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**ABSTRACT**

The informal efforts of principals to encourage the professional development of teachers may be more significant than the formal programs. The Instructional Management Project was undertaken by Far West Laboratories (San Francisco, California) to increase understanding of these informal efforts. One aspect of the research involved school observations and interviews with selected school principals, teachers, and students, as well as the administration of the Instructional Organization Instrument. The principals' routine behaviors were assigned to nine categories: goal setting and planning; monitoring; evaluating; communication; scheduling, allocating resources, and organizing; staffing; modeling; governing; and filling in for other staff members. The targets for these actions were also categorized: work structure, staff relations, student relations, safety and order, plant and equipment, community relations, and institutional ethos. All principals spent over half their time communicating. Those who effectively encouraged staff professional development focused comparatively heavily on professional matters in informal exchanges. Six kinds of informal activities of principals were found typical of efforts to initiate or reinforce teacher development: disseminating information about formal development opportunities; disseminating professional materials; focusing professional interest around specific themes; soliciting teacher responses to educational concerns; encouraging experimentation and innovation; and publicizing teacher achievements. Examples of such behaviors are cited, and a three-page bibliography is included. (PGD)

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EVERYDAY ACTS:

STAFF DEVELOPMENT AS CONTINUOUS AND INFORMAL ROUTINE

AERA 1985

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Everyday Acts:

Staff Development as Continuous and Informal Routine

(precis)

Six roles the principal can assume during everyday routine acts of monitoring and managing the school have been identified as means of informally initiating staff development at an individual and group level. The roles as defined, described and exemplified in this paper corroborate earlier theory and research that suggests routine behaviors of principals can be powerful motivators within the school setting.

Everyday Acts:  
Staff Development as Continuous and Informal Routine

The purpose of this investigation was to examine the everyday acts of principals to determine what informal and ongoing interactions between principal and staff appear to influence the professional growth and development of the staff.

Organizational literature documents the fact that there are both formal and informal aspects of any organization. Formal staff development projects are those projects that define specific goals and follow specific guidelines, often with inservice training of both teachers and administrators involved. The Madeline Hunter model for instituting Clinical Teaching and Supervision in school districts is a good example of this type of inservice. Thematic workshops and grassroots curriculum development are other formal means of staff development. Bring in a speaker on a major topic, such as "Writing Across the Curriculum," then have the teachers move into groups for discussion of implementation possibilities in their own subject fields. Research on coaching tells us, however, that the success of these models depends not on the strength or importance of the chosen topic, or even the willingness of the teachers to try new techniques, but on the ongoing support that follows the presentation. It is, in fact, the principal who determines the success of these formally introduced programs through his ongoing support. Formal programming in a school is only one means of initiating staff development, and, as both experience and research point out, formal staff development alone is not sufficient.

Three areas of theory and research, (a) teacher development (an emerging field), (b) adult development and (c) organizational psychology, emphasize the importance of continued personal/professional growth. The "mature" professional is not one who needs to be told what to do by an administrator or through mandated curriculum and/or inservice, but one who is autonomous, reflective and self-actualizing, one who essentially continues to learn and develop as an individual and a professional. Organizational theory has its parallel, the "mature" organization. Organizational psychology is founded on the fact that the organization as a whole exists as an entity to which individual members react (Schein, 1965), and situational leadership, a branch of organizational psychology, is based on the assumption that individuals within an organization differ in their level of maturity (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977; Schein and Bennis, 1965), and the organization must be able to meet the differing needs of its members. Translated to school settings, we are talking about teachers who continue to develop as professionals and teachers who seem not to be growing. We are talking about a changing knowledge base, both professional and

content oriented, for which teachers are responsible. We are talking about the school (organization) as an entity unto itself--the "culture" to which teachers react and within which they participate (Little, 1983; Sergiovanni, 1983 and 1984). Finally we are talking about the principal who is referred to as the "gatekeeper of change" within the building (Berman and McLaughlin, 1978). Barth states that, "It is not the teachers, or the central office people, or the university people who are really causing schools to be the way they are or changing the way they might be. It is whoever lives in the principal's office" (1976). Individual teachers comprise the total organization but it is the principal who essentially creates/commands/ tends to the individuals and the school. What is the organizational climate to which teachers react and within which they participate? As the educational leader, the principal is the key figure to that climate. And the formal programming--planned inservices and formal evaluation procedures--are only part, a relatively small part, of the routine activities of both the principal and the teachers.

If we define staff development as methods and procedures that promote the professional growth of teachers, we must consider more than the formal programs that exist within the school. Formal programs are excellent ways of introducing new ideas, new curriculum, new knowledge that is professionally relevant, but it is only the self-actualizing teachers who will benefit from those programs, and even those teachers will be hesitant to try new methods and materials if they do not perceive the total environment of the school as supportive of them as professionals. (See Lieberman and Miller, 1984; and Sizer, 1984 for a perspective of the teacher's dilemma.)

Staff development may be aimed at the teachers as a group, but it is effective only as it inspires teachers as individuals to seek to improve their own curriculum and instruction methods. What are the means available to principals to help them encourage individual teachers and groups to continue their professional growth? "Informal communication" techniques, although not as obvious, can be more effective a means of initiating and insuring continued staff development at an individual and group level than the formal (and often costly) inservice programs that have served as models for so long. It has been suggested that principals accomplish much within the routine structure of their day (Dwyer, 1984). It has been the purpose of this research to answer the following questions: What, if anything, do principals do on a daily basis to successfully promote professional development of individuals and/or groups within the school? What types of interactions, what types of everyday acts, encourage staff to seek and continue seeking professional development?

In this paper after describing the methods and procedures for data collection and analysis, I will present an overview of the "informal process" and a brief case report to illustrate the findings in an integrated model. Then I will present isolated techniques that operated on several sites with examples from the

data. Finally I will discuss the implications of these findings for administrators, university professors of administration and supervision, and researchers.

### Methods and Procedures

Because data for this report is a subset of the extensive data collected as part of the Instructional Management Program at Far West Laboratories I will first briefly describe the larger project, the background from which this research developed, and then explain the rationale behind the secondary analysis from which this paper developed.

### Background

Far West's Instructional Management Research was a year-long, multimethod, multilevel field study of twelve school principals. Their field-based and collaborative effort was undertaken to probe a paradox found in research about principals and effective schools. (For a thorough description of the research procedures and methodology from which this brief background has been summarized and quoted, refer to Dwyer et al., Methodology: A Companion Volume for the Instructional Management Program's Field Study of Principals.) Although descriptive studies of principals argue that the work of principals is often fragmented and little concerned with instructional matters (Peterson, 1978; Pitner, 1982; Sproull, 1979), effective-school studies emphasize the importance of principals as instructional leaders (Armor et al., 1976; Brookover and Lezotte, 1977; Edmonds, 1979).

In examining the qualitative research completed on instructional leaders, Far West researchers identified three types of studies:

1. Mintzberg-type studies in which reseearchers follow principals through a number of days of activity, and categorize and count principals actions (e.g., Martin and Willower, 1981).
2. Interview studies where principals are questioned about their experiences and the nature of their work (e.g., Blumberg and Greenfield, 1980).
3. Anecdotal inquiries in which researchers probe for a general understanding of some aspect of the principalship, using observation and interview, but lacking the intensiveness of ethnographies (e.g., Morris et al., 1982; Weber, 1971).

Although each of these studies offers new perspectives on the nature of the principalship, none of the studies is all encompassing. None ultimately connects principal action to student outcome. Although this was not the purpose of any of these studies, student outcomes are the ultimate purpose of education. The principal, as the leader in the school, must

have some effect on those outcomes, no matter how circuitous the process might be. The Instructional Management Project was designed to be intensive and all encompassing. The intent of the research was to record and explore the actions of all participants (principal, teachers, staff, students, parents) in sufficient detail to be able to trace and understand the effects of the principal on student outcomes.

### Research Procedures

School districts were selected to represent urban, suburban and rural districts within the service area of Far West Laboratories. Participating schools were selected on the basis of district recommendation and preliminary interviews with the principals in the district recommended schools. Districts, interested in representing themselves in the best light, maintained the right to recommend the schools that would participate, thus preempting the request to identify potential schools by more systematic means such as examining achievement-score trends.

Sites determined, one researcher was assigned to each school to carry out the various research tasks. Area coordinators from the Laboratory were assigned to assure cross-site validity and coherence in the content of field notes and the use of Laboratory designed instruments.

Phase 1 included initial interviews with each principal regarding personal philosophy, professional background and experience, school goals and completion of a school description instrument.

Site activities for Phase 1 also included two types of ethnographic activities. First, the shadow and the reflective interview: the principal was shadowed for varying lengths of time, averaging a half day, and then interviewed in depth on a succeeding day concerning the reasoning behind the actions and activities recorded. Second, the cruise: the site worker explored other aspects of the school, spending time in the faculty lounge, the cafeteria, the library, the school yard, the halls, recording behaviors, actions, conversations. Cruises included data on meetings that were held within the school, district meetings, parent meetings.

When field workers were not involved in regularly scheduled research activities they maintained contact with their sites through site visits, one and two hour "drop-in" visits where they talked with the principal and faculty about ongoing events.

All work was recorded in notes and/or on tape. Additionally, the field workers taped summary observations at the end of each visit. All materials were then compiled into integrated field notes.

Phase 2 included classroom observations and reflective interviews, structured interviews with the teachers, and semi-

structured interviews with a representative sample of students. Classroom observations were followed up with reflective interviews that explored why the teachers were doing what they were doing and how and why the principal may have had some influence, negative or positive, on the classroom happenings. Structured interviews with the teachers sought specific information of their interpretations of school policy, the curriculum they were using, their professional backgrounds, and their educational philosophy including thoughts they had in relation to school leadership. Student interviews focused on student interactions with the principal, but included questions about their perceptions of the "principal's job," the school and their present school and principal as compared to other schools they may have attended. Teacher interviews were audio-taped and transcribed.

Phase 2 also included administration of the Instructional Organization Instrument, a lengthy instrument designed to explore the formal groupings and policies that pertained to instruction (e.g. curriculum selection and delivery, class schedules and structure, extracurricular activities, evaluation of teachers and students.

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Insert Figure 1 here  
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### Initial Analysis

Phase 1 and 2 provided over 10,000 pages of descriptive material about the work of principals. As a research group, one of the more time consuming elements of analysis was the development of a computerized data base from those thousands of pages of data-- reducing the data, as Miles has termed it (Miles, 1983). We needed a system for analyzing what a principal does. Through thorough reading and rereading of the data, reading of related research, and extensive discussion, we developed a matrix of principal activities and targets for those activities. Essentially we summarized principals' routine behaviors into nine categories.

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Insert Figure 2 here  
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Because over 50% of all principal's time was spent in communicating, we decided to further categorize the actions by defining the purpose or "target" for all actions, thus developing a list of eight targets.

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Insert Figure 3 here  
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Then the data was coded using the developed matrix and entered into the computer. From the data thus coded and entered, pie charts were produced, visually showing the breakdown of the principals' routine activities and the targets for those activities. (Figures have been altered to show breakdown of both

PHASE I

INITIAL INTERVIEWS WITH EACH PRINCIPAL

SHADOWS OF PRINCIPALS AND REFLECTIVE INTERVIEWS

CRUISES

SITE VISITS

ALL FIELD NOTES WERE ACCOMPANIED BY SUMMARY OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS BY FIELD WORKERS.

PHASE II

CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS AND REFLECTIVE INTERVIEWS WITH TEACHERS

STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH THE TEACHERS

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE OF STUDENTS

INSTRUCTIONAL ORGANIZATION INSTRUMENT

(CONTINUATION OF PHASE I)

FIGURE 1. RESEARCH COMPONENTS OF THE DATA COLLECTION.

## CATEGORIES OF ROUTINE BEHAVIORS

- GOAL SETTING AND PLANNING:** DEFINING OR DETERMINING FUTURE OUTCOMES  
MAKING DECISIONS ABOUT, OR FORMULATING MEANS  
FOR ACHIEVING THOSE ENDS.
- MONITERING:** REVIEWING, WATCHING, CHECKING, BEING PRESENT WITHOUT A FORMAL  
EVALUATION INTENDED.
- EVALUATING:** APPRAISING OR JUDGING WITH REGARD TO PERSONS, PROGRAMS, MATERIALS.
- COMMUNICATING:** VARIOUS FORMS OF VERBAL EXCHANGE, INCLUDING GREETING, INFORMING,  
COUNSELING, COMMENTING, ETC. ALSO INCLUDES FORMS OF NONVERBAL  
COMMUNICATION SUCH AS PHYSICAL CONTACTS, GESTURES, AND  
FACIAL EXPRESSIONS.
- SCHEDULING, ALLOCATING RESOURCES AND ORGANIZING:** MAKING DEICSIONS ABOUT  
ALLOCATIONS OF TIME, SPACE, MATERIALS, PERSONNEL, AND ENERGY.  
ARRANGING OR COORDINATING PROJECTS, PROGRAMS, OR EVENTS.
- STAFFING:** HIRING AND PLACEMENT OF TEACHING STAFF, SPECIALISTS, AND SUPPORT  
PERSONNEL.
- MODELING:** DEMONSTRATING TEACHING TECHNIQUES OR STRATEGIES OF INTERACTION FOR  
TEACHERS, OTHER STAFF, PARENTS, OR STUDENTS.
- GOVERNING:** DECISION MAKING WITH REGARD TO POLICY. LEGISLATING, ENFORCING  
POLICY OR RULES.
- FILLING IN:** SUBSTITUTING FOR ANOTHER STAFF MEMBER (NURSE, MAINTENANCE PERSON,  
SECRETARY, TEACHER) ON A TEMPORARY BASIS.

FIGURE 2: CATEGORIES OF PRINCIPALS' ROUTINE BEHAVIORS.

## TARGETS OF PRINCIPAL'S ACTIVITIES

- WORK STRUCTURE:** ALL COMPONENTS RELATED TO THE TASK OF DELIVERING INSTRUCTION.
- STAFF RELATIONS:** OUTCOMES CONCERNING THE FEELINGS AND/OR PERSONAL NEEDS OF INDIVIDUAL STAFF MEMBERS.
- STUDENT RELATIONS:** OUTCOMES CONCERNING THE FEELINGS, ATTITUDES, OR PERSONAL NEEDS (ACADEMIC, SOCIAL, OR PSYCHOLOGICAL) OF STUDENTS.
- SAFETY & ORDER:** FEATURES OF THE PHYSICAL ORGANIZATION, RULES, AND PROCEDURES OF THE SCHOOL THAT INFLUENCE THE SAFETY OF MEMBERS AND THE CAPACITY OF MEMBERS TO CARRY OUT THEIR WORK.
- PLANT & EQUIPMENT:** ELEMENTS OF THE PHYSICAL PLANT SUCH AS THE BUILDING, GROUNDS, AUDIOVISUAL EQUIPMENT, OFFICE MACHINES, ETC.
- COMMUNITY RELATIONS:** OUTCOMES CONCERNING THE ATTITUDES AND INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS OR OTHER COMMUNITY MEMBERS.
- INSTITUTIONAL ETHOS:** SCHOOL CULTURE OR SPIRIT. MAY REFER TO FEATURES OF THE SCHOOL PROGRAM OR TO A "TONE" THAT CONTRIBUTES TO THE SCHOOL'S UNIQUE IDENTITY AND CONSTITUTES SHARED MEANING AMONG MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL ORGANIZATION.

FIGURE 3: TARGETS OF PRINCIPALS ACTIVITIES.

the monitoring and communicating functions.)

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Insert Figure 4 and 5 here  
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### Further Analysis

The beauty of such robust data is in the hypothesis and analysis that can grow from it, after the fact, and the conclusions that can be drawn.

The profiles of what principals do in their schools illustrates the schizophrenic nature of the principal's day. (See also the case studies available from Far West Laboratory: Ray Murdock and Jefferson Elementary School: Instructional Leadership in a Rural Setting, Grace Lancaster and Emerson Junior High School: Instructional Leadership in an Urban Setting, Frances Hedges and Orchard Park Elementary School: Instructional Leadership in a Stable Urban Setting.) The principal's activities are generally short, face-to-face interactions which occur more often in the halls and classes than in their offices, and which are often interrupted or nested within other activities. Typically, a principal may walk down the hall with one intent and carry out three interactions unrelated to the original intent. It is the brevity, abruptness and unplanned nature of these interactions that has caused some researchers to state that "instructional leadership (in terms of classroom observation and teacher supervisor is not the central focus of the principalship" (Morris et al, p. 689), while others have reported that,

Perhaps the most widely heralded role of the principal is that of instructional leader, which conjures up images of a task routine dominated by the generation of innovative curricula and novel teaching strategies. The principals in this study spent 17.4% of their time on instructional matters. . . .the majority of the routine education of youngsters that occurred in the schools was clearly the province of the teaching staff (Martin and Willower, 1981,p.83).

Nevertheless, the findings of these studies do not contradict those of the Instructional Management Project. Martin and Willower report that the principal's work is characterized by "variety, brevity, and fragmentation" (p.79), and that the preponderance (84.8%) of the activities of the principals who participated in their study involved "purely verbal elements" (p.80). We found this to be true.

There is an apparent contradiction if one believes that fragmentation precludes development of and/or conclusion of substantive communication. Initial analysis of the Far West data ascertained that the principal's role was fragmented and primarily verbal in nature, and that the principal was a key figure in the instructional leadership of the school. Accepting

Legend: Targets of Principals' Actions

- A = Work Structure
- B = Staff Relations
- C = Student Relations
- D = Safety & Order
- E = Plant & Equipment
- F = Community Relations
- G = Institutional Relations
- H = Institutional Ethos
- O = All Others

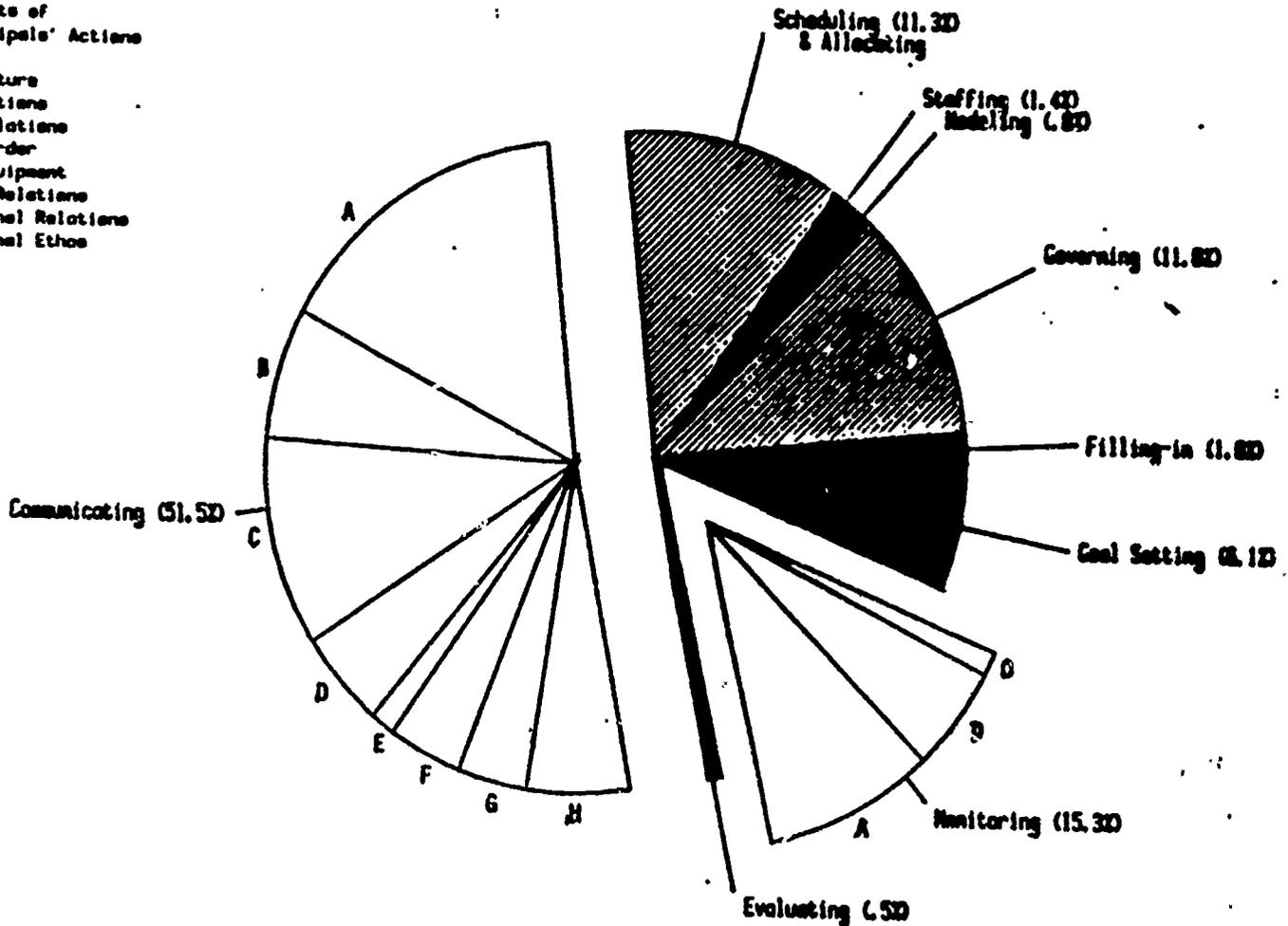


FIGURE 4:

Distribution of Principal Hedges' Routine Actions: Communicating  
Monitoring

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Legend: Targets of  
Principals' Actions

- A = Work Structure
- B = Staff Relations
- C = Student Relations
- D = Safety & Order
- E = Plant & Equipment
- F = Community Relations
- G = Institutional Relations
- H = Institutional Ethos
- O = All Others

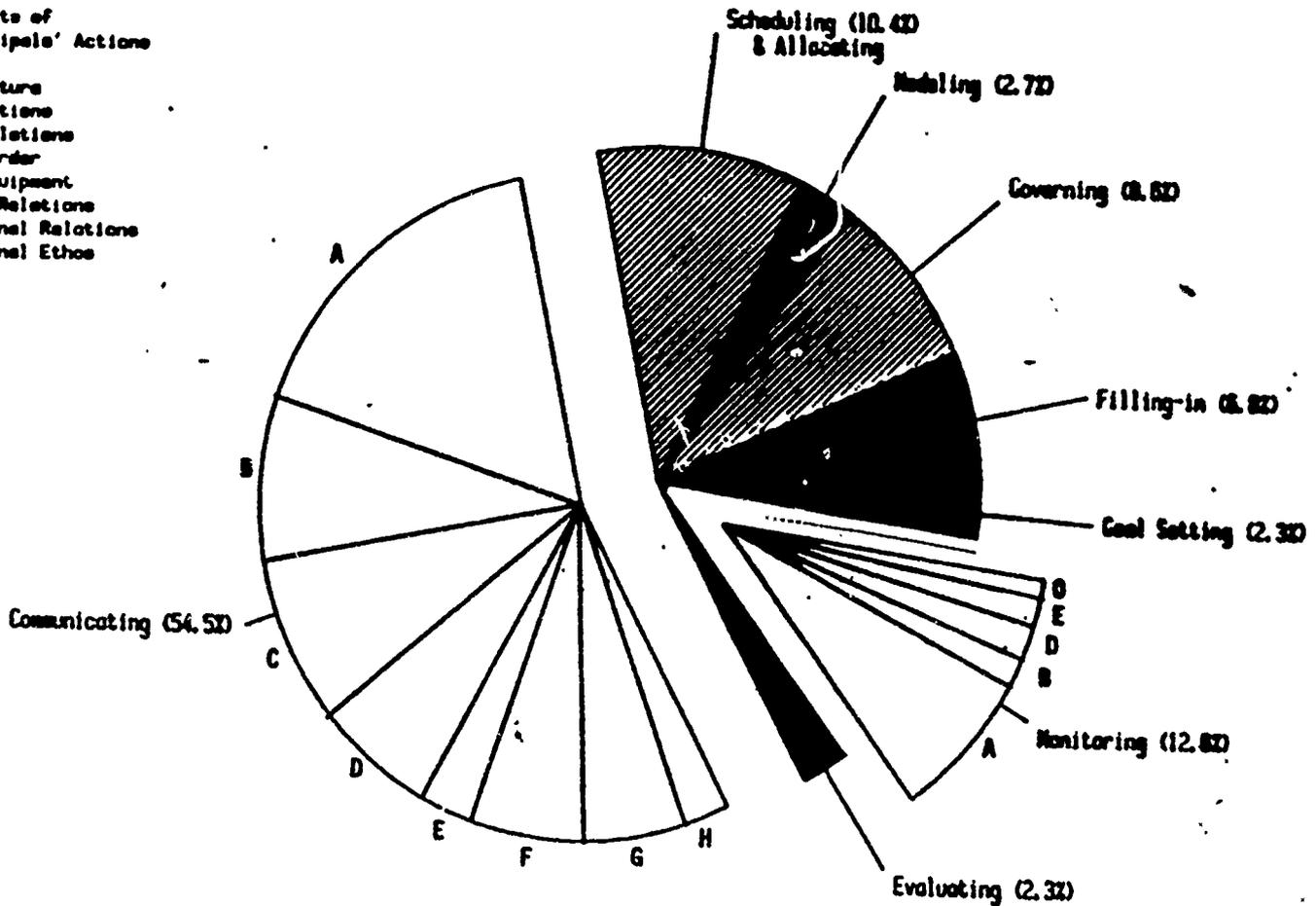


FIGURE 5:

Distribution of Principal Murdock's  
Routine Actions: Communicating  
Monitoring

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both the fragmented nature of a principal's day and the evidence that the principal is a key figure in school effectiveness, there is need for a new question. The question then is not "What do principals do?" Numerous studies have made that quite clear. They talk! They communicate! The more important question is, "What do they communicate and how?" What is the content of the brief interchanges, what effect does the content have on the receiver? With the Instructional Management data it was possible to return and consider both the substantive content of those brief and ongoing verbal exchanges and the effect of those exchanges on teacher practice.

This new question for analysis of the data is not far from the original intent. The original question interns took to the field was, "How do the principal's routine activities affect student learning?" At one level we, and other researchers, were looking at the larger acts--planning and implementation of inservice programs, evaluation processes, formal conferences with teachers and students. These existed. But research has shown us that educational change is dependent on the ongoing support of the principal (Berman and McLaughlin, 1978). Research has also documented the incremental process of curriculum change (Porter et. al.; Walker and Kirst, ). Coaching has been defined as the means of support necessary to ongoing and meaningful implementation of change within a teacher's repertoire( ). Did the data support the hypothesis that teachers and teacher practice were being influenced and/or changed as a result of the fragmented, brief and abrupt interchanges the principals were having with them? Could teacher professional development and improved practice be attributed in any way to the quality and content of these brief interchanges?

Data was re-read with the intent of finding and categorizing multiple examples of verbal exchanges which initiated, encouraged and/or reinforced teacher professional development as evidenced in the classroom and/or reported through teacher interview.

## Results

### Overview

Initial analysis showed that all principals spent more than 50% of their time in acts of communication. But there were differences in the content of those communications. Those principals who seemed to effectively encourage individual professional development were those principals who established continuing dialogues with their staff on a professional basis concerning professional matters. Informal conversations about family, home and holiday activities, sporting and news events, even personal problems were evident in all data sets. Principals and teachers are personal and private individuals as well as professional people, and informal conversations reflected that. However, in schools where professional development of teachers was particularly noticeable through classroom activities, where the organizational climate of the school could be described as

professional, the informal exchanges between principal and teachers revolved around professional matters rather than personal matters. That dialogue was often the means of emphasizing focus points for the school that the principals had personally chosen, instructional emphasis that they instigated and/or supported. Communication was clearly important in initiating, implementing, and reinforcing the purposes of the school and/or programs and techniques that received the support of the principal and that communication was typically brief.

Data supported the importance of this brief and ongoing dialogue at five levels. First, the principal stated the philosophy clearly in initial interviews and the ongoing reflective interviews. Field notes reflected the principal's emphasis through detailed records of verbal interchange and actions. Teachers reported their principals' areas and points of emphasis, often using the exact phrases the principals used. Classroom observations revealed techniques and/or projects that had received the principal's support and finally, in reflective interviews following the class observations the teachers attributed "new" techniques, methods and areas of emphasis to their principals.

Few of the informal interactions that were reported or recorded took longer than ten minutes, many were only thirty second to two minute interchanges in the halls, between classes, during breaks, but all interchanges were personal and ongoing. "Fragmentation, brevity and abruptness" were often noted, but that fragmentation appeared to be a strength. Emphasis came in small doses, and conversations were picked up and left off with days sometimes intervening. Ongoing and effective is the best way to describe the interchanges. Teachers indicated that the general tenor of support they perceived from the principal was important in their willingness to risk "new" routines and projects. Compliments and statements of support from the principal in the informal communications that punctuate a principal's day (60%) were the means of building that "perception of support." The interchanges which resulted in direct action from the teacher came in the form of questions and suggestions, informally, almost casually placed questions and suggestions that left the teacher wondering, thinking and eventually acting.

In the two schools where the principal was not able to clearly and consisely state a point of focus, the teachers were not able to state a focus point either. That is self evident but particularly noteworthy. All principals did have personal philosophies. Only those who had philosophies they were able to communicate clearly and effectively in a sentence or two had teachers who could re-state the philosophy--sometimes using the same words.

## One Teacher Grows--Portraiture and Analysis of the Process at Work

It is Ms. Little's classroom. Desks and chairs have been pushed to the edges of the classroom and about forty-five children are seated on the floor in front of the puppet stage, clapping. Ms. Little goes to the front of the room and tells the children, "You've been a very good audience. I told you, before the show, to think about what the play told us about friendship. Who learned about friendship?" Over half of the hands go up. She points to different children saying, "What did you learn?" They answer, "you have to work to be a friend." "You can't make friends in a hurry." "Sometimes it's good to be slow." The comments may seem simplistic, but these are first and second graders discussing the meaning of a puppet show they have just seen. The discussion continues for five minutes before half of the children file out. Seeing and feeling the enjoyment of these six and seven year olds as they watch the show and hearing their evaluative and analytic comments at the end is enough to satisfy any educational evaluator, but there is more. The excitement doesn't leave with the visiting class. Nor does the opportunity for more learning.

The remaining children move chairs in from the edges to the room and sit facing Ms. Little. She is smiling, and they are waiting to comment. "Feedback?" she asks. Hands go up and the comments begin. "It went very smoothly." "Noone read the wrong lines." "The squirrel had good expression." Jonas did a good job on the props, he was right there when we needed him." You couldn't see the chipmunk too well, we need to re-plot that scene." (This last was said with great expression on the word "re-plot," showing pride in the knowledge.) "We should have held the [act and scene] signs up longer."

Ms. Little sees a few faces looking hurt, and she reassures. "This is not bad criticism. You can't see yourselves. You need someone to say that the sign wasn't right or that the scene has to be "re-plotted" (she smiles at the owner of that word). We have to be critical (and she says the word slowly, as if it is a new word), of what we do so we can do it better. This is called "constructive criticism. It doesn't mean it wasn't good."

And so goes the discussion. What are they learning? They are discussing meaning of plays, a comprehension problem that often is not broached until fourth and fifth grade, even later. They are learning the difference between criticism and constructive criticism. They are becoming aware of voice quality, costuming, staging, props, "plotting." They are learning about process--a good production involves planning, preparation, (three months in this case) cooperation, coordination. A good show is more than the stars on the stage. These are the topics of discussion, so they are also learning to talk amongst themselves about what they are doing, to talk critically. It is only when Ms. Little announces that she will put a big marble in the jar and everyone can leave five minutes early for lunch, that one realizes that this is a classroom that also has a pedantic purpose and a system

of rewards, that one realizes these are only second graders.

At the level of school events, however, this has further and deeper significance. It is actually the result of six months of "pulling." Pulling is the term Mark Manor, the new principal of this school, uses for his "informal" talks with teachers. At the beginning of the school year, Ms. Little personally requested that she have a "straight" second grade class. Manor said that he would try, but he could not make any promises. When he had to assign her a split class, he apologized, told her that she would also get one of the discipline problems from the third grade class (Jonas!) because otherwise there would be a deadly combination in the third grade class. At the same time, however, he complimented her ability to handle the situation and told her he knew she would need support. In quick walk throughs, later in the week

and

later in the month, he pointedly stopped by the desk of Jonas, talked with Jonas at recess ("How are you getting along with Ms. Little? You're pretty lucky to have her.") and asked Ms. Little how things were and what he could do to help out. Later Ms. Little acknowledged her own growing perception of the principal's support. "It's a security. If you feel a principal doesn't think you're professional then you're fighting that all the time. If he or she is confident, then you have all the freedom to do, you know, what you need to do." Support alone was not the seed that caused the puppet show to sprout full blow in the spring. Several things contributed. A pile of catalogues of Educational Materials that Manor left in the faculty lounge with the invitation, "Construct a wish list and I'll see what I can do," was one factor. Then there was an exhibit of puppets at the local museum. Manor suggested that Little might enjoy it. Later he asks her what she thought of it. She had not gone, but a few days later she went to him and told him it had been quite enjoyable. Manor told her that he had seen an old puppet theater in the basement of the school. She put several books about puppetry on her "wish list." Although he did not order them, he persuaded the school library to process them immediately. Little was soon walking around with books about puppets and talking about it at lunch.

The steps from decision to show were the easy ones because the inertia had been overcome. The class decided to do two plays so that everyone had a chance to be in the play and to help with production details. They chose one play and wrote the second-- good projects for any language arts/reading class. There was much more--creating puppets, costuming them, painting the backdrops. School became fun for a class full of second/third graders. Even Jonas was pulled into the excitement. But the excitement did not stop at the door of Ms. Little's class. A second teacher arranged to share the puppet theater, and a third teacher claimed that it was her old theater, she wanted it back! A second theater was constructed in an after-school carpentry class and the ruffled feathers relaxed. Puppet fever did not restrict itself to Ms. Little's room. A few well placed and innocent(?) questions had far reaching effects.

What does Little say about the total experience? Two facts stand out. She says unequivocally, she would not have done this if she had not felt Manor's support, and jubilantly, "This year a play, next year the world." She's talking about starting earlier, using a video machine, having the kids write their own material, taking the show on the road to a local nursery school. This may not be the world, but it is her world and it has not finished expanding.

### The Component Parts

Ms. Little's case is an integrated example of the many and subtle ways a principal can use informal interchange to influence teacher development. Mark Manor, Ms. Little's principal, consciously planted the ideas and asked the questions that moved Ms. Little into action. He called the process "pulling," stating that, "I'm constantly pulling. They have to own what they do, but I'm pulling all the time, 'Did you think of this? Could you do this?' The key to the success of this "pulling" is in the informal and personal nature of the interchanges. Throughout the data there are examples of principals using these "pulling" techniques; sometimes consciously as a means toward change, sometimes intuitively and from natural and personal curiosity they had in the educational processes and events that were taking place in their schools. Teachers responded to the support, concern and interest the principal showed through the informal exchanges. The beauty of the "technique" is in the brevity and in the ease with which it accomplishes what entire workshops and complex mandates are unable to accomplish--teacher change! Principals complain about the time that is lost to "routine activity" but these principals utilized the structure of routine activity to subtly and not so subtly influence the professional development of their teachers.

By analyzing separate cases such as that of Ms. Little, and integrating the various data sources, six areas of possible principal activity/interchange have been thus far identified and categorized. These are instances in which the principal interchange was the initiating and/or reinforcement factor in the professional development of individuals or groups within the school. For the sake of brevity and clarity, each area will be described and then several concrete examples will be cited from the data.

#### 1. Principal as disseminator of workshop opportunities.

The principal keeps track of district and community opportunities for professional development through newspapers, professional literature, district announcements. Announcing opportunities to the staff in general was not generally sufficient incentive for staff to participate. Nor was district propaganda announcing available workshops. Teachers did, however, respond to suggestions of workshops, seminars and classes when the suggestions were directly aimed at them.

Examples:

One teacher at Murdock's school describes himself, with some pride, as "one of the ones that Murdock took. . . down to Herder to learn about the [Reading Skills Management] program." As a result, this teacher had become "a starter in it." Murdock took several teachers actually, and the program became a high profile item in his school. (See #3)

Murdock sent several teachers to another workshop for a math program and was trying to locate enough money to send the cafeteria workers were sent to a conference out of state! (Is it coincidence that his cafeteria workers were being involved professionally and his cafeteria was reputed in the district to be the only one operating in the place?)

Two other teachers mention the general support they received from him as they took University courses at a university some distance from their school,

"He would let me off 45 minutes early so I could get into a class." (E.7156)

"He supported me when I started back to school...this will be my fifth summer..." (E.7154)

Laughing, one teacher at Manor's school commented, "He just signed me up for something in the summer. He told me I was gonna have a...swell summer...just said go to it. And I said, are you going to be there? or are you going to be in Bermuda? Sure I'll go. He knows what interests me!" (TI, 3/9/83, p. 12)

Another recounted, "He told me about the Mathematics League. Didn't even know about it, but he put it (the brochure) in my box. He's always doing that...sticking things in my box." (TI, 3/10/83, p.8)

Hedges teachers reported the same:

"She gives us an awful lot of ideas about conferences, seminars and things like that. She was the one that told me about workshops...in math...and wanted me to go to that...basically, whenever something comes up, she tries to inform us." (E.3446)

"I've attended several conferences for the school and reported back to the school." (E.3387)

"She's encouraged me to go to different workshops ...because she knows that I'm developing an English as Second Language curriculum (E.3304)

Winston's teachers repeat the pattern,

"She has talked to me many times about going on to do other things...you know, taking courses and what have you. (E.880)

"She's always encouraged staff to go on to higher, go on to get the master's...which she's encouraging me to finish..."

### 2. Principal as disseminator of professional materials.

The principal duplicates professional articles, disperses curriculum materials, lends professional books to individual teachers and/or makes available professional material in a central location and tells individual teachers about its existence and later asks opinions of the material.

Manor was shown a programmed curriculum that he felt was worth investigation. He called in two of his teachers and asked them to consider ways it could be used in the total school. Those two teachers zeroxed several sections of the curriculum, and in the process caught the attention of several other teachers. Five teachers have now used that material as enrichment material for their classes. (TI, 3/10/83, p. 15-18.)

Hedges read two articles on allocated time and engaged time. On the opening day of the school year she distributed copies of those articles to all of her teachers, stressing their importance. During the first few months of the year she casually asked teachers what they felt about the articles. Not all teachers had read them. For a few she summarized an idea or two the first time she asked them their opinions. Several teachers responded later to the "repeated" question.

Teachers again and again reported that their principal had brought them materials they could use in their classes.

"She has brought me some materials that are good to use in the classroom that come back to the basic skills." (E.834)

"Yes, Mark gave us a kit that has worked in quite well."  
(TI, 3/30/83, p.1)

### 3. Principal as propounder of stated theme or area of emphasis.

The principal selects or naturally gravitates towards a theme or point of emphasis which then becomes a focal point of informal discussion with individual teachers. Teachers are aware of the principal's emphasis and are drawn into awareness of the issue by the continued visibility the principal gives to the issue/theme/area of emphasis.

At Murdock's school one area of emphasis was the need to "make good citizens out of the children" (TI, 5/19/83, p.7) or, as several teachers said, "civilize 'em." (TI, 5/12/83, p.2)

Again and again teachers were heard to use the same phrases and catch words that the principals used. "Civilize 'em" was only one example. Hedges school presented the best example. Many teachers said that Hedges had "high expectations" for the students, and in student interviews, one of the primary students said, wide-eyed and with great reverence, "She has high expectations for us." The student admitted that she did not know what high expectations meant, but she knew they were good.

Murdock stated outright that,

"I would like it [the school] to be a showcase in this country and in the state...of what education should be for kids. (TI, 3/4/83, p.9) and his teachers were aware of his aim, as evidenced by one teacher who said, "I feel that he wants to make the best school that he [can]...because he's so hard the school is a superior school. (TI, 6/6/83, p.6.)

Hedges was particularly involved in two issues--reading and the self-esteem of children. In interviews, every teacher in the school mentioned the emphasis on reading.

Each class in the school was scheduled for two library periods a week. The library period was essentially a second reading class, and the reading teacher kept records on every child in the school. Beyond that emphasis through scheduling, however, was the verbal emphasis Hedges put on those two activities. She asked teachers and students what they did in the library, what they were reading, how the children were responding to the "pleasure reading." She asked teachers about specific of their children who were not reading at the appropriate skill levels for their grades, and would often have children read for her as part of her classroom visit if the children could do so without interrupting the class. She spent time walking around the library talking with the students and teachers who were scheduled in the library. There was no question as to the importance of reading at Hedges school.

Student self-esteem as an issue received different emphasis. Hedges introduced it as a chosen theme at the beginning of the school year. She put professional materials in the faculty lunch room and in the library, telling the teachers that the materials were available and they should study them. During the year she asked teachers about the materials and about what they were doing in their classes in relation to self-esteem. Occasionally she suggested a method or technique that a teacher might find appropriate to their class, referring the teacher to the shelves in the library for more details. All of these were short, brief encounters, but most of them were effective in producing a response.

Murdock chose a different method of emphasizing his Reading

Skills Management program. All teachers were required to implement the program, although they were able to use the materials as they saw fit, adapting, changing and deleting where they chose. But, charts displaying each child's progress were placed in every classroom (SO, 3/4/83, p.6) and the principal maintained individual student progress files in his office in order to keep current a school-level reading skills chart. (FN, 6/8/83, p. 4) Not only did Murdock make sure that his master chart was up-to-date, (FN, 5/8/83) but he routinely inspected the charts hanging in classrooms.

Zealousness appears to be a requirement for theme emphasis. As one teacher said about Murdock's Reading Management,

"He's a real nut about [the Reading Management Skills Program]. In fact, when I came out to interview for the job, he spent the whole time talking about the management program and showing me everything that was going on. (TI, 5/23/83, p.4)

The point in these chosen themes, and the implementation of them is that the principals may have chosen the themes or areas of emphasis, repeating slogans until they felt like stuck records and heard the phrases in their own dreams and their teachers' conversations, but the teachers themselves still maintained classroom control. They felt the freedom to explore, to test, to change, to adapt, "as long as we produce," or "if it's good for the kids."

In terms of teacher development the themes, purposes and areas of principal emphasis were spurs to the teacher-- subtle and not so subtle suggestions related to their teaching, requiring them to think about and possibly investigate something they would not ordinarily have considered.

#### 4. Principal as the seeker of answers.

The principal, in informal conversation, presents teachers with questions concerning what they are doing in class, what they think, feel or believe in relation to specific school issues, classroom issues, professional materials, school themes. This "technique" was closely associated with both 2 and 3.

Probably one of the most poignant teacher statements related to the principal asking questions was from a teacher who went to the principal with a what she felt was a problem. Almost incredulously she relates, "She [the principal] asked me how I felt about the class. You know, I was wanting some feedback from her because I wanted to know how I was doing and she asked me, well, how did I feel about it? (laugh) It really surprised me. And I guess that was important actually." (E. 1781) Later this teacher talks again about her class and various techniques she and Hedges had eventually worked out to bring the class into better

control. The point that continued to impress the teacher was that the principal was talking to her as an equal, someone who also had ideas that were valid. The teacher personally put more value on her own classroom expertise after the initial interchange.

Questions to teachers were often the most common way of initiating conversation, and the principals were honestly looking for answers. "What do you think of those materials I put in the faculty lunch room?" "Can you use this book?" "What do you think is the problem with \_\_\_\_\_?" "What can I do to help you?"

One teacher reports,  
"She'll bring up, ask the staff what we feel that we need. . . to make us better teachers or better able to cope with particular problems--we discuss and we talk about what, hey look at this, well I went to this workshop, or wouldn't it be better if we did this..." (E.1683)

A typical interchange in the hall between Hedges and a teacher she had observed for a few minutes earlier in the day illustrates the professional and searching nature of many of these interchanges. Hedges begins by complimenting the teacher for the lesson. Then she discusses the English as Second Language children who were in the class. The teacher explains why she was using the technique she was using, and both Hedges and the teacher discuss possibilities. Hedges talks about a specific child in the class and asks the teacher to hypothesize with her as to how much the child actually "learned" and how much was "rote repetition." Together they talk about how they could really assess what the child was learning. (E. 3296)

#### 5. Principal as proponent of experimentation and innovation.

The principal, in informal conversations and general attitude, conveys an impression of supportiveness. Teachers who experimented and sought innovative techniques (or even techniques that were new to them, though not necessarily innovative), indicated a willingness to go beyond their own personal bounds only when they knew their principal was supportive and would not penalize them if their experiments failed. Support sometimes included the personal help and intervention of the principal.

Many of the teachers expressed their appreciation of their principals supportiveness in general terms:

"Any time you learn anything new and are excited about it he's really open to hearing about it and trying it out if you want, you know." (E. 7231)

"I feel whatever I say, whatever I'm doing in my room, if it's a learning situation, I'm going to get her support."  
(E.1649)

"Because I know she trusts my judgment, I go to her with outrageous plans--I mean, uh, mounmental plans. I want to take my kids away for three days on a camping trip--and she doesn't pass out! She says, "When would you like to do this?" and she helps you find a way to do it!" (E.1707)

"Anything basically that you can show her that is something you need or something you want to do that is a method or a tool to that end, she will do anything she can to go along with you and try to help you achieve that...whatever..." (E.1703)

"[Murdock's] real positive, and he lets you try new things.... He doesn't say, Ok, we're using this book and you're gonna use it whether you like it or not." (TI, 5/18/83)

"I think the greatest thing that [Murdock] has is that he has confidence in us; he lets us do what we want to do, teach the way we want to teach, as long as we have results." (TI, 5/19/83, lp.7)

"I use a lot of other materials from other sources, [but] we have Ray Murdock, so if we don't produce he's there to make sure that we do; as long as we're producing he doesn't interfere." (SFI, 5/19/83, p.4)

"He's not closed to [any] idea as long as it's...for the best of the students." (TI, 5/12/83 p.14)

"Any time you learn anything new and are excited about it, [Murdock's] really open to hearing about it and trying it out if you want." (TI, 5/18/83 p.7)

The point seems to be that the principals supported their teachers as long as the teachers were "producing."

At Manor's school, one teacher undertook an environmental living project that involved the class in several months of preparation for a two night stay on a cod-fishing boat that replicated the living conditions of the thirties. The teacher reports:

"I didn't think it could be arranged and I went and talked to him and he really helped me--I wouldn't have done it if it hadn't been for him. I laid it all out and he said he'd help...he di...he did a magnificent job...he even took a group and worked with them. (TI, 3/9/83, p.9)

6. Principal as publicity manager of individual teacher achievements, facilitator of collegial interchange.

The principal, being aware of individual teacher projects, tells other teachers, parents, and even community members of what individual teachers are doing, often suggesting that another teacher consult with the teacher "being publicized." Teachers

being publicized hear about their own achievements "through the grapevine," and teachers being told about their colleagues become fully aware of the principal's awareness of and support for work well done.

Hedges was particularly involved in developing collegial exchange. Her teachers report:

"I was very into Project Write in the classroom and the kids had done a lot of really fine work...[shown a lot of] progress and so she (Hedges) asked me to put together a workshop so that I could show the other teachers what we were doing in the room. What really evolved is four workshops of about two hours each. (E.3420)

Winston, too, was always looking for teachers she could publicize and use as resources within her building. Reports one teacher,

"I've run mini-society children's economics...and Mrs. Winston does everything possible to help me. She encourages other teachers to run mini society too...wanted me to give a workshop, an inservice this year. (E.2020)

and another teacher,

"She wants me to give an inservice on bookbinding for the follow through program." (E.2085)

and still another teacher,

"Sometimes we're just walking down the hall and she's relating certain experiences she has seen, you know, about what I've done in the classroom, and maybe ask me to do something with some of the other teachers." (E.2263)

Hearing principal praise through the grapevine is another means of encouragement that teachers report:

Manor described an innovative math and stocks program at a P.T.A. meeting. The news returned to the teacher who said with pride, "He talked about it. We (the kids and I) know it...so we've gotten a nice happy feeling--that gives you the freedom to go out and be creative." (TI, 3/10/83, p.10) This teacher certainly plans to go for more of that public commendation.

### Conclusions and Implications

Principals often complain about their own ineffectiveness. They feel hampered by the routine activities of their day and their inability to launch major staff development projects and/or innovative curriculum projects. What this research shows is that principals can actually be the source and reinforcement for individual and group professional growth within their schools. Through their own daily interactions with teachers the effective principals in our study used the brief and fragmented nature of

their daily communications to encourage and inspire teachers to reflect on their teaching processes, attend workshops and utilize other learning opportunities within the community to enhance their teaching, investigate the techniques of other teachers, work with other teachers for personal and/or mutual growth, and experiment with new ways of their own. In addition to identifying conversational exchanges as an important means of influencing professional growth among teachers, this research categorizes the exchanges into several different models, providing specific examples of those activities and interactions as they are recorded within the case work.

By examining the fleeting conversational exchanges of these principals and teachers, by listening to what teachers say about the influence of these exchanges, by observing the results of those interchanges as evidenced in classroom happenings, we can see that the "fragmented" nature of the principal's interactions gains new importance. Communication theory has informed us of multi-levels of communication. These brief exchanges of principals and teachers are no exception. We can speculate on what is communicated to a teacher when the supervisor asks a teacher about a specific technique the teacher is using or might use, or when the supervisor asks a teacher about the progress of a specific student. At the most obvious level the principal provides the teacher with specific information and/or asks the teacher for specific information. This is only a surface communication. Through implication the principal also communicates: (a) his own concern and knowledge about professional matters within the school; (b) his awareness of the specific teacher to whom he is talking, including her techniques, her students, (c) his respect and expectations for the teacher as a colleague and professional.

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Insert Figure 6 here  
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The roles the principals played, as categorized within this paper, were identified on multiple sites. They have evolved naturally to meet the requirements of the "brief" interchanges that characterized the communication demands of most principals. For many administrators the roles described here are intuitive. Many administrators have developed these behaviors from their own experiences, but, as with so many "intuitive" behaviors, by actively identifying the behaviors they become more obvious. Thus the behaviors become teachable and useable by a greater proportion of administrators. Probably the most important aspect of this research is that, having been identified, these behaviors can now be taught to supervisors, principals and other administrators who may not be using them. These behaviors are easily incorporated into the everyday acts of any principal. Principals now have several more tools to use consciously and concisely to improve the professionalism of their own staffs.

## ACTUAL AND IMPLIED COMMUNICATION

1. SPECIFIC INFORMATION AND/OR "SUGGESTIONS"
2. CONCERN AND KNOWLEDGE ABOUT PROFESSIONAL MATTERS  
WITHIN THE SCHOOL
3. AWARENESS OF SPECIFIC TEACHER AND TEACHER'S ACTIVITIES
4. RESPECT AND EXPECTATIONS FOR THE TEACHER AS  
A COLLEAGUE AND PROFESSIONAL

FIGURE 6. ACTUAL AND IMPLIED COMMUNICATION IN THE "BRIEF AND  
FRAGMENTED" EXCHANGES BETWEEN PRINCIPAL AND TEACHER.

There are further benefits, personal/professional benefits to the administrator! In an address, Lee Shulman suggested

[There is] another image....of what an effective school is like--an image that goes beyond the empirical view of a school that produces gains in test scores....I'd like to suggest a view of an effective school that you will treat as outrageous. I think we ought to define effective schools as those that are educative settings for teachers.

All of us who have been involved in teaching know that we learn most when we are teaching and when we are looking for better ways to teach. I'd like to extend Shulman's proposal. Schools need to be educative settings for the administrators as well. As administrators investigate and reflect on the happenings in their schools, as they become increasingly more attuned to the happenings in their schools and the means for improving the education therein, as they begin to share their reflections with their teachers and involve their teachers in the investigations, the schools will become educative settings for everyone, including the administrators. Then administrators will be able to do more than "administer." They will no longer complain about their own "ineffectiveness" and the "routine nature" of their everyday acts because their everyday acts will be educative for themselves as well as their teachers, and their schools will be characterized by the professional growth of all participants.

Shulman has presented us with a vision, a hope, an aim. The question for all educators is, How do we attain that vision? It is the quality of our everyday acts, those step by step considerations and questions, that leads us ultimately to attaining our visions.

As researchers we must continue working to discover the better ways, we must describe those better ways. As professors, administrators, teachers, we must take those findings, translate them into useable knowledge and/or behaviors, and finally teach them through our writings, our courses, our inservice work. And then as researchers and evaluators we must again test our programs to see if they are the "better ways" of our visions. The research cycle must not stop with the results. If it is going to be useful to the educational process it must begin anew with the results.

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