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Issues of change: Adoption of a custom calendar

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The University of Nebraska - Lincoln, 1994

Issues of Change: Adoption of a Custom Calendar

By

Robert E. Bruckner

A Dissertation

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Professor Thomas Petrie

Lincoln, Nebraska

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"Issues of Change: Adoption of a Custom Calendar"

BY

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GRADUATE COLLEGE
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ISSUES OF CHANGE: ADOPTION OF A CUSTOM CALENDAR

Robert E. Bruckner, Ed.D.

University of Nebraska, 1994

Advisor: Thomas Petrie

The development of a non-traditional, non-agrarian school calendar has been the topic of discussion, editorializing, and research for many years. This case study was conducted to chronicle a single school system's efforts to initiate and implement a non-traditional calendar and identify the salient issues which influenced the final outcome of the process.

Interviews of nine key participants were conducted. Data analyses of the interview transcripts and other pertinent documents provided information relative to the specific questions addressed in the study. The study examined the rational for change, the adoption process, community reaction, non-calendar related issues, and critical school board decisions.

The calendar adoption process was only moderately successful in terms of the initiated proposal. The study identified process shortcomings including suspect initial communication strategies, perceived limited participation opportunities, a lack of a consensus for change, and a general atmosphere of suspicion and distrust. The administrative leaders were found to have made genuine efforts to obtain

input after the process began, to have provided a sound rationale for change, and to have created new learning opportunities for children.

The researcher recommended that school systems seeking significant reform must establish a consensus for the need for change, that an environment conducive to innovation must exist prior to change, that potentially significant issues must be identified and addressed and that a comprehensive communication strategy must be established and followed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Focus of the Study

The creation of a "customized" calendar is a perennial activity in educational organizations and a current feature of restructuring advocates. Tinkering or manipulating the traditional school calendar has been occurring for more than a century (Shepard, 1977). The demand to restructure America's public education system is focused on the year 2000, which provides decision makers a time line to facilitate educational change and reshape school purposes and visions. Administrators of individual schools are scrambling to meet recent challenges and criticisms. As a consequence, the school calendar, curriculum, student performance, assessment, finance, teacher training and development, and school environments are objects of scrutiny and redesign. Investigating the efforts of a single school system to facilitate a calendar change provides intriguing and useful insights to any educator who may be considering such a change.

Context of the Problem

Adjustments to the traditional school calendar are not new. The agrarian society of the 1800's demanded a school calendar which allowed children to be available for farm responsibilities. The urban areas during this same era did not require children's labor; therefore, many schools operated with different calendars. Cities such as Chicago, Boston, Washington D.C., Cleveland, Buffalo and Detroit all developed and maintained school sessions of 48 weeks or more (Glinke, 1970). The school schedule called for twelve weeks of school with one-

week vacations between each term. This format eventually evolved to consecutive twelve-week sessions with a four week vacation in August.

It was during the post-civil war era that the concept of vacation or summer schools emerged. From 1865 to the turn of the century, summer recess became the pattern in a number of large urban areas. The early summer programs were designed primarily to be vacation schools. This form gradually changed to one emphasizing the concerns of the day (Glinke, 1970). By the end of World War I, the nine-month calendar was the standard format across the country. According to Shepard (1977), the traditional nine-month calendar of today developed as a compromise between the needs of an agrarian society and the demands for a longer school year by urban communities.

There was little interest in extending the agrarian calendar from the years after World War I until the early 1950's. However, a teacher shortage and baby boom during the 1950's renewed interest in extending the calendar. The 1960's included numerous and somewhat isolated experiments with non-traditional calendars. As Shepard (1977) pointed out, it was not until 1968 and the development of the 45-15 plan in Valley View, Illinois, that the year-round school movement really gained a foothold. Shepard outlined the innovations of the 45-15 plan: a summer vacation for all children, a rescheduled school year which did not necessarily accelerate students out of a school system too early, and a series of shorter and more frequent vacations. On the other hand, no substantive changes were made toward the standardization of the year-round school concept.

In summary, the evolution of urban school calendars from the nine-month calendar to the extended school year was marked by the needs and demands of society. These needs had little to do with academic concerns. More often than not, custodial expectations, inadequate facilities, increased enrollments and teacher shortages shaped the school calendar. Recently, however, global competition, technological innovations, methodology improvements and research on learning have enticed educators to view the extended year calendar as a means of enhancing the quality of teaching and learning.

It was because of influences such as global competition and research on learning that the administration of a suburban Midwestern school system identified a need and an opportunity to meet the challenge of school improvement. The described school system has had a long-standing reputation for innovation, risk-taking, and success in meeting the challenge of change. The administrators of the district being studied had experience facing difficult and controversial change issues. For example, during declining enrollment of the 1980's, the district leadership successfully addressed and negotiated the issue of school closings and district reorganization. Months of planning, meetings, and public hearings resulted in the closing of two elementary schools, two junior high schools, and the creation of one middle level school. Throughout the reorganization process, district personnel worked closely with teachers, parents and the public to develop a positive solution to this often-controversial dilemma. The result included the successful closing of schools and a transition from a traditional junior

high structure to the newer middle level philosophy and organization. In addition, the action enhanced elementary programs at two sites. After the implementation, all of the changes won praise from staff, students, and parents.

Based on these successful changes in school structure, district leadership personnel saw a similar opportunity in the move away from the traditional school calendar. The district personnel initially addressed this issue as a means of enhancing the learning opportunities of students, and maintaining a leadership role in the growing local and national effort to meet the needs of an ever-changing and complex global society. While the decision to develop a non-traditional school calendar was perceived by some as only a token effort in the struggle toward meaningful restructuring in American education, it also sparked controversy, criticism, and unexpected scrutiny. For a period of time, the movement divided the community.

The problem of this field investigation was to chronicle the events of a calendar adoption process and identify the salient issues which ultimately influenced the outcome of the process. The issues were identified through content analysis of related public and private documents, and transcripts of oral interviews.

Brief Summary of Events

During the 1990-91 school year a suburban school system superintendent charged personnel within his school system to develop a new and non-traditional school calendar. Motivated by his own beliefs, vision, and understanding of the district's strategic plan he directed a

calendar committee to recommend a more "productive calendar in terms of teacher time and learning time" (Adams,1990). Members of the calendar committee represented staff, students, parents, non-certified staff, and community/business interests. After months of research and meetings the calendar committee drafted a recommended calendar for the consideration of the community and Board of Education. Subsequently, a series of building level meetings was held to obtain feedback from the entire staff. In addition, evening meetings were held to give parents and community members opportunities for input. Two large, formal public hearings were also conducted. Attendance at all meetings was significant and emotions were generally high. Testimonies at most of the meetings were critical of not only the calendar draft, but also of the calendar adoption process itself. Many non-calendar related issues were raised and argued. These issues included teacher evaluation and curriculum development. It seemed that the custom calendar was perceived to be nothing more than a "Trojan Horse" by some community members.

As a result of the feedback and suggestions, the original calendar draft was refined by the committee and administration and sent to the Board of Education for action. The Board reviewed the significantly changed calendar and, in a majority ruling, voted to accept the new three-year calendar beginning with the 1992-93 school year.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose for conducting this study was to increase understanding of the issues and considerations related to implementing

change by focusing upon the events surrounding a relatively new and somewhat controversial situation. Specifically, the researcher was able to:

1. Identify the issues related to change, specifically in response to a proposal to implement a non-traditional school calendar.

2. Identify process issues related to the non-traditional calendar implementation process.

3. Make observations about initiating and implementing change through the creation of a non-traditional school calendar.

Research Questions

The product of the research was a field investigation of a single case. The case study format was useful for reporting, raising understanding, and maintaining the continuous reporting process that characterizes naturalistic inquiry (Guba and Lincoln, 1985).

The descriptive questions were:

1. What rationale was present for the non-traditional calendar initiative?

2. What steps were taken in the development process of the non-traditional calendar?

3. What were the reactions in the community to the non-traditional calendar adoption process?

4. What were the non-calendar related issues?

5. What decisions did the board make in response to community reaction and administrative recommendation?

The interpretive questions were:

1. What factors or issues influenced the final outcome of the calendar adoption process?

2. What were the administration's relevant decisions?

3. What role did the administration's ability to facilitate change play in the final outcome of the process?

Definitions of Terms

The following definitions of terms were used throughout the study.

Case study is the research method of choice for this study. It has been defined as empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context when the boundaries between phenomenon and contest are not clearly evident and in which multiple sources of evidence are used (Yin, 1981, p. 23). Denny (1978) described case study as an intensive or complete examination of a facet, an issue, or perhaps the events of a geographic setting over time. Less clinical descriptions were provided by Guba and Lincoln, referencing case study as a "snapshot of reality" and a "slice of life" (1981, p. 370).

Custom calendar (non-traditional calendar) was the term used by the subject district to describe a calendar designed to meet the 21st century educational goals and the needs of the community using a single track format with a common vacation time for all K-12 students.

Intersessions are short periods of time between regular quarter sessions. They may be used for vacations, staff development, parent conferences, and special programs for students.

Year round education is a reorganization of the school calendar

into instructional blocks and vacations distributed across the calendar year so that learning is continuous throughout the year (Quinlan, George, and Emmett, 1987).

Limitations and Delimitations

Limitations of this study included the often non-generalizable nature of naturalistic inquiry. In this case, the study involved only one school system at a specific point in its history; it is uncertain that the discoveries about the process will apply to other similar situations. The extent to which generalizability is possible relates to the extent to which the case is typical or involves typical phenomena (Yin, 1981).

Another possible limitation of the study related to the fact that the investigator entered the study of this issue after the committee had been formed, had studied the subject, and had made recommendations. The investigator's study of those aspects of the case had to come from reports by other participants. While this late entry may have resulted in some limitation, it also may have lessened the bias of the investigator and resulted in a more objective analysis.

Due to the investigator's administrative position within the subject district, trustworthiness of employees' interview responses may be in question.

Significance of the Study

Since this case study reviews and evaluates the process of change in a suburban district, it will be significant for practitioners, and it may have implications for researchers.

The effort to change to an extended school calendar is often

influenced by overcrowding, financial consideration, and the desire to enhance educational opportunities for students. However, efforts to restructure the traditional agrarian calendar was met with extensive criticism and opposition. An investigation of one school system's effort to change from the configurations of an old paradigm to what was perceived to be an educationally effective calendar structure permits practitioners to "examine processes and values, action and consequences" (Ashbaugh and Kasten,1991 p. 2).

Practitioners will develop a new level of understanding because of the experiences of the subject in the study. Perhaps the knowledge which the reacher reports may not be generalizable to another context; however, it may be useful for understanding the process of change. As it was described by Kemmis (1974), perhaps naturalistic generalizations develop within a person as a product of experiences. They derive from the tacit knowledge of how things are, why they are, how people feel about them, and how these things are likely to be later on in other places with which this person is familiar. They seldom take the form of predictions; they guide action; in fact, they are inseparable from action.

This study provides those practitioners contemplating a non-traditional calendar with a basis of discussion relative to specific techniques and strategies. It is then left to them to decide appropriateness and potential.

This case study has implications for researchers, also. After a thorough study of the process of change and an evaluation of its effectiveness, researchers may be able to note strengths and flaws in

this specific setting and outcome. From the results of this investigation may come new theories for future investigation.

Other researchers have supported the case study approach as one which provides harmony between the readers' experience and knowledge: Stake (1978) and Stenhouse (1979). They argued that case studies make an important contribution to the understanding of schooling. This individual case study of a school district's attempt to change will add to the understanding of the process of change.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The review of literature for this research was placed into two categories. Literature dealing with year-round education (YRE) as it relates to student achievement and implementation processes was reviewed first. Secondly, literature about the "change process" dealt with management of organizational change as well as how individuals address and cope with change.

The Development of Year-Round Education

The development of non-traditional, non-agrarian school calendars has been the topic of much discussion, editorializing, and research for many years. Renewed interest followed the report of the National Commission on Excellence in Education. The commission's document, A Nation at Risk, (1983) called for a 200 to 220 day school year. This suggestion for change rekindled the flame of debate between those witnessing what they saw as a need for change and those who viewed this movement as corroding what was left of our nation's traditional values and practices.

The primary theme of the related literature focused upon the concept of year-round education (YRE). While this field investigation studied what the subject school system described as a "custom calendar" rather than year-round education, there was sufficient similarity in theory and practice to warrant the review of literature relative to YRE as it related to the customizing or adopting of school

calendars. In addition, literature on YRE was used by the Custom Calendar Committee of the subject school system to develop and support the rational for a new calendar.

The literature dealing with YRE encompassed a variety of topics and areas of concern. Upon examination, specific topics or themes were identified. These themes were YRE and its effects upon learning (residual considerations include student attendance and attitude toward school), enrollment and staffing concerns, school finances, and implementation procedures. Because it was acknowledged that the subject school district's motives for examining a non-traditional calendar were not over-crowding or cost saving, only the effects upon the learners and the implementation process were examined in this review of literature.

Non-Traditional Calendars and Student Achievement

Proponents of YRE hold true their claim that lengthening the school year has positive effects upon student learning. The usual starting point for discussions or studies on time and learning is Carroll's (1963) model of learning. Carroll's model described learning as a function of five factors: time allowed for learning, student perseverance, special aptitudes, ability to comprehend instruction, and the quality of instruction. Carroll determined further that time on task and time needed to accomplish the task were critical to the level of learning. Research on mastery learning, for which Carroll's work served as foundation, supported the validity of this conceptualization (Bloom, Modaus, & Hastings, 1981). Mastery learning employs the

availability of extra time and appropriate instruction to help students overcome errors and misunderstandings. So, then, the provision of sufficient learning time becomes a component of learning for mastery, along with the definition of objectives and mastery, and student assessment procedures. Wiley and Harnischfager (1974) examined achievement and the amount of time spent in class. Results indicated that students who experienced greater average time spent in class also demonstrated higher mean achievement. Wiley and Harnischfager went on to find that different teachers spend different amounts of time on particular topics and that the less time spent on a topic, the less well students tend to perform on tests on that topic (American Association of School Administrators, 1981).

It is important to note that the discussion on the potential of school time as an agent for school reform is contingent on the notion which Carroll put forth, that engaged time should match the time needed and the task. It is speculated that proponents of extended school years believe that appropriate use and application of student time has a positive match with student need.

To further support the thesis that more instructional time will enhance learning, the Beginning Teacher Evaluation Study (BTES) categorized time in terms of allocated time, engaged time, and academic learning time (Fischer, 1980). The BTES study defined allocated time as that amount of time that the student is receiving instruction relating to his/her accomplishment of the academic task. Engaged time is that proportion of allocated time that the student is trying to learn, or

working on the task. Lastly, academic learning time is that part of
engaged time when the student is experiencing a high degree of success
in learning. Among the key findings from the BTES 1980 study are:
students learned more in subject areas to which greater amounts of
time are allocated; there were large differences in students' engaged
time observed both within classrooms and across classrooms; students
who were engaged in learning for greater proportions of the allocated
time learned more, and a variety of teaching practices were associated
with higher degrees of engaged time and academic-learning time.

Several evaluations of student work have referred to extended
school calendars. In an assessment of reading and math for the
California schools on year-round schedules the California Assessment
Program (1987) determined that in grades three and six, when single-
track and multi-track schools were compared, single track schools
performed at or above predictions, leading to the conclusion that the
year-round calendar is a "viable educational option" (p. 3). The Buena
Vista Public Schools, Buena Vista, Virginia, evaluated the achievement
of eleventh graders operating on a year-round schedule using the SRA
Achievement Test. It was determined that the SRA Achievement test
scores (Reading, Mathematics, Language Arts, Social Studies, Science,
and Educational Ability) improved as much as eighteen percent, and
local SRA scores increased to a level equal to or above the national
average.

The effect of the extended school year upon student achievement,
as measured by standardized achievement tests is clouded somewhat by

the lack of significant and consistent findings from studies comparing achievement based on school years of different lengths. Although proponents of YRE may cite recent comparisons of United States public education and that of countries such as Japan, West Germany, and others, the systems themselves vary far too drastically to elicit an accurate picture. Clouding the picture even further is the quantity of literature and research disputing any claims of positive impact on student achievement by the proponents of year-round education.

In a revision of research on the topic, the National Education Association (1987) concluded that studies comparing international student achievement ignore those studies which have found no positive relationship between total hours of instruction and student achievement. A study by Pittman, Cox and Burchfiel (1986) investigated the relationship between the length of the school year and student achievement on standardized tests. Achievement scores of students from two different school systems were analyzed. Comparisons showed that increasing the school year would not produce marked change in test score performance.

In a comparison of student achievement in junior high schools using different school calendars, Young and Berger (1983) concluded that the educational achievement of pupils in the year-round school, as measured by the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) was equal to that of students operating on a traditional, nine-month school calendar. Work by Stallings (1980), Young and Berger (1983) and Merino (1983) reinforce the finding that there is no significant difference in

achievement (as measured by standardized tests) between students on a year round schedule and those on a traditional nine-month schedule.

Fisher and Berlinger (1985) commented on the movement towards extending the traditional school year. Although increases in the length of the school day or the number of school days per year have often been suggested in recent proposals for school improvement, we believe that increases in the amount of instructional time without substantial efforts to improve the quality of instruction are liable to be disappointing (p. 340).

The examination of school calendars is, to a large extent, an examination of time. Time within an organization takes on meanings relative to the various levels of the organization. The school central administration sets the parameters of time by the development of the school calendar. The building administrator and staff deal with time and related constraints, as they develop workable and effective schedules. Teachers manipulate time in an effort to maximize the match between student need, learning, and instruction.

The literature regarding non-traditional calendars and their effects are mixed. Student achievement (as measured by standardized achievement tests) generally supports that YRE and/or the extended school year does not significantly increase student learning. However, YRE does not have a negative effect upon student learning. The school calendar is not simply a configuration of time; it is a reflection of the beliefs and priorities of an organization. For instance, school officials show the importance of events or curriculum by the amount of time

allocated for study.

Time does not stand alone. By its nature it affects space, resources, and people. It could be a mistake for any group to view time in and of itself. The better choice would be to examine issues related to resources, of which time is only one.

<u>Examples of Successful Non-Traditional Calendars</u>

Rather than a review of the literature related to the advantages and disadvantages of year-round education, it is pertinent to the purposes of this investigation to examine examples of successful implementations of YRE programs relative to the process. This is particularly relevant given the specific nature of the study: that is, a case study of the initiation and maintenance of a non-traditional calendar. This information will provide interesting and important opportunities for comparisons and speculation.

"The question is not whether or not there will be year-round education, but rather when and how it will be implemented. It's coming, make no mistake about it." This statement given to Thomas Kern (1991) by Dr. Charles Ballinger, Executive Director of the National Association for Year Round Education, typifies the zeal and commitment of many to YRE. Ballinger (1990) proposes a number of generalizations relative to the planning and implementation of a year-round, or non-traditional calendar.

    - Leaders and supporters should themselves become well-versed in the subject.

    - A period of one year to eighteen months is recommended for

study leading to implementation. Two or more years of study may only serve to bolster the inertia of tradition.

- Invite all groups important to the success of year round education to study the concept.

- Avoid scheduling a large community discussion early in the process to introduce the concept. Rather, deliver information to many smaller groups frequently.

- Leaders must anticipate potential situations relating to those audiences outside of the school context.

Ballinger, Kirschenbaum, and Poimbeauf (1987) also have identified a number of elements involved in this change process. It is suggested that those leading the effort be prepared to meet with all concerned groups and make specific comments relative to the definition of YRE, how it is administered, advantages and disadvantages, how YRE can benefit students and teachers, and how the change will be initiated and implemented. Ballinger goes on to suggest that leaders must be willing to present information about the concept repeatedly. Constant restatement is needed to combat myths and distortions. After the commitment has been made to study a non-traditional calendar, key groups and community agencies need to be identified and involved. These groups may include teacher organizations, classified personnel, administrative staff, parent-teacher organizations, parent/community advisory groups, city agencies, youth-serving agencies, churches, and civic organizations. Any change in the public school calender means a change for all of these groups.

Of critical importance, according to Ballinger, is the early
involvement of these community representatives. An early introduction
of these groups will avoid the perception that a decision has already been
made. The final element in the process is the support of the board of
education. It is very important to keep the board informed of the
process, the time-line considered and the rationale for change.

One school system which successfully implemented a year-round
education program began with a small pilot program. In Oxnard,
California, the proponents of YRE overcame the "study and delay"
position of the opponents of the program and began by placing two
elementary buildings on the plan. With the success of these two efforts,
the program quickly grew. As this field investigation progressed, of
specific interest and importance was the steps taken by the subject
school system and the resulting reactions and decisions. The results of
the system's efforts provided important information and insight not only
into the adoption of a non-traditional calendar, but also into the change
process itself.

Reviewing Educational Change

Inherent in the investigation of educational innovation or
restructuring effort is the reality of change and its effects upon
individuals and organizations. As pointed out earlier, the nine-month
school calendar has organized schools, if not culture, for many years.
Any effort to move away from tradition demands an awareness and
sensitivity to the particulars of cultural change.

Resistance to change is seldom viewed as a positive and necessary

element in the change process (Harvey, 1990). Harvey contended that resistance to change is too often viewed as a dimension of personality rather than a logical consequence of proposal for change (p. 53). Because of this tendency, educational innovators need to plan appropriately for change. Planned change seldom occurs without resistance. It is imperative that innovators understand, accept and account for resistance to realize their ideas.

As a reminder to leaders or innovators contemplating significant or consequential change, Hord et. al. (1982) outline a number of assumptions about change. First, change is a process, not an event. This often over-worked epithet remains powerfully relative to the successful implementation of a new proposal. Second, change is accomplished by individuals. The utmost of attention must be paid to individuals and the effects of change upon them. Third, change is a highly personal experience. Changes in traditional school practice will affect individuals differently and at different rates. How people progress through the change process is critical to the change itself. Fourth, change is best understood in operational terms. People will relate to the practicalities of change. Does it take more time? Cost more money? Must individuals change their beliefs? Ambiguity in the presentation of a new idea will not facilitate a successful implementation. Lastly, the focus of facilitation should be on individuals, innovations, and the context.

Too often in education, change is viewed as a package or something concrete. Real, systemic change occurs when people alter

their behavior. The prospects for successful change may be enhanced as the match between individual needs and organizational needs is made.

Michael Fullan (1982) dealt extensively with the practical meaning of educational change in his book, The Meaning of Educational Change. Fullan dealt with the complexities of change from initiation to outcome. Considering the topic of understanding the meaning of change, which is particularly important in this study, he wrote,

> One of the most fundamental problems in education today is that people do not have a clear, coherent sense of meaning about what educational change is for, what it is, and how it proceeds. Thus, there is much faddism, superficiality, confusion, failure of change programs, unwarranted and misdirected resistance, and misunderstood reforms (p. 4).

Change is a reality of the education profession. Whether change is imposed or participation is voluntary, understanding the philosophy and practical application of change is critical if any chance of a successful implementation can be realized. To those that initiate change, the meaning of change must be clear in terms of the innovation or change itself. Possessing a thorough meaning about the desirability and workability of the specific educational practice or innovation is prerequisite to initiating a change to that practice or innovation.

According to Fullan, most researchers see the following broad phases to the change process. Phase I is variously labeled initiation,

mobilization, or adoption. It consists of the process which leads up to and includes a decision to adopt or proceed with a change. Phase II, called implementation, involves the first experiences of attempting to put an idea or program into practice. Phase III, labeled continuation, incorporation, routinization, or institutionalization, refers to whether the change gets built in as an ongoing part of the system or disappears by way of a decision to discard or change through attrition (1982, p. 39).

Not surprisingly, each of the phases are complicated by factors and issues which often make the movement towards change impossible. For the initiator of change, these complications affecting the adoption of an innovation can become his or her undoing unless every factor is considered and addressed. Fullan listed the factors which most often impact adoption of educational change:

- existence and quality of innovations

- access to information

- advocacy from central administration

- teacher pressure or support

- consultants and change agents

- community pressures/support/apathy/opposition

- availability of funds

- new central legislation or policy

- problem-solving incentives for adoption

- bureaucratic incentives for adoption (1982, p. 42).

It is appropriate for this study to examine "community pressure/support/apathy and opposition" in more detail. Fullan stated,

that "in general terms, and depending upon the circumstances, communities can either 1) put pressure on district administrators to do something about a problem, 2) oppose certain potential adoptions about which they become aware, or 3) do nothing (passive support of apathy)" (1982, p. 47). Fullan cited a number of studies supporting each of the patterns listed. To be succinct, however, Fullan listed the following components in an effort to better define the role of the community in the change process:

1. Major demographic changes create turbulence in the environment which may lead to adoptions or irreconcilable conflict depending on the presence of other factors.

2. Most communities do not actively participate in change decisions about educational programs.

3. More highly educated communities seem to put general pressure on their schools to adopt high-quality, academic-oriented changes. They also can react strongly and effectively against proposed changes they do not like.

4. Less educated communities are less likely to initiate change or put effective pressure on educators to initiate changes on their behalf. Such communities are less likely to become activated against changes because of a lack of knowledge, but once activated, they too can become effective.

The implications of the components listed can be very powerful relative to initiation of any change. To reiterate this message from Fullan, understanding the meaning and process of change can be more

important to the success of a change than the change itself.

According to Fullan, the success or failure of a particular change is contingent upon the effectiveness of the planning for that particular change. Success or failure of planners is measured in their ability to deal with their own assumptions about change and partly because some "problems" are inherently unsolvable (1982, p. 81).

Fullan pointed out that it is generally assumed that a leader's commitment to change is necessary to the success of any change implementation. This is true; however, an overly strong or zealous commitment can be a barrier to change. Fullan stated, "A leader who presupposes what the change should be and acts in ways which preclude others' realities is bound to fail" (p. 82). A leader of change or innovation needs to be open to the ideas of others, perhaps leading to adjustments in the direction of the change. In addition, the ideas of others may lead to the identification of problems in implementation.

Another assumption of leadership in change is one which deals with assumed awareness. Innovation often fails because leaders of the change are unaware of situations the implementors of change are facing. Fullan (1982) described this failure: "They (leaders) introduce change without providing a means to identify and confront the situational constraints, and without attempting to understand the values, ideas, and experiences or those who are essential for implementing change."

Fullan (1982) continued to describe other suggestions and problems to avoid in a successful approach to educational change:

- Assume that conflict and disagreement are not only inevitable but fundamental to successful change.

- Assume that people need pressure to change, but realize that change will only be effective under conditions which allow them to act.

- Do not assume that the reason for lack of implementation is outright rejection.... Assume that there are a number of possible reasons: value rejection, inadequate resources to support implementation, and insufficient time.

- Do not expect all or even most people or groups to change. The complexity of change is such that it is totally impossible to bring about widespread reform in any large social system.

- Assume that a plan will be needed based upon these assumptions.

- Assume no amount of knowledge will ever make it totally clear what action should be taken. Action decisions are a combination of valid knowledge, political considerations, on-the-spot decisions, and intuition.

- Assume that change is a frustrating, discouraging business.

The second factor related to the failure of change implementation can be the most difficult to understand, and perhaps the most difficult for leaders to accept. This factor is the realization that some problems are unsolvable. Change is an aspect of social science. Unlike the natural sciences, where facts govern, social sciences deal with values and sometimes irrationality. This makes managing social action virtually impossible by simply analyzing alternatives and their resulting consequences. As Fullan pointed out, there are two issues relative to

change and social sciences. One issue is that in complex social
problems the total number of variables is so large that it is logistically
infeasible to obtain all the necessary information, and cognitively
impossible for individuals to comprehend the total picture even if the
information is available. A second issue is that even if some experts
were able to comprehend the total picture themselves, our theories and
experiences with meaning and experimentation suggest that they would
have a difficult time getting others to act on their knowledge - partly
because others will not easily understand the complex knowledge, and
partly because the process of implementation contains so many
variables which have nothing to do with the quality of knowledge
available (Fullan, 1982, p. 85).

Inherent in the efforts to bring about a successful change is the
often complex problem of poor communication. It is often true that the
majority of program failures or issues of organizational morale may
have at their roots, misunderstandings or poor communication. It
should be understood that change is a very personal issue and because
schools involve so many people, the potential for pitfalls in
communication practices is tremendous. Fullan (1982) pointed out that

> No simple communication is going to reassure or clarify the
> meaning of change for people. A cardinal fact of social change is
> that people will always misinterpret and misunderstand some
> aspect of the purpose or practice of something that is new to
> them.... But even the administrator who thinks of "everything"
> will still face the problem of communication because it is not

possible to transfer all his or her thoughts instantly to the minds of others (p.167-168).

Fullan continued, "Two-way communication about specific innovations that are being attempted is a requirement of success. To the extent that the information flow is accurate, the problems of implementation get identified, and each individual's personal perceptions and concerns - the core of change - get aired" (1987, p. 168).

Educational change is a difficult concept even for educators to address. Given that notion, imagine the confusion, frustration, and suspicion that parent and school community members must encounter. Fullan (1982) pointed out that in a community generally comprised of well-educated patrons, there is likelihood that these patrons will be highly involved in the schools and any decision related to the schools. When coping with an issue of change, patrons in the community described are more likely to ask questions related to the need for change: "whose change?" "what change?" and "when change?"

These questions can lead to other political and philosophical questions about who has the right to decide on educational change. Fullan provided a short, yet powerful answer to this question of decision and reform. He stated, "The answer is that it has to be continually negotiated where there are differences of views" (1982, p. 207).

Relative to a positive relationship between leaders of innovation and parents, the factors of communication and opportunities for involvement become extremely important. It appears to be incumbent upon school administrators to take the lead in working toward mutually

beneficial opportunities. Fullan cited strategies such as building positive rapport with the school board, having a solid grasp of the needs of the community, insuring parent involvement as a component in the change process, and providing for the sharing of information (p. 208). Conversely, parents need to look for opportunities for involvement, ask appropriate questions, be patient and open-minded when it comes to trying to understand educational jargon and issues, and avoid the assumption that their involvement is not wanted (1982, p. 209).

Another perspective on change was provided by Terrance Deal (1986) who suggested that educators reexamine ideas about change in terms of theories and philosophy. Deal maintained that theories form what people see and determine how people interpret experience. School related strategies and programs are shaped primarily by the theories held by the primary participants. It is critical therefore, that participants have an accurate understanding of the purpose and direction of schooling. Deal stated, "If our images of schools are distorted or limited, or if our philosophy of how to change them is off the mark, then we cannot expect to succeed or to explain why we cannot do better" (p.116).

Deal outlined four theories of change which had particular relevance to this study. The first theory emphasized social psychologicl processes and focused attention upon individuals within an organization. He argued that individual attitudes, beliefs, skills and norms truly initiate new directions or changes in an organization. While employee empowerment, problem solving groups and continuous

personal development can positively affect changes, they can also become sources of resistance and protectors of the status quo.

Another theory of change described by Deal addressed the structural view of schools as organizations. The role of goal-setting, job specialization, and defining accountability are examples of organizational characteristics which are guided by a "structural logic of change" (p. 117). Deal maintained that individual and structural theories of change are extremely beneficial in initiating school change, yet there are underlying assumptions about how individuals and organizations work, which may promote or hinder change and improvement. These assumptions include purpose, purposeful action, reasonableness, and certainty. The school administrator acting as an agent of change would do well to develop a working understanding of these assumptions.

Deal outlined the political theory of change as being a theory examined less closely than other perspectives yet nonetheless critical in its ability to initiate change or neutralize change. This political theory of change cites the self-interests of individuals. Power and stature within the organization are valued greatly. When power, structures, or self interest are threatened, individuals tend to form coalitions, bonding together to protest and resist change. Conflicts which can result from political consideration often result in failed change and occasionally, produce victims from the agenda of change. Deal explained, "The scars and unresolved tensions remain for years in schools and communities after changes have temporarily come and quickly gone.... Change

always will have its winners and losers, its contests, and conflicts, its
exchange of power" (p.118). Deal maintained that "the practitioners who
understand the law of the jungle and exercise their power wisely will
probably enjoy more success than those who cling to a world they believe
should behave more sensibly" (p. 118).

Deal's symbolic theory of change has several versions. The first
version views change as being often sought by individuals outside the
organization. The individuals inside the organization work to maintain
the support of the external clients by engaging in a ceremony of change
which is marked by rituals designed to create an appearance of
legitimacy to the change. In reality, changes are most often short-lived
adjustments which fade to a return of the status-quo.

The second version of the symbolic theory of change evolves from
what is known of the role of culture in organizations. Deal defined
culture as "an evolving human invention that shapes behavior and gives
meaning to any social collective" (p. 120). Within a culture there are
particular core values which define character. There are heroes which
embody these values and provide a model for all within an organization
to emulate. Rituals bind people together in the organization and
reinforce basic beliefs. An informal network of individuals continually
conspire to spread the word of the culture which keeps it vital. Deal
explains, "where the elements of culture are consistent and mutually
reinforcing, productivity continuity, morale, and confidence are assured
- as long as the culture fits the requirements posed by the external
environment" (p. 120).

Terrance Deal's descriptions of various change theories are marked by particular tenets and rules. Each theory is supported by those who profess it to be the true path to change. Deal contended to the contrary, "that change is not one thing; it is many" (p. 122). He continued,

> Each of the conceptual approaches highlights an important aspect of change in organization. Change affects and is affected by individual skills and attitudes. Change alters and requires formal patterns of roles and relationships. Change attracts and stimulates issues of power and conflict. Change alters and is influenced by culture. It serves both instrumental and symbolic purposes (p. 122).

Cultural change was examined as well, by Rossman, Corbett., and Firestone (1988) in their case study of three separate high schools. They defined culture as having two major facets. The first facet is that culture describes the way thing are; it interprets events, behaviors, words, and acts, and gives them meaning. The second facet is that culture also prescribes the way people should act; it normatively regulates appropriate and acceptable behaviors in given situations. Thus culture defines what is true and good (p. 5).

They determined that change in an organization with a uniform cultural system, (which means possessing adhered-to expectations for what is and ought to be) may be extremely difficult due to the well-established patterns of behavior already in place. Any proposed change which threatens these patterns faces considerable resistance.

As Rossman, Corbett, and Firestone point out, however, this does not mean good schools with a well-defined culture are not open to change. The schools' norms define where change is legitimate, where and how it will be accepted. Commenting on change and cultures, Rossman, Corbett, and Firestone stated,

> Much cultural content has a deep sense of obligation attached to it. People act and think in certain ways because they feel strongly that it is right to do so. But culture also grows and changes as people come in contact with or create new ideas. Culture is, paradoxically, both static and dynamic. Conflict, dispute, disruption, or at least concern about the change ensures when culture becomes challenged" (p. 13).

These authors blame the poor success rate of innovations on a perceived short-sighted path to change. They believe the problem is that most efforts to change focus only on behavioral change and do not attempt to blend behaviors with the norms or the core of the school's culture (Rossman, et. al. 1987). Successful change, they maintain, must either accommodate this core of the culture or engage in the difficult task of reinterpreting, redefining, and reshaping it. Redefining this culture will require time and nurturing as well as the timely application of power and creativity (p. 19).

Of particular importance to this study was the literature outlining the models of change. As described by Hall and Hord (1987), Havelock (1971) defined three different perspectives for understanding change. The Social Interactions Model for Change emphasizes change in terms

of a sequential series of decisions. Typically, there are five phases involved: the initial phase develops an awareness of the innovation; the next phase is marked by an increased interest in the innovation as well as a need for more information about the subject. The third phase is evaluation and method by which the change is decided upon. The trial and adoption phase follows. The role of the facilitator within this model is more important during the awareness and interest phases. Once the decision is made to adopt the innovation there is little need for the facilitator (Hall and Hord,1987).

The Research, Development, and Diffusion (RD&D) Model described by Havelock (1971) approached change as a systemic, orderly sequence of events marked by research and planned dissemination of information. The RD&D model has five basic assumptions guiding it: (1) a rational sequence - research, development, packaging, and dissemination for applying a new practice, 2) large-scale planning, 3) a division of labor related to the sequence and planning, 4) a rational consumer who accepts and adopts the change, and 5) an initial expense that is acceptable due to anticipated long-term savings.

This model for facilitating change may be very effective if the change is simply mandated. It does not, however, address directly the sociopolitical issues of change such as fear, power, and resistance.

The Problem Solver Model of change was of particular interest relative to this study. As outline by Havelock (1971), the most important component of this model is that which deals with user need. The user need should be the primary concern of the leader of the innovation. The

next important need deals with the articulation and timely diagnosis of the user need. User readiness for change should also be examined diagnostically. Readiness and need should be be construed as meaning the same thing relative to planning for change.

Another aspect of the Problem Solver Model suggests that the leader of the innovation should be non-directive and should avoid being considered an advocate of a specific solution to a problem or of an idea. The final consideration promotes the notion that the strongest user commitment will come from those innovations which have evolved or were initiated by the user.

It may be of particular interest to point out that this investigation determined that the users of the proposed innovation under study perceived themselves to be reacting to a specific proposed action; they did not generally view their input as contributing to solution or a new innovation.

The Rand Change Agent Study (1974), although somewhat dated, is often cited for implications of educational change. In particular, it has provided insights for agents of change in school settings. This four year study examined federal change programs designed to promote innovative programs in schools. The results, as described by Hall and Hord (1987) suggested that schools change as new practices gain support, are adopted to the local situation and become integrated into the regular operation of the organization. In addition, successful implementation was characterized by additional planning to adapt a change to the local setting. The organizational change strategies

outlined in the Rand Study may provide some insight relative to the topic of this investigation.

A relatively new view of change examines educational reform as a continuum of change which emphasizes a shift from traditionally isolated adjustments to reform which emphasizes the interconnectedness of the total educational program. Holzman (1993) defines systemic change as change which takes into account the relationships between the bureaucracies within education, individual schools within a school system, the entire range of school issues, the horizontal and vertical structures in schools, and the basic fundamental fabric of public education.

In an attempt to clarify the comprehensiveness of systemic change, Andersen (1993) designed a "Continuum of Systemic Change" (p. 14), which defined six developmental stages and six elements of change. The matrix created by Anderson attempts to show how the stages of change: maintenance of the old, emergence of a new infrastructure, and predominance of a new system, interact with the elements of vision, public and political support, networking, teaching and learning changes, administrative roles and responsibilities and policy alignment. Anderson (1993) cautions that systemic change should not be viewed as being accomplished in a distinct and linear fashion. Rather, change will occur often in a somewhat sporadic way, moving back and forth on the continuum. The value of understanding such a matrix, Anderson suggests, lies in the educational leaders' ability to use the matrix to,

develop a common language and conceptual picture of the

processes and goals of change among diverse stake holders ...

develop a strategic plan for moving forward on systemic change

... and develop an ongoing assessment process for support and

encourage deep, quality change (1993, p. 17).

Anderson and Holzman have offered a definitive and somewhat

clinical view of systemic change. Watson (1993) agrees with this

underlying philosophy of systemic change and the need for such

fundamental reform; he cautions, however, that a quick, blanket

implementation of a systems approach to changes can be dangerous

without an initial "systemic reflection" (p. 25), relative to the needs of the

educational community involved. Watson believes that patrons in

communities very seldom agree upon the goals of school reform and

that educators, parents and students find it difficult to reach consensus

on schools' needs and problems. Watson contends that "without broad

agreement about the kinds of changes needed, and why, these systemic

efforts are no more likely to succeed than so many other educational

innovations we've seen come and go" (p. 25). The challenge for

education leaders contemplating reform, according to Watson, lies in

the leaders' ability to "create conditions that will promote informed,

thoughtful discussions about purposes among teachers, students,

parents, and community members" (p. 25).

<u>Administrative Leadership and Change in Schools</u>

A question addressed in this study examined the school

administrators' ability to facilitate or lead change.

Throughout the review of literature on change, particular role implications for administrators were cited (Fullan, Deal, and Holzman). A review of additional leadership literature provided focus while considering this question.

Different conceptions of educational leadership have emerged since the 1940's (Pajak, 1993).

The image of the educational leader in the 1940's to 1950's was one of democratic educator. Characteristically, leadership was possessed by a few, but was the responsibility of many. The effective leader during this decade tried to stimulate people to participate in planning, implementing, and evaluating their experiences. Promoting a democratic philosophy into educational action was an important task for the educational leader during this period. Leadership was viewed as a potential possessed by many, and everyone in the school and community should become involved to meet the challenges of any situation.

The decade of the 1960's, according to Pajak, was marked by an expanding federal role in public education. As this role brought new reforms (Head Start, Vocational Education Act, and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act) the function of the educational leader became one of an agent of change. Democratic practices gave way to a supervisory role where decision making became a more singular function. However, as the decade passed, changing values and the spreading of the power base in society altered the role of the supervisor as an agent of change. The initial years of the 1970's were marked by the decline of democratic educational leadership and an emerging view

that leadership "is a function of position in the organization and should be adaptable to fit the requirements of different situations" (Pajak, p. 170).

The decade of the 1980's became a period of educational reform. Public education was criticized for its reluctance to change and inability to keep pace with what was becoming a global society. Educational leadership evolved into what Pajak termed a "corporate visionary" (p. 171). Institutional leadership and instructional leadership became separate, yet equally important, elements of leadership. As business became more actively involved in education, its influence became evident upon schools and school leadership. Educators began to think in terms of quality control, customers and strategic planning.

Pajak projected the decade of the 1990's to mark leadership with the characteristics normally associated with teachers. The leader as teacher descriptor downplays the leader as hero role and emphasizes leaders as those who recognize the position in a highly interrelated and interactive system.

Senge (1990) describes the role of leader as teacher as critical to success, "Leaders as teachers help people restructure their views of reality to see beyond the superficial conditions and events into the underlying causes of problems... and therefore to see new possibilities for shaping the future" (p. 12).

Gleaning from the work of Senge (1990), Pajak explained the elements of the effective leadership profile as (a) the empowerment of self and others through cooperative effort, (b) an intellectual creativity

that helps group members transcend superficial understanding, (c) the collective application of knowledge to practical problems, and (d) a commitment to making the future somehow better than the present (p. 175).

A general understanding of the philosophical and practical path educational leadership has taken over the last forty years was very useful in addressing questions presented in this study. Much has been written concerning leadership as a matter of style, traits, or situation. However a relatively new descriptor of leadership examines leadership in terms of its authenticity. Theories by Sergiovanni (1992) and Schlecty (1992) are characterized by a need for action and the ability to motivate others. Authentic leaders have the ability to clearly define their assumptions concerning their own values, goals and specifically what actions demonstrate their values and goals (Evans, 1993). Evans defined five biases inherent in authentic leadership which enhance and promote innovation and change. The first bias is clarity and focus; a clear, exciting vision of what is desired of what needs to be is a primary prerequisite of change. Too much flexibility and openness may cloud the followers' perceptions of the shared vision.

The second bias is participation. The authentic leader, Evans maintains, understands that participation is the cornerstone to commitment. However, when participants have little experience with collaboration or struggle with a complex problem, the leader must be ready to assert himself or herself as needed to see the innovation through.

The fourth bias which authentic leaders embrace is communication. Authentic leaders understand the anxiety and uncertainty caused by major changes; therefore, they are strongly biased toward clear and accurate communication.

The fifth bias is confirming the efforts of those participating in the development of the change is routinely accomplished by these effective leaders. This recognition of efforts motivates the individuals involved and encourages their continued efforts.

The final bias for action credited to authentic leaders is a willingness to confront resistance to change. While there is no proven method for addressing conflict, to ignore resistance is to lose credibility and to eventually inhibit reform. A leader's authenticity and commitment is tested by the degree of resistance or the lack of effort to succeed. Asserting beliefs and acknowledging the truth is action which is consistent with effective leadership. Evans states that effective leaders understand well one final truth of change, which is that "no amount of feedback produces change in the uncommitted" (p. 23).

The notion of change can be both exciting and frustrating. While is may be generally accepted that change is necessary, it nonetheless, can be painful. Michael Fullan (1982) stated the following about change,

Being deeply committed to a particular change in itself provides no guidelines for attaining it, and may blind us to the realities of others which would be necessary for transforming and implementing the change effectively. Having no vision at all is what makes for educational bandwagons. In the final analysis,

either we have to give up and admit that effective educational

change is impossible, or we have to take our best knowledge and

attempt to improve our efforts. We do possess much

knowledge which could make improvement possible.

Whether this knowledge gets used is itself a problem of

change (p. 88).

Summary of the Literature

The review of literature for this study was organized into three

categories. The first category of literature deals with Year-Round

Education (YRE), its philosophy, implementation, and effect upon

learning. The second portion of the literature review focused upon the

process of implementing change. The third section examines the

administrators role in implementing change. The critical points of the

literature categories are briefly outlined.

Proponents of Year-Round Education advocate YRE as a means

to increase the amount of allocated time in which children will have

opportunities to learn. Assumptions appear to be made, by YRE

proponents, that the appropriateness of an individual school's quality of

instruction and a students' perseverance and aptitude to learn, are in

place. The effects of YRE on learning is not clear. Some of the literature

indicates that schools with YRE in place have students who have

demonstrated increases in learning as measured on standardized tests.

Other investigations conclude that there are no significant differences

in student performance between schools with YRE and schools on a

traditional school calendar.

To provide a baseline of information regarding implementation guidelines, literature was reviewed which made suggestions for enhancing the successful implementation of a YRE initiative. Critical points were: knowledgeable leaders, an extended time-line, collaborative planning opportunities, and planning for non-calendar related issues.

The second category in the literature review addressed the factors and issues related to change. The literature outlined factors related to the change process and the considerations for the leaders of innovation. Factors contributing to a successful innovation are many. These include: forming a clear purpose for change, recognizing that resistance to change is unavoidable, and planning for it, realizing that the implementation of a change occurs in the context of phases with various considerations involved within each phase, and accepting that some problems are simply unsolvable. Also discussed were the ideas surrounding the cultures of organizations, suggestions as to how change can be facilitated through these unique bureaucratic organizations, and the nature of systemic change.

There are several important assumptions about change. These assumptions include: a leader must be committed to the change; awareness of an issue is not necessarily shared or common knowledge; conflict and disagreement are fundamental to change; not everyone will change; a plan will be needed to successfully implement change; and change is a frustrating, discouraging business.

Thirdly, examining the historic trends of educational leadership provided an important perspective for judging leadership today. A

contemporary model of leadership, authentic leadership, was specifically reviewed.

Inherent in the issues of change are the factors related to communication. These factors include: a two-way system of communication must be in place, the awareness that some amount of information will be misinterpreted, and the initiators of change must take the lead in building a sound, trustworthy system of communication.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Attributes of the Case Study

The purpose of this study was to conduct a field investigation of a public school system's efforts to initiate and implement a non-traditional, customized calendar. The reporting mode for this investigation is the case study.

The advantages of case study for the naturalistic investigator are described by Guba and Lincoln (1985) as:

- The case study is the primary vehicle for emic inquiry.

- The case study builds on the readers' tacit knowledge.

- The case study is an effective vehicle for demonstrating the interplay between inquirer and respondent.

- The case study provides the reader an opportunity to probe for internal consistency.

- The case study provides the "thick description" necessary for judgments of transferability.

- The case study provides a grounded assessment of context.

This case study was written to chronicle the efforts of the individuals involved, to render a description of the total experience, and to provide answers to the questions developed for this study. Through this mode of study a thorough description of the transactions involved in the study was provided along with a discussion of the saliencies and outcomes as they relate to the problem under study (Guba and Lincoln,

1985).

Subject

The subject school system had been involved in a process of initiating and implementing a non-traditional school calendar to be in place for the 1992-93 school year. It is a district with boundaries located within the largest metropolitan area in the state. The subject school system has had a long, rich history of innovation including individualized instruction, differentiated staffing, early childhood education, and inter-age grouping. Characteristics of the system include an experienced and well-trained certified staff, supportive and aware community, and a decision-making process marked by collaboration, empowerment, and mutual respect. Financially, the district was sound; however, it operates under a legislatively mandated lid on spending.

At the time of the study enrollment was approximately 5000 students. Ten elementary schools, one middle-level school (grades 7-8) and one 9-12 high school comprise the basic organizational structure of the district. Programs of significance include a center for continuing education, an alternative high school and six early childhood/day care centers.

Sources

The investigation of a particular event from the viewpoint of all the major participates is a form of case study or field investigation referred to as a situational analysis (Borg and Gall, 1983). Critical to situational analysis is the compilation and analysis of data from many

sources.

Sources are generally categorized as documents, which are are records of past events. They are written or printed materials, official or unofficial, public or private, published or unpublished (McMillan and Schumacher, 1984, p. 436).

Oral testimonies are other sources used in investigations of situational analysis. Oral testimonies are records by those persons who have witnessed significant events. Tapes and verbatim transcripts are evidence of these records (McMillan and Schumacher, 1984). In this field investigation, documents and oral testimonies were used.

<u>Documents</u>

Documents in this case study included copies of official board of education minutes, newspaper articles and editorials, minutes of public hearings, news releases, compiled and categorized data from district records and field notes. The documents selected for use were part of a larger bank of documents and information. These documents contributed most appropriately to the clear understanding of the process of initiating a non-traditional school calendar. A list of the public documents analyzed for this study is provided in Appendix A.

<u>Oral Testimonies</u>

"We interview people to find out things we cannot directly observe.... We cannot observe situations that preclude the presence of an observer.... The purpose of interviewing then, is to allow us to enter into the other person's perspective" (Patton, 1980). Interviewing is necessary when we cannot observe behavior, feelings, or how people interpret the

world around them. It is also necessary to interview when we are interested in past events that are impossible to replicate (Merriam, 1988). The use of documents and oral testimonies in concert provides for triangulation of data which enhances a study's validity and dependability. Selected oral testimonies were used in this study.

Selection of an interviewer and the interviewees was done to provide the most reliable information and not to compromise the validity. Ms. Jeri Chambers, an experienced interviewer, conducted the interviews of those individuals not employed by the school district. (See Appendix H for vita.) The researcher interviewed the administrators of the district.

Nine persons were interviewed by consent. Four of the individuals interviewed were employees of the school district. Five were community members selected on the basis of their role and involvement in the calendar process. Not all of the interviewees were involved directly in calendar process. There were two calendar committee members and district administrators among those interviewed. The other interviewees were involved in, and witnesses to, the decisions in the process.

The school superintendent was interviewed due to his role and position in the district. Seen as the initiator of the innovation, his insights were particularly useful. The assistant superintendent for operations was selected because of his role as chairperson of the calendar committee. Another assistant superintendent was selected due to membership on the calendar committee, completion of tasks

relative to research and data collection, and because he was to assume
the role of superintendent following the retirement of the current
superintendent at the end of the 1991-92 school year. A teacher was
interviewed because of his membership on the calendar committee and
his involvement in the local teachers organization. The five community
members were: a volunteer coordinator for the district and former
parent, an active parent and self-described supporter of the custom
calendar initiative, and three patrons who actively involved in the effort
to oppose the calendar process.

Interviewees were contacted initially by telephone to invite them to
participate. A follow-up telephone call, by the interviewer, to arrange
specific interview times and places was made. Interviews ranged from
one hour to one and one-half hour in length. A release of information
form was provided for each person interviewed. (See Appendix C).

At the time when the researcher and interviewer initially met,
the interviewer was provided a list of possible interview questions
(Appendix B). In addition, brief discussions relative to the individuals
to be interviewed were shared. To provide the interviewer with some
additional understanding, a brief reflection on the circumstances
surrounding the process was also shared. In addition to the suggested
interview questions provided the interviewer, the researcher suggested
additional questions for specific interviewees. The researcher provided
direction for the interviewer, yet encouraged her to use her own
expertise and judgment relative to topics or directions of the interview.
Each interview was taped and a typed transcript was prepared for each

tape by Lenka Knowski, a secretary skilled in word processing and transcription.

Examination of Sources

Involved in a study of situational analysis or case study is the process of examining critically the sources in terms or personal bias, values, and interests (McMillan and Schumacher, 1984).

External Criticisms

The authenticity of any source used in case study is paramount toward the reliability of the study itself. Scrutiny of the source exposes fundamental, yet critical information, such as author, time frame, and motive (McMillan and Schumacher, 1984) To address the issue of authenticity, the following comments are made concerning the specific sources used in the study.

Public Hearing Minutes

Two public hearings were held to address specifically the non-traditional calendar issue. The first hearing was held on November 11, 1991, with the second hearing following on November 20, 1991. Minutes of these hearing were recorded by an experienced, professional secretary. The same secretary recorded the minutes for both meetings. Copies of the minutes were obtained from the office of the superintendent.

Board of Education Minutes

Throughout the time frame of the calendar adoption process there were a number of board meetings held. However, only three of these meetings listed the calendar proposal as an agenda item. These

meetings were held on October 7, 1991, December 2, 1991, and January 6, 1992. In similar fashion to the public hearings, a professional secretary recorded the minutes for each meeting. The written minutes of each meeting were obtained from the office of the superintendent.

Input/ Follow-up Meetings

A total of 23 building level input and follow-up meetings were held. These meetings occurred between October 14, 1991, and November 7, 1991, and were held at all twelve of the district's school facilities. While there were no formal minutes taken, each meeting employed the use of group recorders to record the input from members of the small groups. These data were presented to an assistant superintendent, who grouped and categorized them into themes.

Copies of the final compilation were made available to patrons at each building. A copy for use by the researcher was obtained through the office of the superintendent. (See Appendix E for Executive Summary).

Newspaper Documents

A total of 12 newspaper articles were used as source documents for this study. These sources included signed letters to the editor, an informational article by a staff writer, a follow-up report after the first building input meeting by the same staff writer, two editorials in the study paper, another follow-up article after another building input meeting, an editorial citing the need for education change, another editorial citing the need for change and referring to a calendar change as a first step, an article after the December 2, board meeting reporting

opposition views, an article on the December 15, rally held by the calendar opposition, an article prior to the January 6, 1992, board meeting citing speculation on the outcome of the meetings, and an article dealing with a community member's address before a committee of the state legislators speaking against the district's methods for nominating school board candidates.

Miscellaneous Documents

A number of other documents were used in this study. These included: press releases, district created documents outlining the calendar proposal, memos describing the entire process relative to meeting times, places, and formats.

Oral Testimonies

As previously indicated, nine persons were selected to provide oral testimony. These included the superintendent of schools, two assistant superintendents, two calendar committee members, and five members of the community. The interviews were conducted at different stages of the process. Five interviews were conducted initially following the board's final decision and four were obtained approximately one year later. Audiotapes were made of each interview and transcripts were created. The researcher listened to all the tapes to verify transcripts.

Internal Criticisms

Internal criticism involves evaluating the accuracy and worth of the statements contained in a document as well as evaluating the person who wrote them (Borg and Gall, 1983). It is critical to the study

that witnesses or those providing testimony are reliable in terms of what they have witnessed and how they report what they know. The researcher watched carefully throughout the study for bias, prejudice, and exaggeration from all sources. The following information on those providing oral testimony addresses the issues of their credibility and reliability. Fictitious names were used for this purpose and throughout the study.

Paul Adams was the superintendent of schools at the initial stage of the calendar adoption initiation. Through his efforts, the initiative was begun. He retired at the end of the 1991-92 school year.

Ron Wilson was chairperson of the calendar committee and often used as spokesperson during the process. He was appointed by the superintendent to lead the committee in addition to his duties as assistant superintendent.

Mark Bowmar was an assistant superintendent and calendar committee member. He was also responsible for organizing information from the input/feedback meetings. He was named to succeed Paul Adams as superintendent of schools for 1992-93. Don Johnson was an officer in the local teachers' association as well as a calendar committee member. He attended all calendar meetings. Sharon Smith was active in the effort opposing the calendar initiative. A leader and organizer, she attended all public hearings and board meetings. Kathy Wilson was also an active participant in the opposition effort to stop the calendar process. She worked beyond her local building attendance area in her efforts. Connie Andersen was a parent against

the calendar proposal. She was a regular attendee at meetings and was quoted in the newspaper voicing her concern about the calendar. Mary Jones was a long-time parent, community volunteer, and calendar committee member. She attended most of the calendar committee meetings and many of the school and public meetings. Maureen Holiday was a parent supportive of the calendar proposal. She was not a calendar committee member, but she often went on record as a proponent of change.

<div align="center">Content Analysis</div>

Through the analysis of data, the researcher must assure the findings are valid and that another competent researcher working independently at the same site would not come up with totally contradictory findings (Miles and Huberman, 1984). By using methods of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification, such assurances can be made (Ibid.).

Examining the numerous data sources for worth and relevance was the first step in the data analysis process. The newspaper articles, memos, transcripts of testimony, minutes of meetings, and other public and private documents were synthesized and summarized to provide understanding of the complex and emotional issues under investigation.

Organizing and displaying the data was the next step in the process. All sources of data were arranged chronologically and organized in such a way as to make access and understanding as functional as possible. Categories based upon the research questions

were created and sources and testimonies were charted according to category appropriateness. (Appendix D)

By checking the responses, the researcher drew possible conclusions based upon frequency and information found in the review of literature.

Miles and Huberman (1984) outlined techniques which a researcher may use to verify conclusions:

- Checking for representativeness

- Triangulation across data sources and methods

- Weighing the evidence and deciding which kinds of data are most trustworthy

- Making contrasts, comparisons, and using extreme cases

- Replicating a finding in another part of the data and checking our rival explanations (1984, p. 28).

In addition, the analysis of the document and the oral testimonies was done inductively. "Inductive analysis means the patterns, themes, and categories of analysis emerge from the data rather than being imposed on data prior to data collection and analysis as done in verification research" (McMillan and Schumacher, 1984, p. 415). Guba and Lincoln (1985) added that data analysis is not a matter of data reduction but of inductions as qualitative data are reconstructed into meaningful wholes. This field investigation fit the paradigm of case study and followed accepted data analysis methods relative to case study.

Ethics

Due to what may be considered a number of sensitive issues related to the calendar adoption process, ethical considerations are appropriate. According to Merriam (1988), questions of ethics typically emerge in connection of data and the dissemination of findings. While many documents are public record, steps were taken to safeguard the identities of those individual giving oral testimonies. Fictitious names were given to the school district and all persons involved in this study. Maintaining anonymity was deemed appropriate even though some facts of the situation were a matter of public record and that publicity had increased public awareness.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The findings reported here are derived from content analysis of related documents and transcripts of nine interviews.

Introduction

The school district in this study will be referred to as the Meadowbrook School System. It is a suburban school system located within the city limits of a metropolitan city. The school district has one high school, one middle school, and ten elementary schools.

Meadowbrook School System has had a long, rich history of innovation and educational risk-taking. The patrons enjoy the resources of an upper/middle income community and the benefits of an experienced teaching staff and a generally supportive clientele with high expectations for performance. However, recent considerations have impacted the Meadowbrook School District and have forced the district's administration to reexamine the district's needs. Among these considerations are the relatively high number of "empty-nest" homes. Approximately 70% of the homes in Meadowbrook School District have no school-age children living in them. The growing number of children with special and unique needs has placed strain on existing programs and practices.

And, finally, budgetary issues have impacted existing programs and threaten the future of new programs deemed necessary to meet the new and ever-changing needs of the district.

Dr. Paul Adams, the superintendent of Meadowbrook Schools during the time of the study, had been superintendent since 1988. He retired in 1992. His successor, Mr. Mark Bowmar, previously served as an assistant superintendent in the district and was named to succeed Dr. Adams in the summer of 1991. Dr. Adams and Mr. Bowmar were interviewed for this study.

The school district officials initiated the study, development, and implementation efforts of a non-traditional calendar in 1991. The committee created to accomplish this task was chaired by Mr. Ron Wilson, who was Assistant Superintendent of Operations for the district. The Custom Calendar Team, as the committee came to be known, was made up of 20 members. The members of the committee represented various constituencies: teachers, parents, students, school administrators, and the business community. An active member of the team serving as both a community member and volunteer was Mary Jones. Mrs. Jones has had children attend the district and in the past has been very active at the school and district level. She currently serves as a coordinator of volunteer services for the school district. Dan Johnson was another Custom Calendar Team member. He was a teacher in the district with over twenty years of experience. He also has been actively involved in the local teacher organization.

Oral testimonies of four other important figures are a part of this field investigation. Kathy Wilson was a somewhat typical, relatively involved parent whose concern, curiosity, and level of involvement intensified as the events of the custom calendar adoption process

unfolded. Connie Anderson was a parent in the district and a former teacher. A self described traditional thinker, she was skeptical of the district's reputation for taking "progressive measures" and tendency toward experimentation. Sharon Smith was a parent in the school system and at the time of the custom calendar initiation efforts, expressed considerable doubt relative to proceedings, issues, data collection, and the rational for the need for change in general. Maureen Holiday was an active parent with business interests in the community. A supporter of change, innovation, and risk-taking, she generally applauded the district's efforts to adopt a non-traditional calendar. She currently remains active on the district's calendar intersession committee.

<u>Chronology</u>

An article in the December, 1990, issue of a regional educational newsletter, authored by Superintendent Adams outlining the need for change and specifically the need for a longer school year, may have signaled the beginning of the district's effort to develop a time enhancing, non-traditional school calendar. In the article, Dr. Adams argued the need for change within current educational structure. He suggested that to initiate this change, schools needed to "focus on one significant change component, which is what restructuring is all about, and get on with it. My choice for that change is the school calendar" (Adams, 1990). It was early February, 1991 when Superintendent Adams asked Ron Wilson to act as chairperson for a calendar committee. The calendar committee was formed and in place prior to

March 8, 1991. Between the time when the calendar committee was formed and the January 6, 1992 school board meeting, a series of school site meetings, board meetings, and two open hearings were held. During this period the calendar committee was meeting to research and develop a calendar recommendation. Periodic updates by the calendar committee were also given to the entire administrative team.

On January 6, 1992, the school board met to consider the calendar recommendation of Superintendent Adams. Without question, the calendar recommendation made at this time was significantly different than any of the calendar options developed prior to the January board meeting. The calendar recommendation was passed by the board by a five to one vote.

Retrospective Reflections

The nine persons interviewed represented both sides of the non-traditional calendar issue. When asked to describe their initial reactions to the calendar proposals, those taking a position against the process had similar impressions. Sharon Smith expressed concern about the research conducted, saying, "I felt like it needed a whole lot more study... and after I had looked at what they called 'research,' I was appalled" (Smith, 1993). Kathy Wilson was totally against the idea of the intersessions because, "I don't think they had done enough research."

She went on to add that she wasn't against adding days to the school year, however, she felt that "They've got to do something else along with that" (Wilson, 1993). Connie Anderson said, "There was

absolutely no quantitative or definitive research to back (the idea) that this would work....I felt that it was jumping in too fast, too much, too soon, without trying a little bit of it first" (Anderson, 1993).

When asked to reflect upon the non-traditional calendar initiative, the administrators described similar, yet not completely so, impressions. Relative to the public concern about the calendar committee process, Superintendent Adams said, "A lot of people think we should have expanded the committee...and I can understand why...I just think that sometimes it's better to have a fairly small group of people study something, and come up with a recommendation and give people a chance to react to it, then try to get forty or fifty or a hundred people together to try to plan something initially because that's always hard to do" (Adams, 1992).

Mark Bowmar said, "I worked with the Department of Education to look at how this fit as far as rules and regulations, and would they consider this change a significant enough change to require a broader community input (vote of the people) and their answer was 'No, this was no more than any other calendar adoption" (Bowmar, 1992). Ron Wilson, the calendar committee chairperson, reflected, "The only thing that I think I would have done differently would have been to get more information out early on: what we meant by 'custom calendar.'... People thought it was just another calendar; they didn't realize it was going to be so different" (Wilson, 1992).

Calendar committee member Dan Johnson commented, "I don't think that the process was bad.... The charge that we were given was to

develop something and not necessarily just a calendar, but the criteria to go with it, a philosophy, objectives, and I think that was good. Probably the only thing I would say is we needed more parental involvement since it does concern all the parents" (Johnson, 1992, p. 8).

Descriptive Research Questions

Answers to the five descriptive questions are based on findings from the analysis of public documents, administrative records, newspaper articles, board of education minutes, field notes, and transcripts of the taped interviews.

Question One

What rationale was present for the non-traditional calendar initiative?

Overview

From the outset of the non-traditional calendar initiative, the proponents, in this case the district's leading administrative officers, consistently argued for the need to find more time in which to provide for an ever growing curriculum. Citing public education's relatively poor performance on comparative test results and the need for continuous staff development, the administration developed a rationale for change. More specifically, they tried to define a need for more time. The opposition to this reasoning argued that if more time were needed, existing time parameters should be scrutinized to eliminate perceived waste.

The Rational for Change

In the December, 1990, issue of an educational newsletter,

Superintendent Paul Adams outlined his views on the need for
educational change and, in particular, the need to redesign the school
calendar. "The agrarian-based, September-June calendar is
detrimental to cumulative learning and retention," he wrote, and he
went on to further state that "traditional summer activities such as
travel, camps, employment, etc. will be disrupted, but of we are truly
concerned about increasing the productivity and assuring that each
student is a successful contributor to our society, we must be willing to
make the change" (Adams, 1990). Citing Superintendent Adam's call
for a new initiative, assistant superintendent Ron Wilson referred to the
superintendent's article as the vehicle for outlining "his feelings on why
we should look at (a) non-traditional calendar. (Wilson, 1991, pg. 1). In
a meeting with Wilson in the early stages of the process, Adams also
gave to Wilson "his ideas of why this district should have a non-
traditional calendar" (Ibid).

After the calendar committee was formed, one of their initial
tasks was to draft a list of objectives for the Custom Calendar. The
tentative list created in March, 1991, included the following Custom
Calendar objectives:

A. To implement a calendar which can serve as a catalyst for
educational change.

B. To provide for 8-10 additional days of instruction in the
calendar by the year 2000.

C. To provide for a more continuous learning program.

D. To provide for more frequent remediation and enrichment

opportunities.

E. To reduce learning loss for the educational disadvantaged student.

F. To reduce the amount of review needed at the beginning of each year.

G. To provide quality intersession programs for all students.

H. To reduce stress and fatigue for students and teachers.

This initial list was examined and adjusted until a final document was prepared for distribution in September, 1991. In the revised document, the goal of the Custom Calendar initiative was: "To implement a calendar which will serve as a vehicle for significant educational improvement" (Appendix F). The original list of eight objectives was trimmed to five. The final objectives and the supporting rational provided to the staff and community are outlined on the following pages. The entire document is included in Appendix F.

Objective: To provide for 10 additional days of instruction by the year 2000.

- The increased demands of an informational age and changing societal needs increase the demands upon our instructional time. Time is needed to support additional instruction in areas such as technology, foreign language, health education, etc. without infringing upon the instructional time needed for the traditional basic skills.

- A longer school year, time-on-task correlates with higher achievement. Higher achievers, on the average, spend more time in school than lower achievers who tend to be absent more often.

- The custom calendar would provide students with learning experiences more consistent with students of other countries.

- More academic learning time is needed in mathematics and science to remain competitive with students of other countries.

Objective: To create a more continuous learning program.

- Research indicates that continuous learning allows students to retain more of what they have learned.

- Research indicates that students forget at different rates. Students who have difficulty learning acquire knowledge more slowly and tend to lose it more rapidly.

- Students who have a difficult learning experience average a learning loss of three to four months in the summer while other students actually gain a month.

- Semester exams will be completed before winter break, eliminating the need to reteach and review.

- Conferences and staff development may be scheduled during intersessions, reducing the number of early dismissals and disruption of learning time.

Objective: To provide quality intersession programs.

- One of the more significant educational benefits the custom calendar offers is the opportunity for students to participate in intersession programs.

- Intersessions provide opportunities for more frequent intervention in the basic skills, resulting in more success for students.

- A quality intersession program also includes school/community

opportunities in the arts and other enrichment opportunities.

- Students in sports and activities many times see participation during intersessions as an advantage since they are unencumbered with class assignments and other pressures.

Objective: To procure non-traditional financing and support for intersession programs.

- We will work with the community to secure a blend of financing and support from grants, entitlement funds, corporate sponsors, extended teacher contracts, volunteers and parents.

Objective: To reduce stress and fatigue for students and teachers.

- Vacations are important! A custom calendar can offer a wider variety of vacation experiences throughout the year.

- Most schools on a custom calendar report significant reductions in student behavior problems, truancy, vandalism, and absenteeism.

- Conferences and staff training during intersessions provide optimal learning time for teachers.

The document was dated September 23, 1991.

In addition to these objectives and rationale, the document of September 23, 1991, also included the proposed 1992-93 school calendar (Appendix G). This calendar as proposed to the community called for an August 3rd beginning date and a June 4th ending date. It called for 194 contract days and 182 student days based upon a quarter system to include three week-long intersessions.

Oral testimony from several of the individuals interviewed provided different perspectives on the rationale or need for a non-

tradition at calendar. Calendar committee member Don Johnson stated
that there was a need to "better equip our students with the learning
aspect of education, as well as to update and get in line with what the
president is trying to do" (Johnson, 1991, p. 2). Another committee
member, Mary Jones, viewed the reason for examining a new calendar
as a matter of developing "something that would be good educationally."
She added, "if it wasn't good educationally, there was no reason to do all
this topsy turvy stuff" (Jones, 1991).

Assistant Superintendent Mark Bowmar recognized the need for
change as an issue of time. "I think there's a need to change the
calendar because we don't have enough time to do what we are being
asked to do.... It's a time issue. Time is a commodity we haven't
changed"(Bowmar, 1991, p. 1). Bowmar also provided this perspective,
"To establish a need, we began looking at the demographics of the
district, talking about the district clientele...changing from what they
had been historically. If we are going to continue to move forward and
to be an educational leader as a school district, we have to realize that
the students we are getting are not going to be 80% from upper-middle
class white families, and that time is a commodity that we can deal with
to help make some significant changes to meet the needs of all kids as a
mission of the school district" (Bowmar, 1991, p. 2).

The rationale presented to defend the effort to introduce a non-
traditional calendar met with a significant amount of skepticism and
suspicion from the community and some staff. Parent and community
member Connie Andersen provided a counter point to the argument

that time was a critical issue. She said, "That's silly, to even think that more school days are going to help....The first thing they need to be concerned about is curriculum, and using the time wisely that is already built into the calendar" (Andersen, 1993, p. 11). She added, "I felt it was too much change....There was absolutely no quantitative or definitive research to back that this would work"(Andersen, 1993, p. 2).

Another community members, Kathy Wilson, agreed by saying, "You can't tell me that my kids can sit in class for two more days and they're going to be smarter"(Wilson, 1993, p. 4). Sharon Smith, a parent, noted, "I think the district likes to be innovative for the sake of innovation, and think that's cool, but it's a little different when you're a parent, and you have children, and you want the best for them"(Smith, 1993, p. 3). She went on to add, "I'm not sure what they (calendar committee) was charged with doing....If they were given the charge to come up with the best calendar to accomplish what we feel is absolutely the best in educational opportunity for our kids, or if they were charged with coming up with something different...adding two days"(ibid, p. 10).

Question Two

What steps were taken in the development process of the non-traditional calendar?

Overview

The call for change presented by the superintendent had, in effect, begun the process of adopting a new school calendar for the district. The next step was to create a calendar committee and establish time-lines for the process itself. The following descriptions represent a

chronology of the steps taken to develop and plan implementation of the district's non-traditional school calendar.

Chronology of the Process

In February, 1991, Superintendent Adams asked Assistant Superintendent Ron Wilson to assume the position of chairperson for the custom calendar committee. Wilson began the process of selecting the committee. He was asked by the superintendent to keep the membership small, yet representative. Superintendent Adams reflected, "What I did... was to take the format that we had used in the past for Strategic Planning, and for every strategy we had come out with we had designed an action team of somewhere around ten. twelve, or fourteen people... and gone through a specific time line as to when their work should be done" (Adams, 1992, p. 2).

Mr. Wilson assembled a fifteen member committee. Members included three central office administrators, one school board member, one member from the district volunteer council, four teachers, one student, two business community members, two parents, and one building administrator. The committee met for the first time in March, 1991, to receive their charge and "get the ball rolling"(Wilson, 1992, p. 5). When asked to describe the functioning of the committee, Wilson commented, "What we were doing was feeling our way and trying to see where we were at during those first two or three meetings....We identified what we called 'important factors' during the first four meetings....like child care, vacations, etc. Then we divided into two groups....in the fifth meeting we developed goals and objectives....Then

in the rest of the sixth, seventh, and eighth meetings they (each group) developed a non-traditional calendar on their own.... At the last meeting each group presented their non-traditional calendar to the other group, and the other group asked questions, made them justify their calendar, made them connect the objectives to their calendar, and so forth"(Wilson, 1991, p. 7).

The calendar committee conducted its meetings from March, 1991, through May, 1991. The committee sent two new calendar proposals to the superintendent for consideration. In July, 1991, Superintendent Adams met with Ron Wilson to look at the committee's recommendations. The superintendent added his recommendation and a calendar proposal was selected to be presented to other administrators, staff and the community for their input.

On September 18, 1991, a custom calendar review meeting was held with the entire administrative staff. The purpose of this meeting was to review the proposed new calendar, suggest possible modifications, and to brainstorm anticipated questions for consideration.

On September 25, 1991, an administrators "cracker barrel" meeting was held. The agenda included the setting of dates for staff and parent meetings, review questions and answers from the September 18th meeting, and to identify issues to consider when evaluating the custom calendar. In September, 1991, Wilson presented the following time lines for custom calendar presentations:

Staff overview presentations by building   October 7-11

Staff small group by building (head cooks, building

services)   October 14-November 1

Parent presentations and reactions by building

                                   October 14-November 8

Public Hearings

        Meadowbrook Middle School   November 11

        Bayside Elementary   November 20

Recommendation to School Board   December 2

School Board Decision   January 6

During the period from March, 1991, through September, 1991, the committee worked without public communication or input. Speculation and assumptions began to grow within the community. Rumors gave way to the belief that the process was "greased" (Wilson, 1991).

On October 1, 1991, Assistant Superintendent Wilson sent a memo to Superintendent Adams outlining the procedures for the parent input meetings to be held at each building site. An October 4, 1991, news release gave notice that the Meadowbrook Board of Education would be introduced to the 1992-93 Custom Calendar at the October 7, 1991, meeting. On October 14, at the Miller Elementary School, the first of thirteen school site meetings was held. On October 15, the first letter of opposition to the new calendar was printed in the local paper. A number of other letters and articles followed during the months prior to the January 6, 1992, board meeting. (These documents are contained in

the data file developed by the researcher.)

Throughout October and into November, school meetings were conducted. In addition, two public hearings were held. One on November 19, 1991, at the Meadowbrook Middle School, and the other at Meadow Brook High School, on November 20, 1991.

On November 15, 1991, acting on a request from Assistant Superintendent Mark Bowmar to examine evaluation procedures for the Meadowbrook Custom Calendar project, Dr. Joseph Smith, from State College, issued a draft proposal of program evaluation to Mr. Bowmar. The comprehensive proposal was accepted and the calendar evaluation was in progress. Dr. Smith was present at the November 19, 1991, public hearing to address the issue of evaluation. Minutes (available in the data file) from that meeting indicate that Dr. Smith addressed evaluation issues relating to particular assessment models, speed, and ease of assessment, and possible outcomes (Public Hearing Minutes, Nov. 19, 1991).

On November 26, 1991, an administrators meeting was held to review the outcomes of the input meetings as well as the public hearing. Mr. Bowmar presented a compilation of comments from the meetings. Much of the discussion centered on the issues of instructional time and operationalizing the intersessions as part of the calendar revision.

Before the meeting concluded, Superintendent Adams announced a new calendar proposal. It was somewhat unclear as to who authored the new proposal, but it seemed to reflect less change than the original calendar. Adams explained the three-year calendar to administrators,

mentioning that this particular option was reviewed by the calendar committee and they accepted it as a viable option. The new proposal called for school to begin August 17 in 1992-93, August 16 in 1993-94, and no sooner than August 8 in 1994-95. The school year would end June 4, 1993, June 3, 1994, and no later than June 9, 1995. The proposal also called for a week-long intersession to occur in March, 1993, and 1994. Adams mentioned that the proposal would be presented to the school board for their consideration. It was projected that the board would actually vote on the proposal at the January 6, 1992, meeting.

Minutes of the December 2, 1991, board meeting indicate that Dr. Adams praised the efforts of those who worked on the calendar committee, in particular, Ron Wilson. Adams said he believed "the calendar committee under the leadership of Ron Wilson did a superb job, putting in a tremendous amount of work"(Board Report, December 2, 1991). He went on to add, "This committee's recommendation was submitted to the superintendent the latter part of June and the superintendent made a few recommendations before sending it back to the committee"(Ibid.).

In anticipation of a large crowd, the January 6, 1992, Meadowbrook School Board meeting was moved from its usual meeting place, the central office building, to the larger Meadowbrook Middle School. The attendance was estimated at approximately four-hundred people. Considerable dialogue occurred. The president of the school board outlined the procedures for the meeting, which allowed for a presentation by Superintendent Adams, open discussion between board

members, and the testimony of forty-six persons. The presentation given by Dr. Adams explained the new calendar proposal presented earlier to the calendar committee and the district administrators.

Minutes from the board meeting indicate that Adams described the proposal by presenting starting and ending dates for the three years. On the topic of staff training days, he stated, "There are no staff development days included in the proposal. Planning and staff development days would be determined at a later date" (Board Minutes, January 6, 1992, p. 3). Adams went on to add, "The calendar for the 1993-94 school year corresponds exactly with the 1992-93 proposal....For planning and evaluation, it is important to have two years of a stable calendar" (Ibid.). The description of the 1994-95 calendar included guidelines to plan the calendar and add two student days. The 1994-95 school year would start no earlier than August 8, and end no later than June 9. Adams stated, "this would give people time to plan accordingly" (Ibid.).

Records indicate that a motion was made to accept the calendar proposal as presented by Dr. Adams. This motion was amended to drop the recommendation for the 1994-95 school year, "thereby giving residents, students, and staff more time to study the situation" (Ibid., p. 3). A motion was made to indefinitely postpone the amended motion. This motion died for lack of a second. After lengthy discussion and open testimony, much of which was supportive of the calendar proposal, the amended motion (two-year calendar) was passed five to one.

<u>Question Three</u>

What were the reactions in the community to the non-traditional calendar adoption process?

<u>Overview</u>

The reactions of community members to the process of developing a non-traditional calendar for the Meadowbrook Schools were publicly recorded in the minutes of the building input meetings, public hearings, the letters to the editor section of the newspaper, and at school board meetings. In addition, according to Dr. Adams and Mr. Wilson, there were a significant number of letters which could not be shared publicly that were addressed to them specifically.

<u>Reactions of the Community</u>

Connie Andersen, an active community member, when asked to express her initial feelings about the calendar adoption process, stated, "I was very skeptical because I see the district doing a lot of progressive educational measures for the sake of progressivism only...with my children as their guinea pigs" (Andersen, 1992, p.1). Another parent interviewed, Sharon Smith, said, "tinkering with the calendar might be real innovative, might get some good press, but if we focused all of our resources into this very innovative calendar....I didn't feel that that was where the resources should have been directed" (Smith, 1992, p. 5). This theme of "innovation for innovation's sake" was reinforced in letters and articles printed in the newspaper. Citing the district's "progressive philosophy," and alumnus wrote, "I know the faults (Meadowbrook) has created by jumping on the bandwagon of seemingly

every fad in education. I consider myself a 'victim' of the fad hysteria. In extending the school year, it will, in all honestly, give students more of less" (Daily Paper, October 10, 1991).

In an article appearing in the October 8, 1991, issue of the same newspaper, members of a group called Citizens for Responsible Education said, "school administrators are rushing into having a new calendar" (Daily Paper, October 8, 1991). A press release distributed by the group was quoted as saying, "Are we so eager to be perceived as leaders that we rush into an expanded calendar much as we rushed into an open classroom model in the '60's, only to spend additional tax dollars in the '70's rebuilding walls?" (Daily Paper, Oct. 8, 1991).

The high school newspaper editorialized, "With the proposal of the new calendar....it seems to be carrying on it's hallowed tradition of bungling by bureaucracy - boldly going where no other school district has gone before and dragging its students and teachers helplessly behind" (School News, October 18, 1991). During October and November of 1991, a petition drive against the calendar had begun. Minutes of the public hearing on November 19, 1991, indicate one community member reported, "several people in the district have helped distribute petitions, and in one week's time, over 300 signatures were collected and they were not through"(Public Hearing minutes, November 19, 1991, p. 7).

The concept of quality intersessions for enrichment and remediation began to emerge as an issue of much confusion and concern. According to the Executive Summary of Custom Calendar Input Sessions, (Appendix E) "473 items were identified related to

intersessions (p. 3). The summary went on to add, "The dominate issue was the need for more information regarding intersessions: e.g., what programs will be offered; how will students be selected; how much will they cost, and who will pay?" The questions related to intersessions were frequently mentioned during each of the two public hearings.

Testimony of a community member at the November 20, 1991 public hearing was representative of the comments. He said, "You state, 'Intersessions provide opportunities for more frequent intervention in basic skills resulting in more success for all students.' Since intersessions have not been designed for the district, it is false to assume intersessions will result in more success for all students. What documented evidence or study did the committee use to support this statement?" (Public Hearing, November 20, 1991).

When asked about the intersession topic, Connie Andersen responded, "I would have liked to have seen a proposed intersession all mapped out.... 'This is what we're proposing to do; we have these things that have been given to us by the business community; these people have said they will do x, y, z.' There was no plan; there was no research....That isn't the way to do things" (Andersen, 1992).

In another newspaper article which gave coverage to the anti-calendar rally, a patron described the intersession concept as "a major complaint" and expressed worry "about the cost of the intersessions" (Daily Paper, December 16, 1991).

An analysis of the minutes of both public hearings indicates that of the thirty-seven people who spoke, sixteen mentioned intersession. Of

those sixteen testimonies, twelve were considered negative to the intersession concept.

Sharon Smith voiced her concern, "I was on the intersession committee...but I was kind of a token parent. The two teachers were the ones who set up the intersession for the most part" (Smith, 1992, p. 7).

Voicing her support for the intersession concept was parent Maureen Holiday. In her written testimony provided at the November 20 public hearing she said, "As a parent I am not asking the administration what are we going to do? I am asking what I can do to help. I think business is already identifying the need to form partnerships with schools; we can help them identify the means" (Public Hearing, November 20, 1991).

There was significant concern regarding the administration's decision relative to the custom calendar committee make-up. Those critical of the process voiced concern about committee membership, representation, tokenism, decision-making and the absence of minutes from the meeting themselves.

In her interview, Sharon Smith reflected upon the task of the custom calendar committee. She said, "I am not real sure what went on with this calendar committee.... I'm not sure what they were charged with doing. if they were given the charge to come up with the best in educational opportunity for our kids, or if they were charged with coming up with something different, add two days" (Smith, 1992, p. 10). Regarding the custom calendar committee membership, Mrs. Smith said, "Ask for volunteers from the community to sit on this committee?

I don't think calling a school secretary or principal and asking, 'Can
you recommend somebody?' is necessarily going to get the rank and file
of a community to input on a committee" (Ibid, p. 11).

Kathy Wilson, reflecting on the calendar committee said, "I know
one complaint I still hear is this calendar committee - why wasn't
anyone from Valley Heights on it? People felt, and this is what they told
me, that the administration hand picked their committee" (Wilson, 1992,
p. 15).

A patron at the November 20 public hearing inquired, "Where are
the committee's written reports and recommendations to this point?
Where are the committee's minutes of all meetings showing the time,
place, members present and absent, and the substance of all matters
discussed as required by state law" (Public Hearing, November 20, 1991).

As the January 6, 1992, board meeting approached, emotions and
reactions on both sides of the issue continued to run high.

Although a significant number of patrons had been active in
opposing the calendar adoption based upon hearing and meeting
attendance, the vast majority of community members had not been
involved. Their feeling remained virtually untapped. Those opposed to
the calendar change appealed to the committee and to the school
administration to survey the community and to put the issue to a vote.

As a patron at the November 20, 1991, public hearing explained,
"The administration and board would do a disservice if they operate on
the assumed basis of silent majority approval....You cannot assume the
majority was in favor" (Public Hearing, November 20, 1991).

Ron Wilson, citing "no legal obligation to put the issue to vote," (Wilson, 1992), voiced concern about an informed public and suggested that the issue was one for the Board of Education to decide as representative of the patrons of the district.

In middle December, 1991, a flyer was distributed announcing a rally to be held at Meadowbrook High School on Sunday, December 15th. The purpose of the rally was to gather signatures for a petition opposing the calendar adoption. Parents and children gathered outside of the school to "display signs expressing their opposition to the calendar and to sign a giant postcard to be delivered to the school board"(Daily Paper, December 16, 1991). According to the newspaper article, the postcard listed four of the protest's arguments:

"- The calendar will probably bring about a tax increase.

- The district has been unwilling to include parental input in planning the calendar.

- Extending the school year does not guarantee quality education.

- No other options have been considered." (Daily Paper, December 16, 1991).

As referenced earlier, district administrators, primarily Assistant Superintendent Mark Bowmar, completed an item analysis of the information from community input meetings, follow-up meetings, and public hearings. These "trends and issues" also reflected the reactions that community members felt and demonstrated regarding the calendar proposal itself. The executive summary outlining this analysis is succinct and candid. The major issues are described as the

following.

Interruptions. The key issue was that it would be desirable to reduce the interruptions in student days, e.g., staff development during intersessions is super; teachers will spend more time in the classroom, and intersessions should be used for conferences and staff development.

Vacations and Sports. The themes were that vacations are important; intersessions would provide new opportunities for vacations. Some vacations would be disrupted by the proposed early start of the school year, and that student participation in summer sports programs may suffer.

August 3 as a Starting Date. moving too fast and/or too early. Next year is too soon to introduce the proposed calendar. The implementation of the proposed calendar should be delayed so that families and the community could be better prepared.

Stress. These items presented a wide range of opinion as to the effect the proposed calendar would have on student and staff stress and fatigue. Opinion seemed to be equally split.

Adding Days. There was considerable agreement that it was desirable to add days to the school year.

Finance. There was a belief that more cost information was needed concerning intersessions. What is the district's ability to implement the proposed calendar within the limits of the current budget lid?

Research and Evaluation. There was a definite theme that there is an interest in and a need for having more research and evaluation

information available.

Semester Ending Before Winter Break. The item analysis indicated a feeling that ending the semester as proposed would be a positive outcome of the calendar. (Custom Calendar Impact, Executive Summary, October, 1991.)

Question Four

What were the non-calendar related issues?

Overview

Throughout the calendar adoption process there were obvious and expected issues which needed to be discussed and resolved by all the parties involved. Those issues were examined in question three. However, as time passed and the process evolved, a number of non-calendar related issues surfaced. Those opposing the calendar were emphatic in arguing that there were a number of issues which were prerequisite to any change in calendar or extension of the school year. Proponents of the calendar change did not see the same relatedness or, in some cases, viewed changing the calendar as a vehicle for addressing the "other" perceived problems.

Non-Calendar Related Items

From the very beginning of the effort to redesign the school calendar, Superintendent Adams recognized the need for schools to address a number of educational issues if schools were to improve. In the same article in which he signaled the effort to change the school calendar he also stated, "This call for change included life-long learning strategies, revised teaching methods. high qualify staff development

programs, emphasis on higher-ordered thinking skills, rethinking the school calendar, and empowering people closest to the job in decision-making" (Adams, December, 1990).

It became apparent throughout the custom calendar adoption process that those individuals opposing the calendar were strongly suggesting that the Meadowbrook school system examine other educational issues first, then rethink the school calendar. In her interview. Sharon Smith shared this thought: "I felt curriculum needed a lot of work; I felt teacher evaluation and teacher continuation needed a lot of work, with the possibility of tinkering with the calendar....I mean just as a side issue. I was afraid that if all those energies were focused there (calendar), these other areas would be neglected"(Smith, 1993, p. 4). Kathy Wilson added, "If they add more days, they need to change the curriculum. They need to improve it, not change it, but improve it" (Wilson, 1993, p. 4). Connie Andersen agreed, saying, "Adding school days I didn't think should be the goal. I would have liked to have seen more attention given to the curriculum....and using the time wisely that is already built into the calendar"(Andersen, 1993, p. 10).

At an elementary school input meeting held on November 9, 1991, an unidentified patron expressed his feelings succinctly: "If you don't change what you do, changing when you do it won't make any difference" (Field Notes, November 11, 1991, p. 3).

The concept of change was an issue discussed often. Discussions pointed to change as a matter of readiness and need. Kathy Wilson felt

that , "it was too big of a change to push it through without consulting the taxpayers" (Wilson, 1993, p. 13).

"I think the whole process needs to be slower," Sharon Smith responded when asked about the change" (Smith, 1993, p. 4). Comments at the public hearings of November 11 and November 20 included:

- "If it ain't broke, don't fix it."
- "Don't try to change by yourselves."
- "Change for the wrong reason was not good."
- "Changes were unnecessary."
- "We need more than a 4-5 month period for implementation."
- "Change is inevitable and with the calendar we can control change."
- "Let's put this off until other districts have accepted it."
- "We need to give change a chance."
- "Calendar is being far too rushed."
- "Let's not rush the process." (Public Hearings November 11 and 20, 1991.)

Could the communication strategies used by the district's administration relative to the calendar process have been better? According to all of the individuals interviewed, communicating to the public the process, expectations, and the progress of the committee was an area perhaps taken for granted. Sharon Smith felt that the process needed to "be open from the very beginning" (Smith, 1993, p. 11). Kathy Wilson said, "It's first communications....If they'd just sent me a letter saying this is what we're planning to do...I might have look at it, put it

aside and thought "Gee, that's great" (Smith, 1993, p. 7).

Superintendent Adams reflected, 'I know that there were a lot of residents in the district that felt that we didn't communicate well with them" (Adams, 1992, p. 5). Assistant Superintendent Bowmar concurred, "There's a legitimate concern here that they (community) heard about a custom calendar, but they didn't know what it was" (Bowmar, 1992, p. 7).

In the brochure given to the community, Proposed Custom Calendar, the Meadowbrook School System defines time on task a "when students are engaged in learning." The definition further adds, "Additional time on task can be achieved through a longer school year and less disruptive, more efficient calendar" (p. 2). Supporting this concept as a reason to change their traditional calendar, Superintendent Adams said, "We've got to give kids ... more time to learn. Since we're not that flexible, at least maybe we ought to provide times along the way to help kids that are having trouble, and also maybe provide some different kinds of activities for all kids" (Adams, 1992, p. 4). Ron Wilson suggested that "with more time on task...we might be able to better enhance youngsters" (1992, p. 3). Critics of this time on task theme recognized the value of the concept. Their criticism generally focused upon the concern that "we aren't using the time we have" (Andersen, 1993, p. 11). "So they kept talking about 'Time on task,' and that irritated me.... We had to add more school days, when I didn't believe that the school days we were already given were being used effectively" (Andersen, 1993, p. 11). Sharon Smith added, "I have seen

some studies that showed adding days to the calendar really accomplished very little. The more time you have, the more time you waste, which is real sad" (Smith, 1993 p. 5).

At the public hearing of November 20, 1991, a community member spoke on the issue of time on task. He said, "A longer school year is not the definition of time on task. The correlation between a longer school year and higher achievement is not supported by any documented research studies in any of the data used by the committee" (Public Hearing, November 20, 1991).

Question Five

What decisions did the board make in response to community reaction and administrative recommendation?

Overview

Throughout the calendar adoption process, the Meadowbrook School Board was removed from the development and planning process. At the October 7, 1991 meeting, the board was introduced to the initial calendar proposal. This board meeting was held prior to any input meetings or public meetings. The December 2, 1991, board meeting marked the introduction of the adjusted calendar proposal. No action was taken at this time on the proposal. On January 6, 1992, the Meadowbrook School Board met to conduct regular business and to take action on the three-year custom calendar proposal. The Board made three decisions in response to community reaction and administrative recommendation.

Decision One

The format for the January 6 board meeting was stated clearly and enforced rigidly by the board president. She welcomed the testimony of community members, yet reminded them that it was a "Board meeting not a town hall meeting" (Board Minutes, January 6, 1992, p. 2). Forty-six patrons addressed the board. Many of those addressing the board had not spoken at any of the input meetings or public hearings. Review of their testimony indicates most of those speaking were supportive of the new proposal. A petition with 1,000 signatures opposing the calendar was presented to the board.

The first decision made by the board was to change the calendar proposal (in the form of an amended motion) by dropping the 1994-95 school year from the recommended calendar proposal. Citing a need for more time, a board member said by dropping the 1994-95 school year it should "give residents, students, and staff more time to study the situation" (Ibid., p.5).

Another board member added she was initially opposed to the custom calendar; it was too much, too fast. Conceptually, however, she felt it was a good idea. "The fact that the 1994-95 school year calendar was open ended scares many people. In talking with constituents, they were accepting of two years, but the third year has got to go" (Ibid., p. 6).

Decision Two

Each member of the board took an opportunity to comment on the issue. Generally, they reflected upon the issues of intersessions, relations with the business community, adding two days to the school

year, as well as a number of non-calendar related topics. Somewhat abruptly, a motion was made to "indefinitely postpone the amended motion" (Ibid., p. 7). The second decision made by the board was to let that motion die for lack of a second.

Decision Three

Following the testimonies, board members were asked for final comments. A board member commented that if this calendar was adopted she expected to receive periodic updates about the effectiveness of this calendar, and she also expected a reexamination of every aspect of the district's responsibilities, curriculum enhancement, on-going evaluation of the teaching staff, administrative efficiency, etc., to be included. The same board member added that as a board they needed to challenge the administration every step of the way" (Ibid., p. 20).

A board member speaking against the proposal commented that he thought the issue needed to be set aside for more refinement. "Why rush into the change for the coming year?... People have stated we need to do a better job with youngsters in school before adding more time" (Ibid, p. 21). The board member went on to say, "Change is difficult, and there is a strong percentage of disapproval in the community....In polling people who did not speak this evening, they are opposed to change and quality addressed....Elementary teachers feel other issues need to be addressed" (Ibid, p. 21).

After no further comments, the president called for the question on the original motion, as amended. The third decision made by the board of education of the Meadowbrook Schools was to carry the motion

on a five to one vote.

Interpretive Research Questions

Answers to the three interpretive research questions were derived from the perspectives of the interviewees. The three interpretive questions are:

What factors and issues influenced the final outcome of the calendar adoption process?

What were the administrator's relevant decisions?

What role did the administrators ability to facilitate change play in the final outcome of the process?

Interpretive Question One

What factors or issues influenced the final outcome of the calendar adoption process?

Overview

The factors and issues were identified by examining the responses given by interviewees. Questions were not always asked using the same words, however three questions were selected for soliciting appropriate responses. They were:

1. What concerned you the most about the process?

2. What caused the changes in the process?

3. What are your personal perceptions to this point?

The interviewees' responses follow, beginning with the patrons.

Sharon Smith

Ms. Smith said that the calendar we have now is something that was "patched together" by the administration at the very last minute in

hopes of being able to get at least that much through. She felt they (administration) were not getting the needed support from the community and staff. She stated they needed not only a significant majority of their community; they needed a significant, enthusiastic majority of their teachers and they didn't have that. A slower time frame would have helped. She also felt that the committee was trying to do too much, too soon (Smith, 1993).

Following is a list of quotations taken from the transcript of Sharon Smith's answer to this question during the interview.

- "They needed a significant majority of teachers, and they didn't have it."

- "They can't push this one through; they're going to patch something together."

- "This kind of intrigue in the district; this is nonsense" (Ibid.).

Kathy Wilson

Ms. Wilson reflected that an important factor was the perception that they (committee) were going to leave parents out of the process. She also felt that addressing the issue that by simply adding days will improve learning was a major influence. Not having the total support of all the teachers was also an issue. She observed that the intensity of the resistance varied from school to school. Her school's patrons were "really against it," probably stemming from an attempt some years ago, to close the school. The size of the change was a factor in her opinion along with the perception that the change was simply going to be pushed through without consulting the taxpayers (Wilson,1993).

Following is a list of quotations or excerpts taken from the transcript of Kathy Wilson's answer to this question during the interview.

- "They were not going to consult the parents."

- "The teachers didn't think it was a good idea."

- "Opposition seemed to go by school."

- "...lack of support for intersessions" (Ibid.).

Connie Andersen

Ms. Andersen said that the custom calendar effort was a prelude to the implementation of Outcome Based Education. She also believed that the amount and intensity of the resistance from the residents persuaded the administration and board to make adjustments. Andersen also felt as though they (administration) were on course to significantly change the calendar and it (calendar) would not go back. Another factor influencing change according to Andersen, was the ability of people to convince others that simply adding days was not the answer (Andersen,1993).

Following is a list of quotations or excerpts taken from the transcript of Connie Andersen's answer to this question during the interview.

- "...no definitive information on intersession."

- "...the intensity of the resistance."

- "...the belief that the district needs more than additional days."

- "...the belief that most people didn't want the change" (Ibid.).

<u>Mary Jones</u>

Ms. Jones commented on the time lines for change as a factor influencing the final outcome. She felt the district should start developing plans for implementation more than one year in advance. She also believed that the community should have been better informed. She speculated, based upon her years of experience as a parent in the district, that this district will not push something through when there are that many people unhappy. Parents are very important (Jones,1993).

Following is a list of quotations or excerpts taken from the transcript of Mary Jones answer to this question during the interview.

- "...communication concerns"

- "...organized resistance"

- "...concerns over needs of those resisting" (Ibid.).

<u>Maureen Holiday</u>

A proponent of the custom calendar effort, Ms. Holiday felt that the fear or readiness for change was an important factor. She understood, yet did not agree with, the feelings of some parents that there should be other changes first. She believed also that the perceived vagueness of the intersession concept impacted the outcome. Holiday also speculated that the sheer intensity of the opposition was an important factor relative to the outcome (Holiday, 1993).

Following is a list of quotations or excerpts taken from the transcript of Maureen Holiday's answer to this question during the interview.

- "...length of summer"

- "...concerns about intersessions"

- "...number of public hearings"

- "...need for change" (Ibid.).

<u>Paul Adams</u>

Superintendent Adams said the failure to adequately inform the community, not just of the custom calendar process, but also of the purpose and direction of the district's strategic plan, played a significant role in the final outcome. Adams also speculated that people would recognize the need for more school days. Admittedly, they did not. Adams acknowledged that there may have been some underestimation or failure to recognize the impact of the calendar upon parents. He also felt that the opposition was not necessarily wide spread, but it was vocal and it was very well organized. Finally, Adams recognized two factors which affected the final outcome: time and preparation at the beginning of effort and being able to sense the readiness of people relative to change(Adams, 1991).

Following is a list of quotations or excerpts taken from the transcript of Paul Adam's answer to this question during the interview.

- "We did not do a good job of going to our staff and our community."

- "I thought August 3 was going to be too early for some people."

- "We should have recognized (better) that the calendar is affecting parents (not just kids)."

- "I don't think there was wide-spread opposition; opposition was

well organized."

    - "You're better off taking a lot of time up front (to explain.)"

    - "Preparing the community .... We didn't do that very well"

(Ibid.).

Ron Wilson

Wilson viewed the calendar committee's efforts and commitment as a factor. He expressed his disappointment and concern as he reflected upon the rumors and accusations that the committee's work was merely a "done deal." Agreeing with others, he said the outcomes of the process were influenced by communication factors, specifically the failure to supply meaningful information to the community during the initial stages of the process. Wilson speculated, too, that not putting the decision to a vote could have been an impacting issue (Wilson,1991).

Following is a list of quotations or excerpts taken from the transcript of Ron Wilson's answer to this question during the interview.

    - "...time line for final decision"

    - "...no need for needs assessment"

    - "...no need for vote" (Ibid.).

Mark Bowmar

Bowmar's insights reflected upon the comprehensiveness of the process itself. Making the process a participative effort influenced the outcome. Bowmar said financial considerations were an important factor also. The revision of the initial proposal based primarily upon recommendations from the superintendent was mentioned. Bowmar expressed his dissatisfaction with the district's efforts to inform the

community and to market the proposal. He, too, underestimated the level of concern existing in the community. Bowmar suggested that the lack of fanfare at the beginning was a negative factor (Bowmar,1991).

Following is a list of quotations or excerpts taken from the transcript of Mark Bowmar's answer to this question during the interview.

- "This did not fall under the statutes governing year-round school."

- "It is the board's responsibility to establish a calendar; they charged the recommendation for that calendar to the superintendent."

- "It was primarily the superintendent's final recommendation that prevailed" (Ibid.).

Interpretive Question Two

What were the administrators' relevant decisions?

Overview

Three questions were suggested for use by the interviewer relative to the question to be addressed. There were:

1. What things could you (they) have done differently?

2. How would you describe your role in the process?

3. What part of the process did you oppose?

So as not to extend beyond the scope of the question, the relative quality of the decision will not be discussed.

Sharon Smith

Ms. Smith expressed her thoughts relative to a number of administrative decisions. Among them were not having an evaluation

in place from the outset, the amount and type of research which was decided upon on which to base decisions and to share with the community, the mandate to complete the first semester prior to the winter break, and the decision to keep the plan for funding the intersession relatively open-ended. Smith acknowledged the decision to have open meetings where people could speak and testify. She went on to talk about decisions relative to the time frame, openness, and calendar committee make-up (Smith, 1993).

Following is a list of quotations or excerpts taken from the transcript of Sharon Smith's answer to this question during the interview.

- "...evaluation considered to be too vague."

- "I had some serious concerns about the specifics of the calendar."

- "The plan for funding was hazy."

- "The people without children in school were not being asked."

- "I would like to have seen more primary research."

- "I didn't know what the rush was."

- "They didn't ask for volunteers from the community" (Ibid.).

Kathy Wilson

Ms. Wilson indicated that the decision to delay extensive communications until after a proposal had been developed was a concern for her. She also felt the perceived vagueness of the intersession plans was a decision which created much apprehension. The make-up of the calendar committee, specifically, the decision not to

have every building represented was also mentioned (Wilson, K. 1993).

Following is a list of quotations or excerpts taken from the transcript of Kathy Wilson's answer to this question during the interview.

- "...the position that adding days increases learning."

- "...not communicating well initially"

- "...perception that the committee was not representative" (Ibid.).

Connie Andersen

Connie Andersen acknowledged the decision to meet with the community to acquire input. The decision not to have those meetings in the initial stages of the process was very disconcerting to her. The decision to implement a new calendar for the 1992-93 school year, rather than wait was also mentioned as a problem by Ms. Andersen. She also would have liked to have seen the district conduct its own definitive research rather than rely on studies conducted in other areas of the country. She now feels the decision has already been made to continue regardless of the feelings existing in the community (Andersen, 1993).

Following is a list of quotations or excerpts taken from the transcript of Connie Andersen's answer to this question during the interview.

- "...decision to provide research on year-round education."

- "...perception that the district was going to do what they wanted to move forward and not wait" (Ibid.).

Mary Jones

Ms. Jones expressed some consternation over the idea of a three-

year calendar versus a one-year calendar. She speculated upon the decision to develop the calendar committee in the fashion it was (Jones, 1993).

Following is a list of quotations or excerpts taken from the transcript of Mary Jones answer to this question during the interview.

- "...to put me on the committee."

- "...not to have more parents on the committee" (Ibid.).

Maureen Holiday

Ms. Holiday noted that the calendar proposal adopted was not the initial proposal. She would have liked to have seen the intersession earlier in the year as it was proposed in the first calendar draft. She added that the district did a good job of communicating. Ms. Holiday speculated that the district's decision to involve so many people might have been a cause of the negative reaction. She added that spending so much time addressing the intersession issue may have been a drawback (Holiday, 1993).

Following is a list of quotations or excerpts taken from the transcript of Maureen Holiday's answer to this question during the interview.

- "March intersession (is) too late."

- "...supplying too much information."

- "...include intersessions" (Ibid.).

Paul Adams

Superintendent Adams supported the decision to keep the initial calendar committee relatively small. The decision to put a time limit on

the committee's work was also mentioned. He defended the decision to stick to the task of developing a more productive calendar. Adams reflected with regret on the assumptions made relative to the community's awareness of the district's strategic plan. His decision to alter the initial proposal reflective of community feedback was an important decision. Decisions regarding communication methods and communications timing were questioned introspectively by Adams. He remains convinced that moving toward a more productive school calendar is the right thing to do (Adams, 1991).

Following is a list of quotations or excerpts taken from the transcript of Paul Adam's answer to this question during the interview.

- "We kept the committee fairly small."

- "We may sometimes take for granted that people are somewhat aware."

- "I wanted to see if we could come up with a more productive calendar."

- "The only other time I met with them (calendar committee) was right before I made my recommendation to the board."

- "I didn't feel any need to communicate directly with the committee."

- "We probably should have anticipated that (effect on parents.)"

- "I would certainly change the fact that we would have gone to the community early on."

- "I think we made the mistake of almost springing this calendar upon people before they were ready."

- "You never know what would have happened if you had made different decisions" (Ibid.).

<u>Ron Wilson</u>

Mr. Wilson reflected briefly on the decision to have himself head up the calendar committee, as well as the specific charge given to the committee. Wilson noted that while the superintendent decided the year of implementation, the calendar committee decided the time lines for the events within the process. He, too, felt satisfaction with the decision to develop the committee in the fashion in which it functioned. Wilson expounded upon the committee's decisions relative to their stated objectives. He found them to be totally appropriate and praised the committee's efforts. In terms of communication, he regretted not getting more information out to the public at an earlier stage. He defended the decision not to publicize the names of the calendar committee members for fear that they would be overwhelmed with calls and requests (Wilson, 1991).

Following is a list of quotations or excerpts taken from the transcript of Ron Wilson's answer to this question during the interview.

- "...chairperson selection"
- "...setting time-line"
- "...administration representation on committee"
- "...committee size"
- "...not communicating early"
- "...data compilation responsibility" (Ibid.).

<u>Mark Bowmar</u>

Mr. Bowmar mentioned that the decision to redesign the traditional calendar was based in part on the changing demographics of the school system.

Bowmar also said the decision not to bring the calendar issue to a vote was based upon information given to him by state officials.

Bowmar said the calendar committee was made aware early on that district would stand behind their efforts. He also said that the decision to adjust the initial calendar proposal was made primarily by the superintendent. Bowmar was upbeat about the district's efforts to meet and communicate with the residents, although he felt there could have been more informal meetings. Bowmar said the district made the decision to introduce the new calendar proposal based upon the perceived readiness of the community. In retrospect perhaps, the community was not ready at all (Bowmar,1991).

Following is a list of quotations or excerpts taken from the transcript of Mark Bowmar's answer to this question during the interview.

- "The primary impetus for the plan came from the superintendent."

- "The superintendent made the decision of who (of the administrators) could be on the committee."

- "...consult with the Department of Education."

- "The committee was given the charge that we would stand behind their research on a non-traditional calendar."

- "Our efforts to communicate have surpassed what I've seen in any other district."

- "I was not satisfied with our marketing effort."

- "I would not have put more people on the committee."

- We're going to fulfill the five objectives and continue working towards it" (Ibid.).

Interpretive Question Three

What role did the administration's ability to facilitate change play in the final outcome of the process?

Overview

The role of the administration's ability to facilitate change throughout this process was examined by reviewing the responses given by the interviewees to these questions:

1. Would you share your personal reflections on the calendar adoption process?

2. What do you feel are the most critical issues facing our schools?

3. What do you feel needs to happen to affect successful change?

4. How did you first learn about the calendar changes?

Sharon Smith

Ms. Smith recalled that she had heard about the calendar proposal through rumor and soon after her perception was that this was something that was going to be railroaded through. Smith recalled being led to believe that there was considerable research conducted. What she saw she didn't like. Ms. Smith also felt that district's

approach was somewhat backwards, taking a block of time and then looking for something to fill it. She repeated her belief that the district should examine other areas of school and then look at the calendar. Ms.. Smith said she thought the non-parents of the district were not being informed or given the opportunity to become involved. She cited her feeling that toward the end of the process she felt "they're going to patch something together, something piecemeal, and ram it through" (Smith, p. 5). Finally, she said she expected things to be run in a very professional manner, and suggested that perhaps standards had slipped, and maybe the district had rested somewhat on a previously wonderful reputation (Smith, 1993).

Following is a list of quotations or excerpts taken from the transcript of Sharon Smith's answer to this question during the interview.

- "...our understanding that this was...ready to go."

- "I needed to learn more about it."

- "After I looked at what they called research, I was appalled."

- "I am in favor of looking at the data to see if it works."

- "I didn't feel that this is where our resources should be directed."

- "I felt they had the cart before the horse."

- "I think they could have been better informed."

- "I think it needs to be slowed from the beginning."

- "This issue has made me feel that they are not responsive at all" (Ibid.).

<u>Kathy Wilson</u>

Ms. Wilson said she felt something needed to be done with the curriculum and thought perhaps some compromise might be in order. However, she thought the superintendent had it in his mind that he was right and that he really didn't care what anybody else had to say. Ms. Wilson didn't feel that anyone was really resistant to change. but it became a question of how the district was going about it. She said she was going to give it (the proposal) a chance. her children would be involved in the intersession (Wilson, 1993).

Following is a list of quotations or excerpts taken from the transcript of Kathy Wilson's answer to this question during the interview.

- "...did not agree with how the change was facilitated."

- "Superintendent was indifferent towards other views."

- "...perception that the committee was hand-picked."

- "Administration is reluctant to change because of opposition"

(Ibid.).

<u>Connie Andersen</u>

Ms. Andersen stated that she was not opposed to change, as much to the change itself. She repeated that she could see where it could be very helpful, if it (change) were done correctly. She acknowledged the administration's efforts to communicate but she felt they were going to do what they were going to do. Ms. Andersen also felt she would have been more receptive had the change been researched better. She said she was worried the district didn't hold nearly the place

in the educational hierarchy that it did twenty years ago (Andersen, 1993).

Following is a list of quotations or excerpts taken from the transcript of Connie Andersen's answer to this question during the interview.

- "They did not provide evidence of planning."

- "...underestimate the understanding of change."

- "They did not provide enough information initially."

- "Reasons for change were not clear" (Ibid.).

Mary Jones

As a calendar committee member, Ms. Jones felt the leadership was insightful and well organized. Ms. Jones reflected that she could understand two sides of the issue, yet she wanted people to be on our side and not negative about it. She never expected the non-calendar related issues to be brought up; she felt left without the answers. Ms. Jones recalled attending the public hearings and thinking that some of the individuals providing testimony were just getting things wrong. There are answers, she thought, and why don't you have them? She felt the committee must not have gotten the message through (Jones, 1993).

Following is a list of quotations or excerpts taken from the transcript of Mary Jones's answer to this question during the interview.

- "...stimulate thinking on calendar impact."

- "...concerns about the time line for change."

- "...communication concerns."

- "...didn't anticipate resistance to change."

- "District does not push things upon people."

Maureen Holiday

Ms. Holiday stated that change is not a thing to be feared. A lot of people don't want to do something until they are absolutely sure. She thought sometimes the district was that way, too. Ms. Holiday felt that many of those opposing the calendar simply wanted no change and nothing anyone did was going to change that. She appreciated the way the administration allowed parents to participate. She was not convinced that such participation is always a good idea. Ms. Holiday understood that some people believed that the district would have the original calendar proposal within two years, she suggested that it wouldn't be just the Meadowbrook district (Holiday, 1993).

Following is a list of quotations or excerpts taken from the transcript of Maureen Holiday's answer to this question during the interview.

- "District did a lot of planning."
- "Intersessions will be successful over time."
- "Parents did not want change."
- "Opposition was smaller than thought."
- "...giving too much information."
- "Why did we have to change?" (Ibid.).

Paul Adams

Adams repeated his concern regarding the inability to communicate the district's total strategic plan to the community. Adams said that in hind-sight, the calendar issue really got parents

stirred up. He should have anticipated that, he said; It was a good lesson to learn. Superintendent Adams felt the decisions to have as many meetings as were held will help make the implementation of the calendar progress much easier. He wished he (they) had provided more background information and pondered whether using the term "custom calendar" was a good thing to do (Adams, 1991).

Following is a list of quotations or excerpts taken from the transcript of Paul Adam's answer to this question during the interview.

- "I thought there would be a lot of quibbling about the little things, but I didn't think people would be concerned about adding days or helping disadvantaged youngsters."

- "If you do things to affect parents, then they are going to get stirred."

- "There just isn't any doubt in my mind that we're right in what we're doing."

- "You're better off taking time and getting a lot of involvement if you can before you make a major decision."

- "People thought everything was going along fine, then, 'What's this new calendar?'" (Ibid.).

Ron Wilson

Wilson drew from his experience on the calendar committee to conclude that the committee took the challenge given to them by the superintendent very seriously. He admitted to some "heated" debates within the committee while the committee was working, however he was proud that organization was facilitated and that the committee was

able to reach agreement. He stated that no one on the committee thought that the initial proposal would be the proposal that would go to the board; adjustments were assumed. Wilson said it was his intent to keep the calendar committee together and to meet a few times a year to examine research and evaluation relative to the calendar (Wilson, 1991).

Following is a list of quotations or excerpts taken from the transcript of Ron Wilson's answer to this question during the interview.

- "...employ the help of key community members."

- "...motivate committee members" (Ibid.).

Mark Bowmar

Mr. Bowmar said that the district recognizes the need for change given current demands for instructional time. He felt that the superintendent provided the leadership and commitment needed to reassure the calendar committee that their efforts were important and valued. Bowmar stated that he was proud that individuals on the committee felt empowered enough to disagree and to be straight-forward with their feelings. He also felt Mr. Wilson's leadership was effective. Mrs. Bowmar observed that the role of the district's administration was to create a vision of the need for change and keeping that in front of people was an important marketing and communication strategy. He reflected that the process has made him more sensitive to what he thought was an excellent process (Bowmar, 1991).

Following is a list of quotations or excerpts taken from the transcript of Mark Bowmar's answer to this question during the interview.

- "There were two parameters given, (1) you're not bound by starting and ending dates, and (2) you need to meet the objective of the strategic plan."

- "Creating a vision for change and keeping it in front of people is important" (Ibid.).

CHAPTER V
DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

In 1991 a suburban school system initiated a process for developing a non-traditional school calendar. The effort evolved into a controversial and often emotionally charged issue. The outline for change designed by a district calendar committee and related decisions for change made by district administrators ran headlong into strong opposition from parents and patrons. The community opposition, disjointed initially, rapidly developed organization and common purpose. After a series of building level input and feedback meetings as well as two public hearings, the school board acted upon and passed a revised three-year school calendar. The extent to which the controversy affected the morale, and the unity of purpose of the district is difficult to determine. The challenge for the district and community lies in their ability to bring together the individual talents and tenacity to sustain a mutual vision. The purpose for conducting this study was to increase understanding of the issues and considerations related to implementing change by focusing upon the events surrounding a relatively new and somewhat controversial situation.

The review of literature provided important background information and was a source for comparative analysis. The analysis of public documents, field notes, and transcripts of nine oral testimonies

provided the information necessary to address the questions in the study. Descriptive and interpretive questions were used to provide direction for this study. The findings were organized to reflect the type of question used to provide a chronology of events as well as reactions of the community.

<u>Question One</u>

What rationale was present for the non-traditional calendar initiative?

Analysis of the interview transcripts and public records indicates that rationale for change was provided by the district personnel to the community through methods developed primarily by personal expertise, philosophy, experience, and vision. It was evident that the district administration and calendar committee were seeking a baseline of information to which the community could respond and eventually adjust as consensus would have it. There was no evidence of a local assessment of needs or an initial consensus building effort. The reasons found most often for initiating the change in calendar were:

- to provide meaningful and equal educational opportunities for all students.

- to provide innovative and creative leadership to an area of perceived need.

- to provide more allocated time.

- to develop the concept of intersessions as a viable educational opportunity.

- to reduce stress and fatigue for staff and students.

- to begin to meet the demands of a competitive international work force and society.

Question Two

What steps were taken in the development process of the non-traditional calendar?

The district's administrators decided from the outset to follow what they felt to be a proven process for addressing a district-wide concern. For the most part, it was a change process used when the district was faced with the issue of closing schools. Simply stated, it consisted of an ad hoc group generating suggestions or options for the greater audience to respond to and eventually adjust, until a workable proposal was developed for serious and final consideration. In this case a calendar committee was assembled by district officials, the committee was representative of the various "positions" in the district, i.e. parent, teacher, business person, administrator, community member, and student. This committee was given its charge and time frame and went about the business of learning about year-round education and eventually constructed a non-traditional calendar for the Meadowbrook Schools. An issue of considerable importance evolved during the period the committee was working, roughly March, 1991 until June, 1991. This issue was the perceived lack of communication or, more specifically, community awareness. In some way, all of those interviewed mentioned the need or the concern about communicating during this critical period. Those concerns were expressed in terms such as the following.

- "(We needed) more up front information."

- "We could have had more informal meetings."

- "We needed to spend more time early on, talking about the strategic plan and how the calendar fit into the plan."

- "I had heard that they were working at changing the calendar."

- "Maybe the community should have had some information about this."

- "I heard about it mostly through the 'grapevine.'"

- "But... the way I found out about this...!

- "A number of neighbors got together to kind of discuss what they heard was the proposal."

Based in part upon these comments, it was conjectured that speculation and rumor fostered fear and distrust until opposition was unavoidable.

The size and make-up of the calendar committee was a point of considerable concern by both sides of the issue. The community opposition desired representation for all schools and more open selection process. District personnel held fast to the belief that the size of the existing committee made it more workable for the task at hand.

The input and feedback meetings, public hearings, and school board meetings designed to generate ideas, feelings, and suggestions accomplished the task.

The revision of the initial calendar proposal was a critical step in the development process.

Finally, the decision by the board of education to exclude the 1994-

95 calendar year from its adopted motion was a significant step in the non-traditional calendar adoption process. Given the sociopolitical nature of the problem the board recognized the needs and concerns of those on either side of the issue.

Question Three

What were the reactions in the community to the non-traditional calendar adoption process?

As the process of changing the traditional calendar progressed, the reactions of community evolved into an unpredictable pattern. The pattern of reaction from the opposition of the process referenced consistently the following concerns:

1. The custom calendar was an attempt at innovation for the sake of innovation.

2. The time line of the adoption was too fast.

3. The notion of quality intersessions was not well thought-out.

4. The calendar committee make-up was not representative of the entire district.

5. A vote or survey needed to be taken to receive input from the entire district.

6. More research needed to be done.

Essentially, these reactions were brought up time and time again, often in a different format, yet still making an effort to address the same points.

An eventual, and perhaps surprising reaction in the community occurred at the January 6, 1992, board meeting. As the minutes of the

meeting indicate, a large number of individuals testifying spoke, if not directly to the calendar issue, on behalf of the district as a school system rich in history and one with the reputation of commitment to its patrons and children. This was a reaction which was not apparent until this meeting.

Still another reaction of the community was that of no reaction at all. While significant numbers of community members attended the numerous meetings (exact counts were not taken) the majority of parents and patrons stayed away. This lack of involvement was a cause for concern for those on both sides of the issue. Efforts were made to communicate to the entire district and numerous opportunities were provided for involvement. This led leaders on both sides only to speculate relative to the feelings of those choosing not to become involved.

Question Four

What were the non-calendar related issues?

The adoption of a custom calendar for the Meadowbrook School System brought with it a number of predictable issues for district administrators and calendar committee members. Review of oral testimony and public records indicates that individuals were prepared to address the most logical of issues.

These were discussed in Question Three. What was not expected by district leaders were a number of concerns raised by opponents of the calendar initiative. These concerns were:

1. Perceived problems and inconsistencies in school curriculum.

2. Maximizing time on task.

3. Timeliness and effectiveness of communication techniques.

4. Readiness for change.

5. Teacher performance, training, and evaluation.

Repeatedly, these issues were brought up at input and feedback meetings as well as the public hearings and board meetings. Often, personal anecdotes were used to make a point relative to a specific issue. Opponents of the custom calendar viewed these other issues as priorities for examination prior to discussion of the calendar.

Administrators were receptive and made genuine efforts to answer questions openly and honestly, yet with proper protocol. Consistently, the district leaders addressed the issues not as an "either-or" dilemma, but as issues that, by and large, could be looked at separately and continuously. This was frustrating for many persons actively involved in the process.

Question Five

What decisions did the board make in response to community reaction and administration recommendation?

The decisions of the board of education relative to the Meadowbrook custom calendar were:

- to drop the 1994-95 school year from the calendar proposal.

- to take no action on a motion to postpone or delay action, thus forcing a decision on January 6, 1992.

- to pass an amended school calendar.

Community reaction to these decisions, derived from oral

testimonies, reflected a feeling of compromise and a perception of responsiveness on the part of the board. However, there was also resignation that the calendar change was simply delayed and eventually, district administrators would get what they wanted.

There were three interpretive questions.

Interpretive Question One

What factors influenced the final outcome of the calendar adoption process?

Analysis of documents and oral testimonies suggested that numerous factors or issues influenced the final outcome of the calendar process. These issues and factors were grouped into the following categories:

1. communication issues
2. staff support factors
3. time line for change issues
4. intersession questions
5. opposition influences and organization
6. consensus for change factor
7. time management issues

The interaction of these issues and factors undoubtedly had an impact upon the final outcome, including the board's decision.

Board members were not interviewed, however the dialogue and interaction of board members, observed and recorded, would indicate that the issues and factors which were categorized were very much on the minds of the individual board members. If there were internal

politics, they were not manifested. The impact of external politics, such as publicity, can only be speculated upon.

The influence of the factors and issues on the decisions of Superintendent Adams can be analyzed through examination of his oral testimony. Without question, he was sensitive to the response of the community. He acknowledged concerns and was receptive to ideas as evidenced by adjustments made in the proposal. Yet he remained committed to a vision and direction that he felt was totally correct for his community and school system. As demonstrated by tremendous public support at a board caucus, this vision was shared by many.

Interpretive Question Two

What were the administrators relevant decisions?

Undoubtedly, during the course of the calendar adoption process there was a number of important decisions made by key administrators which were logistical, contextual, and problematic. The relative importance of all the decisions would be difficult to measure, however, based upon analysis of testimonies and public documents, obvious consistencies evolved in perceived importance of particular administrative decisions. In random order, the most relevant decisions made by administrators during the calendar adoption process were:

1. To establish a calendar committee relatively small in numbers, yet representative of district's interests.

2. To establish a time frame which called for immediate implementation in the 1992-93 school year.

3. To maintain a "low profile" communication strategy until the

immediate time of the initial calendar proposal.

4. To conduct a significant number of input and feedback meetings.

5. To revise the initial proposal to reflect community input.

6. To deal with the intersession concept on a pilot basis.

7. Not to conduct a district-wide vote.

The decisions listed above had either a positive or negative effect upon the process. According to Ballinger (1980), providing large community discussion early in the process to introduce a new calendar concept may prove to hinder a smooth transition. Ballinger (1990) suggested having many small informational meetings instead. Despite the single issues discussions or discussions unrelated to the calendar issue, the input/feedback meetings held at all of the building sites accomplished the task of introducing attendees to the concept of a non-traditional calendar.

The decision by district personnel to maintain a low profile communications strategy during the initial stages of the committee work undoubtedly had a negative impact upon the process. Each of the administrators spoke with some regret to not employing a more aggressive communication plan. This apparent lack of correct information encouraged speculation and fabrication about issues related to the new calendar. On this topic, Ballinger (1990) suggested that leaders must be willing to present information about the concept repeatedly. He went on to say that the early involvement of key community representatives is critical so as to avoid the perception that a

decision has already been made.

The size and make-up of the committee had much to do with some members of the community feeling unrepresented. This perception manifested itself in the form of debates and accusations, and eventually became one of the non-related calendar issues. In terms of function, the committee was successful. Its task, to provide a calendar proposal to which the community could respond, was accomplished in an expeditious manner. Whether the effectiveness of the committee outweighs the criticisms of its assemblage is difficult to judge. However, in retrospect, it would be prudent to examine options for "total" representation.

The time line created for implementation was extremely important. The original time line was eventually altered somewhat by the decisions of the board to drop the 1994-95 school year from the proposal. The initially proposed time frame was referenced often by individuals opposed to the new calendar as a matter of readiness. Ballinger (1990) suggested a period of one year to eighteen months is needed for study leading to implementation. Ballinger also warned, however, that to wait any longer, two or more years, may only serve to reinforce tradition. The established time line for the proposal implementation did much to fuel the fire of opposition. Those speaking against the change often expressed the need for more time to plan.

The decision not to conduct a district-wide vote on the issue of a new calendar was important in terms of the need for a decision at all. The issue of voting or surveying the community brought with it too

many factors which may have, in the end, further divided the community. The potential of specific areas or schools voting a particular way or not voting at all would be a real concern. Of course, the issue of school board and superintendent responsibility would become a topic of much speculation. Ballinger (1990) advised that leaders of this type of change must anticipate potential situations relating to those audiences or concerns outside of the context of the calendar initiative.

Adjusting the initial calendar proposal did reflect input from the community without compromising the initiative itself. This decision was as much a matter of understanding and implementing the theory of change as it was a calendar issue.

The literature reviewed in this study examined a number of practical factors related to change. Each factor interacts with the other as the change process occurs.

A particularly important factor of change was the role of the leader. In this case, the leader (Superintendent Adams) was committed to change. He was not committed to a specific, non-negotiable option. As Fullan stated, "There is no recipe for change because, unlike ingredients for a cake, people are not standard to begin with, and the thing is that they change as you work with them in response to their experiences and their perceptions. The task of the administrator is not to get this or that innovation put into practice, but to build the capacity of the district to handle any and all innovations" (Fullan, 1982, p. 179). In this report Superintendent Adams was somewhat successful.

The final relevant decision was to treat the intersession concept as

a pilot. Questions raised throughout the process regarding the specifics of intersessions were legitimate. Lack of a specific plan led to multiple questions for administrators to answer. It became evident that the opposition was not willing to act on faith concerning the intersession concept. The administration demonstrated flexibility and insight by relaxing a particular strategy.

Interpretive Question Three

What role did the administrators' ability to facilitate change play in the final outcome of the process?

House (1974) explained, "The personal costs of trying new innovations are often high... and seldom is there any indication that innovations are worth the investment....They require that one believe that they will ultimately bear fruit and be worth the personal investment, often without the hope of an immediate return....The amount of energy and time required to learn the new skills or roles associated with the new innovation is a useful index to the magnitude of resistance" (p. 73).

Observation, analysis of documents and oral testimony indicated clearly that the administrator's ability to facilitate change was challenged throughout the process. Reviewing the factors related to change theory, by and large, the administration acted and planned consistently. The administration was genuinely committed to an innovation deemed to be an important and necessary contribution in the effort to develop and meet the unique needs of children. The change was perceived to be both desirable and workable. Efforts were made to

inform and receive input, issues were addressed head-on, openly and honestly. There was a commitment to innovation, yet not steadfast to a specific vision. In what was meant to be attempts to gain valuable information necessary to mold and shape an idea, an atmosphere of suspicion and distrust forced a defensive posture. Perhaps the assumptions related to change were overlooked or were not understood, because, predictably, according to Fullan (1982) these assumptions were realized. In the end, or rather, to this point, the initiative to change, to create a new way of doing things has been launched. Successful innovation does not end with the implementation of plans. The truly difficult tasks remain: putting the change in place and assessing the outcome.

Conclusions

Certain conclusions have emerged from this study. There are three conclusions which are directed toward those who would contemplate the initiation of a non-traditional school calendar.

1. School district administrators or leaders of innovation should have a firm, working understanding of change theory and its practical applications.

2. School administrators should pursue a pro-active plan of communication which makes clear assumptions and reduces ambiguity.

3. School administrators should demonstrate the specificity of need and be prepared to articulate that need to the community.

Presumably, no one theory or model of change will necessarily be

a perfect fit for a school leader contemplating a significant change or reform. However, based upon the suggestions of those who have investigated the topic thoroughly (Deal (1986), Evans (1993), Fullan (1992), Hall and Hord (1987), and Holzman (1993), there are fundamental components of change which should be a part of any effort to change. Components such as a comprehensive communication strategy, techniques which promote district-wide opportunities for participation, and a generally agreed-upon rationale for change should be components of any refo.m effort. The demographics of the comunity and the personal leadership qualities of the change leader, in concert with the components previously mentioned, will blend together to create a unique model which should enhance the opportunity for a successful change.

The following conclusions may be of interest to community groups and patrons of school systems which are considering innovation.

4. Parents should seek and acquire focus for sharing ideas, viewpoints, and problem solving.

5. Parents should defend the rights and interests of their children and respect the same rights and interests of others.

6. Collaboration and understanding foster success, growth and the ability to facilitate change.

Conventional wisdom suggests that the burden of proof for establishing a need for change should be left to those who assume the role of educaticnal leadership. The literature addressed the needs for initiators of change to be proactive in their efforts to communicate and to

consider all options. Deal (1986), Evans (1993), Anderson (1993), and Fullan, (1992) strongly advised educational leaders to avoid the trap of "assumed awareness." Leaders sometimes fail to recognize the need to address the situational constraints related to a specific change. Instead, these leaders often assume that the participants are aware of or understand the particulars of a situation.

But what role should communicty members have in establishing the environment for change? Deal argued that individual attitudes (including those of patrons), beliefs, skills and norms initiate new directions in an organization. If patron attitudes do, in effect, shape the direction of organization, then it become critically important that patrons become pro-active in seeking ways to become actively involved. Most certainly the school must do all it can to facilitate this involvement, however, patrons must also act on these opportunities. Just as patron participation can shape an organization, so can patron apathy.

The rights and interests of the children in the Meadowbrook School System were most likely the highest priority of school officials, parents, and patrons. It may be speculated that parent resistance in the name of student rights was really what Rossman (et. al., 1988) called a "rational defense" against what they felt was a poorly planned and executed innovation.

Fullan (1992) stated that two-way communication about specific innovations that are being attempted is a requirement for success (p. 168). Hall and Hord described the initial phase of their change model as a period of developing awareness and understanding of the reform being

considered.

Without question, collaboration and understanding are necessary for a successful change to occur. It is apparent that such collaboration and understanding was, for the most part, absent from this process. Procedurally, strategies were implemented to encourage such a collaboration. Unfortunately, skepticism, mistrust, and a lack of understanding prohibited positive dialogue.

<u>Recommendations</u>

The following recommendations conclude this study.

1. School districts seeking to create change must establish a consensus for the need to change.

2. An environment conducive to innovation must exist in a district before change can be considered a serious option by staff, parents, and the community.

3. Issues with the potential to impact the entire system must be identified and strategies made to provide for appropriate representation and input.

4. A communication strategy emphasizing an early and explicit statement of goals and options must be identified and followed.

While the above recommendations will not guarantee an easy path to change, they may lessen the unplanned detours along the way and they may increase the chance of reaching the target.

Educational change is a complex concept marked by unpredictable interplay between individual and organization needs, responsibilities, and rights. Cultural norms, leadership skills, and

participant commitment all play a part in the outcome.

No simple outline of sequential steps necessary for change can guarantee a successful reform since working toward consensus can be a long and painful journey. If consensus is not achieved, it becomes the leader's responsibility to press forward, challenging the participants or even forcing action. Inaction cannot be a acceptable organizational strategy.

Creating and maintaining an environment conducive to change is no easy task. Change often threatens self-interests of individuals (Deal, 1986). The challenge facing the educational innovator is to develop a positive environment for change while nurturing the interests of the individuals within the organization. Risk-taking should be supported and successes rewarded. Understanding, patience and receptiveness are virtues to be promoted.

As Fullan (1982) stated, "No simple communication is going to reassure or clarify the meaning of change for people" (p. 168). There will always be misunderstandings and misinterpretations. Following the above recommendations, however, will increase the chances of success.

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Appendix A

Public Source Documents

Public Source Documents

Arranged Chronologically

(actual names deleted)

December, 1990

1. Article, <u>Educational Journal</u>, Dr. Paul Adams

February, 1991

1. Custom Calendar Committee, Outline of Process and

Objectives.

September, 1991

1. Time lines for Custom Calendar Presentations

2. Meadowbrook Schools: Proposed Custom Calendar Booklet

3. Agenda for Administrator "Cracker Barrel" Meeting

4. Goal for the Custom Calendar Outline

October, 1991

1. Memo to Dr. Paul Adams from Mr. Ron Wilson

2. Memo from Mr. Ron Wilson to all Administrators re: input

meetings

3. Press release of upcoming School Board Meeting

4. Letters to Editor in <u>Daily News</u>

5. Article, <u>Daily News</u>, on Meadowbrook Plan

6. Article, <u>Daily News</u> , on parent input meetings

7. Articles, <u>School News</u>. Editorial against calendar proposal

8. Article, <u>Daily News</u>. Cites arguments against the calendar proposal

9. Document: Meadowbrook Schools; Custom Calendar Objectives

November, 1991

1. Article, <u>Daily News</u>. Supports the move to longer school year

2. Editorial, <u>School News</u>. Neutral position

3. Evaluation Proposal from State College

4. Minutes from Public Hearing. November 19, 1991

5. Minutes from Public Hearing. November 20, 1991

6. Written testimony from Public Hearing by Maureen Holiday

7. Written testimony from Public Hearing by John Jones

8. Meadowbrook Schools, Custom Calendar Input: Executive Summary

December, 1991

1. Minutes from Board of Education Meeting, December 2, 1991

2. Article, <u>Daily News</u>. Parents Against Calendar

3. Flyer from Rally against calendar

4. Article, <u>Daily News.</u> Opposition to Longer School Year

January, 1992

1. Article, <u>Daily News</u>. Speculates vote on new calendar

2. Minutes, Board of Education Meeting, January 6, 1992

February, 1992

1. Article, <u>Daily News.</u> Criticism of Board selection process

Appendix B

Interview Questions

Interview Questions

1. Reflecting back, would you recall how you first learned of the proposed calendar changes.

2. What were your feelings at the time?

3. How would you describe your position relative to the custom calendar?

4. Did you oppose the proposed calendar?

5. If so, why? Be specific.

6. In what ways do you feel schools need to change?

7. If you opposed the calendar, was it because of the calendar itself, the adoption process, or both? Please explain.

8. Was the community well informed?

9. Did the community influence the outcome of the calendar adoption process?

10. Did the publicity influence the outcome?

11. Did the administration move too quickly, or appropriately in the adoption process?

12. What could school officials have done differently to make the adoption process go more smoothly?

13. To affect successful change, what do you think needs to happen?

14. What was the most significant influence on the change from the original proposal?

15. What do you feel are the most critical issues facing the school system now?

16. Did you feel you had any sense of control during the adoption process?

17. Why do you feel so many people resisted the custom calendar proposal?

18. At this time, what do you see happening with the school calendar in the next two years?

19. Currently, how do you feel about the custom calendar?

Appendix C

Release of Information Form

RELEASE OF INFORMATION FORM

Date_____

       I give Robert Bruckner permission to use the tape recording, transcript and contents of the interview granted for the purpose of dissertation research that may lead to publication, on the condition that the actual names of all persons involved, including myself, and the name of the community and school system shall not be used to protect the anonymity of all involved. I understand that the purpose of this research, including any publication that may result, is for the purpose of examining the implementation process of a non-traditional, custom calendar.

_____   _____
Signature of Interviewee   Signature of Researcher

Appendix D

Content Analysis Coding System

Appendix D

Content Analysis Coding System

For this research, a matrix was designed for the recording and coding of data. In this project specific statements from documents were cut and taped to cards. The cards were coded by number according to questions asked during interviews as well as by factors that developed during the course of the study. The coded cards were listed as follows.

1. How did you learn about the proposed calendar changes?
2. What did you feel when you first heard of the calendar change?
3. Did you favor or oppose the calendar initiative?
4. Was the community well informed?
5. Did publicity influence the final outcome?
6. Did you oppose the calendar itself or the adoption process?
7. What was the most significant influence on the change from the original calendar proposal?
8. What could the school officials have done differently?
9. What non-calendar related issues were there?
10. What were the reasons for change?
11. What administrative decisions most influenced the final outcome?
12. What were the major reactions in the community?
13. What were the major decisions of the board?
14. What did administrators do to facilitate change?
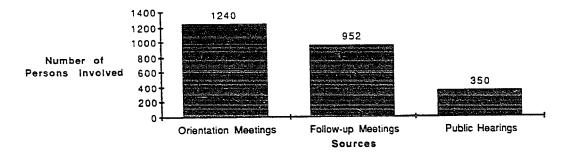
Appendix E

Executive Summary of Custom Calendar

CUSTOM CALENDAR INPUT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In March of 1991, Superintendent ▓▓▓▓▓▓ created a "Custom Calendar" committee. This committee was charged with the task of designing a non-traditional calendar that would serve as a vehicle for significant educational improvement in the ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓. The committee membership included parents, business representatives, a student, and staff. This committee researched and studied non-traditional calendars, their effect on educational programs, and their impact upon community lifestyles. Sample calendars were developed and refined with additional input from district administrators. The proposed calendar was submitted to the Board of Education for public input on October 7, 1991. The Custom Calendar committee and the administration immediately embarked on an extensive series of activities to obtain public reaction to the proposed calendar. These activities were designed around a three-phase process which included orientation and follow-up meetings, public hearings, and individual written input.

The following is a summary of the input received from parents, students, and staff regarding the proposed custom calendar for the 1992-93 school year. This document is intended to provide a "snapshot" of input received.

Custom Calendar Input

Bar chart titled "Custom Calendar Input". Y-axis labeled "Number of Persons Involved" ranging from 0 to 1400. X-axis labeled "Sources". Orientation Meetings: 1240; Follow-up Meetings: 952; Public Hearings: 350.

INPUT SOURCES

Orientation Meetings. 28 orientation meetings conducted for approximately 1,240 people.

13	meetings with	655	parents
13	meetings with	525	staff
2	meetings with	60	students

The objectives of these meetings were to provide an overview of the goals and objectives of the proposed calendar, outline the need for change, and review in detail the specific proposal.

Follow-up Meetings. 28 follow-up meetings were conducted for approximately 952 people.

13	meetings with	483	parents
13	meetings with	422	staff
2	meetings with	47	students

These meetings provided an opportunity for detailed discussion of the proposed calendar. A small group discussion format was used with calendar committee members and administrators being available to each group to answer questions. Small group discussions were guided by the following three questions:

What is your specific reaction to the custom calendar objectives?
What is your specific reaction to the proposed calendar?
What are your specific recommendations?

A recorder was assigned to each small group and specific comments were recorded.

More than 2,500 specific comments were collected at the feedback sessions.

Public Hearings. Two public hearings were conducted. The primary purpose of these hearings was to give individuals who had not participated in the input sessions an opportunity to voice their reaction to the proposed calendar. The hearings were held for the calendar committee, with 12 committee members attending each hearing.

Date	Location	Attendees	Presenters
November 19, 1991	▓▓▓▓ Middle School	Approx. 165	17
November 20, 1991	▓▓▓▓ High School	Approx. 185	20

TRENDS AND ISSUES

In view of the above, an item analysis was conducted to determine trends and identify critical issues. Through the item analysis the following trends and issues have been identified:

Intersessions. 473 items were identified related to intersessions. The dominant issue was the need for more information regarding intersessions: e.g., what programs will be offered; how will students be selected; how much will they cost; and who will pay?

Interruptions. 164 items addressed interruptions. The key issue was that it would be desirable to reduce the interruptions in student days: e.g., staff development during intersessions is super; teachers will spend more time in the classroom, in favor of not breaking up learning time with conferences; and intersessions should be used for conferences and staff development.

Vacations/Sports. 155 items addressed vacations/sports. The themes were that vacations are important, intersessions would provide new opportunities for vacations, some vacations would be disrupted by the proposed early start of the school year, and that student participation in summer sports programs may suffer: e.g., fall and spring allow for a variety of family vacations; family vacations conflict; summer vacations are important; and impact sports, no vacations, goal is good, but athletic calendar won't change.

August 3 As a Starting Date. 115 items were identified as referencing August 3, moving too fast and/or delay. The issues that emerged were that next year is too soon to introduce the proposed calendar, August 3 is too early to start school, and the implementation of the proposed calendar should be delayed so that families and the community could be better prepared: e.g., we might be premature to make the change by next August; starting too early in August, some already have plans for next August; and slow down the process.

Stress. 108 items mentioned stress. These items presented a wide range of opinion as to effect the proposed calendar would have on student and staff stress and fatigue. Opinion seemed to be equally split as evidenced by comments like: will relieve stress—yes—I like it; and this program will cause more stress.

Finance. 86 items referenced cost, taxes, or finance. The themes related with these items were the need for more cost information regarding intersessions, the district's ability to implement the proposed calendar within the limits of the current budget lid, and the desire to have more specific cost information: e.g., we need more information about cost...; concerned about cost with 4% lid; how will cost affect taxpayers on fixed incomes; and non-traditional financing is great...but need it in writing.

Adding Days. 82 items mentioned the number of days. There was considerable agreement that it was desirable to add days to the school year: e.g., go for 10; ten days not really enough; and more days a good objective; however, other comments included: e. g., restructure the day and curriculum rather than add more days; and use the days we have more efficiently.

Research and Evaluation. 47 Items referenced the area of research and/or evaluation. There was a definite theme that there is an interest in and a need for having more research and evaluation information available: e.g., research this topic more; present more research and take more time; and what will the evaluation look like?

Semester Ending Before Winter Break. 43 items addressed this issue. The item analysis indicated a feeling that ending the semester as proposed would be a positive outcome of the calendar: e.g., real positive about ending semester before Christmas; and semester exams prior to winter vacation would be a natural.

Appendix F

Objectives for the Custom Calendar

Custom Calendar

<u>Goal:</u> To implement a calendar which will serve as a vehicle for significant educational improvement.

- The parents and educators of the ██████████████ ████████ are partners in the design of educational opportunities providing the best for their children.

- As a nationally recognized leader in education, the ████████████████████████ has adopted a strategic plan embracing the *national education goals.* The strategic objectives of our plan include:

  - By 1996, 100% of the children in ███████ will start school ready to learn.

  - By 2000, 100% of ██████████ graduates will demonstrate competence in skills and knowledge necessary for responsible citizenship, life-long learning, and productive employment in our modern economy.

  - By 1996, 100% of ████████ students will be competitive in the world community in mathematics and science.

  - By 1996, 100% of ████████ students will demonstrate the personal/social skills necessary to function successfully in school and in life.

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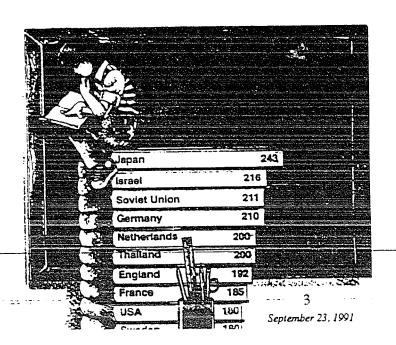
Custom Calendar
OBJECTIVES

- To provide for 10 additional days of instruction by the year 2000.

- To create a more continuous learning program.

- To provide quality intersession programs .

- To procure non-traditional financing and support for intersession programs.

- To reduce stress and fatigue for students and teachers.

Custom Calendar

Objective: To provide for 10 additional days of instruction by the year 2000.

- The increased demands of an informational age and changing societal needs increase the demands upon our instructional time. Time is needed to support additional instruction in areas such as technology, foreign language, health education, etc. without infringing upon the instructional time needed for the traditional basic skills.

- A longer school year—time on task—correlates with higher achievement. Higher achievers, on the average, spend more time in school than low achievers who tend to be absent more often. (1)

- The *custom calendar* would provide students with learning experiences more consistent with students of other countries. (2)

- More academic learning time is needed in mathematics and science to remain competitive with students of other countries. (3)

Country	Days
Japan	243
Israel	216
Soviet Union	211
Germany	210
Netherlands	200
Thailand	200
England	192
France	185
USA	180

3

September 23, 1991

Custom Calendar

Objective: To create a more continuous learning program.

- Learning is sequential and continuous. Research indicates that continuous learning allows students to retain more of what they have learned, thus reducing learning loss and the amount of review time needed. (4)

- Research indicates that students forget at different rates. Students who have difficulty learning acquire knowledge more slowly and tend to lose it more rapidly. (5)

- Students who have a difficult learning experience, average a learning loss of three to four months in the summer while other students actually gain a month. At the end of grade six, the one child will score at the fourth to fifth grade level while the other child scores at the ninth grade level. (5)

- Semester exams will be completed before winter break eliminating the need to reteach and review.

- Conferences and staff development may be scheduled during intersessions reducing the number of early dismissals and disruption of learning time.

Custom Calendar

Objective: To provide quality intersession programs.

- One of the more significant educational benefits the *custom calendar* offers is the opportunity for students to participate in intersession programs. (6)

- Intersessions provide opportunities for more frequent intervention in the basic skills resulting in more success for students. (7)

- A quality intersession program also includes school/community opportunities in the arts and other enrichment activities.

- Students in sports and activities many times see participation during intersessions as an advantage since they are unencumbered with class assignments and other school pressures. (8)

Custom Calendar

Objective: To procure **non-traditional financing** and support for intersession programs.

- We will work with the community to secure a blend of financing and support from grants, entitlement funds, corporate sponsors, extended teacher contracts, volunteers, and parents.

$$\$ \$ \$$$

Custom Calendar

Objective: To reduce stress and fatigue for students and teachers.

- Vacations are important! A *custom calendar* can offer a wider variety of vacation experiences throughout the year.

- Most schools on a *custom calendar* report significant reductions in student behavior problems, truancy, vandalism, and absenteeism. (9)

- Conferences and staff training during intersessions provide optimal learning time for teachers.

7

Research Report

Evaluation of Custom Calendar Schools in Utah December 1990

- 83% of the parents with children in *custom calendar* programs are happy with the program.

- 84% of the teachers preferred to teach in a school with a *custom calendar* program.

- 89% of the parents believe that their child has the same or more opportunity to learn under a *custom calendar* program.

- 73% of the teachers feel that students learn more on a *custom calendar* program.

- 78% of the parents have an overall positive evaluation of the *custom calendar* program.

- 76% of the teachers feel that students in a *custom calendar* program have a more positive attitude about school.

- 83% of the parents have not found it difficult to adjust their family schedule to the *custom calendar* program.

- 68% of the teachers believe that changing to a *custom calendar* encouraged educational improvement.

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July 1992

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August 1992

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September 1992

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October 1992

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November 1992

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92 - 93

Quarter I	-	44 days
Quarter II	-	45 days
Quarter III	-	45 days
Quarter IV	-	48 days

Students	-	182 days

Conferences (4)
Oct. 5-6   - Noon - 9 P.M.
Mar. 15-16   - Noon - 9 P.M.

Intersessions for Students
October 12-16
January 4-8
March 22-26

Legend
School Days
Intersessions

January 1993

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February 1993

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March 1993

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April 1993

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June 1993

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STAFF DAYS

Proposed		191 CONTRACT DAYS	
194 CONTRACT DAYS			
Building Work Days	4	Building Work Days	2-1/2
July 28	1/2	Adjusted	
July 30, 31	2	Accordingly	
June 6 or 8	1		
Building Flex	1/2		
Staff Development Days	4	Staff Development Days	2-1/2
July 29	1	Adjusted	
October 7, 8	2	Accordingly	
March 17	1		

Appendix G

Proposed Calendar

Recommended
92 - 93
CALENDAR

July 1992

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August 1992

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September 1992

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October 1992

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November 1992

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December 1992

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Quarter I   (Aug. 17-Oct. 16)-   44 days
Quarter II   (Oct. 19-Dec. 23)-   45 days
Quarter III   (Jan. 11-Mar. 12)-   45 days
Quarter IV   (Mar. 29-Jun. 4) -   48 days
Students   - 182 days

Staff Days   191 - 194 days

Conferences (3)
  Oct. 28-29   - Afternoon/Evening
  Oct. 30   - Comp. Day
  Mar. 15-16

Staff Work/Staff Dev. Days (6-9)

Student Intersession
  March 22 - 26

Winter Break
  December 24 - January 8

January 1993

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February 1993

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March 1993

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April 1993

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June 1993

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Recommended
93 - 94
CALENDAR

July 1993

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August 1993

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September 1993

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October 1993

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November 1993

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December 1993

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Quarter I (Aug. 16-Oct. 15)- 44 days
Quarter II (Oct. 18-Dec. 22)- 45 days
Quarter III (Jan. 10-Mar. 11)- 45 days
Quarter IV (Mar. 28-Jun. 3) - 48 days
Students - 182 days

Staff Days 191 - 194 days

Conferences (3)
    Oct. 27-28 - Afternoon/Evening
    Oct. 29 - Comp. Day
    Mar. 14-15

Staff Work/Staff Dev. Days (6-9)

Student Intersession
    March 21 - 25

Winter Break
    December 23 - January 7

January 1994

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February 1994

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March 1994

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April 1994

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May 1994

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29	30	31				

June 1994

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

Recommended

94 - 95
CALENDAR

The calendar shall contain a minimum of 184 student days with a starting date of no earlier than August 8 and an ending date no later than June 9. The specific calendar to be presented to the Board of Education in January 1994, will be responsive to ongoing evaluation and research. In addition, the evaluation findings will be used to determine the number of intersessions, length of intersessions, and intersession activities.

Appendix H

Interviewer Vita

JERI LANDFAIR CHAMBERS
1111 Melrose Drive
Richardson, TX 75080
(214) 235-8746

Education

1993   Masters in Educational Administration and Supervision
University of Nebraska, Omaha
Expected date of completion—May, 1993

1988   Bachelors of Science, Education
Secondary Education—Math/Biology
University of Texas, Austin

Work Experience

1992-1993   **Graduate Assistant in Teacher Education** - University of Nebraska at Omaha
* Coordinated, organized and supervised teacher observation experiences for approximately 400 undergraduate students each semester at the University of Nebraska at Omaha.
* Integrated material for the development of a field experience handbook.
* Observed and conferenced with student teachers.
* Worked with program evaluation team; developed surveys to be used in assessment of Intersession for Westside Community Schools.
*

1990-1992   Andersen Middle School, Millard Public Schools, Omaha, NE
Teacher—Math 8, Algebra 8, Gifted Algebra 7
* School Community Intervention Team—Organized and led the first time drug intervention team at Andersen Middle School; Coordinated and facilitated interventions.
* Facilitated an interdisciplinary team in true middle school concept building.
* Designed Five-Year Celebration activity involving all faculty and staff to demonstrate to the School Board the successes of Andersen Middle School.
* Field tested University of Chicago Mathematics Project - Algebra 7.
* Sponsor, Math Counts—Initiated formation of math club; supervised 6 students at math competition.
* 8th grade Farewell Committee, Faculty Representative—Initiated and organized Eighth Grade Awards; coordinated parent volunteers.

(Work Experience, continued)

1988-1990   Richardson Junior High School, Richardson Independent School District,
             Richardson, TX
             Teacher—Math 8, Consumer Math 9
             • Chair—Site-Based Management Team, Student Services Committee:
               Coordinated the activities of the Student Services team to include:
               Student of the month; Multicultural Awareness activities; Initiated
               changing the bus route with the central office to better serve the needs
               of the students.
             • Sponsor, Freshman Cheerleader —Supervised twelve cheerleaders;
               Attended and chaperoned summer camps; Served as school
               representative to the cheerleaders' parents; Persuaded cheerleaders and
               their parents to choose reasonable uniforms; Coordinated activities with
               the other cheerleader sponsors in the school; Coordinated all-school pep
               rallies.
             • Member, Loving Intervention for Teens (LIFT)—Selected to facilitate
               "recovering drug user" support group.
             • Sponsor, National Junior Honor Society—Coordinated service projects;
               Organized Freshman Farewell Dance.
             • Member, Consumer Math Book Selection committee.
             • Authored, Curriculum Guide and Scope & Sequence to coincide with
               newly adopted consumer math textbook.

Specialized Training
1992   Educational Administration Practicum Experience with the Public
             Information Office of the Omaha Public Schools
             • Co-Producer of a series of three Public Service Announcements for the
               Omaha Public Schools.
             • Conducted an analysis of advisor/advisee programs—reported results
               to Director of Public Information.
             • Shadowed two high school assistant principals and analyzed their
               differing leadership styles.
             • Shadowed the mathematics supervisor and analyzed instructional role.
             • Wrote press releases to be sent to newspapers, radio and television.

1991   • Researched Total Quality Management principles for use in public
               schools.

Honors , Awards, and Offices
University of Nebraska at Omaha
             • Nominated for Outstanding Graduate Student
             • Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges—
               1992.

(Honors, Awards, and Offices, continued)

University of Texas at Austin
- Outstanding Secondary Student Teacher—1988.
- Member, Student Representative for Texas' Excellence Award for Outstanding High School Teachers Selection Committee—1987-88.
- President, Education Council—1986-87.
- Finalist, Dad's Day Outstanding Student-1987—One of three women.
- Welcoming Speech for 1987 Education Convocation for 500 students and their families.
- Secretary, Cabinet of College Councils—1987-88.
- Historian, Mortar Board—1987-88.
- Member, Orange Jackets—1986-88; Oldest woman's service, scholarship, leadership organization.
- Goodfellow Award—Yearbook recognition for contribution to the University.
- Panhellenic Representative—Delta Gamma Fraternity.

Publications

OPS News—Contributing writer to the September/October and November/December 1992 newsletters for the Omaha Public Schools.

Professional Affiliations

Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development
National Association of Secondary School Principals
National Education Association
National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
Nebraska Association of Middle Level Educators
Nebraska State Education Association
Millard Education Association

Certifications

Texas Teacher Certificate for Life:	Secondary [6-12] Biology
	Secondary [6-12] Mathematics
Nebraska Teaching Certificate Initial:	Mathematics 7-12
	Biology 7-12
Nebraska Administrative Certificate:	Expected, May 1993

Community Service

Christmas Basket Program—Dundee Presbyterian Church, Omaha, 1991-92
Methodist Youth Fellowship Counselor—First United Methodist, Omaha, 1990-91
7th Sunday School Teacher—First United Methodist, Richardson, 1989-90