A STUDY OF THE BASIC CULTURAL ASSUMPTIONS OF A SCHOOL

A Thesis Submitted to the College of

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By

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SUMMARY OF DISSERTATION

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A STUDY OF THE BASIC CULTURAL ASSUMPTIONS OF A SCHOOL

This study attempted to discover the operative cultural assumptions that guide school people's solutions to external and internal problems and that are taught to new members as the correct way to approach these problems.

Schein's (1984) levels of culture and their interaction formed the conceptual framework for the study. The research method was based on Schein's (1985a) Joint Exploration Through Iterative Interviewing methodology which involved a series of encounters and joint explorations between an outside investigator and various inside key informants. This methodology incorporated a triangulation approach using data from interviews, observations, and archival material. Data was collected over a four-month period within one school nominated by central office personnel of the Saskatoon Catholic Board of Education. Throughout the data collection phase, formulating hypotheses about the school's assumptions was used to guide data collection and analysis. Data were categorized based on Schein's methodology of using basic assumptions to form cultural paradigms.

Data concluded that three basic assumptions guided life at St. Gabriel School: 1) the Catholic faith and the Christian value system pervaded all school activity; 2) a transactional leadership style influenced decision-making, relationships, communications, and the teaching-learning situation; and 3) the student's social needs were emphasized at the expense of academic learning. Staff, students, and parents appeared to be socialized into all three assumptions.

This study revealed that the principal had a major impact upon how all three assumptions arose and were maintained. The religious assumption was initiated as part of the principal's leadership role. His leadership style emphasized student's social needs and resulted from his espoused philosophy of learning. Teachers, parents, and students possessed the same basic assumptions. Each group contained individuals who espoused values different from those

embedded in the three assumptions, but the predominant members representing each group were living out the assumptions. While some members in each group desired change, no one was able to effect change.

The possibility of establishing a school culture which encompasses the school effectiveness characteristics within the context of these three basic cultural assumptions would be problematic. St. Gabriel School did not demonstrate a shared vision on academic learning where planned curriculum, high expectations, and ongoing assessment reflected school academic goals. Collaborative and transformational relations were not characteristic of the staff. The leader did not demonstrate the values, knowledge, and technical skills necessary to bring about changes in the school's culture.

Schein's (1984) conceptual model, developed for the study of basic cultural assumptions, was useful in deciphering the culture of St. Gabriel. Schein's analysis of culture as existing at three different levels proved to be an important distinction as data was collected. His Joint Exploration Through Iterative Interviewing methodology enabled the underlying assumptions to be brought to the surface. Schein provided a valuable theoretical framework and an appropriate methodology for studying the deepest level of an organization, that is, its cultural assumption.

Judgements and conclusions about schools can be made on superficial levels of observation. In order to truly understand the functioning of any school, probing beneath these surface levels is necessary. This study confirmed that for this instance principals have a dominant influence on the culture of schools, therefore, they should be helped to use a cultural lens in order to understand and assess the state of effectiveness of their schools. Finally, a number of theoretical, methodological, and practical implications were noted.

ABSTRACT

This study attempted to discover the operative cultural assumptions that guide school people's solutions to external and internal problems and that are taught to new members as the correct way to approach these problems.

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Finally, sincere thanks is extended to Peggy Craig, the writer's typist for her quality work, support, and encouragement.

DEDICATION

I came upon a poem by Langston Hughes while practice teaching at the time of my father's passing. It has become a source of understanding to me as I have journeyed through the complexities of life.

Hold fast to dreams
For if dreams die
Life is a broken winged bird
That cannot fly.

My life has been but a series of dreams, the desired destination known, the route taken planned, yet often unpredictable.

The dream of having a child was fulfilled before my doctoral work was completed and only weeks after I was appointed principal. These two other dreams had been part of yet another journey. My decision to fly with all three dreams provided me with many challenges and fulfillment.

It is a result of this journey that I dedicate this work to my son, BobbyJo, who became close to my heart during pregnancy when my oral defence proposal and data collection were in progress. He then grew to assist me with my writing to its' completion and became my key inspiration to finish.

It is my wish that he may benefit from the modelling of determination and perseverance demonstrated by me through this undertaking. I hope that he may some day also pursue meaningful dreams, knowing his mother will always be there for him with understanding, support, and endless time.

My husband, Ken, has journeyed through fifteen years of marriage to me as

full-time working professional, part-time academic through three degrees, and finally in pursuit of this goal. This dissertation now closes a major chapter of that lifestyle and welcomes many new future destinations together with BobbyJo.

This work is also dedicated to my parents: my mother, Anne, who has always supported my needs throughout all times of major changes in my life, and to my late father, William (Bill), who served as a touchstone in my life and instilled in me the values of pride, hard work, and learning.

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THE PROBLEM

The significance of the concept of organizational culture has been advanced by scholars for various reasons. Schein (1985a) suggests there is no culture-free concept, because culture is about the meaning of life in work places. "Individuals and organizational performance, and the feelings that people in an organization have about that organization cannot be understood unless one takes into account the organization's culture" (p. 24). The linking of culture and organization brings attention to the subjective, interpretive aspects of organizational life, where culture is maintained or changed by virtue of its continual creation or recreation through members interactions, shared interpretations, and the significance that they attach to what occurs.

Pettigrew (1979) reminds us that:

> In the pursuit of our everyday tasks and objectives, it is all too easy to forget . . . the more expressive social tissue around us that gives those tasks meaning. Yet, in order for people to function within any given setting, they must have a continuing sense of what that reality is all about in order to be acted upon. (p. 574)

Deal (1985a) sees this sense of reality existing in the traditions and symbols that make a school special to students, teachers, parents, and the community and which create a pathway to educational effectiveness inside the school. The people in each school dictate through words and deed what happens to the culture:

> Effective schools are those that over time have built a system of beliefs, supported by cultural forms that give meaning to the

> process of education . . . . These schools . . . display shared values and beliefs, well known and widely celebrated heroes and heroines; well attended and memorable rituals and ceremonies; positive stories; and a dedicated informal group whose members work diligently to maintain and strengthen the culture. (p. 609)

These observations suggest there is a need to study individual schools to decipher how their cultures have emerged; why their cultures persist; how their cultures influence their constituents' role performances; and the relationship between their operating cultures and the school effectiveness attributes.

The Purpose of the Study

The specific purpose of this study was to discover the operative basic assumptions of a school's culture, that is, solutions to external and internal problems that have worked consistently for the people in the school, and are, therefore, taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think about, and feel in relation to those problems.

The major questions in this study were:

1. What basic assumptions regarding their daily work have the staff members and students at this school invented, discovered or developed?
2. How did these basic assumptions arise?
3. Are the basic cultural assumptions of the teachers, parents, and students similar?
4. What are the implications of these basic assumptions for the establishment of a school culture which encompasses the school effectiveness

characteristics?

5. Does Schein's (1985a) conceptual model, which was developed for the study of basic cultural assumptions, have utility for deciphering school culture?

The Significance of the Study

It was hoped that this study would make a significant contribution for both practitioners and researchers through its advancement of the theoretical literature.

Recent literature on organizational culture emphasizes the critical need to examine school culture as the focal point for achieving school effectiveness. Purkey and Smith (1982) summarize this need when they state:

> that an academically effective school is distinguished by its culture: a structure, process, and climate of values and norms that channel staff and students in the direction of successful teaching and learning . . . . The logic of the cultural model is such that it points to increasing the organizational effectiveness of a school building. (p. 68)

Schein (1985a) suggests culture is about the meaning of life in work places:

> Individuals and organizational performance, and the feelings that people in an organization have about that organization cannot be understood unless one takes into account the organization's culture. (p. 24)

The linking of culture and organization brings attention to the subjective, interpretive aspects or organizational life, where culture is maintained or changed by virtue of its continual creation or recreation through members interactions, shared interpretations, and the significance they attach to what occurs.

An examination by Deal (1985a) of how effective schools evolve to create a more

favourable environment of growth and development for people who work in them reveals that meaning in these schools comes from this culture. Meaning comes from the shared values and beliefs, the heroes and heroines of the workplace, the rituals and ceremonies, the stories, and from the informal activities of the cultural players. Therefore, understanding these ways of thinking, behaviours, and other elements of the culture of a school is a pre-requisite to making the school more effective.

Fullan (1985) reminds us that the values and beliefs that bring success and give meaning to education are developed over a long time by effective schools. Their special traditions and symbols eventually create a pathway to educational effectiveness. Culture comes to serve a variety of functions in these schools. An overview of these functions relate to: 1) providing a normative function in shaping behaviour which can solve problems; 2) making meaning for individuals in the organization by shaping their perceptions and interpretation of reality; and 3) enhancing a bonding or integrative function that serves as an unconscious power or social energy to move the organization into action. Together these functions influence behaviour and productivity, that is, how teachers teach, how much students learn, and thus, how effective the school becomes.

To improve complex organizations such as schools, with any degree of impact according to Kilmann et al. (1985), requires "an explicit management of culture along with all the other controllable variables in the organization: strategy, structure, rewards, skills, teams, and so on" (p. 423). Culture change requires teachers to learn new ways of thinking and behaving, and of acquiring new skills and attitudes at the

same time as it seeks to develop organizational changes which integrate the descriptive characteristics of effective schools. Since effective schools theory identifies the school building as the delivery level, with each school having a different school culture, school improvement consists of manipulating at the school level, the network of characteristics that influence an individual school's culture.

The school effectiveness literature has come to be criticized for paying little attention to assessment of non-school variables, due to their narrow focus on basic skills achievement. The potential links between the organizational and pedagogical components need clarifying and strengthening. Fullan et al. (1980) agree social scientists are clearer about why organizational development of schools does not work, than why it does.

Purkey and Smith (1983) emphasize that a school is a small culture, a more or less loosely knit social organization, and not a fine piece of machinery like a nuclear reactor. In this environment, nothing works all the time. Some things work more often than others, but hardly anything works for everybody. Nothing works by itself, and everything takes a long time. Interior aspects of school improvement, such as willingness to implement new practices, perceptions of results, and meanings of success to different actors deserve to be recorded in some detail.

The amount of agreement on the principle factors of school effectiveness is striking. We know the characteristics of effective schools, but there is much less clarity about how to achieve them. This may partly be due to the fact that the effective schools research has reflected a strong rational and technical emphasis on

goals, leadership, planning, meeting, and learning. The cultural approach to school effectiveness, in contrast, shows a definite symbolic emphasis on values, assumptions, norms, beliefs, heroes, heroines, rituals, and other cultural elements. The importance of the difference is that these approaches present divergent ways of depicting the core attributes of effective schools and of identifying what is needed to help less successful schools improve.

Although values equip a school to manage the daily details of running smoothly and punctually, understanding the symbols of the culture of a school has been suggested by Kilmann, Saxton and Serpa (1985), Purkey and Smith (1983), Fullan (1985), Schein (1985), Louis and Kilmann (1985), Sathe (1985), and Deal and Kennedy (1982) as a prerequisite to making it more effective. Deal (1985a) sees the "pathway to educational effectiveness inside each school. It exists in the traditions and symbols that make a school special to students, teachers, administrators, parents, and the community" (p. 615). He, thus, recommends an approach which encourages the application of language and concepts of culture to school improvement efforts. This involves the school looking inwards on the elements of its culture, rather than trying only to emulate characteristics of an effective school.

Accepting the premise that functional cultures increase organizational effectiveness implies that schools wishing to enhance their effectiveness must begin by revealing the basic elements of their existing cultures. This beginning source of information will assist schools in understanding how their present school culture impacts upon their organization and its members' behaviour. Only then will it

become more evident what basic assumptions have been developed to form the existing culture, how they influence the role performance of the school's constituent groups and its activities, and reveal the implications of this existing culture for school effectiveness.

Purkey and Smith (1985) agree that since each school is unique, consequently the school should be looking at its whole culture, rather than at individual effectiveness attributes:

> the organizational looseness of schools and the resulting relative autonomy of teachers in the classroom indicate that school cohesiveness can be obtained through building staff agreement on and commitment to clearly and commonly identified norms and goals . . . efforts to change schools have been productive and most enduring when directed towards influencing the entire school culture via a strategy involving collaborative planning, shared decision-making, and collegial work in an atmosphere friendly to experimentation and evaluation. (p. 357)

Scholars in educational administration have taken a cue from the business literature on the concept of organizational culture to provide a plethora of prescriptions to principals on how to create, embed, transmit, and change school cultures in order to achieve desired school effectiveness goals. These prescriptions deal with espoused theories of action, what scholars think principals ought to do to have cultures which will enable them to achieve desired results. Unlike their counterparts in business organizations, these educational scholars have not dealt with what school culture is. They have not dealt with how it can be deciphered, how it influences the operational activities of the school or how it changes or should be changed. In addition, issues such as why school culture emerges or persists have not

been taken into account. Finally, they have not considered the roles of various constituent groups working toward school effectiveness. These observations suggested that there is a need to study individual schools to decipher their cultures so that the implications of these operating cultures for school effectiveness could be better understood.

Existing theories, conceptual frameworks, and models of school effectiveness such as those of MacKenzie (1983), Purkey and Smith (1985), Murphy et al. (1983), Sackney (1985), Duignan (1986), Caldwell and Spinks (1986), and Loucks (1983) depict the characteristics of school effectiveness towards which a school engaged in school improvement should move. Few of these approaches deal with culture as the essence of school effectiveness. The researcher hoped this study would contribute to the theoretical literature by adding support to existing school effectiveness literature on the concept of school culture. Also, the researcher hoped this study would clarify the appropriateness and utility of Schein's (1985a) Joint Exploration Through Iterative Interviewing methodology for the deciphering of cultural assumptions in school organizations.

Assumptions

The following assumptions were postulated by the researcher for the purposes of this study:

1. Schein's conceptual model developed for the study of business organizations had the potential to be a suitable framework, data collection, and data analysis

methodology for studying the basic assumptions of a school's culture.

2. The principal, vice-principal, staff, students, and parents would be willing and able to share the meanings they were experiencing as they perceived and interpreted events in the context of their school culture.
3. The observations of artifacts, analysis of archival material, and interviews with key informants used in data collection would elicit accurate information from individual respondents.
4. The informants would accept the data collection and analysis as interpretive endeavours and a concomitant process of data collection which would require their repeated involvement.

Limitations

In this research the reliance upon a case study resulted in the following concerns common to that mode of research:

1. This study relied only upon observation of artifacts, interviews with key informants, and analysis of archival material. These data collection methods may not have identified all of the cultural components of the school.
2. The adoption of one school as a basis for the study of organizational culture limits the ability to generalize the research results to other school settings.
3. The use of effective schools correlates may not be appropriate in assessing the assumptions of separate schools.

Delimitations

This study was delimited in four major ways:

1. The proposed study was confined to an examination of the operative, basic assumptions which were present within the organizational culture of one school and which became revealed during Schein's (1985a) Joint Exploration Through Iterative Interviewing Methodology chosen for the study.
2. Cultural assumptions generated were restricted to selected stakeholders of the organizational culture of the school under study.
3. Interviews were conducted with a sample from within each constituent group of administrators, teaching staff, non-teachers, students, and parents. The selection of interviewees depended upon volunteers and the numbers of members within each group. As a result, the interviews provided data from which to hypothesize assumptions, but they were not generalizable beyond the setting of the constituents concerned.
4. The study was delimited to an on site time line of approximately four months.

Definitions of Key Terms

In this study the following definitions were adapted:

Organizational Culture: Schein's (1985a) definition of organizational culture as "a pattern of basic assumptions - invented, discovered, or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration - that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to

new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems" (p. 9) was used for purposes of this study.

Operative Basic Assumptions: Operative basic assumptions according to Schein (1984, p. 3) are underlying assumptions, which are typically unconscious but which actually determine how group members perceive, think, and feel. Such assumptions are learned responses that originated as espoused values. As a value leads to a behaviour, and as that behaviour begins to solve the problem which prompted it in the first place, the value is gradually transformed into an underlying assumption about how things really are. As the assumption is increasingly taken for granted it drops out of awareness while becoming part of the operating culture of the group.

Daily Assumptions: An organization's routines and procedures for everyday behaviour, that is, the way things are on a daily basis constitute daily assumptions. They flow from basic assumptions because they are translations and enactments of basic assumptions, according to Davis (1985a). They are situational, which causes them to sometimes change to meet circumstances.

School Effectiveness: Purkey and Smith (1983) propose that an academically effective school is distinguished by its culture: a structure, process, and climate of values and norms that emphasize successful teaching and learning. Collaborative planning, collegial work, agreement and unity of purpose are prerequisites of an effective school which reflect a unique mix of five interdependent characteristics. These include: a style of leadership which has an instructional focus; a school climate free of discipline problems and vandalism, which is conducive to learning; a

school focus on basic skills instruction; high expectations that all students have the capability of performing regardless of their background; and a system of monitoring and assessing pupil performance in relationship to the instructional objectives of the school.

Informant: A member of the school organization or culture who possesses knowledge, insight, and/or perceptions along with a willingness to share this information to contribute to the formation of basic assumptions of the culture under study.

Artifacts: Dyer's (1985, p. 202) definition of artifacts as tangible aspects of a culture a person hears, sees, or feels in an organization, that is, the overt expressions or surface manifestations of an organization's socially shared perspectives, values, and assumptions was used.

Staff Members: For the purpose of this study, staff members included administrative, professional, and support staff working within the school under study.

Stakeholders: For the purpose of this study stakeholders included administrative, professional and support staff, students, and parents.

Hypothesis: In this study personal puzzlements and hunches about what was seen, heard, and observed in the school under study became the hypotheses from which to pursue the existence of cultural assumptions.

Values: Values according to Schein (1984, p. 3) represent what people say is the reason for their behaviour, what they ideally would like those reasons to be, and what are often their rationalizations for their behaviour. Values are hard to observe

directly. It is often necessary to infer them by interviewing key members of the organization.

Transactional Leadership: Leithwood (1992) proposes that transactional leadership is based on an exchange of services for various kinds of rewards that the leader controls, at least in part. Transactional practices are central in maintaining the organization - getting the day-to-day routines carried out, however, such practices do not stimulate improvement.

Transformational Leadership: Transformational school leaders, according to Leithwood (1992), are in more or less pursuit of three fundamental goals: helping staff members develop and maintain a collaborative school culture; fostering teacher development; and helping staff solve problems together more effectively. Transformational leadership facilitates the redefinition of a people's mission and vision, a renewal of their commitment, and the restructuring of their systems for accomplishing goals. It provides the incentive for people to attempt improvements in their practices.

Organization of the Study

Chapter 1 introduced the problem that this study addressed. Chapter 2 reviews the literature appropriate to the problem and identifies a conceptual framework for the study. The research design and methodology are outlined in Chapter 3. It also includes a description of the sources of data. Chapter 4 provides a description of the setting of the study at three levels. Chapters 5, 6, and 7 present the operative, basic

assumptions which were found to be present within the organizational culture of the study school. Finally, Chapter 8 summarizes the findings of the study and outlines a number of conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

This chapter reviews contemporary general literature on the concept of organizational culture and on the concept of school effectiveness. Understanding the culture of schools as a prerequisite to making them more effective involves schools looking inwards on the elements of their cultures, rather than trying only to emulate the characteristics of effective schools. Since the school culture literature and the school effectiveness literature are so closely intertwined, the researcher has decided to present the literature review on school culture followed by a brief review of the school effectiveness literature. The identification of major school effectiveness characteristics reflects the literature of the 1960's to the present, while the literature on school culture is a phenomenon of the late 1970's to the present. Sackney and Wilson (1987) reinforce the premise that school culture literature builds on the school effectiveness literature. Therefore, I believe an attempt to understand school culture requires a working understanding of the fundamental characteristics of school effectiveness.

The effective schools movement has clarified and specified the ingredients and characteristics necessary for developing effective schools. What has received little attention is an examination of the underlying basic assumptions or guiding beliefs which lead schools to evolve and create a more favourable environment for the growth and development of the people who work in them.

The effective schools research reflects a strong rational and technical emphasis on instructional leadership, school climate, high expectations, a basic instructional skills focus and monitoring and evaluating learning. The cultural approach to school effectiveness in contrast, shows a definite symbolic emphasis on values, assumptions, norms, beliefs, heroes, heroines, rituals and other cultural elements. These approaches present divergent ways of depicting the core attributes of effective schools and of identifying what is needed to help less successful schools improve.

Even though many scholars have written on how school principals should create, define, shape, and/or change the culture or the symbolic activities which shape the school's effectiveness, Firestone et al. (1985) and Smirich (1983) comment on how very few have attempted to study the school as an organizational culture, that is, a school in which the principal, teachers, students, and parents have attained a shared sense of meaning that allows day-to-day activities to become routinized and taken for for granted.

Owens (1987b) recommends that researchers of school organizations spend more time in schools using approaches such as participant observation, ethnography, and intensive case studies in order to accurately learn what is happening to them. Geertz (1973) suggests that there is a need for more 'thick descriptions' of life in schools. Thick descriptions, Owens (1987b) argues, identify and capture the meanings, feelings, and significance of the actions of the various school participants.

Section one reviews literature on the meaning of the concept of organizational culture along with an examination of the functions of culture through definitions. It

examines the content of culture through an identification of cultural elements. The creation, maintenance, transmission and changing of culture, along with the impact of culture and how school culture can be revitalized form the final components of section one of the literature review. Section two of the literature review examines the literature on factors associated with school effectiveness and on the relationship between school effectiveness and school culture.

Organizational Culture

The Meaning of Organizational Culture

Writers such as Kilmann, Saxton and Serpa (1985), and Schein (1985a) explain that the recency of the topic of organizational culture has resulted in the use of many different meanings. Riley (1983) offers an explanation for this problem residing in at least two major research traditions in the study of organizational culture, namely an interpretive approach and a functionalist approach. She postulates that "the functionalist research tradition considers culture to be an organizational variable, something the organization has; while the interpretive tradition studies culture as a pattern of symbolic discourse, something the organization is" (p. 414).

In defining the relationship between organizations and culture, two distinct paradigms exist. The first view based on the functionalist paradigm, is characterized by those who conceive of culture as something an organization has, culture is analogous to a simple machine according to Kilmann et al. (1985). In the alternative view based on the interpretive paradigm, organizations and cultures are inseparable.

Organizations do not have a culture; rather they are a culture. Kilmann, Saxton and Serpa (1985) state that viewing the organization as:

> an open system - as an interconnected, living organism whose parts are connected and dependent on each other suggests that culture cannot be managed as a thing apart from the rest of the organization. All parts of the organization are altered by any culture change. (p. 14)

Regardless of the approach adopted, both views adhere to the defining of culture and the fact that culture does influence individuals. The definitions found in the literature on organizational culture generate multiple meanings, showing that culture is a very complex phenomenon, serving a variety of functions in an organization. The definitions provide an overview of the functions of organizational culture related to: making meaning for individuals in the organization by shaping their perceptions and interpretation of reality; providing a normative function in shaping behaviour which can solve problems; and enhancing a bonding or integrative function that serves as an unconscious power or social energy to move the organization into action.

Defining Culture as a Basis for Understanding its Functions

Davis (1985a) defines corporate culture as " . . . the pattern of shared beliefs and values that shapes the meaning of an institution for its members and provides them with the rules for behaviour in their organization" (p. 138). The function of organizational culture in making meaning for individuals in the organization is reiterated by Firestone and Wilson (1985) in their statement: " . . . a culture is the system of publicly accepted meanings for the activities of a group of people" (p. 10). Isabella (1984) suggests further, that meaning affects behaviour by shaping

perceptions and interpretations of reality. She defines meaning as "the significance of symbolism which . . . an event, action or organizational fact comes to hold for an individual organizational member" (p. 10), which creates perceptions that shape attention and hence, subsequent action. Louis (1985a) summarizes the relationship of this meaning or content to group relationship, in his definition of culture which refers:

> First, to some content (that is, shared understandings, artifacts, behaviours); second to a group; and third, to the relationship between the group and the content, a relationship of distinctiveness and specificity. Culture refers to the shared understandings peculiar to and specific to a group. (p. 127)

The normative nature (or common understandings) of organizational culture in shaping perception and interpreting reality, which leads to problem solving behaviour is summarized by Deal (1985a) as "the way we do things around here. It consists of patterns of thought, behaviour and artifacts that symbolize and give meaning to the workplace" (p. 605). Meanings are derived from the elements of culture; namely shared values and beliefs, heroes and heroines, ritual and ceremony, stories, and an informal network of cultural players.

Schein (1985a) emphasizes the problem-solving function of culture in his definition and also alludes to an unconscious power engendered by an organization's culture as:

> A pattern of basic assumptions - invented, discovered or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration - that has worked well enough to be considered valid and to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to these problems. Because such assumptions have

> worked repeatedly, they are likely to be taken for granted and to have dropped out of awareness. (p. 9)

Deal (1985b) attributes the power of culture to "the concept of a learned pattern of unconscious thought, reflected and reinforced by behaviour, that silently and powerfully shapes the experience of people" (p. 361). Kilmann (1985) describes this power as a "social energy that moves the corporation into action . . . an energy that flows from the shared commitments among group members . . . one for all, and all for one and esprit de corps" (p. 353).

Wilkins and Patterson (1985) attest to the importance of an unconscious force or power of culture in serving as a bonding or integrative function for the organization. "The assumptions that underlie culture and the habitual ways of thinking about and seeing the world are powerful because people rarely think about them, though they influence almost everything people do" (p. 268). Renner (cited in Kilmann, 1985) defines culture as " . . . the shared values and behaviour that knit a community together. It's the rules of the game; the unseen unity" (p. 92). This bonding function of culture also serves a stabilising function for Deal (1985b) who claims that "culture provides stability, fosters certainty, solidifies order and predictability" (p. 301).

For the purposes of this study Schein's (1985a) definition of culture was used as a stipulative definition, which according to Scheffler (1960) is given by its author who asks that the defined term be consistently taken to carry this stipulated meaning throughout her study.

Elements of Culture

An understanding of the elements of culture is necessary before trying to determine how culture is created, evolves, and changed. Schein (1985a) conceives of culture as existing at three levels. At the most superficial level are artifacts and creations, which include things such as technology and visible behavioral patterns found in an organization. Values, the next level, have more credibility in governing behaviours and providing a rationale for behaviour. Values assist in understanding why the organization works the way it does, but do not explain the driving forces or essence of the culture. That which creates the values and responses of people are the learned underlying assumptions found at level three. Culture is the pattern of these underlying assumptions, a pattern that is taken for granted and transformed into guides for thought, perception, feeling and behaviour. The assumptions guide the organization's relationship to the environment, the nature of reality, time, space, the essence of human nature, and the nature of human activity and human relationships. Each of the problems of internal integration and external survival faced by an organization, creates assumptions which are the most basic and most important layer of an organization's culture.

Whereas Schein's (1985a) three levels of culture include artifacts, values, and assumptions, Kilmann, Saxton and Serpa (1985) maintain culture is manifest through behavioral norms, hidden assumptions and human nature, also occurring at a different level of depth. Behavioral norms, the unwritten rules of the game, are just below the surface of experience. They are transmitted by employees to one another

by stories, rites, rituals, and sanctions which influence the behaviours and attitudes that the members of a group pressure one another to follow. The beliefs or assumptions behind all decisions and actions that underlie culture, lie at a deeper level. Assumptions relate to the nature of the environment and to what various stakeholders want and need, how they make decisions, and which actions they are likely to take now and in the future. At its deepest level, culture is the collective manifestation of human nature, the collection of human dynamics, wants, motives, and desires that make a group of people unique. To understand how a group functions, one must understand the issues it is likely to emphasize or ignore, and what information it is likely to select and retain. One must appreciate how human nature affects the way in which the group approaches new problems and opportunities.

Deal (1985a) identifies culture as consisting of patterns of thought, behaviour and artifacts that symbolize and give meaning to the workplace. Meanings which are derived from the elements of culture include shared values and beliefs, heroes and heroines, ritual and ceremony, stories, and experience which over time becomes summarized in symbols, slogans, and philosophies. These meanings narrow an organization's mission and offer guidelines for behaviour and decision-making. Heroes and heroines are people representing the status quo whose thoughts, deeds, and personal qualities represent core company values. They provide role models and tangible expressions of values for other employees, for which they are rewarded and celebrated formally and informally. Much of the day-to-day behaviour or work,

management and personal exchange in any organization is ritualistic. Rituals, or regular ways of doing things, reinforce the norms of the work place by bonding managers and employees with each other, and with core values and shared symbols. Ceremony involves dramatizing and reinforcing core values and beliefs at conferences, retreats, meetings, and other similar ceremonies which generate people's commitment to the organization. Stories about philosophy, exploits of heroes or heroines, and the success of distinctive practices, carry company values. Informal networks of gossip, storytellers, and other cultural players are a natural and usually well-appreciated part of a strong organization. Their chief function is to carry and reinforce the values to keep the culture alive and intact, thereby acting as a barrier to change.

Deciphering the content of culture may also be attempted by considering the sites and sources of its presence. Sites of potential culture, or pockets or shared understandings within work settings, may be found at various levels of the organization according to Louis (1985a). Shared understandings may develop among members sited in a vertical slice of the organization, any division of the organization which is different from other divisions, or in a horizontal slice, among members of a similar classification, department or informal group of persons, no matter what division they belong to.

Aside from these sites of potential culture, several sources of culture external to the organization, called transorganizational sites of culture exist. Transorganizational sources of shared understandings that may be found within work organizations

include examples such as the national culture of the society in which the organization is located; the ethnic cultures of workers; the local geography of the community; the professions and occupational groups; and the industry to which the organization belongs. These threads of shared understanding engage individuals on many different levels, through many different affiliations of daily life at work and elsewhere.

Louis (1985a) contends that it is difficult, therefore, to "determine where any particular understanding comes from, or is rooted, and how widely within a work setting the understanding is shared or extends" (p. 130). By assessing the sociological, psychological, and historical aspects of the penetration of these shared understandings, the roots and extent of cultures can be traced. The sociological aspect of penetration involves pervasiveness, how far and wide the culture reaches. The psychological aspect relates to its homogeneity, or the consistency of understandings among members of the culture, and the historical aspect refers to the stability or consistency of the understandings across time. The pervasiveness, homogeneity, and stability of an understanding, along with the direction and target of the understanding, influence the degree to which the understanding becomes the culture of a group.

In addition to deciphering the content of culture by considering the sites and sources, Sathe (1985) supports Louis' (1985a) historical aspect of penetration and encourages using both historical and current evidence to infer what a culture is. Sathe maintains the reason for this is that internalized beliefs and values that members of a community share cannot be measured easily or observed directly, nor

can what people say about beliefs and values be relied on when deciphering a culture. Each important shared assumption may be inferred from manifestations of culture, that is the shared sayings, doings, and feelings experienced by members of an organization. Discovering the pattern of important assumptions helps make sense of the culture from the point of view of the people whose culture is being studied. Since culture is learned, focusing on stressful periods or critical incidents in an organization's history, may reveal how assumptions came to be formed, how they are ordered, and the extent to which they are shared.

Understanding who and what is considered deviant in a culture also helps decipher the sources and boundaries of a culture. Kilmann (1985) sees one of the key variables to understanding and gaining insight into an organization's culture as the study of their taboos. Taboos are powerful because they lie at the very heart of the sense of meaning and order in a culture. A principal function of taboos is to set up clear boundaries of behaviour, in which certain acts are permitted or not permitted. Since taboos are one of the most hidden aspects of a culture, a key question to raise involves whether an organization's culture allows itself to face its taboos, or whether these taboos are a source of evidence that boundaries exist.

The cultural content of organizations has been used by Sathe (1985), and Deal and Kennedy (1982) to develop typologies of culture which are also useful in deciphering content in organizational culture. Wallach (cited in Kilmann et al., 1985), provides a summary of what makes a culture good or bad, adaptive or dysfunctional, by looking at what cultures do for organizations:

> There are no good or bad cultures, per se. A culture is good - effective - if it reinforces the mission, purposes and strategies of the organization. It can be an asset or a liability. Strong cultural norms make an organization efficient . . . . To be effective, the culture must not only be efficient, but be appropriate to the needs of the business, company, and the employees. (p. 354)

A culture may eventually become dysfunctional according to Deal and Kennedy (1982) if it is not explicitly managed. People cope by protecting themselves, by being cautious, by minimizing risks, and by going along with the culture by displaying self-defeating behaviours that can have disruptive effects. These behaviours include: doing the minimum to get by; resisting innovation; being negative about change; and undermining morale and performance. Alternatively, an adaptive culture entails a risk-taking, trusting, proactive approach, where members share the confidence required to manage problems and new opportunities in a supportive way.

Whether cultures become adaptive or dysfunctional, may be in part determined by the two major elements of culture identified by Sathe (1985) as the content and strength of culture. The strength of culture according to Sathe (1985) and Deal and Kennedy (1982) influences the intensity of behaviour. The strongest cultures according to Sathe (1985) are "thicker, more widely shared, and more clearly ordered and have a more profound influence on organizational behaviour" (p.236). Thickness or how many important shared assumptions there are, the extent of sharing or how widely these assumptions are shared in the organization, and clarity of ordering or how clear it is that some assumptions are more important than others, are three features of a culture which determine its strength. Weak cultures have more ambiguous, thinly held beliefs and values, and therefore, produce less powerful

effects than do strong cultures. Two additional important factors which determine the strength of culture are the number of employees in the organization and their geographical dispersion. A small work force with localized operations facilitates growth of a strong culture, because beliefs and values can develop easier and become more widely shared. Larger organizations require strong leadership that consistently emphasizes the same beliefs and values which eventually take hold over time among a widely shared work force.

Many conceptions of the elements of culture exist in the research and literature. For Schein (1985a), culture is manifested through behavioral norms, hidden assumptions, and human nature. Kilmann, Saxton and Serpa (1985) see culture as consisting of artifacts and patterns of thought and behaviour that give meaning to the workplace. Internal and external beliefs and values reflect culture for Davis (1985a), whereas Louis (1985a) attributes sites and sources of pockets of shared understandings to culture. Sathe (1985) sees historical and current evidence of beliefs and values as culture elements, while the study of taboos is Kilmann's (1985) focus. Culture is either adaptive or dysfunctional according to Deal and Kennedy (1982). Regardless of the conception, the elements of the content of culture are all directed towards a similar definition of culture.

The Creation of Culture

Dyer (1985) outlines three major theories of culture creation:

1. Founders and leaders bring with them a set of assumptions, values, perspectives and artifacts to the organization and impose them on their employees.

2. A culture emerges as members of the organization interact with one another to solve the fundamental problems of internal integration of group members and environmental adaptation.

3. Individual members of an organization may become "culture creators" by developing solutions to individual problems of identity, control, individual needs, and acceptance that are then passed on to the succeeding generation of members. (p. 210)

Dyer (1985) indicates the two sources of culture development in an organization to be interactive and prescriptive. Interactive sources of culture involve the organization's members interacting with each other and their environment to create an emergent organizational culture. When leaders, another individual, or a group of individuals in an organization prescribe the sources, norms, values, or beliefs, this results in a prescriptive source of culture.

Although the prescriptive view is supported by some authors, it will be presented first, since it does not receive as much elaboration as is given by supporters of the interactive or interpretive view. Kilmann (1985) explains that culture forms quickly around recognized needs, settings, and specific task requirements. Smirich (1983) supports Kilmann in his notion that culture is "imported into the organization through the membership" (p. 343). The organization is born with a release of energetic drive and imagination on the part of members struggling to make the organization work. As the reward systems, policies, procedures, and rules governing work evolve, they impact by suggesting behaviours and attitudes that are important, furthering the development of the initial culture. These forces develop along with actions of key individuals or leaders who provide clues regarding objectives, values,

and behaviours expected from subordinates. In this way, the top executive's tone, standards, focus, and way of dealing with people are passed through the organization.

Spencer (cited in Kilmann, 1985) believes that "the way the chief executive and senior managers of the company conduct themselves as individuals has a more profound impact on how other people in the company conduct themselves, than anything else that happens" (p. 357). Critical incidents which stem from management action become the folklore that people remember. The folklore indicates what the organization really wants, and what really counts, and becomes the unwritten rules of the game which members adopt as norms for protection and survival in the organization. Davis (1985a) supports Spencer's (1985) subscription to a top-down prescriptive culture creation model, in which he maintains "guiding principles are invariably set at the top and transmitted down through the ranks" (p. 137).

Smirich (1983) focuses attention on the expressive, non-rational qualities of the experience of the members within the organization to legitimate attention to the subjective, interpretive aspects of organizational life. A cultural analysis moves in the "direction of questioning taken-for-granted assumptions, raising issues of context and meaning, and bringing to the surface underlying values" (p. 355). Smirich advocates the view that a culture is something an organization is, not something an organization has. Culture as a root metaphor promotes a view of organizations as manifestations of expressive forms and of human consciousness. Organizations are understood and analyzed in terms of their expressive, ideational and symbolic aspects. The social world exists only as a pattern of symbolic relationships and meanings which are

sustained through human interaction processes. "Organizations are themselves culture-producing phenomena" (p. 344) whose production occurs ". . . through the interaction of organizational members, their shared interpretations and the significance they attach to what occurs" (Jelinek, Smirich and Hirsch, 1983, p. 336).

Allen (1985) describes a norm-based methodology for helping people to create and maintain cultural environments that are supportive of what they are trying to achieve in their lives and in their organizations. It is based on the premise that the needs of many groups can be met by a systematic, humanistic, participative change process which makes use of the power of culture to bring about positive changes. The four phase systematic program for the creation of culture involves: phase 1, analysis and objective setting; phase 2, systems introduction and involvement; phase 3, systems implementation and change; phase 4, evaluation and renewal. These phases are based upon the principles of focus on both the individual and the culture, involvement of people, systematic strategies and tactics, win-win solutions, results orientation, sustained effort and freedom.

For Schein (1985a) who provides support for the interactive view, culture is learned through two interactive mechanisms: anxiety and pain reduction, the social trauma model, and positive reward and reinforcement, the success model. Cultural learning takes place as groups solve problems. The initial trauma of a new group, along with the crises of survival, cause members to share perceptions, and develop ways of handling and avoiding discomfort and pain by creating ritualistic ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving. Trauma-based learning is hard to undo because, as

people learn how to avoid a painful situation, they are hindered from testing for changes in the environment. The resulting cultural assumptions that are learned, become defense mechanisms for coping with anxiety and potential trauma. The second major learning mechanism is positive reinforcement. People repeat what works and give up what does not. This learning mechanism produces responses that continually test the environment, and are examined and changed accordingly.

All organizations have a culture. Schein (1985a), however, claims:

> The strength, clarity and degree of integration of a corporate culture or subculture is directly proportional to the stability of the membership of the group, the length of time the group has been together, and the intensity of the collective learning that has taken place. (p. 26)

Thus, corporate culture is learned in an evolving way as members interact through shared history. A strong culture cannot simply be created in a prescriptive way by executive action.

Jelinek, Smirich and Hirsch (1983) support an interpretive framework for making sense in an organizational setting. They advocate understanding organizations in multiple ways, as having "machine-like" aspects, "organism-like" aspects, "culture-like" aspects and others yet to be identified. They suggest an interpretive framework that tolerates many alternative assumptions, including culture as a root metaphor for organizational studies. Culture as a root metaphor redirects attention away from the structure-technology elements towards elements such as norms, values, and shared understandings which can lead to new insight. This interpretive form of culture "another word for social reality, is both product and process, the shaper of human

interaction and the outcome of it, continually created and recreated by peoples' ongoing interactions" (p. 331). Pettigrew (1979) also sees culture as a family of concepts including symbols, language, social drama, and ritual that highlight organizing as the major focus.

Gregory (1983) sees the study of organizational culture becoming translated into the study of the informal symbolic side of corporate life. Gregory emphasizes that the meanings contained in a culture strongly influence individuals' behaviours. She defines culture as a "system of meanings that accompany the myriad of behaviours and practices recognized as a distinct way of life" (p. 364). Cultural meanings are "apparently shared," people interact "as if" they share culture. From a base of shared culture, people converse and negotiate new shared meanings. As people's affiliations change over time, cultures from past experiences are carried into new ones. Therefore, Gregory sees society and organizations as correctly viewed in terms of multiple cross-cutting cultural contexts, that change through time in a multicultural society.

In addition to the interactive and prescriptive views discussed above, an examination of the processes by which culture is created is necessary to develop a thorough conceptualization of culture creation. Three culture-creating processes evolve from the literature: a rational problem-solving process, a political process, and a non-rational symbolic process.

Schein (1984) describes the culture of any group as the collective or shared learning of norms, values, and beliefs of that group, as it develops its capacity to

survive its external environment and to manage its own internal affairs while solving problems in both. Culture is the solution to these problems, for it is the way members perceive, think about, and feel in relation to these problems. The solutions become assumptions which drop out of awareness unconsciously to become taken for granted culture. External adaptation and survival problems include developing: 1) a mission or reason for existing; 2) concrete goals derived from this core mission; 3) organizational structures and decision-making processes as means for accomplishing the goals; 4) information and control systems as a means to monitoring progress; and 5) a means to remediate structures and processes if goals are not accomplished. In order to function at all, the group must face integration problems including the development of: 1) a common language and shared conceptual system; 2) a way to define boundaries and select membership; 3) a way of allocating authority, power, status, property, and other resources; 4) norms to handle interpersonal relationships through the style or climate of the organization; 5) criteria for dispensing rewards and punishments; and 6) a way of coping with unmanageable, unpredictable, and stressful events (Schein, 1984, p. 9). Schein cautions that to describe the creation of a whole culture, we must confront each of the external and internal issues identified above. We must not make the mistake of assuming that if one aspect of an organization has been described, such as how people are managed, that we have described the whole culture. Sathe (1985) supports this view suggesting that " . . . the content of culture derives from a combination of prior assumptions and new learning experiences" (p. 136) which all

have significance for how problem solving inherent in the process of culture creation is handled.

An alternative view, the political process view of culture creation, perceives culture to be created to maintain power relationships, in addition to solving problems. Munby (1984) suggests that organizational culture does not develop through legitimate, self-generated consensus, but emerges as an ideological manifestation of deep structure power relations. Symbolism influences culture creation since " . . . organizational stories and metaphors can function ideologically to produce and reproduce the forms or organizational reality required to sustain the interests of dominant groups" (p. 196).

Organizational symbolism plays a significant role in the non-rational symbolic process of culture creation. Dandridge, Mitroff and Joyce (1980) postulate that symbols have consensual and denotative functions, which cause individual action to be directed toward common goals in collective endeavours. Pettigrew (1979) views the content and processes associated with these collective endeavours to create organizational culture through a focus on social dramas. These dramas provide an exploration of the past, present, and future of an organization as it grows, evolves, and transforms over time. Pettigrew concludes that purpose, commitment, and order are generated in an organization both through the feeling and actions of their founders, and through beliefs, ideology, language, ritual, and myth which he labels as culture. These concepts reveal the person "as a creator of symbols, languages, beliefs, visions, ideologies, and myths, in effect, man as a creator and manager of

meaning" (p. 572).

Of the concepts, symbolism is the most inclusive category, because language, ritual, and myth are forms of symbolism. Symbols "are objects, acts, relationships, or linguistic formations that stand ambiguously for a multiplicity of meanings, evoke emotions, and compel men to action" (Cohen cited in Pettigrew, 1979, p. 574). Symbols arise out of the processes in which a group of people use vocabulary or language, and formulate beliefs, rituals, and myths to structure its activities and purposes in an organizational culture. The various forms and functions of symbols, language, ideologies, beliefs, rituals, and myths are interdependent. Through these mechanisms and processes, culture evolves and attempts to handle problems of integration, control and commitment. "Man [sic] creates culture and culture creates man" (p. 577) through organizational symbolism.

Barley (1983) also addressed the meaning organizational members create through symbols or systems of signs they employ as culture is created. Signs are broadly interpreted, where "signification refers both to the processes by which events, words, behaviours, and objects carry meaning for the members of a given community and to the content they convey" (p. 394). Barley's investigation of the manipulation of signs to create and sustain a normalized meaning in a funeral home, suggests the power of symbols to engage people in a guided interpretation of reality. His semiotic approach to culture, which studies how communication is possible, becomes one form the influence of culture could take. Culture could become a mechanism for organized action, once the rules by which members of a work culture relate to one

another are established.

Spencer (cited in Kilmann, 1985) and Davis (1985a) support a prescriptive top-down view of culture creation, where the guiding principles of culture are set at the top and transmitted down through the ranks. Smirich and Hirsch (1983), Allen (1985), Schein (1985a), Jelinek, Smirich and Hirsch (1983), and Gregory (1983) share a processual view of culture as the continuous recreation of shared meanings. Their linking of culture and organization brings attention to the subjective, interpretive aspects of organizational life. For them, culture persists and is maintained or changed by virtue of its continual creation or recreation through members interactions, shared interpretations, and the significance they attach to what occurs. In addition to these aforementioned views, three culture-creating processes, a rational problem-solving process, a political process, and a non-rational symbolic process were discussed. These views expressed by Schein (1984), Munby (1984), Dandridge, Mitroff and Joyce (1980), Pettigrew (1979), and Barley (1983) introduced the roles of problem-solving, power relations and symbolism as organizations develop a culture which must survive its external environment, while managing its own internal affairs.

The Maintenance and Transmission of Culture

Once a particular culture permeates an organization, mechanisms must exist to maintain and transmit it, if that culture is to remain functional and strong. Kilmann (1984) suggests that by understanding what maintains culture two important lessons can be learned:

> First, the impact of one group on its members is very powerful indeed. If the group is cohesive . . . there will be strong

> pressures on each member to adopt whatever the cultural norms specify. Second, if the cultural norms are supportive of the organization's mission, the efforts of members will continue to yield high performances. (p. 104)

Whether culture is effective or dysfunctional, culture developers must understand the power of its invisible force to brainwash people. Kilmann identifies this invisible force which operates to control individuals and maintain culture, as the norms or unwritten rules of behaviour in an organization. Norms are embedded in the organization through consensus among members concerning what constitutes appropriate behaviour. Violation of norms results in immediate pressures to get the offending person to change his or her behaviour. The group's leverage to demand compliance with its norms, results from peoples' needs to be accepted by a group. It is difficult to be a deviant in a group when everyone else is against you. "People need acceptance from others so much, that they will deny their own perceptions when confronted with the group's norms of objective reality. Objective reality thus becomes social reality" (p. 360) which is maintained by formal sanctions or rewards such as pay or promotion. Collectively, members come to believe everything is fine and reinforce this myth by rewarding one another for its maintenance.

Dandridge, Mitroff and Joyce (1980) describe how symbolism is useful in maintaining and transmitting culture. Symbols can be of three types: verbal, actions, or material. Verbal symbols are comprised of: myths, legends, stories, slogans, creeds, jokes, rumours, and names. Actions include: rituals, celebrations, and rites of passage. Material symbols reflect: logos, status, symbols, awards, pins, and flags. Together, these symbols function in descriptive, energy-controlling, and system

maintenance capacities. Symbols, as descriptors, provide an expression of the organization. In their energy-controlling capacity, they either inspire or demotivate people in an organization. Symbols serve a system maintenance function and provide justification and guidance for peoples' actions in the organization.

Deal and Kennedy (1982, p. 15) elaborate on the action component of Dandridge, Mitroff and Joyce's symbolism. They suggest that the beliefs and values of an organization are made concrete through the anointing of heroes and the performing of rites and rituals. A cultural network consisting of storytellers, spies, priests, cabals, and whisperers communicates the values and heroic mythology throughout an organization. These informal means of communication transmit the culture and influence its maintenance within the organization.

In his analysis of the transmission and maintenance of culture Schein (1985a) focuses on the role of leadership. Many powerful ways exist in which leaders are able to embed their own assumptions in the ongoing daily life of their organizations:

> Through what they pay attention to and reward, through the role modelling they do, through the manner in which they deal with critical incidents, and through the criteria they use for recruitment, selection, promotion, and excommunication, they communicate both explicitly and implicitly the assumptions they really hold. (p. 243)

Schein reinforces that leadership and culture management are so central to understanding organizations and making them effective, that we cannot afford to be complacent about either one.

In summary culture-gaps exist where social energy pressures members to persist in behaviours that may have worked well in the past, but are now dysfunctional. The

gap between the outdated culture and what is needed for success, results in a culture rut where people pursue behaviours out of habit. Kilmann (1985) explains that there is no adaptation or change, instead routine motions are maintained by a social energy which works against the organization and is contrary to the members' wishes. People comply with the unstated, below-the-surface, behind-the-scenes, invisible culture, rather than attempt to create change towards a healthier, stronger more functional culture.

Changing Culture

Researchers who address the problem of culture lag or culture-gaps often debate about appropriate change methods, each offering his or her own view which is in disagreement with the other's point of view. Schein (1985a) proposes that these are not competing, but complementary points of view, each of which is needed for a full understanding of culture change.

Culture is defined by Sathe (1985) as having two major elements: content and strength; therefore, culture change may involve a change in either or both of these areas. The resistance to change may be a product of the magnitude of change in the cultural content and the strength of the prevailing culture. The fewer and less central the assumptions to be changed, and the less movement there is towards an alien culture, the less significant the change will be to the culture's content. Radical change in the content of culture is more difficult to accomplish than are incremental changes. Cultural resistance to change is also greater in a strong culture than in a weak culture. An examination of the literature on cultural change reveals both top-

down and participative views for changing the content of culture. Many change models suggest different processes for dealing with culture at different levels.

A number of writers have begun to develop a variety of theories of culture change that might assist attempts to manage culture. Pettigrew (1979) suggests that since leaders are the "creators" of culture, culture change is accompanied by a change in leadership; leadership succession is the essential ingredient in cultural change. Schein (1985b, p. 27) claims the management of cultural change by the leader depends not on the leader as the creator of culture, but on the circumstances in which the organizational leader finds himself/herself. Schein assumes an organization's culture goes through different stages of development, and that the kind of change possible depends upon the degree to which the organization is ready to change, either because of some externally induced crisis or internal forces pushing towards change. He contends an organization goes through three major developmental phases: birth and early growth, organizational midlife, and organizational maturity. Schein also identifies the major cultural issues in each phase, the degree of self -awareness that is crucial and what change mechanisms are likely to be operating. Cultural change involves at least eleven phases including: 1) natural evolution; 2) self-guided evolution through organizational therapy; 3) managed evolution through hybrids; 4) managed revolution through outsiders (associated with birth and early growth); 5) planned change and organizational development; 6) technological seduction; 7) change through scandal, explosion of myths; 8) incrementalism (associated with organizational midlife); 9) co-ercive

persuasion; 10) turnaround; and 11) re-organization, destruction, and rebirth (associated with organizational maturity), (Schein, 1985b, pp. 27 - 41).

During the growth period culture is nourished as it grows and matures. In organizational midlife the most important elements of culture become embedded in the structure and processes of the organization and taken for granted. It becomes difficult to decipher and make people aware of culture. At this state there are so many possible conditions created by cultural diffusion and subcultures, that it becomes harder to maintain a highly integrated, uniform culture in a large, increasingly differentiated organization. Leaders need to have the necessary insights and skills to diagnose and manage cultural situations, and to make choices as to where the organization is going. Flexibility which encourages organizational diversity rather than uniformity in culture, may be more advantageous in organizational midlife than one strong culture. Organizational maturity is often seen as the most important stage in cultural change, because some organizations find that pieces of their culture, or even their entire culture, become dysfunctional amidst a dynamic competitive environment. Whether the choice is to rapidly transform parts of the culture in a turnaround, or destroy the group and its culture through total reorganization, change managers need to unfreeze the organization and then implement a program of change. Consideration needs to be given to change mechanisms involving the development of new assumptions, changing structures, and processes where necessary, rewarding evidence for new learning, creating new slogans, myths, stories, rituals, and coercing people into new behaviour. In creating

cultural change managers should not assume that more or stronger culture is better. Rather, what is better depends on the stage of evolution of the organization, and on its current state of adaptiveness to problems of the external environment and internal organization.

Dyer (1985) considers the preconditions necessary prior to determining how to manage various stages in the cultural change process. Coping with crises, leadership change, and conflict are all part of cultural change which can be planned for. Dyer's model suggests that change is triggered by certain crises that call into question the leader's ability to govern. The crises are accompanied by a breakdown of pattern-maintenance symbols, beliefs or structures, that serve to sustain the underlying assumptions of the old culture. If new leadership emerges with a new set of assumptions to resolve the crisis, there will be conflict between the proponents of the old and new leadership. If the crisis is resolved by giving the new leader credit, his/her culture becomes the newly established cultural pattern of symbols, beliefs, and structures. The new culture must become institutionalized and sustained, until some future event again calls into question the leadership abilities and practices, and the cycle is repeated (Dyer, 1985, pp. 210 - 222). Dyer's model suggests that to initiate cultural change, the leader must seize upon opportunities during times of crises that occur in an organization. A certain sense of opportunism is essential to begin the process of cultural change.

To assist the management of cultural change Schwartz and Davis (1981, pp. 33-38) maintain leaders need to learn to evaluate the way tasks are usually handled in

the context of key relationships such as innovating, decision-making, communicating, organizing, monitoring, appraising, and rewarding. This evaluation needs to occur within the components of an organization's structure, systems, and people. By highlighting task/relationship areas where major problems exist, sources of cultural risk can be identified. Risk points become the places where serious cultural difficulty is encountered. In planning for change, managers can then choose a strategy to deal with these cultural risk points by: ignoring the culture; managing around the culture by changing the implementation plan; trying to change the culture to fit the strategy; or changing the strategy to fit the culture. The decision to change a culture is a complex, long-term undertaking that involves co-ordinated efforts by top leadership to change their own behaviour and signals they send to their subordinates and others in the organization. A cultural risk analysis provides a practical way for top management to evaluate cultural change options before making a commitment to create any change in the existing culture.

Wilkins and Patterson (1985) argue that culture cannot be changed top-down by managerial methods such as those recommended by Pettigrew (1979), Dyer (1985), and Schwartz and Davis (1981). These methods focus on rational planning which involves imposing the values of the few on the many which assume:

> 1) that through clear and careful planning, culture can be changed in precisely intended directions; 2) that by acting in value-oriented ways, executives will present clear signals that everyone will want to follow and will know how to follow; and 3) that if enough emphasis is put on changing a culture, the culture will be changed faster than would ordinarily be the case. (Wilkins and Patterson, 1985, p. 266)

According to Wilkins and Patterson's (1985) participative view, culture consists of the conclusions a group of people draw from their experience, what people believe about what works, and what does not. Attempts to change organizational culture based on overt values and practices leaves these tacit assumptions unexplored. Culture is "like a person's character or personality and is, therefore, changed through processes of growth rather than through engineering" (p. 279). Therefore, Wilkins and Patterson emphasize that ideal cultural change consists of change at all three levels - assumptions, values, and practice. Unless shared assumptions in the three areas of equity, competence, and adaptability are developed, learned, internalized, and shared rather than being directly imposed, cultural change will not succeed. Implementing this form of cultural change requires "starting from where you are . . . with efforts . . . analogous to that of a master teacher" (p. 290).

Louis (1985) supports Wilkins and Patterson's (1985) suggestion to start from where you are. Identifying the source and boundary of understandings in an organization may present a beginning point of change. Sourcing is the identification of the roots or primary site of shared understandings. The roots of shared understanding must be found if lasting change is to be brought about. Bounding is the identification of the extent, reach, or penetration or shared understandings. One may need to know the extent to which a shared understanding is acceptable in an organization and where it applies and where it does not, before change efforts are initiated.

Kilmann (1985) acknowledges the manifestation of culture through shared values,

beliefs, expectations, and assumptions but believes that culture is most easily controlled through norms. Allen and Kraft (cited in Kilmann, 1985) claim norms can be surfaced, discussed, and altered:

> Norms are a universal phenomenon. They are necessary, tenacious, but also extremely malleable. Because they can change so quickly and easily, they present a tremendous opportunity to people interested in change. Any group, no matter its size, once it understands itself as a cultural entity, can plan its own norms, creating positive ones that will help reach its goals and modifying or discarding the negative ones. (p. 7-8)

Kilmann's (1985) five steps for managing culture show how the organization can gain control over its culture. Members decide what new norms are required for the problems encountered and then proceed to energize their work in these new directions to close the culture gap. The five step process involves: 1) surfacing actual norms; 2) articulating new directions; 3) establishing new norms; 4) identifying culture-gaps (the difference between the actual norms and the desired norms); and 5) closing the culture-gaps. Once the organization has used these steps to determine the extent of its culture-gaps, it can plan the strategy, structure, and reward systems. The behaviour of top management must enable the formal system to work together with the social energy of members to follow the newly established cultural norms.

Assumptions about human nature are more difficult to examine and change than behavioral norms, according to Kilmann, Saxton and Serpa (1985). An examination of norms requires looking at day-to-day behaviour, whereas an examination of assumptions requires looking at all previous decisions and actions, therefore, norms

are more easily examined for change purposes. In order to examine assumptions being made about human nature and the environment of the organization, which are the deepest layer of culture, a participative approach is needed.

Organizations are open, living, interconnected systems in which culture cannot be managed as a thing apart from the rest of the organization, according to Kilmann, Saxton and Serpa (1985). When shaping culture, "1) the consequences of a culture change on all aspects of the organization (strategy, structure, reward system, skills, work procedures, and so on); and 2) how all of these aspects may need to be altered to support cultural change, must be considered" (p. 15). Otherwise, efforts to effect culture change could create more problems and dysfunctions, unless change is managed from the systems perspective which acknowledges the interconnectedness of other aspects of the organization to culture.

Sathe's (1985) model for producing culture change involves intervention in each of the basic processes that causes culture to perpetuate itself at five intervention points: changing behaviour; altering external justifications of behaviour; communicating new patterns of beliefs and values; hiring and socialization of newcomers to fit into the intended culture; and removing existing members who deviate from the new culture. Sathe suggests that "one of the most effective ways of changing people's beliefs and values is to first change their corresponding behaviours" (p. 244). Behaviour change is the starting point of cultural intervention. The motivation to change behaviour must be based on intrinsic motivators. Essentially, this means that people must be made to see the inherent worth of what it is they are

being asked to do. In communicating new patterns of beliefs and values, managers engaged in culture change must use both implicit and explicit forms of culture and remember that informal socialization is more effective than formal socialization.

Despite Sathe's (1985) advocacy of changing culture through peoples' behaviour, he cautions that:

> behaviour change does not necessarily indicate a corresponding culture change, because the organization's leadership and system can effect behaviour change without effecting any culture change . . . . Culture change can be positively inferred only if the new behaviours can be attributed to neither the organization's leadership not to its systems. A good test of culture change is whether the new behaviour persists after the leaders that helped create the culture change leave or after the systems used to create the culture change are further altered. (p. 254)

The use of rites and ceremonies by effective managers to facilitate culture change is discussed by Trice and Doyer (1985). Rites include many culture forms such as: symbols, language, gestures, physical settings, artifacts, rituals, myths, sagas, legends, stories, and folk tales that can be used to convey desirable old and new cultural messages. Managers who recognize that rites and ceremonies already occur around them, and who become aware of both their intended and latent consequences, can use rites to facilitate change. A respect for the power of rites to help people maintain some sense of stability in the midst of change, can assist managers in using rites creatively and effectively to achieve cultural change.

Managerial efforts to create, strengthen, or change culture will have a high probability of success according to Sethia and Von Glinow (1985) only if such efforts are accompanied by efforts to design a culturally compatible reward system. "If the

reward system is in harmony with the culture, it will reinforce and invigorate the culture, but if it is inconsistent with the culture, then it will undermine and stultify culture" (p. 418).

Although major culture change is difficult to effect and takes a long time to accomplish, Sathe (1985) stresses it is necessary to pursue, since "creating culture change in the organization is analogous to gaining the commitment of the individual" (p. 256). Relying on the organization's leadership and systems to create changes in behaviour patterns alone, may only secure compliance with costs and risks of efficiency, insufficiency, or irrelevancy without any culture change. Committed people self-monitor their behaviour, and rewards and punishments which drive their intrinsic behaviour. They put in the energy, time, and effort to do what needs to be done, not just what they are minimally required to do. While behaviour change reflects change involving skills and behaviours, mental processes such as perception and thinking are only affected by cultural change. An understanding of this difference can help culture managers decide whether it is behaviour change, or culture prevailing change which brings commitment they wish to pursue in order to most effectively achieve their desired results. This, in turn, will influence which of the change theories presented above they will implement in order to ensure that culture has a functional impact on their organization.

The Impact of Culture on Schools

An examination of the content of culture, how it is created, maintained, transmitted, and changed leads to the question of the effect it can have upon schools

as organizations in the future. Kilmann, Saxton and Serpa (1985) state:

> Culture is the social energy that drives - or fails to drive the organization. To ignore a culture and move on to something else is to assume, once again, that formal documents, strategies, structures and reward systems are enough to guide human behaviour in an organization - that people believe and commit to what they read or are told to do. (p. 422)

The authors argue that most of what goes on in an organization is guided by the cultural qualities of shared meanings, hidden assumptions, and unwritten rules. Several researchers argue that "strong" cultures are somehow more likely to be associated with organizational effectiveness than are "weak" cultures, and that strong cultures can be deliberately created (Ouchi, 1982; Deal and Kennedy, 1982; Peters and Waterman, 1982). Sergiovanni (1984) states "all schools have cultures: strong or weak, functional or dysfunctional. Successful schools seem to have strong and functional cultures aligned with a vision of excellence in schooling" (p. 10).

Kilmann, Saxton and Serpa (1985) distinguish three interrelated aspects of the impact of culture as direction, pervasiveness, and strength. The direction of impact is the course that culture causes the organization to follow. The pervasiveness of impact is the degree to which the culture is widespread, or shared among the members of the group. Members of any group must share a common view if the group is to act effectively. The strength of impact is the level of pressure that a culture exerts on members in the organization, regardless of the direction. A strong culture that puts considerable pressure on each person to behave in certain ways, if managed correctly, can capture the group's energy and imagination to move activity in the direction that will help the organization accomplish its goals.

These three aspects of impact affect the performance of the organization. Kilmann, Saxton, and Serpa (1985) maintain a culture has a positive impact on an organization when "it points behaviour in the right direction, is widely shared among the members of work groups, and puts strong pressures on group members to follow the established cultural guidelines" (p. 4). Alternatively, a culture has a negative impact on an organization when "it points behaviour in the wrong direction, is widely shared among group members, and exerts strong pressures on group members" (p. 5). To improve complex organizations such as schools, with any degree of impact according to Kilmann (1984), requires "an explicit management of culture along with all the other controllable variables in the organization: strategy, structure, rewards, skills, teams, and so on" (p. 423). Influencing the direction, pervasiveness, and strength of culture can have an impact on improving schools by creating a culture which becomes the social energy that drives schools.

The impact of culture on performance is presently built on theoretical argument and examples of exemplary schools. Deal (1985a) refers to several studies on sub-culture which influence student performance. Student sub-cultures have been shown to have an effect on the scholastic tone of the school, and subsequently, on student behaviour and performance. Teacher's sub-cultures often dictate how teachers relate to one another and can undermine efforts to introduce innovations, or influence expectations on the amount of time to be spent on instruction and thus influence student performance. The administrative sub-culture can often become pre-occupied with accountability, control, and change encouraging procedural conformity which can

erode teacher motivation, inspirational creativity and, thereby, the tone and performance of the school. Orientations of parent and community sub-cultures may also have impact through voiced expectations about school performance. These sub-cultures can have a tremendous effect on behaviour, and through behaviour on performance, unless subgroups are held together by an overall cultural unity. Cultural elements influence the behaviour of administrators, teachers, parents, and students by projecting an overall image of what the school stands for. This in turn influences productivity, how well teachers teach, and how much students learn. Owens (1987b, p. 196) substantiates Deal's findings in his conclusion to large-scale research in the United States which "supports the mounting evidence in the literature that the learning and development of students are significantly influenced by the characteristics of organizational culture."

Fuller and Izu (1985) share the feeling that cultural beliefs within a school exert considerable power. Unlike regulatory controls placed on teachers, cultural beliefs are created by unobtrusive socialization of the teacher. The importance of this kind of change is that it causes teachers to converge to some commonly held beliefs. They come to share a faith which shapes their sense of efficacy to boost student learning. Purkey and Smith (1983) support Fuller and Izu's (1985) contention that culture brings power. They point out that cultural models of school improvement assume that changing the school's culture requires "changing people, their behaviours, and attitudes as well as the school organization and norms. It assumes that consensus among the staff of a school is more powerful that overt control, without ignoring the

need for leadership" (p. 68).

Purkey and Smith (1985) argue the school is the focus of change and culture is the target. Culture or "the way we do things around here " (Deal, 1985a) consists of ways of thinking, behaviour, and artifacts that symbolize the workplace. Understanding these symbols and culture of a school is a prerequisite to making the school more effective, since meaning in schools comes from this culture - from the shared values and beliefs, the heroes and heroines of the workplace, the rituals and ceremonies, the stories, and from the informal activities of the cultural players (Deal and Kennedy, 1982). The values and beliefs that bring success are developed over a long time by effective schools to give meaning to education in that facility (Fullan, 1985). School improvement plans and projections can be viewed as symbolic activities which reshape the culture of schools.

The effective schools movement offers an opportunity to examine how schools evolve to create a more favourable environment for growth and development. It clarifies and specifies the ingredients represented by a "culture" of mutually agreed upon expectations and goals necessary for effective schools. Isabella (1984) contends that "culture conveys a sense of identity for organizational members. It encourages the generation of commitment by providing organizational members with a rationale for their time and energy" (p. 37). This link between the meaning individuals attach to the organization due to their beliefs, and their commitment to the culture of the school becomes the power that can influence growth of the school and impact upon school improvement efforts.

Revitalizing School Culture

Deal (1985b) shows how the effective schools research reflects a strong rational and technical emphasis on goals, leadership, planning, meeting, and learning. The cultural approach to school improvement, in contrast, shows a definite symbolic emphasis on values, heroes, heroines, rituals, and beliefs. The importance of the difference is that these approaches present divergent ways of depicting the core attributes of effective schools, and of identifying what is needed to help less successful schools improve. Deal thus recommends an approach which encourages the application of language and concepts of culture to school improvement efforts. The approach encourages a school to look back on its own history and on the elements of its culture, rather than trying to emulate the characteristics of effective schools. Efforts to strengthen schools will thus be approached symbolically as well as rationally.

Although rational processes equip schools to manage the daily details of running smoothly and punctually, the symbolic side of organizations creates an opportunity to rebuild the integrity and identity of schools, and at the same time rekindles public faith in education. Deal (1985a) sees the "pathway to educational effectiveness inside each school. It exists in the traditions and symbols that make a school special to students, teachers, administrators, parents, and the community" (p. 615). He suggests symbolic strategies to help a school look backward on its history and inward on its symbols and rites. By combining the efforts of the cultural actors involved, these symbolic strategies can revitalize or transform the school's culture.

Deal (1985a) further advocates that understanding the symbols of the school's culture is a prerequisite to making the school more effective:

> Unless improvement strategies and programs are guided by a sensitive awareness of the role played by school culture, the effective schools movement could collapse under its own weight. We now have a language to describe the symbolic side of schools and change . . . help policymakers and educators think about the symbolic components of effective schools, and how the current moments can be harnessed to revitalize - perhaps to reshape the culture of schools. (p. 602)

In support of Deal's (1985a) school-based approach to culture revitalization, Purkey and Smith (1985) agree that since each school is unique it should be looking at its whole culture rather than at individual effectiveness attributes:

> the organizational looseness of schools and the resulting relative autonomy of teachers in the classroom, indicate that school cohesiveness can be obtained through building staff agreement on and commitment to clearly and commonly identified norms and goals . . . efforts to change schools have been productive and most enduring when directed towards influencing the entire school culture via a strategy involving collaborative planning, shared decision-making, and collegial work in an atmosphere friendly to experimentation and evaluation. (p. 357)

Purkey and Smith suggest a model drawing on this research which integrates the descriptive characteristics of effective schools, with what is known about policy formation, innovation implementation, organizational theory, and workplace reform.

Purkey and Smith's (1985) model, which must be adapted to fit local conditions, offers a systematic approach to developing characteristics which enhance a school's chance of successfully developing an effective school culture. The model provides both means and content, a process and a direction for an effective schools project. Nine characteristics, which can be quickly implemented by administrative mandate,

set the context and provide the impetus for the second group of four characteristics, which define the school's culture. The first nine characteristics include: school-site management and democratic decision-making; leadership; staff stability; curriculum articulation and organization; staff development; parental involvement and support; school-wide recognition of academic success; maximized learning time; and district support. The second group of four evolve in each school within the context of the first group, with an ultimate outcome of a school culture and climate that support and nourish academic success. The four characteristics which define the school's culture and lead to the development of the school climate include: collaborative planning and collegial relationships; a sense of community; clear goals and high expectations commonly shared; and order and discipline.

Purkey and Smith (1985) contend that developing these characteristics enhances a school's chances of successfully developing an effective school culture. In addition, staff participation in decision-making at the school level, identified as important in the research on implementation and change, is also integral to the process of creating an effective school culture. In contrast to the teacher's relative autonomy in the classroom, "staffs traditionally have not had the authority and opportunity to decide schoolwide policy on management issues" (p. 359). Cultural change requires teachers to learn new ways of thinking and behaving, and to acquire new skills and attitudes. For this to happen, people must be meaningfully involved in making the decisions concerning these changes, if they are to be held accountable for the outcomes engendered by the changes.

Since effective schools theory identifies the school building as the delivery level, with each schooi having a different school culture, school improvement consists of manipulating at the school level the network of characteristics that influence an individual school's culture. Ultimately, the goal is to affect teacher and student behaviour and attitudes.

Saphier and King (1985) see school improvement as emerging from the confluence of four elements: the strengthening of teacher's skills; the systematic renovation of curriculum; the improvement of the organization; and the involvement of parents and citizens in responsible school-community partnerships which all underlie a school culture that either energizes or undermines them. They contend, that regardless of the focus of particular change efforts in revitalizing school culture, schools need to nurture and build on the cultural norms that contribute to growth, if school improvement is to occur and have any lasting effects. Saphier and King advocate supporting those cultural norms where they exist and building them where they do not exist, since the degree to which these norms are strong influences the ability of school improvement activities to have any effect. Building these norms "depends equally on teachers' will and commitment, since good leadership alone cannot make them strong; but without such leadership, culture cannot begin to grow or be expected to endure" (p. 68). The culture builders of the school need to bring an ever-present awareness of these norms to everything they do in daily activity because this awareness and commitment to culture building is more important than any single activity or structure in the school organization.

Since culture building is school-based, administrators must understand their role in the process. Leaders cannot be the sole creators of organizational culture, or the sole force driving changes in the culture. Sergiovanni (1984) asserts that strong, functional cultures are "nurtured and built by the school leadership and membership" (p. 10). Leaders can manage the culture through both formal, explicit means, and informal, implicit means to affect school improvement outcomes.

Deal and Kennedy (1983) suggest three things educational leaders can do to help build a strong functional culture. First, leaders must get to know their culture's content, as it specifies the commitments by which cultural actors operate. Secondly, leaders must determine whether the culture is encouraging or undermining educational performance. Third, leaders must plan for how staff will come to grips with cultural patterns that need to be re-examined or changed. In order to do this, several formal management strategies involving communication, socialization, organizational design, and reward systems are available to the leader. As well, Saphier and King (1985) suggest informal leadership strategies which derive from the daily personal behaviour of the leader and his/her communication style are even more potent that the formal management strategies. Role modelling of behaviour which is consistent with desirable norms and values within the school culture is also an important leadership function according to Sergiovanni (1984). Sathe (1983) emphasizes the importance of leader's informal communication which carries implicit messages about the culture through storytelling and the relating of anecdotes that also support desired cultural values. The interpersonal and social skills of the leader

are relied upon to recognize how the dynamic social side of school life can influence change, commitment, and thus, improvement.

The Relationship Between School Culture and School Effectiveness

In an attempt to relate organizational culture (however described and measured) to the effectiveness of educational organizations, one invariably confronts the difficulties of assessing the effectiveness dimension. This problem requires that we identify indicators of organizational effectiveness in schools and ways of measuring them. Considerable research has been conducted and sufficient findings have been successfully replicated by the effective schools researchers to permit a synthesis of the broad agreements on the fundamental elements or indicators of effective schooling (MacKenzie, 1983), and of the most tangible characteristics of effective schools (Edmonds, 1979; Cohen, 1982). These will be discussed in the subsequent section of the literature review. The critical nature of the interdependence of these variables according to Purkey and Smith (1982) results from schooling being a complex process conditioned by the history and circumstances of its evolution. As a consequence:

> no single element of school effectiveness can be considered in isolation from all of the others, or from the total situation in which it is found. The principles of effectiveness may be consistent, but each school must implement them in unique ways. When effective schools are examined invito, what emerges is not a checklist of specific ingredients, but a syndrome or "culture" of mutually reinforcing expectations and activities. (p. 65)

Likert (1961) sought to link organizational performance to the internal characteristics of the organization. His analysis showed the performance of an organization to be determined by causal, intervening, and end-result variables.

Causal variables are under the control of the administration. The administration can choose the design of the organization's structure, the leadership style, and the philosophy of operation which together become the management system of the organization. The management system causes the interaction-influence system of the organization, namely its culture, to have the characteristics that it does have. The nature of intervening variables such as motivation, communication, and other critical aspects of organizational functioning flow directly from and are determined by these causal variables. End result variables which measure an organization's success depend on the nature and quality of the internal functioning of the organization.

Likert's analysis fits nicely with recent reports of naturalistic research in American public schools such as Ernest Boyer's (1983) High School and John Goodlad's (1984) A Place Called School which point out that successful schools are marked by a culture of pride and a climate of success. The norms of these schools support success-oriented efforts which reflect the values which leaders enact in the daily life of the school.

Research support for a close relationship between the culture of the school and school effectiveness also comes from a study of twelve inner-city London schools by Rutter and Mortimore (1979). They asked whether it mattered which school a child attended and if so, which were the features of the school that mattered. The study showed that the marked difference in the behaviour, attendance, and achievement of the students in various secondary schools "were systematically related to their characteristics as social institutions" (p. 178). This research suggested that

organizational culture (which Rutter and Mortimore called ethos) was a critical factor in student behaviour and achievement. And, as Likert had, Rutter and Mortimore pointed out that organizational culture was in the control of the people who managed the organization.

Moos (1979) reported a large-scale research project in the United States that supports the mounting evidence in the literature that the learning and development of students were significantly influenced by characteristics of organizational culture. After studying some ten thousand secondary school students in over five hundred classrooms, Moos declared that our knowledge of the causes and effects of organizational culture enables us to create and manage specified learning environments by controlling critical variables such as competition, intellectuality, and formal structure. This knowledge improves our ability to ensure students are placed in settings in which they will feel most comfortable and be most successful.

Deal (1985a) maintains it is the people in each school who dictate through words and deed what happens to their culture:

> Effective schools are those that over time have built a system of beliefs, supported by cultural forms that give meaning to the process of education . . . . These schools display shared values and beliefs, well known and widely celebrated heroes and heroines; well attended and memorable rituals and ceremonies; positive stories; and a dedicated informal group whose members work diligently to maintain and strengthen the culture. (p. 609)

Meaning in schools comes from this culture, from the shared values and beliefs, the heroes and heroines of the workplace, the rituals and ceremonies, the stories, and from the informal activities of the cultural players. Therefore, understanding these

ways of thinking, behaviours, and other elements of the culture of a school is a pre-requisite to making the school more effective. Fullan (1985) reminds us that the values and beliefs that bring success and meaning to education are developed over a long time by effective schools. Their special traditions and symbols eventually create a pathway to educational effectiveness for that school. The characteristics of effective schools discussed in the preceding section of the literature review become incorporated into the belief system of the school and reinforced through the school's culture.

Purkey and Smith (1982) argue the need to examine school culture as the focal point for developing school effectiveness. They contend:

> that an academically effective school is distinguished by its culture: a structure, process, and climate of values and norms that channel staff and students in the direction of successful teaching and learning . . . . The logic of the cultural model is such that it points to increasing the organizational effectiveness of a school building. (p. 68)

Culture serves a variety of functions in a school organization, which together influence its impact on school effectiveness. Consequently, any discussion of culture must consider the impact of school effectiveness.

Factors Associated With School Effectiveness

The literature on the history and evolution of school effectiveness illustrates how the scope of research efforts directed at identifying school factors that influence school effectiveness has expanded considerably since the Coleman Report of the 1960's. From efforts concentrating on easily quantifiable variables, research has

shifted towards a greater recognition of more complex variables. There is presently broad agreement on the fundamental elements of effective schooling (MacKenzie, 1983), and that process variables appear to offer greater potential for understanding differences in school effectiveness.

Since the creation of the National Institute of Education, by Congress in 1972, sufficient research has been conducted and enough findings have been successfully replicated to permit a synthesis of the most tangible and indispensable characteristics of effective schools (Edmonds, 1979; Cohen, 1982) to include:

1. strong administrative leadership by the school principal; especially in regard to instructional matters;
2. a school climate conducive to learning, ie., a safe and orderly school free of discipline and vandalism problems;
3. school-wide emphasis on basic skills instruction which entails agreement among the professional staff that instruction in the basic skills is the primary goal of the school;
4. teacher expectations that students can reach high levels of achievement, regardless of pupil background; and
5. a system of monitoring and assessing pupil performance which is tied to instructional objectives.

Other interrelated factors associated with school effectiveness which have emerged consistently and more recently from the literature (Manasse, 1984; Murphy et al., 1985a) have been expressed through a variety of terms, but seem to reduce to

an additional five basic areas:

1. shared vision/mission
2. school-wide staff development
3. parent and community involvement
4. collaborative planning and implementation
5. school system support

The critical nature of the interdependence of these interrelated factors and the preceding five variables is a recurring theme in the literature (Purkey and Smith, 1983; Fullan, 1985). This interdependence, according to Purkey and Smith (1983), results from schooling being a complex process conditioned by the history and circumstances of its evolution. The implication is that a school in which the principal and instructional staff agree on what they are doing, believe they can do it, provide an environment conducive to accomplishing the task, monitor their effectiveness, and adjust performance based on such feedback, is likely to be an effective one. Further elaboration of each of the factors associated with school effectiveness will assist in creating an understanding of how effectiveness can be identified.

Effective Leadership

The literature on school effectiveness has emphasized the critical influence of the principal in making the school effective (Edmonds, 1979; Rutter et al., 1979; Manasse, 1984; Murphy et al., 1985a). Consequently, any discussion of effective schooling is inextricably bound to, and dependent upon a discussion of administrative leadership within the school.

According to Brookover et al. (1978), Austin (1979), Edmonds (1979), Rutter et al. (1979), Cohen (1982), Little (1982), and Murphy et al. (1983) good schools invariably had good administrators. Effective principals:

1. have clear, informed visions of what they want their schools to become - visions that focus on students and their needs;
2. translate these visions into goals for their schools and expectations for the teachers, students, and administrators;
3. establish school climates that support progress toward these goals and expectations;
4. continuously monitor progress; and
5. intervene in a supportive or corrective manner when this seems necessary.

The characteristics of the "effective" leader can be discussed by focusing on four necessary aspects of school leadership: values, knowledge, interpersonal skills and technical skills (McCabe and Renihan, 1985).

i. Values. Leaders of effective schools work hard and put in extraordinary amounts of time to demonstrate that they care about the school and its people. Along with a vision of the change process itself their values provide a framework within which leaders act on a daily basis and against which they access affects (Manasse, 1984). These principals are able to combine their personal vision with information sensing and analysis skills, and interpersonal skills to generate commitment of a common set of values with their staff members.

ii. Knowledge. Effective principals possess knowledge about the characteristics

of effective schools. They understand how children learn and develop and how instruction can promote student and teacher growth. Glickman (1985) suggests this kind of knowledge comes to a principal as a result of what is called expert power as compared to legitimate, coercive, referent or reward power. Effective principals are viewed by teachers and pupils as persons who are expert in a wide variety of areas.

iii. Interpersonal Skills. Values and knowledge need to be accompanied by effective interpersonal skills for building and communicating norms for effectiveness with a variety of individuals. The principal must use his/her own problem-solving abilities to identify, choose, and determine the most appropriate interpersonal approaches to use with his/her staff to ensure operational norms which enhance school effectiveness. Specific leadership processes which build and maintain these school effectiveness norms while valuing interpersonal communication include: modelling, feedback, and consensus building (Squires et al., 1981).

iv. Technical Skills. Technical skills in assessing, planning, observing, researching, monitoring, and evaluating the instructional program are a critical aspect of school leadership (Leithwood and Montgomery, 1982). Instructional leadership includes, among other things, an important role in framing and communicating school goals, establishing expectations and standards, coordinating the curriculum, supervising and evaluating instruction, promoting student opportunity to learn and promoting professional development for staff (Murphy et al., 1983). The opportunity for increasing the teacher's skills in planning, managing, and delivering instruction comes through supervision according to Squires et al. (1981).

Variations in the degree and the nature of the effect principals have on school effectiveness ultimately is influenced by variations in characteristics within these four aspects of school leadership: values, knowledge, interpersonal skills, and technical skills as discussed above. Leithwood (1992) maintains that while instructional leadership of the 1980's and 1990's focused on improving technical, instructional activities of the school, changes such as building a shared vision, improving communication, and developing collaborative decision-making processes require a focus on transformational leadership. While "transactional" leadership "is based on an exchange of services . . . for various kinds of rewards . . . that the leader controls, at least in part" transformational leaders "more or less pursuit three fundamental goals: 1) helping staff members develop and maintain a collaborative professional school culture; 2) fostering teacher development; and 3) helping them solve problems together more effectively" (p. 9). While transactional and transformational leadership practices may be viewed as complementary, according to Leithwood "transformational leadership provides the incentive for people to attempt improvements in their practices" (p. 9).

Bass (1985) found followers described transformational leaders as someone who made everyone enthusiastic about assignments, who inspired loyalty to the organization, who commanded respect from everyone, and who had a sense of mission that excited responses. Followers had complete faith in these leaders, felt proud to be associated with them, and trusted their capability to overcome any obstacle. These leaders serve as role models to personally influence their followers

through developmental orientation.

While transactional practices may be seen as central to maintaining the day-to-day routines carried out in schools, Leithwood (1992) maintains school administration into the next century will involve transformational leadership which "evokes a more appropriate range of practice . . . and subsume(s) instructional leadership as the dominant image of school administrators, at least during the 90"s" (p. 8).

A Caring School Climate

Brookover and Erickson (1975) identify school climate as the attitudes, beliefs, values, and norms that characterize a school. They suggest the school social climate:

> encompasses a composite of variables as defined and perceived by the members of this group. These factors may be broadly conceived as the norms of the social system and expectations held for various members as perceived by the members of the group and communicated to members of the group. (p. 364)

Thus, the school's climate has an impact upon how its members perform, since it is the tone or atmosphere which results from the interaction among teacher, students, and the principal.

In effective schools specific attention is given to the creation and maintenance of a climate which is conducive to learning, due to evidence that the climate of the school and the morale of the staff can have a positive effect on pupil attitudes and learning (Edmonds, 1979; Rutter, 1979). While school climate can appear to be a very abstract concept, four vital aspects of a school's climate or environment encourage and emphasize the worth of all individuals within the school: pervasive caring, physical surroundings, order and discipline, and meaningful student

participation.

i. Pervasive Caring. A caring atmosphere permeates an effective school led by a principal who sets an example by showing interest in all teachers, students, and parents.

ii. Physical Surroundings. Effective schools take great pride in the general appearance of their buildings. Classroom walls are used for displaying student work to stress the academic side of school, to encourage students to work well, and to reward them by having their work displayed, as well as to make their school more visually attractive. Pictures, plants, topical displays and student designed murals, as well as student classroom work are also evident in hallways. A general attention to decoration and cleanliness with swift attention to maintenance matters (Rutter et al., 1979) provides a positive model to students, acknowledging that people work and behave better when they are well looked after and feel that those in charge care. Involving students in a meaningful voice in the appearance of their school also encourages a greater sense of ownership and commitment to the school.

iii. Order and Discipline. Effective schools maintain a safe and orderly environment for learning. A safe environment refers to a climate in which students and staff are free from the danger of harm to themselves or damage to their property (Edmonds, 1979; Wynne, 1980; Anderson, 1982). An orderly environment refers to a systematic set of discipline policies and practices (Brookover et al., 1978; Anderson, 1982). Effective schools recognize order as a social necessity, therefore, approach the tasks of order and discipline with seriousness and purposefulness.

iv. Meaningful Student Participation. Another key to school effectiveness is the involvement of students in the process of change. This involvement particularly helps to create what Rutter et al., (1979), and Mortimore et al., (1987a) label the positive ethos of the school. There is a positive attitude toward young people and a positive attitude toward learning. The key aspects of student participation have been identified by Rutter et al. (1979), Wynne (1980), and Squires et al. (1981) to include the number and quality of chances students have to learn responsibility and practice leadership behaviour, to form close ties to their school, and to learn skills necessary to participate successfully in activities. In schools that are successful in promoting student involvement, Murphy et al. (1985b) found these key aspects are nurtured through "regular mechanisms that encourage and reinforce involvement, a wide array of activities, and the use of formal mechanisms for helping students learn the skills to ensure that involvement is a successful experience" (p. 367). They indicate that these schools provide a positive direction for students to influence the school climate by structuring opportunities for students to come together and support each other and by arranging for shared experiences that promote attachment to the school. They create rich environments of meaningful involvement in a wide variety of sports teams, an array of interest and curriculum clubs, opportunities for students to work in the larger community, and a number of ways for students to take responsibility through student government.

Shared Vision and Academic Focus

A clear sense of mission, with a specific emphasis on high academic performance and a total dedication to academic excellence is found in effective schools (Hallinger, 1981; Shoemaker & Fraser, 1981).

i. Shared Vision. In contrast to schools characterized by vague and unclear goals, successful schools project a consistent philosophy and sense of mission which is shared by teachers, pupils, and administrators (Rutter at al., 1979; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982; Murphy et al., 1983). A prevailing norm guides decision-making and other important activities in the school which are described by Murphy et al. (1983) as "academic press" - the sense that all activities combine to create an environment of academic rigor. Goals are often embodied in school norms in which academic matters and student achievement are highly prized and framed in a way that can be measured with target dates, timelines, and responsibilities included in goal statements.

A vital component of the mission statement is a clear school-wide set of academic and social behaviour goals. Achievement in reading, writing, mathematics, and other areas are emphasized by the entire teaching staff, as is student behaviour which promotes an orderly classroom and school climate. Teachers, parents, and students share the same understanding of the school's goals (Brookover et al., 1979; Edmonds and Frederiksen, 1979; Wynne, 1980) because there is agreement between administrators and teachers as to the importance of this mission.

Rutter et al. (1979) suggest that the principal is instrumental not only in the

setting of goals and priorities, but also in communicating them through the vision. Vision refers to the capacity to create and communicate a view of the desired state of affairs that induces a commitment among those working in the school. Schools that are successful in school improvement have developed a sense of their own mission based upon a vision of what the desired or ideal school will be like. Discrepancies between what is envisioned for the school and what exists, provides the basis for setting goals and developing procedures to meet those goals (Rutter et al., 1979; Leithwood and Montgomery, 1982; Joyce et al., 1983; Purkey and Degen, 1985). This shared image includes clear agreements about what is valued, both in the kind of relationships among people and in the expectations that are shared for staff and students within the school.

ii. Academic Focus. Brookover et al. (1977), Edmonds (1979), and Rosenshine (1979) identify a marked emphasis on academic learning as a common characteristic of effective schools. Throughout these and other studies, the point is made that the importance placed upon academic learning is reflected in the major portion of school time appropriated to it. It is very clear that the most effective schools care the most about instruction and learning in all of the school's endeavours (Wellish et al., 1978; Edmonds, 1979; Rutter et al., 1979; Squires et al., 1981; Brookover et al., 1982). When educational issues arise, student learning considerations are the most important criteria used in decision-making in an effective school.

(a) Instruction. A school-wide commitment to instructional improvement is a most important factor operating in successful schools (Rutter et al., 1979; Wynne,

1980). The value system, knowledge base, interpersonal skills, technical skills, and personality traits brought to the classroom by each teacher, are factors which influence what is taught, how it is taught, and the learning climate of the classroom (Rosenshine, 1979). Many of these variables which contribute to instructional improvement are within the individual and collective control of the school staff. In recent years there has been an explosion of knowledge, evidence, and indices of what constitutes effective teaching. As a result, a final model representing the epitome of school instruction does not exist.

(b). Curriculum. Along with a school-wide commitment to instructional improvement, planned school curriculum is correlated with school effectiveness (Cohen, 1982), since a school's curriculum forms a substantial portion of the base upon which instruction is planned (Rutter et al., 1979). Provincial curriculum guides provide direction and general purpose; textbooks and program series give more precise direction and guidance about instruction; school divisions and individual schools write curriculum guides to further aid in meeting student needs; and, of course, teachers come to work with their own plans to make children's experiences in school more rewarding.

School staffs that meet to discuss and plan the school's curriculum around common goals, based on a common vision of the knowledge, skills, and abilities students of the school possess, work more productively and harmoniously, since their efforts are guided by a well-defined and co-ordinated curriculum. Alignment and co-ordination is evident between and among grades in the subject matter pursued, in the

resource material obtained for the school, and in the instructional procedures (Squires, 1981; Little, 1982; Anderson, 1982; Murphy et al., 1982; Joyce et al., 1983; Purkey & Smith, 1983).

High Expectations

Central to the notion of positive ethos in the school is the notion of high expectations. No other variable has been found to be more consistently related to school effectiveness than high expectations (Purkey & Smith, 1983, p. 427) which establish a school norm that presses for student academic achievement, educational excellence, and staff responsibility for student performance. "High expectations" refers to a climate where the staff expect all students to do well, believe that all students have the capacity to do well, believe in their ability to influence student achievement, accept responsibility for student achievement, and hold themselves accountable for student learning. Good (1983) noted that there is a direct relationship between student achievement and the expectations that teachers and principals hold for them. This norm of high expectations is translated into specific school and classroom policies, practices, and behaviours. These include regularly assigned and graded homework, participation in co-curricular activities only if grades are high, and notification of parents when expectations are not being met. Success is built into lessons, and teachers provide consistent rewards for demonstrated achievement (Brookover et al., 1978). Standards for achievement are high yet reasonable, and students expect to master their academic work and graduate (Rutter et al., 1979). Students feel teachers care about their academic performance and that

hard work is more important than luck. They have a sense of control over their environment.

High expectations influence almost every activity the school undertakes. Teachers and administrators hold high expectations for themselves and for each other. In a high expectation environment, where assistance is readily available for teachers and students, individuals develop a sense of confidence. Risk-taking becomes a norm (Joyce et al., 1983) and success spills over into other activities.

Systematic Monitoring and Evaluation of Academic Performance

Effective schools continually seek to improve, to find better ways of meeting the changing needs of their students, staff, and communities (Edmonds, 1979; Rosenshine, 1979; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982; Purkey & Smith, 1983). Monitoring, or the ongoing assessment of student progress, teaching, curriculum and/or projects, occurs in effective schools continuously as they strive to make appropriate improvements (Rutter et al., 1979; Goodlad, 1984). Tests are taken seriously and test results are discussed with the entire school staff and with individual teachers, and used for instructional and curricular planning (Brookover & Lezotte, 1977; Edmonds, 1979). Tests become one mechanism available for making clear the goals of education which are at the very heart of what defines an effective school.

Both formative and summative evaluation is focused on improvement of instruction and on factors that influence instruction. A systematic process of gathering information to help determine whether student and school goals are being met is used. Decisions to continue the use of particular programs and practices, or

to modify them to improve instruction and learning are made. This systematic evaluation is but one step in the larger context of planning, which begins by goal setting and the establishment of priorities which are then followed by a focus on improvement (De Roche, 1981).

Collaborative Planning and Implementation

The most important organizational processes known to be associated with effective schools are open communications, shared decision-making, confrontation of conflict situations, collaborative planning, and the building of consensus. The primary focus for these collegial processes is academic matters and student achievement (Little, 1982). The literature confirms that the quality of working relationships among teachers is strongly related to school improvement success (Rutter et al., 1979; Little, 1982). Collegiality, open communication, trust, support, and mutual confidence are all part of the environment where successful improvement projects occur (Huberman & Miles, 1984). Where teachers are working as isolated individuals and good peer relations are lacking, school improvement is limited (Little, 1981; Purkey & Smith, 1983; Huberman & Miles, 1984).

Staff Development

Goodlad (1983) argues that "creating a satisfying place of work for the individuals who inhabit schools is good in its own right, but it appears to be necessary to maintain a productive educational environment" (p. 59). Bentzen (1974) notes that schools which engage in successful change demonstrate a cycle of professional interactions in which the teachers and principal talk together about what they want

to happen in the school, decide about intentions, formulate action plans and systematically reflect upon the effects of their plans. In schools where the ethos is strong, staff development is an ongoing, participatory, problem-solving component of school life. While professional development needs in a teacher's career are influenced by the teacher's self-directedness and self-evaluation, they are also complemented by the collaborative and supportive activities of staff members through staff development activities aimed at the school level. Hopkin's (1987) school-based review which enhances Bentzen's (1974) view is a complementary strategy that involves a school staff in a systematic review of current practice in a climate which places great emphasis on staff collaboration and on norms that encourage and support staff development.

A culture which channels staff and students in the direction of successful teaching and learning (Purkey and Smith, 1983) must be developed in order for a staff to engage in meaningful interaction, review current practices, and create the improvements recommended by Bentzen (1974) and Hopkins (1987). The importance of school culture is that it brings a fundamental belief system or set of values, that provides a definite purpose and that emphasizes the importance of collegiality and collaboration in all the processes involved in reaching school effectiveness. Johnson (1983) states that if the social organization of the school includes collegial and collaborative norms, then staff members would be better disposed towards being involved in self-improvement and staff development activities which would help to improve their performance and, consequently, student

achievement in the classroom. Murphy et al. (1985b) also conclude that staff development activities which "become an integral part of the school climate and which involve collegial relationships among staff in the implementation of inservice content" have been found to be "associated with gains in school-wide student achievement" (p. 366). Positive change and improvement are unlikely otherwise, according to MacKenzie (1983), since the "overall climate and atmosphere of the school can be seen as a crucible for the personal efficacy of those who work there" (p. 10).

Parent and Community Involvement

Rutter et al. (1979) have shown that the extent to which school staff and parents work together to promote student learning is related to school effectiveness. Murphy et al., (1985b, p. 368) provide four activities and processes which contribute to the function of co-operation and support: frequent communication from the school with a clear set of expectations for parents and what they can do to help the school reach its goals; structured parent input into these goals and decisions; opportunities for parents to participate in school functions, activities, and classroom instruction; and opportunities for parents to learn about school programs, develop parenting skills, and how they can work with their children at home on academic subjects. Effective schools enjoy strong support from the parents and the communities in which they are located. There is a good deal of parent participation and involvement in advisory and decision-making bodies. An internal atmosphere of professional collegiality is maintained with groups working together, making decisions, and resolving conflict in

pursuit of a common goal, namely, academic excellence.

Effective schools also recognize the significant effect home environments have on achievement. Bloom (1973) characterizes these home environments as follows:

1. Work habits of the family: The degree of routine in the home, the emphasis on regularity in the use of space and time, and the priority given to schoolwork over other activities.
2. Academic guidance and support: The availability and quality of the help and encouragement parents give the child for his or her schoolwork, and the conditions they provide to support the child's schoolwork.
3. Stimulation: The opportunity provided by the home to explore ideas, events, and the larger environment.
4. Language development: Opportunities in the home for developing correct and effective use of language.
5. Academic aspirations and expectations: The parents' aspirations for the child, the standards they set for the child's school achievement, and their interests in and knowledge of the child's school experiences.

Walberg (1984) suggests that this "alterable curriculum of the home" is twice as predictive of academic learning as is socio-economic status. Parental influence, support, and involvement is a major factor in maximizing student learning. As a result of this, Renihan and Renihan (1984) feel the "pastoral" role of the school leader should reach out to parents and the community and encourage a philosophy of partnership in the education of children, by establishing a climate of "respect,

dialogue, and openness characterized by informal parental visits to the school" (p. 5).

The fundamental elements of effective schools discussed in this section of the literature review will assist in understanding the implications for school effectiveness of the cultural assumptions of St. Gabriel School.

Conceptual Framework

Schein's (1984) levels of culture and their interaction formed the conceptual framework for this study. Schein (1984, p. 3) analyzes organizational culture as existing at three different levels as shown in Figure 1. "Visible artifacts" are defined as the constructed environment of the organization. For this level of analysis the data are easy to obtain but hard to interpret. "How" a group constructs its environment and "what" behaviour patterns exist amoung members can be described, but the underlying logic - why a group behaves the way it does often cannot be understood.

The second level values assist with an analysis of why members behave the way they do. Schein (1984, p. 3) explains that "as values are hard to observe directly, it is often necessary to infer them by interviewing key members of the organization as to content analyze artifacts." He elaborates that these values represent only the espoused values of a culture focussing on "what people say is the reason for their behaviour, what they ideally would like those reasons to be, and what are often their rationalizations for their behaviour." The underlying reasons for behaviour remain unconscious or concealed.

Schein (1984) labels this third unconscious level which actually determines how group members perceive, think, and feel the underlying assumptions. To really understand a culture he maintains it is imperative to delve into this layer.

> Such assumptions are themselves learned responses that originated as espoused values. But as a value leads to a behaviour, and as that behaviour begins to solve the problem which prempted it in the first place, the value gradually is transformed into an underlying assumption about how things really are. As the assumption is increasingly taken for granted, it drops out of awareness. (p. 4)

Schein (1984) argues these underlying assumptions can be brought back to awareness through a kind of focussed inquiry using the efforts of both an insider who makes the unconscious assumptions and an outsider who helps uncover the assumptions by asking the right kinds of questions. Because of the human need for order and consistency the basic assumptions of a group eventually form a pattern. This pattern of underlying assumptions, namely culture, becomes taken for granted and unconscious until it is called to the surface by a process of inquiry such as the Joint Exploration Through Iterative Interviewing approach.

Artifacts and Creations Technology Art Visible and Audible Behaviour Patterns	Visible but Often Not Decipherable
Values	Greater Level of Awareness
Basic Assumptions Relationship to Environment Nature of Reality, Time, and Space Nature of Human Nature Nature of Human Activity Nature of Human Relationships	Taken for Granted Invisible Preconscious

Figure 2.1. The Levels of Culture and Their Interaction (Schein, 1984, p. 4)

Summary

The cultural approach to school effectiveness shows a definite symbolic emphasis on values, assumptions, norms, beliefs, heroes, heroines, rituals, and other cultural elements. The effective schools research, in contrast, has reflected a strong rational and technical emphasis on instructional leadership, school climate, high expectations, a basic skills instructional focus, and monitoring and evaluating learning. The importance of the difference is that these approaches present divergent ways of depicting the core attributes of effective schools and of identifying what is needed to help less successful schools improve.

While a rational and technical emphasis equips schools to manage the daily details of running smoothly and punctually, understanding the symbols of the culture of schools has been suggested by Kilmann, Saxton and Serpa (1985), Louis (1985a), Sathe (1985), and Deal and Kennedy (1982) as a pre-requisite to making them more effective. This involves schools looking inwards on the elements of their cultures, rather than trying only to emulate the characteristics of effective schools identified in the second part of the literature review.

Purkey and Smith (1985) reinforce that since each school is unique it should be looking at its whole culture rather than at individual effectiveness attributes:

> the organizational looseness of schools and the resulting relative autonomy of teachers in the classroom indicate that school cohesiveness can be obtained through building staff agreement on and commitment to clearly and commonly identified norms and goals . . . efforts to change schools have been productive and most enduring when directed towards influencing the entire school culture via a strategy involving collaborative planning, shared decision-making, and collegial work in an atmosphere

friendly to experimentation and evaluation. (p. 357)

This approach could reflect a culture that values norms which energize the attributes of improvement by providing a link between belief, meaning, and action which together would influence the school's effectiveness. The staff, while focusing on the whole picture, would ensure resulting school improvement activity would take place with the ultimate goal of affecting those school effectiveness variables identified as ultimately influencing student learning, the very underlying reason behind school improvement.

The concept of school culture has been shown to either undermine or energize schools working towards attributes of school effectiveness. Commonly held assumptions, values, beliefs, norms, and other elements of culture have been shown to have considerable power over personnel in a school. This power of culture creates a commitment and sense of identity for organizational members, providing the link between the beliefs and meaning which influence their impact on students. Strong functional cultures have been shown to improve educational productivity as a result. Accepting the premise that functional cultures increase organizational effectiveness, suggests that schools wishing to enhance their effectiveness must begin by revealing the basic elements of their existing cultures. This beginning source of information will assist schools in understanding how their present school culture is impacting upon their organization and its members' behaviour. Only then will it become more evident what changes need to occur before a culture will develop which energizes the school to work towards the attributes of effective schools advocated by the literature on school effectiveness.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the models for studying school culture, the scope of the study, the selection of a school for the study, the duration of the study, the sources of data, and the data collection and analysis methods used to decipher St. Gabriel's basic assumptions.

Models For Studying School Culture

Several researchers share similar conceptualizations for the study of organizations as culture. The following examples will serve to support the researcher's choice of Schein's (1985a) framework for data collection and analysis of a school culture.

Lightfoot's (1983, pp. 13 - 14) framework for the study of culture maintains that schools should be studied in their contextual reality, and school environments and processes should be examined from the outsider's more distant perspective and the insider's immediate subjective view. For Lightfoot, truth is in the integration of various perspectives, where all types of subjects are allowed to reveal their dimensions, including the deviant voice as an important version of the truth and as a useful indicator of what the culture defines as the norm. Preconceived notions of themes or lists of predetermined questions are not necessary, as the researcher selects themes as they emerge as cental in the organization.

Cusick's (1983) organizing framework also indicates that the most important approach for an outsider to learn about a school is by participating in its daily

activities and noting its ethos first hand. The researcher is able to witness, describe, and discuss phenomena in the culture with insiders continuously. As phenomena pattern out into hypotheses, they are systematically tested with various insiders to decipher "the deeper life and the deeper meanings of the institution" (p. 7).

Sathe (1985) maintains the process of deciphering the culture of an organization works best when outsiders are teamed up with established members of the culture under study. The research "should proceed from observations that puzzle the outsider because the insider's assumptions are more easily surfaced by contrast to the outsider's initial assumptions" (p. 21).

Smirich (1983) advocates that researchers studying culture should be "concerned with learning the consensual meanings ascribed by a group of people to their experience, and articulating the thematic relationships expressed in this meaning system" (p. 165). As a result, the researcher's role in the field should be that of a learner, since "meanings do not exist in objects or activities; they are assigned to events by people who perceive and interpret their context. Therefore, because the researcher's concern is with meaning, and not with facts that lie outside human actions, the researcher needs to be close to, not detached from, those interactions in which meaning are rooted and elaborated" (p. 165).

Thus, researchers studying the cultures of organizations have common conceptualizations on methodology. Lightfoot (1983), Cusick (1983), Smirich (1983), and Sathe (1985) all agree that in studying the cultures of organizations researchers should:

1. enter organizations with no predetermined hypotheses and the meanings should be learned through their interactions with the people in those settings;
2. obtain data from several key people in the organization who embody the basic assumptions;
3. be concerned with the shared meanings which these people ascribe to their experience;
4. be close to the social interactions in which meanings are rooted and elaborated because shared meanings are the result of people's perceptions and interpretations of events in their context;
5. make a commitment to spend a significant length of time in the cultural setting to observe interactions with and learn from the people in the organizational setting; and
6. be reminded that analysis of data is an interpretive endeavour and a concomitant process of data collection.

Schein's (1985a) methodology is consistent with the definition of organizational culture proposed earlier and the research questions posed by the researcher. It incorporates aspects of Lightfoot's (1983), Cusick's (1983), Sathe's (1985), and Smirich's (1983) frameworks into one comprehensive and systematic design for deciphering an organization's basic assumptions.

Joint Exploration Through Iterative Interviewing involves a series of encounters and joint explorations between an outside investigator and various key informants, who live in the organization under study, and who embody its culture. Finally

determining the organization's basic assumptions must be a joint effort to avoid the outsider's subjectivity bias and the insider's internal invisibility.

Schein (1985a) further explains that the outsider researcher's subjectivity prevents the outsider from experiencing the categories of meaning that an insider uses,

> because he [sic] has not lived long enough in the culture to learn the semantic nuances, how meanings are translated into behaviour, and how such behavioral rules apply situationally. What the newcomer learns at entry reveals surface layers of the culture; only when inner boundaries are crossed is the member told that really goes on and how to think about it. Furthermore, the outsider inevitably imposes his own categories of meaning onto observed events, and these interpretations are incorrect to an unknown degree. The insider can correct the misinterpretation by hearing how the outsider interprets events. But they need to talk about it explicitly, so that the misinterpretation can be observed and corrected. (p. 113)

In terms of the insider's internal invisibility Schein (1985a) explains that the insider cannot tell the outsider what the basic assumptions are and how they are patterned because

> they have dropped out of awareness and are taken for granted. The insider can become aware of them only by trying to explain to the outsider why certain things that puzzle the outsider happen the way they do or by correcting interpretations that the outsider is making. (p. 113)

Only a joint effort between the insiders and an outsider can decipher the basic assumptions and their interrelationships according to Schein.

Joint Exploration Through Iterative Interviewing is the safest methodology in collecting data on organizational culture according to Schein (1985a), because this methodology does not require initial definite questions or things to observe or ask, and regardless of how much data the researcher has, an outsider cannot decipher the

culture alone. Instead, theoretical categories on problems of external adaptation and survival, problems of internal integration, and basic underlying assumptions around which cultural paradigms form, can be used to alert the researcher to areas where observations should be made.

The underlying assumptions that are involved in the incidents, feelings, what is done, and how it works are elicited so that the researcher can begin to look for patterns in these responses. From these emerging patterns tentative hypotheses are then developed which describe the organization's basic assumptions that will come to be tested with key insiders (Schein, 1985a, p. 121).

London's (1978, p. 15) conceptualization supports Schein in advocating that researchers should not start with hypotheses to test when deciphering the culture of educational institutions. Smirich (1983) also advances the view that researchers of culture should not start their studies with predetermined hypotheses to be tested in the field. Instead, they should "learn about the meanings of social action through the course of their interaction with people in a particular setting. The themes present in the setting will emerge and can be explored on cycles of data collection and analysis" (p. 168).

Thus, Schein's (1985a) evocative technique is used to pursue critical incidents. Merton et al. (1957) claim that non-directive interviews can "uncover diversity of relevant responses, whether or not these have been anticipated by the inquirer. . . . It gives the interviewee an opportunity to express himself about matters of central significance to him" (p. 43). The questions in the interview schedule are based on

issues raised from the researcher's observations of verbal, behavioral and physical artifacts, from the data obtained from archival material and documents, and from preliminary informal meetings with the various constituent groups where the researcher explains her purpose and role in the school.

Ten activity steps are involved in Schein's (1985a) Joint Exploration Through Iterative Interviewing methodology of deciphering an organization's basic assumptions. These include:

1. entry and focus on surprises
2. systematic observation and checking
3. the location of a motivated insider
4. the revelation of surprises, puzzlements and hunches
5. joint exploration to find explanation
6. the formalization of hypotheses
7. systematic checking and consolidation
8. pushing to the level of assumptions
9. perceptual recalibration
10. formal written description (pp. 114 - 118, see Appendix A)

This evocative technique is used to look for patterns in the responses of respondents. Tentative hypotheses are then developed from these emerging patterns which describe the basic assumptions to be tested with key insiders. The ten activity steps provide a comprehensive and systematic design for deciphering an organization's basic assumptions.

Scope of the Study

This study focused on one school. Owens (1987a, p. 25) reminds us that each school has a culture which can be described, that is, a uniqueness, a history,

traditions, and customs that leaders emphasize and make coherent. Deal (1985a) elaborates on how this culture develops:

> Each school has its own story or origin, the people or circumstances that launched it, and those who presided over its course thereafter. Through evolutionary development - crises and resolutions, internal innovations and external pressures, plans and chance occurrences - the original concept was shaped and reshaped into an organic collection of traditions and distinctive ways. Throughout a school's history, a parade of teachers, students, principals, and parents cast sustaining memories. Great accomplishments meld with dramatic failures to form a potentially cherishable lore. (p. 615)

The deciphering of a school's unique culture according to Schein (1985a) involves elaborate and extensive data collection activities which take a long time. The data collection phase was limited, therefore, to one school site, identified as possessing these three characteristics along with being seen as a school possessing many of the major school effectiveness variables. Since culture is learned in an evolving way as members interact through shared history, the site chosen needed to have a membership which had an opportunity to develop a defined culture. Schein (1985a) claims:

> The strength, clarity, and degree of integration of a corporate culture or subculture is directly proportional to the stability of the membership of the group, the length of time the group has been together, and the intensity of the collective learning that has taken place. (p. 26)

Selection of a School for the Study

A modification of the so-called "reputational approach" was used to identify the school for this study. The people best suited to judge the reputations of the schools

in the Westville* Catholic Board of Education were considered to be the director, superintendents, program co-ordinators, and consultants. These individuals were approached by the superintendent of education to nominate schools on the basis of the school selection criteria identified under the scope of the study along with the variables associated with school effectiveness. Considerable research has been conducted and sufficient findings have been successfully replicated to permit a synthesis of the most tangible and indispensable characteristics of effective schools (Edmonds, 1979; Cohen, 1982). These include:

1. strong administration leadership;
2. a school climate conducive to learning;
3. school-wide emphasis on basic skills instruction;
4. teacher expectations that students can reach high levels of achievement;
5. a system of monitoring and assessing pupil performance which is tied to instructional objectives.

These variables associated with school effectiveness became the criteria to assist nominees in identifying the school for this study. Additional criteria involved the length of tenure of the principal's leadership in the school so that a school with a newly appointed principal would not be considered, the size of the school requiring that it be large enough that a suitable number of staff members would consider participating in the study, and that the degree of staff-turnover be more stable in the current school year. Those providing nominations were asked to nominate a school on the basis of their knowledge of that school in relationship to the relevant set of

*For reasons of anonymity a pseudonym has been provided for the system and the school in which the study took place.

characteristics and criteria provided. Subsequently the researcher received the name of one school from the superintendents of central office.

Once the school was identified the researcher was requested to meet with the principal of the school to further elaborate to him the purpose of the study; its significance; its design and procedures; the potential roles for staff members, students, and parents in the study; and some of the implications of the school's participation in the study. The school staff was told that because the findings of the study would be used to write a dissertation, the findings would become public. Staff, students, and parents were each informed that pseudonyms would be used both for the school and for the individuals referred to in the study so as not to injure or jeopardize any individual (Owens, 1987a, p. 17). Confidentiality of information was assured during and after the study (Mirvis, 1980, p. 201). Minimal participation time during scheduled school activities was requested of participants. Staff could voluntarily decide whether they wanted to participate in capacities such as participant observation or for the purposes of being interviewed. At the meeting with the principal and vice-principal to go over these issues, both men indicated their support for the study; however, they wished to consult with their staff at the upcoming staff meeting to determine whether they, too, would be interested in participating in the study. After the staff meeting took place and agreement was given to become involved in the study, the researcher met with those staff members who had expressed a special interest in being involved over a noon hour lunch meeting to go over the same elements of the proposal study that had been discussed with the

administrative team earlier. The staff did not feel any contractual letter was needed for their participation and understood their withdrawal from involvement in the study would be accommodated should the need arise. Matters surrounding ownership and confidentiality of data were clarified to the satisfaction of the participants. Preparatory plans were made for the researcher's entry in the school site the following day.

Duration of the Study

Deciphering an organization's basic assumptions by Joint Exploration Through Iterative Interviewing, observation, and analysis of archival material requires great patience and effort over an extended period of time according to Schein (1985a, p. 113). Schein (1985a) and Frost et al. (1985) also warn that an accurate understanding of an organization's basic cultural assumptions cannot be successfully deciphered unless the researcher has lived in the culture for some time. Wilcox (1982, p. 461) recommends that the researcher studying organizations as culture stay in the study setting long enough to repeatedly observe and iteratively interview the organizational people under study and to analyze relevant organizational documents.

Approval was granted to conduct the study by the Westville Catholic Board of Education and permission was granted by all participants to report the data using pseudonyms to protect anonymity. Appendix G provides a letter of release from the principal of the study school.

The researcher proposed data collection for approximately a four month period

from January, 1989 to April, 1989. It was felt this time period would allow the researcher sufficient time to collect data which were representative of the operations of the school at different times of the school year. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) recommend this length of time as desirable in qualitative research.

Sources of Data

Three major sources were used to generate data for Phase One of the research which involved the deciphering of the school's basic assumptions. Artifacts were observed, iterative interviews took place with key informants, and archival material was analyzed. All three methods were used simultaneously, so that data collected by one method were cross-checked with data gathered by another method so as to ensure accuracy, authenticity, and consistency of data.

Observations of Artifacts

The school and its stakeholders' verbal, behavioral, and physical artifacts or what the researcher saw, heard, and felt provided the data on which questions were focused for iterative interviews with key informants.

Interviews with Key Informants

In accordance with Schein's (1985a) Joint Exploration Through Iterative Interviewing the researcher used key informants to generate data that led to deciphering of the school's basic assumptions. Using different constituent groups to acquire a variety of perspectives on the multiple realities of the culture under investigation improved the trustworthiness of the findings from this study. The

diversity of types of information collected was not only justifiable but was required (Lawler et al., 1983, p. 537). The selection of key informants was based on the following: length of time in the school; possession of special knowledge which would contribute insights about St. Gabriel not so evident to others; and a willingness to share information.

According to Kvale (1984) a qualitative interview is:

> centered on the interviewee's life-world; it seeks to understand the meaning of phenomena in his (or her) life-world; it is qualitative, descriptive, and specific; it is presuppositionless; it is focused on certain themes; it is open for ambiguities and changes; it depends upon the sensitivity of the interviewer; it takes place in an interpersonal interaction. (p. 174)

Data gathered by this type of iterative interviewing guards against the domination of data matching the researcher's view of relevance. Since the perceptions gained from selected respondents afforded only partial views of the reality perceived by the participant, people from many constituencies of the organizational culture were interviewed to gain a wider perspective on the multiple realities. The researcher recruited the principal, vice-principal, secretary, librarian, custodian, a sample of staff members, paraprofessionals, students, parents, and community members to be among the group of key informants. The interview data was repeated back to informants to ensure the accuracy of the information before subsequent iterative interviews took place.

Analysis of Archival Material

The contents of the school's correspondence, school documents, daily memos, newsletters, reports, staff meeting agendas and minutes, timetables, in-service

sessions, examination results, student personnel records, board of education memos, Advisory School Council meetings and related materials generated data from which the researcher focused on issues that needed explanation and that identified the people to be interviewed. Documents were analyzed because as Mirvis (1980) argues, the records and written material that are in the possession of the organization provide one of the richest and unobtrusive sources of data.

Data Collection

Data for Phase One of the research was collected and analyzed using Schein's (1985) conceptual framework. The solution to problems of external adaptation and internal integration is culture, the way members perceive, think about, and feel about these issues. The solutions become assumptions which drop unconsciously out of awareness to become taken for granted culture. External adaptation and survival problems include developing:

1. a mission or reason for existing;
2. concrete goals derived from this core mission;
3. organizational structures and decision-making processes as means for accomplishing the goals;
4. information and control systems as a means to monitoring progress; and
5. a means to remediate structures and processes if goals are not accomplished. (Schein, 1985a, p. 15)

In order to function at all, the group must face problems of integration including the development of:

1. a common language and shared conceptual systems;
2. a way to define boundaries and select membership;
3. a way of allocating power, authority, status, property, and

other resources;
4. norms to handle interpersonal relationships through the style or climate of the organization;
5. criteria for dispensing rewards and punishments; and
6. a way of coping with unmanageable, unpredictable and stressful events. (Schein, 1985a, p. 15)

Schein (1985a) cautions that in order to describe the whole culture, we must confront each of the external and internal issues identified above. We must not assume that if one aspect of an organization has been described, such as how the people are managed, that we have described the whole culture.

Joint Exploration Through Iterative Interviewing involved a series of encounters and joint explorations between the researcher as the outside investigator and various key informants who lived in the school and who embodied its culture. Finally determining the organization's basic assumptions was a joint effort to avoid the outsider's bias, and the insiders' internal invisibility.

The questions in the iterative interview schedules were based on issues raised from the researcher's observations of verbal, behavioral and physical artifacts, from the data obtained from archival material and documents, and from preliminary informal meetings with the various constituent groups where the researcher's purpose and role in the school were explained. The underlying assumptions that were involved in critical incidents, feelings, what was done, and how it worked were elicited so that the researcher could begin to look for patterns in these responses. From these emerging patterns tentative hypotheses were developed which described the organization's basic assumptions that came to be tested with key insiders.

The data collection design provided an emergent plan for a highly interactive

process of data gathering from which analyses were developed. The strategy provided for a rather broad-scale exploration at the outset using triangulation to cross check and verify the accuracy of information obtained from observation of artifacts, iterative interviews with key informants, and the analysis of archival material. In the early stages of the study a majority of the time was spent in data gathering. The researcher started with broad, general questions and proceeded through a conceptual funnelling recommended by Owens (1987b) to understand what the data meant. This aided in the development of thick descriptions which synthesized, integrated, and related observations. From these thick descriptions tentative hypotheses were derived. Decisions were made as to how to check for accuracy, seek verification, test, probe, and confirm emerging patterns and hypotheses as the study unfolded. In the latter stages of the study probing, checking, and testing activities were followed by an increase in verification and confirmation of the basic assumptions of the school's culture.

Throughout the course of the study an audit trail as proposed by Guba and Lincoln (1981a) was maintained. The nature of each decision in the research plan, the data upon which it was based, and the reasoning that entered into it were documented. The trail consisted of documents which preserved the record of the investigation. Among these were the raw notes from iterative interviews and observations, edited summary notes of iterative interviews and observations, records of meetings, documents used as data sources, guidelines used for content analysis of documents, decision rules by which data were categorized, and documents that the

researcher accessed as part of the study. These materials helped preserve a sense of the context in which observations were made over time and aided in the recall of events.

Trustworthiness

Guba (1981a, pp. 79-80) suggests that four major concerns relate to trustworthiness of inquiries conducted within the naturalistic inquiry paradigm. These include truth value, applicability, consistency, and neutrality. Truth value involves how one establishes confidence in the "truth" of the findings of a particular inquiry for the respondents with which and the context in which the inquiry was carried out. Applicability relates to how one determines the degree to which the findings of an inquiry may have applicability in other contexts or with other respondents. Consistency reflects how one determines whether the findings of an inquiry would be consistently repeated if the inquiry were replicated with the same or similar respondents in the same or similar context. Neutrality involves how one establishes the degree to which the findings of an inquiry are a function of solely the respondents and the conditions of the inquiry and not of the biases, motivations, interests, and perspectives of the inquirer. The conventional investigator must attend to these concerns by answering how internal and external validity, reliability, and objectivity are provided in the research design. For qualitative research Guba and Lincoln (1981) maintain these terms are inappropriate and the naturalistic inquirer must arrange instead for credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Table 3.1. Scientific and Naturalistic Terms Appropriate to the Four Aspects of Trustworthiness

Aspect	Scientific Term	Naturalistic Term
Truth Value	Internal Validity	Credibility
Applicability	External Validity Generalizability	Transferability
Consistency	Reliability	Dependability
Neutrality	Objectivity	Confirmability

Guba, E.G. (1981a). Criteria for assessing the trustworthiness of naturalistic inquiries.

Table 3.1, Scientific and Naturalistic Terms Appropriate to the Four Aspects of Trustworthiness helps parallel naturalistic terms to those within the rationalistic paradigm.

For purposes of this study the researcher used the techniques recommended by Guba (1981a) for the establishment of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Many factors bearing a variety of relationships to one another formed the whole culture of St. Gabriel which the researcher sought to understand in deciphering the school's basic assumptions. To establish credibility many methods were used. "Prolonged engagement" at St. Gabriel for approximately a four month

period allowed the staff to adjust to the researcher's presence and satisfy her that she did not constitute a threat, while at the same time providing time to check her developing perceptions as she continuously studied the site. Extended interaction with St. Gabriel for "persistent observation" from the time of arrival before the beginning of the school day to the end of the day, helped the researcher gain an understanding of what was characteristic of St. Gabriel while identifying atypical qualities. "Peer debriefing" occurred in an ongoing manner with the researcher's college advisor weekly so that she could test her insights and expose herself to searching questions away from St. Gabriel. During the questioning provided at these debriefings the researcher received timely suggestions on the direction of her inquiry. Discussions included the sources of information she was pursuing, the nature of the questions being asked, suggestions for new focus points, reactions to certain informants, recommendations on making sense of data, and similar topics related to the research design and methodology. "Triangulation" was used through the methods of iterative interviewing, observation of artifacts, and analysis of archival material to cross-check data and interpretations and verify them from at least two sources. "Referential adequacy materials" in the form of the school's correspondence, school documents, daily memos, newsletters, staff meeting agendas, and related materials were kept to test findings and interpretations as the study evolved. As well these materials were used to test analyses and interpretations made after the field portion of the researcher's work at St. Gabriel was complete. The process of "member checks as the single most important action inquirers can take for it goes to the heart

of the credibility criterion" (Guba, 1981a, p. 85) were built into the nature of Schein's (1985a) iterative interviewing methodology used throughout the study. New observations, reactions, projections, and hunches about what was going on in the culture were checked with informants to see whether the information could be verified repeatedly.

Since naturalistic studies produce context bound descriptive or interpretive statements an index of transferability is not possible. However, Guba and Lincoln (1981) state the naturalist should "provide the data base that makes transferability judgements possible on the part of the potential appliers" (p. 316). To assist the possibility of transfer, the researcher provided "thick descriptive data" to permit comparison to the context of St. Gabriel to other possible contexts to which transfer might be contemplated. Someone interested in making a transfer could reach a conclusion about the possibility of transferability from the thick description provided to test the degree of fit. As well the data reflected "theoretical/purposive sampling" to maximize the range of information the researcher could uncover. Some of the individuals interviewed were not representative or typical of the dominant points of view. Their values were different, and they shared how difficult it was to function within the assumptions of St. Gabriel's culture.

Since naturalist enquirers must be concerned with dependability and confirmability of data knowing instabilities can arise, triangulation was used. Data were collected from a variety of perspectives, using a variety of methods, and drawing upon a variety of sources to ensure that if data yielded similar results the case for

stability and confirmability would be strengthened. An "audit trail" was established to detail the processes whereby data were collected and analyzed, and interpretations were made. The researcher also kept a journal to include details of her daily schedule and methodology.

The techniques of prolonged engagement, persistent observation, peer debriefing, triangulation, referential adequacy materials, member checks, thick descriptive data, theoretical/purposive sampling, and an audit trail were used to increase the probability of this study's trustworthiness. According to Guba (1981a):

> in sense the naturalistic theory of trustworthiness is an incomplete one - one cannot muster evidence that will compel another to accept the trustworthiness of the study but only evidence that will persuade the other of its relative trustworthiness. (p. 88)

Guba (1981a) emphasizes there must be special criteria for trustworthiness. Conventional criteria cannot be used adequately in qualitative types of research. They must be substituted by others, together with corresponding procedures that affirm the trustworthiness of naturalistic approaches. Table 3.2 summarizes this discussion of how the researcher attempted to increase the probability of this study's worthiness.

Data Analysis

Schein's (1985a) Joint Exploration Through Iterative Interviewing activity steps and schedules were used to analyze data. Throughout the data collection phase, formulating hypotheses about the school's assumptions became the basic tool for data

Table 3.2. The Naturalistic Treatment of Trustworthiness

To take account of:	The researcher	
	During	After
Credibility	Used prolonged engagement Used persistent observation Used peer debriefing Did triangulation Collected referential adequacy materials Did member checks	Established referential adequacy Did member checks
Transferability	Collected thick descriptive data Did theoretical purposive sampling	Developed thick description
Dependability	Used overlap methods Left an audit trail	Did a dependability audit (process)
Confirmability	Did triangulation practised reflexivity (audit trail)	Did a confirmability audit (product)

collection and analysis. During the initial week the researcher experienced how the school operated, informally met and talked with teachers, students, non-teaching staff, and parents individually and in groups. This served to enable the establishment of a rapport with the people that would be conducive to learning St. Gabriel's basic assumptions, while helping the researcher identify areas for initial observation.

As the second week progressed, simultaneous with observation activities, the researcher recorded data from verbal, behavioral, and physical artifacts. She summarized issues she perceived as significant or relevant to probe with key informants at a later time with respect to the school's basic assumptions. Concurrently, data obtained from archival material and documents also generated issues which needed explanation and pointed to people with whom iterative interviews should be held.

At the beginning of the third week of research the principal was interviewed to get an overview of how the school solved its major problems of external adaptation and internal integration, and what kinds of solutions worked repeatedly and, therefore, became embedded. The researcher hoped to examine documents only the principal could provide which would have relevant data on the school.

As the end of the third week approached the researcher continued to observe teachers, students, non-teaching staff, visitors, and parents to the school as they interacted in their informal and formal work contexts. These observations focused on what Sathe (1985, p. 114), termed a search for regularities, shared meanings, shared sayings, shared doings, and shared feelings.

By the end of the first month of study the researcher started to reveal her personal puzzlements and hunches about what she had seen, heard, and observed at the school. She sought explanations for the origins and meanings of the verbal, behavioral, and physical artifact puzzlements she had collected. Through continuous iterative interviewing she sought more data from documents. In this process of continuing to observe and record repeatable shared things, sayings, doings, and feelings, the researcher sought more explanations, elaborations, and even corrections on her puzzlements and hunches from key informants.

Near the end of the second month the researcher was ready to categorize the data generated to that point based on Schein's methodology of using basic assumptions to form cultural paradigms. The purpose of this step was to test the broad and tentative themes for indication of the school's basic assumptions using the data at hand. The categories used included:

1. humanity's relationship to nature;
2. the nature of reality and truth;
3. the nature of human nature;
4. the nature of human activity;
5. the nature of human relationships. (Schein. 1985a, p. 86)

This phase of generating themes was followed by a search for new evidence to support the emerging hypotheses about the school's basic assumptions. Consequently, a second round of iterative interviews resulted in further explanation and clarification of issues from the original data gathered and the themes which emerged. Schein's external adaptation and internal integration issues checklist was referred to systematically throughout the second set of interviews.

During the third and part of the fourth month of research, new data continued to be generated, while existing data were consolidated. The accuracy, credibility, and consistency of each piece of information obtained was checked against other pieces of information. At this stage a final round of iterative interviews with key informants examined the original themes hypothesized in the previous month, against new data collected from recent observations and interviews, and from the cross-checking processes which had been occurring. This approach enabled the refining of the school's basic assumptions with the key informants. At this point descriptions of the basic assumptions operating at the school were written with an indication of their origin and development and why they persisted at the school. The final month was spent refining and verifying the written statements of the basic assumptions operating at St. Gabriel.

Data Reporting

The report of the research findings in the next chapter will attempt to help the reader understand what the researcher discovered about the respondents' experiences, beliefs, feelings, and values as they relate to the cultural assumptions of St. Gabriel School. Reported assumptions were carefully documented from multiple sources and provide rich, thick descriptions. Judgments and conclusions were connected to evidence and supported by a carefully maintained audit trail. The researcher will attempt to help the reader to understand the culture of the school by providing a report of events and insight into the meaning of these events in order to reveal the assumptions of the school culture.

After delineating the basic assumptions of the school culture the researcher discusses how these assumptions arose and points out their similarities among the teachers, students, and parent groups. She discusses the implications of these basic assumptions for the establishment of a school culture which encompasses the school effectiveness characteristics. Finally, the researcher determines whether Schein's (1985) conceptual model which was developed for the study of basic cultural assumptions was appropriate and has utility for the study of school culture.

Summary

This chapter outlined a research method based upon Schein's (1984) Joint Exploration Through Iterative Interviewing methodology used in the study of organizational culture. The selection method of one school site for this study over a data collection period of approximately four months was explained. Three major sources used to generate data which would decipher the school's basic assumptions including observation of artifacts, iterative interviewing with key informants, and analysis of archival material were outlined. An explanation of the simultaneous use of all three methods was provided. It was hoped that the use of these sources of data collection would cross-check so as to ensure accuracy, authenticity, and consistency of data. Techniques to ensure credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the study which increase the probability of trustworthiness were discussed. A description of the approach used to conduct data analysis was provided. Finally, data reporting methods were identified for sharing the school's basic cultural assumptions.

CHAPTER 4

THE SETTING OF THE STUDY

Introduction

Frost et al. (1985) and Schein (1985a) caution that an accurate understanding of an organization's basic cultural assumptions can only be successfully deciphered outside a researcher's own culture if the researcher has lived in such a culture for some time. Consequently, St. Gabriel Elementary School, located in a major city in Saskatchewan, was studied for approximately four months. This chapter describes the setting of the study at three levels: the city separate school education system of which St. Gabriel is a part, the Lakeland neighbourhood in which St. Gabriel is located, and St. Gabriel Elementary School itself.

The Separate School Education System In Westville

Catholic schools exist because of rights and privileges which have been granted through the laws of Canada and Saskatchewan. These schools are firmly committed to the partnership of home, school, parish, and community in the education of children and young adults. Welcome to Westville Catholic Schools (1988 - 89) emphasizes that "at all times there is an emphasis on the dignity of all people as the sons and daughters of God." An important part of serving the students, according to the Westville Catholic Schools Annual Report (1987 - 88), is the "recognition that a Catholic school division participates in the mission of the Church. As such, Catholic schools must strive to be examples of Christian values and Catholic

traditions" (p. 2).

Aims and Objectives of a Catholic School

Aside from those aims and objectives which one would expect to appear in board policy, the Westville Catholic Board of Education, in fostering co-operation between home, school, and parish, holds to the aims and objectives articulated in Policy AAB (1982). This policy clearly articulates the board's educational commitment to Catholic education:

> 1. To direct all educational efforts to leading students to know and love God.
> 2. To integrate God's truth and light into the entire life of the school and the entire curriculum.
> 3. To enable each student to understand the natural world, man's [sic] role in it, and the relationships between God and his world.

Mr. D. Kichner, Superintendent of Education for the Westville Catholic Board of Education, articulated board policy (Interview, May 11, 1989) in the following manner:

> A Catholic School manifests a philosophy of life, a set of beliefs. It is a legal entity in the Province of Saskatchewan. Philosophically, Catholic Education is based on the beliefs which grow out of the understandings of what Christianity is, and of what the values of Catholic traditions are .... It's really a two dimensional thing. Christian values are common to all Christian religions and Catholic traditions are those things which may in a sense symbolize Catholic doctrine. Right from the beginning, Catholic schools were legal entities which had access to public funds. This is an important historical context.

Characteristics of Catholic Schools

Catholic schools must be strongly committed to the ideals of Christian education because of the distinctive function they perform in the community and the special

obligations they have to the students who attend them. An opportunity must be provided for students to achieve academic excellence and to grow personally, socially, and physically in a Christian-oriented environment.

The Westville Catholic Board of Education provides ideals which give its schools a sense of purpose and a distinctive character. Policy AAC (1982) enunciates five characteristics which people associated with the operation of the schools must strive to achieve. These include:

1. a vital interest in the religious education program;
2. a true spirit of charity in the association with children, parents, and staff;
3. respect for the inestimable worth of each individual as a child of God;
4. the light of Christian standards and values permeate all changes and new developments; and
5. the example of the lives of the people associated with the school reinforce the lessons taught.

According to Mr. D. Kichner, Superintendent of Education (Interview, May 11, 1988), Catholic education is set in a framework of hopes, values, and beliefs:

> The basic framework comes from beliefs of the church and has to do with the nature of the person and the nature of faith. Doctrines are only part of the framework as external manifestations of what these beliefs really are. Certain practices are different. For one thing, we recognize Catholic traditions. These are certain events and celebrations that we are in a position to recognize because we share the importance of them. As a Catholic school we have an obligation to help celebrate them and we have an educational component to help children understand what they mean. Our goal is to search for meaning in these things.
>
> We believe we have the responsibility to develop the person to the fullest extent. Religious education gives us the freedom to operate under these guidelines. The notion of what is a person is very important to Catholic education. The church sees faith

> as a gift. The person's response is to use that gift of faith to fulfil themselves through their families and through relationships with the community. Catholic education, by definition, demands a connection or relationship with the community. This means the family as a community, the church community, the parish community, the diocese community of Westville, and the universal community of the Catholic church. Part of the understanding of Catholic education is that the person is fully developed and becomes fully alive in the community. You can't do it on your own, which gives you the responsibility for yourself, but also for others.
>
> Connected with the notion of responsibility is the notion of freedom. People have free will . . . . In religious programs we try to help kids understand that it is in using their freedom that they become alive.

A combination of the ideals which give Catholic schools a sense of purpose and a distinctive character, and a framework of hopes, values, and beliefs characterize Catholic schools within the Westville Catholic Board of Education.

Elementary School Curriculum

Each Catholic school follows the basic course content and teaching methods required by the Department of Education. An Education Services brochure (1988 - 89) welcoming parents to the Westville Catholic Schools indicates that Catholic schools also respond to the mandate given by the parents "to integrate God, God's truth, and God's life into the entire curriculum and the everyday life of the school" (p. 2). The brochure explains the religious education program in Westville Catholic schools:

> [It] supports the home and the parish in assisting students to understand their Catholic faith and by providing them a Christian community which is enlivened by the Gospel spirit of freedom and charity; a community involving children, teachers, priests, and parents. Gospel values are presented as a way of life for students growing up in today's changing and complex

society. (p. 2)

The religious course of study for elementary schools is Canadian Catechism, a program which includes areas such as the doctrine, the sacraments, the Bible, the prayer life, and moral development. Participation in liturgical celebrations occurs regularly. Parents of children other than those of the Catholic faith who wish to register their children in a Catholic school may do so provided their children willingly take part in religious education classes.

Aside from formal religious instruction, which comprises approximately ten percent of the school day, reading, writing, arithmetic, science, and social studies constitute the core curriculum program. A range of services is available for students requiring special education. All schools provide a conversational French language program to students in Grades 6, 7, and 8 and an Enriched Learning Opportunities program to students identified as having special abilities and talents. Teachers of Grades 2 and 6 students assist parents and pastors with sacramental preparation.

While the Catholic schools have an obligation to follow the Department of Education guidelines, they also assume the responsibility and the freedom to take a position, and to share their beliefs about issues in society. According to Mr. D. Kichner (Interview, May 11, 1989):

> Catholic schools have an obligation to recognize and a responsibility to do something about these issues. At the level of instruction the way certain curricula are taught would be different due to different beliefs which drive the curriculum. Catholic education embodies and must promote a sense of hope that things can get better in society and we can make a difference. Catholic education believes in its missionary responsibility because it reflects its belief about people.

Employment of Teachers

Catholic schools must be centres of Catholic life and worship. Based upon the knowledge "that a Catholic school depends upon teachers almost entirely for the accomplishment of its goals and purposes" (Vatican Council II), preference in hiring is extended to Catholic teachers who openly demonstrate the practice of their faith. The Catholic Board of Education (1988) expects all teachers hired to:

> a) have completed or complete during the first two years of service with the school division, formal training in religious education as outlined in policy GHB;
> b) make a positive contribution to the development of a genuine spirit of Christian community within the school and to participate in the school's religious activities wherein both teacher and students can grow to the full measure of Christian teaching;
> c) support the religious program in the school and teach those Religion courses are required by the Board;
> d) follow both in and out of school a lifestyle and deportment in harmony with Catholic teaching and principles; and
> e) abide by the ideals and principles common to members of the Catholic church and, by word and example, to encourage Catholic students to do likewise.

The Westville Catholic Board of Education's commitment to Catholic education influences the aims and objectives of a Catholic school, hiring characteristics of the school, the curriculum of instruction, and the teachers employed. Understanding this context is crucial to understanding St. Gabriel's school culture.

The Lakeland District Neighbourhood Profile*

An understanding of data on the Lakeland neighbourhood, its population, household and family characteristics, levels of education, and occupation groups provides a context for understanding the setting of St. Gabriel School.

Development Data

The development of Lakeland in the city of Westville began in the early 1980's. According to the City Planning Department Policy, the geographical region of Lakeland covered a gross area of 134.03 hectares. Building sites and parks occupied 14.55 hectares of the total gross area. At the time of the study, development included 721 one unit dwellings and 195 other dwellings for a total of 916 units. No commercial space was available.

In comparison with other areas of Westville, Lakeland district and the dwellings represented by this area were average to slightly below average. The average monthly shelter cost for rented households in 1986 was $537 for a one unit dwelling, of which there were 25, and $486 for a multiple unit dwelling, of which there were 325. In the same year 855 homes were owned at an average monthly shelter cost of $726 for a one unit dwelling and $427 for a 15 multiple unit dwelling. In 1988, 71 homes were sold at an average selling price of $75,797, with a range of selling prices from $53,500 - $102,000.

Demographic Data

Population. The 1981 population of 2295 rose to 3917 by 1986 and to 4170

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*A pseudonym has been used for the neighbournood district.

by 1988. Of the total population, 36.33% was between the ages of 0 and 14; 5.40% was between the age of 15 to 19; 23.74% was between 20 to 29 years old; 23.14% was between 30 to 39 years old; 5.40% was between 40 to 49 years old; 3.60% was between 50 to 59 years old; and 2.16% was 60 years of age or older. These indicate that just over one-third of the population was elementary school aged children and almost one-half was adults between the ages of 20 and 39, suggesting a young neighbourhood and a large school. The public school enrolment rose from 282 in 1986 to 401 in 1988, and the Catholic school registration shifted from 418 students in 1986 to 447 students in 1988.

Household/family characteristics. In 1986, 79.6% of the 1215 households was occupied by two parent families and 11.7% by single parent families. The average family household size in 1986 was 3.4 members. The average family income was $33,247; 37.1% of families earned $40,000 or over; 20.8% of families earned between $30,000 and $39,999; 19% earned between $20,000 and $29,999; 11.8% earned between $10,000 and $19,999; and 10.4% of families earned under $10,000. These data suggest that the Lakeland district represented largely a lower middle class economic area.

Highest education level attained. The variations in educational level may offer some explanation for the variations in family income. In 1986, 6.3% of the adults had obtained less than a Grade 9 education; 32.2% had completed some secondary schooling; 14.8% had obtained a Grade 12 diploma; and 13% had received a trades certificate or diploma. 14.4% of the adult population had enrolled in post-

secondary schooling, and 13.2% had completed these courses. University degrees were held by 6.1% of the population.

Occupation in labour force. Occupational data reflect the influence of educational level upon occupational choice. In 1986, 45.0% of the total labour force of 1085 worked in clerical, sales, and service jobs, 10.8% worked in processing and manufacturing, 9.3% in construction trades, and 9.8% in transportation, for a total of 74.9% of the population. Of the remaining one-quarter of the work force, 11.5% worked in management, 3.8% in teaching and related jobs, 5.5% in medical and health, and 1.2% in natural resources related jobs. 3.1% of the adult population did not report an occupation.

St. Gabriel Elementary School

Establishment of St. Gabriel Elementary School

> Organizations do not form accidentally or spontaneously. They are usually created because someone takes a leadership role in seeing how the concerted action of a number of people could accomplish something that would be impossible through individual action alone. (Schein, 1983, p. 16)

St. Gabriel School opened in the early 1980's. Mr. Janzen, a Grade 8 homeroom teacher and the vice-principal of St. Paul's School, was appointed principal-designate of St. Gabriel. Nine teaching staff and support personnel moved from St. Paul's to St. Gabriel with Mr. Janzen.

Increase in school size. When the school opened, the facility included: principal's, vice-principal's, and secretarial offices; a staffroom; 11 classrooms; a

science room; gymnasium; 2 conference rooms; a mudroom; and washroom facilities, all surrounding a central library. The facility was capable of handling approximately 250 students.

An increase in student enrolment over the following three years necessitated additions to the original building. In the summer of 1985, three classrooms and a mudroom were added; in the summer of 1986, three more classrooms were built; and in the summer of 1987, four classrooms and another mudroom were added. The school at the time of this study housed 443 students, which represents its maximum enrolment size.

Physical characteristics. St. Gabriel was built on a 2.5 acre site along a main thoroughfare of the neighbourhood. Entering the front doors of the school an outsider would find the principal's and secretary's offices to the immediate right and the vice-principal's office and staffroom to the immediate left. Directly ahead was the library around which the remaining rooms of the school were located. To the right of the main entry were the Grade 7 and 8 classrooms. Further along that hall were the washrooms, the gymnasium, and an exit door to the staff parking lot. Turning left at the washrooms and walking in a circular path around the library, one would notice a custodial storage room and another Grade 8 classroom.

To the left of the main entry two Kindergarten classrooms adjoined the staffroom and ran along the outside of the library. Along the main hall which radiated from the Kindergarten area were a fine arts room, two Grade 1 classrooms, and a Grade 5/6 classroom on the left side of the hall, and a conference room, a Grade 1

classroom, and science rooms on the right side. These rooms were the extent of the original school construction.

Later additions extended eastward from the custodian's storage room. This wing held an additional mudroom, three Grade 2 classrooms, two Grade 3 classrooms, and a special education classroom. The final addition of a mudroom and four classrooms, two occupied by Grade 4 and one each by Grades 5 and 6, was attached to the Grade 5/6 and science room wing of the original school building.

The school yard contained a relatively large play area. To the west of the school was a skating rink which remained intact year round for seasonal use. To the northwest of the rink a creative playground area was used largely by Grades K to 4 students prior to school, during recess breaks, and at noon hour. A large grassed area was available for use by the remainder of the student body, especially Grades 5 to 8 students not involved in house leagues. The school yard was well maintained, snow was removed regularly from sidewalks, and the site was largely free of any form of graffiti or property abuse.

Administration. The principal, Mr. Janzen was responsible for the daily administration of St. Gabriel School. Mr. Janzen's career in education had extended over 26 years. For the first 8 years of his career, he taught in a rural Saskatchewan town, the last year of which he was principal. For the next 8 years, Bill taught Mathematics at Holy Family High School in Westville. He spent 2 years at Sister Theresa School, one as a vice-principal and one as acting principal; 3 years at St. Paul's School as vice-principal, the last year as principal-designate of St. Gabriel; and

5 years as principal of St. Gabriel School .

Although the vice-principal's primary responsibility was the teaching of a homeroom Grade 8 class, he had been given .25 release time per week to assist the principal with administrative tasks as delegated. During the course of this research project the vice-principal had received an education leave from the Catholic Board of Education to study personnel in the Westville Public Board of Education. Mr. Buchko, the Grade 7 teacher with a major in religious studies, was chosen over another male staff member to act as vice-principal for the months of April and May. He had been hired by the Catholic Board of Education to teach at St. Gabriel School four years earlier.

Teachers. Aside from the principal, the approved teaching complement for St. Gabriel was 20.25 teachers plus an itinerant French teacher. At the time of the study, there were 16 full-time teachers: one for Kindergarten, two each for Grades 1, 2, 3, 4, and 8, one each for Grades 5, 5/6, 6, and 7, and one full-time resource room teacher. Eight half-time teachers had the following teaching assignments: one in afternoon Kindergarten, one in the morning and one in the afternoon sharing Grade 1 and likewise in Grade 2, one morning and one afternoon resource room teacher, and one half-time teacher librarian. Because of the size of the school, a .25 teacher was hired to release the Grade 8 teacher/vice-principal for administrative duties two mornings a week. When the vice-principal began education leave in April, the .25 release person assumed full-time responsibility for the Grade 8 classroom on a temporary contract. A new .25 teacher, also on a temporary contract, was hired

to release the acting vice-principal from his Grade 7 classroom. An itinerant French teacher was staffed .30 to teach French to Grades 5 to 8 for two 30-minute periods at each grade level per week.

The French program provided release time for Grades 5 to 8 teachers, and it remained the only formal preparation time on their timetables throughout the period of the study. The remainder of the teachers at St. Gabriel School taught full-time, with the exception of the Kindergarten teacher, whose morning students went home at 11:30 a.m., and the full-time resource room teacher, who spent every Friday in conferences with teachers about individual students. Mr. Janzen taught the classes of the homeroom teachers while they met with the resource room teacher.

On Monday, March 6, 1989, Mr. Janzen instituted a half-hour per week period of release time for teachers of Grade 1 to 4 to program for high risk students. The teachers used this time to meet individually with the students, to confer with central office consultants, and to meet with parents regarding the child's progress. Otherwise, Kindergarten to Grade 4 teachers had no formal release time from their teaching responsibilities.

While the study was being conducted, the Grade 2 teacher left on a maternity leave and was replaced by a teacher new to the Catholic Board of Education. Shortly thereafter, the full-time Resource Room teacher became ill from a pregnancy, and her ability to return before the end of the school year came into question. Consequently, she was replaced by two half-time resource room teachers. The morning position was filled by the afternoon Kindergarten teacher, who was

familiar with the school and who had formerly taught resource room. The other teacher, who was teaching half-time resource in another school, had interned at St. Gabriel the previous year and was familiar with the school.

The ages of the teachers at St. Gabriel ranged from 24 to 48 years, with the average being 36 years. Thirteen teachers had Bachelor of Education degrees, five had both a Bachelor of Education and Bachelor of Arts degree, and five had a Master's degree. Three teachers had less than four years of university training. All St. Gabriel's teachers were of the Roman Catholic faith. At the time of the study, the teachers' average tenure at St. Gabriel was 2.84 years. The school had been open five years when the study began. Two staff members, Georgina Pinder and Leslie Krochak had been part of the staff since the school had opened in February, 1984.

Apart from teaching students in their class, teachers were engaged in other responsibilities. The teachers led several extra-curricular programs such as sports coaching, student representative council, house leagues, safety patrols, and junior choir. They supervised lunchroom and non-instructional time, they sat on school and system level committees, they attended in-service and professional development workshops after school hours, they helped with community functions such as fun night, and they participated in parish activities and other religious celebrations.

In the initial interviews, the 22 teachers were asked to describe the staff. In ten interviews, staff members commented that they worked well together, and that they were helpful and co-operative toward one another. In five interviews, caring for each other was mentioned. Being child-oriented and focused, professionally excellent,

open-minded, and willing to try new ideas were discussed in three interviews. Two teachers commented that the staff worked hard and that they tried to eliminate unprofessional gossip. These characteristics were evident in Leon Buchko's (February 02, 1989) statement:

> The staff are youthful in ideas and age, warm to each other . . . and open to implementing different things . . . . They put out a lot of energy to kids because of the amount they care . . . . There is no stagnation and there are no personality conflicts, so it is a good environment for teaching and kids.

Dianne Pipchuk (February 03, 1989) explained that "the staff is dedicated, caring, hard working, competent, fun, and helpful. They share a philosophy of children being the focus." Effie Carlson (February 09, 1989) made the same points when she noted that "staff are excellent professionally and enthusiastic about what they do with a willingness to try new things to help individual children and classrooms . . . . They are helpful if you approach them, otherwise you are left to be independent."

Students. In 1989, at the time of the study St. Gabriel had 443 students in 19 classes as indicated in Table 4.1. The ages of St. Gabriel's students ranged from 5 in Kindergarten to 15 in Grade 8. Of the 443 students, 70% were Roman Catholic and 30% were either protestant, of another faith, or did not belong to any religious faith.

Interviews with various staff members revealed that the students largely came from a lower middle to working class socio-economic background, with a minority of the children coming from a middle-class professional background. The neighbourhood had a mixture of single parents, double working parents, and

Table 4.1. Number of Students in Each Class at St. Gabriel School During the 1989 School Year

Grades	Number of Students in Each Class	Total Number of Students in Each Year
K a.m.	21	
K a.m.	19	
K p.m.	20	60
1	23	
1	24	
1	21	68
2	20	
2	22	
2	22	64
3	29	
3	30	59
4	22	
4	22	44
5	26	37
5/6	24	
6	27	40
7	32	32
8	20	
8	19	39
Total	443	443

traditional families. Some home situations were troubled. Mr. Buchko (February 02, 1989) commented that, while taking a position on topics such as premarital sex and living together, he must be sensitive to the students who are living in these

situations. Responses from a primary teacher, Judy Hudson (February 06, 1989) revealed that "the students come with non-traditional English speaking backgrounds. None of the kids knew even one nursery rhyme. They lack the background from home." Comments from Dave Sitter (February 02, 1989) supported the concern over academic weaknesses identified in many interviews: "The majority of the students are fairly cooperative, but do not have high achievement needs, in fact motivation is lacking. They are not lazy, but don't strive for the top." Georgina Pinder (March 20, 1989) supported this comment: "Some children are here to learn and have higher academic expectations. Some are filling in space and for others it is more self-concept building and they will learn what they will learn." Regarding the personality of the student body Lillian McCarthy (March 09, 1989) believed that students "haveold fashioned values, are polite, usually respectful, playful, happy, and relaxed. They are quick to greet you regardless of age." Cathy Spencer (February 06, 1989) made similar points, noting that "they are neat kids, not stuffy with false fronts, but sincere. They come to school for friends and a challenge." While Coralee Craik (February 01, 1989) saw the middle years kids as a bit less respectful, she explained their behaviour by saying "it's just that age group, they are daring." Two male teachers of the senior Project Gonzaga students, Leon Buchko (February 02, 1989) and Carl Friesen (February 01, 1989) suggested that the students "are hungry for affection, to be loved, to have a friend. They want acceptance and to be listened to."

Non-teaching staff. At the time of the study, St. Gabriel's non-teaching staff included one full-time teacher aide responsible for the English as a Second Language

program, a .25 teacher aide responsible for secretarial assistance, one full-time clerk typist, and two custodians, one for the day and the other for evenings. Towards the end of the study period, an additional .25 teacher-aide was hired to assist with the release of teachers from Grades 1 to 4 one half-hour per week in order to deal with the needs of high risk students.

Curriculum. St. Gabriel students were taught the subjects as indicated in Table 4.2. Formal religion was taught to all students enrolled at St. Gabriel. According to St. Gabriel's School Handbook (1983-84), religion was seen as an:

> important aspect of a student's overall education. The primary educators of children are parents and it is our role as a school to assist you. We will assist you in seeing that your children fulfil their religious obligations. (pp. 2 - 3)

Social studies, science and health were integrated with language arts from Grades 1 to 3, and they were treated as separate subjects in Grades 4 to 8. Core French instruction began at Grade 5 for thirty-minute periods twice per week. Grade 8 students were taught the Practical Arts for one hour per week. Grade 8 studentsparticipated in a Special Friends Program between students and residents of Lakeland Centre, a Level IV Care Home, for one and one-half hours per week for six months.

Daily routine. From Monday to Friday, students arrived at school anytime after 8:15 a.m. While students were encouraged to arrive no earlier than 8:45 a.m. in the morning and 12:45 p.m. in the afternoon, many latchkey children came earlier. Inside supervision was provided from 8:40 to 9:00 a.m., and staff members were expected to be in their homerooms by 8:40 a.m.. Outside and indoor supervision was

Table 4.2. Subjects Taught at St. Gabriel School During the 1989 School Year

Division	Subjects Taught
I (Grades 1, 2, 3)	Religion Language Arts: Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing Social Studies, Science, Health are integrated with Language Arts Mathematics Physical Education Music Art
II (Grades 4, 5, 6)	Religion Language Arts Mathematics Social Studies Science Health Physical Education Music Art French
III (Grades 7, 8)	Religion Language Arts Mathematics Social Studies Science Health Physical Education Music Art French Practical Arts (8) Special Friends Program

provided at both morning and afternoon recesses.

Noon-hour supervision was provided by the teachers of St. Gabriel School. Although students were encouraged to go home for lunch, up to 100 students ate lunch at school. As part of a new lunch policy involving sanitary eating conditions, students sat at desks in their classrooms, rather than sitting on the floor in a centralized hall location. After eating, students were encouraged to go outdoors. The Catholic Board of Education provided a payment of some $200 per month for lunch supervision. St. Gabriel staff shared noon-hour supervision as part of their supervisory duties, and the money was used for various school activities throughout the year.

Morning classes went from 8:55 a.m. to 11:55 a.m., except for Kindergarten classes, which ended at 11:30 a.m. All afternoon classes, including Kindergarten began at 1:00 p.m. and went until 3:30 p.m.

Since many students arrived at school early, it was common practice to use early morning to coach inter-school sports. At the time of the study, track practices for children of Grades 4 to 8 occurred five times per week, from 8:00 a.m. to 8:45 a.m., or from 3:30 p.m. to 4:15 p.m. Some forty students were involved in these practices. Practices and games for girls and boys basketball, involving nine girls and thirteen boys from Grades 7 and 8, occurred three times a week. Basketball games often took place at noon-hour, or after school in either St. Gabriel or at another school. During the study, approximately twelve basketball games were played, and students participated in a total of six track meets. Most of the student body not involved in

practices were in the school by 8:40 a.m. and could be found in all parts of the school, including the library, the gymnasium, halls, and classrooms. Some students could be found working, but the majority of the students socialized informally.

At recess and noon-hour when the gymnasium was not occupied, house leagues for students in Grades 5 to 8 took place. All students were placed on teams which competed for points toward trophies to be presented at year end. Points were awarded on the basis of participation, sportsmanship, and performance. All house league activities were supervised by teachers of Grades 5 to 8 and by the full-time Kindergarten teacher.

Each school day began with announcements from Mr. Janzen regarding daily events, upcoming events, congratulations, reminders, and requests. Students with birthdays were acknowledged with wishes for a special day. Each Monday the target behaviour of the week such as remembering to remove outer footwear was explained, and subsequent days brought a reminder and words of encouragement or support. On Friday the "student of the week" was announced from among students nominated by homeroom teachers. The "patroller of the week" was congratulated for having accumulated the most points while on duty. Daily announcements included the saying of the Lord's Prayer by two students speaking together. Mr. Janzen shared a focus for the day's prayer. For example, on Wednesday, January 25, 1989, the prayer was one of Christian unity:

> We are praying so all Christians throughout the world would share a commonality and our interdependence worldwide would be strengthened.

The conclusion of announcements was a wish for everyone to have a nice day.

Part of the daily routine involved built-in times for the staff to meet. Every Monday morning at 8:40 a.m. the staff assembled in the staffroom to discuss the details of the upcoming week for fifteen minutes. Events were clarified, issues were addressed, anticipated problems were resolved, and information was shared to ensure communication among all staff members. During the course of the study, it appeared that meetings were attended by all staff members and the responsibility for attending was taken seriously. The time from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m. on Tuesdays was reserved for meetings of teachers with students in Project Gonzaga, a project name for children in the middle years or Grades 5 to 8. Upon request of several participants this time was later changed to Tuesday noon meetings to accommodate the busier schedule of the school period. The first and third Monday noon hours of the month were reserved for primary, or Kindergarten to Grade 4, meetings. However, only one formal meeting of the group took place during the study period. Many team meetings of Grades 1 and 2 teachers occurred on an ongoing basis for daily planning and program development. Consequently, the need for regular primary meetings was not as pressing as in the case of Grades 5 to 8. In addition to these meeting times, the third Thursday of the month was reserved for monthly staff meetings, with students being dismissed at 2:30 p.m. Table 4.3 provides a summary of the daily routine at St. Gabriel School.

Table 4.3. Summary of Daily Routine at St. Gabriel School

Monday To Friday	
8:00 a.m.	Practices held for track and/or basketball.
8:40 a.m.	Students allowed indoors anywhere in school. Staff meeting for entire staff (Mondays).
8:55 a.m.	Morning announcements, saying of Lord's Prayer.
8:55 - 10:30 a.m.	Classes in progress.
10:30 - 10:45 a.m.	Recess Break (Grades 5 - 8 had the option of remaining indoors).
10:45 - 11:55 a.m.	Classes in progress.
11:55 - 12:55 p.m.	Lunch Kindergarten to Grade 4 meetings (first and third Tuesday of the month).
12:55 - 2:20 p.m.	Classes in progress.
2:20 - 2:35 p.m.	Recess Break (Grades 5 - 8 had the option of remaining indoors). Staff meeting every third Thursday of the month from 2:35 to 5:00 p.m.
2:35 - 3:30 p.m.	Classes in progress.
3:30 - 4:30 p.m.	Sports related practices or games. Gonzaga meetings for Grades 5 - 8 (Tuesdays).

Summary

In this chapter, the setting of the study was described at three levels. First, the city separate school education system of which St. Gabriel was a part was described, and the aims and objectives of Catholic schools, their characteristics, curriculum, and employment of staff were examined. Second, a neighbourhood profile of Lakeland District where St. Gabriel was situated, including demographic data such as population, family characteristics, education level, and occupation was provided. Finally, Chapter 4 included a detailed description of St. Gabriel Elementary School with its establishment, size, physical characteristics, administration, teachers, students, non-teaching staff, curriculum, and daily routine.

In subsequent chapters, the findings of the study, that is, the basic underlying assumptions around which the culture of St. Gabriel was formed, are discussed. The discussions cover the major research questions, indicating how each assumption persists or is maintained and how it influences the culture and effectiveness of the school. In Chapter 5, St. Gabriel's basic assumption that the Catholic faith and Christian value system pervades all school activities is discussed. St. Gabriel's basic assumption that a transactional leadership style influences decision-making, relationships, communications, and the teaching-learning situation is discussed in Chapter 6. In Chapter 7, St. Gabriel's basic assumption that children's social needs are emphasized at the expense of academic learning is examined.

CHAPTER 5

THE CHRISTIAN VALUE ASSUMPTION

Introduction

During the study the researcher observed artifacts, examined archival material and conducted interviews with staff members, parents, and students. The data obtained from these sources indicate that one assumption of St. Gabriel School is that the Catholic faith and the Christian value system pervade all school activity. The origin and development of this assumption was in response to St. Gabriel being a Catholic elementary school within a Catholic school division that strives to be an example of Christian values and Catholic traditions. This assumption came to be sustained by all people associated with the operation of the school.

Assumption 1: The Catholic faith and the Christian value system pervaded all school activities.

This assumption will be discussed in three sections. The first section will describe artifacts that demonstrated the persistence of the assumption. The second section will examine archival material. The third section will discuss the assumption from the points of view of teachers, parents, and students, based on the iterative interviews.

Artifacts

A variety of verbal, physical, and behavioral artifacts provided data and reinforced the assumption that the Catholic faith and Christian value system pervade all school

activity.

Visual displays. Upon entering the main doors of St. Gabriel school I noticed a crucifixion cross and a plaque commemorating the blessing and official opening of St. Gabriel school. A four foot statue of the Virgin Mary, a picture of Pope John Paul, and a school banner with the words "Come, Follow Me" presented a religious feeling.

Walking through the halls of the school I encountered a banner that read, "Blessed Are The Peacemakers For They Shall Be Called The Children Of God." A bulletin board entitled "The God Who Sets Us Free" illustrated senior students' interpretations of God's power over greed, pollution, abortion, violence, war, and lust through collage art. An art project in a primary hallway showed Jesus holding candles, accompanied by a poster with the message "I am the light of the world. Anyone who follows me will not be walking in the dark. He will have the light of life."

The halls were an extension of the classrooms. I found similar symbolic representations of the Catholic faith and of Christian values throughout most classrooms of the school. Most primary classrooms had a religious corner. The Grade 2 classroom, for example, displayed sayings such as "Lord Have Mercy" and "Christ Have Mercy," and posters of "Praise the Lord Anyhow" and "God is Love." Prayers like "Now I Lay Me Down To Sleep" and "Thank You For The World So Sweet" accompanied a Child's Prayer "God our father, you loved us first. You gave us all in your son, Jesus. May your holy spirit help me to become better." Various

other religious poems were displayed. Another Grade 2 classroom had a poster of Pope John Paul and the words to "Hail Mary Bless Us Oh Lord Our Father." In one Grade 3 classroom hung a picture of Mary and Joseph, an early Christian poster, and a picture of Jesus going to the hills to pray, all of which were drawn by students. A Grade 4 classroom displayed a cross above the window and various art projects reflecting lessons from religion classes, such as "Jesus Calls Peter To Follow Him." As I moved from the lower to the higher grades, the number of religious sayings, posters, poems, and art work diminished considerably although a cross was present in all classrooms.

In addition to the religious symbolism present in the individual classrooms, I witnessed religious symbolism on a school-wide level during a Lent project. A large, painted cross was displayed in the front hall to reflect the theme of sacrifice. Each student received a small paper cross with five sections, each to be coloured as a good deed was done. When each individual cross was completed, it was glued on to the large cross. The main hall became a reminder of the theme of sacrifice during pre-Easter celebrations and served as a point of gathering during paraliturgy services held during the lenten period.

Rituals and ceremonies. Opening exercises at St. Gabriel School included the reciting of the Lord's Prayer and a statement by the principal as to the focus of prayer for the day. For example, on February 28 the principal reminded the school that the day's prayer was in reminder of Pope John Paul's lenten message to feed the hungry. "Please bring some preserved food item to our Share Lenten table to be

given to help feed the poor people . . . . You may wish to sacrifice treats and donate money to Share Lent instead." This statement was followed by the saying of the Lord's Prayer by two students over the intercom system. Students in classrooms joined in this ceremony in various ways, some by repeating the prayer along with the intercom voices, others by bowing their heads and repeating the words quietly in their minds.

Regular classroom masses took place on Wednesdays at 11:15 a.m. with the assistance of Father Pihach, the community assistant pastor. Since the student body numbered 443 in total, weekly masses in the gym were felt to be less effective and so school gatherings were reserved for special masses such as Ash Wednesday and Pre-Easter mass.

The Ash Wednesday mass began the formal celebrations of the forty non-Sunday days prior to Easter, namely Lent. A Share Lent committee including the kindergarten, Grade 2, Grade 5 - 6 teachers, and the principal informed staff that the theme for Lent was "Create Within Us A New Spirit." The school's first emphasis would be a focus on the Catholic scriptural meaning of Lent. The main focus would be on turning attention to Christ. By carefully examining the role model he provided, students were expected to make significant changes in their lives by creating within themselves a new spirit. The children were taught some of the ways this could be done spiritually and physically.

The plan for Ash Wednesday mass on February 8, 1989 was made by the Grade 2 teacher, Mrs. Lumberjack. The theme, "Trying To Say Yes," first reading psalm,

gospel, petitions, and offertory were all responsibilities assigned to staff members, who in turn, involved their students where appropriate. Participants sat on the floor of the gymnasium facing the front which was designed as an altar with two screens which projected the songs to be sung during the mass. The primary children were involved mostly in reciting with two Grade 8 students acting as servers. Only Catholic students participated in the receiving of Communion conducted by the principal and the Grade 6 teacher who acted as Communion ministers while the others waited.

The sermon talked about doing away with the "i" in evil. If evil is spelled backward and the "i" is left out we get lve. To make love we need an "o" which stands for others. That was what Lent was all about. It was about giving up the focus on "I" and trying harder to do things for others.

Prior to the mass, students had recorded on small pieces of paper what they were going to give up during the lenten period. The promises collected by the Grade 7 teacher, Mr. Buchko, were to be burnt into ashes to complete the ritual of making the sign of the cross upon the forehead of each participant as a reminder that "Thou art dust and to dust you shall return." As noon approached quickly, this part of the mass was completed in individual classrooms followed by lunch dismissal. I observed, from a conversation in the staffroom, that for many students this activity was not treated seriously by the nature of the promises recorded. Many of their promises were burnt in the school garbage incinerator which was not where I expected the burning to ashes would occur.

In subsequent classroom observations between February 7, 1989 and the pre-Easter mass of March 22, 1989 I observed teachers spending some religious class time on the scripture on the passion, death, and resurrection of Christ. To enhance understanding simple one to two-page plays and Stations of the Cross booklets of fourteen pictures which depicted the passion of Christ during Lent were used.

In addition, class lenten celebrations called "paraliturgies" were held once a week at the front door of the school with three or four classes meeting together. These five lenten celebrations involved the themes of good deeds, almsgiving, prayer, self-denial, and fasting. After opening prayers on topics such as weakness, selfishness, thoughtlessness, and uncaring, scripture readings and explanations of the target behaviour or chosen penance of the week took place. All participants then joined in the singing of a closing hymn as they quietly walked back to their classrooms thinking about the implications of the celebration theme for the remainder of the week. The purpose of these lenten celebrations was to help children think spiritually of ways in which a new spirit could be created within them. Some students came and participated in paraliturgies with seriousness, for others it was another occasion to misbehave or wander in thought and action from what was expected. Pope John Paul's lenten message asked them to feed the hungry. Follow-up back in classrooms emphasized how this could be done physically with the conversion of some personal sacrifice of candy, television time, and so forth into doing some real good for someone else. For example, money not spent on candy could be provided to share Lent. A fundraising share Lent box was displayed in most classrooms and non-

perishable food items were donated to the front hall to be passed on to the Westville Food Bank. Later, on March 22, 1989, a penny race in the gymnasium brought in thirty thousand pennies or three hundred dollars which was also donated to the needy. In this way the school attempted to help its students make Lent a giving season.

Along with the lenten celebrations, On Monday, March 13, 1989, teachers assisted students with an examination of conscience in preparation for confession. Questions given to students on paper to think about included ones such as: Did I "cut up" in church instead of praying to God? Do I pray at other times? Did I disobey my parents or try to hide from doing work around the house? Was I rude to some of my classmates or brothers and sisters because I couldn't have my way? Did I get angry or swear? On Wednesday, March 15, 1989, three priests were in the school during the morning for confession. Students had an opportunity to confess the sins they named to the priest and all other sins which they could not remember, and asked forgiveness and penance. Non-Catholic students did not participate and many senior students participated in teasing and ridiculing those who had.

As lenten celebrations drew to a close, the pre-Easter mass was held on Wednesday, March 22, 1989 following a similar format to the Ash Wednesday mass. The musical selections, entrance prayer, first reading, responsorial psalm, and intercessions were done by staff members. A Grade 5 - 6 class did the gospel dramatization, and staff and students performed the offertory procession involving food items, pennies, an Easter basket, water, wine, and bread.

Archival Material

St. Gabriel's correspondence, such as daily memos, newsletters, documents, Board of Education memos, in-service notices, and agendas of staff meetings, were kept together in yearly binders. In this archival material, I found an emphasis on the Catholic faith and the Christian value system that supported the evidence found in the school artifacts.

Board of Education correspondence. During the study period, a notice from the Catholic Board of Education invited staff to attend a 4:00 p.m. Mass on Monday, February 13, 1989, to celebrate the Eucharist during the first week of Lent. Grade 5 and 6 teachers were reminded of a workshop on confirmation to be held after school on February 14, 1989. A short time later, teachers were encouraged to attend part or all of a weekend TRACE Catholic Education Conference, to be held on March 3 and 4, 1989, for which conference funding assistance was available. Attending a principals' meeting on February 22, 1989, I watched the group engage in prayer at the beginning of the meeting. At this particular meeting the group was introduced to the system's new religious consultant and .25 consultant for Byzantine Ukrainian Rites. (Byzantine Ukrainians are Catholic, but they express their faith and worship differently from Roman Catholics). The principals were encouraged to use the expertise of these consultants at their schools.

Daily memos. Various memos from classroom teachers to parents and from the principal to teachers indicated an attempt to instill the Catholic faith and the Christian value system into daily learning activities. The principal set the tone for

religious expectations for the school in a September 13, 1988 memo to the staff. He informed staff members that Father Pihach, Assistant Pastor at St. Peter Parish, would be at the school each Wednesday morning of the week to assist teachers with class masses, liturgies or paraliturgies, shared instruction in religion programs, or sacramental preparation. The school year would open with the celebration of a school opening mass.

On September 23, 1988 parents received a memo from the Grade 2 teachers indicating that their child had received a special book "to help him or her become better friends with Jesus." A parent or family book of ten units was sent home so that "some of the activities could be done as the students work on the themes at school." A memo from the same teachers on October 28, 1988 noted that the beginning of Unit 7, "Jesus Is A Friend Who Forgives," would coincide with the reconciliation preparation program at St. Peter Parish, which many teachers intended to include in the school program.

Grade 1 teachers informed parents in a December, 1988 memo that their child would be participating in advent angel activities as part of advent preparation: "The purpose of these activities is to develop an awareness of how to make someone else happy through secret acts of thoughtfulness." A list of good deeds, including statements such as "make my bed; help with the dishes; put away my toys and games; don't call people names; don't interrupt; listen while others are talking," and a "Countdown to Christmas" activity of hearts accompanied the memo. The hearts were to be coloured each day to show that the student was getting his heart ready for

Jesus by trying to be more kind, more helpful, more patient, and more hardworking.

In a December, 1988 memo, the principal thanked staff for the "super job you are doing to keep Christ as the central figure during Christmas this season . . . . We need to let Christ into our lives to really make a difference." In the same memo, Mr. Janzen asked for prayers for Tammy Fernuk's dad, who had passed away, and for the Bartoley children's aunt and uncle, who had lost their lives accidentally.

Other memos to parents referred to expectations and target behaviours as they related to religion. In a September 19, 1988 memo to parents, the Grade 7 teacher's opening statement was, "I stress Christian values in the classroom. This creates an environment that is conducive to learning co-operation and positive group dynamics." A February 10, 1989 memo from Grade 2 teachers informed parents that the children would be focusing on a different target behaviour each day during Lent. The teachers asked parents for their co-operation:

> Please ask your child to tell you what they were working on. Each activity is to help us become more like Jesus as we journey towards Easter. We have also included a sheet of target activities that the children (or your whole family) can work on at home during Lent.

Newsletters. The community school newsletter updated parents and community members on religious activities in which they might like to participate. A February 28, 1989 newsletter shared Pope John Paul's lenten message to feed the hungry. The newsletter asked parents to encourage every child to bring a preserved food item to the school's Share Lent table. This food would be given to the Friendship Inn to help feed poor people. Parents were asked to help their children

make Lent a giving season. The same newsletter reminded parents of the dates for Grade 6 confirmation and first communion meetings to be held at St. Peter's Parish. In a March 15, 1989 newsletter, dates for masses for holy week services at St. Peter's Parish centre were included and parents were reminded to involve their children.

School documents. Prior to the admission of a non-Catholic child into one of the schools in the Westville Catholic Board of Education, parents or guardians must complete a declaration of status. In signing the declaration, parents agree to have their child meet all the school requirements, including participation in the regular Catechetic courses.

St. Peter Parish Centre memos. Memos to parents regarding reconciliation (confession), first holy communion, and confirmation emphasized the role parents had to play in each of these events. In a memo of October 19, 1988, Father Oleksi reminded parents:

> You are really a very important person in helping discover God's mercy and live in the sacrament of confession. No one can take your place because your example means so much to your child . . . is more important than any formal class your child will receive.

Regarding first holy communion, a memo of February, 1989, told parents that children needed their parents' help and example: "You are the most essential element in the spiritual formation of your child. Without your contribution the effort of the teacher and the parish will make very little impression on your child." In a memo about preparation for confirmation, also in February, parents were reminded that "living as a mature Christian is the best lesson and example that can help your

child."

These documents indicated that the church counted on the school to be strongly committed to the ideals of Christian education. The school performed a distinctive function in the community by helping parents to meet obligations related to special occasions in the life of a Catholic student. The school served as a liaison between the church parish and parents in their attempts to provide the Christian-oriented environment needed to reinforce Christian values.

Interviews

Interviews held with the St. Gabriel principal, teachers, parents, and students indicated that the assumption that the Catholic faith and Christian value system pervaded all school activity, influenced the feeling or climate of the school, the management of students, decision-making processes, and the teaching of curriculum.

Staff interviews. Several staff members explained that the Catholic faith and the Christian value system influenced the way in which students were disciplined. According to Larry Spencer (Interview, April 15, 1989), this assumption was "used like a filter to try to protect the person in the student . . . to separate the action from the student." Larry tried to emphasize that he was angry with what the child did, not with the person. The message, "I still like you," emphasized respect for the person. Henry Weber (Interview, April 7, 1989) explained further the Catholic ideal of social justice permeated how they dealt with students: "Kids are forgiven, but fairness is kept in mind. Kids are trusted if they approach you and you accept what they say." Leon Buchko (Interview, February 2, 1989) added that staff could fall back on

Catholic doctrine and Christian values in choosing consequences: "Target behaviours are stressed. Kids have to get along because we won't accept monopolies or harassments. Patience is important."

The principal summarized the implications of this assumption by explaining that the doctrines of the Catholic church led to the teaching of morals and values within the Catholic faith:

> The gospel values involve our belief that Christ came down on earth to teach us gospel values. If two kids are fighting on the playground and Christ came along, what would he do? How would he discipline a child? For our students we use him as a model. We think about how we handle the situation based on gospel values.

One teacher, Georgina Pinder (Interview, April 10, 1989), challenged the assumption that the doctrines of the Catholic faith and the Christian value system influenced the way staff members treated students. In her opinion there was no difference in the way a good teacher managed students, regardless of whether it was a public or Catholic school. For Georgina Pinder, two things made the school Catholic: the presence of a priest for classroom masses and for celebrations such as Lent and Advent; and the teaching of religion. These elements created a different program of delivery to students, and it was through these elements that the Catholic faith and the Christian value system influenced her work with children.

Decision-making was also influenced by the assumption that the Catholic faith and the Christian value system provide a foundation for school activity. According to Pati Gilroy (Interview, April 6, 1989), scheduling decisions such as when to have a Christmas concert were determined by this assumption: "When to have a

Christmas concert is influenced by Advent. Advent is the key, not having the concert so early we are practising in November and losing the meaning of it all." Effie Carlson (Interview, April 7, 1989) added that daily decisions about teaching religion, classroom masses, paraliturgies, and celebration times like Lent and Advent carried expectations that teachers would follow through at the classroom level.

The Catholic faith and the Christian value system also influenced instruction and teaching. Henry Weber (Interview, April 7, 1989) explained that teachers' understandings of doctrine and their adaptations of doctrine within the curriculum influenced what went on in the classroom. He explained that, in teaching, he reinforced concepts and added a spiritual dimension by referring to biblical context and to Christ's way. This background in religion helped teachers to answer the students' questions. Henry added that a large component (about 30%) of non-Catholic students created some instructional difficulties:

> Parents sign up on paper but the kids do what they want anyway. Behaviour at masses is a problem, yet since we have these kids who don't go to any church, they have no way of knowing what behaviour is the norm. It isn't a given.

A discussion with two newly hired staff members (Interview, April 10, 1989) revealed that both Ann Kiddleson and Katie Potter felt that it was only okay to share values and beliefs during instruction if they were in keeping with the Catholic faith. A long time employee of the Catholic Board and a teaching member of St. Gabriel School, Elaine Grayling (Interview, April 12, 1989), differed. She saw such a difference of opinion on what makes a good Catholic that she believed it would be difficult to share the Catholic school's position instead of one's own: "There are big

issues and general morality differences relating for example to abortion, which in my opinion has nothing to do with being Catholic. Post Vatican 2 Catholicism is quite different from pre Vatican Catholicism."

The principal, Mr. Janzen (Interview, April 12, 1989), offered an explanation for this observed difference of opinion on the staff's instructional role: "In staffing one gets people at different levels of conviction. Therefore, their dealing with religion will manifest itself differently .... Teachers must understand the church's doctrines and gospel view of it, not their own perspectives." Later, on May 13, 1989, Mr. Janzen offered the beginnings of a solution. The reluctance of some staff members to participate in certain activities such as paraliturgies was because they were not actively practising Catholics. "We need to look at teachers' commitments and target the classroom for more prayer and the study of the liturgy itself." This suggestion was reinforced by Elaine Grayling (Interview, April 12, 1989) in her discussion of how the Catholic faith and the Christian value system were being incorporated at St. Gabriel:

> Here we pray through celebrations that have become focused on as a religious aspect from a Catholic point of view which is different from a Christian point of view. For example, at Easter the sign of new life is emphasized. Chicks and bunnies are fine as signs of new life, but not just as the commercial sign of Easter.

Parent interviews. Interviews with parents indicated that their perception of the role of the school in regard to the Catholic faith and the Christian value system was mainly to build values that support the home. Marilynne Foster (Interview, February 13, 1989) wanted her children "to get a grounding I can't give them." Other

parents like Karl Mogden (Interview, February 14, 1989), who appeared to be teaching religion at home, saw religious instruction "as building values at school that support the home." Mrs. Belleveu (Interview, February 21, 1989) reinforced this comment by stating that "religion is important because the morals the teachers display influence the home/school partnership."

One parent, Mrs. Ives (Interview, March 1, 1989), recalled that, while religion was not actively practised in their home, the school's approach had helped her children deal with the recent death of her brother: "They were not heavily remorseful because they kept saying he is still with us right now."

For Mrs. Baker (Interview, February 21, 1989), religion was something she heard little or nothing about from her Grade 8 child. Because her husband had had religion "pushed down his throat," they did not go to church regularly. While she was glad that her children received religious instruction, it was not a major factor for them. However, Mrs. Baker agreed that it did support home values for those families who actively participated in the Catholic faith.

Student interviews. Primary students up to Grade 3 described their understanding of how the Catholic faith and the Christian value system influenced them by saying that religion involved reading stories about Jesus from the bible, colouring and drawing pictures, and writing. Casey Black (Interview, February 8, 1989), a Grade 3 student, added that they did too much colouring. Agreeing with this position, the Grade 4 group (Interview, February 23, 1989) suggested that religion was becoming boring, because it was the same thing year after year.

However, one child, Jo-anne Dyck, commented that she liked to learn about Jesus because it supported her reading of the bible at home. In the Grade 5 and 6 interviews (February 23, 1989), Lisa Kiddle's voice represented group consensus: "Religion is boring. She just talks about God and we draw pictures. We hardly even get art separate from religion. We don't find religion interesting any more because we already had it for four years." The Grade 7 group (Interview, February 3, 1989) strongly contradicted the feelings of the former three grades by suggesting that "religion is neat. We talk about the past, satanism." This group was taught by a staff member with a major in religion. Their comments reflected an enthusiastic response to Mr. Buchko's style of ensuring that religion permeated all activities during the school day.

Summary

Data obtained from the researcher's observation of artifacts, examination of archival material, and interviews with school personnel showed evidence of the assumption that the Catholic faith and the Christian value system pervaded all school activity. While visual displays, rituals and ceremonies, school board correspondence, memos, and newsletters suggested ways in which this principle could be implemented, interviews revealed considerable variance among staff members in integrating the assumption into student management, decision-making, and instructional practices. Parents saw the school's role as one of building the Catholic faith and Christian value system. By the time they reached Grade 3, most students found religion repetitive

and boring with too much emphasis being placed on coloring and the drawing of pictures.

CHAPTER 6

PRINCIPAL'S LEADERSHIP STYLE ASSUMPTION

Introduction

Data gathered during the study from artifacts, archival material, and interviews led to the deciphering of St. Gabriel's assumption that a transactional leadership style influenced decision-making, relationships, communications, and the teaching-learning situation. The origin and development of this assumption was in response to a leadership style chosen by the principal upon his appointment to St. Gabriel School. This assumption subsequently came to be accepted by St. Gabriel staff who believed that this style was not open to feedback or to suggestions for change.

Assumption 2: A transactional leadership style influenced decision-making, relationships, communications, and the teaching-learning situation.

This assumption will be discussed in three sections. The first section discusses the assumption from an examination of archival material. The second section discusses the assumption from the points of view of teachers, parents, and students based on iterative interviews. The third section discusses this assumption with respect to artifacts which demonstrate the persistence of the assumption.

Archival Material

A variety of correspondence, daily memos, newsletters, and meetings at St. Gabriel enabled me to confirm the existence of the assumption that a transactional leadership style influenced decision-making, relationships, communications, and the

teaching-learning situation. The discussion of this leadership assumption begins with an examination of archival material related to staff meetings. This examination is followed by data from Monday morning meetings, Project Gonzaga meetings, Grades K-4 noon meetings, Parent Council meetings, meetings of principals, and a meeting with Education 100 students. Finally, data gained from an examination of newsletters is shared.

Staff meetings. I participated in four monthly staff meetings during the research period. All staff meetings occurred in the library structured by a circular seating formation with the principal, Bill, at the head and the vice-principal, Carl, among the staff. Individuals sat in grade or division groupings with people they communicated with during the work day. Staff generally sat in the same spot from meeting to meeting. Similarities among meetings indicated a transactional leadership style, which was reflected in pre-determined agenda format and content and in controlled communications, relationships, and decision-making. Analyzing all four staff meetings, I found six categories to represent the content of the agendas: professional development information, extra-curricular updates, learning related issues, committee reports, professional matters, and decision-making items.

I have chosen to share data from these meetings by topic rather than by staff meeting to illuminate the importance of the various topics and to demonstrate the leader's control over staff relationships, decision-making, and communications.

Professional development information was shared at all four meetings, and at one meeting, staff members were given time to discuss and to reflect on St. Gabriel

School. At the January meeting, considerable time was spent on providing professional development information which could have been delivered by a memo or on the display board. Bill informed staff members of opportunities, but he did not ask for reaction or for input. Professional development topics included: a TRACE Catholic Education Conference (March 3 and 4) to which all were encouraged to attend and for which funding was available; an AIDS in-service workshop for Grades 7 and 8 teachers from 4:00 to 8:00 p.m. on February 7; a presentation by Dr. Quinn of the Royal University Hospital Youth Services on Attention Deficit Disorder on January 25 from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m.; a Department of Education presentation on Meeting the Challenging Needs of TMR and Multiply Handicapped Youngsters on February 7 from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.; an administrative seminar for interested candidates; audio tapes from the Catholic Education Conference in Edmonton; a Seeds workshop on January 24 at 4:00 p.m.; and a System Mass to celebrate Eucharist (in the first week of Lent) on February 13 at 4:00 p.m. The February staff meeting dealt with professional development information about a grant for Indian Culture Programs and with evaluative responses to the February Institute. The March staff meeting provided a one-hour opportunity to discuss school issues identified by Bill. This discussion was defined as a professional development item.

A memo regarding the March 16 staff meeting indicated that Bill had proposed three professional development activities in his plan for the year's staff meetings. They included teacher welfare and pensions, special needs students, and St. Gabriel School. Bill had designated the topic of issues at St. Gabriel School as the

professional development activity for the March meeting. Groups of nine teachers, appointed by Bill, discussed the issues for half an hour. This discussion was followed by large group sharing and issues consolidation.

Bill identified the issues to be discussed, in order, as supervision, special needs students, the equipment and teacher workrooms, reporting to parents, STF/STA, staff relationships, and a category labelled other. A handout listed the issues and provided columns for positive and negative feedback and for recommendations. Staff members indicated that the activity was timely, relevant, and appreciated, but that they needed an opportunity to raise other issues which had not been targeted for discussion. Staff members were unhappy with the request to discuss only the issues identified by Bill, because they would have chosen other issues as priorities. The topics of supervision, teacher and equipment workrooms, and parent-teacher interviews appeared to be managerial issues which generated negativism and dissatisfaction and which dominated the discussion. These issues absorbed a disproportionate amount of the discussion time without solving the problems identified in each. STF/STA and staff relations were professional related topics which generated very little discussion. The topics of special needs students, as the only teaching-learning issue, excluded the majority of the student body from the discussion. Many staff members commented that the control of topics was Bill's way to ensure that "real issues" would not surface. No doubt existed in my mind that Bill deliberately controlled this activity through strategic choices of topics and pre-established groups of nine teachers in order to limit the degree of input. Bill

explained that this feedback mechanism was intended to replace individual staff interviews which were becoming difficult to schedule with a large staff and a busy school. How this procedure was related to staff development was unclear. Bill appeared to use the issue discussion technique as a professional development topic in order to justify his decision, not to rationalize a change in his leadership style of interviewing staff members individually for feedback. His choice of activity further illustrates his use of a transactional style to influence how staff relate, communicate, and make decisions that influence the teaching-learning situation. At the April 13 staff meeting, Bill identified peer coaching as a staff development opportunity and he requested the involvement of interested staff. He suggested that teacher involvement in peer coaching would absolve him of his instructional leadership role:

> I'm feeling a horrendous burden. When I opened this school I found it easy to get around and visit and talk with you. Now this is complicated by being bigger in size. Now I'll need to rely on your coaching for you to get feedback because I can't get around. I'd like to visit and support but I need two or three people who can get involved in teacher-to-teacher support with meaningful feedback.

The in-service workshop for peer coaching was to be held prior to school opening the following fall, and Effie, Dianne, and Elaine volunteered to attend. A handout received at the principal's meeting was shared with staff members, but no further activity or discussion on the topic ensued. There was no attempt by the leader to maximize the opportunity for staff to learn more about peer coaching or to explore benefits for them and for the school. Rather than take full advantage of a professional development topic, he had used it, once again, to rationalize a change

in his own leadership style.

Another aspect of staff meetings included information about extra-curricular activities. Most often details flowed from the leader to staff members, although committee members occasionally shared plans for extra-curricular events. The nature of the extra-curricular activities also reinforced Bill's transactional leadership style. For the most part, he authorized events that involved children in socializing activities. January's extra-curricular items included the spring track meet date; dates for the music festival (which featured non-competitive adjudication and constructive evaluation); the Hawks/Police Card Program presentation; and a fitness competition with Tartu, Estonia, involving twenty minutes of activity. February's staff meeting addressed a tobogganing function for Grade 8 students and a bike rodeo for Grade 4 students sponsored by Petro-Canada. The focus of extra-curricular activities for the March meeting was a penny race to raise funds for a Share Lent project on giving to help the Friendship Inn. April's focus on extra-curricular activities highlighted the Home and School Association's fun night, for which staff were requested to sign up for bingo. Very little student or staff involvement existed in determining the structure or the content of the activities at fun night, or in questioning the nature of their involvement in the event. Rather, staff were asked to support the function as participants and to enjoy the fundraiser for the school. Bill met with the fun night committee and largely encouraged the maintenance of past practices. He used his role as principal to guard the school by taking a "no" position on new ideas such as the sale of cotton candy. However, games involving wheels of chance and direct

gambling were allowed, to my surprise. These games appeared to conflict with Bill's Christian values. An additional item at the April meeting was information to the staff regarding the Up, Up and Away reading program which involved fifteen minutes of reading time at home, signed by parents. Ten sessions earned the reader an opportunity to set off a helium balloon.

While another assumption, to be shared in Chapter 7, involves learning, a few learning-related matters were dealt with at the staff meetings which are appropriate for discussion within the context of this assumption on leadership. Three learning-related items were shared at the January 19 staff meeting with little staff involvement or discussion. Staff were informed that Education Week would be held on March 6 to 10 with the theme of "Shaping You and Your World." Board members would visit as special guests. No discussion was held about what St. Gabriel would do during Education Week, although it was only seven weeks away. No one asked if involvement would be sought. The second learning related item was a reminder to staff that students with extra-ordinary ability who would benefit from challenging activities needed to be nominated for the Enriched Learning Opportunity program (ELO). There was no indication that Bill knew who these students might be. Finally, staff were encouraged to arrange for attendance at the school board office library book display to recommend for purchase books they could use in their programs.

February's staff meeting provided a twenty-minute opportunity to discuss the Common Essential Learnings (CELs) on technological literacy. Staff were asked to

read Chapter 5 of The Common Essential Learnings (pages 36-41) and discuss the content in four pre-determined groups of seven. I was also placed in a group. Observations of the group interactions indicated that there was no agreement among members of the meaning of technological literacy or of its translation into classroom practice. None of the discussion reflected the school's underlying assumption around Catholicism and a Christian value system. Rather, Henry was concerned about how the description of technological literacy would be comprehended by the "average teacher"; Anne wanted concrete examples provided; Elaine was concerned about moral issues and teachers' social responsibility to children; and Hanya was concerned that teachers get "zapped with doing everything." Although this session had raised the awareness of the document and had provoked discussion, no attempt was made to draw conclusions about bringing the implications of technological literacy into the everyday teaching-learning situation at St. Gabriel. The second learning item in February's meeting involved student evaluation. Mr. Janzen provided a handout on guidelines for doing report cards and parent/teacher interviews as an information item from himself to the staff. No discussion followed. Carl, the vice-principal, shared what would happen for Education Week which was two weeks away. He explained that on the Tuesday morning, March 7, Grades 1-6 would share a hobby day and on Thursday, March 9, Grades 7 and 8 would sponsor a science fair. There was no indication that group input had occurred or that a committee had existed prior to this decision. After Carl shared this information Bill added that Wednesday would be Open House all day, "since few parents come anyway." The staff's non-

verbal reactions indicated that the group was not pleased, but no discussion resulted.

The March 16 staff meeting had no items which were learning-related other than an information item that the Canadian Test of Basic Skills would occur at Grades 4 and 7. This item resurfaced at the April 13 staff meeting as an item on standardized testing. This time Bill listened to brief reactions, as many teachers were interested in knowing their students' achievement levels each fall. After a few suggestions, Bill summarized what he thought the teachers were requesting. Grade 1 would take the Gates McGinitie test using the reading component only and Grades 2 to 8 students would use the reading and mathematics components of the Canadian Test of Basic Skills as a benchmark against which to judge their progress. The other learning-related matter shared at the April 13 meeting was the resource room teacher's illness and replacement. St. Gabriel was allocated two full-time positions for resource room, one of which had been held by Rita. The board had replaced Rita with two half-time teachers which translated into four half-time resource room people to cover St. Gabriel's allocation. The replacement staff would operate on a pull-out system, rather than attempt to integrate within home classrooms, as had been Rita's preferred method of delivering resource room assistance.

Most schools do some degree of decision-making through committees which report back to the staff. St. Gabriel did not function with as many committees as I would have anticipated for its size, nor did a staff council of staff representatives who would serve as a liaison to the principal exist. Since St. Gabriel operated with a transactional leadership style, few committee-type items surfaced at staff meetings.

No committee items existed at the January 19 staff meeting. At the February 23 staff meeting, the social committee outlined a "Curling Skip and Sip" event for April 7, a "Courtyard Night" in May, and a "Car Rally" in June. A Saskatchewan Teachers' Association (STA) representative for the next meeting was requested, and student art was solicited for the Harder Art Gallery display by March 15. The Institute Committee shared two items. The first concerned the problem surrounding materials required to implement learnings from the print-making workshop. Since staff discussion indicated interest, Bill accepted responsibility for purchasing print-making materials in order to facilitate a full-day workshop for teaching. The Art Committee was not offered this opportunity. To my knowledge, this never happened prior to the end of the study period at St. Gabriel School two months later. The second item brought forward by the Institute Committee was done in humour through sharing of completed clay work crafted by middle years staff members at the workshop. Larry was identified as having been the best dressed and Leon as the most disruptive. An evaluation form was handed out to be completed in response to Bill's piece of clay. Humour pervaded the room.

At the March 16 meeting, the social committee convenor, Bonnie, shared a humorous handout about a trip to the Ukraine for Easter. As a participant observer, I felt that it lacked sensitivity to feelings of those of Ukrainian descent on staff, and that it contradicted the school's underlying cultural assumption about the Catholic faith and the Christian value system. Henry, the chairperson for Project Gonzaga, mentioned that the Grade 5/6 classes would be taking a trip to the Galaxy Farm and

that the Grade 7/8 classes would go to Jack Lake. Carl sought feedback for Education Week activities which I felt as a participant observer was done in a manner that solicited praise for his science fair. On the contrary, most reaction reflected the hobby day aspect of Education Week, recommending that it be set aside for a year. Effie was congratulated for having a written piece accompany each hobby in her classroom. At the end of this topic Bill mentioned briefly that Carl would be leaving on May 1 for an education leave, and welcomed Katie, the new Grade 2 teacher, replacing Judy who was on maternity leave. Eight applicants had come directly to see Bill, seven had called, and five resumes were received. Katie, a recent graduate of the College of Education, was congratulated for being successfully chosen.

At the April 13 staff meeting, the only committee related matter came from Bill by way of an announcement that central office had approved a $500 grant application for a Native Education Project submitted by a committee of Dianne, Georgina, Elaine, and Connie. Although Bill shared this item in a congratulatory way, no opportunity was given for the committee to elaborate on the details of their application. These staff members might have shared what this project would mean for the learning opportunities of St. Gabriel students. It was likely that this, too, would come from Bill since his transactional leadership style controlled the communication flow on staff.

Another component of staff meetings included professional matters. No professional matters surfaced at either of the March 16 or April 13 staff meetings,

and those items raised in both January and February were directed from Bill to his staff. At the January 19 meeting, staff were informed that the Teachers' Institute on February 16 would involve the morning at school and the afternoon at the Westville Inn. The agenda consisted of greetings from the chairperson of the board and the director, followed by a keynote address entitled "What Is Good Teaching" by Mr. George Walter, a devoted coach, counsellor, teacher, and administrator. Lunch arrangements had been cancelled due to a lack of interest. Deadlines for long-term and sabbatical leaves and for teacher transfers were shared. Bill expressed his belief that transfers were healthy for professional renewal, but he did not discuss the student as learner and the importance of moving staff to ensure that learner needs are being met.

At the February 23 staff meeting, professional information arising from the principals' meeting the day before was shared. Staff members were encouraged to use the resources of the religious consultant and to attend the opening of St. Valentine School in honour of the former Director of Education, William Spilchuk, who was the father of Sheila Male, the Grade 2 teacher. Information was provided on the Jeux Canada Games, AIDS education development, and the Grade 4 bike rodeo to be sponsored by Petro Canada. At the end of the meeting, Leon indicated that he had lost his register in case anyone had noticed it. Staff members appeared to be concerned for Leon, but not surprised at the loss.

While collaborative planning has been identified as a key element of effective school cultures, opportunity for shared decision-making was non-existent at the staff

meetings of St. Gabriel School. Opportunities did not exist for open communication, or for consensus building regarding academic matters and student achievement. Participatory problem-solving and decision-making were not a natural part of school life. Consequently, such processes were not a component of any of the four staff meetings.

Monday morning meetings. I participated in Monday morning 8:30 a.m. staff meetings during the research period. These staff meetings occurred in the staffroom with teachers sitting at available spots in the crowded room. The purpose of these 10 to 15 minute meetings was to think about the upcoming week and to share information which might have an impact on staff or students. Since Bill did not keep a daily book of announcements to be read by the staff, teachers were expected to record relevant information from these meetings. An example of a typical Monday morning meeting occurred on February 13. Items shared by Bill included announcements regarding the Grades 7 and 8 ski trip that day, a system mass at 4:00 p.m., three brochures for Institute, hot dog day on Wednesday, a confirmation workshop for Grades 4 and 5 staff, a safety patrol/Hawks hockey game on the 14th, the need for two pieces of art for Education Week, the availability of Stations of the Cross booklets of fourteen pictures depicting the passion of Christ during Lent, and an explanation of a cross project on the theme of sacrifice to encourage students to do something good or nice for someone else.

These meetings created an opportunity for others to share, to seek clarification or elaboration, or to raise other problems and issues that required attention.

Generally, however, the meetings were managerial and informative in nature. Each meeting closed with the staff reciting a prayer together aloud.

Project Gonzaga meetings. Project Gonzaga was the title used to identify activities related to middle years students from Grades 5 to 8. This group met more regularly than other staff groups. However, the necessity of meeting continuously came under question because of ineffective functioning. While Bill attended most meetings he often was unable to be at the beginning or to remain for the duration. Consequently, the leadership rested in the hands of Henry, the chairperson, who had the most years of experience with the project at St. Gabriel. Carl, the vice-principal, was frequently in conflict with Henry, over leadership of the meetings, even though Carl lacked background information. Henry was a controller. Others risked speaking during meetings, which lacked focus, cooperation, and agreement.

Data from the meetings indicated that Project Gonzaga was not functioning well. Staff relations among middle years teachers were strained. Bill did not monitor the project nor did he listen to teachers' feedback regarding the problem of leadership. Through his transactional leadership style, Bill had delegated Henry to lead the committee, but Henry was challenged by his colleagues. This issue was not addressed. Nor could Carl, the vice-principal, be counted on to lead the group, since most teachers seemed unwilling to accept his leadership. While Bill had a vision for the middle years student, he had been unable to translate his expectations into realized goals. Although the middle years staff had contributions to make, they needed a problem-solving leadership style in order to create meaning and to translate

intent into action for the middle years programming at St. Gabriel School. Otherwise, Project Gonzaga would be nothing more than separate classrooms of students who came together periodically for events unrelated to academic learning. Throughout the entire research period , I did not observe the principal's leadership to bring about positive changes in the relationships, communications, and decision-making processes among middle years teachers or to generate a positive impact on the teaching-learning situation.

Grades K to 4 noon meetings. While it was my understanding from Bill that the Grades K to 4 teachers met regularly at noon hours, during the research period only one such formal meeting took place. The teachers met on February 27. Effie accepted the appointment as chair, although she had not known ahead of time and had not developed an agenda. Bonnie volunteered to act as a summarizer and recorder of the group's deliberations. All group members shared freely and willingly in a relaxed, informal atmosphere. Georgina asked questions on goals and methodology. Three topics were discussed at the meeting: a discussion on print-making needs, the availability of a Native Grant of $500 from central office, and a proposal called "It's Get To Know Kids Time" which would release K to 4 teachers for a half hour per week. According to Bill (February 27, 1989), this time:

> would be to deal with kids, test them, meet parents, look at cumulative files, book resource people, etc. The idea is to help you feel better about where your kids are at and where you can take them to. You need to get a handle on what each child can do. This is time to focus on one or two kids and find out.

Throughout the iterative interviewing, Bill appeared to feel a need to address the

child as learner, although this issue had not been an obvious focus of his role as a leader. He had acquired additional stenographic help from central office and planned to use Pearl Fletcher to supervise the classes. He was most careful to point out that Pearl would not teach the classes. Having given the teachers a moment to consider the proposal, Bill asked, "Since most of your instruction occurs in the morning, is the afternoon better?" This question was surprising because it suggested an assumption on Bill's part that the only learning occurring in the school was happening during language arts and mathematics instruction. Nevertheless, the staff reacted positively to this opportunity. Although they recognized the limitations of thirty minutes, they were grateful for the time.

Unlike the Project Gonzaga meetings, this meeting was one of open communication, consensus building, and an academic focus. Participatory decision-making was a reflection of the group's ability to relate well as staff members and to share a concern for the learning needs of their students. Bill attended the entire meeting. However, he did not exercise any leadership, and Effie managed well. Throughout the research period, many grade alike-groups of teachers met to plan to and organize for learning. However, no other formal Grades K to 5 meetings occurred. I wondered why Bill insisted that the middle years Project Gonzaga meetings occur regularly, despite their problems, but he did not regularly use the talents of the K to 5 group to produce benefits for learners in that grade category.

Parent Council meetings. Past practice indicated that Parent Council meetings were usually held the last Monday of each month. During the research

period, the March meeting was postponed until April because of the Easter break. On April 2, the Parent Council met to plan for fun night.

I attended the regular February 27 meeting at 8:00 p.m. in the staffroom. At five minutes to eight no one had yet arrived. Carl, the vice-principal, was busily writing out something for Julie to type the next day. When the meeting finally began, he continued to write. Bill announced that he was regretfully missing his son's Grade 9 orientation to Holy Mary High School, and that he planned to go to the orientation if no one showed up for the meeting . Around 8:05 p.m. seven mothers arrived. The president declared herself ill and asked Bill to chair the meeting for her. No agenda was made available. As a participant observer, I was surprised that she had not asked the vice-president or another parent to chair the meeting as would be the usual procedure. No other men were present, and no one had received notice of the meeting through their children.

The treasurer reported an income of $910 from raffle tickets and $322 from the last hot dog sale. She reminded the group that the Grade 8 students were to provide the next cookie treat. They required advance notice since they were known to "slack off". The total in the account was $3034.32. An appeal from Carl resulted in a decision to purchase team uniforms. The Council also decided to make a donation to the safety patrols.

Bill's report included the following: a sharing of the Education Week timetable, a reminder that Monday morning was planning time, an indication that the Grade 2 teacher's last day before maternity leave would be March 10 and that the Grade

1 teacher's last day would be the end of June, an announcement that 55 Kindergarten students had registered to date, an explanation of the upcoming basketball tournament, and a request for $375 to cover the upcoming Globe Theatre performance costs.

The only question that the parents asked Carl was whether the Grade 8 class would have a hamburger fundraiser to raise money for camp in June. Carl glanced uncertainly towards Bill. He would be gone on a two-month education leave, and he did not know if the parents had been informed. Bill chose not to share this information, and responded that no decision had yet been made.

An AIDS film, a newly acquired resource for the health program, was reviewed. At the end of the film the meeting adjourned with no time allocated for spontaneous questions, for reactions, or for sharing .

From this Parent Council meeting, I could not ascertain if a clear set of expectations existed between Bill and the president over the agenda of the meeting or over communication with the parent body. Although the school sent out a monthly calendar of events, the Parent Council meeting date was not included. Since only seven parents attended from a school of 443 students, I wondered about the significance of the Parent Council as a true partner in the activities of the school. Clearly, the Parent Council had a fundraising function and Bill accessed those funds to support causes such as team uniforms, safety patrols, and a drama performance.

Given the cancellation of the March meeting and April's focus on fun night as a fundraiser, I concluded that Bill used his transactional leadership style to define the

functioning of the Home and School largely as fundraising. This definition influenced the nature of communications, relationships, and decision-making by parents on school matters, especially those matters related to the teaching-learning situation. Bill appeared to have acquired a high level of trust from the parents. They seemed to feel that St. Gabriel was offering a sound learning program to their children, and that they had no reason to concern themselves with academic matters.

Meetings of principals. When I became aware of Bill's leadership style as a possible cultural assumption at St. Gabriel, I asked to join Bill in any out-of-school meetings he felt comfortable having me attend. I hoped that these opportunities might provide additional data that would clarify Bill's leadership style. In response to this request, Bill invited me to join the February Principals' Association Meeting and the Administrative Principals' Meeting, both of which were held monthly. I felt that the invitation was made in order to oblige me, but that Bill had some unexplained, guarded feelings. Perhaps Bill needed opportunities to be away from St. Gabriel and to relax, knowing I was not collecting data. This feeling was understandable.

The Principals' Association Meeting of February 8, held at Bishop Murray High School, was attended by four female and twenty-eight male principals of both elementary (K to 8) and secondary (9 to 12) Catholic schools. The meeting was chaired by the executive president who facilitated the involvement of others. No members of the school board office were involved. Three topics formed the agenda of the day. A computer committee presented a brief of its deliberations. After some

discussion, the group expressed a need to have input and to agree on the document before it went to the board, in order to avoid "the same hodge podge we had over instruction." A second agenda item involved the issue of Native equity. The system hoped to hire native teachers to fill nine percent of the staff complement, but was experiencing difficulty in finding qualified teachers. The final agenda item was an informational matter on the consequences of early child entrants. This item would be dealt with at 4:00 p.m. for interested people.

The Administrative Principals' Meeting of February 22, also at Bishop Murray High School, was attended by the same group of principals as the Principals' Association Meeting. The meeting was chaired by the Deputy Director, Mr. Bill Pacheluk, and involved an address by the Director, Mr. Brian O'Neily. The meeting opened with a native prayer, after which I was welcomed. The new .5 religious consultant and .25 Byzantine Ukrainian Rites consultant were introduced. The consultants described the work they hoped to do in the schools. The Director delivered several informational items informally from memory as he stood before the group, hand in pocket. Items included: a visit to British Columbia to see their K to 4 ungraded program, a tea on Friday to honour the retiring religious consultant, an announcement of the opening of St. Valentine School, a thank you for attendance at the administrative workshop, a thank you for keeping within the budget process (St. Gabriel had been $1 off budget!), a sharing of the importance of a great welcome story during Kindergarten registration, an item regarding Grade 9 Catholic registrants in public high schools, an announcement regarding a communication workshop in

April on community/school relations, and, an information item that the board would express appreciation to the staff at the West Post during Education Week. Following these items, the co-chairpersons of the Jeux Canada Games Education Committee shared three curriculum units to be used in school and asked for all Grade 6 students to participate in a simulation on May 12. After a coffee break, the Deputy Director shared his findings from school visitations made in the last week of January. (I had not noticed him at St. Gabriel that week.) He mentioned April's Administrative Principals' Meeting as a time to consider supervision, evaluation, and staff development. Al Smith, Assistant Director of North Battleford, would offer a Time Management workshop at the April meeting. The meeting closed after viewing a new film for AIDS education, "AIDS, AIDS, Learn and Live," to follow "AIDS - A New Epidemic" and "AIDS - It's Your Choice," already in use in Catholic schools.

Bill's pleasant manner and interpersonal skills were evident at both of these meetings. He visited with colleagues and ensured that I felt welcome. Both meetings provided opportunities to watch how Bill took information of relevance back to his staff at St. Gabriel. Aside from his management of information, no evidence of Bill's transactional leadership style at the school level could be found in these meetings.

Meeting with Education 100 students. When Bill was informed by central office that St. Gabriel would be receiving several Education 100 students to observe in his school for seven Tuesday afternoons, he drafted a memo to the staff. In this memo of January 9, 1989, Bill indicated that he would "schedule them randomly

throughout. If you do not wish to participate, please let me know by this Friday." When the students actually arrived on January 31, Bill did not proceed as he had indicated in his original memo. After having each student share where she was from and what she brought to education, Bill emphasized that liking children was of key importance (meeting, January 31, 1989). He saw their purpose as "getting an overview of kids through the eyes of an educator . . . kids of various abilities and levels, through various experiences." Bill described space and teacher allocations and provided a tour of the school. Returning to the meeting, he asked the students to record their goals for this experience. The students found this task difficult. Bill indicated that he would try to arrange experiences that would meet their requests. An opportunity for questions was provided, during which the students express a willingness to accept whatever Bill could arrange. Considering the nature of the question period, I wondered if Bill's transactional style would create a plan for students to observe in pairs at all division levels. Although this situation was true for the beginning visits, each student's input was considered for future sessions, during which they largely stayed with a chosen teacher.

School newsletters. St. Gabriel's newsletters were written every two weeks. The style and format of each followed the same pattern. Content was categorized around predictable topics. The one page, 8 - 1/2" x 14", single-spaced, single-sided newsletter shared information without the use of visuals and without a signature. The centred heading read "St. Gabriel Community School Newsletter" although the term "community school" had never been used with the name of the school on any

other occasion or on any other document. The school address and telephone number were centred beneath this heading. To the left at the upper corner appeared Bill's name and title, and in the upper right hand corner appeared Carl's. The number of the newsletter appeared beneath the principal's name, and the date beneath the vice-principal's name. The content of the newsletter was categorized around predictable topics numbered in Roman numerals. Most newsletters had six or seven items with the largest number, 10, occurring on March 15, 1989. The first newsletter of each month contained a calendar of activities for the month.

An analysis of the seven topics written in the newsletters reinforced the existence of a transactional leadership style that influenced the nature of communication, relationships, decision-making, and the teaching-learning situation. Most of the time the newsletter began with reminders and important dates to remember. These announcements pertained to early dismissal or no-school dates for staff meetings, professional development, institute/convention, and Easter Break. Announcements of event dates included hot dog days, parent council meetings, holy week services, Education Week activities, and report card/interview times. Newsletters ended with a community news item to share broader community information such as lost and found, a Brownie fundraiser, winterfest, give away items (i.e. budgies and cage), a Knights of Columbus dance, baseball registration, and learn to swim programs. Throughout the body of the newsletter the other five topics included thank you's, congratulations/bouquets, welcomes, school events and projects, and lunchroom announcements.

Thank you's were extended to both parents and students. Parents were thanked for their involvement in hot dog days and for attendance at the parent/teacher interviews. Senior students (Newsletter, February 18, 1989) were thanked for their involvement in hot dog days: "It takes great kids to do a good job and we've got some dandies." The Grade 2 classes and teachers were thanked for preparing a choir to sing mass at St. Peter's Parish. All students were thanked (Newsletter, March 15, 1989) for their donations to the Share Lent project and for being "giving of themselves in kind deeds as well as in some of their hard earned cash." A general thank you to all students was given for bringing hobbies and for preparing science projects to share during Education Week. Staff and students involved in hosting the basketball tournament were thanked for contributing to its success.

Items of congratulations and bouquets usually included the students of the week and the safety patrollers of the week and of the month. Five students received a one-line recognition for winning a Pro-Life Poster Contest. Sports references came under the congratulations heading. The coaches and students of the Sled Dog Track Meet were congratulated for their bronze medal win, and parents were thanked for driving. The basketball team was congratulated (Newsletter, March 16, 1989) for "sportsmanship, a display of skills, and being fine ambassadors of St. Gabriel School." Two staff members were congratulated for setting up the Reading Rock-a-thon project, but no opportunity was taken to explain the project to parents. The custodians were congratulated for their hard work in keeping the school clean of spring mud.

The welcome topic in newsletters appeared to be reserved largely for new staff members. When the Grade 2 teacher left on maternity leave and the vice-principal left for education leave, their replacements were welcomed with a brief description of their assignment. Although I was not welcomed on paper, the April 4, 1989 newsletter mentioned the completion of my research, and a pleasant farewell was recorded :

> Mrs. Betty Ann Bodnar is a graduate doctoral student at the University of Saskatchewan. She has been at St. Gabriel for the past few months studying the "culture" of our school. Betty Ann will be completing her work here in the next two weeks. I want to thank parents and children who volunteered to work with Mrs. Bodnar. I also want to thank Betty Ann for being a special part of our staff.

Aside from the staff-related welcomes, Bill's newsletter of April 4, 1989 welcomed spring and reminded parents to mark boots clearly with names, because "we must have 300 pairs of black high top rubber boots with a red band at the top."

Events and happenings consumed the greatest majority of space among the seven topics included in newsletters. From January to April, these events reflected the three categories of religion, fundraising, and learning. Religious items included information about parent meetings for Grade 2's first communion and for Grade 6's confirmation, and encouragement to parents to help their children make Lent a giving season. Parental involvement with Share Lent was requested (Newsletter, February 14, 1989) :

- send non-perishable food items any time now
- children can bring some of their personal money as a

contribution

- help your child complete his/her mosaic cross

(Your child will tell you about the mosaic cross.)

* Our Easter Mass is March 22, at 11 a.m.

Although Bill's style was to be brief and succinct in informing parents, I felt that the theme of "Creating in us a New Spirit, O Lord" could have been elaborated upon as a learning-related item.

Fundraising items referred to a family dance and fun night. Requests were made for fun night donations to the prize room, to bingo, to the white elephant table, and to the bake table. Students were asked to sell as many tickets as possible. Help was solicited in the newsletter of April 4, 1989: "Each family will be scheduled to provide one hour of time . . . . If you haven't called by April 7 your name will be assigned randomly to one of the work areas."

In conclusion, Bill's style of newsletter writing appeared to be one of informing. His purpose was to direct factual information from the school to the home in a way that communicated requests, but did not solicit input or feedback into the decision-making process. St. Gabriel's newsletter could not be considered a vehicle for sharing information on the teaching-learning process. It was not intended to invite involvement or participation in the daily learning activities of classrooms or of the school as a whole. Clearly, that process would be led by Bill.

Periodic memos. Bill wrote periodic memos to staff members on an "as was required basis." The purpose of the memos was to communicate information

necessary to ensure that all staff implemented Bill's expectations. Prior to my arrival, the last such memo had been written on November 22, 1988. It addressed supervision messages that were reviewed regularly with youngsters. During the course of the research study, 12 such memos were received by the teachers. Some memos were general in nature, such as the one of February 1, 1989, which shared factual information and extended an invitation. The staff was informed of the appointment of a Religious consultant, a Red Cross First Aid Clinic opportunity, the need to close the gym for ten days for renovations, the request from a central office consultant to meet with Grades 1 to 3 staff regarding mathematics, an invitation to join the Shrove Tuesday breakfast, and a request to sign up for the Institute lunch if interested. Similar memos shared visitation plans for Education 100 students, requested names for the principal's honour roll, explained fun night raffle ticket procedures, and requested co-operation in facilitating the schedule of an education work experience student.

Other memos addressed specific topics and served as illustrations of the way in which a transactional leadership style influenced communications, relationships, decision-making, and the teaching-learning situation. A memo of February 7, 1989 to teachers of K to 4 regarding the February 17 Art In-service is one such example. The staff had originally planned a primary art workshop with Sister Margaret Tomlinson. The workshop presenter was unable to attend at the time originally planned. Rather than consulting with the staff regarding an alternative plan, Bill informed them:

> I was able to set up a workshop with St. Joseph School primary staff . . . around all different types of print making. To add to the productivity of the workshop each teacher is asked to bring one idea to share . . . written out in lesson format. A sample of student work to illustrate would be included . . . . Please make 22 copies of your written page to be shared.

Although Bill intended well in pursuing alternate arrangements, his new plan caused great distress among the teachers. Staff members were unhappy about being asked to bring an idea, 22 copies of a lesson plan, and an illustration to the workshop. Needless to say, the teachers were not relaxed, they did not look forward to the workshop, and they did not consider how it might be used in the teaching-learning situation. Once again, they reacted emotionally to a directive they felt unable to counter.

A final example of the influence of a transactional leadership style occurred through a March 21, 1989 memo inviting applications for acting vice-principal at St. Gabriel during the period of April 3 to May 26. Since Mr. Friesen would be away on Educational Leave, the appointment of a temporary replacement was approved by the Superintendent of Education. Rather than address this item at the regular Monday morning meeting the day before, Bill chose the formality of a transactional style. His memo stated, "If you are interested please indicate the same in WRITING (informal) by noon on Wednesday, March 22." Once again, this memo reflects his need to control communication rather than to risk open dialogue of a collaborative problem-solving nature. The memo was placed in mailboxes which teachers emptied at various times. Many people were not pleased with Bill's method of informing them nor with his demand for a response by the next day. The staff heard the results

at the following Monday morning meeting. After the meeting ended, Bill informally added a "by the way" statement indicating that Leon Buchko would fill the vacancy. One staff member who had applied was obviously uncomfortable having heard the decision in this manner. Staff dissatisfaction appeared to be not with Bill's choice, but with the method he had chosen to communicate the decision.

When a memo was required to gain parental approval for interviewing children for this study, Bill authorized the letter to come directly from me. After examining a draft copy, he suggested adding a phrase to indicate that the project was authorized by the board and by himself. He recommended that, after a random sample was taken from class lists of student names, I check with his secretary to screen out children. Obviously, Bill did not understand true random sampling, and he wanted to control the nature of the children who became involved in the interview process. Once a final list was generated, I was allowed to send letters of authorization for involvement home with the students chosen through their homeroom teacher.

Artifacts

A variety of verbal, physical, and behavioral artifacts provided data to reinforce the assumption that a transactional leadership style influenced decision-making, relationships, communication, and the teaching-learning situation. Upon entering the main doors of St. Gabriel School, I observed a flipchart welcome sign. Proceeding further I encountered a map of the school and a monthly calendar of events pinned to a portable bulletin board in front of a large glass display case which remained empty throughout the study period. Entering the senior hallways of the school, I

noticed staff and student classroom pictures since 1985-86 and a large picture of the student body in front of the school at its opening. Bill ensured that this wall was maintained. Bulletin boards neatly and tastefully identified the students of the week, the birthdays of the month, and the principal's honour role. The secretary was responsible for maintaining and changing these boards and she took this task seriously. I concluded that, since Bill had not delegated the front entry display case to Coralee or to the staff, it had not been used as prime space to share student learning with those coming to St. Gabriel. Nor had the staff taken ownership by themselves. At one point in the research, Pati (Interview, April 16, 1984) shared that she would check with Bill to see if she "could display her castles in the front hall." This statement came with some encouragement on my part. The sharing of the castles went so well that subsequent learnings came to be presented in a similar manner. Connie had volunteered to put up a monthly calendar on the portable bulletin board in front of the glass display case since she could not offer expertise in other co-curricular areas.

Entering the senior classrooms, I encountered a change from the neat hallways. Senior classrooms, in general, were untidy, disorganized, and visually unappealing. In contrast, I found the primary classrooms to be a predictable extension of neat wall displays, that invited me to learn visually about the life in the classroom. As the research period evolved, I noticed that Bill did not verbalize high expectations regarding classroom environment. Consequently, middle years teachers allowed students to leave their classrooms in disarray. However, Bill did expect the target

behaviour of the week to be posted. He seemed frustrated over delegating the role to his vice-principal and having to settle for Carl's interpretation of the request. Yet, to my knowledge, he never asked Carl to rewrite or redo his presentation.

Bill explicitly verbalized his expectations of staff members. In a meeting with me (Interview, March 13, 1989), he commented, "You need staff in place before anything else can happen in a school. They must have an anticipatory set, or be engaged before school starts." Bill expected his staff to be in their classrooms by 8:40 a.m. in order to meet students as they arrived at school. Bill mentioned that in the past, staff continued to visit over coffee after the first bell had rung, and that classroom behaviour problems had resulted. Now, he expected his staff to arrive by 8:30 a.m. and not to leave before 4:00 p.m. without his knowledge. He clearly articulated his reason for implementing this expectation: "We must bring the bottom up because the marginal can slide. They need to be motivated by being shown how kids are benefiting and what the payoff to them is." Along with these expectations for beginning and ending the day, Bill instituted Friday as jeans day. The first time this occurred, I was surprised and shocked at the style of jeans worn by Bill and by the teachers. As a participant observer, I had not expected to see a principal in older, faded jeans, cowboy boots, and a T-shirt. Bill used this image to create a relaxed school climate at the end of each week .

Staff relations appeared relaxed and informal, at least in the staffroom. Coralee, the secretary, always sat alone, went home for lunch, and seldom joined the staff at afternoon recess. She never attended assemblies or special events, indicating she was

too busy. Bill did not appear to feel the need for any change in Coralee's relations with the staff. In an unsolicited conversation on February 20, 1989, the Grade 2 teacher, Katie, explained that the veterans of the school ran things. Her perception was that tradition had become ritual. What the original staff started continued. My observations of staff and student activities such as basketball confirmed this input. Bill did not attend all staff-student games, and few teachers participated. Typically, those people involved in co-curricular coaching joined the games. Many students watched unsupervised and only one half-time (Grade 2) staff member came to watch. Other staff members remained in the staffroom, and these teachers were described as lacking a supportive attitude. Perhaps if Bill, as a leader, had become involved in these activities, others would have followed. This principle held true for the Shrove Tuesday pancake breakfast, which was well attended and involved Bill as a leader.

Rituals and ceremonies. Mr. Janzen directed communication to the staff and students daily through the ritual of a morning intercom message. Each day began with a focused prayer guided by students. After the prayer, announcements were made pertaining to the student and patroller of the week, the target behaviour of the week, thank you's, encouragements relative to school happenings, and requests related to upcoming school activities. These announcements set the tone for the day and served as a reminder to the staff that interruptions throughout the day would be avoided if all requests were channelled through Bill for morning announcements.

School assemblies occurred at Christmas, at Easter, at the beginning and the end

of the year, and at grad and awards day. Assemblies did not occur on a regular basis because Bill felt that they were too contrived. Teachers had commented to him that the gym was like a zoo with not enough room. They believed that the students regarded the gym as the physical education room and that they had difficulty switching from gym behaviour to appropriate assembly behaviour. My observations on various occasions confirmed this assessment. Bill was master of ceremonies for the Ash Wednesday mass that involved many staff members. At the end Bill thanked students for their excellent behaviour. I questioned this feedback, as did other staff members, who felt that the behaviour of many students was deplorable. The Pre-Easter mass involved other staff members after Bill said the entrance prayer. While students observed proper behaviour throughout the first reading, responsorial psalm, gospel dramatization, intercession, and offertory procession, their behaviour during communion was noisy. Bill did not address this issue, and his silence on this matter was not acceptable to many staff members. Similar problems had been encountered during the paraliturgy gatherings which had occurred prior to the Pre-Easter mass. Led by teachers of grades grouped by the committee in charge, and held outside the main office, paraliturgies of five Lenten celebrations focused on themes of good deeds, almsgiving, prayer, self-denial, and fasting. While these celebrations were intended to help children think of ways in which a new spirit could be created within them, several students continued to misbehave. Since they had not been disciplined in a satisfactory way, their inappropriate behaviour repeated itself in large group gatherings.

Bill articulated the existence of a behaviour modification plan to which, he claimed, all staff consistently reacted in the same way. The plan focused on acceptable behaviour for adults and for children. Rules were developed in classroom meetings with student participation. Students knew they had a right to be in the school, and they did not abuse that right. The Police Card Program assembly on February 21, 1989 served as an additional illustration. Bill needed to remind students about assembly behaviour: "Yelling and whistling are not acceptable. The acceptable way to show approval is clapping." Later, the students were still not settling, so Bill reviewed the two requests he had made of them. For this gathering, students had arrived at an unprepared gym. I got some Grade 7 students quickly to set up. After a welcome by Mr. Janzen and the singing of "Oh Canada," the assembly began. I was surprised that the Lord's Prayer was not recited. Perhaps this omission accounted for the tone of the assembly.

Hot dog days were times to observe verbal and behavioral activity which reflected the influence of a transactional leadership style. Preparatory work for the noon lunches occurred in the kitchen of the large gym. While parents provided the labour, no questions were asked about procedure and no input or suggestions for change were provided. Clearly the nature of the interactions indicated that Bill and the lunch coordinator were in charge. Hot dogs were eaten in home rooms with the assistance of the Grade 8 class. Bill was not involved in any of the preparatory work, which was well-organized. His only involvement was to sort and count the money with the parent assistants who gathered to collate the orders for each noon lunch.

The preparatory gathering for fun night also reinforced Bill's transactional style. Although the meeting was chaired by the president of the Parents' Association, the direction and the outcomes related to decision-making were influenced by Bill's presence. The meeting lacked some structure, and five of the nine parents present said nothing. Questions were asked about poster lamination, dismissal time, cotton candy, crown and anchor, prize solicitation, the food menu, and staff involvement. It was apparent that Bill and the president had not created an agenda for this meeting, perhaps because they both assumed that this fun night would be like others. Neither of them had considered that they would be working with a largely new group of parents who had volunteered without knowledge of past practices. Consequently, this meeting generated considerable confusion. Bill overruled allowing fortune telling in his school, but he authorized crown and anchor. Many parents perceived gambling to be as questionable an issue as fortune telling. He volunteered his staff to be involved in Bingo again, and he confirmed that ticket sales for fun night prizes would be co-ordinated by the secretary at the front office. Twelve stations, apart from a white elephant table, raffles, bingo, a prize room, and a concession, would comprise the "fun" of fun night for a student body of 443. As a participant observer, I was surprised that staff members were not involved in preparations and that student participation in preparing for fun night was be limited to ticket sales. The fun night clearly appeared to be a fundraising opportunity, and no attempt was made to relate it to the processes of teaching and learning which might have occurred with a different leadership style.

Interviews

Interview discussions held with the St. Gabriel principal, staff, students, and parents reinforced the assumption that a transactional leadership style influenced decision-making, relationships, communications, and the teaching-learning situation.

Staff interviews. Several staff members explained that their leader's style influenced how they communicated and made decisions, and that these processes ultimately influenced the teaching-learning situation. In an early discussion with Bill Janzen (Interview, February 9, 1989) about leadership, Bill declared that empowering was the whole basis of his style:

> I, as an administrator, provide opportunity for teachers to make decisions about how children learn then support them . . . I emphasize that we do not take kids to the end of a grade, but to the end of June. I emphasize the process, not the product.

Larry Spencer (Interview, April 5, 1989) wished that Bill would follow up on what he said about empowerment. While Bill seemed sincere and genuine in seeing that the responsibility for teaching was left with teachers:

> few attempts are made to ensure what should be happening is and little feedback is given. It is so busy around here many should be's never are gotten around to. We hear we will get help but Bill does not make it a priority to do so. He is caught up in the business of so many factors we just go on should be's.

Most staff members shared the perception that feedback was a necessary component of empowerment that was lacking. Elaine Grayling (Interview, April 12, 1989) appreciated being empowered professionally, but she felt that the principal's responsibility for monitoring and feedback had not been adequately happening. Although it had not been made a priority, Elaine felt that she required genuine

feedback. Because there was no annual monitoring of progress or evaluation, she preferred feedback to occur on an ongoing basis.

Pati Gilroy (Interview, April 6, 1989) also supported the concept of empowerment but, like others, felt that monitoring and feedback must become an important dimension: "Last year Bill set aside time for this, now he doesn't and hasn't a clue what is really going on as far as helping motivate us about the quality of our work." Many primary teachers expressed concerns about inadequate middle years programming that had resulted from empowerment without feedback. Effie Carlson (Interview, April 7, 1989) felt that some teachers, who were not doing a good job of teaching, needed developmental supervision. Empowering was fine, but follow-up, monitoring, and feedback were necessary and they were lacking. The feedback sought was not being received.

Georgina Pinder, a five-year veteran on staff (Interview, April 10, 1989), noticed that while Bill would come and go frequently, he did not say anything about the children, the learning, or the teaching: "He doesn't comment on whether things are good or not good, so he isn't fulfilling that part of his instructional leadership role. All teachers need to hear and be given ideas to grow with and improve upon." Although Dianne Pipchuk (Interview, April 5, 1989) had been in the profession for a long time, she was new to St. Gabriel School. She noted that Bill instigated opportunities to come into her room over trivial matters that could have waited. She decided that the trips to her room were his form of informal supervision to familiarize himself with what was happening. Dianne was concerned that teachers

were given responsibility, and that, unlike herself, "some coast, don't pull their weight, and no one is watching the impact on the child in this." Both newly appointed staff members in April, Katie in Grade 2 and Anne in Grade 8 did not mind when Bill dropped in on them, but, like Dianne, they felt his purpose was to be sure that they were in control. Neither teacher believed that he would formally book a time with them for observations. Anne recalled speaking to Bill about an incident with a child. He had taken over the situation completely and was now monitoring it. While she needed support being new, she wished that they had handled the problem together.

Observing her boss' daily activity, the secretary (Interview, April 10, 1989) noticed that Bill used to visit classrooms more often, but that the visits were happening less frequently as the staff increased. She felt that the staff were growing apart from one another and were experiencing less personal interaction.

Discussions with Bill on empowered leadership and staff perception of empowerment resulted in his admitting some problems. Bill emphasized the importance of the staff working with him, and he acknowledged their need for regular quality feedback. He explained that, in the previous year, he had set aside time from 10:45 a.m. to noon daily to visit classrooms and to provide feedback. Although he had started this year with the same plan, it had not worked. Bill attributed this problem to a role relationship change with his new team administrator, the vice-principal. He believed that his level of contact with the staff had diminished partly because he had to fill in gaps and to perform functions that the new vice-principal had not addressed. "We are professionals so I decided to

empower staff and make the assumption they are all professional, then deal with things when they are not." The challenge Bill faced was that of monitoring teacher decision-making and determining if the teachers had objectives in mind that benefit students. While agreeing that feedback was necessary, Bill believed that there feedback could be given by the staff to each other or by the administration: "Both have to occur and are legitimate. The value of both has been determined." I had the feeling that Bill did not want to discuss his role in monitoring and providing feedback to staff members while empowering them. He kept repeating how busy he had been.

Henry Weber (Interview, February 10, 1989), a senior teacher, substantiated that Bill's role had changed as a result of having a new vice-principal. Since the change, the tone of the school had been influenced tremendously:

> Peter, the former vice-principal, and Bill actually shared duties and functioned as a team. Bill had a willingness to let him, as a vice-principal, be an administrator. Because of Bill's way of decentralizing things the staff became involved . . . Carl, the new vice-principal, was challenged by coming into a former team situation. Carl has an idea he wants to go a certain way, but he lacks background information. As a result Bill hasn't been able to actualize the team concept.

According to Henry, this situation had had a tremendous influence on the decision-making structures within the school. Henry described Bill as a top-down leader who directed the school in keeping with the principles of the school system which he interpreted and modified to best fit the school and the people he served:

> A lot of the perception of the democratic process of decision-making is somewhat window dressing. Ultimately it still has to be what Bill wants. It is a directed participatory democracy.

> The bottom line is he knows what he wants. The social committee even had a decision changed by Bill. In Gonzaga I get a directive feeling of what Bill wants.

Henry explained further that Bill allocated tasks and that many people volunteered. Bill expected major and minor involvement, but they did not get a good mix. Since Bill was not ensuring equal staff involvement, certain groups dominated.

Another middle years teacher, Dianne Pipchuk (Interview, April 5, 1989), did not identify the vice-principal/principal team as a key factor in determining how decision-making occurred. Rather, she saw Bill as wanting to know what was happening and to be in direct control of every decision: "The staff feels free to be involved in decision-making but Bill ultimately has the last word . . . . He attempts to involve others in the decision-making while finding it difficult to let go." Dianne was disappointed that she had not been credited with looking after patrols on her own. In March, Dianne did extra work for winterfest and mass, and she received no feedback, no thanks, or no reward for her efforts.

Georgina Pinder (Interview, April 10, 1989) noted that more than one style of decision-making was used, depending on the situation. At times the staff discussed an issue and made a decision together. However, even with that process, "Bill lets others feel they made the decision, yet wanted it his way . . . the bottom line is always, I'm the boss and don't you forget it!" Georgina did not feel free to do what she wanted. She had been denied holding parent meetings, and she saw this decision as of a lack of confidence and a lack of leadership on Bill's part, despite his position on empowerment. "He's a good public relations man who has lost sight of the primary function of educating. If it isn't his idea you can't do it." Coralee, the

secretary (Interview, April 10, 1989), also observed this situation to be true most of the time: "Bill has an idea in his mind about the way it will go. Ultimately the decisions end up the way he intended, though he will give a little."

Bill appeared to be involved throughout the school. Pati Gilroy (Interview, April 6, 1989) saw Bill's school-wide involvement as his way of being in control and of staying informed. Unfortunately, this involvement influenced how he made decisions: "When the institute plan person cancelled, Bill took over and found a solution without consulting us and it wasn't satisfactory."

The part-time teacher librarian, Lillian (Interview, March 9, 1989), believed that some of the atmosphere in the school resulted from Bill's style of planning, co-ordinating, and decision-making: "He knows what he wants to do and makes that agenda clear to others. He listens to others and considers their viewpoints." Unlike most teachers, Lillian felt that her viewpoints were sought after and considered, which may reflect her position as the school librarian rather than as a classroom teacher. Whenever an issue arose such as borrowing practices or behaviour in the library, Bill sought Lillian's suggestions for improvement, then communicated them in a memo format to staff, rather than taking the issue to staff for their joint problem-solving first.

Bill (Interview, March 2, 1989) shared the outcomes of a Grade 8 student problem which had culminated that day after five previous meetings. The problem involved a couple's concern that their son would not be ready for high school. The parents wanted their son to be moved because he had a deficiency in basic skills and

his needs were not being addressed. They had lost confidence in the boy's teacher. Bill decided that no alternative nor transfer would be granted. He interpreted the parent's request as the father's need, not the child's. In his decision, Bill focused on how the parent could support Bill's belief that the child had a responsibility for the problem. Bill thought that the child needed problem-solving skills for life which he could discover by demonstration, by modelling, and by resolving this situation. In Bill's mind, the problem could not be solved by what the father wanted. Bill explained that the father had gained new insights. Although he still did not agree with Bill's position, he had changed his view about his son's role in his own education.

Despite a concern about the lack of ongoing feedback and the failures to involve teachers in decision-making, participants in the study often credited Bill for creating the existing school climate. The custodian, Don (Interview, February 3, 1989), commented on how the staff depended on the principal: "If he cares it rubs off on the staff."

Cathy Spencer, the teacher associate (Interview, February 6, 1989), added that Bill, as the backbone, set the tone even though some of his ideas were not so good. Leon Buchko (Interview, March 16, 1989) commented that Bill had good public relation skills and that he was genuine in his expectations which set the tone: "He expects all staff to be in contact with kids, interacting, involved, and encourages staff to live out their Catholic views as an asset."

The staffroom at St. Gabriel served as a congregating place for teachers at school

breaks, lunch time, and meeting times. These occasions provided opportunities for me to observe staff relations. The staffroom at St. Gabriel was primarily a socializing place. Bill (Interview, May 13, 1989) explained that he had made this decision in response to namecalling, labelling, and bantering about students during staff room talk which occurred even in the presence of parents: "If the talk couldn't be positive, then it shouldn't be allowed. This was my conscious effort to eliminate negative talk." I observed that, while some teachers appreciated the chance to stop thinking about students, others had an unfulfilled need to discuss teaching and learning concerns in a place that they frequented daily. Because many staff members did not belong to a grade-level team, they had no opportunity to share their concerns with colleagues. Although Bill assumed that grade-level teams were meeting to discuss learning matters, such meetings happened only at the Grade 1 and 2 levels.

Although he controlled most of the decisions of the school, Bill believed that he was empowering teachers and encouraging positive staff relations. He was known to support his teachers. Leon Buchko (Interview, March 16, 1989) saw Bill as a colleague, not as an authority figure. Bill had the interests of the students and staff at heart: "He always has time for staff if there is a problem and offers alternatives to solve a problem or walks you through a process of solving." Dianne Pipchuk (Interview, February 3, 1989) acknowledged that Bill supported teachers over parents, and she gave an example involving a child who had defaced materials in the hall. When the child was asked to stay after school the parent, expecting the child at home, stormed into the school. Unprepared, Dianne reacted emotionally and

buckled inappropriately:

> Bill stood behind me 100 per cent. He told the parent she had deprived her child of a chance to grow in responsibility. As a parent she had saved her child, given her an out. Bill told me, as a professional, I didn't have to put up with this.

Bill's secretary (Interview, February 6, 1989) commented on Bill's support of teachers over parents by giving examples involving the middle years students who often were a bit disrespectful. Coralee explained that, in dealing with them, Bill "expects kids to be accountable for their own actions which are their own responsibility. If there is a problem they have to work it out with Bill's guidance."

While some staff perceived Bill as supporting staff over parents, Bonnie Start, the full-time Kindergarten teacher (Interview, February 9, 1989), felt that Bill tended to care about people generally and to ensure that relations in the school were good: "He matches staff to the need. I get what I want because I feel Bill understands younger grades and supports their requests."

Commenting on how the size of the school had grown, Bill (Interview, February 9, 1989) noted a change in the relationship between primary and middle years staff and students:

> Fewer teachers know fewer kids. They feel distanced. Teachers don't stop to visit on route to the staff room and don't interact on supervision with the seniors as much as they used to. Some of these people have notions about fearing kids before they give them a chance.

Georgina Pinder (Interview, March 20, 1989) attributed the changes in student/staff relations to changes in staff attitudes. Georgina saw different rules for different people. She noted that Bill was reluctant to say things to certain staff

members or to follow through with them, but to others he would openly challenge why they were not doing certain things. Someone had mistakenly reported her as being out of the building at 11:00 a.m. on a professional planning morning: "Bill accused me of being out of the school when I wasn't and gave no apology when he learned the truth." Georgina was dissatisfied with Bill's empowerment concept, with her lack of involvement in professional decision-making, and with the nature of staff relations. She believed that all these processes could be influenced by a change in leadership style, if Bill would be more open and trusting and would solicit feedback.

Parent interviews. Many staff members credited Bill with creating the climate in the school by advocating good relationships among all who worked at St. Gabriel. His caring rubbed off as he capitalized on good public relation skills to set the tone. This occurred within a transactional style of empowerment which appeared genuine and sincere but which lacked monitoring and feedback regarding teaching and learning.

Among the parents interviewed, these same themes seemed to surface. Mrs. Ives (Interview, March 1, 1989), a teacher associate and the parent of children in Grades 3, 5, and 6, recalled her decision to register at St. Gabriel. Upon entering the front doors, she observed Bill with a child in hand walking down the hall. In time, it became apparent to her that Bill's attitude was family-oriented. In her view, Bill made the school by bringing people together in a caring way. Mrs. Ives felt that the school had flourished under his modelling and his good example.

Marilynne Foster, President of the Parent Association, with children in Grades

2 and 4, saw Bill as easy going and fairly flexible. She reinforced Mrs. Ives' position on Bill's relationship with students (Interview, February 13, 1989) by saying, "many would feel bad if he leaves because he has a way with kids. He's like an uncle to them, all the staff is like a family. If he was replaced the family feeling would be lost."

Karl Mogden, the parent of Grade 1 and 3 students, also felt Mr. Janzen was fantastic in the way he handled students. In an interview on February 14, 1989, he shared a perception that "Bill appears to be in command at most times." It was this perception of Bill as being a figurehead who held respect that caused Dave O'Sullivan (Interview, February 14, 1989) to register his Grade 7 educably mentally handicapped daughter at St. Gabriel. While Dave had been a member of the community since December, 1985, he had not known that the school was equipped to integrate his daughter. Once he learned about Bill's style from neighbours, he transferred his daughter and, since that time, felt that "she is treated like a human being not an idiot which is how she felt at her other school."

While Mrs. Belleveu (Interview, February 21, 1989), with children in Grades 1 and 3 described Bill as approachable to discuss problems, Claire Sylvester (Interview, March 19, 1989), parent of children in Grades 2 and 4, felt that fewer problems would occur if consequences for behaviour were more adequately followed up by teachers. Her perception was that students were given more responsibility than they were ready for. They reacted with abusive fighting, swearing, and taunting of younger children, but nothing was done to curb such behaviour. Mrs. Sylvester

believed that Bill connected with a core group of parents whom he controlled: "While they deserve credit for their work, many are big mouths who threaten others and don't want them involved. Ninety percent of parents, therefore, don't bother getting involved. Even hot dog days has its bosses."

In addition to a lack of leadership in ensuring consequences for problem behaviour, Claire perceived a lack of leadership over learning. Consequently, many parents were uncertain about their children's academic standing. She did not credit Mr. Janzen for his style with kids. Instead, she summarized him as being "good at the public relations game, a man with a mixture of politics and genuineness."

Mrs. Sylvester's concerns over learning became a dominant theme in interviews held with other parents. While other parents saw Mr. Janzen as a friendly person, they were more concerned with the need for instructional leadership. Since the final cultural assumption disclosed in this study relates to learning, I will share parental comments regarding leadership and instruction in that section.

Student interviews. Groups of students from Grades 2 to 8 who were interviewed reflected differently upon their principal as a leader, depending upon their age. Students from the Grade 3 group (Interview, February 8, 1989) summarized Mr. Janzen as being nice. They volunteered that "the Grade 8's all call him names, swear, and complain about him." The Grade 2 group (Interview, February 8, 1989) also described their principal as being nice to them in the halls and they explained how he stopped them if they were running. In referring to an incident when Mr. Janzen met with a group of them about their behaviour, the encounter was

described as being "a secret what it was about."

Grade 4 students (Interview, February 23, 1989) shared many examples of how they saw Mr. Janzen's leadership style:

> He is a real character. He'll do crazy things and won't be afraid to do them. He'll tell us things about his feelings, and not hide things. He dresses funny at Hallowe'en and takes it easy with us. He's kind because he gave us a picture of space after teaching us. Mr. Janzen took us to another school to deal with a beating up problem. . . . he will always take time for you.

As I moved to interview older students, the nature of the sharing changed. While the Grade 5 and 6 students (Interview, February 28, 1989) felt that they could talk to Mr. Janzen if they had a problem, they suggested to "look out when he gets mad." Grade 7 and 8 students possessed similar feelings. More specifically, Grade 7 students (Interview, February 23, 1989) shared:

> Mr. Janzen isn't liked. You can be in the middle of talking to him and he'll shut the door in your face. He gets mad sometimes. If he has a bad day he takes it out on us. He yells at the Grade 8's over tattletale notes he receives. He calls suspects in and yells at them, doesn't listen to their side of the story.

The Grade 8 students were also concerned about listening: "Mr. Janzen treats us like robots . . . He doesn't listen . . . he'd rather listen to little kids' problems. We wish he'd be a primary teacher."

Summary

Chapter 6 provided a discussion of the second assumption that a transactional leadership style influenced decision-making, relationships, communications, and the

teaching-learning situation. The assumption was discussed in three sections: through an examination of archival material, iterative interviews with teachers, parents and students, and artifacts. Archival material included correspondence, daily memos, newsletters, and notes from various meetings. Opportunity for shared decision-making was virtually non-existent at most meetings. Open communication, consensus building, participatory problem-solving, and group decision-making on academic matters and student achievement were not a regular part of school life. While Bill had a vision for the middle years students, he was unable to translate his expectations into realized goals. The middle years staff needed a problem-solving leadership style which could bring about changes in their relationships, communications, and decision-making processes in order to exert a positive impact on the teaching-learning in the middle years.

The nature of relationships, communications, and decision-making involving the Parent Council revealed that parents were not true partners in the teaching-learning situation of the school. The school newsletter directed factual information from the school home in a way that communicated requests, but did not solicit input into decisions around teaching or learning. Memorandums to staff were used to inform rather than to invite participation in decision-making activities.

A variety of verbal, physical, and behavioral artifacts provided data that reinforced the assumption that a transactional leadership style influenced decision-making, relationships, communications, and the teaching-learning situation. Rituals and ceremonies such as daily morning intercom messages, mass gatherings such as

the Easter celebration, noon hot dog days, and fun night were other sources of data which reinforced the transactional leadership assumption.

Staff interviews revealed a concern that Bill's leadership style failed to provide teachers with ongoing feedback. While being empowered, staff members felt a need to become involved as true participants in the decision-making processes of the school. They credited Bill with creating a climate for healthy relationships among staff members. Teachers credited Bill with advocating good relationships among all who worked at St. Gabriel. They perceived his caring to "rub off" as he set a good public relations tone. Yet while Bill appeared genuine and sincere, staff desired more monitoring and feedback in the teaching-learning situation.

Parents saw Mr. Janzen as a "great guy," but they also focused on the need for him to address their concerns regarding his instructional leadership capacity. Student reflections on the leadership style varied by grade level with older students expressing more dislike of Mr. Janzen because of his perceived inability to listen to them and their problems.

Bill's predominant leadership style was transactional. This style was particularly evident in learning-related matters. On some occasions related to religious and socialization activities, some consultation and collaboration existed. However, the nature and the degree of staff involvement did not appear to be enough for staff members to feel content about overall decision-making and communication as it related to the teaching-learning situation.

CHAPTER 7

EMPHASIS ON SOCIAL NEEDS ASSUMPTION

Introduction

During the study I observed artifacts, examined archival material and conducted interviews with staff members, parents, and students which led to the deciphering of St. Gabriel's assumption that children's social needs were emphasized with a school priority of having fun, and that learning was of secondary importance.

The assumption originated from Bill's espoused philosophy of learning at St. Gabriel School; and it developed in response to his influence over the tone and atmosphere of school activities.

Assumption 3: Children's social needs were emphasized at the expense of academic learning.

This assumption will be discussed in three sections. The first section discusses the assumption with respect to artifacts which demonstrated the persistence of the assumption. The second section discusses the assumption from an examination of archival material. The third section discusses the assumption from the points of view of teachers, parents, and students based on iterative interviews.

Artifacts

A variety of verbal, physical, and behavioral artifacts provided data to reinforce the assumption that children's social needs were emphasized at the expense of academic learning. Artifacts included physical displays, verbal artifacts, behavioral

artifacts, and rituals and ceremonies.

Physical displays. As I entered the main doors of St. Gabriel School, I observed the physical attributes of the front entry and halls for their relationship to learning. While both assumptions on religion and leadership were represented by a number of visual displays, that which was observable for learning was more limited. I immediately noticed a small, portable bulletin board with a calendar of school events in front of a large display case which was attached to the wall of the library. Although the display case was a focal point of the front entrance, it remained empty throughout the duration of the study. The display case would have been an excellent source for displaying the results of student learning, but it was not used for this purpose. No schedule existed for teachers to accept responsibility for displaying work, nor did the teacher librarian use the space to accentuate reading or library related matters.

To the right of the front entry, the Middle Years wing of the school did not present itself neatly. Open doors revealed senior classrooms which, in general, were untidy, were disorganized, and were visually unappealing as learning environments. Various art work was displayed on one bulletin board, and all other wall spaces for bulletin boards reflected items of student-related matters. House league teams, recorded results of recess activity games, a list of upcoming track meets, and student information appeared on the remaining bulletin boards. A large degree of bulletin board space appeared to be poorly displayed or not used. No relationship to learning activity was evident. I did not feel that bulletin boards in the Middle Years

wing were as representative of learning activity as were the display areas in other parts of the building.

To the left of the front entry I found the Kindergarten wing to be a contrast to the lack of appeal to learning found in the senior wing. Colourful, artistic displays involving "Hungry Caterpillars," "Clowning Around," "Let It Snow," and "We Love Having Fun With Friends" reflected learning activities of K students. This display space changed almost every two weeks throughout the study period.

Continuing down through the primary halls of Grades 1 and 2, visual displays on "Rainy Day Blues" and "Little Tommy Turtle" changed with holiday celebrations and with seasons to reflect development in classroom learnings. The hallways of the Grades 2 and 3 classrooms shared visuals of still poems, three-dimensional flowers, the violet, a dragon reading theme, and the sights and sounds of spring, aside from religious visuals. Proceeding to the mudroom area of the Grades 4, 5, and 6 classrooms, tobogganing pictures, posters for the pancake breakfast, and reading rockathon information provided a pleasing decor. The halls directly outside of these classrooms varied. One Grade 5/6 classroom displayed a religious bulletin board related to confirmation. The Grade 6 class displayed a cross of egg cartons on stained glass for Easter. This display remained until the end of the study period. The Grade 6 classroom bulletin board on "What's In A Word" was learning related but did not change throughout the entire study period. The two Grade 4 class halls changed the most, and visual displays always represented learning. Topics such as "April Showers Bring . . .," "Spring Brings New Life," "Using Quotation Marks," and

the like reflected samples of written and/or artistic student work while delivering a theme or message to its audience. No type of display was found outside the resource room.

Anticipating classrooms to be an extension of the halls, I found similar visual representations of learning within the classrooms. Both Kindergarten classrooms were inviting, learning environments. Aside from a dress-up area, an art corner, a happy birthday area, and classroom helper corners, all displays were related to learning readiness skills. Animal alphabets, opposites, the catch of the day, colours, numbers, months, reading, and art related to caterpillars and friendship flowers all visually represented individual student growth in learning.

In one Grade 2 classroom, of the ten bulletin boards, three represented religion; five held classroom procedures such as rules, helping hands, pen pals, a calendar, and birthdays; one carried the alphabet; and one displayed a learning centre for reading. The other Grade 2 classroom included 18 various visuals of which ten related to religious poems or songs; five to classroom procedures like helpers, rules, and spare things to do; and three related to learning in the form of seasons, the alphabet, counting numbers, and colours. A cozy reading corner was furnished with a rocking chair covered by a quilt of student patches of artwork created in response to literature the students had read.

One Grade 3 classroom appeared visually impressive, but upon further analysis it revealed itself to be composed entirely of purchased visuals. While these displays were colourful and appealing, they did not reflect student learning, nor did they

include samples of student products. Mrs. Gilroy's Grade 3 classroom contained seven visuals of which three were religious, one was a mobile, and the other was the happy birthday corner. Names appeared on student lockers and one learning-related visual, an elaborate model of a castle to accompany a fairy tale unit of study, was a focal point of the classroom atmosphere.

As was the case with hallway displays, both Grade 4 classrooms were visually rich and changed continuously over the study period. Miss Carlson's room contained 13 visuals, the largest number of learning-related displays in any classroom. Two areas represented religion, five contained classroom procedures (timetable, rules, homework, calendar, odd job squad), and six held learning-related topics. Displays of poetry, friendship words, whole language, and grammar from language arts; fractions from math; and a winter mosaic from art adorned the area. Mr. Sitter's Grade 4 classroom reflected twelve visuals, only one on religion, three on classroom procedures (homework and timetables), and eight on learning-related matters such as snow poetry, spelling, the numberline, fractions, a time learning centre, pioneers, and art mosaics and mobiles.

Of ten visuals in the Grade 5/6 classroom, none pertained specifically to learning. Six bulletin boards reflected student related matters like student representative council (SRC) notices, timetables, English as a second language (ESL) helpers, care partners, and leaders. Two visuals referred to classroom procedures on homework reminders and a monthly calendar. Names appeared on lockers, and a sign "Respect Others Respect Yourself" generated thought.

The Grade 8 classroom was in a state of disarray throughout the study period. In my opinion, it required a house cleaning. Aside from two posters on a perfect world and some student work on professions, a pile of games in the corner characterized the many piles throughout the room which needed to be organized for learning.

Although the library appeared tidy, only one seasonal visual represented a deliberate attempt to create any semblance of learning. Otherwise, no learning-related visuals invited students to the library, which was primarily a facility for borrowing materials, for reading, or for working at tables.

The staffroom housed a variety of visuals, since it was the only common gathering place for staff. No teacher work or conference room had been created from existing space, so teachers largely worked in classrooms and used the staffroom to socialize and to exchange information. Typical of most staffrooms, St. Gabriel's contained a table for coffee supplies, labelled cupboards, staff mailboxes, a monthly calendar of meeting times and events, a Teacher's Association corner, a professional corner announcing conferences, jobs, committee matters, and excursion sites, and magazine slots which contained outdated material that no one appeared to use. A blackboard was periodically used to record memos related to audio-visual use, absent staff, or reminders of significant events for the day. Seldom had a learning topic appeared unless it was related to religion. Aside from a file of central office circulars, the remaining displays were of schedules for supervision of students, January to June masses, Civic skating, house leagues on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday noon, and

schedules for the use of a variety of special rooms like the gym and the science room. The art room was used only during the last period of each day. The library schedule was not signed in for all day Monday and Tuesday, Friday afternoon, or Thursday morning. This schedule indicated that the library was used only 2.5 days of each week, or half of its available time. For a student body of 443 or 17 homerooms, the schedule provided 750 minutes of use per week, or approximately one 45 minute period per classroom per week. Along with the forementioned artifacts, a plaque of the official opening of St. Gabriel was part of the decor. By the stove, a picture with the saying "We are for one another in all we say and do", hung beside a poster of good hygiene procedures. As a participant observer, I was surprised at how few of the visuals throughout the halls and classrooms of St. Gabriel related directly to a learning topic. In all of the bulletin board work, nothing existed to reflect science, health, music, or physical education. Only one Grade 4 visual represented a study of pioneers in social studies.

Verbal artifacts. Daily intercom messages from Bill to the staff and students shared a morning prayer, identified the students of the week, outlined the target behaviour of the week, and noted birthdays and messages relevant to the day. During the study period I found messages related to learning to be limited unless they were inclusive of Kindergarten to Grade 8. These messages were mostly concerned with out-of-school trips, education week activities, reading games, and religious stations of the cross activities.

At the end of the month, those students whose names were submitted for the

principal's honour roll received oral recognition and had their group picture taken with Mr. Janzen to be displayed in one of the main halls. Confusion appeared to exist regarding the criteria for selection of students for the honour roll, and parents did not perceive that the choices were made for academic reasons. Clarification on the goals of this program were not comunicated to the staff or the parents before the end of the study period.

At lunchtime an average of seven staff members could be found eating and socializing in the staffroom. Others left the building, supervised lunch students as part of the supervision schedule, or remained in their classrooms to work. After school few teachers remained in the staffroom for any length of time. Conversations related to teaching and learning seldom occurred given Bill's mandate that the staffroom be a socializing centre. Periodically, though, I would overhear conversations of complaint. Topics included complaints on the amount of paperwork, the frequency and lack of effectiveness of middle years meetings, and the lack of preparation time; the business of co-curricular programs; concerns about being supervised by superintendents who only gave fifteen minute notices of their arrival; general statements about the nature of the students and their parents; and periodic references to Bill as a leader or to fellow colleagues with whom the staff appeared to be unhappy. Only on two occasions did I observe informal meetings related to learning matters. Once a group of primary teachers jointly responded to a revised report card that they had created, and on a second occasion the Grade 2 teachers planned their Ancestry Party which involved a parent audience. Aside from these

discussions, various conversations occurred where the staff shared information about out-of-school excursions, but they did not discuss the specifics of learning unrelated to religion.

The secretary seldom visited the staffroom, but when she did, she sat alone, listened, and did not become involved in the conversations. The itinerant teacher of French occasionally shared her frustrations with teaching French to the middle years students. It was apparent that she had not found anyone on staff with whom she could talk about her concerns or from whom she could receive assistance.

Behavioral artifacts. The assumption that children's social needs were emphasized at the expense of academic learning was reinforced by observations. Some teachers in the primary classrooms up to Grade 4 appeared to approach learning seriously and to weave an element of fun into the instructional strategies. Several examples serve to illustrate this finding. Although none of the Grade 1 teachers wished to become directly involved in this study, one allowed me to observe her classroom in action. As the study progressed, these observations provided valuable insights into learning at the primary level. On February 2, 1989, I observed her teach a mathematics class based on the Exploration Math program. Students were using Fisher Price characters and a waterslide to make combinations of pairs of numbers which would add to five. One child told the story, another recorded the operation being demonstrated on the board, and the rest of the class listened. At the end of the exercise, the entire group repeated the number sentence aloud. Following this introduction to the concept, five groups of activities took place. Stations using

the computer, cheerios, marshmallows, a turtle board, and a desk top provided practice in adding to five. Students approached learning with eagerness and excitement. There was no doubt that they were having fun while learning. The fun component had been built into the instructional procedures with learning objectives that clearly followed the goal of the overall lesson.

Observation in a Grade 3 classroom also revealed that fun had been built into the instructional methodology. Students were engaged in a creative thinking activity related to using criteria to help make a decision. A catalyst teacher from the school board office assisted Mrs. Gilroy by acting as a model instructor. Several versions of "Mary Had A Little Lamb," created by public school librarian, Christie Forrel, were read. Students talked about which version they liked best as a class. It became evident that certain criteria had been applied in making a choice. Following this discussion, groups of four students selected five nursery rhymes from a brainstormed list and recorded them on the blackboard. Using three criteria and a scale of one to four, the children judged each nursery rhyme to determine which verse the group liked best. Once again, students were actively involved as learners and appeared to be having fun with this instructional approach to one aspect of creative thinking.

Sitting in on the oral reading of Little House In The Big Woods during a Grade 4 language arts class, I felt that these students, too, had fun during the lesson. Students were allowed to relax in their desks, sit, or lie on the floor around their teacher. They had been asked to listen for details in order to compare the children's lifestyles and daily rules from Wilder's time with lifestyles and rules of the present.

Students listened intensely and responded appropriately to questioning throughout the activity. They appeared to accomplish the listening goals identified at the beginning of the lesson.

Observations of two combined Grade 2 classes using climbing apparatus in the gym for a joint physical education period once a week left a different impression of fun and learning than did the previous three examples. Over 50 students, supervised by one teacher, moved actively through a variety of stations. While the stations seemed well planned and students appeared to be engaged, I was unsure of the intended learning objectives for each station. The supervising teacher explained that this physical education arrangement had developed as a way for her and her Grade 2 teacher partner to provide a weekly preparation time. She agreed that the students were inadequately supervised by a 50:1 student-teacher ratio, but she used the layout of the stations as a way to rationalize the class. Although the students were having fun and were physically engaged, the activity stations did not always reflect learning objectives related to the components of the physical education curriculum.

Opportunities to observe throughout Grades 5 to 8, the middle years, or Project Gonzaga, strongly reaffirmed the assumption that children's social needs were emphasized at the expense of academic learning. While primary classroom desks were paired or grouped, senior classrooms resembled traditional patterns of rows. Teaching reflected traditional transmissional styles. My observations of a lesson on fractions at the Grade 5/6 level led me to conclude that the lesson was paced too slowly and that the colouring activity was inappropriate for the grade level. Similarly,

a Grade 6 spelling lesson appeared to be an exercise in traditional workbook correcting. In a conversation with students after both observations, they described learning as boring. They could hardly wait for recess activities, out-of-school excursions, and other entertaining Gonzaga activities that helped them survive school.

Participation in a Grade 7 mathematics class on geometry revealed Bill's commitment to helping Mr. Buchko develop skills in teaching geometry. All students worked on various parts of contracts which Bill had determined to be appropriate for their ability level. Bill responded to individual requests within the classroom while Leon worked in the library with a group struggling with concept attainment. This particular lesson was not characteristic of most lessons observed in this room or in the other two senior rooms. I wondered whether the students' seriousness reflected the fact that their principal was the instructor.

Observations of a Grade 8 lesson with Mr. Weber indicated a teaching situation from which students could hardly wait to escape. The lesson involved a workbook topic sentence activity on a person in history that the students would have liked to have met. Students were provided with brief oral instructions to brainstorm a list of names and to record a series of questions to be answered about the person. When this task was completed, they could go to the library to research the answers and to write a one-page report. Amidst confusion and numerous questions, students escaped from the room to the library. Students were not required to identify the person they had chosen or to produce the questions they had recorded. Mr. Weber had not checked the library in advance for the availability of researchable information on the

people his students would likely choose. Consequently, the library period was equally unproductive.

Typical observations of all three senior rooms revealed teacher-directed learning through brief explanation followed by assignments. Students' on-task behaviour was limited because of tremendous movement within the classroom and to other parts of the school. Often students would be confused about what they had been asked to do, but they did not persist in seeking clarification or assistance. Rather, they socialized and discussed the things they really came to school for, like skating, skiing, Lakeland visits, tobogganing, recess activities, and sports.

During the study period, many continuous fun activities seemed to absorb the energy of staff and the conversations with students, who anticipated these events with excitement. An air band concert on January 27 for Grades 5 to 8 with a Kindergarten to Grade 4 audience consumed a considerable amount of school time. Music was chosen, costumes were planned, and the dramatics and singing imitation were rehearsed. Of the few parents who attended, one left the performance indicating that in her home they listened to many kinds of music, but she was unsure what some of this "heavy metal" music represented and she was amazed that teachers would allow it.

On February 2, middle years students participated in a skate challenge for Winterfest and shortly thereafter began preparing for a school pancake breakfast to be held on February 7. That same day they participated in a variety of activities for a fitness competition with Tartu Trek, Estonia. From February 8 to 10, students

participated in a reading walkathon that removed students from class from the beginning to the end of each day. On February 13, the senior classes enjoyed a day of skiing at Mt. Bulmere. They returned the following day to participate in Chinese New Year's celebrations. Hot dog day on February 15 involved all interested Kindergarten to 8 students, but the Grade 8 class provided labour that involved at least two hours of the morning. Additional time was taken to roll the money collected from some 350 orders. Gonzaga students enjoyed a staff versus student spirit basketball game during the noon hour on February 23. Five of 27 staff members participated, many students were unsupervised, and only one teacher, Sheila Male, stopped by to watch for a few minutes. While the event lacked staff support, students had fun, especially when the afternoon bell got delayed. Ongoing throughout this same time period, Gonzaga students enjoyed regular weekly skating at the Civic Centre and tobogganing on the afternoon of Friday, February 24, at McKenzie Park.

As February ended, students looked forward to a basketball tournament hosted by St. Gabriel on March 1, 2, and 3. At the tournament, most of the students either played or helped with the concession. Since Education Week was the following week, Gonzaga students were involved in the hobby day and the science fair, either as participants or observers. These events consumed the morning of March 7 for the hobby day and all day on March 9 for the science fair. I discovered that the students had little guidance or monitoring as they prepared for the science fair. Topics were self-chosen and largely unrelated to the science curriculum being taught. No

consistency of expectations existed, and no format was provided for the production of diagrams, posters, handouts, demonstrations, reports, and the like. Students had not presented their project to the class for feedback prior to the science fair. On March 10, some students were involved in preparatory work for a family dance to take place that evening. On March 15 another school-wide hot dog day again required a time commitment from Grade 8 students. On March 20 the Grade 5 and 6 students spent a day at Jack Lake, and on March 21 the Grade 7 and 8 classes did the same. On March 22 the entire school participated in a penny race and raised $300 towards the Share Lent project. Several senior grade students sorted and rolled money for deposit. On the morning of March 23 the Grade 8 class enjoyed a wind-up party at Lakeland Centre where they went one morning a week to learn from senior citizens. Upon their return to school, they enjoyed the Easter Bonnet parade put on by the Grades 1 to 4 students in the large gym at 1:15 p.m.

Easter break gave students and staff a change of pace. Along with the activities mentioned above, recess activities for Grades 5 to 8 students were scheduled for three days of the week, track practices occurred four times a week at 8:00 a.m., and school sports teams practised around these schedules with inter-school games at noon hour or after school, usually once a week.

The return from Easter Break brought another hot dog lunch on April 12. Preparations for fun night on April 21 consumed the energy of students who sold tickets and did other preparatory work. At the same time, the City Police hockey project was introduced to the students at a school assembly. This drew the

immediate attention of many students who brought their cards to school. On May 12 the Grade 6 class participated in an all day simulation of the Jeux Canada mini games. May 22 to 30 involved students in a book fair to raise funds for various school activities. At the same time, all Grade 5 to 8 students began to practice for the track and field season.

Although considerable fun activity was available for the Grade 5 to 8 students, only two such events involved the Kindergarten to Grade 4 students, to my knowledge. The Kindergarten class enjoyed a leprechaun hunt on St. Patrick's Day and both Grade 2 classes joined together for a heritage party. Otherwise, the primary grades appeared to adhere more conscientiously to the curriculum of study and to ensure that fun was occurring within the learning process. Yet those grades did participate in all school-wide activities of a fun nature, such as hot dog days, the penny race, Easter Bonnet Parade, and air band.

During the course of the study period, I was able to observe how staff utilized the services of the catalyst teacher from the school board office. Mrs. Pencer was available from January 18 to April 5 one morning each week on a sign-up basis. Nineteen spots were reserved for the following topics: seven on critical thinking, five on listening and observation skills, two each on independent study skills and Creative Problem Solving, and one each on affective thinking, interviewing and studying skills, simulations, and use of community resources. No one signed up for visual, oral, or written communication skills; notetaking and outlining skills; organizing and analyzing data; creative thinking; or library skills. Some sessions needed to be cancelled and

never were re-booked. I did not observe conscientious follow-up plans being made to reinforce or to expand the learning after the catalyst teacher had left.

It was also evident that St. Gabriel's staff was not incorporating the Common Essential Learnings (C.E.L.'s) as was intended when the Department of Education released the in-service package and the documentation manual. Bill had chosen not to provide a workshop at St. Gabriel until the fall. Before that time, his only goal was to help staff become more familiar with and to develop an understanding of the documents. During the entire study period, the only attempt made to familiarize the staff with the C.E.L.'s on technological literacy was a discussion.

Rituals and ceremonies. Rituals and ceremonies can serve to reinforce values and beliefs by providing regular patterns that generate the commitment of those involved in the school. The practice of holding daily opening exercises over the intercom, as discussed in the previous section, was one of the few rituals conducted at St. Gabriel's which had any bearing on learning. Assemblies for the entire school did not occur on a regular basis because Bill (Interview, April 5, 1989) perceived them to "be contrived," "the gym becomes a zoo," "there is not enough room," and "it is hard for kids to switch away from physical education behaviour to assembly behaviour." Consequently, entire school gatherings occurred mostly for religious purposes, for example, to celebrate mass at Easter time or on other holy holidays. During the study period the entire student body met together for only two non-religious assemblies: a Police Card program and a student-produced Air Band concert. The format for each of these gatherings was different, and neither of them

appeared to reinforce commonly held values or beliefs. Both gatherings created opportunities to address appropriate student behaviour, but neither assembly drew a direct relationship to learning. They were treated as fun occasions.

The only annual ritual I discovered and observed was a Grade 2 Ancestry Day party. I learned that traditionally the veterans of the school ran this activity. The Ancestry Day party was a ritual initiated by Georgina Pinder and continued each year. It was not called an assembly or a concert, but a party. Some 60 students and their four Grade 2 teachers shared a demonstration of troika, French and Scandinavian dance, and a Brother John song in four languages. Individual students shared a German poem, an Irish poem, and two piano solos. The audience was composed of 30 parents and 20 pre-school children. Bill did not attend any of the events. He explained later that a new family had arrived with a potential Kindergarten registrant, and that they took precedence. I noticed the teachers' disappointment that their leader had been unable to watch the results of their hard work.

The principal's honour roll provided an opportunity each month for ritualized picture taking of the nominated students and the principal. Since confusion existed around the goals and purposes of this honour roll, I cannot conclude whether it was intended to be a learning-related ritual.

Archival Material

A variety of correspondence, daily memos, newsletters, staff and other meetings occurred ongoing at St. Gabriel allowing me to confirm the assumption that

children's social needs were emphasized at the expense of academic learning. I begin the discussion of this learning assumption through an examination of archival materials related to staff meetings. This section will be followed by data from Monday morning meetings, Project Gonzaga meetings, Grades K to 4 noon meetings, and Parent Council meetings. Finally, the data gained from an examination of newsletters and periodic memos will be shared.

Staff meetings. The four monthly staff meetings attended during the research period included six categories or topics, of which learning was a minor one. At the January 19 staff meeting, three learning-related items were shared. These items generated little staff involvement or discussion. Staff were informed that Education Week would be held during the week of March 6 to 10 with the theme of "Shaping You and Your World." No discussion was held about what St. Gabriel would do during Education Week. This topic was raised again at the February staff meeting by the vice-principal. He explained that Tuesday, March 7 was being designated a Grades 1 to 6 hobby day and Thursday, March 9, a science fair for Grades 7 and 8. Bill added that Wednesday would be Open House all day "since few parents come anyway." No group input occurred and no committee had existed prior to the sharing of this decision. Non-verbal reactions indicated that the staff was not pleased. The second learning item shared at the January staff meeting related to the nomination of students who would benefit from the Enriched Learning Opportunity program (ELO). The third item encouraged staff members to attend the library book display at the school board office to recommend books for purchase.

February's staff meeting provided a twenty minute opportunity to discuss the Common Essential Learning (C.E.L.) of technological literacy, as discussed in Chapter 6. Handouts on student evaluation, guidelines for doing report cards, and parent/teacher interviews were provided, but no opportunity for discussion was given.

At the March 16 staff meeting, teachers were told that the Canadian Test of Basic Skills would occur at Grades 4 and 7. The topic was raised again at the April 13 staff meeting under an item on standardized testing. A decision was made to administer the Gates McGinitie test in reading to Grade 1 and the Canadian Test of Basic Skills reading and mathematics test components at the Grade 2 to 8 level. The only other learning-related item raised at the April 13 staff meeting was an announcement regarding the replacement of the full-time resource room teacher who would be off until year end.

Monday morning meetings. Monday morning 8:30 a.m. staff meetings occurred throughout the entire research period. In a brief 10 to 15 minutes the week was reviewed largely in an announcement format. The meetings appeared managerial and informative in nature. This meeting time was not a forum for discussing current practice, for evaluating past learning experiences or for planning future activities. It was assumed that specifics related to learning would be dealt with at Grades K to 4 or at Grades 5 to 8 Project Gonzaga meetings.

Project Gonzaga meetings. Project Gonzaga meetings were held more frequently that any other type of staff meeting despite their ineffective functioning and their problematic leadership. The Tuesday, January 31 meeting held at 3:45 p.m.

in the library was representative of how most meetings proceeded. Starting fifteen minutes late, Henry apologized for not having an agenda, explaining that things had been hectic. This beginning influenced the direction of the entire meeting. Connie shared the minutes of the last meeting. Henry gave information about a number of topics, but he left little opportunity for reaction or for discussion. Leon attempted to lead a discussion on the upcoming pancake breakfast, but before he could bring closure to the group's ideas, Henry had regained the leadership and had led the group into other topics. Henry informed the group that a pottery guest would be coming to offer a workshop to middle years students. He mentioned that their school's name needed to be entered for canoeing at 2:00 p.m. on February 14. Henry reminded everyone that the gym would be closed for seven to ten days for painting. He recommended that Dianne and Connie should go to the April 6 to 8 conference. Larry interjected with a comment that he would rather meet at noon hours. Henry reacted negatively to this suggestion because of basketball and noon-hour supervision. The conclusion was that a change in meeting time was probably not possible until a later date.

A confusing topic of discussion was on whether the group would once again offer mini-units. Initial responses included a time concern from Connie, a preference by Larry to stay in his homeroom, or to offer a career or seminar day in the spring, a comment from Carl, the vice-principal, about being too busy, and a request for clarification on what mini-units were. Dianne, new to St. Gabriel, listened with frustration, and she was not asked for her input. Ignoring the responses to his

question, Henry continued by asking if the group wanted a different focus from the content of drugs, alcohol, self-concept, decision-making, and divorce. These topics had been taught previously in four 35-minute periods. Carl replied that he was too busy and Connie questioned whether age mix was an important objective. Dianne recommended that if the content was in response to a perceived need, then the kits should be divided among grade levels and used according to maturity and need. Henry acknowledged that there was more confusion than consensus because Carl and Dianne were new. He concluded that the group would not offer mini-units before Easter because there was not enough time. Henry suggested that the kits be reviewed in the next few weeks to determine how they might reinforce or fit into the existing health and religion curriculum. At that point, Connie asked where she could find a copy of the health curriculum.

The meeting lasted thirty minutes longer than originally planned. Larry had already left, and Bill walked in towards the end of the mini-unit discussion. Leon tried to gain a commitment from the group regarding the pancake breakfast, but Bill asked to return to the mini-unit topic since he had not been there for most of the discussion. He expressed a concern that classroom teachers were delivering a disjointed approach by inviting outside speakers without offering any follow-up. He recommended that a few people meet to develop a proposal. Henry reviewed for Bill the decision that each staff member would consider ways to integrate the kits into the existing health curriculum. In frustration, Leon questioned where the group was since it was already 4:50 p.m. A bewildered, tired group left the library.

The strained relations among middle years teachers and their frustrations with leadership influenced this group's tendency to emphasize the social need over learning. While a great deal of activity occurred for Grades 5 to 8 students, it appeared to build spirit and fun rather than to achieve academic learning goals.

Grades K to 4 noon meetings. While it was my understanding that Grades K to 4 staff met regularly on the second Monday of each month at noon hour, only one such formal meeting took place. Throughout the research period, various small or grade-alike groupings of teachers met to plan and to organize various learning activities, but the bringing together of all K to 4 staff members had not been implemented. The one meeting which I did attend, held on February 27, was characterized by open communication and consensus building around an academic focus. At recess, Bill asked Effie to chair the meeting, and she agreed. Topics would include print-making needs, a Native Grant, and "It's Get To Know Kids Time." Bill's proposal for releasing teachers one-half hour per week to deal with students, to test them, to meet parents, to examine cumulative files, and to book resource people was well received. Participatory decision-making was reflected in the group's decision to hold a one-day print-making workshop which would rotate students through centres. A committee to pursue the $500 Native Grant formed quickly.

Bill did not appear to have the same expectations of the K to 4 group as he had of Project Gonzaga. This group did not have a leader who would call and chair meetings and who would ensure that agendas were set ahead of time. As a participant observer, I felt that the K to 4 staff was missing an opportunity to

capitalize on its many talents in order to offer benefits for all students. They might have been able to offer a strong model of the need for a learning focus across the grades. If this group had a designated leader, a small staff council consisting of the K to 4 leader, the 5 to 8 Project Gonzaga leader, the vice-principal, and the principal could have been formed. This core group may have shown the kind of instructional leadership that appeared necessary in order to develop an academic focus at St. Gabriel School.

Parent Council meetings. Since the role of the Parent Council was primarily a fundraising one, learning-related matters were limited to information items in the principal's report. This role influenced the nature of communications, relationships, and decision-making by parents on matters related to the teaching-learning situation. A high level of trust appeared to exist concerning the academic program being offered, yet interview data suggested that some parents had identified problems with learning and that they were aware of the need for a change in Bill's instructional leadership style.

School newsletters. St. Gabriel's bi-monthly newsletters generally included seven topics: important dates to remember, community news, thank you's, congratulations/bouquets, welcomes, school events and happenings, and lunchroom announcements. A review of all newsletters from the study period revealed that newsletter items related to learning were limited to announcements surrounding Education Week and report cards. On February 28, 1989, parents learned that the theme for Education Week would be "Shaping You and Your World." No attempt

was made to relate Education Week activities to student learning. Parents were informed that there would be no school Monday morning. They were invited to view Grades 1 to 6 hobbies on Tuesday morning and to visit with a school board trustee for one hour in the afternoon. Wednesday was Open House to visit the school and classrooms, and Thursday featured a Grade 7 and 8 science fair. The week would culminate with a family dance on Friday evening. The hobby component for Grades 1 to 6 would come from home sources. Consequently, some parents would have input and awareness. The Grade 7 and 8 science projects would not necessarily relate to the science curriculum. Students would be given open choice to pursue a topic of interest. Perhaps this situation offers some explanation for Bill's decision to communicate the details of Education Week events without relating them to the teaching-learning situation or without sharing how hobbies and science investigations can shape the students and their world.

The newsletter items dealing with report cards and interviews informed parents of the date that second term reports would be sent home and that of the need to request interviews. Parents could meet with teachers on Monday or Tuesday from 3:45 to 5:00 p.m. or Tuesday evening between 7:00 and 9:00 p.m. These times translated into four-and-one-half hours available for average class sizes of 26 students. Parents were to book times through the school secretary, and interview schedules would be included in the report card. Thus, parents were asked to book an interview without having seen their child's report card. I assumed that later requests would be accommodated.

The last topic addressed in newsletters focused on the lunchroom. Between 150 and 200 students stayed for lunch daily at St. Gabriel during the winter. Bill expressed a concern about the amount of food youngsters were tossing into the garbage. He appealed (Newsletter, January 20, 1989) to parents to send a "preferred nutritious lunch" and have students "bring home the food they cannot eat" or add it to a "sharing tray." Bill included tips from the health nurse on ways of making sandwiches more appealing in order to avoid "lunch bag blues."

Periodic memos. During the course of the research study, Bill wrote twelve memos to the staff. One memo related specifically to learning. In a February 3, 1989 memo on the use (abuse) of the school library, Bill reviewed his major concerns: a number of overdue books; the condition of the shelves, newspapers, study carols, magazines, and books; the behaviour of children during class visits to the library and during free time; and the play or recreation atmosphere which pervaded the library. Bill appealed to the staff to:

> be of one mind on use of the library. Since we are talking about a facility that must meet the needs of ALL PEOPLE in the school, we must have the co-operation of absolutely EVERY staff member. The basic plan has to be the same for everyone. Each teacher is responsible for the conduct of his/her children when they use the library.

Later, in the same memo, Bill provided suggestions for managing classroom use of the library: "The children have to get the message daily . . . . Anyone not supporting this basic premise must be removed immediately. The children must learn that they take charge of their behaviour or they leave the library." In the following statement, Bill implies that the school library is not a focal point of learning: "Occasionally a

teacher may wish to have some members of the class use the library during school time for research or whatever. You, the teacher, must provide the supervision of these children during the entire time they are in the library." The implications of this statement were reinforced by my observation that the library was seldom used unless entire classes of students, supervised by a staff member, were exchanging books. Bill's memo was implemented with seriousness by most indoor supervisors. Children who were not abiding by the basic purpose of the library were to leave immediately with no warning. While Bill's intentions were sound, a more participatory, collaborative approach to decision-making and problem-solving might have created more loyalty to, commitment to, and ownership for the problem. Such an approach may have resulted in increased library use, rather than limiting the learning opportunities for students.

A master binder of outgoing memos from teachers to parents was available for analysis. No expectation existed around teacher to parent communication. Consequently, a variety of memos were found, some of which related directly to social opportunities and others which related to learning. Memos from both Kindergarten teachers occurred regularly. Mrs. Grayling hand wrote hers, while Miss Start used a soft public relations style in her typed memos. Both teachers used memos to inform parents of activities that required their input. Sometimes the learning event related to a colour, alphabet, science experiment, art activity, snack, or costume for which something needed to be brought from home.

Grade 1 memos were sent home eleven times during the study period. Seven

memos related directly to learning. A memo of January 16, 1989 indicated, "We have been learning the subtraction facts to 5. Your child would benefit from practising these facts for a few minutes daily until he/she has mastered these facts automatically." A related memo, on February 28, 1989, provided parents with flashcards to cut up and use at home with the following instructions:

> Please mix the + with the - facts rather than doing only one operation at a time. At this time in the school year your child should be able to combine both operations without confusion. Regular practice with these will help your child to be able to move from solving the facts concretely (i.e. using fingers) to abstractly (i.e. using memory and/or counting in their head).

Again on April 10, 1989, another set of flashcards and a similar memo were sent home for the facts 8, 9, and 10. Spelling became the topic of two memos from this grade. On January 17, 1989, parents received a request to help their children:

> We have been learning about the importance of spelling words correctly as well as reading them correctly . . . sending you the lists of these words to practise at home. Every second Friday we will have a small spelling test . . . Each list will contain words that must be mastered, as well as bonus words that are included to "challenge the children."

A January 26, 1989 reminder went home about the Unit 1 spelling test words. One month later, on February 27, 1989, a follow-up memo on spelling words for Units 5 to 10 accompanied a similar request for parents to practise with their children in order to pinpoint difficulties.

Reading received a similar priority in the memos. On January 27, 1989, parents were told of a home reading program called "Let's Go Bananas Over Books":

> We would like this reading to be a positive experience for your child so that he/she can develop confidence and an enjoyment

> of reading. When your child has read for 15 minutes or for as long as he/she is able to read, sign and date the record sheet.

Aside from these seven learning-related memos, the other four were related to requests for pancake toppings for Shrove Tuesday on February 6, 1989, a fruit peeled and cut up in a container for a Valentine party on February 10, 1989, the need to create an Easter bonnet hat, to bring pennies for the Share Lent project on March 17, 1989, and a request for a change of clothes in the event of an accident with mud on April 3, 1989.

Memos from Grade 2 were jointly signed by the two teachers of the straight Grade 2 classrooms and appeared in a standardized format of describing language arts, math, religion, and music activities. Of five memos sent during the research period, two related directly to learning. A memo of February 3, 1989 explained the Chinese New Year's celebration planned for February 6. Children were requested to wear red for a day of writing fortunes, making dragons, and learning about the year of the snake. The second learning memo was an invitation to attend the Ancestry Day celebrations shared by Grade 2. A request concerning testing was included: "Next week we will be busy doing some testing in several areas. Please help us out by sending your children to school well rested and mentally prepared to write tests." The remaining three memos related to a sleigh ride and treats on Valentine's Day, a Lent project on daily behaviour, and a trip to the Harder Art Gallery.

Teachers of the combined Grade 2/3 class sent one memo during the research period in order to request parental involvement in their Ancestry program which

celebrated multicultural backgrounds. Both memos from the Grade 3 class pertained to out-of-school learning opportunities which extended classroom learnings. The first, on February 7, reminded parents of the skate and visit to the Meander Valley Centre which they were welcomed to join. The second memo shared details of a trip to see "Sleeping Beauty" as part of a unit on fairy tales. The sole memo from Grade 4 related to the swimming program in which children would be participating. At the Grade 5/6 level, two memos on March 3 and March 15, 1989, related to out-of-school learning opportunities to Pincer Creek and the Galaxy Farm, the latter being an annual winter festival which included golfing in snow, visiting the zoo, snowshoeing, toboggan racing, skating, and cross-country skiing. Only one memo, on April 6, 1989, was sent from Grade 7 involving those students who had been selected to attend the Pride Conference:

> Your child has been selected as a possible candidate. Your child has displayed leadership skills and a responsible attitude, therefore, would be a good resource person for the other students. The goal of the conference is to provide positive experience to the students and an opportunity for them to supply information on drug education and peer pressure.

Both memos of February 24 and March 17 from one Grade 8 teacher related to relay track meet information. No memos related directly to learning. The other Grade 8 teacher communicated with parents seven times during the study period. Four of his memos of January 25, February 3, February 10, and March 15 detailed out-of-school trips to Mt. Allison, Keimer Lake, the library, and the courthouse. A January 25, 1989 memo shared the objectives of the science fair: "an appreciation of the scientific approach; those with aptitude for science to enter the field; and provide

parents the opportunity to become involved." Parents were invited to an in-service meeting on AIDS in a March 20, 1989 memo, and they were informed of a wind-up celebration of the special friends program at Lakeland Centre in the same memo. A March 13, 1989 memo explained Mr. Friesen's receipt of an educational leave for two months and reassured parents that a meeting for graduation would be held the first week of June.

Interviews

Interview discussions held with the St. Gabriel principal, staff, students, and parents reinforced the assumption that children's social needs were emphasized with a school priority of having fun, at the expense of academic learning.

Staff interviews. Bill espoused his philosophy of learning at St. Gabriel (Interview, April 12, 1989) by describing the goals of St. Gabriel as child-centred and gospel-based. "Given the family structures and socio-economics and demographics of this community and given the limited time available the school would self destruct if it focused only on one thing like academics at the expense of the whole child."

Leon Buchko (Interview, February 2, 1989) confirmed his understanding of Bill's philosophy in declaring, "We reinforce that if kids succeed socially, we will reach them academically." While this position seemed acceptable to Leon, for Larry Spencer it was the cause of major concern. Larry (Interview, February 7, 1989) agreed that academic learning was secondary to the social aspects of schooling at St. Gabriel, but in his opinion there was too much of it:

> Academics are not the norm and parenting and the home environment don't help. This school lacks a direction as a

> whole. There are lots of starts here with many loose ends and lots of things never get done. Too many things are going on and overwhelming people. They need a week to teach kids only .... The business of the school is interfering with teaching in the classroom. Teachers don't say anything because they don't want to rock the boat .... Educators need to take a position on their role in learning and ensure it is happening beyond the principal and communities' desire for kids to like school and have fun when they come here.

Two months later at a follow-up interview, (Interview, April 15, 1989) Larry's position was unchanged:

> The child's self-concept, self-image, and emotional and social needs are addressed here before an emphasis on learning takes place. Everything seems to have to be fun around here. I would like to see an emphasis on learning first as it interrelates to other needs.

Other staff members also clearly understood Bill's philosophy of social needs first, but each teacher interpreted and applied the focus differently. Georgina Pinder (Interview, February 6, 1989) explained that "to cope with the new kind of kid teachers must provide child-oriented fun activities to give kids good feelings about themselves. Teachers go overboard to make the child comfortable at school because they are dealing with how to get kids excited about learning. They need to awaken the television child and teach him how to learn and think." Georgina, however, (Interview, April 10, 1989) told her students they were "here to learn something. We will have fun, but that's not why you are here."

While Georgina, a five-year veteran of St. Gabriel, could openly challenge Bill's philosophical position, others were not so bold. Effie Carlson (Interview, February 9, 1989), a newly appointed teacher, explained, "We were to go in there and have fun, learning is to be fun." Effie explained that she knew she was at St. Gabriel to

teach the curriculum, but that a lot of freedom existed as to how teaching happened in the context of having fun. Effie added that she had no team to share with and that, while brief classroom visits occurred, her daybook or lesson plans were never checked to see if learning was taking place.

Elaine Grayling (Interview, February 6, 1989) definitely felt the child came first at St. Gabriel and that learning came second. Agreeing with Elaine, Sheila Male (Interview, February 10, 1989) also shared a perception that the school focus was social above academic: "Kids come to school to socialize and school work is secondary. The thrust here is to be happy and have fun in the learning environment. The kids aren't as stressed about academics."

The vice-principal freely summed up his perspective on why the philosophy of social needs was perpetuated over learning at St. Gabriel:

> There is conflict due to differences among teachers. Consistency is lacking among staff. Our leader influences the tone and atmosphere here through his values. Mine and his differ. I agree kids need to be emotionally and socially prepared for learning, but I would put learning first.

In an attempt to understand further how the philosophy and assumption of social needs over learning was maintained, I focused interview questions to gain information from the staff on teaching and learning at St. Gabriel School. Sheila Male (Interview, February 10, 1989) used "dedicated, caring, and concerned about providing the best for students" to describe St. Gabriel staff. Concurring, Dianne Pipchuk (Interview, February 3, 1989) also used the words caring and dedicated, and she added "hardworking, competent, fun, and helpful. They share a philosophy of

children being the focus." Bonnie Start (Interview, February 9, 1989) saw the staff as "supportive, creative, open-minded, and willing to try new things. Bill tends to hire the person." Agreeing with Bonnie that teachers were willing to try new things to help children, Effie Carlson (Interview, February 9, 1989) found, though, that she was left to be independent unless she approached others. Pati Gilroy (Interview, April 9, 1989) agreed with Effie that the staff appeared to be professionally good teachers who cared for kids, but that some were doing more than others: "Some don't put out enough and reach the kids considering the low numbers they have."

Further interviews revealed that meeting academic needs appeared to be each teacher's business in the classroom. Dave Sitter (Interview, February 2, 1989) shared:

> Learning isn't talked about . . . . Here if you can teach one week in a row you're lucky. There are always interruptions and pull-outs. It isn't obvious that learning is the focus. It seems we reach them socially first then try teaching them. It's part of Bill's philosophy of teaching kids how to learn the process. Yet he expects the basic skills to be in place and they are not. The grade four's can't read writing, can't write, and have low math skills.

Along with Dave, Pati Gilroy (Interview, February 9, 1989) also missed the talk about learning that was the norm in her other school. Pati needed recognition for how her students were learning, but found that comments came only twice a year with report cards. Effie Carlson (Interview, April 7, 1989) found that there was no place to share what was happening with teaching and learning in her classroom: "I lack motivation and collegial stimulation. When other staff members approach me, it is usually because I have something they need, not because they want to provide me with support, encouragement, or discussion." Not having an intimate colleague on staff

with whom she could discuss teaching and learning issues was also problematic for Dianne Pipchuk (Interview, April 5, 1989). Dianne felt that St. Gabriel had a shallow staff:

> There is a lack of depth. No one talks about the meat of teaching, yet I hear what a great staff it is. I have the perception you can't be too outstanding in anything you do either, because it takes away from others. The chauvinism is obvious, so are the right channels. Men have it and women have no hope.

Dianne felt that women had no chance on the St. Gabriel staff; she had worked hard on three projects but she had received no recognition. The lack of recognition influenced her approach to future projects and the depth of her future involvement.

In agreeing that the staff was not concerned with learning, Cathy Spencer (Interview, February 6, 1989) felt:

> the kids at St. Gabriel aren't getting a fair shake. The staff defend what they do through the needs of academically lower and special needs students. The kids who care enough are learning to the best of their ability, but potential is not being tapped adequately.

Given that there appeared to be limited talk about teaching and learning among colleagues and that some staff were concerned about the ultimate impact on children, I probed for other sources of the assumption that social needs were emphasized at the expense of academic learning. Much of the data indicated a problematic instructional leadership style. Discussing leadership with Bill Janzen (Interview, February 9, 1989) revealed that Bill's leadership style was to provide the opportunity for teachers to make decisions about how children learn and to provide support for the teachers: "I emphasize that we don't take kids to the end of a grade, but to the

end of June. I emphasize the process, not the product." Later, on April 5, 1989, Bill added that he needed the staff to work with him: "They need regular quality feedback. If there is a choice to be made between parent and teacher, support goes with the teacher and I call the parents later."

Larry Spencer (Interview, April 5, 1989) agreed that Bill saw teaching as being the responsibility of the teachers. Larry believed that attempts were being made at improvement, but that little feedback was given, resulting in a loss in emphasis on learning: "It is so busy around here, many should be's never are gotten around to. We hear we will get help but Bill doesn't make it a priority to do so. He is caught up in the business of so many factors we just go on should be's." Georgina Pinder (Interview, April 10, 1989) concurred with Larry that Bill appeared in classrooms less frequently, and when he did he said nothing about the students, learning, or teaching: "He doesn't comment on whether things are good or not so good, so he isn't fulfilling that part of his instructional leadership role. All teachers need to hear and be given ideas to grow with and improve upon." Georgina had been denied holding parent meetings as well. She believed that she was not free to do what she wanted because everything had to be Bill's idea. She believed that there were many ways of achieving goals. Georgina worried about students coming to school only for fun: "We've spoiled them so bad, done everything for them they can't take responsibility for their learning. Bill has lost sight of the primary function of educating. His role shows evidence of a lack of confidence and leadership."

In keeping with Larry and Georgina's concerns, Dianne Pipchuk (Interview, April

5, 1989) mentioned that "teachers are given a responsibility and some coast and don't pull their weight and no one is watching the impact on the child in this." Dianne stressed that, while teachers have an obligation to be responsible for their teaching, the leader needs to create the opportunity for this responsibility to develop.

Effie Carlson (Interview, April 7, 1989) felt that developmental supervision was needed:

> There is a lot of activity there, not always related to learning which can be separated out. Work on the social emotional child has to interact with the academics. There is a lack of formal teaching in a sequential way as it continues from K to 4.

Effie maintained that if Bill could facilitate more communication between lower and upper grade teachers, ideas could be brought forth. In her opinion, the only common point of discussion on staff was at-risk kids, and even that issue was sensitive because each division taught in isolation and did little evaluation of their academic goals.

From a paraprofessional perspective, Coralee Craik (Interview, April 10, 1989) observed that the staff did not monitor or evaluate learning as a school: "While things like reading rockathons occur, these kids are praised by Bill too much too often, undeservingly, and given too much." Coralee felt that the staff needed to become more vocal on the issue.

Newly hired Ann Kiddleson (Interview, April 10, 1989) noticed many senior students frequently out of class, and she wondered how they could learn anything: "They seem to have a lot of independent time with privileges of Grade 8 ruling the roost. There is an over emphasis on activities not tied to learning." As a new teacher, Ann had no feeling that Bill would formally book a time with her for

observation, and she confirmed other staff members' concerns around the need for developmental supervision.

While the majority of Kindergarten to Grade 5 staff shared concerns around the socialization focus, especially at the senior level, teachers of the Middle Years did not share this perspective. Henry Weber (Interview, April 7, 1989) explained that having assessed the academic skills of his students, he believed that the majority would be lucky to finish Grade 12. Consequently, he had become less academic: "This has influenced the types of activities Gonzaga offers to develop life skills which will prepare students for a more effective future based on their present performance levels." Henry did not believe a strong academic program to be helpful to these students.

Leon Buchko, another senior teacher, (Interview, March 16, 1989) explained that, while students thought he placed an emphasis on academics, it was his facade:

> Students will learn in spite of you as a teacher, yet you need to be cognizant of what happens to them next year. They need to learn a routine, responsibility. They socially need a comfortable atmosphere . . . I stress values, not mark mongers, academics aren't all . . . . The process and how you go through is important, not the final end or test.

When I asked Bill for his position on an emphasis on socialization in the middle years, I received the following response:

> There are eight areas of child development including: cognitive, social, academic, communication, personal management, leisure, work skills, spirit, and faith. I see the last four as peripheral, getting attention when the rest are covered. In the middle, time needs to be spent on learning needs as they relate to the characteristics of the child. We must educate the whole child.

Bill's response confused me, given the school's assumption that the Catholic faith and the Christian value system underlie all school activity. According to Bill's response, spirit and faith were among the areas of child development considered after the other areas had received attention. I better understood why some confusion existed among staff members regarding the preferred philosophy of socialization over learning, and why the teachers had experienced difficulty in implementing an academic focus. Perhaps the need for instructional leadership was the key to resolving the difficulty.

Given that little discussion took place over teaching and learning at St. Gabriel, I elicited descriptions of students as learners. Larry Spencer (Interview, February 7, 1989) saw his students as having "a very low desire to succeed, learn, accomplish, or show quality. They are apathetic, not motivated." Agreeing with Larry, Dave Sitter (Interview, February 12, 1989) stated, "These kids don't have high achievement needs, in fact motivation is lacking. They don't strive for the top." Dave Sitter added, though, that the majority of his class was responsible and fairly co-operative, but that "their expectations are different since they came from blue collar homes."

Cathy Spencer (Interview, February 6, 1989) agreed that students don't have high achievement goals:

> A few care academically, others feel if they can make it fine. There is a wide range of abilities but most students stay along between 70 and 80 percent. We only have a few high achievers since it isn't the norm here, but there are lots of special needs kids . . . . They aren't serious about homework. It isn't emphasized enough depending on the teacher, and no school policy exists. For a lot of kids problem home lives influence what they do at school. Often they become discipline problems.

Attending school to have a good time was a theme that re-occurred throughout the remaining interviews. According to Effie Carlson (Interview, February 9, 1989), the students did not care about learning. They were:

> negative towards school with their social life being of concern. They are happy as learners as long as they aren't told what to do and when because they like freedom . . . . An academic focus alone doesn't work here. It has to be part of a package. It's a hard struggle to get students to care and realize that product does matter.

Leon Buchko (Interview, February 2, 1989) reinforced that his class wanted to attend school to have a good time: "They don't do homework and like to get over 50, but few work for 80's. Some are conscientious, most rely on memory to pull them through." Home and family situations were mentioned several times as teachers attempted to describe the type of students they taught. Leon Buchko (Interview, February 2, 1989) characterized students as living in the realities of a lower socio-economic area with many single parents: "These kids are hungry for affection, to be loved, to have a friend that is infallible." Effie Carlson (Interview, February 9, 1989) added that often her students came to school upset or crying about the arguing going on in their homes. Perhaps the family issues explained why Dianne Pipchuk (Interview, February 3, 1989) could not get her middle years students to take homework seriously: "They slack off with no help from home, no push. Academics aren't emphasized. Only four parents see the importance of learning, books, and education and emphasize it." The custodian, Don Zalazny (Interview, February 3, 1989), agreed with Dianne's perception. The Grade 5 to 8 students who willingly visited with him hated school and complained constantly about some teachers.

Primary teachers shared similar stories. According to Elaine Grayling (Interview, February 6, 1989) none of her Kindergarten students knew any nursery rhymes:

> They have poor language and experience backgrounds, but the parents are doing the best they can . . . . The kids' aspirations are to be cashiers and plant workers. Only one parent was a nurse and two worked in a bank. These factors influence the personality of the student body and how kids approach school.

Despite the background from which Kindergarten students entered school, Georgina Pinder (Interview, February 6, 1989) believed that primary children wanted to achieve: "In Grade 1 and 2 it is important that children understand learning is their job. They get out what they put in." Educably mentally handicapped students seemed to know where they were as learners and to understand their labels, according to Barbara Mitchell (Interview, February 13, 1989). She, too, found that primary students "like coming to the resource room and work hard, but older students feel more defeated and they don't try as hard."

Many staff members wanted to talk about middle years students and the problems that they perceived to exist with the Grade 5 to 8 student body. Coralee Craik (Interview, February 6, 1989) found these students to be disrespectful: "They are daring even if they are expected to be accountable for their own actions which are their own responsibility." Pati Gilroy (Interview, February 9, 1989) added that senior students needed discipline because they did not have learning as a first priority: "I sometimes feel I am educating kids, others are entertaining them. I am concerned about academic learning, working hard to make them feel good about their accomplishments."

Dianne Pipchuk (Interview, February 5, 1989) attributed the activity level accepted at the senior grades to an easy going attitude on the part of their teachers. Larry Spencer (Interview, February 7, 1989) felt that the problem behaviour in the school would continue as long as Bill rewarded students for good behaviour in group gatherings in the gym, and pretended that there was no problem.

It became evident to me that the nature of the students and staff in Grades 5 to 8 exerted a major influence on how teaching and learning occurred in the school. In a lengthy discussion with Bill Janzen (Interview, April 5, 1989), he shared that:

> only four of ten staff have understood the middle years philosophy, otherwise others haven't bought into the package of delivery. That's why there are some problems in middle years because people don't share the same philosophy about the role of activities in meeting learning goals. Playdays, swimming, camping, etc. are part of the instructional program. They don't replace it but need to be incorporated. The challenge is to never do an activity unless it fits in with general academics. It's a growth process we have to bring people through in taking charge of decisions made by the group . . . . Teachers need clearly stated learning objectives. If I have to supervise professional teachers doing that we're in trouble. I empower staff and make the assumption they are all professional, then deal with things when they aren't. It becomes a challenge monitoring what is happening in teacher decisions and seeing if they have an objective in mind.

Other interviews indicated that Bill's leadership of the teaching and learning of middle years students was limited. He had failed to generate philosophical agreement among staff or to ensure the development of appropriate educational activities. Dianne Pipchuk (Interview, February 3, 1989) indicated that her confusion as a middle years teacher had started at the beginning of the school year:

> As we were to priorize objectives for the year we came up with

> activities as Henry monopolized the whole thing. Gonzaga got off target right there as we listed activities and overlooked goals and objectives. The wanting learning to be fun philosophy was wrongly interpreted. Academics needed to come first. Our purpose is to teach.

Larry Spencer (Interview, February 7, 1989) supported Dianne's comments, and he explained that children's learning had never been the focus of the middle years staff at St. Gabriel:

> Goals and objectives are just activities, more social things to do .... The middle years is a big problem. The kids aren't being readied for high school .... And this school is looked up to by downtown as a pioneer of Gonzaga?

Coralee Craik (Interview, April 10, 1989) agreed that the school had strayed too far away academic goals. Coralee's daughter had attended St. Gabriel School and had been poorly prepared for high school: "The kids need to be prepared for high school more consciously. The structure here is too loose. Kids need to develop an ability to get down to work and be responsible." Two months later, Larry (Interview, April 5, 1989) still felt concerned about the problems in the middle years: "We do more than should be done in extras and therefore, stress is placed on time to pay attention to learning. Learning should come first with reexamination of all the extras."

The leader of Project Gonzaga, Henry Weber (Interview, March 15, 1989), believed some teachers had a narrow perspective of teaching and of the needs of students. In his view, "Division I should be academic, whereas in older grades the needs and thus objectives for students change." Needless to say, Henry did not perceive the same problems in the middle years as other teachers. The primary staff

also shared strong feelings around the direction of Project Gonzaga. Pati Gilroy (Interview, April 5, 1989) observed that for all the meetings middle years teachers attended, she did not see many results: "They engage in too many activities unrelated to academics." Georgina Pinder (Interview, April 10, 1989) concurred strongly. She, too, did not believe that middle years teachers were organized for learning:

> There is a feeling who you are and what can be accomplished are social events to get kids coming to school. They need to look at what events got these kids responsible for themselves academically. Gonzaga needs help to identify the steps and be sure the connection of activities to learning is reinforced.

Bill Janzen's (Interview, April 5, 1989) reaction to these perceptions was mixed. He believed the primary staff to be busy and hard working. They started early, they worked late, and they spent time on instructional matters. Bill indicated that a looser type of instruction occurred at the middle years because of coaching and house leagues: "It is different, not as formal, with more variety of techniques." Bill was not comfortable addressing concerns about Gonzaga expressed by teachers within the program or outside of it.

Another major influence upon the teaching and learning at St. Gabriel School related to the resource room. In an interview with Rita Sneider (Interview, February 10, 1989), the resource room teacher, I learned that she delivered resource room services by planning cooperatively with individual teachers. Her intent was to help classroom teachers feel responsible for their children's success and to develop a program that closely approximated the regular program in the classroom. A list of

at-risk children was developed from teacher concerns and informal assessments. After priorities were established, the most needy students were served. Out of 100 students identified, approximately 50 students received help from one full and two half-time resource room teachers. Some pull-out services and some classroom work were provided for Grades 1, 2, 3.

In Grades 7 and 8, five out of thirty students needed special programming, but services were limited because of scheduling problems, stigma concerns, and teacher discomfort. Some tutorials or group teaching were available. Dianne Pipchuk (Interview, April 5, 1989) explained, "It is the new image of the Catholic system that we care for every child no matter how needy they are, so this thrust in our school tries to reflect that." However, Larry Spencer (Interview, April 5, 1989) was not convinced that the students were getting the help they needed: "It is a problem of personnel capability and competence. There is too much paper pushing and paperwork."

When Lillian became ill, the school was without a resource room teacher for two weeks. Georgina Pinder (Interview, April 10, 1989) wondered why Lillian had not been replaced immediately if the resource room was so important. Effie Carlson (Interview, April 7, 1989) felt that, while resource room students needed attention, "so did the gifted and they weren't getting any chance to go further as far as they could go." Coralee Craik (Interview, April 10, 1989) echoed similar feelings: "Resource room has always been the focus at St. Gabriel, but it should even out and attention be paid to the average and brighter kids as well."

Another expression of need came from Elaine Grayling (Interview, April 12, 1989), who was frustrated that no help was given to high-risk Kindergarten children: "Lillian using all day Friday to conference with teachers while Bill covers is a poor use of his and her time as far as benefits to kids is concerned. There should be small groups of kids cycled in and out of resource room instead of licensing kids there for life." Further data confirmed that most special needs students retained their identification and programming for the entire year. Barbara Mitchell (Interview, February 13, 1989), the Itinerant Special Needs Teacher, explained that she was responsible for seventeen students with I.Q.'s ranging from 55 to 80. The majority of her students were in Grade 7 with the remainder spread throughout the grades. Fourteen students, grouped according to age and need, received daily services in 15 to 45 minute time periods. Barbara spent her extra half-day with three additional students. Although she provided pull-out programming, her goal was to tie learning back to the classroom by helping the homeroom teacher to modify programs. These data indicate that the special needs of 67 students in a school of 443 were being addressed. Perhaps the limited resource room services accounted for some of the teachers' concerns around the delivery of academic programs and the strong socialization focus.

St. Gabriel had several students learning English as a second language. Cathy Spencer (Interview, February 6, 1989) revealed that she had been a teacher aide for five years with no training, and that she was responsible for planning and teaching lessons for ESL students. An ESL supervisor came in once a week for 45 minutes

to see her plans. She received no further monitoring. Cathy felt that staff members took advantage of her when they needed something, but that they treated her as just a teacher aide at other times.

I wondered how teachers felt that parents reacted to socialization taking priority over learning. I found that parents did not seem to be well informed or to be involved, often by choice or by design. Bill Janzen (Interview, April 12, 1989) stated that he did not see his community as having proactive parents who interfered with or who investigated education:

> I believe parents have to trust the school. While my parents are supportive, they don't influence the school a whole lot. Attempts to involve them in decision-making are not that successful. Rather they want to be informed and told what is going on.

Two paraprofessional viewpoints illuminated Bill's perspective on the lack of parental influence and involvement. Coralee Craik (Interview, February 6, 1989) shared that in recent years parents had been less involved: "Bill likes to take control of parent council, manipulate them albeit in a positive way." Cathy Spencer (Interview, February 6, 1989), also a parent in the school, found that while parents supported the school, they hung back a lot:

> Parents who do come in with a concern are shunned by the teacher and pushed aside. If the parent doesn't back off it will go to Bill who sticks up for the teacher. Several Grade 6 families withdrew due to the principal supporting the teacher and not seeing their concerns.

Other staff members perceived a lack of support by parents, and they raised additional concerns. Dave Sitter (Interview, February 2, 1989) was concerned that

a "blue collar mentality" existed whereby the teacher was boss, and everything the school did was right. Sheila Male (Interview, February 10, 1989) agreed, adding, "The school can do what it wants. Our parents don't have academic goals for their kids. They want them to do well, but don't really get involved." Coralee Craik (Interview, April 10, 1989) described the situation as a "blind trust of the school." Coralee wanted parents to become more critically involved in the academic program of the school. "Parents feel no distress about what happens at St. Gabriel," according to Lillian McCarthy (Interview, March 9, 1989). "They are either ambivalent or positive because Bill is a real public relations man who wants the school to look good in the community."

Larry Spencer (Interview, February 7, 1989) expressed the most concern. He thought that parents influenced the school negatively:

> They aren't concerned and are over trusting that we are doing the right thing. They don't wonder or check. If St. Gabriel staff were plopped elsewhere, parents would ask about the number of fun social activities going on around here.

Two staff members attempted to understand this characteristic of the parents. Dianne Pipchuk (Interview, February 3, 1989) indicated that parents were busy worrying about babysitters, getting to work on time, climbing the social ladder, and struggling to be middle class. Pati Gilroy (Interview, April 5, 1989) also thought that parents were striving to be middle class. They appeared to want academics on the one hand, but they questioned it on the other: "Many of my parents are more concerned about lunchroom behaviour than learning. Some even question why academics are being stressed at such a young age." However, not all teachers placed

the full responsibility on the parents. Effie Carlson (Interview, April 7, 1989) blamed teachers for not bothering to make parents feel more welcome and involved: "Most of our communication is on paper, yet we assume our parents are happy when we and they are too busy to get together and show we care."

The Kindergarten teachers admitted that they had several parents who discussed teachers over coffee. They disliked having parents in the school every day and they preferred to request "mother helpers" for special events. Elaine Grayling (Interview, February 6, 1989) summarized the various perspectives shared by other teachers:

> Our lower, middle, and working class parents are looking for more for their kids while they are still trying to make it. They want a better life for their kids so they will have more than their parents had. Therefore, they have high expectations of their child being a rosebud in Kindergarten. They expect them to be perfect, yet the kids lack the background from home.

Parent interviews. Similar themes on learning emerged from parent interviews as from the staff interviews. Pearl Fletcher (Interview, February 24, 1989) expected her Grade 8 son to become well-rounded, academic, sportsmanlike, and friendly. Her major concern was that "learning is not the focus at this school. There is a lack of writing and when I inquire I am reassured, but nothing happens." Pearl was concerned about the number of school events that detracted from learning. The discipline was too lax; both the students and the learning program required more control.

Supporting Mrs. Fletcher, another parent, Claire Sylvester (Interview, March 16, 1989), was concerned that they were unsure of their sons' (in Grade 1 and 3) academic standing:

> The biggest concern is that if they are average they are being left behind. Kids with special needs are okay and seem to be looked after but I am uncertain about the ones in the middle. Trevor went twenty pages ahead in math, wasn't shown how and hadn't been monitored.

Claire and Mrs. Ives (Interview, March 1, 1989) felt that the honour role and the student of the week needed explanation. Both parents questioned if these programs reflected academic standing.

For Bobby Rae Harrington (Interview, March 1, 1989), school should be interesting, challenging, and enjoyable, yet she felt that at St. Gabriel teachers did not push the students: "My son doesn't feel rewarded as a learner so at home we overexaggerate his accomplishments. We see staff assignments as a weakness which need to be addressed by our leader to ensure talents are best utilized to the school's benefit." Mrs. Baker (Interview, February 21, 1989) shared similar feelings about her son: "My boy was identified as being slow in Grade 1 and four years later nothing has changed. He is frustrated and doesn't want to come to school." Mrs. Baker believed that some teachers were not suitable for the grade they taught. She wanted Bill to work more closely with staff members who were not suited to certain ages. She felt frustrated because she had initiated a number of contacts with Bill and with the teachers, but her concerns had not been addressed.

An active member of the parent association with children in Grades 1, 4, and 6, Nancy Lorimer (Interview, February 28, 1989) felt that Bill needed to deal with the issues of homework and studying: "Kids don't study enough, but they aren't taught how to. I feel by Grade 4 they should also have some type of daily homework." Nancy referred to Bill as a great guy, down to earth, and friendly. Although she

believed that he ran the kind of school she would like to have attended, she felt that he needed to pay attention to the areas of homework and studying.

Data obtained during the parent interviews confirmed the staff perceptions of a trusting community. Both men interviewed raised the issue of trust when talking briefly about learning. Karl Mogden (Interview, February 14, 1989) described the community as "very trusting, so we leave teachers alone." Karl saw the school as having an academic and a social blend. Dave O'Sullivan's (Interview, February 14, 1989) way of explaining trust was that "we feel they know what they are doing here because we haven't had any bad feedback." Beyond Mrs. Belleveu's (Interview, February 21, 1989) concern about how to help her child, who was enrolled in a whole language program, read at home, she trusted the school to handle things. Notes and stickers worked wonders in her opinion: "Kids grow up too quickly anyway, so we should let them have fun."

One major incident involving trust with the academic program occurred during the research period. I was unable to interview the parent involved, but I heard Bill's version. According to Bill, the parent of a Middle Years student reacted to a math pre-test score of 28% by wanting to move their son. They felt that there was a deficiency in the basics, they believed that their son's needs were not being addressed, and that they had no respect for the teacher. Bill dealt with the issue by insisting at the fifth meeting that the problem belonged to Chip, the student. He was responsible for his own learning, and he would not be moved. The parents would have to cope with the teacher in whom they had no faith. This example reinforced

the comments that parents did not connect with the school because they knew that Bill would defend the staff member and would not address their needs.

Student interviews. Groups of students from Grades 1 to 8 who were interviewed responded to questions around learning in three general areas: motivation; comments on the teachers; and sharing what they perceived to be the focus of learning at their grade level. Grade 8 students (Interview, February 22, 1989) quickly made clear their reason for being at St. Gabriel: "What motivates us is not learning. We come for friends and fun. We're not turned on to learning because it's only work - no fun. There is too much repetition in each subject." Students at the Grade 5 and 6 levels (Interview, February 23, 1989) appeared to have a more serious approach: "We come to get an education for a job when we grow up because now you can't do anything without a diploma. Some of us care about marks and passing, only sometimes do we take our homework seriously." Homework was mentioned again at the Grade 4 level (Interview, February 23, 1989) when students indicated that they were "motivated to not avoid homework because we like school and don't want to get behind." The youngest to refer to motivation were the Grade 3 students (Interview, February 8, 1989), who stated that they "try to be good students so the teachers won't yell at them or embarrass them, but treat them nicely."

References to staff members as teachers of learning were candid. Grade 8 students (Interview, February 22, 1989) felt a "need to change the attitude of teachers. They are flipped out, moody, and unrealistic some days." A detailed response came from Grade 7 students (Interview, February 22, 1989):

> The looks of the school in our area doesn't leave a good impression. The rooms are messy and crowded. The teachers could influence this and change things. Most teachers want us to learn but are too strict. Our French teacher takes a long time because everything has to be done to perfection. Our science teacher is hard to understand. He makes us do too many things at once. He teaches us a lot but we have to write lots of notes, copy diagrams, and read from the text to understand what it all means.

The Grade 5 and 6 students (Interview, February 23, 1989) likewise did not hold back critical information:

> Some teachers make learning interesting by letting you go off topic and discuss things. This year's teacher doesn't understand kids having problems. She doesn't make it interesting or explain it, just tells us what to do. Learning is tough . . . . She teaches for money and couldn't care less. She's mean, to her it's a job.

At lower grade levels students appeared to see more of a mixture of staff types. Grade 4 students (Interview, February 23, 1989) stated: "Some teachers think school is just work time not play time . . . . Some are more serious than others and don't even like talking during art . . . . They expect good work and behaviour of us. We have teachers for special needs and our parents like that." Keeping with the same tone, Grade 3 students (Interview, February 8, 1989) explained:

> Some teachers are mad and yell at kids. [One teacher] may embarrass you if you have trouble in class. She yells out in class if you make a mistake. We liked Kindergarten to Grade 2 better because the teachers wanted us to learn.

Once again, the youngest group, Grade 2 students (Interview, February 8, 1989), tended to be most positive in saying that their teachers "are mostly nice people. We have rules in class like no running, hands up to talk, and whisper."

Perceptions from all groups about the nature of learning focused on their

particular setting. For Grade 8 students (Interview, February 22, 1989), teachers emphasized:

> math and a good attitude. Mr. Buchko mixes religion with everything. It gets to us. We hardly got art in Grade 7 cause it was always tied to religion. We have no health. Language arts and grammar aren't going anywhere. We just get started science because the science fair is coming.

Comments surrounding math, religion, and language arts came once again from the Grade 7 students (Interview, February 22, 1989):

> Math is the most important thing and Mr. Buchko pushes religion. Not much homework. Maybe two days a week we get an hour depending on the subject but we have no homework on weekends. Language arts is notes on grammar. We don't do too much creative writing, we just have journals. This year we've written maybe five times, mostly one page of foolscap. We think we should be doing more.

The importance of math and concerns over art and religion were expressed by Grade 5 and 6 students (Interview, February 23, 1989):

> Math and sports education are important. Science is boring. We watched fifteen movies in the last two days and just pretended it was interesting. We hardly get art separate from religious art. She talks about God and we draw pictures.

It was no surprise to me, having observed in their classroom, when Grade 4 students (Interview, February 23, 1989) also indicated a math bias: "Mr. Sitter makes us learn with things like mad minutes and gives us homework to study."

While math was mentioned in Grades 2 and 3 student interviews, students shared information on language arts. For Grade 3 students (Interview, February 8, 1989) the emphasis was on:

> learning how to listen and behave. We do lots of language arts

> and reading and writing. We get bored creating a book for every unit. Math is important. Religion involves stories from the bible, drawing pictures then writing. We colour too much.

Grade 2 students (Interview, February 8, 1989) commented on math, reading, and religion: "We do lots of math, so we can learn the facts. We read every day and have little homework. In religion we read stories about Jesus then draw pictures."

Summary

An examination of the physical artifacts throughout the hallways, the classrooms, the library, specialized areas of the school, and the staffroom revealed few visuals directly related to learning. No representation of learning in science, health, music, or physical education was found, with only one visual depicting learning within social studies. Verbal and behavioral artifacts revealed that the staff were left alone to make decisions on academic needs. Special needs students received a large portion of the attention, but discussion on learning for the majority of learners was virtually non-existent. Emphasis on the academic program did not appear to be the norm in the school. A contrast was evident between primary teachers' and students' approaches and the direction of Project Gonzaga which emphasized socialization. Many activities unrelated to learning goals interfered with teaching. These activities were undertaken in an attempt to motivate the apathetic students who were perceived to have a low desire to succeed. While parents displayed a blind trust of the school, in the interviews they demonstrated a variety of unexpressed concerns.

I found that in all staff interviews confusion existed in interpreting and applying Bill's philosophy. Was St. Gabriel's a child-centred school based on gospel values

and focused on socialization with academic learning being of secondary importance? Primary teachers tended to respond with the notion that learning was to occur within a context of socialization, but that having fun was not the main purpose of school. Even though learning appeared to be fun, socialization was not their main goal. All staff members believed that they were left alone to meet academic needs. Discussions of teaching and learning did not exist, and the teachers were not being stimulated by their leader. The staff implied that Bill's leadership style needed to be re-examined. Bill needed to accept responsibility for the problems caused by a social needs focus, especially for students from Grades 5 to 8. Furthermore, he needed to address their concerns regarding the school's tendency to concentrate on special needs students at the expense of the majority of the students.

Because the students were not perceived by the teachers to be motivated learners striving to meet academic goals, the assumption of social needs over academic learning as a philosophy required serious re-examination. Data on student home backgrounds and on an over-trusting community indicated that this re-examination probably would not begin in most students' homes. Consequently, staff members needed to assume responsibility for developing a new interpretation of social needs and an academic learning philosophy at St. Gabriel School.

Four themes emerged from the parent interviews: a perception that academic learning was not a focus, an uncertainty as to children's academic performance, a questioning of the suitability of some staff for the grades they taught, and a desire for students to do homework and to be taught how to study. Aside from these issues,

trust appeared to exist among parents of the school. This trust perhaps explains why parental concerns may not have been raised in the past.

While senior students' motivation for attending school appeared to be to have fun, younger students came with more serious intentions. Yet both groups avoided homework and disliked being embarrassed by certain teachers. Along with parents, students questioned the suitability of some teachers for the grade level they were teaching. A respect for staff members among Project Gonzaga students of Grades 5 to 8 was lacking. Younger students noticed certain teachers to be more serious and caring than others. Comments on learning indicated that math was perceived to be a focus at all grade levels. Reflections on religion were of boredom, even among primary students for whom religion meant drawing pictures. Senior students expressed concerns about the lack of attention to language arts, writing, and preparation for high school. Many concerns were shared concerning boredom in science, poor methodology, or just having begun certain subjects. In all, I was not surprised at the nature of student comments. They appeared to confirm the reality that I heard from staff and parents and that I had observed from artifacts and archival sources.

CHAPTER 8

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents a summary of the study. The findings and conclusions of the research are outlined. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the implications for research and practice.

Summary of the Study

The purpose of the study was to discover the operative assumptions of a school's culture that guided the way in which school personnel solved external and internal problems and that were taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think about, and feel in relation to those problems. Based upon this purpose, a series of five research questions were posed:

1. What basic assumptions regarding their daily work have the staff members and students at this school invented, discovered, or developed?
2. How did these basic assumptions arise?
3. Are the basic cultural assumptions of the teachers, parents, and students similar?
4. What are the implications of these basic assumptions for the establishment of a school culture which encompasses the school effectiveness characteristics?
5. Does Schein's (1985a) conceptual model, which was developed for the study of basic cultural assumptions, have utility for deciphering school culture?

Schein's (1984) levels of culture and their interaction formed the conceptual framework for this study. Schein viewed organizational culture as existing at three different levels. "Visible artifacts" included: the constructed environment of the organization; "values" reflected what people said were the reasons for their behaviour; and "underlying assumptions" actually determined how group members perceived, thought, and felt. Schein argued that these underlying assumptions eventually form a pattern, namely culture, and become taken for granted. He maintained that these assumptions could be brought back to awareness through focused inquiry.

The research method chosen for this study was based on Schein's (1985a) Joint Exploration Through Iterative Interviewing methodology used in the study of organizational culture. This methodology involved a series of encounters and joint explorations between myself as an outside investigator and various key informants, who lived in the school under study and who embodied its culture. Determining the school's basic assumption was a joint effort. This technique reduced the risk of researcher subjectivity bias because an outsider cannot experience the meanings that an insider does. As well, Schein (1985a) explained that the insider alone cannot identify the basic assumptions because they have dropped out of awareness and have become taken for granted. This methodology did not require initial specific questions to ask or things to observe. Instead, problems of external adaptation and survival, problems of internal integration, and basic underlying assumptions, around which cultural paradigms form, were used to identify areas where observations should

be made. Interview questions were based on issues raised from my observation of verbal, behavioral, and physical artifacts; from the data obtained from archival material and documents; and from meetings with the various constituent groups. Underlying assumptions were elicited during interviews using an evocative technique and a search for patterns in the responses. From the emerging patterns, tentative hypotheses were developed that described the school's basic assumptions and that were tested with key insiders. The following activities provided a comprehensive and systematic design for deciphering the school's basic assumptions:

(1) Entry and focus on surprises
(2) Systematic observation and checking
(3) The location of a motivated insider
(4) The revelation of surprises, puzzlements, and hunches
(5) Joint exploration to find explanation
(6) The formalization of hypotheses
(7) Systematic checking and consolidation
(8) Pushing to the level of assumptions
(9) Perceptual recalibration
(10) Formal written description (pp. 114 - 118, see Appendix A)

This study focused on the deciphering of the culture of one school from the elaborate and extensive data collection activities. The school for this study was nominated by the director, superintendents, program co-ordinators, and consultants of the Westville Catholic Board of Education on the basis of selection criteria provided by the researcher. These criteria included a school which had functioned long enough for culture to develop, a principal who had been in the school for more than one year, a school large enough to have sufficient numbers of staff who might consider participating in such a study, and a school which possessed most of the five characteristics defined as being the most tangible and indispensable characteristics

of effective schools.

Data were collected for approximately a four month period from January, 1989 to April, 1989. This time period was deemed to be sufficient to collect data that were representative of the operations of the school throughout the school year. Three major sources were used to generate data. Artifacts were observed, iterative interviews were conducted with key informants, and archival material was analyzed. Artifacts, which consisted of verbal, behavioral, and physical characteristics of the school and its stakeholders, provided the data from which interview questions were generated. Key informants for the interviews were selected from several constituent groups, including staff, parents, and students. Archival materials included the contents of the school's correspondence, documents, daily memos, newsletters, reports, staff meeting agendas and minutes, timetables, in-service sessions, student records, board of education memos, Advisory School Council meetings, and other related materials.

Data were collected and analyzed using Schein's (1985a) conceptual framework. Culture is evident in the members' characteristic approach to problems of external adaptation and internal integration. In order to describe this culture, external and internal issues were discussed through the Joint Exploration Through Iterative Interviewing methodology. Data collection involved a highly interactive process. Triangulation was used to cross check and verify the accuracy of information obtained from observation of artifacts, iterative interviews with key informants, and analysis of archival material. In the early stages of the study, broad, general

questions were used to guide data collection. This strategy facilitated the synthesis of related observations, the development of thick descriptions, and the derivation of tentative hypotheses. As the study progressed, probing, checking, and testing were used to confirm emerging patterns and hypotheses.

Throughout the course of the study, an audit trail was maintained to preserve a sense of the context in which observations were made. The nature of decisions in the research plan, the data upon which the decisions were based, and the reasoning that guided decision-making were documented. Techniques to ensure credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the study were included in order to increase the probability of trustworthiness. These techniques included prolonged engagement, persistent observation, peer debriefing, triangulation, referential adequacy materials, member checks, thick descriptive data, theoretical/purposive sampling, and an audit trail.

Schein's (1985a) Joint Exploration Through Iterative Interviewing procedures and schedules were used to analyze data. Throughout the data collection phase, preliminary hypotheses about the school's assumptions guided data collection and analysis. Data from observations, from verbal, behavioral, and physical artifacts, and from archival material and documents generated issues for further exploration and pointed to suitable candidates for iterative interviews. Throughout the observation of informal and formal work contexts, I searched for regularities, shared meanings, shared sayings, shared doings, and shared feelings. Questions and hunches emerged as I sought explanation for the origins and meanings of the verbal, behavioral, and

physical artifacts that I had collected. I sought explanation, elaboration, and correction of these questions and hunches through further observations, interviews, and recordings of shared experiences.

Near the end of the second month, the data were categorized in order to test the tentative themes that indicated the school's basic assumptions. The categories were based on Schein's (1985a, p. 86) system of cultural assumptions and included: humanity's relationship to nature; the nature of reality and truth; the nature of human nature; the nature of human activity; and the nature of human relationships. This phase of generating themes was followed by a search for further evidence, explanation, and clarification to support emerging hypotheses. Iterative interviewing continued, and checklists of Schein's external adaptation and internal integration issues were referred to systematically. During the final weeks of research, existing data were consolidated and new data were checked against existing information. Final interviews with key informants refined and verified the written statements of the school's basic assumptions. At this point, descriptions of the basic assumptions operating at the school were written.

Research Findings and Conclusions

Chapter 1 outlined five research questions that formed the basis of this study. A summary and discussion of the findings and conclusions for these research questions follows.

Research Question 1

What basic assumptions regarding their daily work have the staff members and students at this school invented, discovered, or developed?

In this study, I was able to discover the operative basic assumptions of the school's culture by using Schein's (1985a) conceptual framework of organizational culture for data collection and analysis.

Based upon observation of artifacts, examination of archival material, and iterative interviews with staff members, parents, and students, three basic assumptions were deciphered about the daily work within the culture of St. Gabriel School. The first assumption was that the Catholic faith and the Christian value system pervaded all school activity. This assumption was evident in visual displays found in the halls and classrooms of the school and in rituals and ceremonies that included opening exercises, classroom masses, and school gatherings around religious celebrations. Correspondence from the Board of Education, daily memos, newsletters, and parish memos reflected an expectation for attendance at various religious events.

The second assumption was that a transactional leadership style influenced decision-making, relationships, communications, and the teaching-learning situation. There were limited opportunities for shared decision-making at St. Gabriel. Open communication, consensus building, and participatory problem-solving and decision-making, with a focus on academic matters and student achievement, were not a natural part of school life. Parents were not true partners in the teaching-learning situation of the school. While crediting their principal for creating a climate for

healthy relationships, staff requested more involvement in the decision-making processes of the school and more monitoring and feedback in the teaching-learning situation.

The final assumption was that the children's social needs were emphasized at the expense of academic learning. Discussions of teaching and learning did not exist, and staff were left alone to meet academic learning needs. Many activities unrelated to learning goals interfered with teaching in an attempt to use social needs to motivate apathetic students with a perceived low desire to succeed or accomplish. Confusion existed in interpreting and applying the social needs philosophy. Teaching practices among primary teachers were quite different from those of the staff at the Grade 5 to 8 level. It was, therefore, concluded in this case study that three basic assumptions guided the work of the school staff.

Research Question 2

How did these basic assumptions arise?

The assumption that the Catholic faith and the Christian value system pervaded all school activity originated and developed as a consequence of St. Gabriel being a Catholic elementary school within a Catholic school division. This basic assumption was initiated by the principal of St. Gabriel as part of his leadership role. It subsequently came to be nurtured by all St. Gabriel people associated with the operation of the school. New staff members quickly became indoctrinated since the principal screened applicants to ensure that practising Catholics who would live out this assumption were hired. A variety of verbal, physical, and behavioral artifacts

reinforced this assumption. From the main entry of the school, through the halls, and into the classrooms an outsider could observe various banners, bulletin boards, messages, and symbols of religion, some of which were changed to conform with the holy calendar. The daily activities of the school included prayer, rituals, and ceremonies that reflected the religious days of the calendar. Regular weekly classroom masses and school gatherings to observe religious seasons reinforced the presence of the Catholic faith and the Christian value system. Staff and students were expected to participate in special functions planned for religious occasions and parents were strongly encouraged to become involved.

The assumption that a transactional leadership style influenced decision-making, relationships, communications, and the teaching-learning situation originated and developed in response to a leadership style chosen by the principal upon his appointment to St. Gabriel School. This assumption subsequently came to be accepted by St. Gabriel staff who believed that this style was not open to feedback or to suggestions for change. Although the principal had a vision for the school, he experienced difficulty in translating his expectations into realized goals because of his leadership style. Staff members wished to become true participants in decision-making processes related to the teaching-learning situation.

The assumption that the children's social needs were emphasized at the expense of academic learning originated from the principal's espoused philosophy of learning. This philosophy was based on child-centered goals and gospel values. The principal believed that, given the family structure, socio-economic status, and demographics of

the community, his school would not succeed if it focused on academics at the expense of the whole child. This philosophy influenced the tone and atmosphere of school activities that were delivered by staff members. Differences were noted between primary teachers who emphasized academic performance and Project Gonzaga teachers who emphasized socialization. Primary teachers tended to believe that learning occurred within a context of socialization, but that school was more than just having fun. Although learning appeared to be fun, socialization was not the teachers' main goal. By contrast, middle years teachers set goals and objectives that were simply social activities with no academic component.

In conclusion, this study revealed that the principal had a major impact upon how all three assumptions arose and were maintained. The religious assumption was initiated as part of the principal's leadership role. His leadership style was chosen and the assumption emphasizing children's social needs resulted from his espoused philosophy of learning.

Research Question 3

Are the basic cultural assumptions of the teachers, parents, and students similar?

The research design of this study required me to work with motivated insiders who had embodied St. Gabriel's basic assumptions, that is, people who had accepted St. Gabriel's way of doing things. Consequently, while dissenting views were heard, read, and recorded, individuals possessing such views appeared to have been largely socialized into all three assumptions as the way of doing things at St. Gabriel School.

The assumption that the Catholic faith and Christian value system pervaded all school activity was adopted with more certainty and less question by the majority of the staff in comparison to the other two assumptions of this study. General acceptance of a transactional leadership style appeared to reflect traditional values and beliefs that it was appropriate for a principal to lead in this manner, even though change was desirable. More variance existed in the depth with which staff assumed that children's social needs should be emphasized at the expense of academic learning. Professional norms differed considerably within the staff who were comprised of various educational backgrounds, teaching experiences, personal circumstances, and therefore, beliefs about instruction and learning. A subculture of K to 4 teachers preferred to define their assumptions around learning differently, yet they were unable to influence the direction of the entire school. Rather they went along with school level activities which focused on social needs while ensuring that in their own classrooms the focus remained one of learning before fun. Many of these teachers also chose not to be directly involved in this study.

While staff members held different opinions on their role related to how the Catholic faith and the Christian value system should pervade all school activity, they nevertheless implemented this assumption similarly. Halls and classrooms symbolically represented the Catholic faith and Christian values. The entire school body congregated for religious celebrations. Daily opening exercises involved everyone reciting the Lord's Prayer. Regular classroom masses occurred on Wednesday mornings. Religion classes were built into the timetables. Class lenten

celebrations called paraliturgies were held weekly prior to Easter. Teachers assisted with preparations for confession and attended in-service sessions on Catholic education. School and teacher newsletters updated parents on religious activities, and the Parish assisted staff members with religious events such as first holy communion and confirmation.

I observed that the church expected the school to be strongly committed to the ideals of Christian education and to help parents with obligations related to special occasions in the life of a Catholic student. Parents expected the school to build values that supported the home. Thus, the staff served as a liaison between the church and the home in an attempt to provide a Christian-oriented environment and to reinforce Christian values in the home and the community. This task was difficult for teachers of Grades 4 to 8 students who found religion boring, and redundant, and who resented art always being related to religion.

Staff, students, and parents had been socialized to accept a transactional leadership style as the principal's way of doing things. While some members within all three groups desired change, none appeared to be organizing themselves to effect change. Archival material, verbal, physical, and behavioral artifacts, and iterative interviews revealed that open communication, shared decision-making, consensus building, and participatory problem-solving were not a natural part of school life at St. Gabriel. While staff members felt empowered to teach as they wished, they lacked the ongoing monitoring and feedback necessary for effective teaching and learning to occur. Both teachers and parents credited the principal with creating a

climate that helped to establish healthy relationships among people who worked at St. Gabriel. They perceived his caring to rub off via the tone of his public relations. Parents saw themselves serving in a fundraising capacity, and they knew they were not true partners in the teaching-learning situation of the school. While most students called their principal a friendly, great guy, some students felt the need to have major instructional concerns addressed more closely. Students from Grades 4 and up appeared more unwilling to accept the principal's leadership style than did students in the younger grades. This discrepancy may have been partly due to the older students' perception that the principal did not listen to them and could not help them solve their problems.

Staff, students, and parents daily lived out the assumption that children's social needs were emphasized at the expense of academic learning. An examination of physical artifacts revealed few academic visuals throughout the hallways, classrooms, library, specialized areas of the school, and staffroom. Science, health, physical education, and music were not visually represented anywhere. Only one social studies display was found. A limited number of rituals and ceremonies were used to reinforce a learning focus. Interview data reinforced observed behavioral and verbal artifacts that indicated an emphasis on meeting social needs. This focus on fun was especially evident from Grades 5 to 8. Staff members were left alone to make decisions on academic needs. Special needs students received a disproportionate amount of attention. The academic program lacked direction, and discussion of teaching and learning was limited. A high emphasis on socialization diverted staff

members' energy away from academics. Archival material from correspondence, a variety of memos, newsletters, staff and other meetings confirmed an emphasis on social needs.

Some parents perceived that learning was not a priority at St. Gabriel; they felt uncertain about their children's academic performance. Parental trust had caused issues to remain undiscussed. Parents and many staff members who taught Grades K to 3 questioned the nature of much activity of students in Grades 5 to 8. They challenged the suitability of some teachers for the grades they were assigned to teach. Parents felt their children should do more homework and should be taught how to study. Students not only questioned the suitability of some teachers but showed obvious disrespect for certain staff members at the senior grade levels. While students enjoyed the social aspects of schooling and admitted that they were not academically motivated, they expressed a concern about a lack of attention to language arts, science, and preparation for the future.

Thus in deciphering the basic cultural assumptions at St. Gabriel School, teachers, parents, and students possessed the same basic assumptions. Each group contained individuals who espoused values different from those embedded in the three assumptions, but, the predominant members representing each group were living out the assumptions.

Research Question 4

What are the implications of these basic assumptions for the establishment of a school culture which encompasses the school effectiveness characteristics?

Firestone et al. (1985) and Smirich (1983) indicate that few scholars have attempted to study the school as an organizational culture in which the principal, teachers, students, and parents have attained a shared sense of meaning that allows day-to-day activities to become routinized and taken for granted. I examined St. Gabriel as a case study using Schein's methodology of iterative interviewing and participant observation to capture the meanings, feelings, and actions to decipher the three underlying assumptions.

Wallach (cited in Kilmann, 1985), summarizes the potential effects of a culture:

> if it reinforces the mission, purposes, and strategies of the organization. It can be an asset or a liability. Strong cultural norms make an organization efficient .... To be effective, the culture must not only be efficient, but be appropriate to the needs of the [school]. (p. 354)

Deal and Kennedy (1982) maintain that understanding the culture of a school is a pre-requisite to making the school more effective since meaning in schools comes from this culture. The values and beliefs that bring success are developed over a long time to give meaning to education in an effective school (Fullan, 1985).

The effective schools movement examines how schools evolve to create favourable environments for growth and development. It clarifies and specifies the ingredients necessary for effective schools. Purkey and Smith (1985) suggest:

> the organizational looseness of schools and the resulting relative autonomy of teachers in the classroom, indicate that school cohesiveness can be obtained through building staff agreement on and commitment to clearly and commonly identified norms and goals .... Efforts to change schools have been productive and most enduring when directed towards influencing the entire school culture via a strategy involving collaborative planning, shared decision-making, and transactional work in an

atmosphere friendly to experimentation and evaluation. (p. 357)

The concept of school culture has been shown either to undermine or to energize school effectiveness. Commonly held assumptions, values, beliefs, norms, and other elements of culture have been identified to have considerable power over personnel in a school. The power of culture creates a commitment and a sense of identity for members, and provides the link between the beliefs and the actions of school personnel.

Accepting the premise that functional cultures increase organizational effectiveness suggests that schools wishing to enhance their effectiveness must begin by revealing the basic elements of their existing culture. The three assumptions found at St. Gabriel can be used to decipher the implication its culture has for developing an effective school environment.

All three assumptions in this study were interrelated. The second assumption that a transactional leadership style influenced decision-making, relationships, communications, and the teaching-learning situation influenced the other two assumptions related to religion and learning and had major implications for how St. Gabriel's school culture would encompass attributes of school effectiveness. In his analysis of the transmission and maintenance of culture, Schein (1985a) focuses on the role of leadership. Powerful strategies exist for leaders to embed their own assumptions in the ongoing daily life of their organizations:

> Through what they pay attention to and reward, through the role modelling they do, through the manner in which they deal with critical incidents, and through the criteria they use for recruitment, selection, promotion, and excommunication they communicate both explicitly and implicitly the assumptions they

really hold. (p. 243)

Schein argues that leadership and culture management are so central to understanding organizations and to making them effective that one cannot be complacent about either one. Heckman (1991) adds that the future success of schools "depends upon renewing the internal culture and ethos . . . its values and norms . . . to create conditions in which student and teacher work is real and powerful."

The literature on school effectiveness emphasizes the critical influence of the principal in making the school effective (Edmonds, 1979; Rutter et al., 1979; Manasse, 1984; Brookover et al., 1978; Austin, 1979; Edmonds, 1979; Cohen, 1982; Little, 1982; Murphy et al., 1983; Sackney and Wilson, 1987). The literature indicates that effective principals possess key leadership qualities: a clear and informed vision that focuses on students and their needs; an ability to translate visions into goals for their schools and expectations for teachers and students; an ability to establish school climates that support progress towards these goals and expectations; a continuous system for monitoring progress; and the ability to intervene in a supportive or corrective manner when necessary.

Based on the discussion of the leadership assumption in Chapter 6 and in light of the literature on effective schools, the implication is that Mr. Janzen's predominantly transactional leadership style detracted from establishing a school culture which would promote the attributes of school effectiveness. His leadership style influenced decision-making, relationships, communications, and the teaching-learning situation in a manner that did not reflect the practices of effective schools.

His planning and decision-making styles appeared to be influenced by his inability to work effectively with a new vice-principal. Teachers described the principal as having become more top-down, directive, and controlling. He wanted to be informed about everything, and he wanted things to go his way. Decisions ultimately ended up his way even though he tried to create a perception that staff had been involved. Although collaborative planning has been identified as a key element of effective schools at St. Gabriel the opportunity for shared decision-making was virtually non-existent. Few opportunities existed for open communication and consensus-building regarding academic matters and student achievement. Participatory problem solving and decision-making were not a natural part of school life. While the principal empowered teachers to be responsible for the teaching-learning situation, staff members indicated a lack of monitoring and ongoing feedback necessary for growth to occur. Concerns about a lack of instructional leadership were evident.

Bill did not appear to realize that staff members viewed their relationship with him differently than he did. He intended for staff to have discretion and autonomy over school activities within the goals of St. Gabriel School. He carried out this intent by centralizing the managerial functions related to religion and decision-making and by decentralizing the technical functions related to teaching and learning. He perceived the latter as empowerment of teachers without seeing the impact his transactional style had on this empowerment. His version of empowerment caused staff members to feel that no one was in charge of the instructional leadership of academic matters. Perhaps Bill lacked the skill required to develop new relationships

when empowering a staff who still perceived him to be an unequal partner, their boss.

It appeared to me that the staff had targeted Bill as the reason why things were a certain way. Rather, Barth (1990) suggests that teachers must "take responsibility for more than the minimum, more than what goes on within the four walls of the classroom" (p. 31). Maeroff (1988) further states, "Teacher empowerment can be better appreciated if it is viewed as professionalization rather than an exercise in worrying who is the boss" (p. 53). Fullan and Hargreaves (1991) indicate that "it is individuals and small groups of teachers and principals who must create the school and professional culture they want" (p. 107). Given the perspectives of these authors, the staff at St. Gabriel would be encouraged to re-examine their responsibility for those elements of the existing culture with which they are unhappy. As Leithwood and Jantzi (1990) claimed, establishing a collaborative culture involves a change in staff member's individual and shared understandings of their current purpose and practices, and it provides an "enhanced capacity to solve future problems, individually and collegially" (p. 30). Bill no doubt would need to willingly consider a shift from the predominant attributes of a transactional style to the attributes of transformational leadership. According to Sergiovanni (1990) this would involve cultural and moral leadership to bond staff together in a "set of purposes, a cause, a vision of what the school is and can become, a set of beliefs about what teaching and learning should be, a set of values and standards to which they adhere, a conviction" (p. 27).

Most meetings reflected a pre-determined agenda in both content and format as a way of controlling communications from Bill to the group. Information about extra-curricular activities flowed from Bill to the staff with periodic involvement by committee members such as those which existed for track and field, Project Gonzaga, socials, and lental celebrations. St. Gabriel had not functioned with many committees nor had a staff council existed. Monday morning meetings created an opportunity for staff to become informed. These meetings were technical/managerial in nature resulting in clarification and elaboration of activities for the upcoming week.

Periodic memos served the purpose of ensuring that teachers were implementing expectations. Memos on the use of the library and on the Art in-service were illustrations of times when a more participatory, collaborative approach to problem-solving and decision-making may have created more commitment and ownership on the part of staff.

The functioning of Project Gonzaga was also problematic. Staff relations among teachers of Grades 5 to 8 were strained because of ineffective leadership. The expectations and vision that Bill had for middle years students were not being translated into realizable goals under the leadership of the chairperson of Project Gonzaga, Henry.

Parent Council meetings indicated that parents served a fundraising function, rather than acting as true partners in the teaching-learning activities of the school. The bi-monthly school newsletter directed information to the home in a way which

would communicate requests rather than solicit feedback into the decision-making process. The newsletter did not share information on the teaching-learning process, nor did it invite involvement in the daily learning activities of the school.

A variety of verbal, physical, and behavioral artifacts reinforced certain expectations Bill held for the staff. All teachers were to be at school by 8:30 a.m. and in their classrooms by 8:40 a.m. to meet students as they arrived. All teachers consistently fulfilled this expectation. However, less consistency was found in relation to classroom environments. It became apparent that Bill had neither verbalized nor followed up on expectations around classroom cleanliness since senior classrooms remained run-down. Staff from K to 5 appeared troubled by the look of these classrooms. However, they did not raise their concerns with the teachers involved. Rather, they held Bill responsible for the environment of the school. They underestimated their collective responsibility for the school climate beyond their own classroom doors.

In the discussion of the leadership assumption, reference was made to the importance of a shared vision and an academic focus. Hallinger (1981) and Shoemaker and Fraser (1981) found that effective schools possess a clear sense of mission with a specific emphasis on academic performance and dedication to academic excellence. Effective schools care the most about instructional learning in all of the school's endeavour (Wellish et al., 1978; Edmonds, 1979; Rutter, 1979; Squires et al., 1981; Brookover et al., 1982). A sense of mission based on a consistent philosophy is shared by teachers, pupils, and administrators (Rutter et al.,

1979; Leithwood and Montgomery, 1982; Murphy et al., 1983; Simpson, 1990). A clear set of school-wide academic and behaviour goals are embodied in school norms which prize student achievement. Teachers, parents, and students share the same understanding of these goals (Wynne, 1980) because all people involved in the school agree to the importance of this mission. A shared mission provides teachers the opportunity to reach agreement about what is valued, to develop a common language around their beliefs, and to channel the energy that will assist them in working towards the same direction. Sizer (1991) contends that it is through "challenging long-held assumptions, negotiating compromises, and being decisive about what's truly important" in the goals of the school that lasting improvements will occur.

No other variable has been found to be more consistently related to school effectiveness than high expectations (Purkey and Smith, 1983, p. 427). In a climate of high expectations, staff members expect students to do well, they believe students have the capacity to do well, they believe in their ability to influence student achievement, they accept responsibility for student achievement, and they hold themselves accountable for student learning. The norm of high expectations is translated into specific school and classroom policies, practices, and behaviours: regularly assigned and graded homework, participation in co-curricular activities only if grades are high, and notification of parents when expectations are not being met (Brookover et al., 1978).

From the data I collected, it appeared that a combination of assumption one (that the Catholic faith and the Christian value system underlie all school activities) and

assumption three (that children's social needs are emphasized at the expense of academic learning) provided a shared vision for the staff at St. Gabriel. The principal's sense of mission was based on the Catholic faith and the Christian value system. Socialization was more of a priority than was academic learning. Most Project Gonzaga staff members functioned within this mission while the K to Grade 4 teachers implemented it with various interpretations. Many of the K to Grade 4 teachers established norms for academic achievement and held students responsible for their performance. These teachers expected students to do well, they believed that the students had the capacity to do so, they believed in their own ability to influence student achievement, and they felt accountable for student learning. Therefore, while the entire staff accepted the religious mission, their implementation of socialization and academic learning goals varied.

Visual displays throughout the school reflected far more religious messages than learning topics. Rituals and ceremonies including the daily recitation of the Lord's Prayer, regular Wednesday classroom masses, weekly religion classes, and religious celebrations around Lent and Easter periods became sources of common goals for students. Rituals, ceremonies, and social activities were seldom related to academic learning objectives. These events embodied a curriculum related to the learning of religion and socialization that included expectations for total commitment and participation by staff and students. A large proportion of archival material including correspondence, memos, newsletters, board of education documents, staff meeting agendas, and in-service reinforced the emphasis on the Catholic faith and the

Christian value system and on socialization activities. Many memos to parents requested co-operation with target behaviours related to religious topics like Lent, reconciliation (confession), first holy communion, and confirmation, and to such social activities as noon hot dog lunches, out-of-school trips, and fun night.

The church and most parents expected St. Gabriel to be strongly committed to the ideals of Christian education and to perform this function by providing a Christian-oriented environment within the learning context of the school. Teachers commented on how the Catholic faith and the Christian value system influenced how they disciplined and dealt with students. Interviews revealed a difference of opinion in the staff's perception of their religious instructional role dependent upon their own level of practice as Catholics. While parents expected the school to build religious values that supported the home, students did not see this mission as necessarily desirable beyond Grade 4.

An examination of the data revealed that teachers were empowered to make decisions on the teaching-learning situation with minimal monitoring. Opportunities were seldom created to talk about teaching and learning. Academics were not the priority of the school, and St. Gabriel appeared to lack direction beyond a religious focus. Even this focus confused some teachers who had difficulty applying Bill's philosophy which was based on gospel values and on social needs at the expense of academic learning. When learning matters did surface an inordinate amount of time and attention was focused on the special needs students rather than on the entire student body. As a participant observer, I was surprised that, while the staff was not

happy about the lack of attention to academic learning, they did little to address the problem. Most staff members conducted their professional work privately. Established work routines continued. Teachers did not seek ways to work together or to learn from each other in order to improve their expertise. Rather, they chose to blame their leader for not providing developmental supervision, feedback, or opportunities to talk about teaching and learning. Many activities unrelated to learning goals were used to motivate apathetic students who were described by teachers as having a low desire to succeed. Staff members did not see their students as being motivated or as striving to meet academic goals. Yet the teachers appeared unable to meet the challenges of this reality.

Aside from fulfilling its religious function, St. Gabriel staff had not chosen to focus on academic learning. The few topics related to learning which surfaced during the study period were not dealt with through a shared vision on instruction. High expectations and built-in strategies for assessment characteristic of effective schools were not incorporated into learning plans. Rather, all topics were influenced by living out the three cultural assumptions deciphered by this study. Education Week activities were directed to staff by administration. Staff members accepted and implemented the plan without input or criticism. Even though they appeared not to be satisfied prior to or after the event, little change was evident. Enriched learning opportunity (ELO) nominations were dealt with as an announcement to fill out applications for referrals. While special needs students of lower ability received resource room attention, individualized instruction for students with enrichment

needs was dependent upon classroom teachers. When teachers saw the amount of work required to nominate a student, little happened. The Canadian Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) announcement from administration drew some reaction to change the practice at St. Gabriel regardless of central office's expectation that testing occur only at the Grades 2 and 7 levels. This was the only occasion during the research period that I observed the staff become vocal about its belief and attempt to influence a decision they had been handed. I wondered whether some teachers from Grades 1 to 4 saw the test as a vehicle to confirm that they were doing a good job while exposing other teachers who they felt were not offering a good academic program. The brief half-hour discussion of the Common Essential Learnings (CELs) was simply an opportunity to share understandings about technological literacy. Implementation and application of the CELs was deferred to the fall of the next school year. In no way could I observe any attempt to relate the four topics to a school plan with an academic focus.

Brookover et al. (1982) maintain that the school's climate has an impact upon how its members perform since it is the tone or atmosphere which results from the interaction among teachers, students, and the principal. In effective schools, specific attention is given to the creation and maintenance of a climate that is conducive to learning (Edmonds, 1979; Rutter et al., 1979). Four vital aspects of a school's climate emphasize the worth of all individuals in the school: pervasive caring, tidy physical surroundings, order and discipline, and meaningful student participation. The principal was credited by staff and parents for creating good relationships among

all those who worked at St. Gabriel. He was seen as creating a caring atmosphere by showing interest in all teachers, students, and parents. Hersch (1982) and Joyce et al. (1983) describe how a caring climate is influenced by high expectations, an emphasis on learning, and the use of rewards and incentives. Bill did not choose a learning focus to create a positive school climate. Rather, he implemented a religious focus where socialization superseded learning. The physical surroundings of his school were clean, decorated, and carefully attended. Except for a few classrooms at the senior level, staff members appeared to accept responsibility for the appearance of classrooms and hallways.

Brookover et al. (1978), Edmonds (1979), Wynne (1980), Anderson (1982), and Murphy et al. (1985a) claim that effective schools maintain a safe, orderly environment for learning through a systematic set of discipline policies and practices. Bill administered St. Gabriel in such a way that the rules seemed to be reasonable and clearly understood. Although the rule of the week was posted and reinforced by daily intercom messages, other rules were expected to be enforced by teachers in their classrooms and while on supervision. According to Joyce et al. (1983), more effective schools tend to have fewer rules, and the socialization emphasis is geared towards rights and responsibilities. While this goal was effectively implemented from Grades K to 6, discipline problems surfaced at Grade 7 and 8. A lack of respect for some senior teachers and a dislike of the principal by some senior students may have contributed to the discipline problem.

Another key to school effectiveness is meaningful student participation.

Involvement of students creates what Rutter et al. (1979) and Mortimore et al. (1987b) label the positive ethos of the school. In such schools, there is a positive attitude toward young people and a positive attitude toward learning. Students are provided opportunities to learn responsibility, to practice leadership, and to form close ties to their school while learning skills necessary for success. St. Gabriel attempted to use Project Gonzaga as a vehicle to bring senior students together to support each other, to share experiences, and to develop an attachment to their school. For a variety of reasons discussed in Chapter 7, success was limited. The student government did not function successfully due to a lack of leadership on the part of the vice-principal. Aside from sports teams, interest clubs were non-existent. School spirit was not built through pep rallies or assemblies. At St. Gabriel, religion and socialization were used to encourage pro-social conduct. Events such as the penny race during Share Lent and the Stations of the Cross showing acts of good deed were designed as visible ways to help students develop courtesy, teamwork, and generosity. Thus, the conceptualization, articulation, and publication of criteria for good social performance within the student body were built into the assumptions surrounding religion and social needs at the expense of a focus on academic learning.

Rutter et al. (1979) have shown that the extent to which school staff and parents work together to promote student learning is related to school effectiveness. Murphy et al. (1985b, p. 368) speaks of four activities and processes which contribute to co-operation and support: frequent communication from the school suggesting ways for parents to help the school reach its goal; structured parent input into these goals and

decisions; opportunities for parents to participate in school functions, activities, and classroom instruction; opportunities for parents to learn about school programs; and suggestions for how parents can help their children with academic subjects. The type of parental involvement I observed at St. Gabriel was limited to fundraising. Through the parent council, parents assisted with preparation for hot dog days and fun night. The principal's communication to parents through the newsletters was to inform. No opportunity appeared to exist to influence goals and decisions, and St. Gabriel did not have a written planning document for circulation. While parents were always welcomed at school functions, virtually no parental involvement in classroom instruction was evident. There did not appear to be a forum for informing parents about any of the school's programs or about how they could help their children at home. Perhaps this deficit helps explain the comments of parents regarding learning at St. Gabriel. While the parents of St. Gabriel trusted the school, interviews revealed a perception by parents that learning was not the focus. Parents were uncertain as to their children's academic performance. Some parents questioned teachers' suitability for the grades they taught. Most parents wanted their children to bring homework home and to be taught how to study. They felt that a welcome, friendly atmosphere existed at St. Gabriel but that conditions needed to be created in which parents could work together with teachers in pursuit of academic excellence.

One final category covered in the literature on school effectiveness involves staff development. Goodlad (1983) argues that to maintain a productive educational

environment schools must create a satisfying place of work for the individuals who inhabit them. Goldman et al. (1990) found that when principals bring staff together with a clearly expressed set of common values which focus goal-setting on children's learning, a culture for change is created which builds on collaborative decision-making. Bentzen (1974) notes that schools where teachers and the principal collaboratively talk together about what they want to happen, decide about intentions, formulate action plans, and systematically reflect upon the effects of plans, develop a participatory type of staff development that becomes a problem solving component of school life. In order for staff to engage in this process, Purkey and Smith (1983) contend that a culture which channels staff and students in the direction of successful teaching and learning must be developed. This culture entails a belief system or set of values that states a purpose for and that emphasizes the importance of transformational relations and collaboration in achieving school effectiveness. When these norms are present, Johnson (1983) states that staff members are better disposed towards being involved in self-improvement and staff development activities which ultimately improve student achievement in the classroom.

Chapters 5, 6, and 7 on the cultural assumptions of St. Gabriel indicated that the teachers were not necessarily satisfied with their working conditions. Staff members admitted that they worked under a transactional style of administration which limited the degree of joint planning and decision-making. They did not work in a culture focused on teaching and learning with a value of transformational relations and collaboration. Rather they felt isolated from one another in accomplishing teaching

goals for which they were individually responsible. Staff members did not see how encouraging one another could work towards improving the situation. They did not envisage any responsibility for developing support, trust, and openness. Value differences continued to separate teachers and to erode the role they needed to assume in focusing on academic learning. Staff development plans during the school year included discussions about teacher welfare-pension, special needs students, and St. Gabriel School. The March 16 meeting which focused on St. Gabriel involved a half-hour discussion of positives and negatives. In groups of nine, teachers talked about supervision, special needs students, the equipment and teacher workrooms, reporting to parents, STF/STA, and staff relationships. The principal led this activity with strategic choices of topics and group size to guard against the raising of "real issues". He used this professional development topic to rationalize his inability to interview staff individually as the school grew larger. How this topic was related to staff development was uncertain to me. Peer coaching was dealt with at the April 13 meeting by asking for the involvement of interested staff. Bill explained his need to have teachers rely on peer coaching since he could not provide individual feedback due to the size of the staff. Aside from these two opportunities which Bill labelled staff development, no other formal staff development activities occurred at the school during the study period. At the February Teachers' Institute, sessions on printmaking and clay in-services were held. As well, a variety of sessions were available for staff to attend on their own accord. The nature of staff development at St. Gabriel did not reflect the staff development descriptors characterized by the school effectiveness

literature. Teachers did not display any initiative to change their staff development program or to influence the direction it appeared to be going.

The three cultural assumptions at St. Gabriel revealed the existence of mutually reinforcing expectations and activities surrounding a religion and socialization focus over a learning priority implemented within a transactional leadership style. The possibility of establishing a school culture which encompassed school effectiveness characteristics within the context of these three basic cultural assumptions was problematic. St. Gabriel did not have a shared vision on academic learning where planned curriculum, high expectations, and ongoing assessment reflected school academic goals. Collaborative and transformational relations were not characteristic of the staff.

Most teachers felt the principal was the key reason their school functioned the way it did; at the same time they accepted little responsibility for their role in the process. Goodlad (1984) recommends that if:

> teachers can be persuaded to take the first step - namely an assessment of their own classrooms . . . a beginning will have been made. Otherwise, the problem is shrugged off as existing somewhere else . . . . The power for improving each school lies with the principal, teachers, students, and parents associated with it. (p. 129)

Goodlad suggests that efforts at improvement must encompass the entire school as a system of parts which interact and affect the others: "The school must become largely self-directing. The people connected with it must develop a capacity for affecting renewal and establishing mechanisms to do this" (p.276). St. Gabriel staff members were capable of establishing religious and social expectations and activities

which were mutually reinforcing. If all teachers accepted their individual and collective roles in the process of cultural change, I believe they could similarly establish a focus on academic learning. Such an emphasis could bring about the changes necessary for developing the elements of effective schools.

This study examined the three assumptions of St. Gabriel School within the context of the school effectiveness literature. It revealed that the basic elements of St. Gabriel's existing culture were not based on mutually agreed upon expectations and goals necessary for effective schools. The staff at this school could not afford to be complacent about either leadership or culture management according to Schein (1985b), since both were central to understanding organizations and to making them effective.

Research Question 5

Does Schein's (1985a) conceptual model, which was developed for the study of basic cultural assumptions, have utility for deciphering school culture?

The major purpose of this study was to decipher St. Gabriel's basic cultural assumptions. According to Schein (1985a, p. 91), assumptions involve those guiding beliefs which are invented, discovered, or developed; that have consistently solved the organization's external and internal problems; that are considered valid; and that are taught to teachers, students, and support staff as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to the school's problems and activities. The focus was to learn the shared meanings held by the people of St. Gabriel in order to identify the basic cultural assumptions that had formed. Schein argues that the underlying

assumptions can be brought back to awareness through a focused inquiry using the efforts of both an insider who lives the unconscious assumptions and an outsider who helps uncover the assumptions by asking the right kinds of questions. The basic assumptions could be raised by a process of inquiry using the Joint Exploration Through Iterative Interviewing approach. This methodology does not require initial definite questions to ask or things to observe. Instead, Schein provides theoretical categories or problems of external adaptation and survival, problems of internal integration, and basic underlying assumptions around which cultural paradigms form to alert the researcher to areas suitable for observation. From these observations, patterns of responses are elicited. These emerging patterns provide tentative hypotheses with which to further interview and test key insiders. Through the application of these procedures, St. Gabriel's basic assumptions appeared.

Not having predetermined hypotheses to be tested in the field provided a challenge in learning about the meanings of social action at St. Gabriel. Themes emerged as data were collected and analyzed. Interview questions came to be based on issues raised from my observations of verbal, behavioral, and physical artifacts, from the data I obtained from archival material and documents, and from informal participation as a researcher in the school. Each form of data came to be more significant when it appeared to confirm the hypotheses. Patience and effort were necessary over the four-month period because of the methodology of iterative interviewing, observation, and analysis of archival material. Living in St. Gabriel's culture was necessary in order to observe and to interview the participants

repeatedly, to access the relevant organizational documents, and to capitalize on the other aspects of Schein's methodology.

Artifacts were observed, interviews took place with key informants, and archival material was analyzed. Simultaneous processing of the data enabled cross-checking of the information collected by one method with information from the other two methods so as to ensure credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the data. The verbal, behavioral, and physical artifacts provided the data from which I developed questions for interviewing key informants. I had no difficulty interviewing different constituent groups who had a variety of perspectives and a diversity of information. Each respondent had been at St. Gabriel for a different length of time, possessed a special knowledge not so evident to others, and was willing to share information that contributed to insights about St. Gabriel. A wide perspective was gained from interviewing the principal, vice-principal, secretary, librarian, custodian, teachers from K to Grade 8, two newly hired staff members, the resource room teachers, paraprofessionals, students of Grades 2 to 8, parents representing all grades, and community members. I had informal conversations with the Core French teacher, Grade 1, 2, 3, and 5 teachers who did not originally wish to be involved in the iterative interviewing methodology. I was overwhelmed with the willingness of people to participate. Probing to check and to confirm hypotheses seemed easier when the informants appeared to look forward to the interviews.

The archival material provided a rich and unobtrusive source of data that helped me to verify information acquired by other means. Although the analysis of this

material was time consuming, it was a necessary source of confirmation of other data.

The data collection design outlined by Schein provided an emergent plan for a highly interactive process of data gathering. At the outset, I used broad exploration and triangulation to verify the accuracy of information I obtained from my observation of artifacts, my analysis of archival material, and my iterative interviews with key informants. During the beginning stages of this study, a majority of time was spent on initial interviews with 21 staff members, groups of students representing each grade level, and parents with whom interviews could be arranged. The questions were broad and general. Responses were analyzed, were synthesized, integrated, and related to observations of artifacts and findings from archival material. As I completed this first phase, tentative hypotheses were derived. A second set of interviews was conducted to check for accuracy, to find verification among interviewees, and to probe further. Some informants came to be interviewed more than others, for several reasons. Some informants shared at a level of depth which required more time in the interview session. Their way of elaborating was often more revealing than the brief, simple responses offered by others. Some staff informants worked at school both early and late in the day and they treated the interview as part of the work day. These informants felt that they were benefitting as they practised reflective thinking. For other staff members, interviews meant an inconvenience in an already busy schedule; I did not impose upon these people often. Accessing parents for interviews also necessitated many home visits. Scheduling outside of the normal working hours of the school day was required. I was cautious

about the frequency with which students were removed from classes since their absence created extra work for the teacher and student in catching up with what was missed. At the same time, students did not appreciate missing recess breaks, giving up part of their lunch break, coming in early or staying late simply to be interviewed. Eventually I came to confirm certain patterns and hypotheses that could be verified to be the basic assumptions of the school's culture. Schein's conceptual framework was useful in the deciphering of these assumptions.

Schein's Joint Exploration Through Iterative Interviewing activity steps and schedules also proved to be useful in analyzing data. Throughout the entire data collection phase, the formulation of hypotheses about the school's assumptions became the basic tool used to collect and to analyze data. The need to analyze concurrently data from observations, interviews, and archival material acted as an advance organizer. The cycle repeated itself as more evidence, explanations, and elaborations, were sought about my questions and hunches. Schein's checklist of external adaptation and internal integration issues provided a helpful reference. The accuracy, credibility, and consistency of pieces of information were consolidated in final interviews in order to refine the school's basic assumptions with key informants. At this point I was able to write descriptions of the basic assumptions operating at St. Gabriel School along with their origin, their development, and their endurance within the school.

In short, Schein's (1985a) conceptual model developed for the study of basic cultural assumptions did have utility in deciphering the culture of St. Gabriel.

Schein's analysis of organizational culture as existing at three different levels proved to be an important distinction as data were collected. While "visible artifacts," or the constructed environment of St. Gabriel, were easy to obtain, it was harder to interpret the underlying logic as to why the people at St. Gabriel were behaving a certain way. "Values" assisted in the analysis of the reasons that members behaved the way they did. Since values were hard to observe directly, they needed to be inferred from interviews as people discussed the reason for their behaviour. The underlying reasons remained concealed or unconscious at the third level. How St. Gabriel's people actually perceived, thought, and felt constituted their "underlying assumptions." Schein's Joint Exploration Through Iterative Interviewing methodology enabled me to bring these underlying assumptions to the surface. It can, therefore, be concluded that Schein provided a valuable theoretical framework and an appropriate methodology for studying the deepest level of an organization, that is, its cultural assumptions.

Theoretical, Methodological and Practical Implications

The major research findings and conclusions drawn from this study were discussed in the previous section under each of the five research questions that formed this study. Based upon these findings and conclusions, theoretical, methodological, and practical implications are proposed below.

Implications for Theory

1. Schein's Joint Exploration Through Iterative Interviewing methodology has

theoretical utility and can be applied as a frame of reference for the further study of schools as cultures.

2. School culture appears to hold promise as a theoretical paradigm. Further theoretical development regarding the application of school culture to school effectiveness would be valuable. This study may provide valuable insight with respect to current educational practises and their implications for school effectiveness.
3. The study of school culture requires joint exploration between an outside investigator and various inside informants who live in the organization under study and who embody its culture. Determining an organization's basic assumptions must be a joint effort.

Implications for Research Methodology

1. A true understanding of the culture of a school can only be obtained by living within the culture for an extended period of time and by using a cultural lens. Different types of studies with symbolic emphasis on values, assumptions, norms, beliefs, heroes, heroines, rituals, and other cultural elements are required, as empirical studies with rational and technical emphases cannot reveal the type of data collected in this study.
2. The use of triangulation to incorporate various sources of data collection methods is necessary to ensure the trustworthiness or credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of findings.
3. The observation of verbal, behavioral and physical artifacts along with the

collection of data from archival material together provide rich sources from which to generate interview questions while enabling cross-checking of data collected.

4. The interviewing of different constituent groups with a variety of perspectives and a diversity of information is necessary to determine how widely shared an assumption is and, therefore, whether it truly represents an underlying assumption of the culture. The voice of students contributed significantly to exploring further puzzlements and hunches which eventually led to the deciphering of the assumptions at St. Gabriel.
5. To encourage ongoing, open, honest, trusting relations between researchers and principals of schools, clear understandings and agreements must be reached at the outset as to access of archival material.

Implications for Practise

1. Principals have a dominant influence on the cultures of schools. As educational administrators, they should understand how to assess the effectiveness of their schools beyond an examination of the school effectiveness variables. If principals were able to identify their own cultural assumptions, as well as those that influence teachers' performance, they would be better equipped to effect changes at interpretive levels of meaning, that is, in what people value, believe, and assume. Principals would also develop a new lens from which to understand the present realities of their schools. Organizational culture would be seen as a framework for understanding and

explaining the behaviour of educational organizations. Since cultural change requires new ways of thinking and behaving, the revealing of existing assumptions becomes a critical step in influencing the future direction of the school.

2. A collaborative culture lies within the control of all those who participated in it. All teachers must accept individual and collective roles in the process of effecting the cultural changes necessary to develop the elements of effective schools. Administrators alone cannot build commitment to culture building norms.
3. Physical, verbal, and behavioral artifacts such as rituals and ceremonies serve to reinforce values and beliefs by providing regular patterns that generate the commitment of those involved in a school. Staff members are encouraged to examine these elements of culture as sources of understanding the symbolic aspects of life at school.
4. In order for staff members to be disposed towards being involved in self-assessment and self-improvement, the school culture must entail a belief system which values transformational relations and collaboration directed towards successful teaching and learning.
5. Parental involvement, co-operation, and support in helping schools reach their goals have been shown to enhance effective school cultures. It is recommended that staff members create conditions in which they can work together with the parents in the building of cultures which pursue academic

excellence.

6. Schools, with special programs for middle years students, are cautioned to ensure that the nature of the activities planned relate to learning goals if effectiveness is desired in the school culture.

7. Brief, informal visitations to schools may leave good impressions about the functioning of the school. Probing beneath the surface levels of initial observations results in a different version of reality. Researchers not intensely involved in studying the values and assumptions of a school would likely make judgements and draw conclusions based on visible behavioral patterns found in all schools. In order to examine the level of a school's effectiveness, an examination and an understanding of the cultural assumptions operating within the school must be undertaken. This implies that supervisors, such as superintendents, need to spend much more time within schools in order to understand their cultures.

Implications for Further Research

1. This study focused on a large Catholic elementary school with a Catholic Board of Education in a large, urban setting. It is suggested that the study of school culture be extended to:

   (i) different kinds and types of schools

      (a) protestant
      (b) Christian
      (c) private
      (d) French Immersion
      (e) inner city
      (f) suburban

(g) rural
(h) elementary
(i) secondary
(j) junior high schools
(k) K to 12 schools

(ii) different sizes of schools

(iii) different ages of schools (lengths of history)

(iv) schools with principals of a variety of tenure

2. This study involved deciphering the basic underlying assumptions of the stakeholders of the school. It is suggested that future research examine the views of members of sub-cultures who may not fully embody the operative basic assumptions of their school. The implications of the role of sub-cultures in influencing school culture and school effectiveness would be worth examination.

3. The role relationship between the principal and vice-principal had a significant impact on the functioning of this study school and, therefore, the type of culture that existed. It is suggested that future research examine the influence of this role relationship on the culture of schools.

A Concluding Comment

Prior to this study, I have worked in six different schools, each of which experienced different degrees of effectiveness. I have been a term consultant responsible for work in all 51 schools in my school division. Throughout my career, I have searched for a better understanding of those factors that affected the quality

of education as these schools changed over time. The impetus for this study came from my perception that the subjective interpretive aspects of school life appeared to hold the values and beliefs that gave meaning to activity in schools. After examining the school effectiveness research, which reflected a strong rational and technical emphasis, the cultural approach to school effectiveness appeared to be a viable alternative for identifying elements which helped schools experience success.

With the help of Schein's (1985a) conceptual model, this study confirmed the ability to decipher basic cultural assumptions that determine how people perceive, think, and feel about school life. That which the stakeholders of St. Gabriel valued led to certain behaviours. As these behaviours were used to solve problems, the values gradually transformed into underlying assumptions about how things should be. As the assumptions came to be taken for granted, they dropped out of awareness and became part of the operating culture of the group. Having deciphered these underlying cultural assumptions, I was able to understand how the values and beliefs these people continued to hold created meaning at St. Gabriel and influenced the level of effectiveness within their school.

If the process of achieving school effectiveness is to continue, there is a critical need to examine school culture as the focal point for achieving school effectiveness. We must encourage the application of the concepts of culture to school improvement efforts. Schools will need to look within in order to reveal the basic elements of their existing culturès before they attempt to emulate the characteristics of effective schools. When school personnel are aware of those assumptions which form their

existing culture, they will have a better understanding as to how these assumptions influence members' performance and school activities. Finally, they will have revealed the implications of these assumptions within their culture for future school effectiveness.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

SCHEIN'S JOINT EXPLORATION THROUGH ITERATIVE INTERVIEWING

Method Steps

1. **Entry and Focus on Surprises:** The interested outsider enters the organization or group to be deciphered and begins to experience the culture both actively through systematic observation and possibly through encountering "surprises".
2. **Systematic Observation and Checking:** The outsider engages in systematic observation to calibrate the surprising experiences as best he or she can and to verify that the surprising events are indeed repeatable experiences and thus likely to be a reflection of the culture, not merely random or idiosyncratic events.
3. **Locating a Motivated Insider:** The outsider can now find someone in the culture who analytically is capable of deciphering what is going on and who is motivated to do so.
4. **Revealing the Surprises, Puzzlements and Hunches:** Once a relationship has been established with the insider, the outsider can reveal his or her observations, surprises, reactions, and even his or her own projections, theories, and hunches about what is going on in the culture.
5. **Joint Exploration to Find Explanation:** The insider attempts to explain to the outsider what the surprising event means, or, if the outsider has a hunch, the insider elaborates on or corrects the outsider's interpretation. Both parties now have to probe systematically for the underlying assumptions and the pattern among them. At this point, the problems of external adaptation and survival; the problems of internal integration; and the categories of basic assumptions become relevant as mental checklists to ensure that all of the cultural terrain is being covered.
6. **Formalizing Hypotheses:** The output of Step 5 is explanations that make sense, stated in the form of underlying assumptions, but these assumptions can be taken only as hunches about the culture at this point, and must be formalized into hypotheses.

7. **Systematic Checking and Consolidation:** Through new interviews or observations, the interested insider and the outsider now search for new evidence. At this point systematic interviewing of informants may be in order, since the outsider now knows enough to know where to look, what to look for, and when to ask.
8. **Pushing to the Level of Assumptions:** The outsider takes the confirmed hypotheses and attempts to state clearly what assumption is operating and how that assumption affects behavior.
9. **Perpetual Recalibrations:** As new data surface, and the outsider becomes better acquainted with the culture, he or she can refine and modify the model of the culture he or she has begun to construct, and he or she can test that model on other interested insiders, who must be interested and analytical.
10. **Formal Written Description:** As a final test of the understanding of the assumptions of a given organizational culture, it is necessary to write down assumptions and to show how they relate to each other in a meaningful pattern to articulate the paradigm.

Schein, E.H. (1985). Organizational culture and leadership: A dynamic view. (pp. 114 - 118), San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

APPENDIX B

THE PROBLEMS OF EXTERNAL ADAPTATION AND SURVIVAL

1. **Mission and Strategy**: Obtaining a shared understanding of core mission, primary task, manifest and latent functions.
2. **Goals**: Developing consensus on goals, as derived from the core mission.
3. **Means**: Developing consensus on the means to be used to attain the goals, such as the organizational structure, division of labor, reward system, and authority system.
4. **Measurement**: Developing consensus on the criteria to be used in measuring how well the group is doing in fulfilling its goals, such as the information and control system.
5. **Correction**: Developing consensus on the appropriate remedial or repair strategies to be used if goals are not being met.

Schein, E.H. (1985). Organizational culture and leadership: A dynamic view. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, p. 53.

APPENDIX C

THE PROBLEMS OF INTERNAL INTEGRATION

1. **Common Language and Conceptual Categories**: If members cannot communicate with and understand each other, a group is impossible by definition.
2. **Group Boundaries and Criteria for Inclusion and Exclusion**: One of the most important areas of culture is the shared consensus on who is in and who is out and by what criteria one determines membership.
3. **Power and Status**: Every organization must work out its pecking order, its criteria and rules for how one gets, maintains, and loses power; consensus in this area is crucial to help members manage feelings of aggression.
4. **Intimacy, Friendship, and Love**: Every organization must work out its rules of the game for peer relationships, for relationships between the sexes, and for the manner in which openness and intimacy are to be handled in the context of managing the organization's tasks.
5. **Rewards and Punishments**: Every group must know what its heroic and sinful behaviors are; what gets rewarded with property, status and power; and what gets punished in the form of withdrawal of the rewards and, ultimately, excommunication.
6. **Ideology and "Religion"**: Every organization, like every society faces unexplainable and inexplicable events, which must be given meaning so that members can respond to them and avoid the anxiety of dealing with the unexplainable and uncontrollable.

Schein, E.H. (1985). Organizational culture and leadership: A dynamic view. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, p. 66.

APPENDIX D
SCHEIN'S INTERVIEW METHODOLOGY

1. Let's go back over the history of your organization. Can you tell me when it was founded and describe the events that occurred at that time?
   a) Who was involved? (Try to locate the important founding figures or leaders who might have been the real culture creators, and find out what their values, biases, assumptions, and goals were.)
   b) What were the critical problems in getting started? (Try to find out what the survival issues were and how they were handled.)
   c) Were there specific goals that emerged? Ways of working? Key values that emerged early?
2. What was the next critical incident that occurred? (A critical incident is any major event that threatened survival, or caused re-examination or reformulation of goals or ways of working, or involved membership or inclusion issues. To discover a critical incident, the interviewer might ask the respondent to recall events that caused problems for which the organization had no ready solution, or events that challenged existing norms and solutions (such as an act of insubordination, or anything interpersonal that was unusual or tension provoking and required some kind of response).
   a) Tell me how people were feeling about what was happening. Were they anxious or angry or delighted or what?
   b) What was done? Who did anything? (Here the interviewer tries to elicit in detail the nature of the response and the key actors who were responsible for the response. If an informant says, for example, "We are faced with a cutback, but instead of laying people off, we went to all of us working fewer hours and taking a pay cut," the interviewer might ask: "Who thought of this idea?" "How was it implemented?")
   c) What was the meaning of the response? What goals, values, and assumptions were implied or explicitly stated in the response?
   d) What happened? Did the response work? How did people feel subsequently? Did the response continue? (The interviewer then asks questions about the next crisis or critical event, around which the same series of questions would be asked again).

Schein, E.H. (1985). Organizational culture and leadership: A dynamic view. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, pp. 119 - 120.

APPENDIX E

BASIC UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS AROUND WHICH CULTURAL PARADIGMS FORM

1. **Humanity's Relationship to Nature:** At the organizational level, do the key members view the relationship of the organization to its environment as one of dominance, submission, harmonizing, finding an appropriate niche, or what?
2. **The Nature of Reality and Truth:** The linguistic and behavioral rules that define what is real and what is not, what is a "fact", how truth is ultimately to be determined, and whether truth is "revealed" or "discovered" through basic concepts of time and space.
3. **The Nature of Human Nature:** What does it mean to be "human" and what attributes are considered intrinsic or ultimate? Is human nature good, evil or neutral? Are human beings perfectible or not?
4. **The Nature of Human Activity:** What is the "right " thing for human beings to do, on the basis of the above assumptions about reality, the environment, and human nature: to be active, passive, self-developmental, fatalistic, or what? What is work and what is play?
5. **The Nature of Human Relationships:** What is considered to be the "right " way for people to relate to each other, to distribute power and love? Is life co-operative or competitive; individualistic, group collaborative, or communal, based on traditional linear authority, law and charisma, or what?

Schein, E.H. (1985). Organizational culture and leadership: A dynamic view. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, p. 86.

APPENDIX F

February 8, 1989

Dear Parents,

The purpose of this letter is to request permission for your child to be involved in a small group discussion(s) in which he/she will be asked to share some viewpoints on St. School.

This request is part of an approximately four month project being conducted in St. School under the authorization of the Saskatoon Catholic Board of Education and your principal, Mr. . The study, which involves deciphering the culture of your school is partly being done through the interviewing of willing staff, students, and parents.

I am presently completing a Ph.D. in educational administration at the University of Saskatchewan, so the findings of this study will be written up in a dissertation. Your child's name will not be revealed and the information learned will be reported only as that of a student at this school.

If you would support your child's involvement in this project please sign the bottom portion of this page and have it returned to the classroom teacher as soon as possible. Thank you for considering this request.

I authorize my child _____ to be involved in this project.

_____

Parent's Signature

APPENDIX G

November 18, 1992

To Whom It May Concern,

In my capacity as the principal of St. School at the time a study was conducted by Mrs. Betty Ann Bodnar, I am able to report that the members of staff including myself agreed to participate in such study. Permission to conduct the study had been granted by the Catholic Board of Education and parents, myself and the staff members were notified of this. We understood that the researcher would take care to keep the responses of individuals anonymous by using pseudonyms whenever quotations of staff members' were used in her document, nor would the school be named.

Further I understand that her work was conducted under the guidance of Dr. Larry Sackney, her Ph.D. supervisor. Throughout the study I and other staff members had opportunities to review the data Mrs. Bodnar would be reporting in her study. This process enabled us to clarify the material that she was writing. I am satisfied that the researcher carried out her study with sensitivity. Accordingly, I have no difficulty with the manner in which she reports her findings.

Yours truly,

Mr. Principal

APPENDIX H

May, 1989

Dear Parents Involved In An Interview For The Study
Of St. School Culture,

As the collection of data at St. School has now come to a close I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your involvement in my research.

Many of you modified your schedules to come down to the school and meet with me and several of you made me feel very welcome in your homes. The detailed information you were able to provide me with brought clarity to my understanding of the over all culture of St. School. In addition, your thoughts and responses gave me a special and separate picture of the parents' and community's views of their school. As a result of the time you made available to me I know my study will be richer in description.

As the challenges of writing up the findings of my work evolve over the next few months I may contact you by phone if I find it necessary to clarify or confirm certain ideas you shared. Otherwise, I wish you a relaxing summer break and encourage your continued involvement in helping shape the culture of St. School as a special place for your child to learn. Thank you.

Yours truly,

Betty Ann Bodnar
Doctoral Candidate
University of Saskatchewan

APPENDIX I

May, 1989

Dear Staff Members of St. School,

As the data collection phase of my research draws to an end, I would like to formally thank each of you for the special role you played in helping my study of your school's culture become a possibility.

From the warm friendly smiles at our beginning meeting, to the soon after willingness to be interviewed and have me come into classrooms, I knew each of you would add to my understandings in a special way. Many of you gave up your few and precious in-school preparatory periods; others ate lunch while we talked; and still others came earlier or left late after a long day so that my interview requests could be accommodated. These concessions happened amidst a very busy schedule, yet never once did any of you appear to avoid a request. In fact, I was overwhelmed at your immediate response to find a time quickly and meet well beyond our scheduled amount of time. I appreciated the trusting relationship of our interviews and thus the depth and detail with which you responded to my questions, many which were not easy or typically talked about. As a result, your thoughts will enhance the quality of my written work.

As the challenges of writing up the findings of my work evolve over the next few months I may contact you if I find it necessary to clarify or confirm certain ideas you shared. Otherwise, I wish you a relaxing summer break and encourage your continued involvement in helping shape the culture of St. School as a special place in which to reach children.

Yours truly,

Betty Ann Bodnar
Doctoral Candidate
University of Saskatchewan

APPENDIX J

LIST OF ST. GABRIEL STAFF INVOLVED IN STUDY

Staff Member	Position
Bill Janzen	Principal
Carl Friesen	Vice Principal
Bonnie Start	Kindergarten
Elaine Grayling	Kindergarten
Anne Fraser	Grade 1
Sandy Deader	Grade 1
Georgina Pinder	Grade 2
Sheila Male	Grade 2
Katie Potter	Grade 2
Pati Gilroy	Grade 3
Hanya Fernuik	Grade 3
Dave Sitter	Grade 4
Effie Carlson	Grade 4
Dianne Pipchuk	Grade 5/6
Connie Spritzer	Grade 5/6
Larry Spencer	Grade 6
Leon Buchko	Grade 7
Henry Weber	Grade 8
Ann Kiddleson	Grade 8
Barbara Mitchell	Itinerant Special Needs Teacher
Rita Sneider	Resource Room
Lillian McCarthy	Librarian
Cathy Spence	Teacher Aide, ESL
Don Zalazny	Custodian
Coralee Craik	Clerk Typist
Peter Belan	Ex-Vice Principal

Guba, E.G. (1981). Criteria for assessing the trustworthiness of naturalistic inquiries. ECTJ, 29 (2), 75 - 91.

APPENDIX K
SAMPLE OF STAFF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Staff Interview Grade _____ Date _____ Time _____ Location

1. Talk to me about yourself. (Background, experience, present)

2. Staff related:

   Describe your job in this school.

   How do you see yourself as part of this staff?

   Describe the teachers in this school.

   If you were influencing the hiring of a staff member what would be important?

   Have there been any staff problems since you have been here?

3. Student related:

   What is the personality of the student body?

   What attributes characterize the students of this school?

   How do students relate to one another?

   What relationship exists between staff and students?

   Talk to me about behavior and discipline.

4. Learning related:

   Comment on the : ability level of students

   attitude towards school

   homework

   marks

   co-operative/competitive orientation

5. Leadership related:

   Describe the type of leadership that occurs at St. Gabriel.

   What types of expectations appear to come from these leaders?

   Talk about standards within the building.

   Tell me about the repoire between leaders and others of the school.

6. Communication related:

   Talk about: interpersonal communications

   relationships

   decision-making

   problem solving

   planning, organizing

   curriculum, instruction

7. Parents/Community related:

   Describe

   How do both influence the operations of the school?

   Comment on involvement level within the school and the nature of that involvement.

   Do you involve parents in your particular classroom?

8. Strengths/Weaknesses

9. Other (Evolving)

APPENDIX L

SAMPLE OF STUDENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Student Interviews Grade _____ Time _____ Location _____

1. Student related:

   If you were to explain to a new student what the kids at this school were like what would you say?

   (i.e. What are they like before school, at recess, noon, after school, in the classroom etc.)

   How do kids here make friends? Are you groupy or like a family?

2. Teacher related:

   Can you describe what the teachers here are like? (as people, as teachers)

   What kinds of things do teachers expect of you in class, and out of class?

   Are the teachers involved with the kids in this school? In what ways?

   If you were hiring another teacher for this school what would you look for?

3. Leadership related:

   Can you tell me about Mr. _____ as a principal. What is he like?

   How does your principal affect/influence you as a student?

   Have you ever met with him alone for any reason?

   Do you have any feelings about your former vice-principal or present vice-principal and how they influence the school?

4. School Atmosphere related:

   What are the attitudes of the students and teachers towards this school?

   How do students and teachers relate to one another and each other?

   Tell me about how you are expected to behave and how discipline is dealt with.

   What is your school spirit like?

   How do you feel about the looks of the school? (i.e. bulletin boards in halls, insides of classrooms, cleanliness, grafitti,

equipment, etc.)

5. Learning related:

What do you think your teacher focuses on the most in teaching you?

How do you approach school? What motivates you? What do you hope to get out of learning?

Tell me about your effort in school.

How do you approach homework?

What do marks mean to you?

Are you made to feel good as a learner?

Are you rewarded?

6. School subject related:

How do you feel about you core subjects? About religion?

7. School activities related:

Tell me about your extra curricular activities.

Tell me about special activities within the school day (i.e. skating, skiing, hotdog day, etc.) Are there enough/too many of these activities?

8. Problem related:

What kinds of problems have come up at this school?
When there is a problem how is it dealt with?

9. Communication home related:

How do your parents feel about this school?

Do they visit or volunteer?

When you talk about school at home what kinds of things are discussed?

10. Strengths/Weaknesses related:

11. Project Grades 5 - 8 related:

What does Project) for you as a student?

12. Other: (Evolving)

APPENDIX M

SAMPLE OF PARENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Parent Interviews Date _____ Name _____ Location _____ Time

1. Family related:

   Tell me about your family members as part of this school.

   How long have you lived in this neighbourhood?

   Was your decision to move here influenced by the school?

   How did you choose this school?

2. Staff related:

   If a friend asked you what the staff at St. Gabriel was like how would you describe it?

   How do you see your child(ren)'s teacher?

   Please comment on the expectations staff have of students.

   If you were hiring a staff member what would you look for?

3. School atmosphere related:

   Are the guidelines for discipline and rules of conduct clearly understood and appropriate?

   Do you see and feel an orderly, purposeful school?

   What is school spirit like?

   What are the attitudes of teachers and students like?

4. Student related:

   What is the personality of the students of this school?

   What kinds of things do your children say about kids at school?

5. Learning related:

   What goals do you have for your children?

   Are your child's learning needs being looked after?

   What do you see the school focussing on?

   Do you feel all subjects are adequately covered?

   Comment on religious instruction.

   Does your child feel happy as a learner? rewarded?

6. Extra curricular related:

Do you feel the extra activities at the school are extensive enough and effective?

7. Leadership related:

How do you feel about the leadership style in this school?

Have you personally had dealings with the principal or vice-principal? Tell me about this experience.

8. Communication related:

How do you get most of your information about the school?

Are newsletters frequent enough and is the content adequate?

Are teachers accessible enough? Do you hear from them?

Do you feel your child's progress and achievement are communicated well?

Is communication one or two way?

If you have a probem how do you go about solving it?

Do you feel you have enough input into decision-making?

9. Facility related:

Comment on the building, equipment, school grounds, etc.

10. Parent/community related:

Describe how the community sees the school.

How do you influence the school's operations as parents?

If the school is criticized what would the criticism be for?

Do you volunteer in the classroom? In other ways?

Do you feel free to visit the school?

11. Strengths/Weaknesses related:

Are you generally satisfied with the education your child is receiving in this school?

What makes the school strong?

Is there a need for any improvement?

12. Other related: (Evolving)

APPENDIX N
SAMPLE OF AN INITIAL MORNING OBSERVATION

Wednesday January 25, 1989

I arrived at school at 8:00 today to get some notion of staff arrival and school happenings before bell time. Most talk in the staffroom was social, however the three Grade 1 teachers seemed to be filling in a reaction form to the Grade 1 report card which they had designed for their school's use. This form would be sent down to central office. _____ informed me that the Grade 2 and 3 teachers had also modified the existing system report card to suit their local needs. (* Must get copies from _____).

At 20 to 9 the staff left the staffroom for their own classrooms. ----- explained that it was an expectation that the staffroom be cleared so teachers would be available to meet their students as they arrived at their classrooms. Formerly there had been a tendency for people to still be visiting or cofeeing after the first bell had rung and behavior problems would occur in the classroom. This way, staff would be expected to arrive at school by 8:30 rather than 8:45 which had become a pattern amongst several staff.

At 8:55 the morning bell went and shortly thereafter _____ came on the intercom with the daily message.

1. The target behavior for this week had to do with keeping boots on racks to help the custodian keep the school clean.
2. Today's prayer was of Christian unity. "We are praying so all christians throughout the world would share a commonality and our interdependence worldwide would be strengthened."

After this preliminary comment by ----- two children recited the Lord's prayer. This was followed by _____ wishing everyone a nice day.

Mrs. _____ Grade 2 Visitation, 9:10 to 9:30

As I entered the classroom a group of twenty students sitting in desks of two beside each other were sharing the weather prediction as part of current affairs. After this was completed three students had been designated to share current affairs for the day. As each student contributed the teacher wrote verbatim what they said on the board. After all three had finished, the class read the statements aloud in a choral way. Then they looked for ed and ing words, talked about root words and the rule about dropping an e before adding ing. This appeared to be part of the whole language approach used in the classroom.

Student responses resulted from a show of hands and students appeared to be very well managed. The next task they were assigned related to using the spelling words of the week to make up sentences. New words requested of their teacher were spelled for students then recorded in a vocabulary notebook.

I observed the classroom environment to include:

1. A religious corner: Lord Have Mercy, Christ Have Mercy, a poster Praise the Lord Anyhow, a poster God is Love, poems Child's Prayer, God Our Father, Now I Lay Me Down To Sleep, Thank You For The World So Sweet
2. Bulletin boards related to: happy helpers, seasons, counting numbers, colors, a calendar, alphabet, spare things to do,

classroom rules, things to do in winter

3. Other: A quilt of student art patches covered a rocking chair which sat in front of a cozy looking reading corner

Mrs. _____ Grade 3 Visitation, 9:50 - 10:40

When I arrived students were playing Simple Simon while waiting for _____ , the catalyst teacher from central office who was going to come in and do a creative thinking activity with the students. _____ arrived late, but began quickly reminding students about listening when others speak, putting their hands up, and responding to her magic signal to stop all activity. The topic taught related to using criteria to help make a decision. Several versions of Mary Had a Little Lamb by a public school librarian were read. Students then talked about which they liked best. The follow-up activity occurred in groups of four. Students were required to select five nursery rhymes and record them along with three criteria for judging a nursery rhyme. Using a scale, they were to determine which rhyme their group liked best. While working in groups each child occupied the role of: reader, encourager, recorder, and checker. To facilitate the activity I helped two groups, as did Mrs. _____ and the catalyst teacher. Students managed quite well with the task which I have often seen reserved for higher grade levels. The activity went far past recess, but studnets did not moan or complain. They were given an extended recess beyond the regular one.

The classroom environment included:

1. Religion: Picture of Mary/Joseph, The Early Christians

poster, a picture of Jesus going to the hills to pray, summoning the disciples and others (drawn by students).

a cross by the clock

2. Student names on lockers
3. A model castle to go with a fairy tale unit
4. Snowflake mobiles
5. A happy birthday corner

Recess Discoveries

_____ came into the staffroom to ask for the "God Suitcase" which was the bag for mass. Most conversation appeared to be social.

Daily staff memos on blackboard: only for VCR, 16mm projector, reminders that day, absent teachers, special things

Supervision schedule: 15 minute blocks, all on before school, 4 during lunch (2 share lunchroom supervision where kids now eat in their own desks instead of on the floor in halls. $2,100.00 per year is made for use by staff for various things).

Calendar: Jan. 30, 8 p.m. parent council meeting, Mondays 8:40 meetings about the week ahead, Tuesday p.m. Gonzaga middle years meetings, primary meetings first and third Monday of the month at noon.

Mrs. _____ Grade 5/6 Visitation, 11:05 - 11:30

I entered _____ room when her class was working on a fraction lesson. _____ had handed out a sheet with circular, square, and other shapes that had been divided into different sections. The

students were engaged as a whole class in coloring in certain fractions. There seemed to be more general chatter and conversation than in other classrooms and students did not have to raise their hands. They just asked aloud for clarification. (I found the lesson very slow paced for this age group given that fractions of this nature are taught back in Grade 3.)

Classroom environment:

1. Religious symbolism seemed absent.
2. Trays were under desks that later fit into side shelves
3. Respect others, respect yourself
4. Names on lockers
5. January monthly calendar
6. Homework reminders
7. Puzzle on baack table, lego on side shelf
8. Student Bulletin Boards: SRC, middle years notices, timetable, care partners, ESL helpers, Today's Leaders

The students did not seem to mind my presence and rather ignored me, continuing on with their task at hand.

Miss _____ Grade 4 Visitation, 11:30 - 12:00

When I entered the classroom students responded as if they had been informed I would be coming. They quickly put away their work and gathered at the front corner of the room on the floor to listen to Little House In The Big Woods being read aloud to them. They were to listen and compare the children's lifestyle and daily rules back then to today. The boys and girls sat in separate groupings,

relaxed and sprawled out on the floor listening intently and reacting appropriately to the teacher's questions throughout.

At the end of this task students were requested to take out their bibles, the Good News New Testament. There were a few groans and complaints, but students quickly found Mathew 18:21. As this lesson began I departed.

Classroom Environment:

1. Religion: Cross above window, Jesus calls Peter to follow him art project.
2. Bulletin Boards: Little House in the Big Woods whole language sheets, For Your Information (timetable, Rules we are expected to follow, odd job squad, homework on flipchart, January calendar), poetry on snow, friendship words, fractions, winter mosaic, parts of speech.

Lunch (Noon Hour)

I ate lunch in the staffroom today. goes home for lunch every day because she lives close by and finds the day too long otherwise. The p.m. K, Grade 1 and Grade 2 teachers, along with the afternoon resource room teachers arrive between 12:15 and 12:30 and seem to go to their rooms without spending much time in the staffroom.

Most conversations were social among the seven people who did stay to eat. At 12:30 when the vice-principal got up to leave a comment was made by the Grade 8 teacher, "Sure is interesting to see how the v.p. finally starts working just because there is

someone watching what is going on around here". I wasn't sure how to react, but kept talking and volunteering information about the former v.p. who had helped _____ open up the school, suggesting there was quite a difference in how the two gentlemen approach their roles. (Will look for clarification).

APPENDIX O
SAMPLE OF A SCHOOL STAFF MEETING

_____ SCHOOL STAFF MEETING - March 16, 1989
2:30 p.m. - Library .

AGENDA

Opening Prayer

I. 1. Reports:
a) Social - _____ , _____

b) S.T.A. - ____

c) - ____

d) Primary

e) Art

2. Review:
a) Hobby Day

b) Science Fair

3. School Calendar:
a) April - June 1989

b) September - June 1990

4. Museum of Natural Sciences:

5. Educational Leave - Mr. _____

6. Other

II. Professional Development: _____ from the S.T.F. is tentatively booked to come at 3:30 p.m. to deal with Teacher Pensions - Annuity vs. Formula. He will also be able to answer questions regarding teaching and the profession in

APPENDIX P
SAMPLE OF A PROJECT GONZAGA MEETING

Project Gonzaga Meeting LRC 3:45 Grades 5 - 8 staff

1. ____ apologized for no agenda. It's been hectic.

2. Minutes are accepted as circulated by _____ .

3. _____: Pancake breakfast. Rented a 18 X 22 grill for $20.00 plus propane, plus will need 3 frying pans (___ , ___ , __).

   - ____ will purchase paper plates/utensils
   - bring own mixing bowls
   - find out who is coming (get a ticket for accurate count)

4. ____ _____ pottery lady doesn't want time to conflict with luncheon on Feb. 16 so she will begin at 8:30.

5. _____ 2 people can go to conference April 6 - 8. _____ and _____ will represent us. (_____ didn't even get a chance to react).

6. _____ letter from _____ thanking him, _____ for all of you for team leaders meeting. (Began in 1983).

7. ____ will go put in names for canoe date draw on Tue. Feb. 14 at 2 p.m. Get requests to him by then. (____ asked students to keep down the noise, ____ in a louder voice told them if they weren't working to get out).

8. Information: Gym is out of commission for 7 - 10 days beginning possibly this Thurs. due to painting.

9. Last topic of day <u>mini units</u>.

10. ___ inquired about the possibility of an alternate noon hour time to meet. Others in favour but will be at least 3 meetings down the road due to basketball and people needing to exchange supervision times.

11. Mini unit discussion:

___: If so when?

__: Difficult with 5 - 8 mix.

_____: Time was a problem.

___: Still offer? Do change format?

__: Prefer to do in own room.

__ : Too busy.

__: How about a career or seminar day in a p.m. during spring as an option or alternative?

__: Asks for clarification on concept.

__: Do we want a different focus? I see a different stand. Are we going to continue with content these units provided?

__: Question re time frame.

__: 4 X 35 min periods. Students had some option with hope would cover all topics over 3 years. (drugs/alcohol, self concept, decision-making, who am I, divorce)

__: Feels we have more confusion than consensus, maybe because __ and ____ are new. With that in place I can't see it happening before Easter. Will there be time after Easter before June?

__: Good idea but just too busy.

__ : Was age mix an important objective?

__: Yes but not of high importance as a factor. Basic purpose was that kids needed opportunity to get this type of information. It was a "reaction to a perceived need".

___ : If content is important let's divide up kits among teachers and do it at each grade level based on need and maturity

of the subject matter.

___: Look at the health curriculum. Generally kits are back up. We can resolve this today by me sending out a list of the kits. We'll review them in a few weeks after people have considered how they might fit into the existing health and religion program.

____: Where can get a copy of the health curriculum?

___: Suggests each take 1 kit, look at it and come back to the group.

___: Mid March for evaluation.

(____tends to control the meeting. People speak at risk. He suggests, summarizes, directs. Is this a healthy co-operative group?)

___: Think about _____ concept of career day. My own impression is .... I also recomment fall.....

(Discussion over _____ reaction. Silence. ____ is coloring. ____ doesn't say anything. Meeting must end, its 4:25)?

___: Tries to summarize.

__: New idea again, shares pros and cons and elaborates on each.

____: In closing , _____ reviews getting a commitment from kids on pancake breakfast.

___: If stick to tasks ____ assigned we should be O.K. Maybe we could have a few posters made and put up?

___: Back to mini-unit topic.

(Somehow the meeting is now 30 minutes later and we are going in circles. The chairs effectiveness is ?able. Why not rotate.)

____ recommends a couple of people get together and propose

something.

____: Concerned about "expert image" of outsiders. Classroom teachers can better prescribe needs. Shares and expands.

____ : Volunteers for _____ suggestion. ____ also willing.

____: Classroom teachers are feeling are delivering a piecemeal disjointed approach since have outsiders coming in to do their thing without any follow up after.

____: Where are we now?

____: We're closing the meeting now, because as usual _____ you snuck oone in and got us going in a new direction.

Motion to adjourn at 4:40.

All left around 4:50.

____ stayed only til four then needed to leave.

Back in the staffroom _____ is concerned whether the superintendent will come by the see her tomorrow since her day book is not finished. She'll take it home. _____ explains how they get a 15 minute notice and then they are watched.

Record 1st meeting with at noon on Friday and how others had him sick with the flu while he disclosed an encounter with a parent that was the worse Christmas present he'd ever had. After 18 years he is stressed out over this!

APPENDIX Q
SAMPLE OF A SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Principal [illegible] Telephone: [illegible] Mr. Vice-Principal

Newsletter #9 January 20,1989

I. DATES TO REMEMBER:

January 30: Teacher 1/2 day planning (MORNING ONLY!) No classes in the morning. Classes begin at 1:00 P.M.
January 30: Parent Council Meeting in the Staff Room at 8:00 P.M.
February 16: } No classes for all schools in the city. Teachers' Institute and
February 17: } Convention.
March 10: Report Card Day - Second Term
March 13 and 14: Parent-teacher Interviews.
March 24: GOOD FRIDAY
March 24 - April 2: Easter Holidays.
April 21: St. School Fun Night.

II. KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION FOR FALL OF 1989:

Preliminary registration for Kindergarten will take place during the two week period Monday, January 23, to Friday, February 3. The reason for designating the period of registration is to try to get an accurate picture of the enrolment for staffing and budgeting.

Age: Children will be admitted to Kindergarten provided they are five years of age on or before January 31, 1990. Parents may specify at this time for morning or afternoon attendance.

Grade One Registration: It is NOT necessary to complete new registration forms for children presently in Kindergarten. Children who are NOT REGISTERED in Kindergarten presently and who will be SIX YEARS of age on or before JANUARY 31, 1990, are eligible for grade one.

III. SCHOOL LUNCHES:

We have between 150 and 200 youngsters daily staying for lunch during the winter. I am concerned about the amount of food youngsters are bringing for lunch and tossing into the garbage. The most common items are: sandwiches I don't like, apples, oranges and other fruit. Could you please check with your children to:
a) bring their preferred nutritious lunch.
b) bring home the food they cannot eat.

We will provide a "SHARING TRAY" for the odd time a youngster has a food item left over and is unable to eat it.

Tip from the Health Nurse: Lunch Bag Blues!

- Make sandwiches more appealing by varying the breads. Try raisin, multigrain, rye, pumpernickel, cheese bread, pita bread, an English muffin or a bagel. Whole grain breads contain more fibre and nutrients than white bread.
- Try new combinations for sandwich fillings. How about peanut butter with raisins, tuna mixed with chopped green pepper or grated cheese and cut up raw vegetables in a pita?

IV. CONGRATULATIONS TO: our Students of the Week - , , , and .

: our Patrol of the Month -

THANK-YOU TO: the parents who helped at our January Hot Dog Day - , , , , , , , , , , , .

COMMUNITY NEWS:

1. Brownie Pack will be selling cupcakes (25¢) and Hot Chocolate (25¢) at the Skating Shack during Public Skating on Sundays from 2:00-4:30 P.M. during January and February. Proceeds will support Brownie activities.

2. Centre has openings for Native Children ages 3 and 4. For more information call or

3. A child's pair of glasses was lost on the St. School Playground in early January. If you have found a pair of glasses please call the secretary at