

IMPROVING DECISION MAKING
IN BRITISH COLUMBIA SCHOOL DISTRICTS
A PROPOSAL

by

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Improving Decision Making In A
B.C. School District - A Proposal

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the essential elements of decision making within a school district and proposes a model for effective decision making.

Processes and procedures for decision making used in past years within a representative British Columbia school district, North Vancouver, are discussed. The need for improvements is indicated. The merits of two other decision making proposals - a systems analysis approach and a process with limited public involvement - are entertained.

The recommended decision making model includes a process with three levels: deciding on goals, deciding on policies, and deciding on programs. Ongoing feedback and evaluation are crucial to the success of the process. The model also includes a pluralistic concept of leadership which provides for extensive participation by all interested persons and which allows open, threat-free communication among all those involved in the decision making process.

The study attempts to show how the recommended model might improve decision making within a school district such as North Vancouver.

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need is the same of what

Chapter I

ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM

A. The Need for Decision Making Models in School Districts

Every organization must make provision for decision making. Decisions must be made concerning what goals, purposes, objectives, policies and programs will be accepted by the organization as legitimate. Decisions need to be rendered continuously with respect to the implementation of policies and programs. These decisions may be made by the leader, by the group, or by a combination of methods. Regardless of how decisions are made or who makes them, an organization cannot operate unless decisions are made.

(Morphet, 1967: 88)

There is a trend in the public school system in British Columbia toward decentralization. For many years educational decision making was strongly centralist and hierarchical. Under the direction of the Minister of Education, the Department of Education prescribed detailed courses of study for all subjects taught in the schools: teachers were required to teach only that which was officially sanctioned. All textbooks were prescribed and special permission from the Department was needed to use additional texts or workbooks. Province-wide testing programs were designed to compare the achievement of students in each district and each school. The tests also determined which students were fit for additional education and which were not. The Department appointed District Superintendents to all school districts (except Vancouver) and this ensured strong central control over the public schools of the province. Decision making within a school district was concerned primarily with how best to carry out the decisions of the Department of Education.

During the past several years there has been a rapid decentralization

Since the Department did not disapprove, then they must have been held as approving.

2

of decision making. Boards of school trustees can now authorize optional courses, the evaluation of programs and of student performance is almost totally a local responsibility, and schools purchase a wide variety of texts which do not require Departmental approval. In districts of over 20,000 students the school boards may hire their superintendents: in smaller districts, where a new superintendent needs to be appointed, trustees can choose from a short list of candidates.

It therefore seems reasonable that, with the increase in the number of important decisions which have to be made within a school district, a sound model for decision making be adopted and used. Such a model should indicate what types of decisions need to be made, in what order these types of decisions should be made, who might participate in the decision making process, what sorts of evaluation and feedback are needed, and what kind of leadership is required.

B. Factors Indicating A Need For Changed Decision Making Models in School Districts

During the past two years there have been several developments which might significantly affect administrative practices and decision making procedures in the school districts of B.C. One such development is that several teachers' associations and school boards have signed learning conditions contracts. The contracts in Surrey, Burnaby and West Vancouver state that there should be staff committees in each school, they specify who should be on the committees, and what work the committees should do (BCTF. 1973). In each of these contracts an administrator must be on the staff committee. For an example of the work of such committees, the Burnaby contract lists the functions as:

to the following list the work which should be done?
or the work actually done.

3

1. To conduct studies of the educational philosophy and objectives of the school.
2. To conduct studies of the utilization of staff, including the use of auxiliary, school personnel.
3. To consider recommendations for changes in curriculum offerings, timetabling, the use of new teaching techniques, media or materials.
4. To assist in the establishment of policies with respect to student evaluation procedures.
5. Propose or plan programs of in-service education designed to fulfil the interests and requirements of the staff.
6. To assist in a program of orientation for teachers new to the staff.
7. To consider such other matters as deemed necessary by the principal or staff, particularly those areas covered by this agreement.

(BCTF. 1973:2)

A Statement of Accord in North Vancouver provides for monthly consultative meetings of the Superintendent and the local teachers' association executive as well as regular meetings of trustee and teacher representatives. The contracts in Surrey and Powell River make provision for meetings of trustee and teacher representatives as required.

In most cases these contracts were signed after considerable pressure from the teachers' associations. Many trustees were reluctant to enter into such agreements fearing that they might lose some of the decision making powers which are delegated to them under the Public Schools Act and its Regulations. On the other hand, it was a dissatisfaction with the decision making processes and the administrative practices which prompted teachers to negotiate for some guarantees.

In requiring that trustees and administrators consult with classroom teachers at regular or various times, these contracts ensure an increase

in the number of people within a school district who actively participate in important decision making and they also delimit the power of administrators to some extent.

Another factor which might significantly effect changes in the administrative practices within school districts is the efforts by students to increase their decision making powers within schools. During the past two years students in two districts, Vancouver and North Vancouver, have tried to persuade trustees to adopt a Students' Bill of Rights (Vancouver Sun, 1972:12). Under the auspices of the most recent Commission on Education, members of the B.C. Educational Student Task Force made some vigorous comments: "The Act leaves it up to the principal to define what he thinks is just, and in a lot of cases what the principal thinks is just is just outright fascism" (Vancouver Sun, 1973:8).

Moreover, in a brief paper entitled "The Public School System - Directions for Change" tabled in the B.C. Legislature by the Minister of Education there is a strong suggestion that administrative practices within the school system need drastic changes:

Further, the present administrative structure may not recognize the supportive role of administration to classroom activity. It may be appropriate to devise administrative arrangements that distribute decision-making responsibility more effectively.

(Dailly, 1974:4)

Another section states:

The structure of the education system should be redesigned in such a way that authority and responsibility are distributed more appropriately, keeping in mind the principle that the primary relationship in education is between the teacher, the pupil, and the parent, and that other parts of the system must be in support of that relationship.

(Dailly, 1974:2)

Probably forthcoming legislative changes could have significant effects on the decision making processes, including the role of leadership and administration, in each school district of the province.

As it is the present decision making procedures and the dominant role of administrators within those procedures which is being questioned widely, the search for new decision making models would seem to be wise. As administrators are in key positions to determine what Lonsdale calls organizational climates (Lonsdale, 1964:166), their decisions are largely responsible for the survival or disintegration of the educational systems. Lonsdale urges that:

"In these times and with the present state of development of organizational theory, no administrator can be excused for failing to give high priority in his planning to the problem of organizational survival."

(Lonsdale, 1964:170)

C. An Overview

Research findings which indicate the assets and liabilities of group decision making, as compared to individual decision making, are briefly listed at the beginning of Chapter 2. The differences between the democratic and consensus decision making processes are defined. There follows a description of the decision making practices in the North Vancouver School District during the past several years. There is no attempt to determine whether or not North Vancouver is typical of B.C. school districts in terms of decision making but it is taken as being probably representative of many.

It is claimed that there may be a need for expanding the group of people who actually make the important decisions within a school district.

*How was this
inference made*

There is also a brief review in Chapter 2 of several decision making proposals found in the literature. One model for a decision making process and for administrative procedures is recommended for adoption.

In Chapter 3 there is a more detailed discussion of the recommended model, how it might help bring about increased participation by those interested and concerned, and the importance of effective leadership within a school district.

Chapter II

DECISION MAKING MODELS

A. Characteristics of Group Decision Making

In summarizing research findings on decision making, Maier states that:

Research on group problem solving reveals that the group has both advantages and disadvantages over individual problem solving. If the potentials for group problem solving can be exploited and if its deficiencies can be avoided, it follows that group problem solving can attain a level of proficiency not ordinarily achieved. The requirement for achieving this level of group performance seems to hinge on developing a style of discussion leadership which maximizes the group's assets and minimizes its liabilities.

(Maier, 1967:577)

Maier lists the group assets as:

1. greater sum total of knowledge and information
2. greater number of approaches to a problem
3. participation in problem solving increases acceptance of solutions and responsibility for making the solution work
4. better comprehension of the decision by those who must work together in executing the decision

Maier also discusses factors which serve either as assets or liabilities, depending largely upon the skill of the leader:

1. disagreement can either lead to an innovative solution or create hard feelings among members
2. discussion can locate mutual interests or intensify conflicting interests
3. more time is required for a group decision than individual decision but acceptance and quality of the decision may require group decision making
4. groups are more willing to reach decisions involving risks but the risks may be a gain or loss

5. in group decision some members must change: hopefully those with the most constructive views do not change easily

Decision making modes vary from group to group. Napier and Gershenfeld (1973:213) contrast the differences between group decision making by the democratic process and by the consensus process. The democratic or majority vote process ensures that at least half the members will be in support of a particular solution and it reduces the threat of tyranny from within the group. However, in majority vote decision making extraneous pressures sometimes influence the way members vote, some members do not have enough skills to influence their own destinies in groups, a vote can prematurely stop discussion, minority opinions are often seen as a threat to group cohesion (often a vote further polarizes the group), and problems are often over-simplified into either-or dichotomies with a resulting failure to explore all the issues. By contrast,

Reaching a decision through consensus represents the ideal in terms of group participation, but it is by no means the most efficient or least tension-producing approach to decision making. It assumes that a decision will not be made without the approval of every member but it does not mean that each member must agree totally with what is going to happen. It simply indicates that each member is willing to go along with the decision, at least for the time being. The process provides for full group participation and a willingness to compromise...Unlike a system based on majority vote (basically a tension-producing system) decision by consensus seeks out alternative viewpoints and then struggles to find a solution at the expense of no particular group or person.

(Napier, 1973:215)

After studying the behaviour of thousands of groups, Hall (1971:54) concludes that the most effective groups try to get every member involved

in the decision making. They actively seek out points of disagreement, especially in the early stages. The most ineffective groups tend to use simple decision techniques such as majority rule, averaging and bargaining. They seem to feel it is more important to reach a decision than to arrive at a decision they can all agree on.

Consensus is a decision process for making full use of available resources and for resolving conflicts creatively. Consensus is difficult to reach, so not every ranking will meet with everyone's complete approval. Complete unanimity is not the goal--it is rarely achieved. But each individual should be able to accept the group rankings on the basis of logic and feasibility.

(Hall, 1971:54)

Napier and Gershenfeld list conditions which are ideally present in a problem solving group:

1. The goals of the group are clearly understood by the participants.
2. Mechanisms that insure the active participation of the minority are established for making decisions.
3. A concerted effort is made to discover resource people within the group.
4. Ideas are explored in a nonevaluative climate.
5. Participation is shared, and control is not in the hands of one or two dominant members.
6. Member roles are differentiated according to group needs and specific skills.
7. Problems are stated as conditions and explored in terms of the factors causing the particular condition to exist.
8. The group is aware of its own potency to affect change and somehow involves the support of necessary individuals in both the diagnostic and solution phases of problem solving.
9. Communication channels are kept open by using process observers and making efforts to look at both the task and emotional dimensions of the group's work together.
10. Size and physical arrangement are deemed appropriate to the task.

11. Participants are considered in terms of status and power, and the composition of the group is such that ideas or solutions are maximized.
12. Time is long enough for the necessary problem-solving phases but short enough to be a motivational factor.
13. Solutions are (as much as possible) testable, and the impact of the decision is evaluated.
14. The group is held accountable for its own decisions.

(Napier, 1973:217)

Within a school district there are many decision making groups of various sizes. The total district (including parents, other adults, students, teachers, trustees and administrators) could be considered a group although this large group obviously never meets as a decision making body. Other decision making groups include the Board of School Trustees, the central administration, the teachers' professional organization, school staffs, individual classes with students and the teacher. Although the major decisions within most school districts are now made by trustees and by administrators at the central office, there may be a trend toward greater involvement in the decision making by more people in the community who are interested and feel they have a right to participate directly in the discussions prior to the decisions being made.

B. Practices In North Vancouver

In a 1971 report commissioned by the B.C. School Trustees Association, Dr. William A. Plenderleith comments:

The Board has very wisely appointed the District Superintendent of Schools to be its Chief Executive Officer. The trustees are thus able to devote the major part of their efforts to policy making, to planning, to appraisal and to the establishment of harmonious public relationships.

(Plenderleith, 1971:88)

He further states that this "unit-headed type of school organization" has four advantages (and lists no disadvantages):

1. It provides a centralized control over all aspects of both the educational and the business organization, and centralized control is considered to be, in most other fields of endeavour, a first principle of efficient business management.
2. It secures a coordinated effort on the part of the executive staff and thus tends to prevent the development of the competitive friction, which frequently occurs in multiple-headed organizations.
3. It guards against the waste due to duplication of effort which frequently obtains in multiple-headed organizations.
4. It makes one person completely responsible for the implementation of all policy prescribed by the School Board.

(Plenderleith, 1971:89)

and then states that:

This is an effective type of organization because the chief function of any School Board is to determine matters of policy and to see that the policy decisions it makes are carried out by its paid officials. The skill with which any School Board operates on a policy-making and appraising level can be judged by the degree to which executive responsibilities are delegated to competent executive personnel.

Does Plender believe or have the side power to enforce, state your difference

(Plenderleith, 1971:89)

It is evident Plenderleith ~~believes~~ that the prime function of the central administration staff, and particularly the District Superintendent, is to maintain a strong centralized control over the school system and to be fully responsible to the Board of School Trustees for all programs within the school district. It is implied that the school system should be run by "efficient business management" and that the Chief Executive Officer give the Board firm guidance in its policy decision making. The administrative staff memoranda (See Appendix A for a sample) used as a basis for decision making at Board meetings reflect the style of leader-

ship within the decision making process in North Vancouver during the past.

~~That~~ ^{The} educational administrators ^{are} have a strong influence over the decision making within a school district ~~is~~ not only common in practice but is also frequently supported in the literature.

Instructional changes which call for significant new ways of using professional talent, drawing upon instructional resources, allocating physical facilities, scheduling instructional time or altering physical space--rearrangements of the structural elements of the institution--depend almost exclusively upon administrative initiative.

(Brickell, 1961:23)

Morphet examines some assumptions underlying what he calls the traditional monocratic, bureaucratic concept of administrative organization.

Summarized they are:

Leadership is confined to those holding positions in the power echelon. If a capable person attempts to exercise leadership when he does not hold a power position, he will become a trouble maker and interfere with the administrative leadership of the person holding the superordinate position.

Good human relations are necessary in order that followers accept decisions of superordinates. Forcing followers to accept superordinate decisions requires inspection and supervision, which is expensive in time and energy. Good relations result in voluntary, unquestioning following.

Authority and power can be delegated, but responsibility cannot be shared. If things go wrong, the top executive is always responsible.

Final responsibility is placed in the administrator at the top of the power echelon. If he is responsible for everything then he should have the authority to veto any decision of his subordinates.

The person holding the top position in the power echelon should defend his subordinates, right or wrong, so long as they take his orders and are loyal to him (the assumptions of feudalism).

Unity of purpose is secured through loyalty to the superordinate.

The image of the executive is that of a superman. Occupants of hierarchical positions are the most honest, fair and impartial.

Maximum production is attained in a climate of competition and pressure. Life is a competitive struggle for survival and greater rewards should be given to the persons who are successful.

Leadership within the line-and-staff structure has the responsibility for formulating them.

Authority is the right and privilege of a person holding a hierarchical position (like divine right of king's theory).

The individual in the organization is expendable. The individual exists to serve the organization, rather than the organization to serve the individual.

Evaluation is the prerogative of superordinates. It is one of the means by which discipline in the organization is enforced.

when talking about more efficient answer with min usage of resources are you talking about coming up with the correct answer or coming up with the quickest answer? (Morphet, 1967:102-4)

Although decision making by few people is usually more efficient than by many people, there may be a need to involve more people in a school district's decision making group in order to arrive at decisions which are more acceptable, which ensure more commitment to carry out the decisions, and which capitalize on the many untapped energies and resources in the community. A recent research project in Vancouver (Erickson, 1970) indicates the kinds of frustrations which can develop within a school district when there is inadequate discussion and liaison among the various groups within a school district. The researchers

found that there was a vast "understanding and communication gap" between categories of personnel in the Vancouver schools. School board officials did not appear to understand or appreciate the problems of teachers, teachers had limited understanding of and appreciation for the constraints within which school board officials worked, school board officials insisted that principals were fully responsible for their schools and yet principals argued that each time they exercised initiative the school board personnel "pulled the rug out from under them" at the first sign of public discontent.

Although the number of people within an urban school district who are interested in contributing to the important decisions within the district probably constitutes a very large group, effective processes for such involvement need to be established.

C. Alternative Models for Decision Making

In the literature on educational administration and on models for decision making within an educational organization there seems to be general agreement concerning the need for:

- (a) decisions on purposes or objectives or goals
- (b) decisions on programs to realize the purposes, objectives or goals
- (c) ongoing methods of evaluation and analysis
- (d) effective communication channels
- (e) sound administrative practices

However, the models used to arrive at these decisions and practices vary considerably.

1. A Model with Limited Involvement by Particular Groups

House (1969) offers a planning model which has five phases:

Phase 1: Defining purposes and objectives

In this phase, the school system establishes its broad purposes and then translates these into more specific terms. It is convenient to speak of the resulting ideas as objectives rather than purposes. Objectives should be particular enough to guide the search and decision making activities of the next phase.

Phase 2: Analyzing the situation

This phase calls for an analysis of ways to achieve the system's objectives. Since there will be many possible programs to achieve each educational objective, the school system should determine what these alternatives are and what advantages, disadvantages and costs each alternative involves.

Phase 3: Setting Goals

Following the analysis of alternative educational programs, the school system selects those programs which are best suited to its objectives and to the available resources. Goals should then be set for each program selected. Goals are simply highly specific expressions of objectives in the same way that objectives are more particular expressions of purposes. Goals are necessary to evaluate programs and for this reason should be stated so that they can be measured precisely.

Phase 4: Developing the Program

In this phase, the programs selected are developed for operation in schools and classrooms. Following this development, the programs are in fact implemented.

Handwritten notes:
Lodges at ...
...
...

Phase 5: Evaluating the Program

In this final phase, the outcomes of the programs are measured and evaluated. The results of this evaluation are then made available through an information system to all other planning phases where they are relevant. This feedback of evaluation information activates further cycles of planning and decision making. These cycles continue until the school system is satisfied it has working programs which economically accomplish its purposes. Realists will acknowledge that this condition is seldom if ever attained in organizations, and that planning is therefore a never-ending activity in effective school systems.

(House, 1969:14)

House explains that the first three phases concern organizational control and decision-making, the fourth is the action phase, while the final one is the sensing and assessment phase which activates continuing planning and change activities.

(House, 1969:19).

Although there might be some disagreement about the definition of terms in the model, particularly for the word 'goals', the model contains all of the essential elements which were referred to at the beginning of this section. However, it is in the area of who makes decisions that the model may not be helpful.

House proposes a three-level plan: decisions by the board, decisions by administration and decisions by the schools. Citizens should not become directly involved in school board functions, school board members should not function directly in the school system, the board should deal with the school system only through its chief administrator, and educators at the school level should influence the board only through the central administration.

There are several assumptions which underly such a discrete separation

of concerns:

- (a) Trustees are lay people and therefore should not meddle in the affairs of the professional educators.
- (b) Administration will always provide trustees with all the necessary information on every topic and with all possible alternatives for decisions that need to be made; administration will always communicate to trustees those items of feedback and evaluation (from teachers, students and others in the system) which trustees would need to know in order to make wise decisions; administration will always create a climate within the system which will best realize all the objectives of the system.
- (c) Educators in the schools should have influence over the system's objectives, policies, rules, and budgeting only if their ideas are sanctioned by administration and passed on to trustees through administration.

House and his colleagues may argue that their system avoids jurisdictional conflict and is administratively efficient. However, administrative efficiency is valid only to the extent that it contributes to the attainment of the goals of the organization, the goals of the actors in the organization, and the extent to which it meets the requirements of the environment for the survival of the organization (Morphet, 1967:93). This model is closely related to the monocratic, bureaucratic concept of decision making and does not help us achieve a greater degree of involvement.

2. A Systems Analysis Model for Decision Making

Systems analysis is another possible model. Banghart outlines the steps which must be accomplished before the systems study is complete (Banghart, 1969:39). Summarized, they are:

Step One - Establish Objectives

Because of the quantitative nature of systems analysis, it is necessary to be extremely specific in determining the objectives to be achieved.

Step Two - Review of Systems Operations

Under any circumstances a systematic review of the total system is necessary in order that the analyst can understand the setting in which the problem to be solved rests.

Step Three - Collection of Data

Collection of data involves basically a statistical procedure.

Step Four - The Analysis of Data

In a systems analysis, unlike the traditional experimental paradigm, one begins the analysis with the objective of determining just which variables are relevant. It is a study dealing with interaction of many variables: causality is not necessarily the primary concern: correlation becomes the primary concern.

Step Five - Isolation of the Problem

The techniques of systems analysis are essentially problem oriented and require isolation, specificity, and definition of the problem.

Step Six - Specify Operations in the Problem Area

This is a very detailed review within the problem-area.

Step Seven - Block Diagram

The block diagram denotes the logical structure of the subsystem operations.

After the analysis is complete a tentative solution is tested until an optional solution is found. The analyst then departs from that problem area.

One type of systems analysis which is being used in a number of school districts in the United States of America is the Planning, Programming, Budgeting System (PPBS). A publication of the National School Public Relations Association explains that:

PPBS is a method, a tool which management can use to attain its goals. It's a means to an end, but as with so many means there's danger that it can easily become an end in itself if its users lose sight of their purpose.

(NSPRA, 1972:2)

Although the systems approach to decision making is an efficient, quick method for getting programs underway and is designed to help cut costs, there are several dangers in adopting it for a decision making model within a school system. First, it is essentially problem oriented (Banghart, 1969:39) and therefore might have a tendency to deal with short term emergencies instead of emphasizing the setting of long term priorities and objectives. A problem centred approach would tend to minimize changes within the system. If there were no strong pressure to change a program or if there were no apparent dysfunction in a subsystem then there would probably be a tendency to leave it alone. But that may be one of the problems of a school district: the school where the parents do not complain to the central office and where there are no apparent conflicts is perceived to be an effective school.

Secondly, systems analysis is a tool for management (NSPRA, 1972:2): if it is to be used as a model for decision making throughout the system and as administrators would be in a position to understand it best and use it most effectively, administration would have an undue advantage in the decision making process. In the special report, the NSPRA states that PPBS "is a system dependent on cooperative planning by the entire staff, as well as by the community, students and citizens"(NSPRA, 1972:3). The report then recommends a highly monocratic, bureaucratic structure for participation in the decision making: teachers assist the building principal

in coordinating and directing the educational programs in his school, the principal requests money for his educational programs through the district curriculum coordinator, the coordinator submits budget requests to the central office staff, this staff recommends to the superintendent what resources should be allocated, and the superintendent recommends an educational program and budget to the board of education (NSPRA, 1972:9-11).

Such a system of decision making is again strongly hierarchical and therefore has several disadvantages. The communication channels are restricted, those at the lower end of the hierarchy have input to the final decisions only through the consent of those higher in the power echelon, and there is no provision for input from those outside the hierarchy.

Although the PPBS or other systems approaches, such as Educational Resources Management System, may not be advisable as a general model for decision making throughout the school district, a systems approach may be used to advantage within the administration's decision making framework.

With its reliance on sophisticated data processing, such essential operations as research, information retrieval, public relations, personnel accounting, routine bookkeeping, student scheduling, cost analyses, and projections on enrolment, building needs and expenditures could be expedited. Moreover, as a tool for handling emergency administrative problems it could be used well. But it may have too many disadvantages as a decision making model for the whole school system.

D. A Recommended Decision Making Model

Morphet (1967) points out that if there is to be extensive involvement in decision making by the total group affected (and from the context of

his observations it seems reasonable to suppose that he might include within a total school district decision making group not only trustees, administrators and teachers but also students, parents and other members of the public) then two structures are needed: "one structure for determining goals, policies and programs and another structure for executing policies and programs" (Morphet, 1967:109). Within the decision making model developed in this paper, the structure for determining goals, policies and programs is referred to as the decision making process whereas the structure for executing policies and programs is discussed in terms of procedures for leadership and administration. The recommended process and procedures together constitute the essential elements of the proposed decision making model.

1. A Process for Decision Making

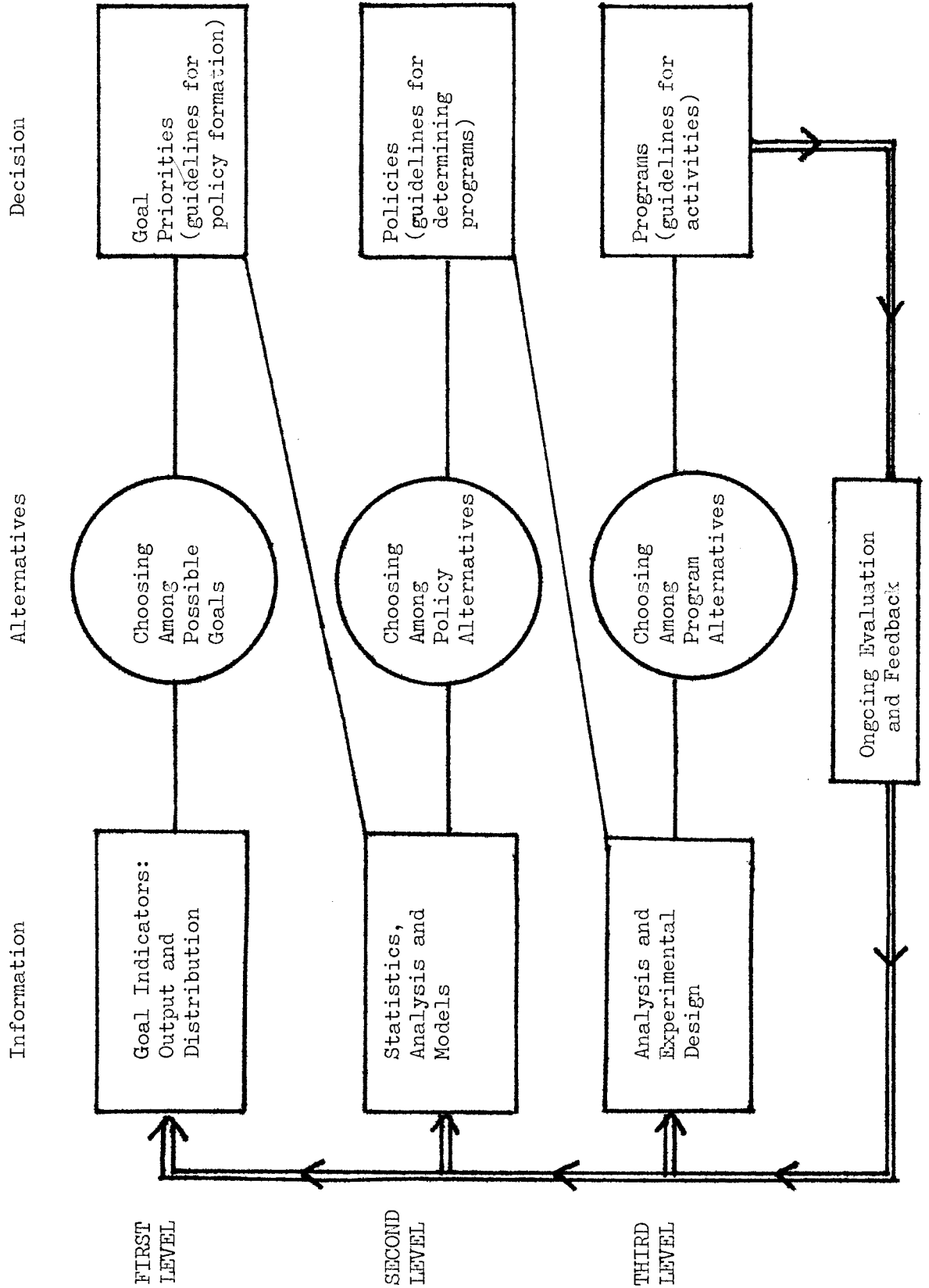
The Economic Council of Canada, in its eighth annual review entitled Design for Decision Making - An Application of Human Resources Policy, recommends a framework for decision making:

The suggested framework places considerable emphasis on three basic elements: decision making is essentially a process of choosing among alternatives; in order to make appropriate choices, it is essential to use the widest possible basis of relevant information and to apply the best possible analytical techniques; and the process must be one that avoids the dangers of bureaucratic and technocratic dominance by providing increased 'openness' in government decision making.

(ECC., 1971:63)

The Council stresses that decision making is essentially a judgemental process. Better information and increasingly sophisticated techniques are only aids for improving judgement.

FIGURE 1: A PROCESS FOR DECISION MAKING



The proposed framework for a decision making process has three major levels. Figure 1 is an adaptation of the Council's flow diagram (ECC., 1971:65). At the first level, decisions concerning goals (or objectives) must be made. This requires that all possible goals be determined, that a selection from these goals be adopted, and that priorities among the adopted goals be set. It is essential that goals be defined specifically enough to avoid controversy about interpretation and at the same time to permit the formation of policy. Highly abstract goals are usually so broad that it is impossible to derive policy from them. Setting goals requires consensus and compromise. At the political level there is a need to consider competing claims so that the public will is recognized and the public interest is met.

The second level in the decision making process requires choosing among policy alternatives in order to arrive at policies or strategies. Such policies should clearly enunciate the general thrust of action. The essence of policy formation is the selection and combination of strategies aimed at meeting the adopted goals while considering the widest possible range of alternatives.

The third level is the choosing of programs, or tactics, which will result in the best progress toward the policies and the goals. At this level it is necessary to decide what alternative programs are possible in terms of human, technical and financial resources, and what knowledge is needed to see the interrelationships and spillovers of various programs. Most of the decisions ~~is~~ at this third level of

decision making will be made by the professional staff. This level requires tactical expertise and such expertise is probably best developed through training. Of course, this does not mean that those who do not have the training should not also have input at this level of decision making.

The Economic Council recommends the establishment of effective feedback mechanisms so that there is a systematic way of learning from experience. The results of an ongoing evaluation of programs must be fed back to the decision makers at each of the three levels so that programs, policies and/or goals can be adopted or revised as thought necessary.

This decision making framework also requires a wide distribution of information among all the participants. Increased knowledge about the process of decision making and the content of public policies would raise the level of debate about decisions. In order to avoid ill-informed or irrelevant comments, or a dangerous advocacy of simplistic solutions to complex problems, a much wider distribution of relevant statistics, analyses, and alternative proposals must be effected.

At the beginning of each decision making level there should be informational inputs and analyses which will aid in each judgemental process. In order to determine what goals are acceptable, what goals are possible, and what goals should receive priority, the Council recommends the development of comprehensive sets of statistical measures, called goal indicators. A continuous monitoring system would lay the

basis for appropriate and timely action before problems reached crisis dimensions.

Goal indicators can be measures of output and of distribution. For example, goal output indicators could measure the level of students' skills development, the number of students who drop-out before graduation, the extent of teachers' job satisfaction, and the public image of the school system. Goal distribution indicators might show, for example, where money is being spent (allocations to each level of education, to each school, to each grade level), a comparison of human resources in new schools and old schools, the level of administrative costs. The use of goal output indicators and goal distribution indicators would assist all those involved in deciding on goals by sharpening perceptions of needs and could serve as an early warning system emphasizing anticipatory action rather than belated and often costly reaction.

As knowledge about the impact of numerous alternative educational policies and programs is presently minimal it will be necessary to develop tools for evaluation and analysis. Well-defined research and objective experimentation is needed.

2. Procedures for Leadership and Administration

Crucial to the success of a decision making process is the role of leadership and administration. The Economic Council does not discuss this area fully.

Morphet defines leadership as follows:

A person performs leadership acts when he: (1) helps a group to define tasks, goals and purposes, (2) helps

a group to achieve its tasks, goals and purposes, (3) helps to maintain the group by assisting in providing for group and individual needs.

(Morphet, 1967:127)

He states that "the weight of available evidence indicates that the assumptions underlying the pluralistic, collegial concept of administration relating to production, group morale, and human relations are more valid than the assumptions of monocratic concept."

(Morphet, 1967:115)

Morphet and his colleagues list the assumptions underlying the pluralistic, collegial concept. Summarized, they are:

Leadership is not confined to those holding status positions in the power echelon. Leadership potential is widely dispersed throughout the organization. The superordinate will be more effective if he develops, rather than restricts, this leadership potential throughout the group.

Good human relations are essential to group production and to meet the needs of individual members of the group.

Responsibility, as well as power and authority, can be shared. Since all responsibility is not placed in the executive at the top of the power echelon, he should not receive all the credit or all the blame.

Those affected by a program or policy should share in the decision making with respect to that program or policy. If not all members can participate directly in all types of decisions, at least they can participate through their representatives.

The individual finds security in a dynamic climate in which he shares responsibility for decision making. A free man is more secure than a vassal: a person is more secure if he helps to determine his own fate.

Unity of purpose is secured through consensus and group loyalty. When the group develops goals, policies and programs they tend to be the property of the group, and the group will be loyal to what it has developed and to the members who have shared in the process.

Maximum production is attained in a threat-free climate.

A threat-free climate does not mean a problem free situation. The solution of problems must conform with the values of the individuals.

The line and staff organization should be used exclusively for the purpose of dividing labour and implementing policies and programs developed by the total group affected. Both the monocratic and the collegial concepts of administration accept the necessity of a line and staff organization. However, in the monocratic concept the line and staff organization both determines and executes policies whereas in the collegial concept the structure for developing policies and programs is usually some type of a committee organization in which all members of the organization have a peer status, regardless of position in the power echelon.

The situation and ~~not~~ the position determines the right and privilege to exercise authority. The point of decision making should be as near the scene of action as practicable.

The individual in the organization is not expendable. Government was created to serve people, and not people to serve government. The organization can better achieve its own purpose by conserving and improving the members of the organization.

Evaluation is a group responsibility. Collegial group evaluation is more valid and reliable than evaluation by one individual. Broad participation in evaluation provides valuable feedback.

(Morphet, 1967:107-110)

The adoption by a school district of the recommended decision making model might result in several improvements. The process, with its three levels, could help all those who participate in the decision making -- interested groups and individuals, students, teachers, administrators, trustees -- to bear in mind the kind of discussion and background information needed on any given topic. The process might give perspective to debate on education and help participants appreciate the significance of their deliberations at a given time and also help ensure that priority

items were dealt with first. The collegial procedures could provide for positive human relations, effective communication, optimum innovation, and maximum effort by those in the system.

Chapter III

APPLICATION OF THE MODEL IN A SCHOOL DISTRICT

A. Deciding On Goals

The British Columbia Public Schools Act holds each Board of School Trustees in the province legally responsible for determining "local policy in conformity with this Act for the effective and efficient operation of the schools in the school district" (PSA, 1973:399). The Act empowers school boards to formulate educational goals for the district, to set policy statements for the district, and to authorize programs, district-wide and within each school (provided such goals, policies and programs conform with the Act). Although a board may choose to delegate to its employees the determination of many of the programs within the district and even at times the setting of policies and procedures, it is to be expected that trustees would play an important leadership role in the setting of educational goals in the district.

There are three important aspects to goal setting which need consideration. First, the centralized versus decentralized arguments need to be sorted out. As the provincial government has delegated much important decision making to local boards, to what extent should local boards delegate decision making to individual school communities? Should there be province-wide goals, school district goals, as well as school community goals? As goals are guidelines for policy formation, as policies are guidelines for determining programs, and as programs are guidelines for action, it would seem advisable for those involved in deciding upon goals

to consider which goals are appropriate for each level within the provincial educational system (provincial, school district, school community, school, classroom). The linkage between goals, policies and programs needs to be kept in mind. Moreover, although it is sometimes argued that decentralization usually results in decisions being more responsive to particular conditions and cases because the decision making is closer to the place where decisions are applied, decentralization is not always preferable. "Some of the worst bureaucratic systems are the most decentralized" (Miklos, 1972:163).

Miklos also points out that autonomy versus coordination is closely related to the centralization-decentralization conflict.

Reactions against coordination may stem in part from the particular strategy adopted for achieving the coordination such as hierarchical directives or standardized procedures. Where coordination conflicts with the emphasis on autonomy, more acceptable approaches - communication and information exchange or group decision processes - may overcome some of the difficulties.

(Miklos, 1972:163)

A second concern in the goal setting process should be the extent of involvement from one or more of the following:

- interested individuals
- interested organizations or groups in the district
- school community groups
- students
- teachers
- central administration

If a board of school trustees decides to seek involvement by others in decisions on goals for a school district then a third concern should be the method of involvement. One of the most often used techniques is the opinion poll. However, this method does not provide for dialogue and it

can have serious shortcomings. The recent survey by the Canadian Education Association is an example of how poorly this method can be used. "It was decided that the specific purpose of the enquiry would be to ascertain what a number of communities believe (a) to be and (b) ought to be the purposes of education in their elementary and secondary schools" (CEA, 1973:3). The questionnaire, consisting of 29 questions, was circulated to 1540 students, educators and members of the general public, in selected communities across Canada. An examination of the questions indicates that the designers of the questionnaire made no distinction between purposes (or goals) and policies or between purposes and programs (or even between purposes and activities). Only four of the 29 questions (1, 3, 10 and 16) elicit responses concerning what the purposes are at present and only six (2, 4, 5, 9, 13 and 15) enquire about what the purposes ought to be. The other nineteen questions deal with issues at the policy or program level. As typical examples:

19. Which of the following methods of evaluating students' progress should carry the most weight?
1. final examination
 2. mid-term and end-of-term examinations
 3. teacher observation and evaluation of daily work

(CEA, 1973:32)

- or 24. In your opinion, the school year should:
1. remain as it is
 2. consist of 12 months and be divided into four self-contained terms, the student being expected normally to take at least 3
 3. other

(CEA, 1973:38)

It is puzzling that an established influential educational association, in consultation with experts from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, the Ontario Ministry of Education, and the Montreal Catholic

School Commission, should claim that responses to questions like those quoted above give a valuable indication of what the Canadian public, educators and students think are, or should be, "the aims of education and the objectives of their schools" (CEA., 1973:4). At the most such responses would indicate satisfaction or dissatisfaction with current practices. Moreover, the questions are much too simplistic to deal with such a complex problem as, for example, evaluation of students' progress.

In the United States, Gallup International has done an annual survey, since 1970, of the public's attitude toward the public schools. Most of the questions on the 1971 survey, for example, also dealt with current practices - finance, voucher system, performance contracts, discipline, accountability and innovations. (PDK., 1971:33). But this survey did not purport to measure what the goals, objectives or purposes of the public schools are, or ought to be.

Public attitude surveys have serious shortcomings in determining goals. Completion of questionnaires usually involves little or no discussion of reasons for choices; decisions are made hastily and often without relevant background knowledge; decisions can be made without the need for justification. In deciding on something as important as goals for a school district, knowledge and relevant reasons are needed in order to arrive at wise decisions.

The Phi Delta Kappa organization has developed a systematic approach to educational planning and development. There are six stages in the process:

1. educational needs assessment
 - (a) goal rating

- (b) performance rating
 - (c) goal priority rating
2. performance objectives setting
 3. program planning
 4. program implementation
 5. progress evaluation
 6. outcome evaluation

(Phi Delta Kappa, 1973)

The first stage requires a random sample of participants: this could be from the whole district if district-wide goals were desired or from a school community if goals for a particular school were sought. The time required is relatively extensive and there is provision for a great deal of dialogue. Such a well planned approach to getting community involvement in the setting of goals for a school district or a school has much to recommend it.

The North Vancouver School Board has used another approach to the determination of district-wide goals. On March 16, 1974, trustees, the Executive of the teachers' association, members of the central administration staff, and the Superintendent-Designate met for most of the day to discuss educational goals for the district. As a result of these discussions a general statement of aims was developed and adopted by the Board to serve as a basis for discussion with the public. (See Appendix B). Although there has as yet been very little discussion, a beginning has been made toward the adoption of educational goals for the district.

In the recommended decision making model it is essential that, prior to the adoption of a set of goals, the decision makers have available to them a considerable amount of information. Decisions should be made within the

context of the existing system and be practically applicable. Thus, in order to know what is being accomplished presently it is necessary to generate pertinent statistics and analyses on the current distribution of human and material resources as well as on the output of the educational system. Although it may not be essential to have such background information when deciding on acceptable goals, it is essential when deciding on what goals are wholly or partially attainable and on a list of priority goals for a given time. For example, if the development of skills in group decision making is one of the goals and is considered very important then there must be some way of deciding whether or not it needs more emphasis within the educational system. If a great deal is being done already and if students are acquiring highly developed skills in this area then an even higher priority rating may not be warranted; if little is being done and if students have poorly developed skills in this area then that goal may need to be put higher in the priority listing. The goal priorities should determine priorities in policy setting and in program development.

Most of the goal distribution indicators and the goal output indicators would probably be formulated by administrative staff, on an ongoing basis, and sometimes at the particular request of trustees and others involved in decision making. Dissemination of such information should be as extensive as possible throughout the district. There is sometimes a tendency for administrators to release for publication information which only complements the system and under a monocratic, bureaucratic type of administration it is not surprising that this should happen: if the final responsibility for all matters is placed on the administrators at the top of the

power echelon then any weakness within the system reflects the lack of abilities of those administrators. With the adoption of a pluralistic, collegial concept of administration the personal threat to administrators is minimized and a much freer dialogue about shortcomings of the educational system should be possible. Weaknesses become everyone's problem.

In formulating goal distribution indicators it should be relatively easy to furnish an itemized accounting of at least annual expenditures at various levels in the school system, for various program areas, or within each school, not only to trustees but also to any member of the public who wishes to examine such figures. If the central administration of a school district does not generate such distribution indicators, or withholds such information, then the district is in danger of tolerating serious inequalities of educational opportunities or of wasting resources in areas of low priority. For example, the goal priorities in the North Vancouver School District might very well be changed if it were widely known what differences in financial allocations there were between Carson Graham Secondary and North Vancouver Secondary or if it were possible to compare the human and financial resources used to operate the physical education programs in the secondary schools (teachers, playing fields, gymnasiums, equipment and materials) and the communicating skills programs in the primary grades. There may be differing resource needs among schools or programs but the reasons for such differences should be open to examination.

Goal output indicators are also essential to a rational discussion in setting goal priorities. Evaluation of the efforts of those within the

educational system - students, classroom teachers, administrators, maintenance staff, secretaries, etc. - is one kind of output indicator. Most evaluation in B.C. public schools has been external evaluation or evaluation by those higher in the power echelon: students are evaluated by classroom teachers, teachers are evaluated by administrators, administrators are theoretically evaluated by more senior administrators or by trustees, and trustees are evaluated by the public. Very little self-evaluation or peer evaluation has been encouraged. If the emphasis is not judgemental (acceptance or rejection) but rather supportive, then peer evaluation might be a powerful force for improved performance, be that social, professional, artistic, intellectual or physical performance.

Other types of goal output indicators could include surveys of public opinion, interviews with recent graduates of the schools, accounts of specific functions which various members of the system serve (These might show that some highly paid people are spending too much time doing low priority work.), statistics on careers which graduates enter (We may be giving few students the skills needed for careers in the arts.) and some analysis of how the system is affecting the physical and mental health of its members. A routine generation of significant goal output indicators would assist all those who are involved in deciding on goal priorities by giving a foundation of knowledge to the deliberations. Without reliable goal distribution indicators and goal output indicators the process whereby goals are determined will be one of whim and gustation instead of deliberation and reason.

B. Deciding on Policies

In the proposed decision making model it is important that goals provide guidelines for policy formation. Before policies (strategies) are determined it is necessary to provide the decision makers with models and other analyses. For example, if one of the adopted goals is to provide an alternate form of schooling for students with special difficulties or needs, it would be helpful to have background information on the problem area - what frustrations students have with their present educational environment, what kinds of alternative schools have been tried elsewhere, cost implications of various other kinds of education, and what professional staff is available within the district and outside the district. After a consideration of various models and analysis, several policy alternatives might be drawn up. From these alternatives one or more policies could be adopted for implementation within the district.

Again, much depends on the administrative style within the school district. In a monocratic, bureaucratic climate trustees usually allow administrative staff to think of all the policy alternatives, select for them the one which seems most appropriate and present that one for ratification. At the same time, in such a system the administrators may feel that if trustees and other lay persons were given alternatives they might make an 'error' and select the 'wrong' alternative too often: it is safer to provide only the 'best' alternative. Offering only one proposal is also an efficient way of doing business because there is less need to generate plenty of background information in order to demonstrate the strengths and weaknesses of each reasonably possible alternative. But such a decision making procedure does not encourage a threat-free, open

informed discussion on the often complex policy decisions that have to be made.

At the second level of decision making - deciding on policies - it is again necessary to ensure strong, open channels of communication with the public and with those who work inside the system. If there were a proposal to build a new school in a given area or to decrease the pupil-teacher ratio or to increase significantly the financial allocations for job training then it would seem reasonable to expect that trustees and central administrators would encourage and provide opportunities for as wide a discussion as possible by all those interested and concerned.

Incidentally, several school boards (including North Vancouver and Vancouver) have regularly scheduled question periods at their meetings. Although this is a commendable practice, the atmosphere at Board meetings is not conducive to a meaningful dialogue. Trustees usually have a meeting agenda that requires completion. Much more than a question period is needed for effective communication with the public.

Telephone conversations between members of the public and trustees or administrators are valuable as a feedback and information channel. However, the one-to-one nature of such conversations limits its effectiveness as a means to achieving widespread discussion, both in terms of time required and in terms of meaningful debate.

Extensive use of the public communications media is needed to foster and maintain an informed, concerned discussion on educational goals, policies and programs within the school district. Radio and television programs with a provision for public participation by telephone could be

effective. Newspaper articles and comments would help.

Internal communication (within the system) needs attention. In North Vancouver, although there are effective existing committees to promote discussions between central administration and the teachers' association (Professional Consultative Committee) and between trustees and the teachers' association (Teacher-Trustee Liaison Committee), direct communication between the senior administrators and classroom teachers or between senior administrators and students has been minimal in the past. Attendance by central administrators at staff meetings in each of the schools within the district, two or three times a year, might provide a more accurate picture of the state of education within the district. In the past the Superintendent has relied heavily for feedback on administrators within the schools. However, under such a system of communication, only the good news or the cries for help tend to go up.

One of the most difficult, prolonged and important policy decisions a board of school trustees has to make annually is the setting of a budget. In many school districts the process is haphazardous. Decisions are often made without due consideration of educational needs. The atmosphere is sometimes that of crisis or confrontation. Those who play key roles in recommending allocations for the coming year (superintendents, secretaries-treasurer, superintendents of works) often make recommendations on crude hunches. If a budgetary allocation is not spent in the year ending it is presumed that there is not enough need in that area to warrant an increase: actually, those lower in the bureaucratic hierarchy have often effectively frustrated expenditure or teachers have not known

there was money available. On the other hand, expenditures have sometimes been made not because there was a real need but because there was money left in the budget. Because there is not a systematic process, specialist groups have at times requested increases in budgetary allocations and when the additional money was available they have had to think hard on ways to spend it.

Adopted goal priorities and policy statements should be reflected in the budgetary decisions. Adequate statistics and analyses, open, frank and extensive discussion, readily available information and the generation of various alternatives would help to make decisions which were based on knowledge and reasons and were arrived at by consensus.

Time is an important element in the decision making process. There never seems to be enough time to do everything needed so perspective is required to take care of priorities. For the past two years one North Vancouver trustee at least has repeatedly suggested that the Board set educational goals and priorities among such goals. However, Board meetings have always been so full of decisions at the programs level and sometimes at the policies and regulations level that there has been no time to consider goals. In fact, it has been argued by some trustees that there is no need to formulate goals because these can be deduced from the total policies, regulations and programs within the district: trustees should not waste valuable decision making time in discussing broad generalities.

This method of decision making has serious consequences. At any given meeting it is difficult to appreciate which items need immediate action, which should be referred because there isn't enough time, and which need

continued attention. At the programs level it leads to such practices as the development of a fairly extensive bicycle safety program at the expense of the communicating arts programs or group decision making programs for students. Without a framework of priorities it is acceptable to acquire any policy or program in the educational marketplace or to stick with the present policies or programs even though they may have outlived their utility. If goal priorities are lacking, crisis decision making or the expenditure of much time on low priority items can result.

C. Deciding on Programs

The proposed model recommends that policies act as guidelines for determining programs. Before decisions on programs are made it is reasonable to expect information on what kinds of considerations have to be made, the essential elements which must be provided for, the avenues available, the possible need for a pilot project or experiment. Normally, the decision makers should have some program alternatives from which to choose.

A school district has a great variety of programs including recruitment of staff, appointment of persons to various positions, maintaining school buildings in functional order, transferring students, salary negotiations, special education, supervision of curriculum, public relations, liaison with the Department of Education, and many more. Although it may not be necessary to categorize formally all district programs it would be advisable to list broad categories of programs so that an ongoing check can be made to ensure that policies and goals are being realized through recognizable avenues.

School districts tend to proceed on a problem - centred operation instead of on a program - oriented basis. Handling immediately what seem to be daily emergencies takes up so much time that there is little left for a methodical check on all programs. If an ongoing supervision of programs is not maintained then deterioration over a period of time can result in a chain of crises. This becomes very disruptive. For example, the trustees and central administration in North Vancouver recently had to make unnecessarily difficult decisions in three areas where an ongoing search for effective policies and procedures had not been made during the past few years. The procedures for appointing new administrators to schools were perceived as inadequate by trustees, prospective appointees, as well as others and yet appointments had to be made. In several schools the administrative practices had led, over a period of years, to serious deterioration in professional relations and firm corrective measures were needed. A third area of emergency decision making concerned the future status of two secondary schools: parents, students, trustees and administrators found themselves in confrontation situations because there was a lack of pertinent information, adequate planning and full consultation. If these three programs - procedures for appointing school administrators, effective administrative practices within schools, and the accommodation of Secondary students - had received better ongoing attention during the past several years there probably would not have been the need for emergency decision making concurrently in three major program areas.

On the other hand, the improvements made this year in North Vancouver

if not carry out by professional educator, & other lay persons, who will carry it out, you.

in the procedures for transferring teachers and hiring new teachers is an example of the kind of concern necessary for program development. Past procedures were reviewed, suggestions were sought to improve the procedures, active participation by many more people was encouraged, and a consensus was arrived at concerning the improvements needed.

Program development will most often be carried out by professional educators but trustees and other lay persons need not be excluded from this level of decision making. Although there must be protection from the influence of those who obstinately insist on program changes regardless of the policies or goals adopted and regardless of the evidence demonstrating the effectiveness (in terms of policies and goals) of given programs, professional educators do not have a monopoly on wisdom in educational matters.

Professional people sometimes claim that others may tell them what they should accomplish but not how to accomplish it, the premise of the argument being that trained persons know best what methods to use. Hopefully, trained persons are better able usually to determine effective methods: otherwise anyone off the street could be recruited to perform teaching or medical or engineering tasks. However, training need not afford the professional practitioners immunity from justifying methods used nor isolate the practitioners from the suggestions of those without professional training. It is at the programs level that the most controversy arises and where the effects are most obvious. A ready willingness to discuss programs, as related to policies and goals adopted, might best ensure confidence in current programs or necessary changes in programs.

D. Evaluation and Feedback

An ongoing system of evaluation and feedback is essential. Lonsdale views feedback as follows:

As applied to organizations, feedback is the process through which the organization learns: it is the input from the environment to the system telling it how it is doing as a result of its output to the environment. One of the attendant problems, if the feedback loop is to work properly, is sensitizing the organization's "sensory organs" so as to decrease any blockage and increase receptivity.

(Lonsdale, 1964:173)

Under the section "Deciding on Goals", self-evaluation and peer evaluation were suggested as ways in which to improve performance. This does not exclude, of course, the need for external evaluation. Morphet points out that "the effectiveness of an organization is enhanced when provision is made not only for evaluating the products of the organization but also the organization itself" (Morphet, 1967:98).

The communication links in a system affect strongly the kind of evaluation and feedback within that system. Morphet makes some valuable contrasts:

The communication patterns differ widely in monocratic and pluralistic organizations. The communication pattern for a monocratic organization is quite simple. It goes up and down in a vertical line organization. A communication from the top must pass through all intermediate echelons of authority before it reaches the bottom, but no intermediate echelon can stop the communication from the top down. A communication from the bottom to the top must also pass through each intermediate echelon, but any intermediate echelon can stop the communication from a lower level from reaching the top. Therefore, the channel of communication is not strictly a two-way channel. Furthermore, great emphasis is given to "going through channels", and any communication from the bottom to the top which does not go through channels is frowned upon. The administrator

in the monocratic hierarchy uses his control over communications to increase his status, power, and prestige.

There are many channels of communication in pluralistic organizations. Such organizations have provisions for communicating through a vertical channel, but it is a two-way channel. Communication is also circular and horizontal in a pluralistic organization. The organization provides for a committee structure or some other arrangement whereby members at the bottom of the line structure may communicate in a face-to-face relationship with the top executives. Since communication is much freer among all members of the organization in a pluralistic structure, the opportunity for beneficial interactions is much greater.

(Morphet, 1967:111-2)

In addition to the monocratic and pluralistic concepts of administration, there is a common attempt by administrators to function somewhere between these two types. This can result in an insidious and manipulative style of pseudodemocratic administration. "The leader decides on what he wants done, but he uses subtle and clever means to assure that the 'right' decision is made by the group" (Morphet, 1967:170). The administrator, in the role of leader and chairperson of meetings, uses one or more of several techniques in order to make it appear as though the informational inputs, often in the form of evaluation and feedback, warrant the decisions he/she wants from a decision making meeting:

- carefully selects and slants information
- recognizes in discussions only those who share his/her opinion
- prior to the decision making meeting instructs one or more persons with views similar to his/her own to steer the thinking of the group
- commends suggestions with which he/she agrees and ignores or ridicules other suggestions

- organizes agendas so that unimportant and non-participatory items are first on the agenda and by the time the controversial items for decision making are dealt with the group is so tired that any decision is a relief
- despite the informational, evaluative and feedback inputs which result in a generally acceptable decision, always reserves the right to make the final decision if in his/her opinion the group decision is wrong.

The lack of trust in the intellectual ability and wisdom of others to arrive at the 'right' decision, after due consideration of all available evaluation, feedback and other information, may result from insecurity of leadership or from unfortunate past experience. In any case, it is reasonable to expect that those involved might soon experience frustration with such a decision making process.

Feedback and evaluation are also needed in a particular aspect of an effective and efficient decision making process. An organization such as a school district usually requires three types of decisions. There are some decision areas in which most people in the organization would like to participate directly. If the issues are very important then probably the best process, in terms of eventual acceptance of the decision and harmony within the system, is to arrive at a consensus decision. Consensus does not mean that everyone necessarily agrees with the decision but everyone should be satisfied that the decision arrived at is the best possible one, politically, at least for the time being. On matters which are less important and which do not require consensus, a fairly quick majority vote decision may be acceptable. There are other matters on which everyone agrees that one person or a small group should make the decisions. The dynamics of what matters fall within each of the three types of decisions -

does Feedback & evaluation lead to good implementation of final decision (Janzen, there is no use in having a good decision if it can't be implemented)

unilateral, parliamentary or consensus - are determined by the tacit or explicit consent of all those affected by the decisions made. An ongoing evaluation of the decision making process itself is needed and feedback from all involved regarding the way in which the three types of decisions are being used would help maintain an effective as well as efficient decision making system.

An ongoing system of evaluation and feedback, therefore, is essential for rational decision making at each level of the proposed decision making model, the types of involvement in decision making should be monitored, and possible distortion or misuse of information from evaluative and feedback mechanisms needs to be guarded against. To judge whether or not goals need revision in terms of kinds and priorities, feedback from inside and outside the system is required: much of this feedback information can be expressed, as indicated previously, in terms of goal distribution indicators and goal output indicators. To gauge the suitability of policies in terms of their intended purposes of realizing goals and as guidelines for programs, continual evaluation and feedback needs to be channelled into this level of decision making. In order to determine whether or not programs are instrumental in serving the purposes for which they were designed and are optional guidelines for effective activities, ongoing evaluation and feedback is needed.

need to be made based on whose opinion.?

Chapter IV

SUMMARY

A model for the decision making process of a school district should be as simple as possible but yet be able to accommodate within its framework all types of decisions that need to be made. Simplicity is needed so that all those who are involved and all who have a right to be involved know what are the parameters for decision making. The ground rules should not exclude many people because those rules are either very complex or are ill-defined. If the recommended three-level decision making process, with its informational inputs at each level, were adopted and made well known, not only might those presently involved in the decision making process within a school district gain a clearer perspective of the importance and function of various discussions and decisions but it might also help to involve others in the community because they would be aware of the process and know how to make meaningful, informed, direct contributions to the educational dialogue. It could help overcome the reluctance to participate which many people have because they feel they do not know how to contribute and might appear foolish if they tried. The recommended process is simple and yet provides for informed, rational deliberation and decision making.

The recommended administrative procedures of the pluralistic, collegial type complement the decision making process. They provide a climate which is threat-free and cooperative. A person's logical and rational argument is more important than the position held. Communication is without arbitrary barriers. Mutual trust, rather than hierarchical fear, could enhance morale. There is a genuine interest in the concerns of others.

which of hierarchical fear would they not become unproductive & not push for further advancement & improvements.?

APPENDIX A

SCHOOL DISTRICT NO.44,
NORTH VANCOUVER, B.C.

Board Room
7:30 p.m.

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF MEMORANDUM

POLICY MEETING
28.5.73.

- A. CALL TO ORDER. Chairman Burbidge will call the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Board Room.
- B. ACTION ITEMS. (Actions calling for Board decisions).
1. Routine Action Items. (Regularly recurring and usually of a non-contentious nature).
 - (a) Approval of Minutes of Meeting on May 14th.
RECOMMENDED MOTION: that the Minutes of the meeting on May 14th, 1973 be approved as circulated.
 - (b) Approval of Minutes of Special Meeting on May 17th, 1973.
RECOMMENDED MOTION: that the Minutes of the meeting on May 17th, 1973 be approved as circulated.
 2. Arising from Previous Meetings.
 - (a) Kindergarten Class, North Shore Neighbourhood House.
At its meeting of May 14th the Board tabled the following motion:
 - Powell/Adkins, that the Executive Director of North Shore N. House be informed that the School District will enrol the five-year olds registered with Day Care Centre at N.H. in either a morning or afternoon class at a nearby school, on the understanding that the N.S.N.H. will be responsible for the transportation of the pupils to the school and back to the House.

The Motion was tabled to give trustees an opportunity to visit the classroom at the House and to study the pros and cons of the request from the Executive Director of Neighbourhood House.

The Superintendent is satisfied that the room at the House is very satisfactory (although equipment and furniture may have to be removed daily from the room since it is used for other purposes in the evenings); the playground facilities are excellent (better than the schools offer), but the available kindergarten equipment will not permit as good a programme as will be provided in the schools. (See Schedule "A").

The Superintendent is still of the opinion that it would be better to accommodate these five-year olds in a nearby school (under the supervision of the school principal; association of five-year olds with Grade I and II pupils; better to have the teacher in the school working with other primary teachers).

It will be necessary to have the motion raised from the table. It has already been moved and seconded so will be open for discussion and voting upon.

(b) Alternative Administrative Pattern - Canyon Heights Elementary School. At the meeting of May 14th the Board tabled the following motion:

- Adkins/Powell, that the request of Canyon Heights Elementary School for the alternative administration pattern indicated in Schedule "B" be approved on the understanding that the costs of the plan not exceed the administrative allowance for the vice-principal of the school.

The Superintendent is not clear on the reason for tabling, unless it was the result of a query from the President of the N.V.T.A. Such being the case, the Board is advised that the N.V.T.A. Executive has advised the Superintendent that it has no objection to the tabled motion approving the alternative administrative plan for Canyon Heights.

Provision for such alternative plans is in School District Regulation 2220 (1), Clause 8; vis., "Subject to the approval of the Board, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, an elementary school may have an alternative administrative pattern to that provided in Clause 4 and/or 5, and/or 6, providing there is no additional cost."

The motion should be raised from the table for discussion and action.

(c) Novaco Daycare Centre. The Norgate Community Association had notified the Board at the last meeting both by letter and verbally through the Secretary Mr. Andrews of its continuing opposition to the present location of the centre on Norgate School grounds. It is suggested that the Board's position be clarified by notifying the association according to the draft of letter enclosed as Schedule "B".

(d) Bylaw No. 61. The Board agreed to participating in a major debenture sale by the B.C. School Districts Capital Financing authority to the extent of \$100,000.00. The rate of 7.34% seems extremely favourable. The Bylaw requires the usual readings.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: that Bylaw No. 61, being a bylaw to authorize the Board to issue and sell to the B.C. School District Capital Financing Authority a debenture in the principal amount of \$100,000.00 be now read a first time.

The Bylaw should be read.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: that Bylaw No. 61 be now read a second time. (A motion that the bylaw be taken as read is in order).

RECOMMENDED MOTION: that Bylaw No. 61 be now read a third time. (A motion that the Bylaw be taken as read is in order).

RECOMMENDED MOTION: that School District No. 44 (North Vancouver) School Loan Bylaw No. 61 be now reconsidered, finally passed and adopted.

3. Items of New Business

(a) Brief Re: Windsor Addition

Submitted as Schedule "C" is a copy of a brief from a number of home owners who are concerned about the proposed addition to Windsor Secondary School. There may be a delegation at the meeting should the Board wish to hear or to question. At the time of writing this memorandum the Superintendent of Schools has not seen the brief so is unable to comment on it. However, the Superintendent of Works has had two meetings with the group with trustees present at the first. The Superintendent wishes to point out that considerable money has already been spent on the plans which are now ready to go to tender.

(b) Capilano College has asked the Board (See Schedule "D") to approve borrowing for capital projects totalling \$750,000.00. (College reps. will explain the exact nature of the projects). It is understood that under the revised provisions of the Public Schools Act, all of these capital costs will be borne by the Department of Education, although borrowing initially is the responsibility of the Boards which make up the College Council.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: that the request from Capilano College Council pursuant to Section 254 of the Public Schools Act, for the Board to borrow its share of \$750,000.00 for emergent capital purposes be approved,

and, that application be made to the Minister of Education to specify such expenses to be eligible for grants and to obtain the approval of the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council, pursuant to Section 217 (1) of the Public Schools Act, to borrow the necessary funds.

(c) Non-Instructional Days. Schedule "E" provides a copy of the programme for non-instructional days at the schools listed in the following resolution:

RECOMMENDED MOTION: that the Board authorizes non-instructional days as follows:-

Delbrook Secondary.....	Friday May 25th, 1973.
Lonsdale Elementary and Annex.....	Monday June 4th, 1973.
Sutherland Jr. Secondary.....	Monday June 4th p.m. only
Fromme Elementary.....	Monday June 4th, 1973.
Norgate Elementary.....	Monday June 11th, 1973.
Keith Lynn Elementary.....	Monday June 11th, 1973.

(d) School Community Report.

Each trustee received a copy of this Report for the last meeting of the Board. It was referred to the Superintendent for recommendations. The Report is based largely on the opinion and experience of professional and non-professional people who are active in Community-School projects or other organizations interested in youth and/or community activities. However, opportunity was given all citizens and organizations to participate in the study and to express their opinions. With the exception of two reports or submissions from individuals, the concept of the community-school was given positive support.

A study of the Report will indicate to trustees that:

1. the community-school concept will cost money - more than the salaries for the director (coordinator) and secretary of each school's project.

Recent changes in the Public Schools Act and announcements by the Minister of Education seem to indicate that School District Budgets may provide for staff for community school programmes and furthermore, provide for joint financing of such programmes by Boards and Municipal Councils - the arrangements are apparently to be worked out by the Board and Council (s) interested in such a joint undertaking;

2. Community-school projects with their advisory and/or parent support committees might tend to be self perpetuating without accountability; some external measure or assessment of the programme must be set up; such an evaluation is difficult;
3. A community-school project is a social-political organization with pressure groups - a good feature if the community advisory committee (executive) is truly representative of the community it serves.
4. The structured community-school concept with paid professional leadership could discourage leadership by volunteers.

If the Board wishes to take some positive action as a result of the Report, the Superintendent, in consultation with the senior administrative staff, recommends for Board consideration:

- i) Establish a liaison committee, comprising two trustees, two aldermen from the District Council, and two aldermen from City Council with the Director of Community-Schools as Secretary, to study costs and financial support;
- ii) Establish a Community Education Steering Committee, comprising representatives from (a) the Community-School Advisory Committees at Queen Mary, Burrard View and Ridgeway, (b) an alderman from the City, (c) an alderman from the District, (d) a Trustee, (e) Superintendent of Schools or his appointee and (f) the Director of Community Schools as secretary;
- iii) Appoint a Director of Community Schools for the school year 1973-74 - one-half time to be Coordinator of the Queen Mary Community School programme, responsible to the Principal of Queen Mary Elementary School, and one-half time (a) to assist the liaison committee indicated above, (b) to assist the Community Education Steering Committee indicated above, (c) to assist in training other Coordinators of Community Schools Programmes in the School District and to act as a resource person in their work. Secretarial assistance to be provided;
- iv) Appoint half-time Coordinators of Community-School Programmes for (a) Burrard View and (b) Ridgeway, (this in addition to the half-time Coordinator at Queen Mary). Some secretarial assistance to be provided.

The cost of the above for the period September 1st to December 31st, 1973 is estimated to be \$14,000, and, for this year, would be a charge against the B account in the budget.

(e) Adult Education

The Director of Adult Education, Mr. McGown, recently attended the annual meeting of the B.C. Association of Continuing Education Administrators. A number of interesting and pertinent matters were discussed which should be of interest to the trustees. Enclosed as Schedule "F" is a report from Mr. McGown, who will be present to answer any questions.

(f) Part-time Consultant (Industrial Education)

Provision was made in the 1973 budget for the appointment of a part-time Consultant in Industrial Education. This position has not been filled since the retirement of Eric Gee. It involves giving a competent I.E. teacher on a school staff some "free time" (1 or 2 blocks) to act as a consultant for all I.E. teachers in the District, and to assist the admin. staff and the purchasing agent in arranging for repairs to and replacement of equipment and evaluations re. purchase of new I.E. equipment.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: . that Mr. Alvin D. Gatley be appointed part-time consultant in Industrial Education, commencing September 1st, 1973, at salary according to current salary agreement.

(g) Coordinator of Work-Experience

Provision was made in the 1973 budget for the appointment of a teacher to coordinate the work experience programme for students in the secondary schools and to do liaison work with the business and industrial community. This appointment was strongly recommended by the Chamber of Commerce's Education Bureau. A copy of the address given by former Argyle student, Walter Stewart, at the recent Workshop attended by a number of the trustees is submitted as Schedule "G".

RECOMMENDED MOTION: that the Superintendent of Schools be authorized to appoint a District Helping Teacher (Coordinator of Work Experience, Secondary Schools) for the school year commencing September 1st, 1973 and ending June 30th, '74 at salary according to current Salary Agreement.

(h) Science Fellowship

The Chemistry Department, U.B.C. is prepared to offer a Science Fellowship to Mr. Rod Kitagawa (Delbrook). It would involve joining the Chemistry Faculty of U.B.C. for the period July 1st, 1973 to January 31st, 1974, attending Lectures, advising on the school chemistry programme, and working with undergrads in the Faculty of Education. The University will be responsible for 40% of the teacher's salary that he would normally receive for the period September 1st, 1973 to January 31st, 1974, the School Board would be responsible for 60%. This conforms to Board policy and regulation for Educational Improvement Leave.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: that Mr. Rod Kitagawa be granted educational improvement leave for the period September 1st, 1973 to January 31st, 1974 to permit him to accept a Science Fellowship at U.B.C., on the understanding that his salary and other benefits will be borne 40% by U.B.C. and 60% by the School District.

(i) Cloverley Elementary Site Development

Consulting Engineers: Underhill and Underhill. Landscape Architect: Harry L. Haggard. In 1969 the Board purchased fourteen undeveloped lots east of the existing playing field at Cloverley Elementary School, and preliminary plans for a development of the area were prepared and presented to the Board.

Working drawings have now been completed in consultation with the Community Association, the school principal and the City Engineering department. The latter agreed in principle to a joint development, and offered to pay up to \$25,000 toward the cost of the project, subject to its joint use by the public for park and recreational use, as well as for school purposes.

The development will provide for a second all weather playing field, a large blacktop area, a jogging tract, an Adventure Playground, landscaping of banks, and upgrading of the site drainage.

The plans will be available for review by the Board on Monday evening. School Board funds have been provided in Referendum No. 9 and No. 11.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: that the plans be approved, and, subject to the approval of the City Council to share 50% of the cost up to \$50,000, and to the approval of the Department of Education, tenders called.

(j) Name for Inter River School

This Elementary School which should be ready for the opening of school in September, 1973, was called Lillooet and Inter River. Neither seems appropriate. The name "Lynnmour" (which definitely locates the school), has been suggested, as has the name "Chief Dan George". Does the Board wish to ask the public for other suggestions, to be received not later than Friday, June 21st? The Board could make a final decision at its June 25th meeting.

(k) Building Programme, 1973-74

Listed hereunder are projects tentatively approved by the Department of Education as essential for 1973-74.

Site Development Referendum No. 9 and Referendum No. 11

Argyle Secondary	-	\$22,900	- Ref. 11 sites.
Cloverley Elementary	-	25,000	- Ref. 11 sites.
Upper Lynn Elementary	-	7,200	- Ref. 11 sites.
Larson Elementary	-	7,600	- Ref. 9 sites.
Eastview Elementary	-	5,400	- Ref. 9 sites.
Boundary Elementary	-	2,500	- Ref. 9 sites.
Lonsdale Annex	-	2,800	- Ref. 11
Keith Lynn Elementary	-	1,400	- Ref. 11 sites.
Fromme Elementary	-	1,600	- Ref. 11 sites.

Buildings - Upgrade Lighting and minor renovations - Ref. 13Upgrade lighting

Sutherland Secondary	Queensbury Elementary
Ridgeway (Main) Elementary	Norgate Elementary
Lonsdale Elementary	North Star Elementary
Westview Elementary	Canyon Heights Elementary
Highlands Elementary	Burrard View Elementary

and Braemar Elementary.

Building Additions, etc: Referendum No. 13

Handsworth Secondary

Prince Charles

Argyle Secondary

Upper Lynn Elementary

It is necessary to have the Department of Education authorize the initiation of each of these projects.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: that the Department of Education be requested to authorize preparation of sketch plans or otherwise approve commencement of the following projects.

(k) Paralleling the building programme in the equipping of schools
Approval is required to use shareable funds.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: that the Board requests the Minister of Education pursuant to Section 190 (1) of the Public Schools Act to authorize the purchase of equipment for the schools in the amounts listed in Schedule "H". Source of Funds: Referendum No. 13.

(l) Policies and Regulations

A number of proposed revised policies and regulations are submitted as Schedule "J". The current policy or regulation accompanies each new proposal. The proposed Regulation on Salaries of Summer School Staff is in line with a request from the Board that salaries be based on certification and hours of work, rather than on grade level and hours of work. The Proposed Regulation re: Tuition Fees is self explanatory and aimed at making the Summer School self supporting. The Proposed Regulation on Transportation of Pupil is new, is needed, and, in general is current procedure. The Revised Regulation on Teacher Entitlement makes provision for kindergarten classes - no other change. The Proposed Regulation on Supportive Staff is also a revision to take care of large kindergarten classes. The proposed Regulation on Use of School Facilities for Pre-School Groups is self explanatory. The Proposed Revision of the Policy on School Building Construction has been submitted at Board request.

The N.V.T.A. executive is in agreement with the above proposals except the regulations re: teacher entitlement and supportive staff for kindergarten pupils. A copy of their letter accompanies Regulation 6151 (1).

RECOMMENDED MOTION: that the Proposed Revised Policy 3562 - New Construction and Renovation be adopted.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: that the following proposed Revised Regulations be approved, effective July 1st, 1973:

- Regulation 4141 (6) - Salaries, Summer School Staff.
- Regulation 3240 (5) - Tuition Fees, Summer School.
- Regulation 6151 (1) - Teacher Entitlement (Elementary Schools).
- Regulation 6162 (1) - Supportive Staff (Elementary Schools).
- Regulation 1331 (1) - Community use of Schools for Pre-School programmes.
- Regulation 3545 - Transportation of Pupils.

(m) Interviews by trustees of candidates for Vice-Principal of a secondary school will take place on Tuesday evening, May 29th, commencing at 7:30 p.m. Because time is such an important factor in making this appointment it is suggested that the interviewing committee be

given authority to "appoint".

RECOMMENDED MOTION: See page 8... ..

C. INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS

1. Question Period.

2. Trustee Reports.

(a) Expense claim forms are included in the kits for trustees. Besides mileage and other direct expenses which trustees are entitled to claim, they are reminded to claim expenses connected with the B.C.S.T.A. Convention on May 6, 7, 8 and 9th such as parking fees, luncheons, etc. Schedule "K".

RECOMMENDED MOTION: that the expenses of the following named trustees be approved pursuant to Section 53 (1) (b) of the Public Schools Act.

(b) Metropolitan Branch Meeting on May 17th. Trustees may wish to comment.

(c) Graduation functions. Some schools have made direct approaches to the chairman or other trustees to attend various graduation functions, in spite of a request that these invitations be channelled through the Secretary-Treasurer's office. The Chairman would like to review these invitations to see whether all schools have been or will be covered. A draft of a memo showing which functions we are aware of is enclosed. Schedule "K".

(d) Individual trustee reports as called.

3. Administration Committee and other staff reports.

(a) Comparative costs - Gas and oil

At the request of the Board, the Superintendent of Works has prepared comparative costs for heating buildings with gas and oil. As previously stated by the Superintendent of Works it would appear that gas is slightly lower in cost in our smaller Elementary schools, one of the main reasons for this being that light furnace oil is being used in a large number of our Elementary Schools, and this is more expensive than heavier oils. In Secondary Schools, where there is a greater consumption of gas, we receive a more favorable rate, and therefore gas is cheaper. The tabulations below show comparative cost breakdown between three types of oil and gas:-

Bunker C fuel oil	8.97¢ for 100,000 B.T.U.	
Royal No. 8	14.45¢	-do-
Furnace oil	15.95¢	-do-
Gas in Secondary Schools	7.87¢	-do-
Gas in Elementary Schools	10.25¢	-do-
Gas in small Elementary Schools	11.75¢	-do-

It is the opinion of our Superintendent of Works and our Consulting Engineers, that gas is undoubtedly the most efficient and foolproof way to heat our buildings. The following facts were considered in making this assessment:-

- a) There are minimal pollution problems with gas.
- b) Problems are encountered with oil quality and also with erratic deliveries during inclement weather.
- c) Less janitorial time is required to service a gas burner than an oil burner.
- d) Sludging of tanks, fuel lines and oil preheating equipment have been a problem.
- e) General maintenance costs are considerably less with gas than with oil.
- f) Normal life of an oil tank is 10.12 years.

(b) Capital costs, Kindergartens.

Just to keep the record straight, especially for the editorial writer of a certain weekly newspaper, enclosed as Schedule "M" is a Zerox copy of the brochure, approved by the Board, and widely circulated in the School District prior to the kindergarten plebiscite in December, 1972. Please note the paragraph containing the statement, "Renovations and Improvements to kindergarten rooms over the next three years are expected to cost the taxpayers \$170,000". !!!

(c) School Boundary Change.

Schedule "N" is a copy of a letter sent to parents of pupils attending Eastview School. It concerns a necessary boundary change resulting in a number of pupils being transferred from Eastview to Ross Road Elementary. The letter has been well received - parents are cooperating.

(d) Dental HealthCare Survey

North Vancouver School District has been one of the School Districts selected for a provincial study of dental health care. Enclosed as Schedule "O" is a copy of a circular explaining the survey.

(e) Grant Re: Drug Education.

The Deputy Provincial Secretary has advised the Board that a grant of \$14,000 has been approved to assist this School District in providing certain Drug Education resources.

(f) French Language Support Grant.

The Department of Education has approved a grant of \$1,600 to Balmoral Jr. Secondary School to assist in a student exchange project with Quebec. This is a first payment. Other requests from this School District are being processed by the Department.

D. FUTURE BUSINESS.1. Items for discussion.

- a) Evaluation of E.D.P. in North Vancouver Schools)
- b) Mini-School at Sutherland) June 11th, 1973
- c) Modified school hours at Blueridge and Brooksbank)
- d) Alternative administrative plan at Blueridge)
- e) Changing role of the elementary teacher)
- f) Family Life Education (translation "SEX EDUCATION")) June 25th, 1973
- g) Library Report)
- h) C.U.P.E. Report) July 9th, 1973

2. Meetings.

- a) Tuesday, May 29th. Interviews for V.P. of a secondary school,
7:30 p.m. Board Room.
- b) Thursday, June 7th. Teachers' Agreements Committee has invited the whole Board to a dinner meeting. A copy of a letter of invitation may be received in time to include with this kit (Schedule "O.O.") It is not the intention of the committee to turn this into a bargaining session, but to decide upon procedures, lines of communication, publicity and other more general matters.
- c) Monday June 11th, Regular Board meeting.
- d) Wednesday, June 13th, West Van/North Van. joint meeting.
On the Agenda - i) Athletics Coordinator, report from committee.
ii) Prince Charles School addition.
iii) G.V.R.D. Livability - film & exposition.
-----at Park Royal Hotel - 6:30 p.m.
- e) Wednesday, June 20th, Dinner for retiring teachers at Frank Bakers, Fireside Room No. 2 at 6:00 p.m.
- f) Monday, June 25th. Policy Meeting.

From Page 6.....

Re: Interviews by trustees of candidates for Vice-Principal of a secondary school - RECOMMENDED MOTION:

E. ADJOURNMENT.

that the committee which interviews candidates for the position of Vice-Principal of a Secondary School on Tuesday May 29th be given authority to make the appointment.

GENERAL STATEMENT OF AIMSBOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEESSCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 44 (NORTH VANCOUVER)

The central aim of the school system is that of assisting students in the acquisition of skills, attitudes and information relevant to the making of responsible decisions, both as individuals and as members of democratic groups.

Such decision-making ability requires that a substantial amount of time be devoted to the development of:

- (a) Those skills of communication which enable a person to read, write, speak, listen and calculate with clarity and accuracy, as well as those skills which enable persons to co-operate in group decision-making.
- (b) Those attitudes best expressed as self-reliance, self-confidence and creativity in areas of individual endeavour, and co-operation, tolerance and enthusiasm in areas of group endeavour.
- (c) That information which is crucial in understanding the society in which we live, including that which relates to what may be deemed controversial issues in the society.

Members of the Board are aware that success in achieving the aforementioned aim is somewhat more difficult to measure than is success in certain academic skills, but also feel that such a difficulty is not insurmountable or a reason for neglect. They are further aware that while it is often difficult to separate education aimed at responsible decision-making from vocational training, when the two appear to come into conflict the priority should be assigned to the former.

It is the opinion of the Board that while the school situations in the district are currently moving toward the development of individual decision-making in a desirable way, very little is being done in terms of permitting students to gain experience and skill in group decision-making and will do all they can to improve the latter.

The Board is very strongly in favour of a reconsideration of the role of primary education in the district with the view of bringing it more into line with the aims established for the development of kindergartens in 1973, since these aims indicate a shift from rote learning and drill toward the development expressed above.

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