

THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF AN
EFFECTIVE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL
AN INTERNSHIP REPORT

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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AN EFFECTIVE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL
AN INTERNSHIP REPORT**

By

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ABSTRACT

Today in education, we find ourselves amid much change and diversity. It is a time of not only unrest in the education system but a time when positive changes can take place. Ongoing educational reform initiatives place more responsibility for decision making on individual schools. Thus, expectations for schools have changed and so has the role of the principal. This internship report focuses on effective leadership, especially educational leadership, as it reflects the roles and responsibilities of a school administrator in our changing and demanding system of education.

The role of the principal is indeed multidimensional. There appears to be a consensus that the roles and responsibilities of a school principal are as multifaceted and complex as the school organization is itself. The responsibilities seem ever evolving and never absolute.

An abundance of current literature from the last two decades exists to describe the various tasks and daily functions of the principal. This report focuses on what Sybouts and Wendel (1994) contend to be the critical functions and tasks of school administrators: (i) instruction and curriculum development; (ii) pupil personnel services; (iii) staff personnel services; (iv) community-school leadership; and (v) organization, structure, coordination and management of school finances.

Critical reflections in the form of a descriptive narrative of daily experiences observed by the intern are included. These reflections serve to indicate that many

functions characteristic of an effective leader were evident in this particular internship setting. It is through these reflections that the intern has developed a deeper and more thorough understanding and appreciation for the many roles a principal must assume in order to meet the needs of the many stakeholders in our education system.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iv
CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF THE INTERNSHIP	1
Rationale for Internship Option	1
Internship Setting	1
Goals and Objectives of Internship	2
Strategies for Realization of Goals	3
Organization of Report	4
CHAPTER 2: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF AN EFFECTIVE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL	6
Introduction	6
Defining Leadership	6
The Role and Responsibility of the Principal	8
Instruction and Curriculum Development	8
Pupil Personnel Services	10
Staff Personnel Services	12
Community-School Leadership	17
Organization, Structure, Coordination and Management of School Finances ..	21
Conclusion	26
CHAPTER 3: PERSONAL REFLECTIONS	28
Introduction	28
<u>Observations and Internship Experience:</u>	
Curriculum and Instruction	29
Pupil Personnel Services	31
Staff Personnel Services	35
Community-School Leadership	39
Organization, Structure, Coordination and Management of School Finances	42
Conclusion	46
APPENDICES	48
REFERENCES	59

CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW OF THE INTERNSHIP

Rationale for Internship Option

The Masters of Education (Educational Leadership) studies require students to complete a course of study that includes theoretical grounding in current paradigms, pedagogies and research in Educational Leadership, combined with practical experience. Students completing this program have the option of completing a minimum of 18 credit hours plus a thesis, or 24 credit hours plus an internship report, a project or paper folio. My choice of the internship option reflects my belief that to effectively prepare a graduate student for the leadership role, an effective, practical experience is essential. The internship route provides for this full-time practical experience and helps to develop personal and professional competencies, highlights the many and varied leadership theories studied throughout the course work, and develops the creative and reflective perspective of the intern.

Internship Setting

The site selected for my internship report is X Elementary School located in a suburban area of Newfoundland. This school has a well-developed administrative team in which the roles of principal and vice-principal are well established. This team has worked together in this setting for nine years. This has provided, and continues to provide, the opportunity for both members of the team to reach their full potential in a collaborative setting.

This school is a Grade 1 through Grade 8 configuration with two and three stream grade levels. It has a student population of 783 students and 38 professional teaching staff. The programs offered at the school are also supported with six student assistants.

This particular school was chosen for the internship setting for a number of reasons. First, the principal was suggested as a suitable supervisor because he possesses extensive leadership experience. Second, when approached to act as supervisor, he appeared quite interested in working with me in a mentoring capacity. Third, because of this principal's own career aspirations and extensive study in the area of Educational Administration, I felt that I could gain much practical experience and creativity from this enthusiastic individual. Finally, given the size and fast-paced environment of this school, I was provided the opportunity to study and to document the many facets of Educational Leadership. The primary, elementary, and junior high setting of this school coincides with my desire to be involved in primary education, my training in elementary methods, and my teaching experience in the junior high area. Such a setting has provided further opportunity to observe a broader administrative approach.

Goals and Objectives of Internship

The primary goal of this internship was to allow me to become part of the administrative team of my cooperating school in the role of observer and participant. My main focus was to observe the role of the principal in an attempt to construct a leadership role from the social context.

The initial goals and objectives for this experience included the following:

1. To gain insight into the various roles of the educational leader in a school setting.
2. To develop a mentoring relationship with the principal and positive relations with staff and students through which meaningful skill development and learning could occur.
3. To document the roles and responsibilities of the school principal and to compare these roles and responsibilities with current research literature trends.
4. To reflect on, and refine, my orientation to education and educational leadership.
5. To gain insight into, and engage in, activities for self development, related to leadership in an educational organization.

Strategies for Realization of Goals

As anticipated, this experience gave me the opportunity to be involved in many relevant leadership activities. Throughout the internship, I employed several strategies to help me achieve a thorough understanding of the many complexities involved in school administration. Several strategies used were as follows:

1. I availed of daily journal writing as a means of documenting my observations and reflecting on daily experiences. These journal entries served as a basis for discussion with the principal, as well as being used to reflect on my own philosophies.
2. I observed the daily interactions of the administrator with teachers, students, parents, board personnel, support staff and the community. I examined these

interactions in relation to the various theories of administration that I have studied.

3. I attended staff meetings, meetings with teachers, and/or student/parent meetings, school board meetings, school council meetings and meetings with members of the community, where confidentiality allowed, to view the principal's role through a broader context.
4. I participated in issues concerning the restructuring of the school district. These issues included staffing, reconfiguration of schools and/or classes, and the necessary changes needed for scheduling.
5. Through shadowing and observing this principal, I gained specific knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of this position. I became involved in and participated in various duties of the principal on a daily basis. Many of these functions were routine, while others were responses to situations that arose spontaneously. Some of these duties included:
 - planning of a teachers' two-day professional development inservice;
 - organizing school assemblies as part of school improvement initiatives;
 - assisting with fundraising initiatives;
 - planning a public speaking competition; and
 - assisting in the administration of the school's discipline policy.

Organization of the Report

This report is organized into three chapters. Chapter 1 provides the reader with the goals and objectives of the internship, as well as an overview of the report.

Chapter 2 is the research component, which examines current literature of the roles and

responsibilities of an effective leader. Chapter 3 is a reflection on the internship experience and the practices that illustrate effective leadership.

Chapters 1 and 3 have been written in the first person because of the experiential and reflective nature of the contents. Chapter 2 is presented in a formal manner in the sense that it is written in the third person.

CHAPTER 2

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF AN EFFECTIVE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

Introduction

With the current demands placed on our education system by society, there are evolving changes occurring in education. The current shift in paradigms has resulted in much decentralization of power, and more school administrators becoming responsible for decision-making processes and functions that were previously the focus of central board offices or regulating agencies such as the Department of Education.

As a result of such trends, the role of the school principal has broadened and is becoming increasingly more complex and difficult. Seasoned and experienced principals must look to, and adopt, new approaches to leadership if they are to “lead” and not simply manage an effective school organization. Garubo and Rothstein (1998) contend that the principal should be a decision maker, problem solver, a support system for staff and students and foremost, a communicator of the school’s goals and vision.

Defining Leadership

Educational leaders deal with people, not things, and people are complicated, unpredictable, multidimensional and contradictory. Thus, it is neither practical nor logical to assume there is one “correct” definition of leadership with one “correct” set of ways of doing things. Leadership, particularly educational leadership, is enigmatic and difficult to both conceptualize and define. Before examining the roles and responsibilities of an administrator, gaining understanding of the essence of leadership is imperative. A further breakdown of the definition of leadership has resulted from

works of such theorists as Burns and Bass (as cited in Owens, 1998), who emphasize understanding leadership styles in a two-dimensional approach. Leadership behaviour is defined in two dimensions: (i) initiating structure, which highlights "getting the job done"; and (ii) consideration or concern for others that focuses on the leader developing friendship, mutual trust, respect and warmth in relationships between leaders and followers.

Educational leadership includes many areas such as: instructional leadership, decision making, empowerment, staff and student priorities and communication, to list a few; however, the area being focused on is leadership in terms of instructional leadership. Many other theorists have offered definitions to capture an understanding of this aspect of leadership. DeBevoise (1994), for example, defines instructional leadership as "those actions that a principal takes or delegates to others to promote growth in student learning." Greenfield (1987) defines instructional leadership as "actions undertaken with the intention of developing a productive and satisfying working environment for teachers and desirable learning conditions and outcomes for children." Davis and Thomas (1989) say that "the construct of instructional leadership remains ambiguous. There is no one ideal leadership style." Dubrin (1998) argues that leadership deals with "change, inspiration, motivation and influence" (p. 3.). The key function of a leader, he maintains, is to create a vision while the role of manager, conversely, is to implement that vision.

The Role and Responsibility of the Principal

Much literature exists to describe the various tasks and the daily functions of the principal. Sybouts and Wendel (1994) suggest that many of the critical functions and tasks that school administrators deal with may be categorized as follows: (i) instruction and curriculum development; (ii) pupil personnel services; (iii) staff personnel services; (iv) community-school leadership; and (v) organization, structure, coordination and management of school finances. A principal wears many hats. The following sections will serve to explain each of these categories further, giving a broader understanding of the complex role the principal plays in each, as the principal is expected to be an effective leader in all these areas.

Instruction and Curriculum Development

Ubben and Hughes (1987) contend that curriculum can simply be defined as what is taught in the school and instruction is the how, the methods and techniques used to improve student achievement. As school curriculum is a prescribed curriculum mandated by the Department of Education, the main responsibility of the school administrator is to ensure that the curriculum is in place and that programs are facilitated to meet the outcomes of the prescribed program.

Instruction, being the lifeblood of the school, carries many implications and responsibilities for the school administrator. The principal has a large role to play in monitoring and promoting instructional programs.

Much literature reflects the notion that to be an effective principal, a person must possess a vision for the learning organization. This vision must be shared by all

participants if indeed the organization is to be effective. According to Sergiovanni (1987), "vision refers to the capacity to create and communicate a view of a desired state of affairs that induces commitment among those working in the organization" (p. 57). It is with this vision in mind that the principal should assume the role of an instructional leader within the learning organization if he or she is to be effective. Sybouts and Wendel (1994) state, "instructional leaders are knowledgeable about instructional resources, provide resources for their teachers by promoting staff development activities, and obtain resources and support for school goals" (p. 17). The principal will, further to this, assist teachers in solving instructional problems, encourage the use of different, current, effective teaching strategies, as well as assist with evaluation techniques.

Kimbrough and Burkett (1990) suggest that effective principals make student achievement their top priority. To do this, principals must engage in activities that affect this end. Such activities may include scheduling meetings to discuss student achievement, reducing classroom interruptions, and using student assemblies and exhibits to reward and highlight student achievement.

Instruction, while appearing to represent one role or responsibility of an administrator, incorporates many of the daily functions of the principal. Current literature suggests that effective instructional leadership should consume most of the principal's time and should be the focus of a principal's work load (Drake and Roe, 1999).

Pupil Personnel Services

A primary focus or responsibility of the principal as suggested by Ubben and Hughes (1997) is to manifest a strong, direct leadership pattern where orderly atmosphere is maintained, student achievement is emphasized and the evaluation of student progress toward stated goals is constantly being monitored. Kimbrough and Burkett (1990) as well state that "the principal should invest leadership in the development of a climate conducive to high educational achievement" (p. 274). The principal does have other responsibilities that foster student development beyond meeting program needs. These responsibilities are typically categorized as student services and include a wide range of duties and tasks.

Of utmost importance is the responsibility of the principal to develop and maintain an orderly, caring, trusting and safe school climate with a sense of community for all students. If such an environment is created, students will accept school as a healthy and positive place to be, and be motivated to learn. As Seyfarth (1999) suggests "a positive relationship exists between the sense of caring and trusting community and students' academic and achievement motivation, their feelings of self esteem and their prosocial motivation" (p.126).

The school is an organization made up of many different people with many personal needs and expectations. The students are the very integral part of this organization and, where diversities exist, it is unrealistic to think problems and disruptive behaviour do not occur. Principals are frequently involved in solving disciplinary problems. According to Sharpe and Harte (1996), discipline requires much

time since the disciplinary action must often be reported to parents. Sybouts and Wendel (1994) contend that the principal, in collaboration with the staff, is responsible for the development of an effective and comprehensive discipline code to guide student behaviour. Through this collaboration, a policy is developed that (i) is effective; and (ii) is to be maintained and practiced. Students, parents and teachers are to be made aware of discipline policies and school rules. Kimbrough and Burkett (1990) suggest the importance of developing student perceptions of the administrators and staff as being sincere and caring, and that the best interests of the students are the primary concern. It is through effective student policies and rules, with firm expectations for them, that their perceptions are enhanced.

Principals are responsible for providing many students with services that foster student development. This role is so inclusive and demanding that current literature suggests this level of responsibility should be an entity within itself. It is suggested that committees be formed to alleviate the demands placed on an administrator to effectively provide adequate service.

Sybouts and Wendel (1994) suggest the following as student services that the principal is responsible for:

1. Student admissions
2. Placement of students with special program needs
3. Maintaining student records
4. Reporting to agencies outside school (i.e., legal or medical, etc.)
5. Liaison with community organization
6. Legal aspects of student attendance and delinquency
7. Student transfers
8. Health services

While this list is not exhaustive, it provides a focus or direction for the effective delivery of student services. Kimbrough and Burkett (1990) further suggest areas of importance within student services that are considered the responsibilities of the principal. They are:

1. A well organized and administered program of guidance and counselling services
2. A constant evaluation and reporting of student progress
3. Development of a policy on student promotion
4. Organization of students for instruction
5. Administering student activities programs

The tasks and demands placed on an administrator within the realms of student services are again very diverse and varied. To be effective in dealing with students on a daily basis, it is important for the principal to be visible to students and to use exceptional interpersonal skills. It is through visibility and interaction with students that the administrator is conveying, to the student body, a message of caring, support and interest in their activities. As Blumberg and Greenfield (1986) state, "the principal does indeed make a difference in the life of a school" (p. 3).

Staff Personnel Services

"The strength of an institution is in its people"(English, Frase and Archar, 1992, p. 97). The effectiveness of an administrator can often be determined or affected by the people with whom he or she works, the professional teaching staff. The staff have a tremendous impact on the character of the school. A major role or responsibility of an

administrator as ascertained by Senge (1990b) is to design the governing principles of purpose, vision and core values, by which people will live. This vision, as defined by Duke (1990), is “an image of what is desirable that can be expressed in ways that inspire and motivate people to work toward improvement” (p. 26).

An effective school principal needs to have a clear vision for the organization and a desire to share and instill this vision through motivating his/her staff to attain certain goals. The personal values and beliefs held by an administrator are reflected in the effectiveness of the organization. The manner in which an administrator interacts with the staff and all stakeholders will reflect his/her level of inclusion in administrative issues concerning the school.

Lieberman (1995) writes that there is a changing paradigm for restructuring schools and that this new paradigm requires a combined participation of those who study, work in, and support schools. The role of principal, she maintains, has shifted from one who oversees and directs teachers' work to one who acts as a partner with teachers providing support and creating growth opportunities.

Current research maintains that school effectiveness is dependent upon the culture and climate of a particular school. Organizational culture is vague, intangible and often difficult to define. However, a widely accepted definition is attributed to Shafritz and Ott (1996) who define culture as “a pattern of basic assumptions invented, discovered, or developed by a given group, as it learns to cope with integration—that has worked well enough to be considered valid, and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems” (pp. 433-434).

It is with the notions of shared vision and school culture that the principal has the responsibility of empowering the teaching staff. It is through empowerment that a teacher becomes inspired, accepts ownership and develops an enhanced sense of self-esteem. An effective administrator can, and should, acknowledge the ability and effectiveness of the staff by delegating power and responsibility, involving them in a shared decision-making process, and utilizing the staff's individual talents and strengths. By so doing, a teacher becomes more motivated and then more content. As McCall (1994) states, "the more stakeholders realize they can actually influence and control the school, the more they are enabled, and the more effective the school will become. Bolman and Deal (1995) further reiterate the importance and impact of shared decision making as a characteristic of effective leadership when they state "their ability to lead emerges from the strength and sustenance of those around them" (p. 56).

Hughes (1994) states that "trust is a highly regarded value that to be developed requires time and the support of the entire school" (p. 153). Leadership in the role of administrator flourishes when both the principal and the teachers view each other as credible. When principals exercise trust in teachers, a more collaborative approach is developed where teachers feel valued and a positive working atmosphere results. Fullan (1991) posits that the principal as a collaborative leader is the key to the future in education for it is through positive staff development that principals are termed effective.

Another important responsibility of the principal, as well as being an important aspect of staff development, is teacher supervision which is an essential element of successful schools. Glickman, Gordon and Ross-Gordon (1998) describe supervision as

“the process by which some person or group of people is responsible for providing a link between an individual teacher’s needs and organizational goals so that individuals within the school can work in harmony toward the vision of what the school *should* be” (p. 6).

Kimbrough and Burkett (1990) state that “supervision is the means by which leadership is provided for improving the teaching and learning environment of the school” (p. 169). These authors also contend that principals, as supervisors, can create more effective schools by enhancing teacher belief in a cause beyond oneself and the four walls, promoting the teacher’s sense of efficiency, making teachers aware of how they complement each other in striving for common goals, stimulating teachers to plan common purposes and actions and challenging teachers to think abstractly about their work. Shreeve (1993) asserts that principals must be collaborative partners in a supervision philosophy that promotes the belief that teachers must be treated as professionals, setting their own goals, and receiving help in achieving those goals. Glickman et al. (1998) concur that the role of a supervising principal is a crucial role in developing human relations. Garubo and Rothstein (1998) further state that “supervisory conferences should help teachers see and understand their own emotions, ambivalence, biases and needs” (p. 109). It is through such supervisory styles that principals can help teachers develop an understanding of their relationship with students and others with whom they work.

It is through the process of effective supervision that staff professional development programs are initiated and carried out. Sergiovanni (1996) states, “traditionally, teacher development has been synonymous with inservice training. And

inservice training methods have empathized such pedagogical principles as uniformity, consumption, memorization, and replication" (p. 142). While inservice training is beneficial to an extent, it does not represent, all inclusively, the goals of a professional development program. Sergiovanni (1996) contends that it is the responsibility of the principal to work with teachers to develop a common purpose for the improvement of teaching and learning where the teachers' capacities, needs, and interests are central. The involvement and ongoing support of the principal are necessary for such professional development endeavours to be both beneficial and effective.

Frase and Hetzel (1990) offers four areas that they believe can be improved through collaborative approaches to professional development initiatives. These are:

1. The teacher's sense of purpose
2. The teacher's perception of students
3. The teacher's knowledge of subject matter
4. The teacher's mastery of technique (pp. 59-60)

Frase and Hetzel feel it is the responsibility of administrators to plan effective development programs for teachers. They state, "professional development and feedback offer opportunities for teachers, or any staff member, to experience achievement, responsibility, and recognition, three powerful motivational factors for teachers" (p. 58). Joyce and Showers (1995) states that "the field of professional development is evolving gradually from a patchwork of courses and workshops into a system ensuring that educational professionals regularly enhance their academic knowledge, professional performance, and image as professionals" (pp.8-9). It is ultimately the responsibility of the principal to constantly enhance and develop this image

of professionalism to ensure that any staff development activities remain focused on the improvement of student learning.

Today in education, as we experience many changes due to reform initiatives, it is imperative that an effective instructional leader provide individualized support to teachers who are experiencing problems while changing programs or practices. Leithwood, Menzies and Jantzi (1994) believe that the administrator's behaviour should indicate respect for the staff and concern for their personal feelings and needs. Teachers need to be reassured by the principal that all efforts will be made to assist them through any problems experienced during the change. Principals should also encourage teachers to be innovative. Holmes (1993) states that principals should "remind teachers that however the curriculum is described or even controlled from outside the school, it is in the delivery of the curriculum that learning will occur" (p. 57).

Such behaviours are necessary if a caring relationship is to exist between principals and staffs. Frase and Hetzel (1990) cite five steps that administrators could use in establishing caring relationships with employees: (i) attending; (ii) listening; (iii) responding; (iv) personalizing; and (v) initiating (p. 1).

Community-School Leadership

Many public institutions are undergoing a transformational period as a result of demands placed on them by the groups they service. Such a transformation is indeed necessary if institutions are to operate effectively. It is unrealistic to think that the school as an institution has not been impacted by such societal demands. "Beliefs about the right and proper role of community leaders and parents in schools currently are under

the greatest pressure for change and are among the greatest sources of contention in schools." (Hart and Brederon, 1996, p.76).

Parents and community organizations, as many writers contend, have a crucial role to play in education. Seyfarth (1999) argues that parental involvement is a critical factor in helping to increase school effectiveness. Such involvement has a tremendous impact on student achievement; it builds an amiable relationship where parents and community members feel involved and welcomed, and sparks renewed interest in the benefits of education. Henderson (1981) states:

When parents show a strong interest in their children's schooling, they promote the development of attitudes that are key to achievement, attitudes that are more a product of how the family interacts than of its social class or income. If schools treat parents as powerless or unimportant, or if they discourage parents from taking an interest, they promote the development of attitudes in parents, and consequently their children, that inhibit achievement (p. 3).

The relationship that exists between a school and a community has far reaching implications. Sybouts and Wendel (1994) posit that school-community relationship should be a co-operative and working relationship among all parties. These authors state that "good school-community relations should foster the contribution the community can make to the school and correspondingly enhance the contribution the school can make to the community" (p. 292).

For positive community relationships to develop, it is the responsibility of the principal to become involved in public relations efforts where communications with parents and the community are received as being open, honest, and genuine. It is through open and direct channels of communication, Seyfarth (1999) suggests that

administrators can effectively work with community and parents so that their reactions to change or school initiatives in particular are supportive. If an administrator expects more direct involvement by parents as volunteers or as members of decision-making committees, Ubben and Hughes (1987) state that "information needs to be communicated to parents that include the goals and strategies of the school, discipline, attendance, plans and policies, explanations of testing programs, grades, standards for excellence, and expectations of the parents" (p. 29). It is through these communication lines that parents will develop an interest and offer their services to the school. As Jones (1991) states, "parents do not want a professional-client relationship: they want to be equal partners in the education of their children" (p.12).

When parents do express interest in taking a more active role in school, it is ultimately the responsibility of the principal to make parents feel that they are viewed as worthy individuals and that the work they are doing is important and beneficial. Because of the wealth of talents and experiences that parents are often willing to share with the school, Sybouts and Wendel (1994) suggest that principals should develop lists of parents and what their interests or abilities are. Research shows that if parent resources are not being appropriately utilized, parents become uninterested and no longer involved. It becomes unimportant to them. Warner (1997) contends that schools must provide an opportunity for meaningful and purposeful parental involvement if parents are to remain active participants.

Many extracurricular events would not take place in schools without the support of parents. It is the responsibility of the principal to enlist this support. Such activities

build school spirit which is an important aspect of the everyday running of the school. It builds a sense of ownership and commitment to goals and assists in developing a positive environment for teachers and students, as well as the parents involved.

As a result of educational reform movements, parents have been given certain roles to play on committees responsible for decision-making and policy development within schools. These committees are the governing bodies of schools and are responsible for approving and/or disapproving many functional aspects of the school as a learning organization. Locally, as well as in other areas of North America, legislation has been enacted by governments to empower parental involvement in education. In fact, the Royal Commission on Education (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1992) recommended that parents be given a more meaningful role in the operation of schools and that school councils be established in all schools to provide an avenue for parental participation. This recommendation became law when, in 1997, the revised Schools Act of Newfoundland and Labrador mandated the establishment of school councils in all schools in the province. Parents, as well as community representatives, are elected to local school councils with a mandate to participate in and oversee the operations of the school. It is the responsibility of the principal not only to be a member of such committees but as Sybouts and Wendel (1994) state:

That when parents are to be participants in the planning and development of school improvement efforts, they should be formally structured into the planning process. Care should be taken to provide a clear definition of what is expected of parental involvement and specified limits should be placed on what parents are expected to do and what they are not to do. When parents do that which has been asked of them, the principal must listen (p. 297).

If community-school relations are to be effective, a two-way communication process is necessary. Seyfarth (1999) states that "partnerships are built through communication and schools hope to develop stronger relationships with parents must communicate effectively with them" (p. 32). As it is the responsibility of the principal to elicit support and involvement, it is also the responsibility of the principal to provide to parents and the community an opportunity to offer input concerning school initiatives. Holmes (1993) contends that if administrators are interested in positive accountability and wish to project the school successes, they should ensure that the school receives feedback, in the form of a survey or questionnaire at least once a year about how well the community and parents feel the school is performing in achieving its goals. The principal, with this feedback, should establish a committee of teachers, parents and community representatives to determine any school improvement initiatives that are deemed necessary.

Organization, Structure, Coordination and Management of School Finances

The primary role of the principal evident in effective leadership literature is that of instructional leader; however, the principal also plays the dual role of "operations manager." While maintaining a different focus from that of instructional leadership, the role of operations manager does affect the learning and instruction within the school. Castaldi (cited in Kimbrough and Burkett, 1990) states, "the provision of attractive, comfortable, and functional school plant facilities facilitates the learning process" (p. 293).

There are a multitude of responsibilities in the day-to-day running of a school. Blumberg and Greenfield (1986) suggest that the twin demands of instructional leadership and managerial control are in some ways mutually dysfunctional. The principal is faced with the dilemma of striking a balance between the two to facilitate an ordered school environment. Drake and Roe (1999) posit that a busy principal covers much ground. The principal must, according to Drake and Rose (1999) "give careful attention to details, adhere to fiscal and personal integrity, and make genuine efforts towards more efficient business practices that can enhance more effective learning if the school is to continue to improve" (pp. 443-444). Because of the numerous demands placed on a principal while undertaking this task, it is imperative that principals engage in time management where they can prioritize these demands. Results of a study conducted by Sharpe and Harte (1996) indicate that although principals felt instructional leadership activities should be their number one priority and consumer of the most time, daily administrative tasks were identified as consuming the most time.

The planning, organizing, scheduling and coordinating of school activities often become the responsibilities of the principal. This planning and coordinating of activities should provide the best possible learning experiences for youth and should be part of the total school program. Sybouts and Wendel (1994) state, "school activities play an important part in the school program and many resources are needed for their operation; therefore, school activity programs merit the same quality planning devoted to other segments of the program" (p. 247). While the principal may delegate the direct supervision of individual activities to teachers or parents within the school, the principal

is still accountable for coordinating activities occurring within the school. The principal should also ensure that activities are scheduled to provide the needed time for practice and participation without any conflicts or interference with scheduled class times.

Dryfoos (1994) adds that a principal has power in determining policies that relate to the use of the school building:

In general, the school administrator acts as interpreter between the school staff and the outside staff, controls the traffic flow, facilitates the use of the services, and is in charge of whatever happens under the school roof. The principal has to set out policies for the release of students from the classroom and work with the clinic staff to schedule appointments at appropriate times (p. 152).

The daily needs of the instructional staff fall within the responsibilities of the principal as well, and he or she should ensure that appropriate amounts of day-to-day common educational supplies are available. This means that the principal should have a good sense of stock control and have sufficient supplies on hand.

The school plant facilities and grounds must be properly maintained and physically attractive. Care of the school presents management priorities for the principal. As Ubben and Hughes (1987) state, "the principal has two important support groups: classified employees who are assigned to the building (custodians, cleaning personnel, secretaries, etc.) and the district-wide maintenance department personnel" (p. 336). Working with non-academic personnel to help them do their job better will require the principal to use the same kind of human relations skills as working with the academic personnel. Because this personnel service plays an important part in the

development of the learning environment, the principal needs to recognize the contributions that these people make to the teaching staff and to the school community.

Included in the daily routine of a principal is responding to requests from central office (which may be many and often), returning phone calls, arranging and attending meetings, writing reports, answering requests, ensuring safety, as well as reacting to situations that arise. Many of these situations may not be crucial but do require immediate attention such as a sick child, disruption on a bus, or equipment failure. A principal has little time to be pro-active and to plan for such occurrences. Frase and Hetzel (1990) posit that many of these daily routines can be termed as time wasters that essentially are ineffective use of valuable time. These authors suggest that the principal, where possible, become less involved. If indeed he or she has established trust and feels they have a competent staff, the staff can carry out many of the less demanding tasks.

Levin (1989) states that "the most common policy for improving the performance of schools is to seek more resources, particularly in the form of higher expenditures. Higher expenditures can be used to purchase more school inputs that can be used to improve school outputs" (p. 16). As a result of decentralization of financial responsibilities over the past decade, schools are expected to maintain and operate within the boundaries of their own developed school budgets. School finances have become the responsibility of the principal. Ubben and Hughes (1997) state that "the principal establishes the regular procedures governing the financial operation of the school" (p 321).

Lawton (1987) suggests that, due to the limited amount of funding allocated to schools, there is a trend toward more flexible administration and broader participation in the school-based budgeting process. As with other places in Northern America, the education system in Newfoundland and Labrador has witnessed a decline in the amount of funds allocated for Education programs and their delivery (Appendix A). As a result, administrators are expected to maintain the budget for programs and facilities with less money input. Administrators involved in the school budget planning are faced with making the ultimate decision for the dispersion of such funds. The operational needs of any school are plentiful and decisions on where the monies should be directed are sometimes easily made, given the required needs that must be met. Examples of these needs may include: photocopying, paper, general school supplies, office supplies, school-based professional development activities, classroom teacher budgets and the list goes on.

To survive, schools are forced to seek outside sources of revenue, often just to meet the basic educational needs. Fundraising efforts have become an integral part of the school revenue. Students and parents find themselves participating more frequently in fundraising efforts to support their education. As Seyfarth (1999) states, "allocated funds seldom cover all of a school's operational costs and principals must sometimes seek money from other sources to sustain programs that might otherwise be forced to terminate. In most cases, schools fund drives and programs for parents help to raise money" (p. 323). Other sources of revenue for the school may be income from property rental, if the school finds itself having to offer a user-fee system for the use of the

facility on an after-hours basis. If a school is situated in a thriving economic area, revenue may be obtained from businesses or corporations in the form of donations. With limited monies, schools are forced to limit programs or seek alternate forms of revenue. These funding limitations force principals to take on the responsibility or role of a business manager.

Conclusion

Over the course of this century, we have witnessed a transformational shift in leadership styles. There has been a progressive move from the top-down bureaucratic leadership style to that of a more humanistic approach to leadership (Owens, 1998). This humanistic approach to leadership is a collaborative and facilitative approach involving many of the participants and stakeholders who collectively, with a vision in mind, forge onward within a learning organization. Senge (1990b) likens the notion of an effective learning organization to a great sports team comprised of individuals who are all great players who collectively combine their talents to develop a great team.

Effective leadership research emphasizes the principal's role as that of instructional leader. However, with the ambiguities and uncertainties inherent in school organizations, much of the principal's time is consumed performing tasks and accepting responsibilities for issues and concerns that remove him/her from the role of instructional leader.

To deal with the responsibilities and the many major tasks that principals must be able to perform requires a strong individual of varying abilities. Kimbrough and Burkett (1990) suggest the following as abilities a principal must possess: (i) problem analysis;

(ii) judgement; (iii) organizational ability; (iv) decisiveness; (v) leadership; (vi) sensitivity; (vii) range of interest; (viii) personal motivation; (ix) stress tolerance; (x) educational values; and (xi) oral and written communication skills.

The functions and responsibilities of a school principal are indeed varied and at times demanding, for as Kimbrough and Burkett (1990) state, "To put it succinctly, the principal is accountable for the entire operation of a school" (p. 4). Effective leadership characteristics are those that espouse shared vision, team learning, motivation, delegation, commitment values and communications. McCall (1994) agrees, "Principals give their schools purpose and direction by developing a shared strategic vision, shaping school culture and values, and formulating school improvement efforts. Principals do not perform these tasks in isolation but rather serve as facilitators, eliciting the involvement of the stakeholders and ensuring that such efforts are carried out" (p. 34).

CHAPTER 3

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Introduction

The goal of this internship placement was to gain experience as an administrator through job shadowing and interaction with school personnel, parents and community organizations. The research component focused my observations on the ways in which the practices of this school principal reflect the current research literature on effective leadership. Under the mentorship and direct supervision of this principal, I feel that the internship placement provided me with the opportunity to develop, understand and learn the many skills necessary to be an effective leader.

Many writers recognize the importance of local knowledge as this form of knowledge and theorizing helps people enhance their well being in the concrete context in which they work and live (Andrews, J., et al, 1999). Following the qualitative method of research, I kept a daily journal in which I consciously recorded the many experiences and activities of the principal, as well as any personal involvement. In this section of the paper, I made use of this journal in the sense that I use quotes and reflections to help develop a more concise understanding of the daily roles and responsibilities of the principal as he endeavoured to meet the needs and demands placed upon him.

This section of the report serves to illustrate several of the many roles and responsibilities in the daily routine of the principal in X Elementary School. It includes specific events that occurred in dealing with students, teachers, parents and community

organizations, as well as personal reflections. These experiences collectively represent a school with a vision and an administrator who is characterized as an effective leader.

Observations and Internship Experience

Curriculum and Instruction

McCall (1994) posits that in progressive school systems, local staffs, under the direction of the principals, will engage in reflective and critical analysis to redesign curricula for their unique groups of students. There was much evidence that the principal in this school did play an active role in curriculum issues. Where necessary, following the guidelines of the Pathways policy of the Provincial Government, the principal ensured that accommodations were made to programs so that students could achieve program outcomes. He met with teachers and parents to discuss students' individual support plans and explained to parents the specific accommodations that would be made to their child's program. One student in particular was very slow completing tasks so the principal, following Department of Education guidelines, placed this student on an alternate pathway (P2) whereby extra time would be given to this student to complete certain tasks in order to meet the objectives of the program.

On a regular basis, the principal checked with teachers to ensure that no problems were being encountered with the programs and to offer curriculum support. One teacher expressed disinterest in a particular topic which lead to a discussion whereby the principal offered ideas and suggestions on how to motivate the students, and even volunteered to go into the classroom and assist the teacher with that particular lesson.

The principal said, "I love it when the opportunity arises for me to teach, not only for me but also so the students can see me in a different light."

During curriculum night, the principal addressed parents on the curriculum plan for the school. The prescribed curriculum was explained to parents--the objectives, the learning outcomes, as well as instructional techniques.

This principal was an advocate of experiential learning. If a topic was part of the curriculum and could be further developed or supported through enrichment activities, such as field trip or guest speakers, the principal was very supportive. Suggestions were offered for instructional strategies outside the classroom to reinforce content. "Why not take them to the Arts and Culture Centre to a play?" the principal suggested to one teacher who mentioned that he was doing drama with his class.

As an instructional leader and when time permitted, this principal, because of his initial training as a special education teacher, would provide teachers with suggestions and information for learning strategies that could be used to facilitate learning. McCall (1994) suggests that to be an effective instructional leader, the principal must know curriculum trends and have a good grasp of instructional methodology that would improve student outcomes. This principal was indeed concerned with the outcomes and, together with the staff, would decide on methods for improving learning. This principal was well read and could offer much support in terms of teaching. This principal ensured that current literature and journals were available to teachers. He would place them in the Staff Room and during conversations, he would spark others interest by referring to articles in those journals and magazines. One teacher in particular jokingly said, "Wow,

this is great, we don't need to go to the library to find information; we have our own Mr. X to tell us what we need to know." He was not removed from the art of teaching and expressed much interest and concern in such matters. School improvement goals were initiated to focus on the improvement of language arts skills. The principal very much supported this goal and formed a committee of teachers and together, they determined the needs and specific areas that should be addressed. As the principal said, "The earlier we can address these concerns, the better off we will be in the future." Finances were provided to purchase materials that could be used to support and enhance this goal.

Pupil Personnel Services

Sybouts and Wendel (1994) state that "the well-being of students must be the main priority of school administrators" (p. 233). The responsibilities encompassed within providing student services are indeed demanding but they do offer a sense of self-satisfaction when, as an administrator, there is evidence that the time and energy spent on an effort is beneficial.

Besides providing curriculum and instructional services for students, it is the responsibility of the principal to provide students with an environment that is caring, safe and conducive to learning.

The students in this school come from three communities. They come with different ideas and expectations for school. The principal told me that he once heard a student say they were getting nothing out of school. This was a hard pill for the principal to swallow for much of his time was spent developing activities and programs

that would make the students appreciate the school and want to be active, contributing members. Because of statements like this, and developing attitudes noticed throughout the school, the principal initiated a program to help develop student self-esteem. In coordination with the St. John's Maple Leafs Booster Club, a program called Buddy in the School was adopted in the school under which this group would visit monthly and present awards to students. Awards were given not solely for academics but also for demonstrating a positive attitude and contributing to creating a positive school environment for all students. Celebrations like this did indeed boost self-esteem as recognition was given for positive actions and students began to realize that they were appreciated.

A major responsibility of the principal is dealing with issues of discipline. As in any school, this school experiences the average amount of student problems that need to be addressed. I learned positive techniques and strategies from this principal for dealing with student discipline. For example, a technique that the principal referred to was "wait time." When a student arrived at the office, the principal often did not know the reason but did not immediately act or react. After a period of time, the principal would have the student deliver a message to a teacher, or move books or boxes. He assigned the student a task. When it was completed, the principal would then address the discipline issue. Most often, the issue was more easily resolved and the student agreed to accept responsibility for his/her actions. The period of time that the student was involved in a task provided a cool-down period removed from the situation. When addressed by the principal, the student was less frustrated and could rationalize his

behavior. This strategy did not always work and was looked on by a few staff who observed the student performing the task as rewarding inappropriate behavior. However, the principal believed that by not judging or condemning the students, and by providing an opportunity for the student to be heard, problems of such nature occurred less frequently. Another technique that often made students come to a resolution quickly was what this principal referred to as "waste time." If a student was sent to the office for a minor infraction, such as disrupting class by talking, the principal quickly said to the student, "Fix it now or your time is mine after school." More often than not, when the threat of detention loomed, students quickly conformed.

One of the better techniques I witnessed was when after having a discussion with a student and no resolution to his behaviour seemed imminent, the principal said, "John, you leave me no choice but to call your parents, who do you want to call, your mom or your dad?" "Mom" was the response from the student. The principal picked up the phone, dialed the number and asked for Mr. Smith. The expression on the student's face changed immediately. The principal said to Mr. Smith that John was in the office and that John needed to speak to him to explain why. The principal handed the phone to John to explain to his father, not his mother, what the problem was. In a very short time, John returned to class with no further problems for a few weeks. I asked the principal why he even bothered to ask the student who he should call and his response was, "that most times the student will get him to call the parent who the student can best manipulate, so I always call the other."

Other discipline problems, such as possession of a knife or physically harming another student, were of a more serious nature and often resulted in parental contact and involvement. If students were at risk of harming themselves or jeopardizing the safety of others, they were suspended from school.

This principal's discipline philosophy utilized a proactive approach as opposed to a reactive approach. By being proactive, the principal felt that being visible to students, especially during unstructured times, could defuse many problems. Being visible to students also provided the opportunity for casual interaction. Such interaction is beneficial as it leaves the students with the impression that the principal is caring and approachable.

Within the internship setting, I observed the unique ability of this principal to recognize the individual differences among students. He was quick to recognize the needs of individual students simply by the way they presented themselves. He often, without any fuss or drawing any attention, took these students aside and spoke with them. Several of these instances he shared with me and when I asked how he resolved them, his reply was that at least the students knew of his concern for them. If the student, for example, came from an economically poor family and had no lunch, he would provide the lunch.

Services were also provided to students to assist with their academic needs. The principal arranged tutors to meet with students after school to provide extra assistance. The principal ensured that an effective guidance program was available to students where

they could receive support for any of their concerns. The principal monitored this service and followed up on particular students.

Staff Personnel Services

Leadership, as defined earlier, means working with people and not through them. Sybouts and Wendel (1994) state, "staff members are central to the realm of human resources with which a principal works" (p. 7).

The internship placement provided me an opportunity to learn in an environment that was characteristic of a human resources model of leadership. There was a staff of approximately 50 academic and non-academic personnel with whom the principal interacted on a daily basis. To the observer, this school was very representative of a team approach leadership style.

The principal, being very much aware of the talents and experiences of the staff, frequently sought their opinions and comments when making decisions that would impact on them. For example, in the Staff Room, he would casually ask if any teachers had any suggestions for the upcoming inservice. He did, where and when appropriate, take into consideration the personal characteristics and individual concerns before reaching a logical conclusion on matters that affected the staff.

This approach to leadership was very beneficial, not only to the staff but to the principal as well. As an instructional leader with an established rapport with the staff, facilitating school initiatives was much easier. The principal was very open with the staff about his goals, aims and overall vision for the school. Such openness was recognized by the staff as being positive and, in turn, they directed their focus in a

positive manner. Through the observation of such openness, it was easily viewed that the principal was trusted in terms of supporting his staff but also as very approachable on any matter.

Working closely with this principal, I quickly realized having positive staff relations does indeed make your job easier. The saying, you cannot please all the people all of the time, is very true in the position of principal. At times, teachers were not in agreement with the decisions made by the principal but because of the openness and trust established, they would not feel threatened by voicing their disagreement. On a number of occasions, I witnessed teachers discussing their concerns with the principal who listened attentively and then offered the explanation and rationale for the decision that was made. Often while they did not come to complete resolution on the matter, the teacher did feel comfortable about being given the opportunity to express one's personal feelings and time was taken to give a further explanation. One teacher said to me, "A good thing about Mr. X is that you can fight with him one minute and love him the next. He holds nothing against you."

Although I did not have the opportunity to observe the principal performing a formal structured in-class teacher evaluation, it was evident that teacher supervision was an ongoing process for this principal. Because of his own fine-tuned philosophy on lifelong learning, this principal was very much involved in the supervisory process. By dropping into classrooms informally, talking with students, and keeping regular contact with teachers by simply asking, "How are things going?", the principal was very aware of what was happening in the school.

As the main focus of supervision is the enhancement of learning, principals need to provide opportunity for the improvement of teaching through professional development training. Professional development should be purposeful and meaningful if it is to be effective. The principal in this school provided teachers the opportunity to offer input into the area(s) in which they wanted to participate (Appendix B). Due to the structure of the school--primary, elementary, and junior high, areas of interest were different. Thus, the principal developed two days of inservice offering different sessions from which staff could choose (See Appendix C). The staff benefitted greatly from this choice as they attended sessions that were pertinent to them. Sergiovanni (1996) states, "In professional development models, the teacher's capacities, needs and interests are central. Teachers are actively involved in contributing data and information, solving problems, and analyzing. Principals are involved as colleagues. Together, principals and teachers work to develop a common purpose themed to the improvement of teaching and learning" (p. 146).

Another characteristic of an effective leader is one who delegates responsibilities to others. It is through this delegation that teachers become empowered. They feel worthwhile and feel that their contribution is valuable. This also assists greatly in developing the self-esteem of teachers. This principal, recognizing the tremendous number of tasks and responsibilities to be completed, freely delegated responsibilities. Teachers viewed this action, not as passing the buck but recognition of their ability and of the trust the principal placed in them. One teacher said to me that it is great to be recognized for what you can do.

Each year, a considerable amount of a principal's time is consumed with staffing issues and concerns. The first step in this process is for the principal to prepare a staff projection of expected needs. When allocations are decided, by government and district office, often the principal has to make adjustments to his teaching staff. During my internship, issues of staffing did surface. Changes that resulted from restructuring this school included the loss of one teacher. The teacher to be moved to another school was the result of a district directive; however, the principal was the bearer of the news. The principal met with the teacher and expressed his concern about losing her and offered his assistance in any way to make her transition easier. A very human approach was demonstrated. For the remaining staff, the principal entertained any staffing requests that they had. If a teacher wished to be assigned to a different grade level or out of a specialty area, these requests were considered. The principal met with teachers privately and discussed their requests. Where possible and within reason, most requests were accommodated. The staff was very accepting of the decisions as they were again allowed input and had the opportunity to express their wishes. As issues of staffing are confidential, I did not as an intern participate; however, I did observe how the process unfolded and felt that the manner in which the principal conducted this process was fair and effective.

The congenial and personal relationships that the principal was able to establish with his staff were rewarding both to him and to the staff. If, for example, a teacher was sick for a period of time, the principal would call to ask how they were. This was not viewed as checking up on them but rather as an expression of genuine concern. This

relationship was also reciprocated by the teachers, who expressed concern and interest in him when he was not well or was experiencing a difficulty.

It was through the principal modeling the above-mentioned behaviours that a positive climate and culture were developed in the school. Teachers did not feel too stressed and, for the most part, enjoyed this type of working environment where they could exercise autonomy in their day-to-day operations.

Community-School Leadership

Support from the community and parents has proven to have a significant impact on the operations of the school. Ubben and Hughes (1997) state that “children learn more in schools where there is good involvement on the part of parents in the school programs” (p. 41).

At X Elementary School, parental involvement was quite evident. From the initial invitation/request from the principal to volunteer their services, parents have been playing a very active role in the life of the school. Parents are assisting teachers by preparing photocopying and laminating; parents are volunteering in the resource room by checking out materials; parents collect the recycling items; on pizza day, parents help to collect money and distribute pizza orders; parents accompany classes on field trips; and parents organize the basketball tournament and team practices. The list goes on. Parents are indeed an integral and important part of this school environment.

The valuable service they provide to this school results from the positive relationships between all staff and the parents. The parents feel welcomed and appreciated, and that makes all the difference. This was evidenced one day early in my

placement. As I was speaking to a teacher in the corridor, a parent walked by and the teacher called out to her. The teacher introduced her to me as "Mom, the best parent helper we have." The parent asked who I was and said, "Once I got a taste for school X, I wouldn't want to leave."

Organizing this support involved strategic planning. The principal initially met with the parents, discussed their areas of interest, and openly and honestly set expectations. The goals of the school were communicated to them, their commitment was welcomed, for as the principal said, they were not providing this service to just teachers and staff but they were providing an invaluable service for the betterment of their children. Parents scheduled themselves for certain tasks during certain times of the week. Mr. Y, a parent volunteer, said that he wouldn't miss coming in and that he often changes his work schedule so he can make it in on recycling days. This process was initiated before my internship placement; however, from my observations, the parents did contribute greatly to the positive school environment. Their pleasant attitudes and interest in the work they were doing was rewarding to see. The parents did know that they were appreciated and, therefore, continued with their efforts. Toward the end of the year, the principal and staff hosted a variety show and dessert party to recognize the tremendous support from the parent volunteers with more than 50 parents in attendance.

The principal, from my observations, was well liked and respected by the community at large. One parent said "he never hides anything, we know everything that is going on in this school." This is a result of the effective communication channels between home and the school. Each month, the principal sends home the monthly

newsletter outlining upcoming events, recognizing individual and group efforts within the school, relaying the positives and not-so positives (i.e., school damage over a weekend), and continuously extending invitations for parents to visit the school or call when there were any concerns. The principal was always welcoming to parents and took the time to meet with them if they came to the school. At the end of each day, if possible, he tried to return calls to discuss issues. He had an open-door policy with parents that greatly enhanced his credibility.

The principal also provided the community and parents an opportunity to share in the successes of their children. School assemblies were held monthly to recognize and celebrate efforts and accomplishment of students. Parents and the general public were always invited to share in these celebrations and welcomed the opportunity to participate.

The relations this principal had with the community were also very effective. He served on community organizations and played an active role in community events. He had concern for the community and recognized community and family needs that required attention. He took steps to direct appropriate organizations and resources toward meeting these needs. For example, within this community, teenage pregnancy had become an issue, so in collaboration with community and governmental organizations, plans were made to establish a regional center where new mothers could receive proper parenting education, and the children could be exposed to a stimulating environment (Thomas, 1999). The benefits of programs such as this one will be recognized when these children enter the school program. The principal, in this

situation, was being proactive with these children, so they will be socially, emotionally and academically prepared to enter the education system.

Many community organizations are also involved in the education of children. In X Elementary School, the local police force offered programs on various aspects of the law; the Red Cross Society offered water safety session; and there was an anti-violence program. The principal viewed such programs as not only benefitting the school but also helping to develop citizenship skills and responsibility in youth.

The community, as well, was supportive of the school financially. Any fundraising efforts undertaken by the school were a success. The principal could call upon local businesses for donations to support any initiatives that were happening in the school. The recognition and positive relationships between the community and the school evident at X Elementary School resulted from the visible role that the principal played within the school, and the interests and involvement shown in the community as a whole.

Organization Structure, Coordination and Management of School Finances

My internship coincided with the restructuring of a school district where school reconfiguration and closures were occurring (Avalon East School Board, 1999). X Elementary School was to be reconfigured from a Grade 1 through 8 to a Grade 2 through 8 system, with a three-year reconfiguration plan that would eventually lead to X Elementary School housing Grade 4 through 9. Such a process became very demanding on principals as any changes occurring within their schools ultimately became their responsibility. Numerous district principal meetings were held, where organizational

processes for the changes were outlined to the principal. Principals and school staffs were inundated with tasks that several felt could and should have remained the responsibility of district personnel.

The organization and coordination of changes for X Elementary School became the responsibility of the principal. Initially it was a stressful undertaking but after giving it some thought and having many discussions with others, he logically concluded that these tasks had to be delegated. He met with the staff and discussed his discontent openly and all agreed to take on assigned tasks. For the last month of the school year, this principal's days were occupied with completing these tasks and attending to the daily operations of the school. Recognizing the demands placed on him and the limited time frame for completion of these tasks, he organized himself by preparing a daily to-do list. While this added responsibility was demanding on him, he remained cognizant of the fact that he still had a school to operate and the students and staff remained his number one priority. Because of the manner in which this principal conducted himself, being visible to staff and students, dealing with daily routines, planning for end-of-the-year events, and maintaining community and parent involvement, it was evident only to a few that he had added responsibilities. He was determined that this transition would be as unintrusive and as smooth as possible. A tremendous amount of work was accomplished behind the scenes and after hours, as is often the case with effective leaders.

Operation of the physical plant--the school building itself--was of continuous interest to the principal. He would have daily walk-throughs of the building to ensure that it was clean and esthetically appealing not only for visitors but particularly for the

students. To create a more appealing atmosphere, age-appropriate murals were printed on walls and initiatives were undertaken to instill in students a sense of pride in their building. Facilities management is a concern or responsibility of the principal, so he must work closely with the maintenance staff to ensure that standards are maintained. The working relationship between the principal and the maintenance/cleaning staff was one of appreciation and respect. When I initially met the maintenance man, he said, "Mr. X is a great guy to work with." I particularly took note that he said, work with and not work for. The sense of pride that the principal felt for the school was also evident in the support staff. This I feel was due partly to the fact that their efforts did not go unnoticed. The principal was constantly showing appreciation to them for any work completed. Recognition was given during announcements to the students. For example, "If you see Mr. A today, be sure to thank him for the great job he did in setting up the new computer tables." Instances such as these do indeed enhance working relationships, as it develops a sense of worth and enhances self esteem.

The secretarial and office staff work closely with the principal. This principal treated these individuals as he did the teaching staff. He asked for their opinions, expressed concern for them, and included them in all staff activities. They were, and did feel, very much a part of the school environment as recognition and appreciation was shown to them.

In dealings with the district personnel, the principal conducted himself in a very professional manner. While not always in agreement with requests or decisions made at the district level, he complied where it was in the best interest of the school. If he felt

the school's objectives or its character was not being upheld by the district office, he was assertive and openly expressed his concerns. Through my observations, I feel that he had established a good working rapport with the central office staff and accommodated their requests. Likewise, I think the relationship was reciprocal with central office staff who recognized the effectiveness of his leadership.

The financial planning or school budget falls within the responsibility of the principal. This principal, in collaboration with the vice-principal, developed the annual school budget. While not totally involved with the day-to-day accounting task, as this is delegated to the vice-principal, he is an active participant. Any requests for purchases or supplies from staff were either approved or not approved by him. Any fundraising events to support activities or to assist program needs were often organized and scheduled by the principal. With regards to supporting teachers in delivering programs, funding, if available, was provided as the principal viewed this as priority spending. The principal is, however, accountable to the district office for the yearly expenditures. It is the principal's responsibility to prepare a budget analysis at year end and forward it to the district office.

Use of the building by outside groups after hours is also the responsibility of the principal. The principal is responsible for scheduling such events and ensuring the safety of the building. This principal felt that providing the facilities for use to community groups (for a nominal fee) enhanced community relations and developed contacts for the school.

Through my observations, this principal was apparently very organized and had his finger on the pulse of what was happening in the school. The daily routine tasks (Appendix D) of organizing events such as meetings and assemblies, maintaining student records, ordering supplies, and dealing with requests from parents, staff and students, were conducted both effectively and efficiently.

Conclusion

It is through participating in the administration of a school, the involvement of the day-to-day routines, the interacting with students, parents, and staff, the organizing, planning, scheduling, completing of district office requests, attending meetings, and even picking up an overturned trash can, that one can appreciate and develop a better understanding of the role of a school principal. One can infer that the responsibilities of the principal are complex, varied, diverse, challenging and exciting.

Clearly, it was evident from my role as observer and participant that the primary task of the principal is to improve the quality of instruction and that all other responsibilities are dependent and should reflect attainment of this goal. The role of principal is neither fixed nor absolute as there are always new areas to address and new problems to solve. The role is complex as it encompasses many duties, of which many are ambivalent and unpredictable. Effective leadership must evolve and change as situations arise.

This internship placement provided me, an aspiring administrator, the opportunity to observe and participate in the life of a school principal. It was under the direction and supervision of this principal that I was able to gain tremendous insight into the many

roles of an educational leader. I was provided with the opportunity to accept certain responsibilities and to be an active member of the school administration team.

While effective leadership research offers much insight into common and universal functions of a school principal, I conclude, after having this practical experience, that the individual principal with a sense of commitment, a focus, and a vision in mind for his or her school, constructs what he or she feels are the main responsibilities and roles. The ability to maintain and accomplish these self-determined responsibilities will characterize the success and the effectiveness of the principal as an educational leader. "As goes the principal--so goes the school" (Owens, 1998).

APPENDIX A

Table 7.1.1: Provincial Budget Allocation by Sector, Newfoundland

Year	Total Budget	% of Total Budget Allocated to Each Sector			
		Social	Resources	General Govt.	Education
90/91	\$3,314,443,066	42.6	7.5	25.9	24.0
91/92	\$3,384,429,967	42.7	7.3	26.2	23.8
92/93	\$3,454,665,445	42.8	7.9	25.2	24.1
93/94	\$3,363,696,609	44.4	5.8	24.5	25.3
94/95	\$3,514,968,475	45.1	6.7	25.5	22.7
95/96	\$3,543,215,900	46.2	5.6	25.8	22.3

Source: Newfoundland and Labrador Public Accounts & Estimates and Department of Education. 1995/96 based on estimates.

It is clear from Table 7.1.1 that the Province has been spending a significant part of its annual budget on education. Since 1990/91 the education sector has received about one quarter of total government expenditures. Over the past six years the portion of the education budget allocated to primary/elementary/secondary education increased and peaked in 1993/94 at 73.8% of the total education budget. Expenditures declined since 1993/94 to 71.7% in the last fiscal year.

APPENDIX B

Staff Inservice

There are still two days remaining for school Professional Development this year. In order to prepare / plan sessions that are pertinent to all grade levels we would like some input. If you have any suggestions or areas /topics that you would like addressed at your particular grade level (Primary/ Elementary/ Jr. High) please complete the form and return it to the office by **Tuesday, April 27.**

Also, if you have any suggestions for speakers to facilitate these days.\

Thanks

Grade Level: _____

Suggested Topics: 1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

APPENDIX C

AGENDA
X Elementary School Improvement Workshop
FRIDAY, MAY 14 and MONDAY, MAY 17

This workshop will consist of five modules:

MODULE 1

Anti - Violence and Bullying Prevention Awareness

Program - 2 ½ hours

Facilitator: School Improvement - Self Esteem Committee and Guest facilitator.

MODULE 2

Integration of Pathways into the regular classroom.

Implementation strategies for Pathway 2 into regular classroom.

Facilitators: Special Education Staff

MODULE 3

Implementing Computer technology projects into the Regular Curriculum
(with a focus on student Web pages and internet research).

Facilitator: Learning Resources Teacher

MODULE 4

Introduction to Junior High Handbook and its impact on Program and Scheduling
for September 1999.

Facilitator: Principal

MODULE 5

Introduction to Cooperative Learning strategies for Primary and Elementary students.

Facilitators: Grade 8 Language Arts Teacher, School Improvement Committee and Guest Speaker.

SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, MAY 14TH

9:00 a.m.	Grades 1-8 - Introduction and Overview of Workshop
9:15 a.m.- 10:15	Module I. Grades 1-8, Guest Facilitator
10:15 a.m. - 10:30	Discussion and Questions
10:30 a.m. - 10:45	Nutrition Break
10:45 -12:30	Grades 5 -8 - Right Choices: Skills for Life - Conflict at School, Dealing with Adults. Making Decisions and Solving Problems.
12:30 - 1:30	Lunch Break
1:30 - 3:30	Module II
	Grades 1 - 3 - Room A
	Grades 4 - 6 - Room B
	Grades 7 - 8 - Room C

Schedule

Monday, May 17th

9:00 a.m - 10:30	Module III - Part A - Grades 1 - 6 Module IV - Part A - Grades 7-8
10:30 - 10:45 a.m.	Nutrition Break
10:45 - 12:00 noon	Module III - Part B - Grades 1 -6 Module IV - Part B - Grades 7 -8
12:00 noon - 1:00 p.m.	Lunch Break
1:00 3:00 p.m.	Module III - Grades 7- 8 Module V - Grades 1 - 6

APPENDIX D

Wednesday, May 5		1999
8:00	Meet <i>Mr. Smith</i> (parent) re: John's suspension Remind Vice-Principal to make announcements this morning	
9:00	Principal's Meeting re: staffing @ Board Office	
10:00		
11:00	Call high school about presentation for Grade 8 students Give teachers forms for staffing preference Start list of classroom changes for September (i.e., Grade 6 room move to present Grade 2 room) Call School Board re: changes to blackboard heights	
11:30	Phone Brian re: murals for new Junior High section Met with two students re: incident on bus a.m. - contacted parents	
12:00	(Cafeteria Duty)	
12:30	Meet Grade 8 parents re: plan for end-of-year event for Grade 8 students - Pippy Park??	
1:00	Grade 7 teacher (<i>Mr.X</i>) re: problems with student. How to accommodate behaviour in class? <i>John P/TimW</i> suspended - fighting lunch time	
1:30	Start parent newsletter Send agenda two-day inservice to Board Call President, School Council re: agenda tonight's meeting	
2:00		
2:30	Mural meeting (Family Resource Centre) Have students begin to set up for Heritage Fair in gym (Check with <i>Darryl</i> for number of tables needed.)	
3:00	Bus Duty Detentions 4 students (<i>Mike, Susan, David, Owen</i>) Newsletter	
4:00	V.P. re: inventory of supplies at <i>X</i> School - anything in particular we need. Budget Proposal Outline	
5:00		
6:00		
7:00	School Council Meeting	

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