the reform.

A strong factor in moving forward with the reform was the recognition that district policies and CIP goals need to be analyzed, built upon, and made usable for the

teachers by the teachers. This was true in the area of district initiatives. The teachers often resented initiatives put upon them by the district office without consulting to see whether the initiative met the teachers' needs. The teachers learned that they could adapt the initiatives to suit their lesson plans to make the initiatives work for them.

At the procedural level, collaboration and a team spirit was embraced by the teachers as they became a team. They became involved in aligning curriculums across the grades to close the gaps in education. They shared responsibility for school commitments and created strategies to free up more time for meetings. They wrote a school vision and implemented a school plan for academic improvement. They used the vision as a lens to keep them focused on the changes needed to increase academic achievement at their school.

### 3. What factors facilitate and impede a faculty-led reform in a school setting?

The teachers constructed the mindmap in IQA #1 based on their belief, that if the 12 factors they identified (*Knowledgeable and Effective leadership, Administrative Support, Teamwork, Curriculum Alignment, Parental Involvement, High Expectations, Student Challenges, Time, Realistic Goals, Teacher Challenges, Resources, and Holistic Learning*) were properly managed and controlled, Central Elementary would benefit from a successful school reform. Most all of these factors were found to either facilitate or impede depending on the issue or situation.

However, at least three factors were regarded as constant facilitators. These included knowledgeable and effective leadership, administrative support, and teamwork. These were evaluated to be the strongest of the factors that facilitated the reform. When teachers learned that leadership was not the sole responsibility of the principal, they became leaders themselves. They began to have realistic expectations of the administrators and found that working as a team with collaborative leadership was key to achieving the school's goals.

On the other hand, several factors were identified as impediments resulting from not having their curriculum aligned, to not having parents involved in their children's education. High expectations were also considered an impediment because teachers expressed doubt over whether they could necessarily achieve the goals set before them. Student challenges, such as learning and emotional problems of students or below grade-level readers, were an impediment because individualization in the classroom was required. The lack of enough time for teaching was a problem all the teachers agreed upon as being an impediment.

Teacher challenges such as commitment, hard work and determination, and being unbiased were considered to be outcomes because the teachers felt these would be less of an impediment if the other factors were resolved. Resources were also considered to be an outcome for the same reasons. The teachers felt that if the preceding factors were resolved, there would be enough resources to go around. Another outcome the teachers hoped to see come out of the reform was holistic learning for the children.

However, the above listed factors might affect the achievement of the primary outcomes such as teacher challenges, resources and holistic learning.

As a result, the teachers were willing to work on many of the impeding factors. For instance, the teachers determined that if curriculum alignment and parent involvement were addressed, these factors could facilitate rather than impede student learning. If the impediments became facilitators, then the high expectations could become realistic goals for the teachers.

If student challenges were better addressed, the teachers would be able to teach more lessons. If teachers had more time to teach, the extra time would facilitate learning. If teachers had realistic goals to guide them, then they might be less stressed when given new district initiatives. The teachers stated they often supplemented their supplies with items they purchase out of pocket. Increased resources could become a facilitator when teachers didn't have to work so hard at getting them. And finally, if the school had a holistic learning plan, increased resources would mean increased student achievement.

### **Additional Findings**

The teachers previously believed that to increase student achievement, they needed knowledgeable and effective leadership. Initially, they believed that leadership had to come from the administration in a top-down, directive manner. It was the only kind of leadership in a school setting they knew. The teachers were right to state they

needed more leadership but they were mistaken to assume it was only principal leadership they needed. And they were right to be concerned about reform failures in the past because studies show the directive approach for school improvement often results in failure (Pettigrew, 1973; Meier 1995; Lieberman and Miller, 1999). However, the teachers learned that the kind of leadership needed was found within themselves. The teacher-as-leader model was essential to change at Central.

The reform helped teachers to become motivated leaders, helped them to address many of the school's problems, and helped them give their students more individualized attention where and when they needed it. The teachers also wanted more time to teach. They learned that they could manage their time better if they worked together and shared some of their responsibilities. Additionally, this strong teacher leadership team supported the principal. As a result of these combined efforts, the TAAS scores increased dramatically.

The teachers in the faculty-led school reform demonstrated that to achieve continued success, the teachers must commit to continued communication, collaborative leadership, and support for one another. As teacher leaders, they had to move away from complacency and isolation and continue to be assertive to provide the best education for all of their students across the school. As a result of their hard work and team efforts, they experienced an esprit de corps and several wins.

Studies on effective schools have indicated that the leadership of the school plays an important part in the development of an effective school (Brookover &

Lezotte, 1979; Venetzky & Winfield, 1979; Weber, 1971). The teachers and the principal at Central learned that by developing the teachers' leadership skills, they could work effectively towards achieving their school's vision. The teachers worked hard to increase their students' academic success, and as a result Central became an effective and Exemplary school in a very short time.

As the teachers assumed greater responsibility for students' academic performance, their own expectations about their professional participation also expanded. Teacher involvement in campus leadership has been documented to some extent. For instance, teacher leadership studies report that as teachers are assigned teacher-leader duties, teachers may encounter obstacles, and loss of collegiality (Yager & Lee, 1994). However, at Central, such loss of collegiality was diminished when teachers learned to work in teams and to make group decisions ensuring every voice had an opportunity to be heard whether written or orally, privately or publicly, or in large or small meetings.

Other studies have suggested that teachers that are not prepared to lead may lack the skills to perform the demanding tasks associated with leadership (Tester, 1998). The strategic plan at Central enabled the teachers to immediately discover that leadership was the number one issue to be resolved. At Central as the teachers discovered their own school's deficiencies, they requested workshops so they could learn how to develop those leadership skills. It was that initiative to learn to lead that drove the reform process towards success.

One of the biggest changes at Central was found in the teachers' attitudes. Many issues were easily resolved when the teachers learned they had power and realized they were the ones who could make a difference in their student's academic scores. An expected outcome of this teacher-led reform included improved teacher morale and job satisfaction. Several teachers later documented these changes in the interviews. The teachers expressed that there was no more anger at Central this year. For an angry school to become a happy one is a considerable change.

An additional benefit from the reform was the development of teachers' interest in exploring new methods and programs. In one interview, one teacher expressed the desire to take on her own action research project in her classroom in the next year. The teachers were beginning to see they were not as restricted as they had previously thought.

It was only after the perceived classroom walls came down, and when the teachers were challenged to find a better way to teach, did the teachers become empowered, learn to trust one another, and become united in their common goal to improve academic achievement at the school level. When they understood the problem was theirs, they worked hard to resolve it.

The study at Central illustrated that top-down leadership which was previously in place did not work to increase academic scores in their school. Schainker and Roberts (1987) argued that the complexity of school leadership might actually paralyze the leader. That may well be what happened to the principal at Central when the school's

academic achievement had not risen for seven years prior to the reform. However, the teachers found that collaborative leadership was very successful for reform at Central. As one teacher stated, “We know that [the reform] is very important. And we won’t have it unless we are united, we just won’t. Being a group of talented people is not going to get us there. Because we’ve been there for years.”

### **Implications for Practice**

What can schools learn from this case study? It was determined that in terms of governance, school reform decisions must move away from the traditional top-down administrative model. Central office personnel and school principals should no longer be the sole decision makers of a school’s policies and procedures. Regarding school leadership, policy-making for a school should include teacher leadership because the teachers know both the issues and the culture of the school; are invested in the outcomes of the policies; and know how to best turn policies into action items at the school level.

In terms of leadership, when teachers are empowered and allowed to become integral parts of the policy decision-making arena at the school level, the teachers will be able to better support decisions made. Empowered teachers, who have influence over policy development and implementation, will understand the reasons why decisions are made the way they are and will be in a better position to support change. The



administrators must learn that they gain power and will make fewer mistakes when they work *with* the teachers not *over* the teachers.

District administrators should stop looking outside for solutions when many answers can be found within the school. The administrators should ask their own internal experts, the teachers, about the school's culture and their school's specific teaching needs. Not all school cultures are the same; not all school administrators are the same; not all teachers are the same; and not all students are the same. So individualized programs must be considered to fit the needs of a school, administrators, principals, and students. Perhaps, the state's TAAS failures are not a failure of the teachers or the students but a reflection of the system and how it is not used to maximize its potential.

Analyzing the project further, the research revealed a paradigm change in leadership at Central. There is a valuable lesson for other schools in this analysis. The teachers and the principal learned that they had to change their attitudes towards solving the problems of the school. In the process, they learned that leadership is not the same as authority. It is important to realize that the principal did not give up his authority when he learned to be a collaborative leader. The teachers learned they did not usurp the principal's authority when they learned to be collaborative leaders. When the leadership style of the school became collaborative, the principal still maintained his authority and position. He became a better principal because he learned to listen and give support whereas previously, he would have been the sole decision maker.

Further analysis revealed there were ten elements that were essential to the school's reform. Each element had a profound role in the outcome of the reform. The researcher suggests that if any of these necessary elements were compromised, then the successful outcome at Central could have been flawed. The elements that every school needs to include when building a reform are:

1. Begin building a reform only after the group has made a commitment
2. Teach leadership and teambuilding to teachers and administrators
3. Provide support & develop trust for all
4. Use data to strategically plan
5. Create relevant and on-going professional development
6. Develop a partnership with a college or university
7. Teach teachers and administrators about collaboration
8. Integrate new programs with existing programs
9. Ask for voluntary participation and to ensure fairness, use voting and majority rule
10. Create a vision for the project and use it as a lens to stay focused on the project.

### **Implications for Further Research**

Due to the scarcity of research in the micropolitics of faculty-led school reform, the study was conceived as a single case study conducted in a single elementary school. Since the student achievement improved so dramatically, it would be valuable to

duplicate the study at other schools to test the hypothesis that a faculty designed, developed, and implemented reform could be successful at another location. It would be interesting to see it tested at other school levels as well. The process could also be repeated at several schools simultaneously by working with a group of schools on successive days. Facilitators could be trained to teach this process and more schools could be targeted for professional and academic development.

Furthermore, future studies are needed to further test the grounded theories from this research data that follow:

Hypothesis 1: The empowering of teachers creates an environment that is conducive to professional development and to building a faculty-led school reform, which improves teaching and increases academic success.

Hypothesis 2: Monitoring the micropolitics of a faculty-led school reform helps identify the political give and take that teachers experience when considering implementing changes at their school.

Hypothesis 3: The IQA methodology improves the chance for success in a school reform by conducting a needs assessment and implementing a program based on those needs targeting the factors that facilitate a reform while diminishing those factors that impede a reform.

## **Conclusion**

Collaborative leadership, which is inclusive of principals and teachers, may foster higher levels of student achievement. This study showed that an administrator who listened and gave teachers what they needed--the power to lead, the power to teach, and the time to learn how to best implement it--maximized the teachers' potential as he cultivated a successful school reform. In the end everyone gained. The school gained Exemplary status; the district gained an Exemplary school; the teachers were regarded as professionals, became motivated, and took pride in their successful school; the students gained academically; the parents gained with the knowledge that their historically at-risk children were being educated at an exemplary school; and, in addition, their neighborhood properties gained in value.

As stated before, when professionals in schools do recognize the need for change and select a model, they may lack the resources or allocate insufficient resources to bring about that change. Despite the demand for immediate improvement, schools must stop reacting with reforms that are brought about haphazardly. They must begin with a strategic plan; they must have a vision; they must have a set of clear goals and objectives; and they must have the full support and commitment of the teachers. As other researchers suggest (Meier, 1995; Lieberman and Miller, 1999) reform failures may be due to improper implementation rather than due to lack of teacher motivation.

The administrators must first ask what it is that teachers need. Teachers need to be given the time to figure out what they need in a constructive manner. An outside

facilitator should walk the faculty through the process for identifying their problems and help guide their path to success. Teachers then need to be provided the support they need and the time to develop in those areas. Teachers interested in affecting student academic performance must assume greater responsibility for their experience and professionalism.

The teachers at Central accepted the challenge of building a school reform, taking on the leadership and the responsibility needed to be successful in raising the TAAS scores. The increased results came not because the teachers “taught the test” but because of the combination of all the hard work they put in towards attaining that goal. The credit of this success story goes to the teachers and the principal who worked both inside and outside of the classroom to improve their curriculum and to become better leaders.

The changes that resulted from the reform effort were positive. The teachers stated they already considered the reform to be a success, professionally speaking, before they heard about the TAAS results. In terms of academic success, the TAAS results provided tangentially, if not definitively, that the reform was also an academic success. Other smaller programs were going on at the same time, but none spent as much time across the school with all of the teachers or were as all-encompassing as this project was at Central.

The important thing is that the teachers at Central now understand the meaning of an exemplary school. They know they can help all students raise their academic

achievement scores because they know *no es donde viene; si no a donde vas*. It's not where you're from; it's where you are going.

## **APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX B

### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Last January how did you feel about the idea of reform at Sanchez?
2. At that time, how would you describe the feelings of the other teachers towards the reform project?
3. How were decisions made at Sanchez before we started the reform process?
4. What issues did the teachers feel strongly about wanting to change?
5. Were there other issues discussed by your colleagues?
6. Last spring, we went through a series of workshops. Can you tell me on a scale of 1 to 5 how they have helped you and the faculty?

Leadership and Teambuilding

Communications

Vision

Statement Writing

7. How effective has this school reform been at Sanchez?
8. What changes are taking place at Sanchez?
9. To what level are you satisfied with the approach of the project?
10. To what degree do you feel that your voice is heard in this reform effort?
11. Do you feel that the majority of the faculty's voice is heard in this reform effort?
12. Has leadership changed in any way?



13. Do you feel you have experienced personal growth during this project?
14. Are there any changes in the faculty's approach towards education in the classroom?
15. I found that your school has take on the curriculum alignment goal identified by the IRD process last January. It has happened in the Tuesday meetings that the steering committee set up this year. How is that working?
16. Are you happy with the reform effort?
17. Do you want to continue with the reform project?
18. We had another IQA exercise, "the cards" as the teachers call them, did you see any change from last year's results to this year's results?

## APPENDIX C

### IQA #1 AFFINITIES, SUB-AFFINITIES AND IF/THEN STATEMENTS

#### 1. Knowledgeable/Effective Leadership

- β *Academic Leadership, lacking knowledge of academics, subject matter experts*
- β *Administration/District needs to “get real”*
- β *Professional*
- β *Fear of emotional outburst from top administrator*
- β *Accountability for implementation of strategies - how will it be done?*
- β *We are going to need to make sure our new teachers are guided, informed, nurtured, etc., in order for it to work. We tend to forget about them.*
- β *Professional development of administrators*
- β *Teacher concerns need to be legitimized - support -*
- β *Teachers and Administrators need to be more informed*
- β *Old baggage from the past*
- β *Trusting faculty to make and carry out decisions. Too many decisions are changed by administrators*
- β *Too many things going on*
- β *Focus on one program*
- β *Dual language*
- β *On our campus we have many different ideas about what works*

- β *No follow through; just always beginning new things*
- β *More focus for our energies*
- β *Follow through on everything started*
- β *Ownership*
- β *More structure and direction rather than money or materials*

## 2. Administrative Support

- β *Administrative Support*
- β *Support*
- β *More Administrative support*
- β *More support (admin.)*
- β *Support from Administration*
- β *Direction, Guidance*
- β *More support for the teacher in terms of discipline*
- β *No tolerance policy, re: discipline*
- β *"0" tolerance for unacceptable behavior (across the school-administration)*
- β *Need better behavior system*
- β *Excellent behavior management*
- β *Improved consequences to discipline on administrative level - pro no tolerance*
- β *Zero tolerance policy on discipline*
- β *Need enforced school wide discipline plan*

### 3. Teamwork

- β *More team building among the teachers*
- β *Teacher teamwork*
- β *A better feeling or spirit of working together to achieve*
- β *More collegial planning*
- β *Collaboration*
- β *Better organization of materials and team sharing and planning*
- β *Collegiality*
- β *Unity*
- β *Different visions or philosophies of best teaching practices*
- β *Better communication, perhaps a school newsletter*
- β *Need to increase communication among the grade levels*
- β *Better communication of expectations: student, faculty, administrative, custodial*
- β *There must be unity among the faculty. A school-wide plan is part of this strong communication.*
- β *Needs to be more shakeup of bad practices. Just because we've "done it before" doesn't mean it continues to be effective (good practices)*

#### 4. Curriculum Alignment

- ℳ *Curriculum alignment*
- ℳ *Curriculum adjustment*
- ℳ *Vertical team planning - weekly!!*
- ℳ *Curriculum needs to be more structurally aligned*
- ℳ *Vertical alignment within the campus*
- ℳ *Aligned teaching within grade levels and vertically*
- ℳ *What about the non-tested subjects?*
- ℳ *Effective planning*
- ℳ *Individual and team planning needs to increase*
- ℳ *Focused instruction, focused curriculum*
- ℳ *Curriculum development, integrated oriented*
- ℳ *More field trips for class curriculum*
- ℳ *Increase organizational skills*
- ℳ *Teach test taking skills*
- ℳ *Increase test taking skills*
- ℳ *Increase note taking skills*
- ℳ *Tutoring after school*

#### 5. Student Challenges

- ℳ *Early identification of special needs*

- β *We've got a new kind of society, we need to meet the learning needs of our kids (charges) not them fit into our way*
- β *How do we get our lowest kids to improve this much? We have already tried so many times with them?*
- β *Student achievement is already very average if not low, so being exemplary is unreasonable*
- β *Increase below reading level students to on level*
- β *Below grade level readers*
- β *How is this possible when half of the students are reading 2-3 grade levels below?*
- β *Meeting the needs of all the children*
- β *(Problem) high student turnover*
- β *Learning and emotional problems of students*
- β *Student motivation*
- β *Intrinsic motivation*
- β *Showing off student achievement - celebrating successes*
- β *Student participation*
- β *Motivation, energy, student/teacher*
- β *Student motivation*
- β *Student motivation*
- β *Need to change student attitude "I don't have to"*

β *Motivation, energy, teacher and student*

## 6. Parental Involvement

β *More parent support*

β *Increase in parental involvement*

β *Parent support and participation*

β *Student home support*

β *Lack of support from home; being able to make contact with parents*

β *Parental involvement (x3)*

β *Student and parent motivation*

β *Need parents more involved*

β *Gaining the cooperation of parents from those students I consider behind*

β *Parent responsibility*

β *More parent participation*

β *Home/School connection*

β *What will it take to really get many more of our parents as partners in this effort?*

β *Resources 0% parental involvement*

β *Parents need to support their children*

β *Parent participation (cooperation)*

β *Parental support*

- β *Parental support and concerns*
- β *Team effort (parent-student-teacher)*
- β *Community involvement*
- β *Social workers out in the community*
- β *Building a sense of family/community pride in school*
- β *Work at meaningful involvement of parents and community*
- β *Parents/Community involvement*
- β *Community involvement*
- β *Strengthening mentoring program*

## 7. Time

- β *Time*
- β *Better management of time*
- β *Time to plan*
- β *Time to research, share, and discern our practices*
- β *Time for reflection and evaluation (daily)*
- β *Need more than just one year*
- β *Organization so deadlines/programs don't come at us at the last minute*
- β *Time to collaborate with teachers*
- β *More planning time*
- β *Time*



- ⌘ *More planning time (esp. Vertical alignment)*
- ⌘ *Planning time*
- ⌘ *More planning time*
- ⌘ *Spend more time at school (after hours) I have a family!*
- ⌘ *Teacher's personal needs (consideration)*
- ⌘ *More support time for special need students*
- ⌘ *Planning time with team*
- ⌘ *Need more time!*
- ⌘ *Morning assembly takes away too much instructional time for students*
- ⌘ *There must be time for change to occur, it might take one year*
- ⌘ *Time to explore test materials*
- ⌘ *Time to implement teaching techniques*
- ⌘ *Time for planning/training/follow through*
- ⌘ *More vertical planning at least with next grade*
- ⌘ *Making time for thoughtful planning*
- ⌘ *We don't share planning period w/our teams. We need some built in planning time together*
- ⌘ *Time*
- ⌘ *Planning time*
- ⌘ *More time to teach math*
- ⌘ *More planning time*

β *Time*

## 8. High Expectations

β *Special Ed?*

β *Our students must be the ones we want to make exemplary. Some difference between school - students*

β *Resources 0% of students need to perform at or above on TAAS*

β *Need all grade levels to expect more of the students*

β *Commitment that all students can succeed!*

## 9. Realistic Goals

β *Is this goal too high for us? Unattainable*

β *The belief that it is impossible at this school*

β *Keeping things realistic - reality - Get real*

β *Let the teachers set and own the goals for the year*

β *Anxiety of both staff and students - Reality*

β *The level the children are at when they arrive in my classroom - Reality*

β *Need a good plan*

β *It would be great to be “exemplary”*

β *A plan*

- β *Will we have to abandon balanced literacy instruction and focus on skills work?  
At what cost?*
- β *What will I need to stop doing instructionally in order to do the level of TAAS  
performance?*

#### 10. Teacher Challenges

- β *Commitment*
- β *Commitment*
- β *Hard work and determination*
- β *Faith*
- β *Belief*
- β *Time 0% participation from entire school*
- β *Flexibility*
- β *Multi-cultural*
- β *Unbiased*
- β *Understanding*
- β *Increase teacher motivation*
- β *Teacher well-being - endurance*
- β *Stability - role of teacher - too many multiple hats*
- β *Morale boosters*
- β *Better/ increased attitude or morale with faculty +positive*

- β *Low teacher morale*
- β *Need good attitudes (teacher and students)*
- β *Incentives*

## 11. Resources

- β *Resources - ideas that have worked*
- β *Time, money and training, equipment, parental involvement*
- β *Constructive use of resources and easy access to them*
- β *Equipment*
- β *Working computer lab*
- β *Need our computers to be working*
- β *Technology*
- β *Working computers*
- β *Materials*
- β *More hands on materials*
- β *Content mastery resources*
- β *More resources (books, dictionaries, etc...)*
- β *More accelerated reader books/program development*
- β *Tools needed: effective teaching materials for primary grades*
- β *Funding*
- β *Money*

- ℔ *Allow money for teachers to purchase necessary materials*
- ℔ *Need more \$ for books to meet needs of some of the students*
- ℔ *Resources, assistance, people*
- ℔ *Additional professional personnel: i.e., technology*
- ℔ *Resources - an aide to help develop materials (charts, games, etc.)*
- ℔ *Resources - vocabulary. Development (Eng/Sp) - more equity in resources especially in library and literacy room (all levels)*
- ℔ *Teacher aide at each grade level - to make the extra “resources” we don’t have time for*
- ℔ *Better use of \$ \$ & staff positions*
- ℔ *Need paraprofessional help (aides)*
- ℔ *Skilled helpers/assistants in the classroom*
- ℔ *Teachers’ aide (to free teacher of time consuming chores, i.e. copies)*
- ℔ *Put more money into people, not more things.*
- ℔ *More presentations from artists, musicians, scientists, etc.*
- ℔ *The lowest kids in my class really need extra guided (adult) practice time for every learning activity. Do we have enough people?*
- ℔ *Not enough special education people*
- ℔ *More support for struggling students, teachers*
- ℔ *Content mastery ~ remediation ~ tutoring for low performing students*
- ℔ *Training*

- β *Training on running a “diverse” learner classroom*
- β *Additional training on how to teach at risk kids*
- β *Training*
- β *Training*
- β *Training for modifications for special populations (i.e. G/T, spec. Ed) for inclusion to be more beneficial*
- β *Interactive training - hands on*
- β *Valuable training on faculty development days*
- β *Special programs ~ training for at risk students.*
- β *G/T training or G/T team leader*
- β *Let teachers choose the training that will help them*
- β *G/T pullout or even better G/T training*
- β *Training*
- β *Specific help for pre-K, K and 1st where TAAS is concerned*
- β *Increased computer skills*
- β *I would like to hear from other exemplary schools. How do they get there? What did it take?*
- β *Need smaller class size*
- β *Smaller classes*
- β *Limit all class sizes to 1 Curriculum Alignment students*
- β *Lower student/teacher ratio*

- β *Smaller number of students*
- β *Lower class sizes in all grades. Not just K-Teamwork*
- β *Need smaller class size*
- β *Better teacher/student ratio - smaller class size*
- β *Smaller classes*
- β *Smaller class size*

## 12. Holistic Learning

- β *Whole learning is part of being exemplary*
- β *Have curriculum Specialists work with teachers. Currently I feel that they “report back” to principal on what teachers do wrong instead of aid teachers*
- β *We need to focus more on long term not just each year, each TAAS test. I want our kids to be life long learners/love learning*
- β *Teaching to the test instead of teaching students to think*
- β *Less emphasis on TAAS test strategies more focus on real learning*
- β *Student’s present level*
- β *We’re always looking for one magic pill and there isn’t one*
- β *An attitude that the students are whole learners, not just TAAS learners*

### **IF/Then Statements IQA #1**

#### **1. High Expectations**

High Expectations † Knowledgeable and Effective Leadership

If you want to have High Expectations, then you must have Knowledgeable and Effective Leadership.

High Expectations ⇄ Parental Involvement

If there were greater Parental Involvement, then it would be easier to have High Expectations.

High Expectations ⇄ Teamwork

If there is a great amount of Teamwork, then high expectations will be met.

High Expectations ⇄ Curriculum Alignment

If we have High Expectations, then we will have to Align our Curriculum.

High Expectations ⇄ Realistic Goals

If we have High Expectations, then we can reach Realistic Goals.

High Expectations ⇄ Teacher Challenges

If we have High Expectations, then we have to accept Teacher Challenges.

High Expectations ⇄ Student Challenges

If we have High Expectations, then we must accept Student Challenges.

High Expectations ⇄ Resources

If we have adequate/equitable Resources, then it will facilitate meeting the High Expectations.

High Expectations ⇄ Time

If Time is allocated effectively, the High Expectations will more likely be met.

High Expectations ⇄ Administrative Support



If we have AS, then will have whole learning as a criterion for High Expectations and exemplary schools.

High Expectations  $\Rightarrow$  Holistic Learning

If we focus on whole learning, then we can better meet High Expectations.

## **2. Knowledgeable and Effective Leadership**

Knowledgeable and Effective Leadership  $\Rightarrow$  Parental Involvement

If you have Effective and Knowledgeable Leadership, then you will have parental involvement.

Knowledgeable and Effective Leadership  $\Rightarrow$  Teamwork

If we have Knowledgeable and Effective (K/E) Leadership, Teamwork will be easier.

Knowledgeable and Effective Leadership  $\Rightarrow$  Curriculum Alignment

If we have Knowledgeable and Effective Leadership, then Curriculum Alignment will be easier to implement.

Knowledgeable and Effective Leadership  $\Rightarrow$  Realistic Goals

If we have Knowledgeable and Effective Leadership, then we will be able to set realistic goals.

Knowledgeable and Effective Leadership  $\Rightarrow$  Teacher Challenges

If we have Knowledge and Effective Leadership, then teacher challenges will be fewer, decreased, and easier to manage.

Knowledgeable and Effective Leadership  $\Rightarrow$  Student Challenges

If we have Knowledgeable and Effective Leadership, then we student challenges will be fewer, decreased, and easier to manage.

Knowledgeable and Effective Leadership ⇄ Resources

If we have Knowledgeable and Effective Leadership, then Resources will be allocated effectively.

Knowledgeable and Effective Leadership ⇄ Time

If we have Knowledgeable and Effective Leadership, then Time will be allocated and compensated effectively.

Knowledgeable and Effective Leadership ⇄ Administrative Support

If we have Knowledgeable and Effective Leadership, then we will expect the support of Administration.

Knowledgeable and Effective Leadership ⇄ Holistic Learning

If we have Knowledgeable and Effective Leadership and support, then we can implement whole learning for exemplary schools.

### **3. Parent Involvement**

Parent Involvement ⇄ Teamwork

If we have Parent Involvement, then teamwork will increase.

Parent Involvement ⇄ Curriculum Alignment

If we have Curriculum Alignment, then Parent Involvement could increase because students will be more successful overall.

Parent Involvement ⇄ Realistic Goals

If goals were realistic, then Parent Involvement will be more positive.

Parent Involvement ↔ Teacher Challenges

If we have a lack of Parent Involvement then Teacher Challenges will increase.

Parent Involvement ↔ Student Challenges

If Parent Involvement is increased then Student Challenges will decrease.

Parent Involvement ↔ Resources

If Resource needs are to be met, then parents need to be involved.

Parent Involvement ↔ Time

If parents were more involved, teachers would spend less time re-mediating, or on phone calls or on conferences.

Parent Involvement ↔ Administrative Support

If you have effective administrative support, then you can achieve effective parental support.

Parent Involvement ↔ Holistic Learning

If Parent Involvement was greater, then Whole Learning will be enhanced.

#### **4. Teamwork**

Teamwork ↔ Curriculum Alignment

If you have TW, then you will have Curriculum Alignment, there would be a higher priority given to teamwork.

Teamwork ↔ Realistic Goals

If we have Teamwork, then we will set Realistic Goals.

Teamwork  $\rightleftarrows$  Teacher Challenges

If you have Teamwork, then you can help us achieve Teacher Challenges.

Teamwork  $\rightleftarrows$  Student Challenges

If we have Teamwork, then we can easily meet Student Challenges.

Teamwork  $\rightleftarrows$  Resources

If we have Teamwork, then Resources can be allocated more equitably.

Teamwork  $\rightleftarrows$  Time

If you have more time allocated to TW, then you will have more time to time to meet with my team to increase Teamwork.

Teamwork  $\rightleftarrows$  Administrative Support

If we have Administrative Support, then there would be a high priority given to teamwork.

Teamwork  $\rightleftarrows$  Holistic Learning

If we have Teamwork, then we can develop Holistic Learning strategies.

## **5. Curriculum Alignment**

Curriculum Alignment  $\rightleftarrows$  Realistic Goals

If we have realistic goals, then we can implement an effective curriculum alignment.

Curriculum Alignment  $\rightleftarrows$  Teacher Challenges

If we have curriculum alignment, then we have fewer and teacher challenges.

Curriculum Alignment  $\rightleftarrows$  Student Challenges

If we have Curriculum Alignment, then we have fewer student challenges.

Curriculum Alignment  $\nrightarrow$  Resources

If we have Curriculum Alignment, then we know what resources we need.

Curriculum Alignment  $\nrightarrow$  Time

If we have more time then Curriculum Alignment could be accomplished.

Curriculum Alignment  $\nrightarrow$  Administrative Support

If we have Administrative Support, then we can achieve Curriculum Alignment.

Curriculum Alignment  $\nrightarrow$  Holistic Learning

If Curriculum Alignment is aligned, then we will have Whole Learning.

## **6. Realistic Goals**

Realistic Goals  $\nrightarrow$  Teacher Challenges

If Teacher Challenges are acknowledged, then realistic goals will be set/met.

Realistic Goals  $\nrightarrow$  Student Challenges

If Student Challenges are acknowledged, then realistic goals will be set/met.

Realistic Goals  $\nrightarrow$  Resources

If we have Realistic Goals, we can use our resources more effectively.

Realistic Goals  $\nrightarrow$  Time

If we have more time, we can set more realistic goals.

Realistic Goals  $\nrightarrow$  Administrative Support

If Administrative support manifests itself, then teachers can set/meet realistic goals.

Realistic Goals  $\nrightarrow$  Holistic Learning

If we have Realistic Goals, then Holistic Learning will occur.

## **7. Teacher Challenges (TC)**

Teacher Challenges  $\nrightarrow$  Student Challenges

If Student Challenges were decreased then Teacher Challenges will decrease.

Teacher Challenges  $\nrightarrow$  Resources

If the Resources were used/allocated effectively, then TC would be decreased.

Teacher Challenges  $\nrightarrow$  Time

If we have fewer teacher challenges, then we would have more time.

Teacher Challenges  $\nrightarrow$  Administrative Support

If we have positive, effective high levels of Admin Support, then Teacher Challenges would be reduced.

Teacher Challenges  $\nrightarrow$  Holistic Learning

If Teacher Challenges are better mapped, then Whole Learning will be employed/can be better accomplished.

## **8. Student Challenges** Student Challenges $\nrightarrow$ Resources

If we recognize/acknowledge our student challenges, then we will allocate resources wisely/appropriately.

Student Challenges  $\rightarrow$  Time

If we recognize/acknowledge student challenges, then time can be used more wisely.

Student Challenges  $\rightarrow$  Administrative Support

If we have administrative support, we can meet Student Challenges.

Student Challenges  $\rightarrow$  Holistic Learning

If we reduce Student Challenges, Whole Learning will be easier to implement, to increase, to better facilitate.

## 9. Resources

Resources  $\rightarrow$  Time

If we have more time, then we can learn how to implement resources effectively.

Resources  $\rightarrow$  Administrative Support

If we have effective, positive admin support, then we can better use resources.

Resources  $\rightarrow$  Holistic Learning

If we have adequate resources, we can better implement Whole Learning.

## 10. Time

Time  $\rightarrow$  Administrative Support

If we have more effective positive admin support, then we could manage time more effectively.

Time  $\rightarrow$  Holistic Learning

If we have more effective management of time, we could better plan whole learning.

## 11. Administrative Support

Administrative Support **fl** Holistic Learning

If we have positive effective administrative support, then we could get closer to  
Whole Learning.

## **12. Holistic Learning**



## Appendix D

### IQA 2 Affinities, Sub-Affinities, and If/Then Statements

#### 1. Collaborative Leadership

- β *Teamwork*
- β *Shared Leadership fewer top-down decisions, teamwork*
- β *Alignment between grades*
- β *Vertical team meetings need agendas, structure and accountability for what was discussed*
- β *Vertical planning (or observe, “guest teach” in other grade levels...)*
- β *Inconsistent teamwork and planning*
- β *More vertical teaming*
- β *Better listening*
- β *More teamwork*
- β *Unresolved arguments*
- β *Better communication*
- β *Personality differences get in the way of planning (for good of students)*

#### 2. Shared Vision

- β *A truly shared vision-primary goal*
- β *Forgetting that our job is teach children*

- β *Do we have the same primary goal?*
- β *Focus-we seem scattered*
- β *Administration must support and facilitate the reform process-goal*
- β *Need: faculty commitment to reform process- goal*
- β *Before we can think about achieving “exemplary status” every child needs to be reading on grade level.*
- β *More defined universal math curriculum*
- β *Expectations*
- β *More accountability and follow through!! (i.e., turning in annual plans by deadline and weekly team meetings)*
- β *Accountability for all of us- not just grades being tested- all grade levels*
- β *Students must be motivated to work for excellence*

### 3. Commitment to Change

- β *Low degree of work ethic produces less student success.*
- β *More exposure to other grades –teach other grades*
- β *Inter-grade-level awareness*
- β *Teachers need more experience teaching tested grades as well as, non-tested grades (TAAS)*
- β *Go the Extra Mile*
- β *Not “buying in” to district’s POL initiative (principles of learning)*

- β *More positive attitudes towards new ideas*
- β *So much negativity (we can't/won't/shouldn't)*
- β *Distracters-what about teachers and others who are resistant to change or “sit on the back row” refusing to help*
- β *Lack of commitment to actually change (like status quo)*
- β *Not ready for the amount of effort it takes to change*
- β *Resistance to change*

#### **4. Best Practices**

- β *Consistency of best practices in all grade levels in all classes.*
- β *Consistency*
- β *Old, ineffective, teaching practices*
- β *Latest research for best teaching methods*
- β *Shared learning*
- β *Implementation of strategies to help students*
- β *English acquisition*

#### **5. Resource Management**

- β *More resources (literature and supplies) for social studies, science especially.  
(English and Spanish)*
- β *Better social studies materials*
- β *More diverse reading book*

- β *Materials*
- β *Better furniture (child-sized)*
- β *Teacher Aides*
- β *Visit other exemplary schools*
- β *Teacher Aide to run copies to free up teachers*
- β *Hands on training*
- β *Money-get paid for extra hours involved in planning/carrying out changes*
- β *Consistent counseling for students who need it*
- β *Additional parent specialist (so we have 2)*
- β *Children lacking basic needs- glasses, hearing aids*
- β *Lack of social support (anger management, etc.) I know we have limited help, but we need more*
- β *Want choice- Really know what's expected in exchange for "free materials."*  
*Shared decision-making*
- β *Computer lab*
- β *Update our technology!-computer lab*
- β *Computers that work*
- β

## **6. Time**

- β *Time*
- β *Time*

- β *TAAS*
- β *Time to do the work*
- β *Time for teams to communicate*
- β *Planning time*
- β *Time*
- β *How can we use the time we have more constructively to achieve our goals?*
- β *Deadlines need to be met, if not why have them?*
- β *Creative scheduling to free up more time (i.e., volunteers, rotate recess duty...)*
- β *Time constraints*
- β *We need to evaluate & prioritize our meetings so they will be more effective.*
- β *Not using the time we have wisely.*
- β *Busy work to i.e., annual plans*
- β *We are asked to do more paperwork with more meetings. No time to plan for our students*
- β

## **7. Parental Issues**

- β *Education of parents/guardians in regard to state and local expectations of students entering school.*
- β *More home visits by a parent specialist*
- β *Lack of parental support*
- β *Need: Bring parents into the reform process to a greater degree*

B *An attitude that the students are whole learners, not just TAAS learners*

## **IQA #2 If/Then Statements.**

### **1. Commitment to Change**

Commitment to Change **if** Shared Vision

If there were a shared vision, there would be more of a commitment to change.

Commitment to Change **if** Resource Management.

If we are not committed to change, we will continue to poorly manage our resources.

Commitment to Change **if** Collaborative Leadership

If we have an environment of collaborative leadership, we will have more commitment to change.

Commitment to Change **if** Time

If we have more time, we will have a stronger commitment to change.

Commitment to Change **if** Parental Issues

If we have a commitment to change, we can improve parental issues.

Commitment to Change **if** Best Practices

If there is a commitment to change, then there will be campus-wide use of best practices.

### **2. Shared Vision**

Shared Vision **if** Resource Management

If we have a shared vision, we will have more focused resource management.

Shared Vision **↔** Collaborative Leadership

If your leadership is collaborative, we will develop a shared vision.

Shared Vision **↔** Time

If we have a focused, shared vision, then we may work to resolve our time issues.

Shared Vision **↔** Parental Issues

If we had a shared vision, we could better focus on parental issues.

Shared Vision **↔** Best Practices

If we have a shared vision, then we can define best practices.

### **3. Resource Management**

Resource Management **↔** Collaborative Leadership

If we have collaborative leadership, we can more effectively manage our resources.

Resource Management **↔** Time

If we manage our resources, we will have more time.

Resource Management **↔** Parental Issues

If we utilize better resource management, we can more effectively address parental issues.

Resource Management **↔** Best practices

If we define Central's best practice, then we will better manage our resources.

#### **4. Collaborative Leadership**

Collaborative Leadership ↔ Time

If we had collaborative leadership, we could/can have more time.

Collaborative Leadership ↔ Parental Issues

If we had collaborative leadership, we could better solve parental issues.

Collaborative Leadership ↔ Best Practices

If we have collaborative leadership, we could have best practices.

#### **5. Time**

Time ↔ Parental Issues

If parental issues were addressed, we would have more time.

Time ↔ Best Practices

If we used best practices, we could save time.

#### **6. Parental Issues**

Parental Issues ↔ Best Practices

If we used best practices, we could improve parental issues.



## Appendix E

### IQA #3 Affinities, Sub-Affinities, and If/Then Statements

#### 1. Communications.

- β *People are talking, teachers are becoming leaders*
- β *Try to communicate without offending*
- β *Better communications 2000*
- β *Listening more, talking more*
- β *Making meeting times more useful*
- β *Speak up or sulk*
- β *Reading Principal's moods, measuring (1999)*
- β *Wanted increased communication*
- β *Observed changes in principal and teachers, improved communications*
- β *Discussing issues, cleared the air, increased communication*
- β *Increased communications*
- β *Increased curriculum alignment through increased communications*
- β *Improved communications—no arguments this year 2000*
- β *Increased communications*
- β *Better communications*
- β *Sharing of power in steering committee*
- β *Building relationships*

- β *Increased communications*
- β *Increased communications*
- β *Teaching excellence through increased communications*
- β *Uses 1 on 1 and group to communicate to principal*
- β *Realized needed a communal idea of vision and exemplary*
- β *Increased communication*
- β *Learning to give opinion non-offensively*
- β *Teachers being honest, feeling empowered, increased communications experienced*

## **2. Esprit de Corps**

- β *Appreciates Principal's change & supports curriculum specialists*
- β *New respect for Principal*
- β *Observed principals' improved behavior, more respectful of principal*
- β *Teacher set to leave at end of year, decided to stay*
- β *Gained insight to others' concerns, found not alone, developed comradeship/appreciation*
- β *Expressed proud of principal's changes*
- β *(Now) Sees/appreciates Principal change*
- β *Observed accomplishments*

- β *Changes: principal listens to teachers; curriculum specialists accepted by teachers; more communicating and accepting leadership roles*
- β *Hopeful*
- β *Satisfied with research approach and results*
- β *Questioning and hoping -do we really have power (not just feel like it)?*
- β *Earn respect of faculty, then voice is heard*
- β *Respectful*
- β *(in second IQA) Brainstorming-teachers more willing to participate*
- β *Exemplary –definition- “I think an exemplary school should mean that you can bring your child to our school and just not pick what class and what teachers because you know all of them are just as good.”*

### **3. Support for Reform**

- β *Teacher enthusiastic for change but understands others’ reluctance*
- β *Before Teachers afraid change effort would be fruitless*
- β *Before Teachers protested change*
- β *Because teachers didn’t understand, some had negative attitudes and tried to rally support away from change*
- β *Observed some teachers support change/others did not before*
- β *Some teachers not participating, not supporting*
- β *Internal fight for power between AP/Principal-caused tension*

- β *Accepted responsibility for change now*
- β *Now Sees greater change than thought possible*
- β *Became cognizant of team effort needed*
- β *Need to think outside of parameters*
- β *Now- Recognized significant change due to reform*
- β *Supported change in a negative environment –before-only way was up*
- β *Feels supported now*
- β *Grateful for change 180 degree change now for this teacher*
- β *16) Observing/rationalizing change*
- β *Supports reform effort*
- β *Recognizing good changes have taken place*
- β *Grateful for experienced in reform*
- β *Supported reform*
- β *Support change*
- β *Accept responsibility for change*
- β *Excited, wanted change*
- β *Supports change*
- β *Trust building/ confidence*
- β *Change away from top-down decisions and principal screaming at teachers now*
- β *Teachers wanted change –be involved in decisions, curriculum alignment*

- β *Wanted reform to overcome negativity among faculty and propel teachers forward*
- β *Feel reform is a catalyst for change*
- β *Supported reform idea*
- β *Meeting/knowing teachers*
- β *Keeps us on our toes*
- β *Teachers wanted change i.e., decision making*
- β *Supporting change*
- β *Observes principal's dilemma with shared power and change*
- β *Positive change*
- β *Supporting change in beginning- but it was not clear how it would happen*
- β *Accepted responsibility to change now*
- β *Supported leadership training*
- β *Identified problems for solving in 2000*

#### **4. Collaborative Leadership**

- β *Beginning- Identified problems such as lack of leadership*
- β *Recognized collaborative leadership still necessary*
- β *After- Observed cooperation-environment-no complaints about admin*
- β *Increased comradeship, support for other teachers*
- β *Teambuilding/curriculum development is seen as healthy, communicating*

- β *Need more teambuilding in 6th grade team*
- β *Support steering committee*
- β *Grateful-leadership changed-improved management*
- β *Participating/supporting steering committee*
- β *Supported card activity*
- β *Support people working together/sharing*
- β *Appreciate leadership changes*
- β *Identifying with team membership*
- β *Teachers as leaders*
- β *Feel leadership supported change*
- β *Break away from group when teambuilding*
- β *Teachers making decisions as opposed to principal*
- β *Vision- people were all engaged and supportive*
- β *Recognizing and supporting strengths of teachers*
- β *Supported vision statement*
- β *Gained awareness-encourage teaming*
- β *Vision writing-teambuilding component*
- β *Leadership and teambuilding got us started, a stepping stone*
- β *Teachers leading, taking risks, supporting curriculum specialists*
- β *Using committees to promote one voice*
- β *Vision statement-began to gel group*

- β *Committed to vision*
- β *Working together- committees*
- β *Decision-making re: curriculum and best practices, teaming*
- β *Then & now- change from waiting for good leadership to actively leading*
- β *Changed to strategic planning for problem-solving-why it now works*
- β *Using committees to align curriculum*
- β *Commitment to curriculum alignment*
- β *Recognized teachers need curriculum alignment to ensure continuity*
- β *Support curriculum-driven approach (now)*
- β *Supports curriculum planning*
- β *Observed increased trust of researcher*
- β *Found cards analysis real helpful*

## **5. Assertiveness**

- β *Assertiveness-whole faculty effort*
- β *Assertive-fought to add 5th grade teacher*
- β *No longer afraid to voice opinions*
- β *Feel opinion is appreciated*
- β *Becoming assertive*
- β *Assertiveness*
- β *No longer afraid to ask for help*

- β *Teachers more relaxed*
- β *Voices being heard*
- β *Covert conversations about power, secretive*
- β *Delegates/defers to others (re: committee work)*

## **6. Empowerment**

- β *Teachers complaining*
- β *Teachers felt they had no control and were overwhelmed with too much work*
- β *50/50 split over reform support/lip service no support in 2000*
- β *Not all committed-primary teachers thought reform for others, i.e., TAAS  
teachers found opinions not always valued*
- β *Feeling empowered, but feels some is due to effect of “someone is watching”*
- β *Little input in decisions*
- β *Observed top-down decision-making – resentful*
- β *Skeptical*
- β *Decisions by teachers were not meaningful*
- β *Re: change- teachers were skeptical*
- β *Beginning- pushing back (too much work)*
- β *Beginning- skeptical*
- β *Beginning- teachers were not getting along-bad vibes*
- β *Skeptical*
- β *Skeptical*



- β *Fear to talk, vision skeptical*
- β *Felt pressured into reform by principal*
- β *People were skeptical*
- β *Did not support principal, “unrealistic” vision for change in the beginning*
- β *Beginning- going through the motions, not committed to reform*
- β *Compliance*
- β *Beginning-complacent behavior-didn't challenge the status quo*
- β *Beginning- compliant towards decisions but angry*
- β *Authoritarian teaching – isolationism- impeded progress*
- β *Shuts down when not listened to or not supported, isolates, back to classroom, hides, does what is capable of doing – teaching*
- β *Not involved in decision making- resentful*
- β *Feeling empowered*

### **Interview If/Then Statements IQA #3**

#### **1. Communication**

Communication † Ingratiation

If we communicate more, then we will be more appreciative of others' ideas.

Communication † Supportive

If we communicate more, then we will be more supportive of others.

Communication  $\rightarrow$  Leading and Teaming

If we have good leadership, then we will communicate more.

Communication  $\rightarrow$  Assertiveness

If we are assertive, then we will be communicating more.

Communication  $\rightarrow$  Complacent

If we communicate more, then we will be less complacent.

## 2. Ingratiation

Ingratiation  $\rightarrow$  Supportive

If we are more supportive, then we will be more appreciative of others' contributions.

Ingratiation  $\rightarrow$  Leading and Teaming

If we have good leadership, then we will be grateful.

Ingratiation  $\rightarrow$  Assertive

If we are more assertive, then we will be appreciative of the accomplishments.

Ingratiation  $\rightarrow$  Complacent

If we are grateful, then we were not complacent.

## 3. Supportive

Supportive  $\rightarrow$  Leadership

If we have good leadership, then we will be supportive.

Supportive  $\rightarrow$  Assertive

If we were supportive, then we would be more assertive.

Supportive ⇄ Complacent

If we were more supportive, then we would be less complacent.

#### **4. Leadership**

Leadership ⇄ Assertive

If we have good leadership, then we will be more assertive.

Leadership ⇄ Complacent

If we have good leadership, then we will be less complacent,

#### **5. Assertive**

Assertive ⇄ Complacent

If we are assertive, then we will be less complacent

## Appendix F

### Summary of 16 Teacher Interviews

	Q1 Pre	Q2 Pre	Q3 Pre	Q4 Pre
<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Teacher feelings idea</b>	<b>General teacher feelings</b>	<b>Whose decisions?</b>	<b>Issues to change?</b>
<b>A</b>	Anxious to have it	We were angry	Principal final decision	Leadership
<b>B</b>	Pessimistic	Not much faith	Top-down	Involved in decisions
<b>C</b>	Loved idea/skeptical	N/A to lower grades	Principal	Leadership
<b>D</b>	I'm open to new ideas	50/50 for/against	Administration	Increase Teaching requirements
<b>E</b>	Great idea	Some overwhelmed	Administration	More choice
<b>F</b>	Excited, help is here	Apprehensive	Top-down	Top-down decisions
<b>G</b>	Thought impossible	Same [impossible]	Top-down w/lip service	Leadership
<b>H</b>	Only way was up	Willing some inflexible	Principal w/CS influence	Teachers need support
<b>I</b>	Saw more work	Expected no change	Top-down	Every imaginable issue
<b>J</b>	OK	Afraid to be guinea pg	Top-down	No more screaming
<b>K</b>	We really needed it	50/50 split	Top-down	Admin leadership
<b>L</b>	Great opportunity	Don't know	AP and I made some	Didn't know
<b>M</b>	Very positive idea	Mixed feelings	Mostly principal/administration	Teacher led meetings
<b>N</b>	Helpful data-driven	N/A to lower grades	Top-down	Decisions affect teachers
<b>O</b>	For change, leery	Mostly skeptical	By administrative	Kids discipline
<b>P</b>	More extra work	Little faith in it	Principal has final say	Working together

	<b>Q5 Pre Other issues?</b>	<b>Q6 Workshop evaluations Leadership/Teambuilding</b>	<b>1-5, 5 is best Communications</b>	<b>Vision Statement</b>
<b>Teachers</b>				
<b>A</b>	Discipline of children	4 laid groundwork	3 need more practice	4
<b>B</b>	Academics	5 great	5 very focused	5 very good
<b>C</b>	Personality clash AP	5 needed trust	3 anti-climatic	5 uplifting/proud of us
<b>D</b>	Y bother, no change	3 time to know others	2 meetings not common	3 developed overall team
<b>E</b>	Teaming best practices	2 many missed point	5 formed steering c.	Good, need to revisit
<b>F</b>	Power struggle	4+.5 our eyes opened	4 few not participating	2-can get buried
<b>G</b>	Not just teacher changes	4 teambuilding	4 Valuable	5 Valuable
<b>H</b>	Need more time	4-5 We needed that	Missed it	3-4 should sc write?
<b>I</b>	Communications	4, more fellowship	w, need more	3 can't recite it
<b>J</b>	No	5-got to know people	2-didn't cut it	4 results-no arguments
<b>K</b>	Leadership was big	5-new working groups	5, we're doing better	5 Painful, but great
<b>L</b>	Didn't know	3,4 pos experience	Missed it	Missed it
<b>M</b>	Teacher led decisions	3-4 people were negative	4 heard positives	5 agreed high standards
<b>N</b>	Principal's moods	3 contact with others	4 got us further	4.5 all involved
<b>O</b>	Piling things on	4 got us started	5 defined exemplary	5 goal oriented
<b>P</b>	Curriculum alignment	3-4 was growth	Pretty successful	4 everyone agreed

	<b>Q7</b>	<b>Q8</b>	<b>Q9</b>	<b>Q10</b>
<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Reform effectiveness?</b>	<b>Visible changes?</b>	<b>Project-good approach?</b>	<b>Your voice heard?</b>
<b>A</b>		Productive meetings	Very satisfied	Very well heard
<b>B</b>	People now speak up	Goal not met	5 liked very much	Not really listened to
<b>C</b>	Highly effective	Trust, Good AP	Seems right	My voice is heard
<b>D</b>	we're less threatened	Open communication	Yes, liked it	Yes, liked small groups
<b>E</b>	Very effective	Leadership is changing	Great, wonderful	Definitely
<b>F</b>	Some big victories	Staffing new 5th grade	Good, liked cards	I can and am heard
<b>G</b>	Very effective	Steering committee	Satisfied, no question	As much as I wanted
<b>H</b>	We've come long way	teacher asked 4 opinions	Worked very well	Yes, will talk to principal
<b>I</b>	more relaxed/communicating	Principal listens more	Like it/good high level	As much as I wanted
<b>J</b>	Fairly effective	Healthy-staff talking	Satisfactory	Always heard
<b>K</b>	Very effective	Steering committee	Good approach	Yes, everyone listens
<b>L</b>	some things not done	More relaxed, new AP	Not sure faculty-driven	Yes, always was
<b>M</b>	work towards effective school	principal listens more	Very satisfied	Very much so
<b>N</b>	Definitely moved forward	Greater awareness	We must be involved	Yes, it's heard
<b>O</b>	Very effective	Attitudes: blooming	Important steps taken	Yes, always heard
<b>P</b>	Effective steering com	Working out problems	Helped, we did it	Sometimes, yes

Teachers	Q11 Others heard?	Q12 Leadership changed?	Q13 Personal growth?	Q14 Classroom changes?	Q15 Curriculum alignment?
<b>A</b>	Sometimes yes/no	Yes, helped admin	Yes, deal w/lois people	Don't know yet	Going much better
<b>B</b>	Probably not	Friction left with AP	More self-realization	POL	A Few negative meetings
<b>C</b>	Some not heard	Yes, real deep effort	Yes want to do research	Mixed with POL	It has started
<b>D</b>	Some yes/no	Yes have more leaders	Feel better sharing	POL and reflecting	Import conversation
<b>E</b>	Yes, have the chance	Yes principal making effort	Yes more involved sc	Definitely, happier	My team works close
<b>F</b>	Choices, some do	Almost 180 degrees	Yes, track issues	Meets district demands	Really important
<b>G</b>	I would hope	Great deal, new AP	Yes, I do	Yes, but origin blurry	Very valuable
<b>H</b>	Yes, I think so	New AP, big change	Yes wish to stay here	More curriculum-driven	Need more teaming
<b>I</b>	If want to, heard	Nicer, respectful	Need to grow	Not that many	No change
<b>J</b>	Some need small group	Yes, we have input	Yes, unsure specifics	Yes, due to POL too	One of biggest helps
<b>K</b>	Yes, majority heard	Admin/sc collaborate	Sure, more open	Still working there	Need more vertical
<b>L</b>	Yes, they're heard	No problem leadership	Yes, when reflecting	Very strong voices	Not able to meet
<b>M</b>	50/50 opportunity there	Teacher as leaders	Yes, can be honest	Emphasis to excel	N/A
<b>N</b>	Some don't care speak	Yes, Big change, AP	Yes, awareness	POL and K academy	Valuable, need more
<b>O</b>	Yes committee helps	The biggest change	Yes in self-control	Comparing practices	TEKS helps blend
<b>P</b>	Sometimes v bother?	Calmer, less stress	Better communications	POL has helped	Started, need more

	Q16	Q17	Q18
Teachers	Happy with reform?	Wish to continue?	New IQA
A	Yes	Yes, most definitely	
B	Yes, it's necessary	Of course, of course	N/A
C	Yes I am	Absolutely	
D	Yes, I'm happy	Sure	70/30 for change, accountability
E	Yes, I'm happy	Yes definitely	
F	Yes	Stay for 5 years	N/A
G	Yes	I do, any grants?	We CAN manage
H	Yes needed to happen	Yes, more to do	Huge difference cards
I	Yes, enjoyed it	Yes	Few problems no admin complaints
J	Yes, want more	Yes, definitely	Very much on target
K	I am happy	Yes	Much more positive/participation
L	Happy with school	Yes is catalytic	Fewer participants this year
M	Yes good for campus	Yes keeps on toes	
N	Yes, but wish faster	Yes, most involved	
O	Yes, I am	Yes, I do	Big change, we are the leaders!
P	Oh I guess, yeah	Better to help the kids	N/A



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