

**YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION:
A CASE STUDY OF POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**

by

Bernadette Walsh

**A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Education
Department of Theory and Policy Studies in Education
The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the
University of Toronto**

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ABSTRACT

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education, Department of Theory and Policy Studies in Education, the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto, 1998

The challenge of Year-Round Education (YRE) in Ontario has been to implement a program which would provide a more balanced amount of time spent in and out of school in order to allow for more continuous learning and to meet the lifestyle needs of today's students, families and educators. The purpose of this study is to document the evolution of a successful Year-Round Education policy making process in the Muskoka Board of Education in Ontario from its initial vision stage through to its implementation.

Based on a review of the literature, thirty interviews were conducted with parents, employees and trustees. The verbal responses to twenty questions were audio-taped, transcribed and analyzed. Data were also collected from a written survey and from documents from the school, the Board of Education, the Ontario Ministry of Education and Training and media reports. As a framework, a conceptual metaphor of a braid represented the interdependence of leadership, ownership and change capacity.

Using a historical perspective, the analysis of the data involved three time frames: the pre-implementation period, the implementation of the policy and the post implementation perspective. Included in the analysis were the perceptions of the participants in this study in relation to the advantages and disadvantages of YRE, the role of leadership of the Principal, the changes in economic and political conditions, the role of geographic location, and the cultural aspects of a tourist area. As well, the study examined the participants' perceptions of the impact of YRE on the community, on family lifestyles and on the academic performance of the students.

This study of Year-Round Education has theoretical, social, and administrative significance. By examining the role of key players and stakeholders in the decision making process, much knowledge was gained concerning policy implementation, change capacity, educational leadership and the consultative process. Ultimately, the relationship between timing and the political process was found to be fundamental in determining whether or not a community would adopt a non-traditional approach to the scheduling of the time that students and educators spend in school.

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The journey towards a doctoral degree began with my parents, Peg and Jim Beatty, who instilled a love of learning and who were role models in their successful efforts to achieve higher levels of education as adults. This experience was enriched by my brother and his family, my in-laws, my extended family, and friends who continue to challenge ways of thinking, yet who accept the uniqueness of independent thought.

Another phase of my journey involved my elementary and secondary education in Owen Sound, Ontario at St. Mary's Catholic School and the OSCVI. As a member of the first wave of "Baby Boomers", I witnessed the resourcefulness of teachers and fellow students when schools were over-crowded and educational materials scarce.

The third phase of my journey spanned a ten year time frame that included the awesome experience of four separate years of study at the University of Western Ontario, Lakeshore Teachers' College, Dalhousie University and the University of Waterloo, as well as summer school and night school Ministry of Education courses.

The next phase of my journey involved my years as an elementary school teacher in two provinces and in four Boards of Education as I followed my husband's career path. Initially fellow teachers encouraged me to pursue a Master of Education degree. But once I became a student at OISE, my love of learning, my family's support, an OECTA / MSSB funded sabbatical and an OISE scholarship launched me into my studies at the Doctoral level.

Along the way, my research in Year-Round Education took me to the Muskoka Board of Education and its resourceful staff. I would especially like to acknowledge the assistance of Dan Patterson, the Principal of Huntsville Public School, Evelyn Brown, a Superintendent and Dusty Papke, the Director of Education at that time.

Now in the final phase of my journey, I am truly indebted to my OISE professors and fellow students who provided much insight into the human component of Educational Administration. I am sincerely grateful to John Davis, my beloved Supervisor, and my committee members Edward Hickox and Joel Weiss. I also acknowledge the support of staff Marion, Rita and Leo, my student cohort group, and friends who continually provided encouragement and who knew when I needed to be reminded that there was a plaque with my name on it waiting to go on the wall of fame.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Over the last decade, the concept of Year-Round Education has been discussed, debated, and intermittently contemplated throughout Ontario from a variety of perspectives. A few school boards have struck committees to study the feasibility of modified school calendars, and newspapers have reported the findings and opinions of the various stakeholders throughout this process. Recently, there was a report that the then Minister of Education and Training supported the idea of YRE and was seriously considering giving the Boards more flexibility in "...picking the time lines that best work for their community" (Globe & Mail, 1996).

Traditionally in Canada, schools have operated on a ten month calendar which was ostensibly designed to accommodate the agricultural needs of farming communities. In the 1920s, 95% of the Ontario population lived on farms and in small towns. Today, the vast majority of students no longer work on farms, even in the summer months. By providing alternative school calendars, Year-Round Education is perceived as one way to improve the delivery of educational services to students in order to provide continuity in learning. The challenge of Year-Round Education (YRE) in Ontario has been to implement programs in varied settings which will meet the lifestyle needs of today's students and their families.

Basically, YRE provides a modified school calendar that allows for shorter periods of instruction, usually 9 to 12 weeks, with more frequent vacation intervals of three to four weeks. A YRE program contains the same number of instructional days as the traditional school calendar, which prior to 1998 was 185 days in Ontario. However, the modified calendar provides a more balanced amount of time spent in and out of school to allow for learning on a more continuous basis. More frequent and shorter vacations throughout the year replace a long summer vacation.

The implementation of YRE policies in some parts of Ontario has proved to be a difficult and complicated process. There were previous attempts to initiate YRE programs in six areas of Ontario. At the time, those projects were discontinued because of strong opposition in the communities. However, one elementary and one secondary program became operational in two different boards in the 1995/96 school year. Two other boards planned to implement programs in the fall of 1996, while another two boards planned YRE programs for the fall of 1997. Nevertheless, political and other obstacles continue to threaten the success of these YRE initiatives.

In the rest of Canada there are only two other provinces that have attempted YRE programs. In British Columbia, feasibility studies of YRE have been commissioned by the provincial government, but to date only one school in Williams Lake has a modified calendar which was not implemented primarily for educational reasons, but was designed to accommodate the logging industry in the community. In Alberta, a high school and a junior high school have implemented modified school calendars. However, there are no programs yet in the other seven Canadian provinces or the Territories.

A study of a successful policy making process with respect to a YRE program in Ontario is timely and provides insight into the whole process of introducing change to a community. By examining the contextual features and the roles of key individuals and stakeholder groups in the decision-making process, much knowledge would be gained about why this policy-making process was successful at a particular point in time.

The study of Year-Round Education has theoretical, social, administrative, and policy making significance. While YRE programs have been a reality in various parts of the United States for many years, they are a relatively new concept in Canada. Moreover, to date, there has been no detailed account of how an Ontario school board was able to implement a YRE policy. If the concept of Year-Round Education continues to gain support in Canada, it is important to examine a successful policy implementation in order to understand the administrative process. It may also provide

useful information and strategies for those communities interested in considering calendar change.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to document the evolution of a successful Year-Round Education policy making process in the Muskoka Board of Education in Ontario from its initial vision stage through to its implementation.

The five areas of interest that were the focus of this study were:

1. The chronology of events in the history of Year-Round Education in the Muskoka Board prior to Board approval of policy initiation in January 1995;
2. The role that the context of the tourist resort area played in the creation and implementation of the Year-Round Education policy;
3. The roles played by the employees, the parents and the trustees in determining the feasibility of the policy prior to implementation;
4. The factors which influenced the trustees to vote unanimously to adopt and implement a Year-Round Education policy and to expand the program the following year;
5. The leadership role of the Principal of the pilot school which most influenced and facilitated the implementation of the YRE policy.

Conceptual Metaphor

As a framework, the evolution of the implementation of a YRE policy in the Muskoka Board of Education in Ontario was compared to that of designing and creating a braid. The three components of the implementation process that became intertwined with each other were leadership, ownership and change capacity which were taken from Dalin's Real Needs Model (1993). This conceptual metaphor of a braid demonstrates the importance of temporal sequence in the policy making process and

at the same time incorporates the roles of the stakeholders, the components of educational change and the cultural context of the community.

In order to better understand the evolution of the Year-Round Education program, each of the three components of this conceptual model will be discussed independently. As well, the interrelationships among the three strands of the braid will be examined in a review of the literature and analyzed in relation to the research data gathered in this study.

THE RESEARCHER AND THE CASE STUDY METHODOLOGY

In the case study venue, the researcher is the instrument used to carry out all aspects of the research. The researcher designs the study, creates the questions that are posed, determines who is interviewed, and analyzes the responses given. The advantage of this procedure is the ultimate degree of consistency with which the data are gathered and analyzed. However, a possible bias is the perspective that the researcher brings to the study.

As much as an attempt was made to view the present study from a neutral perspective, it must be acknowledged that prior to the study there was an existing bias on the part of the researcher. Although not an intention, the researcher's fascination with the concept of YRE may have influenced the study. This may be reflected in the fact that only persons directly involved with the YRE program were interviewed, which resulted in more positive attitudes toward YRE than might have been obtained from random interviews of all members of the community.

However, every effort was made to use procedures that would enhance the trustworthiness of the data. The freedom of bias in the collection of data is demonstrated by the fact that the reporting of the interviews was based solely on the responses of the subjects which were captured retrospectively. Responses were coded and formed into common categories in three separate examinations of the data. As well, the respondents were asked to reflect on the negative as well as the positive

aspects of YRE in the questions that related to the advantages and the disadvantages of the program being studied. The other sources of data, newspaper items, Board reports, and Ministry documents were collected and interpreted from an objective neutral perspective without bias and/or prejudice.

However, the availability of the stakeholders was one limitation to this study. Because the data were collected in August, many of the trustees were away from Muskoka and not available to participate in the study. At the same time, the parents and Board employees most involved in the YRE program were readily accessible in August when the pilot project was in full operation.

Since this is an emergent study of the first YRE program in an elementary school in Ontario, the relatability of the findings to other communities in Ontario is important. The researcher provides "as complete a data base as humanly possible in order to facilitate transferability judgements on the part of others who may wish to apply the study to their own situations" (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, 242). Therefore the degree to which the information gleaned from this study can be transferred to another contextual setting is relative rather than absolute. Regardless of the size of the community being researched, the documentation of the evolution of a successful Year-Round Education policy-making process may provide insight for other educational communities who are contemplating the initial vision stage in the implementation process.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In this chapter, the review of literature will examine research on Year-Round Education, leadership, change capacity, ownership and policy implementation. The emerging concepts from this literature review will provide a focus and direction for this study of the evolution of Year-Round Education in one Ontario Board of Education.

Year-Round Education

Much has been written about Year-Round Education in the United States. Historically, the first YRE school was established in Bluffton, Indiana in 1904 (Kemp, 1995; Glines, 1994). Four other states developed YRE programs in the early 1900s, but were forced to return to a traditional calendar because of the pressures of the Depression and W.W.II (Kemp, 1995; Glines, 1994). Over the years, the three broad areas on which most of the YRE research focused were: (1) financial solution to overcrowding (2) academic achievement and (3) quality of life issues.

In Canada, interest in the concept of YRE can be traced to the periods immediately following World War I and World War II when school populations increased at a faster rate than could be accommodated in existing schools and the economy could not bear construction costs for new buildings. Weiss (1993) reports that there was a renewed interest in YRE in the 1970s and 1980s because of the demand for the construction of new schools to accommodate the growing number of children that resulted from increased birth rates in Canada. However, YRE was thought to be a radical idea that was ahead of its time, and was considered too controversial in those early years. During that time period, the following provincial reports were made:

- 1971 *School Year Modification Study*, Alberta Department of Education
- 1971 *Feasibility Study for the Saskatoon Public Schools*, Saskatchewan
- 1972 *Committee on Year-Round use of Schools*, Ontario Ministry of Education

1988 *School Day: School Year*, British Columbia Commission on Education

1988 *Second Report of the Select Committee on Education*, Ontario

A 1991 *Report of the Year-Round Education Task Force* in Ontario stated an idealistic belief that "learning is a continuous process; therefore the facilities and instructors that provide formal learning should also be made available on a continuous basis." Two years later, in 1993, a Canadian case study by Joel Weiss, *Changing Times, Changing Minds: The Consultation Process in Considering Year-Round Schooling*, examined the factors that contributed to the Durham Board of Education abandoning a YRE policy before it reached the implementation stage.

In the spring of 1991, the Durham Board of Education unanimously voted to implement a multi-track and a single-track YRE pilot project, after having studied the concept for three years. However, the consultation process was hampered in the fall by the timing of school Board elections. Again it became a political issue which was emotionally addressed at public meetings and reported in the media. As a result, the newly elected Board reversed the decision which would have implemented YRE programs the following spring (Weiss, 1993).

This study serves as a catalyst for understanding the reasons why YRE did not succeed elsewhere in Ontario. Three years later, in 1994, the London Board of Education ran into similar problems when YRE programs at the secondary level were proposed immediately prior to a school board election. However, by 1995 it was estimated that there were approximately 1500 students in YRE programs in Canada (Kemp, 1995).

Community consultation has proven to be an important factor in the implementation of YRE. In 1989, York Region established a Year Round School Committee for an "in-house process of information gathering and consultation" (Weiss, 1993, 25). The committee involved 18 employees at different levels but did not include community stakeholders. As a result, a group of York Region parents formed an "Anti-Modified School Year Coalition" to oppose the venture. Because the timing coincided

with the school Board elections, it became a political issue; public meetings were disruptive, and the Board voted unanimously to discontinue the process (Weiss, 1993).

In Ontario, 1995/96 was the first year of implementation of Year-Round Education programs; an elementary YRE initiative in Huntsville and a secondary YRE program in Niagara Falls for adult students. In the school year 1996/97, a YRE program began in an elementary school in the Durham Board. In the fall of 1997, there will be a program in London at a special needs secondary school and the possibility of one or two programs in the Simcoe Board. As well, the Sudbury Board of Education is discussing the possibility of YRE programs.

There are several models of Year-Round Education programs. (See Figure 1 on page 9.) In the present study, the YRE program involves a 45/15 single track schedule, which means that the students are in school or on-track for approximately 45 days (9 weeks) and on vacation or off-track for 15 days (3 weeks) continuously throughout the year. There are also different combinations of on-track and off-track days, such as 90/30, 60/20, and 60/15. When one school accommodates both the traditional and YRE calendars simultaneously, as in this case study, it is called a dual track school.

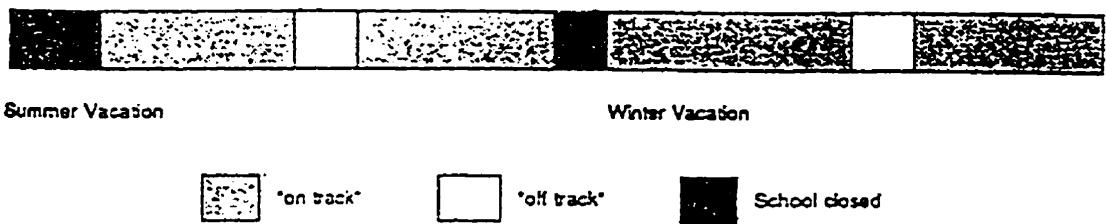
Research has found that in YRE programs which operate on a 45/15 track, there is marked improvement in both student and teacher attendance (Shields & LaRocque, 1995; White, 1987). It has been reported that YRE calendars have a positive influence on the drop out rate of adolescents (Peltier, 1991; White, 1987). This relates to the lower incidence of teacher burnout in the YRE schools (Kinsella, 1989). Shorter periods of teaching followed by frequent vacations appear to be beneficial to the health and well-being of students and teachers (Kneese, 1995; Brekke, 1992; Ballenger, Kirschenbaum & Poimbeauf, 1987).

The benefits of YRE found in the literature contribute positively to the implementation process. A study in San Diego addressed staff satisfaction and found improved discipline of students and reduced vandalism in YRE schools over a 22 year period. (Greenfield, 1994; Peltier, 1991). The University of Central Florida reported that

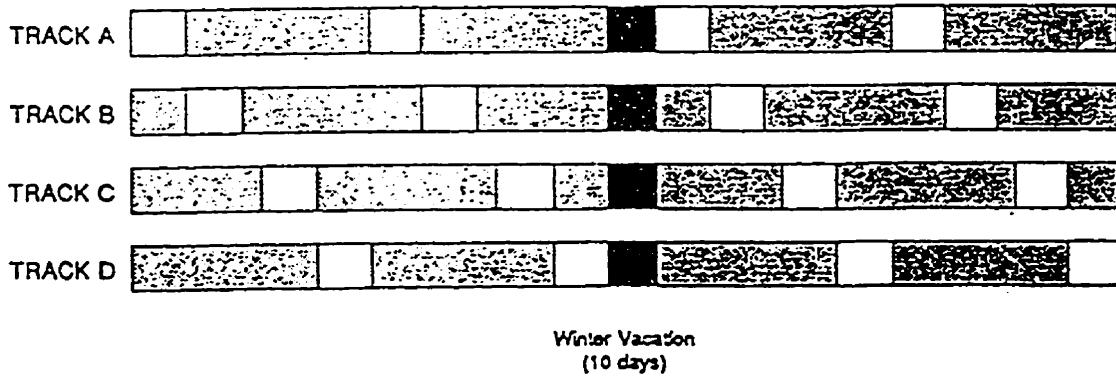
FIGURE 1

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

YEAR-ROUND SCHOOL	A year-round school provides an educational programme throughout the calendar year, thereby increasing the use of facilities. The total amount of time individual teachers and students spend in school, however, generally does not differ from current requirements.
TRACK	The term track refers to a group of students and teachers which is in school or on break at the same time.
ON-TRACK	The term on-track refers to the period of time when a given group of students and teachers is in class.
OFF-TRACK	The term off-track refers to the period of time when a given group of students and teachers is on break.
INTERSESSION	The term intersession refers to additional instructional time offered to students who are off-track, much as summer school is offered within the traditional school year.
SINGLE-TRACK	A single-track calendar has all the students and teachers in school or on break at the same time (but the schedule of in-class and on-break periods differs from the traditional school schedule), as shown below.



MULTI-TRACK A multi-track calendar has the student and teacher population divided into groups (tracks), usually four or five. Each group of students and teachers has a separate schedule of school days and break days. There are several ways to design a multi-track schedule, one of which is shown below.



stakeholders, students, parents and teachers were overwhelmingly satisfied with YRE calendars (Mussatti, 1995). The reasons for parents' positive responses to YRE found by Shields and LaRocque included "the perceived high quality of the instruction, the overall quality of the program, the amount of perceived student learning, increased individual attention, and decreased boredom during vacations" (1995, 13). Parents and teachers in all jurisdictions reported that vacation expenses were lower with off-season travel at reduced rates and less crowded facilities or tourist attractions (Perry, 1991, 14).

In the literature it has been found that there have been improved outcomes for students with learning exceptionalities who participate in a YRE program. Perry (1991) found that YRE actually benefits students who are considered to be at-risk academically. While students appear to benefit from continuous learning in a seamless school year calendar, Shields and LaRocque report that "Year-Round Schooling does not have a negative impact on student learning, and often may have a positive impact" (1995, 4).

At one time it was thought that YRE would benefit only the special needs children who had difficulty retaining information after the long summer break. However, further research in the last ten years supports the theory that all children benefit from uninterrupted learning in different degrees, depending on the memory skills of each student (Walsh, 1997, 15).

In many of the studies reported in the literature, there is a positive correlation between Year-Round Education and student outcomes. Most American studies indicate that reading, language and math test scores improved more in YRE programs than in traditional schools (Kneese, 1995; Worthen & Zsriray, 1994; Winters, 1994; Alcorn, 1992). The reasons given for this improvement relate to theories concerning the retention rate and the learning curve. Ballinger, Kirschenbaum & Poimbeauf (1987) suggest that students in YRE are less likely to forget what they have learned because they have shorter and more frequent holidays than students in traditional calendar programs. Therefore it is not necessary for teachers to review previously taught concepts as often and they can concentrate on teaching new material (Peltier, 1991).

Teachers say that with the traditional calendar, almost the entire month of September is spent in review; under the year-round schedule, many students virtually pick up where they left off" (Grescoe, 1995, 77).

However, other research suggests that information which is not repeated is forgotten during the first few days. Hintzman, in referring to the "classic retention function" which refers to the rate of forgetting over time, states; "While 72 percent had been forgotten after two days, 79 percent was forgotten after 31 days. The rate of forgetting information over longer periods is much slower" (1978, 23). Forgetting occurs quite rapidly at first and becomes slower over longer intervals of time. According to this theory, the rate of forgetting would be practically the same after a holiday of one week as it would be after one month. Yet according to Eisler & Jenish, one of the benefits of YRE programs in twenty schools in Alberta is the "reduction of so-called summer learning loss" (1997, 57). The same MacLean's article states that the principal of a special needs high school in London "believes that shorter holidays should significantly reduce her students' learning loss" when the program is underway in August of 1997.

Another theory suggests that academic achievement improves because the schools are using YRE as a catalyst for restructuring and as a result there are changes in the curriculum materials and instructional practices. Greenfield (1994) argues that "experiences of YRE programs confirmed that the success of a program is a function of its context" (1996, 261). If teachers believe that the students remember previously taught material, they spend less time reviewing old material and as a result, the students enjoy the learning experience more which is reflected in improved test scores.

One study reports that the results of standardized tests given to students using the traditional calendar and students using a YRE calendar indicate no significant difference in academic achievement (Mussatti, 1981). On the other hand, Peltier states that "... recent research does indicate student academic gains in the year-round schools" (1991, 122). However, in the most recent Canadian study, Shields and LaRocque found that the literature affirms that "the impact is generally positive rather than neutral or negative" (1997, 5). Even when it is reported that there is no difference

in the academic outcomes of students in YRE and traditional programs, this should be considered a positive finding considering the changes and the positive benefits to student attitudes and behaviour that were experienced. It is important to note that in the United States, 41% of YRE schools operate on single track schedules because of educational benefits. "In the long run, it may be the educational benefits of Year-Round Education... that will cause it to continue to spread" (Alvarez, et al, 1994, 4).

The disadvantages of YRE reported in the literature include the need for air conditioning in the hot summer months, the potential problem of conflicting school schedules for families whose children attend different schools or whose parents teach in other schools, the possible interruption in usual summer family activities and the lack of availability of day care facilities for the vacation weeks in the off season (Kirman, 1996; Glines, 1994; Sardo-Rooney, 1992). As well, there is a professional development problem for teachers who do not have an extended period in the summer to take university credits (Kirman, 1996; Glines, 1994).

Other disadvantages include the additional expense of transportation that is incurred in the non-traditional teaching times (Glines, 1994; Peltier, 1991). It has also been found that YRE increases the work load for administrative personnel (Shields & LaRocque, 1995). Perry relates some of the disadvantages of YRE to the unwillingness of communities to adapt to change. "The barriers that predominate are those of habit and tradition - vacations, student summer employment, collective agreements - with less consideration of issues relative to learning..." (1991: 15).

Glines (94) outlines several philosophical areas in which people just do not want to break from tradition. These people do not want the traditional summer to change and believe that children have a need to be outdoors in the summer sunshine. Glines (1994) mentions that tradition is a concern of families who spend their summer months at the family cottages or on extended family vacations travelling in various parts of the world. He also acknowledges that camping associations and theme parks have voiced their opposition to Year-Round Schooling and have established a strong lobby group

because of the potential loss in revenue and reduction in the number of students available to work in the summer months.

Leadership

Leadership is an important factor in educational administration research, especially in studies of change, policy implementation, school improvement and effective schools (Clark et al., 1984). The topic of leadership has been one of the most researched subjects in the field of educational administration since the 1950s (Bass, 1990). Yet, it may be one of the least understood areas in the social sciences, for even in the 1990s there is little agreement about an exact definition of leadership. Rather it is thought of as a vague term that includes both administration and management (Hodgkinson, 1991).

This conceptual confusion in leadership studies has been compounded by an over-abundance of types of leadership that continue to surface. These include charismatic leadership, normative leadership, situational leadership, contingency leadership, transactional leadership, instructional leadership, transformational leadership and environmental leadership. Regardless of which label is employed, Schein believes that it is imperative that we not overlook the "tremendous importance of leadership, especially at the beginning of any group process" (1992, 226).

Educational administrators, if they are to become true leaders, must take change as positive challenges to improve the schools and the school districts of this nation. To lead, an effective leader must have followers and must also have developed a strong system of diverse leadership (Herman & Herman, 1994, 1).

Leadership, in the context of (YRE), includes the roles of directors of education, superintendents, and school principals, as well as the perceptions of leadership of the teachers and stakeholders in the community. According to Fullan, successful leaders are "responsible for making vision-building a collective exercise" (1992, 20). Louis & Miles support this by stating that it is critical to have "a strong consensus (shared vision) and strong support from key stakeholders inside and outside the school" (1991,

75). Yet Schein states that, "visions do not have to be very clear or complete. They have to provide a path and a process of learning to assure the members of the organization that constructive change is possible" (1992, 333).

Along with vision, the emphasis on "personal and individual growth and facilitating interaction between teachers appears to be an important and essential ingredient of leadership that contributes to collaboration, motivation and commitment" (À Campo, 1993, 124). Hodgkinson believes that the leadership role has become "a function of self-knowledge and of values" (1991, 16). According to Schein, effective leaders are perpetual learners who have:

- 1) new levels of perception and insight into the realities of the world and also into themselves,
- 2) extraordinary levels of motivation to go through the inevitable pain of learning and change [tenacity],
- 3) the emotional strength to manage their own and others' anxiety as learning and change become more a way of life,
- 4) new skills in analyzing and changing cultural assumptions,
- 5) the willingness and ability to involve others and to elicit their participation, and
- 6) the ability to learn the assumptions of a whole new organizational culture (1992, 391).

In 1995, Sergiovanni summarized leadership styles in educational administration into three distinct theories. 'Pyramid Theory', involves top-down decision making in which the direction of the organization is determined solely by the leader. 'Railroad Theory', as this name implies, involves parallel lines of authority in a decentralized leadership mode, with some limited involvement in decision-making. The third alternative, 'High Performance Theory' involves the participation of all stakeholders in the decision-making process.

A view of leadership has also evolved to include transactional and transformational processes, instructional leadership expertise, and thinking like an organizational designer in the context of organizational learning (Leithwood et al., 1992). The focus of transformational leadership of principals in Leithwood's work operates on the assumption that "leadership only manifests itself in the context of

change, and the nature of that change is a crucial determinant of the forms of leadership that will prove to be helpful" (1994, 499). Schein reinforces the inter-relationship of leadership and change when he states that "the most important point is that leadership starts the change process in the first place" (1992, 332).

Shields and LaRocque reflect critically on the reasons for the failure of a YRE project in British Columbia. In their outline of the challenges for leadership in the implementation of a YRE program, the role of the leader is seen as providing:

... direction without being prescriptive, resources without imposing control, flexibility while maintaining accountability, support without interfering, information without shaping the decision: taking a position without silencing or marginalizing others: and confronting inequities without fear of standing alone (1997, 7).

This collaborative leadership approach allows for effective communication and the 'shared vision' which are essential for the development of ideal school cultures (Fullan, 1992). If the job of school leadership is to develop a sense of ownership (Dalin, 1993, 14); then principals may have to help teachers and others involved in the change process to understand and internalize a new concept such as Year-Round Education.

Change Capacity

Change - real change - comes from the inside out. It doesn't come from hacking at the leaves of attitude and behaviour with quick fix personality ethic techniques. It comes from striking at the root - the fabric of our thought, the fundamental, essential paradigms, which give definition to our character and create the lens through which we see the world (Covey, S. in Oakley & Krug, 1991, 239).

In today's society, one of the few things that has remained constant is change. Dalin refers to change as "a collective process, one that demands partnership and collaboration" (1993, 20), and, as well, states that change itself "deals with changes in participants' attitudes and behaviour as individuals and as partners in joint ventures" (1993, 130). Herman & Herman outline three categories of organizational change which are "optional change, incremental change, and transformational change" (1994, 3). The differences stem from the sources of motivation for change, with "optional change"

being initiated by employees rather than Board mandated, "incremental change" being that which is initiated by stakeholders to make minor improvements to a presently good system. "Transformational change" is defined as modifications initiated by internal or external forces that demand radical changes. Purkey & Smith believe that a balance between "an incentive-based and a mandated school change project seems the most workable" (1985, 367).

Hopkins et al. (1994) recognize that change manifests itself in two forms, either incremental or planned. They also identify two sources of change, internal or external, which can be found below in Figure 2. Together these styles and sources of change interact to produce a basic typology of change. The type of change, especially planned change, has implications for the implementation of Year-Round Education.

FIGURE 2

TYPOLOGY OF CHANGE

	Internal	External
Planned	Purposive	Innovation
Incremental	Personal Development and Growth	Environmental

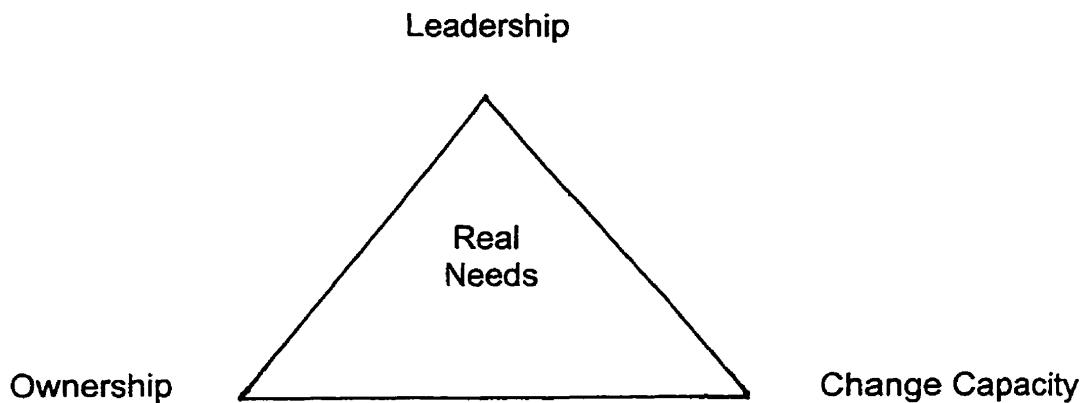
(Hopkins et al., 1994, 22)

It is critical, in any attempt to change the school culture, to influence that culture at the individual and group levels (Dalin, 1993). However, the maturity of the educators and the stability of the school community also determine the school's readiness to adapt to change and its capacity for change. Associated with this are many internal and external factors that impact on a school and cause its culture to continually change its

capacity to deal with these challenges. According to Louis, change only occurs when the environment accepts the "existence of anomalies, as an acceptable alternative to existing practice" (1994, 14).

Although no single theory by itself can explain the success or failure of innovations, Dalin reports that research on the change process in schools found that the minimum conditions for change in order to meet the 'real needs' of the stakeholders were "ownership, change capacity and leadership" (1993, 13). Figure 3 demonstrates the triangular relationship between these conditions for change.

FIGURE 3 THE "REAL NEEDS" MODEL



(Dalin, 1993, 14)

The three conditions are interdependent on each other in order for the real needs to be met. Capacity for change involves all the stakeholders and as Fullan reminds us, "...if it is to be effective, capacity for change cannot reside only at central leadership level" (1991, 214). Change capacity is also related to the competence of educators to challenge their own capacity for personal growth.

Regardless of the source of the innovation, leaders must model their own willingness to change in order to encourage others to change (Oakley & Krug, 1991). "The most effective change in school culture happens when principals, teachers, and students model the values and the beliefs important to the institution" (Stolp, 1994, 3). An important part of the culture of the school according to Dalin is the fact that "schools differ considerably in their capacity for change, the difference being partly due to their innovation history and partly due to how tightly or loosely coupled it is (1993, 15).

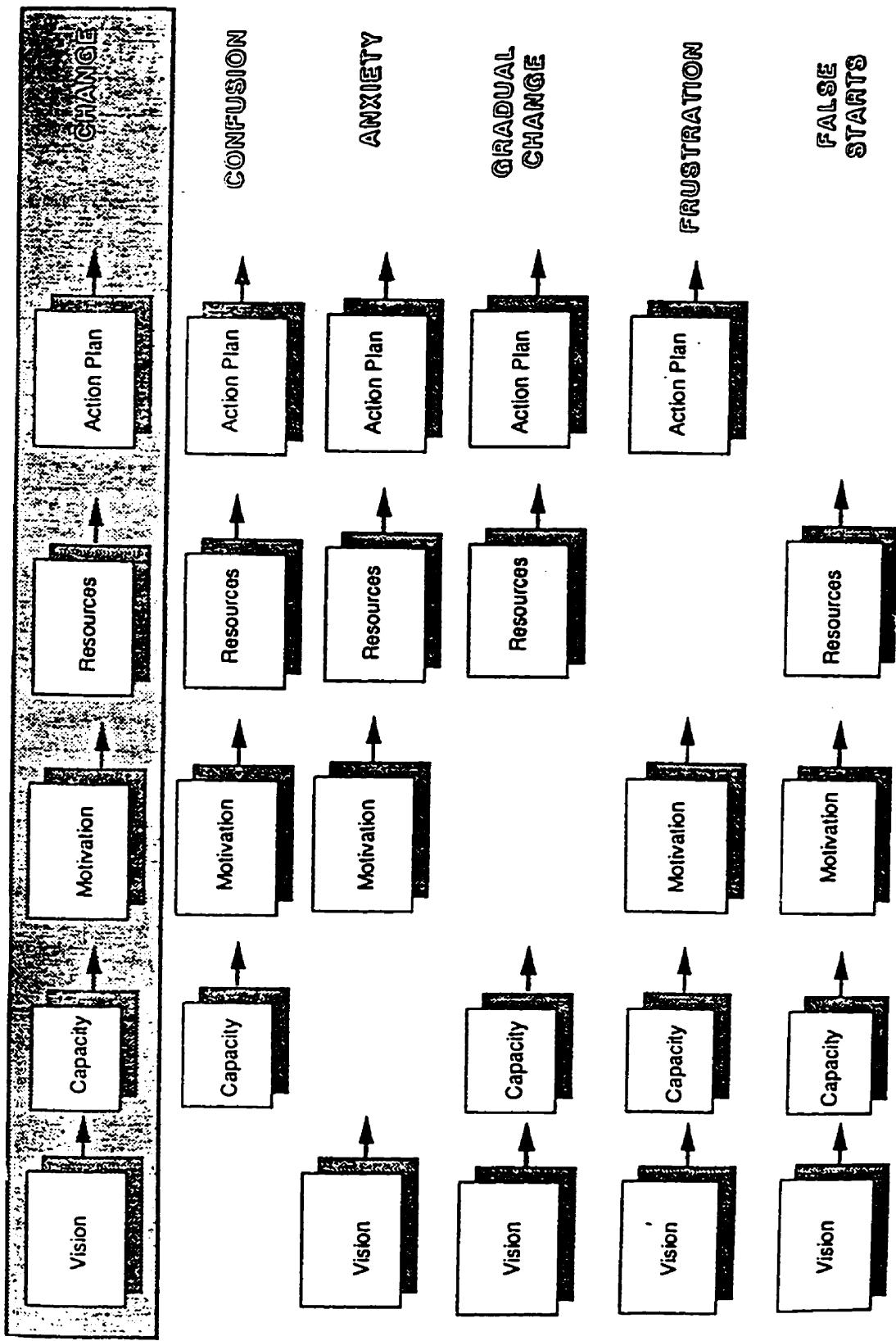
The capacity for change varies from total rejection at one extreme to complete acceptance at the opposite extreme with a range of degrees in between. Oakley & Krug believe that the attitudes of people in an organization can be renewed, if there is "fundamental paradigm shift in the way people think, behave and manage. The shift is from being change-resistant to change-friendly" (1991, 122).

Effective communication strategies are needed in order to influence parents and teachers who are reluctant to change. In implementing a YRE program, Dlugosh offered the following suggestions for moving through the change process:

- (1) Continue to provide an education for the community about alternatives available for scheduling learning time for students.
- (2) Offer evidence about the advantages and disadvantages of the alternative time patterns and their impact on student achievement and student attitude.
- (3) Establish a forum for a dialogue about the function and the purpose (mission) of school in a post-industrial society; a society where production time is measured in fractions of seconds rather than days, or months, or years (1994, 10).

In the literature on change management, (Figure 4, page 19), the San Diego County Office of Education identified five components necessary to produce change as: "vision, capacity, motivation, resources and action plan" (1995, NAYRE). These are an important part of the conceptual model for this study, since the implementation of a YRE policy is closely associated with the components of change. Related closely to these are Fullan's six key themes in the implementation and restructuring process.

FIGURE 4
A MODEL OF MANAGING COMPLEX CHANGE



(NAYRE, 1995, 6)

They include "vision-building, evolutionary planning, innovative-thinking and empowerment, staff development and resource assistance, as well as monitoring and problem-coping" (1991, 82).

As these changes abound in schools today, Fullan designates the district administrator as the "single most important individual for setting the expectations and tone for the pattern of change within a local district" (1991, 191). Later in his book, Fullan also states that the most important task of the district administrator is not to put an innovation into practice, "but to build the capacity of the district and the schools to handle any and all innovations" (1991, 214).

In conclusion, although there are various models and theories concerning the role of change in educational administration, it is important to reiterate that no single theory by itself can explain the success or failure of the change process.

There can be no one recipe for change, because unlike ingredients for a cake, people are not standard to begin with, and the damned thing is that they change as you work with them in response to their experiences and their perceptions (Fullan, 1991, 214).

Ownership

In the conceptual metaphor, the third strand, ownership, is interwoven in the braid with leadership and change capacity. The process of change is partly determined by the degree to which that participants develop a sense of ownership of the ideas and of the change process itself by feeling part of the new process. This happens when individuals trust each other enough to talk about school realities. Open communication facilitates the development of common vision and commitment to shared goals which are components of the change process (Hargreaves, 1994).

Ownership is viewed as a shared belief and a common vision. When a new concept such as YRE is first presented to a community, initial reactions range from total rejection of the idea to initial acceptance of the possibility of developing alternate ways of constructing school calendars. The stakeholders who comprehended the philosophy and purposes of YRE were more ready for change, while those who did not fully

understand the concept, were more resistant to change. Herman & Herman list the eight stages of an individual's resistance to any type of change as "denial, defensiveness, interest, involvement, acceptance, internalization, adaptation and ownership" (1994, 6). Leaders must be aware of the pattern of stages and know how to isolate each one in order to overcome resistance to change.

According to Brekke, "staff and community involvement are key factors in developing and implementing YRE in an efficacious manner (1995, 81). Therefore it was imperative for the leaders to provide information to the trustees, the employees and the stakeholders through community meetings and the distribution of relevant literature. As well, leaders must provide opportunities for the stakeholders to be part of the decision-making process in order to give them a sense of ownership.

Staff development is also plays a vital role in eliciting the cooperation and support of the employees which is important to the success of implementing a YRE program. "Administrators, teachers, and classified employees must be deeply involved in the planning stage because their understanding and acceptance of YRE is vital to its success" (Brekke, 1995, 81). Staff must approach this with a sense of openness to new ideas in order to develop an ownership of the process of change.

Once stakeholders accept and internalize the concept of YRE, the potential is there for them to become a united force that can exert power and influence within the community. Whether approaching ownership from either a top-down or a bottom-up perspective, it is recognized that power can be exercised by members at all levels within an organization. "Political behaviour may operate at the level of the individual, but just as frequently involves coalitions of people that share a common goal or agenda and come together to make something happen" (French and Raven, 1959, 346).

However, not everyone agrees with the concept of YRE. Kemp states, "Ideas, like fleas, jump from person to person, but they don't bite everyone" (1995, 63). Where no ownership of the concept is felt, individuals and groups who have strong beliefs in maintaining the traditional approach to school calendars can exert power and influence

which is oppositional in nature. This can be reduced and possibly avoided by offering a choice of both traditional and YRE calendars to the students in the same school. At all times all of the stakeholders must be kept abreast of what is available, be provided with opportunities to get involved in the decision-making process, and be assured of having their personal preferences honoured.

Ownership, along with leadership and change capacity are intertwined in the conceptual metaphor of the braid which provides the framework of this study of policy implementation. While ownership implies commitment to the idea of YRE, administrators must be aware and acknowledge that the acceptance of YRE in a community is a complex process that involves the reflection of both individual and group perceptions as well as the integration of the elements of leadership and change capacity.

Policy Implementation

The concept of policy-making, according to Downey, is a complex and often difficult process that varies in its own pattern of development with each new venture.

Policies, as instruments of governance - are (1) the board's authoritative choices from among society's competing needs and demands; and (2) the board's guidelines for the persons who serve the educational system - including the board itself (1988, 18).

Pal states that "the formal purpose of public policy is to enhance public good" (1992, 178). But how is the initial policy formulated? With respect to the Board's primary function of establishing policy, Downey outlines the major stages of policy-making, five of which are used as the conceptual model of this study. In the phases of the policy-making process there are different methods of analysis which coincide with the functions of policy analysis. Figure 5 on page 23 offers an overview of these phases of the policy making process. It is important to note that some of the functions serve to inform more than one phase of the policy-making process.

In the initiation phase, a method of environmental scanning is used to inform the Board of emerging trends and to identify any discrepancy or gap between present policy and the environment of the community. Current policies are reviewed and assessments are used to take an inventory of the community's perception of unmet needs with the focus on determining the policy needs.

FIGURE 5**THE POLICY MAKING PROCESS**

Phases of the Process	Functions of Policy Analysis
1. Initiation	Determining Policy Needs
2. Creation	Crafting Alternatives
3. Testing	Estimating Consequences
4. Choice	Facilitating Judgment
5. Installation	Strategizing Implementation

(Downey, 1988, 72)

In the creation phase, policy alternatives are generated and clarified in a form that allows for testing and comparison with relevant information. This addresses the problem setting, establishes a context setting and investigates comparable data about alternative choices. Ideally, it could become an opportunity to incorporate creative thought into crafting alternatives from persons who will be affected by the policy.

In the testing phase, the alternative policies are tested for feasibility through a process of estimating their strengths and weaknesses otherwise known as robustness. By developing composite measures of strengths, uncertainty can be reduced and the Board can better estimate the consequences.

In the choice phase, the alternative policies are synthesized in terms of the positive and negative consequences. At this stage, it is important for the decision makers to seek consensus and to make every attempt to avoid public conflict. It is important that the data are put in order of priority and presented in realistic terms to facilitate the judgment of the Board in order to make more informed choices.

In the installation phase, the chosen policy undergoes the implementation process. There are numerous variables that affect implementation, some of which are the scale and complexity of the change, the level of commitment of the stakeholders, the contextual suitability and stability of the environment, the function of leadership, the extent of community participation in decision-making, the availability of expertise, and the potentiality of political implications.

Well before the time for installation has arrived, indeed before the policy-making process is initiated, thought should be given to the potential problems of implementation and how these are to be overcome (Downey, 1988, 98).

In the implementation process, it is essential to deal with negative reactions and skepticism as constructively as possible. Pal states that there are limited expectations that policies will be implemented in situations "where principles differ, where problem definitions are widely divergent, where actions have incentives that impede, delay and frustrate" (1992, 176). Using open and direct policies, inviting dialogue in the form of problem-solving discussions, and welcoming ideas and suggestions would remove some of the skepticism (Dalin, 1993). Offering alternative solutions and a range of choices allows the stakeholders to make informed decisions about their roles in the process. Once there is agreement on the goals of a policy such as YRE, "the projected end-state that the policy is meant to create becomes an internal benchmark against which success or failure may be measured" (Pal, 1992, 10).

While there are various conceptual models that help to improve our understanding of a policy, Allison (1969) outlined three models, one of which addresses the political implications of the policy implementation process. The Rational Policy Model looks at

any act as a matter of choice. The Organizational Process Model views standard procedures or patterns of behaviour as deliberate choices with outcomes that benefit the organizational good. The Bureaucratic Politics Model looks at behaviour as the outcome of a bargaining process of people at different levels of hierarchy within an organization. In this model, each person's ability to be successful in advancing an issue depends on that person's individual power within the group.

In the policy implementation process, power and influence are important issues. French and Raven address the role of organizational politics. They outline the conditions conducive to political behaviour which they define as "an expression of opinion and debate" (1959, 345), and the sources of top-down and bottom-up influence. Since political behaviour is inevitable within School Boards, the strategies that are proposed to facilitate the management of power and influence include separating the "veil of rationality from political behaviour" (1959, 345). It is recommended that in order to maintain a sense of trust with stakeholders, managers must keep issues that are political in nature out in the open.

In the policy making, Carol Weiss summarizes the stages of decision making as "identifying the problem, canvassing for alternative solutions, weighing the relative advantages and disadvantages of each alternative, selecting a solution, implementing the solution, and evaluating the results" (1980, 141). Regardless of the terminology used in the literature, identifying and resolving the educational problems involved in the effective implementation of policy decisions can be a difficult and complex process.

In conclusion, the literature review for this study focussed on research in the separate areas of Year-Round Education, leadership, change capacity, ownership and policy implementation. In the field of educational administration, leadership, ownership and change capacity are inextricably intertwined like the three strands of a braid. They are interdependent on each other for continuity, and a diversion of any one of them affects the future of the others. Together they play integral roles in determining the success of all educational policies, including Year-Round Education.

CHAPTER 3

THE METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The design for this research was a case study based on the stated areas of interest, as well as upon issues and themes that emerged during the research period. The purpose of the case study approach was to gather information rather than to test a hypothesis (Dixon, Bouma, & Atkinson, 1987). Data were gathered from narratives based upon structured interviews, a survey that required the interviewees to list the five most important factors that contributed to the implementation of the Year-Round Education program, and information gathered from document analysis.

As stated previously, the purpose of this study is to document the evolution of a successful Year-Round Education policy-making process in the Muskoka Board of Education in Ontario from its initial vision stage through to its implementation. The following five areas of interest were the focus of this study:

1. The chronology of events in the history of Year-Round Education in the Muskoka Board prior to Board approval of policy initiation in January 1995;
2. The role that the context of the tourist resort area played in the creation and implementation of the Year-Round Education policy;
3. The roles played by the employees, the parents and the trustees in determining the feasibility of the policy prior to implementation;
4. The factors which influenced the trustees to vote unanimously to adopt and implement a Year-Round Education policy and to expand the program the following year and
5. The leadership role of the Principal of the pilot school which most influenced and facilitated the implementation of the YRE policy.

The Case Study and Its Rationale

A key element of the methodology of this case study was the concentrated focus on the study group with no comparison being made with another group (Dixon, Bouma, & Atkinson, 1987). Researchers employ the case study method when they wish to portray the essential characteristics, behaviours, and consequences of social behaviour which give structure to the social reality of the way human beings act and think in particular settings (Anderson, 1990). By using the case study method, the researcher can clarify concerns raised in the stated research questions, and provide a contextual background based upon the respondents' experiences (Seidman, 1991). This approach allows the culture of a setting to be defined by identifying reasons, intentions, norms and values of the social group being researched (Hughes, 1990).

This case study approach not only allowed the researcher to find answers, but also to explore additional questions through a 'snow-balling' procedure in which "candidates for interviewing became apparent as the process moved along" (Weiss, 1993, 31). As participants were interviewed, they were asked to recommend the names of other employees, parents or trustees who had been involved in the implementation process and who would be available and interested in participating in the study.

Site Selection

Huntsville Public School was the site selected for this study. It is an elementary school located in the Muskoka Board of Education in Ontario. The site selection was based on the following criteria:

- 1) an elementary school with students in Kindergarten to Grade 8,
- 2) a successfully implemented Year-Round Education Program,
- 3) the Principal agreed to my presence in the school, and
- 4) the Board agreed to allow me to interview trustees, employees and parents.

Once the actual research site was selected, approval was sought through a formal application process in order to gain access to it in August, 1996 (Appendix E).

Data Sources: Interviews

Separate interview sessions were conducted with ten employees, ten parents, and ten trustees, for a total of thirty interviews. The sample of employees included five teachers, a school secretary, the Vice Principal, the Principal, and, as well, the Area Superintendent and the Director of the Muskoka Board of Education. The Principal of the school contacted staff members and submitted the names of those who agreed to be interviewed. Preference was given to the teachers who actually worked in the YRE program.

The sample of parents was selected much differently. A newsletter that went home at the beginning of August announced the research study and requested any parents who were interested in being interviewed to inform the school directly themselves or through their children. Parents were also met by the researcher at the end of the school day when they were picking up their children and asked personally if they wished to participate in the study. The first ten parents who agreed to participate and whose children had been in the YRE program for more than one year were selected to be interviewed.

Selection of the trustees was dependent upon their availability in the Muskoka region for personal interviews in August, 1996. The Chairperson of the Board contacted present and former trustees to solicit their cooperation in being interviewed. More than ten trustees volunteered to talk with the researcher, but preference was given to trustees who had been involved throughout the whole process of (YRE) policy making from the late 1980s to the present time.

Background of the Employees

The ten employees in this study included three male and seven female employees. A summary of this information can be found in Table 1 of Appendix A. There was a cross section of types of positions which included; a primary teacher, a full-time junior teacher, a half-time junior teacher, an intermediate teacher, the Vice-

Principal who was half-time in administration as well as half-time junior teacher, the Principal, a school secretary, a consultant, a Superintendent, and the Director of Education. Half of the positions would be considered administrative; the five non-administrative jobs were held by female teachers and staff. The number of years of experience of these employees with the Muskoka Board ranged from a minimum of three and a half years to a maximum of thirty years.

The employees interviewed were the key educators and support staff in the YRE project. The three employees who worked at the Board office had been directly involved in the implementation process. The Director and Superintendent were instrumental in supporting the program and had provided continuous direction to the Principal throughout the process. The consultant interviewed had been the psychometrician who had conducted an evaluation of the program during the first year of operation. While surveying the students, the parents, the staff, the trustees and members of the community, the consultant had gained valuable insight into the YRE program, a discussion of which can be found in a later chapter.

The staff at the school who were surveyed also played key roles in the evolution of the program. The Principal had been involved since the late 1980s, while the Vice Principal joined the staff at the beginning of the project and had been an integral part of the first year team in the administration of the program. In the second year he taught the junior YRE class in a half-time capacity.

The teacher who had taught the single YRE class during the first year was interviewed. However she had returned to a traditional class in the second year because she was travelling to Australia in January as part of a teacher exchange program. The other educators interviewed included the primary, junior and half time intermediate YRE teachers who had taught in the traditional program in the first year. The secretary who had worked at the school for nine years was also interviewed and provided a valuable perspective to the process.

Background of the Parents

The ten parents interviewed in this study included two fathers and eight mothers of students from the age of seven to thirteen, in grades two to seven inclusive. There were five families who had one student in the YRE program, four families with two students in the program and one family with three students in the program. There were a total of sixteen students involved, with five students entering their first year of the program and eleven students returning to the second year of the program. Table 2 in Appendix A provides further information.

The parents interviewed were all knowledgeable about Year-Round Education because they had been involved in the first year of the program. In the one family where the child had not been in the program the first year, the mother was a teacher at the school in the traditional program and had gained knowledge of the program from that perspective. Many other parents of students who were entering their first year of the YRE program responded to the request for parents to interview, but preference was given to second year parents.

Half of the parents interviewed had more than one child in the YRE program. In all the families who had only one child in the program, there were other siblings who were either too young or too old for the grades involved. Although most of the grades were represented in the interviewing process, there were no parents of students in the first and eighth grades in the interview sample. This was a result of the snowballing process which inadvertently missed the parents of students in the youngest and oldest grades.

Years of Service of the Trustees

Three male and seven female trustees participated in the study. Their number of years of experience with the Muskoka Board ranged from a minimum of one year to a maximum of twenty years. There was a balanced cross-section of present and past trustees with four former trustees from the late 1980s era, three present 1996 trustees and three trustees who served from the 1980s to 1996. Table 3 in Appendix A provides

a summary of this information. The person with the most experience on the Board, twenty years, was also self-admittedly the most strongly opposed to the whole concept of YRE when it was first presented to the Board until she retired from office at the end of the last term in November of 1994. Another former trustee had been one of the most active advocates of YRE and had attended a conference of the National Association of Year-Round Education in San Diego in February of 1990.

The remainder of the trustees who were interviewed were not quite as extreme in their views towards YRE, but generally tended to be in favour of the concept. There were discrepancies in the trustees' knowledge and understanding of YRE depending on their years of trustee experience and where they resided within the Muskoka Board of Education. Generally the trustees with the most experience had more background knowledge and provided more of a historical perspective. However, the three participants who had been both former and present trustees gave the best overview of the implementation process and could readily compare and contrast the different stages in the evolution of YRE in Muskoka. Because the Board encompasses such a large area of land, trustees who resided closer to Huntsville tended to be more knowledgeable about the details of the YRE program and more aware of the current status of the number of students enrolled in the expanded program at the beginning of the 1996 school year.

In summary of the interview sample, there were three groups of participants including ten employees, ten parents and ten trustees. The employees had varied background experiences, which included a direct or indirect involvement with the YRE program at Huntsville Public School. The parents represented a cross-section of the families who had children who were enrolled in the program since its inception in 1995. The trustees who participated in the study had served on the Muskoka Board from one to twenty years and represented taxpayers from various parts of the massive county. All thirty participants volunteered to partake in the study and were eager to share their views on the implementation of the YRE program.

The Interview Schedule

Throughout the month of August, 1996, the participants in the study were contacted by telephone and appointments were scheduled at their convenience. Ten interviews were conducted in an average week, with a maximum of three interviews on any given day. The interviews occurred on weekdays, usually throughout the mornings and afternoons and on one occasion, in the evening.

The interviews for this study included a survey (Appendix B) that required the participants to list factors that they felt contributed to the creation of the YRE policy and, as well, twenty structured questions (Appendix C) that were formulated by the researcher. The questions were based on a review of the literature, the objectives of the study, and suggestions made at the research proposal hearing. Identical questions were posed to the employees, the parents and the trustees, with the exception of the first and last questions which dealt with information that related specifically to the particular group of respondents.

The Location and Duration of Interviews

The interviews were conducted in a variety of locations. A room was provided for the researcher's use at the Muskoka Board of Education in Bracebridge, and two employees and four trustees were interviewed there. At Huntsville Public School, the health room was made available and eight employees, ten parents, and three trustees were interviewed there. One employee was interviewed in the school library, another in the office of the school, while the tenth employee preferred to answer the questions in written form. Two trustees were interviewed at their homes and one trustee at a business office.

The range of time required for the interviews was between forty-five minutes and an hour and a half. The average length of time for an interview was an hour. At the beginning of the interview, the respondents were invited to give a brief history of their involvement with the YRE program. This initial dialogue was designed as an

'icebreaker' in order to focus on the research subject. The respondents were then given a summary of the purpose of the study and a copy of the agreement to read and sign (Appendix D). This helped to build a trusting relationship and a strong rapport between the interviewer and the respondents which was imperative in order for successful interviews (Merriam, 1988; Seidman, 1991).

All respondents were then asked to individually list the five most important factors that they thought contributed to the decision of the Board to implement a YRE program at Huntsville School. A list of twenty possible factors including an "other" category was provided to assist the respondents and to set the climate for the twenty interview questions. When this was completed, permission was requested to tape the remainder of the interview. Following a sound test of the recorder, the twenty questions were asked in sequence. The actual length of time spent with the participants was about ten minutes longer than anticipated because in most cases they were so interested in the topic that they wanted to continue the discussion after the formal interview was completed.

The Field Work

Prior to commencing the interviews in this study, initial field work had been completed. In the fall of 1995, the Principal of the school had been contacted by telephone and a visit to the school had been arranged. Materials on Year-Round Education were mutually shared and discussions of a potential research study were begun. Following this meeting, there was ongoing communication via telephone and postal services since there was no computer access to e-mail at the school.

In February 1996, I attended the annual conference sponsored by the National Association of Year-Round Education (NAYRE) in Florida. During the five days of intense workshops covering all aspects of YRE, I made contact with several key educators in NAYRE as well as with nineteen Canadian educators. Representing the Ontario school boards were six from the London Board, two from the Durham Board, and one from the Simcoe Board. All of these areas planned on initiating a YRE

program in the fall of 1996 with the exception of the Simcoe Board which was developing a program in two schools for the fall of 1997. The remaining Canadians included five educators from Alberta, three from British Columbia, one from the Northwest Territories, as well as a presenter, who was a professor from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

In the spring of 1996, an invitation was extended to me to attend a meeting concerning YRE at the Simcoe Board of Education administration building in Barrie. The meeting was designed to inform parents and other interested parties about successful YRE programs including the one in Huntsville and to answer questions and clarify misunderstandings. The Principal of Huntsville Public School was one of the guest speakers. After the meeting, materials from the NAYRE conference were shared and discussed. Later that spring, I attended a Board meeting at the same location at which time the decision to implement two pilot YRE projects in the fall of 1997 was debated and passed in principle.

Also in the spring of 1996, approval was obtained from the Muskoka Board of Education to carry out a research study of Year-Round Education at Huntsville Public School in August of 1996. A condition of this approval was that a copy of the research findings would be given to the Board (Appendix E).

When this ground work was completed, the first day of actual field work began with a meeting at the Board office with the Superintendent of Education responsible for the operation of the YRE program at Huntsville Public School. The research proposal was positively received and affirmed with interest, support and encouragement. The Superintendent suggested that she be the person to contact the Board Chairman who in turn agreed to contact the past and present trustees to seek their cooperation in being interviewed. A meeting was set up the following day with the Board and later the same day, a meeting was arranged with the Principal of Huntsville Public School.

As a result of these initial meetings, contacts were made with employees, parents and trustees over a four week period, and interview times were scheduled for convenient times and locations. Throughout this period of time, field notes and personal

reflections were kept, another technique which allowed the researcher to further explore the previously stated research (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992).

Reliability and Validity of Data

Reliability is the degree of consistency that the instrument or procedure demonstrates. Whatever it is measuring it does so consistently. Validity is that quality of a data gathering instrument or procedure that enables it to measure what it is supposed to measure (Best and Kahn, 1986, 144).

These two standards for confirming the credibility of interpretations are essential elements of all data gathering procedures in order that errors and biases are minimized. In this study, reliability and validity were achieved through a process of triangulation which occurs when the information from documents, surveys and interviews all point in the same direction (Yin, 1993). For example, information reported in newspaper articles was verified by responses from the participants in the study while the minutes of school board meetings agreed with factual information that was provided by another source such as the Ministry of Education and Training.

All interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed to assure maximum accuracy of the data. The open coding of the interview responses was done on two separate occasions and the results compared in order to minimize the possibility of human error. Although it is unlikely that bias can be totally eliminated in social research, it can be reduced and validity increased by accurately recording the data and incorporating the participants' direct quotations in the text.

Specific Research Methodologies

The interviews of employees, parents and trustees were designed to record the respondents' recollections of the chronology of events between the initial discussion of YRE in the late 1980s and Board approval of a pilot project in January, 1995.

The interviews consisted of twenty questions (see Appendix C), the responses to which were audio-taped, and subsequently transcribed. As each question was

analyzed, the data were scanned for themes and coded manually. "Open coding is the part of analysis that pertains specifically to the naming and categorizing of phenomena through close examination of data" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 62). A line-by-line analysis was done of the transcribed data and as it proceeded, the data were further categorized with similar factors being labeled and grouped to include new categories as they arose.

Data were tabulated by the frequency of response for each of the three groups of respondents and arranged in tables in order of decreasing frequency of similar responses. Tables, all of which can be found in Appendix A, were designed to simplify the presentation of information, and to help with interpretation in terms of similarities or patterns that emerged.

The Board documents which were examined to determine the chronological order of events are listed below. Although requested, any correspondence between the Board and the Ministry was not made available for this study.

- minutes from Board meetings
- agendas and minutes from the Board YRE Ad Hoc Committee
- a Report of the YRE Task Force on the Preliminary Viability Study for YRE in Muskoka on February 13, 1991
- a copy of the Pilot Alternative School Year Proposal, January 18, 1995,
- the Board news release dated February 23, 1995,
- copies of registration materials used by parents to enrol students
- communications to parents at Huntsville Public School

In examining the roles that the employees, the parents and the trustees played in determining the feasibility of the policy prior to implementation, information was collected from thirty interviews of employees, parents and trustees, from Board documents and from relevant media reports. The interviews were designed to record the respondents' recollections of the roles played by the various stakeholders in determining the feasibility of Year-Round Education prior to policy implementation.

The Board documents which were examined to establish the roles played by the employees, the parents, and the trustees in determining the feasibility of YRE included the following:

- minutes from Board meetings
- agendas and minutes from the Board YRE Ad Hoc Committee
- a Report of the YRE Task Force on the Preliminary Viability Study for YRE in Muskoka on February 13, 1991
- a copy of the Pilot Alternative School Year Proposal, January 18, 1995,
- communications to parents at Huntsville Public School

Data were also obtained from microfiche at the Huntsville Public Library of previous editions of three local weekly papers, The Herald-Gazette, The Huntsville Forester and The Muskoka Advance. All were scanned in search of articles referring to YRE at the Huntsville Public School or to reports of Board meetings from the late 1980s until 1995. All pertinent articles were photocopied and their content was analyzed in order to establish the chronological order of events. In addition, data were also obtained from video sources of news items on television stations and although they were informational in nature, they did not produce material of value to this study.

Various methods were used to research the five areas of interest that were the focus of this study. In examining the role that the context of the tourist resort area played in the creation and implementation of the Year-Round Education policy, information was collected from two of the interview questions. The participants were asked how they thought the geographic location or the cultural aspects of a community in a tourist area influenced the creation and the implementation of the YRE program at Huntsville Public School.

In examining what influenced the trustees to vote unanimously to adopt and implement a Year-Round Education policy and to expand the program the following year, information was collected from the interviews, relevant Board documents and a survey. The participants were asked to discuss the factors that they thought contributed

to Board approval in 1995 and to the expansion of the program in 1996. As well, the following Board documents were examined:

- A Report of the Evaluation of the Alternate School Year at Huntsville Public School, February, 1996
- copies of the questions used in the Alternate School Year Interim Evaluation Survey that was conducted by a Board office assessor in December of 1995 and January of 1996.

A survey (Appendix B) was given to each of the respondents to complete in writing at the beginning of the interview. The respondents wrote down a list of the five most important factors that they thought contributed to the decision of the Board to implement YRE at Huntsville Public School. The factors listed were tabulated by frequency of response and summarized in a table in order of decreasing frequency. A copy of the survey results can be found in Table 15 in Appendix A.

In examining what leadership behaviours of the Principal that most influenced and facilitated the implementation of the Year-Round Education policy, information was collected from three of the twenty interview questions. The participants were asked to describe the leadership role of the Principal, how they thought it had changed from the late 1980s until 1995, and to give examples of how the Principal handled problems and managed the complexities of change throughout the implementation of the YRE program.

Ethical Issues

In keeping with the ethical issues outlined by Dixon, Bouma, and Atkinson (1987), a letter of introduction was given to the participants. They were assured that their freedom to decline to participate would be respected (Rosenthal & Rosnow, 1975), and they were allowed to withdraw at any time throughout the study (Seidman, 1991). Participants were asked to sign consent forms (Appendix D), and every attempt was made to inform them of the nature and objectives of the research to ensure informed consent (Seidman, 1991).

It was imperative to observe all safeguards possible to ensure the protection of the rights of human research participants (Rosenthal & Rosnow, 1975). With the exception of the Principal, they were assured that their identities would not be disclosed when reporting the results, all the information collected would be kept anonymous, and the raw data would be destroyed after the research was completed (Seidman, 1991). A copy of the findings of the research project will be given to the Board and made accessible to any of the participants who expressed an interest in the study results.

Throughout the study, advice was sought on ethical issues on a continuous basis. The ethical implications and psychological consequences for the participants were considered in all circumstances. Every effort was made to ensure that the participants understood the intent and extent of this study. A conscientious effort was made to avoid influencing the respondents' answers, and to demonstrate attentive behaviour through active listening and a receptive posture as outlined by Anderson (1990).

It was essential that the relationship between the researcher and the participants was completely open and honest (Rosenthal & Rosnow, 1975). At no time was there any intentional deception of the subjects. All transcripts, including direct quotations, were available for sharing with the respondents prior to the completion of the study. This served to validate the data (Merriam, 1988), and conformed with the research code of ethics (Merriam, 1988; Dixon, Bouma & Atkinson, 1987; Rosenthal & Rosnow, 1975).

Summary

The methodology employed in this study focussed on the collection of data using structured interviews that posed twenty questions to a total of thirty trustees, employees and parents. In addition, information was gleaned from a survey, from the media, and from a variety of documents provided by the Muskoka Board of Education and the Ministry of Education and Training. The data were interpreted and coded according to various themes and this information was placed in tables in order of decreasing frequency to allow for comparisons among the three different groups of

participants. The reliability and validity of this study were achieved through the systematic treatment of the interview data as well as through the process of triangulation of the information gathered. Moreover, all possible safeguards were observed to conform with the research code of ethics. In the following chapters, the results will be presented, discussed and analyzed.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

This analysis of the data is arranged in chronological order and is presented according to the three phases of implementation of the YRE policy; the pre-implementation period, the implementation time frame itself and the post-implementation phase.

One source of data examined was the responses from personal interviews with ten employees, ten parents, and ten trustees to the twenty interview questions which were presented orally to each person. The resulting information was screened for common responses, which were categorized and recorded according to the frequency of response. Tables (found in Appendix A) were drawn to summarize the most frequent responses for each question. The information gleaned from the tables was analyzed and compared in relation to the three different groups, the findings from other tables, and the research discussed in the literature review.

The second source of data analyzed was the written responses from a survey of the same ten employees, ten parents, and ten trustees. The participants were asked to list five factors that they thought contributed to the Board decision to implement a YRE program. A table was drawn to summarize the survey findings and the resulting information was analyzed and compared in relation to the three different groups, the findings from other tables, and the research discussed in the literature review.

The third source of data investigated was the documents from the Muskoka Board of Education including minutes, reports, memos, news releases, correspondence and newsletters relating to Year-Round Education from the late 1980s until 1996. These data were presented in chronological order and analyzed and compared in relation to the findings from the interviews of the employees, the parents and the trustees. When relevant, this information was related to the research outlined in the literature review.

The fourth source of data available was the media coverage of the Board's decisions with respect to YRE from the late 1980s until 1996. Local and provincial newspaper articles and television news interviews were described and discussed in chronological order. This information was compared and analyzed in relation to the findings from the interviews of the employees, the parents and the trustees. When appropriate, it was also related to the research outlined in the literature review.

The fifth source of data examined was the Ministry of Education and Training documents and previous correspondence with the Durham Board related to YRE. These data were discussed in relation to the research outlined in the literature review and to the implementation process of YRE at the Muskoka Board of Education.

THE PRE-IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD

The chronology of Year-Round Education in the Muskoka Board of Education officially began in 1988 and developed until the creation of a policy in 1995. This initial phase spanned a period of time that involved three different slates of Trustees, four different Ministers of Education from two different political parties, and several changes in the Senior Administration of the Board.

Initial Board Discussion of Year-Round Education

In the fall of 1988, the Muskoka Board of Education gave advance approval for Dan Patterson, the Principal of Irwin Memorial Public School, to attend the annual conference of the National Association of Year-Round Education (NAYRE) in San Diego, California. The following February, 1989, Patterson attended the five day conference which included a multitude of workshops and information sessions that outlined strategies used to successfully implement YRE programs at the elementary and secondary levels. Patterson had an opportunity to network with delegates and speakers from throughout the United States who provided mutual encouragement and

support in their belief that the "3 Rs" of education for the 21st Century are "rethinking the calendar, restructuring the school year and reforming time" (NAYRE, 1996, 25).

Information on YRE from that conference was shared with Board administration, trustees, teachers and parents. As a result, the Board's Standing Committee on Education began in November of 1989 to study the educational viability of YRE as it pertained to Muskoka. The Board gave approval for one of the trustees to attend the annual conference of NAYRE in San Diego in February, 1990. Following the conference, information was once again shared with the members of the Education Committee.

In June of 1990, the Education Committee made a report to the Board that stated that YRE was educationally sound. At that meeting, the Board passed two motions. The first one was to "give consideration to further study of this concept." The second motion referred this item to the Planning and Development Standing Committee for further study of the operational viability of YRE in the Muskoka Board of Education. Records were not available as to how often the Planning and Development Committee met, and which trustees made up this committee, but it was known that the Superintendent responsible for Planning and Development chaired this committee.

Year-Round Education Task Force

In November 1990, the following motion was passed by the Muskoka Board of Education:

Be it resolved that the Board establish a Year-Round Task Force consisting of two trustees, (to be selected by the Chairperson of the Board), the Superintendent of Planning and Development, four staff members, (to be selected by the Superintendent of Planning and Development), a parent representative, a community representative to conduct a preliminary viability study on Year-Round Education in Muskoka and to report back to the Board through the Planning and Development Committee by the end of January, 1991.

The Task Force focused on the elementary panel and investigated the possible impact on parents/families and park/recreation programs as well as the implications for transportation, growth, finance, insurance plans, administration, curriculum, special education and political ramifications. The timeline was extended one month, and in February, 1991, a report presented by the Task Force to the Board said that a multi-track system would not be operationally viable in Muskoka in the short term. However, the Task Force concluded that there were potentially three ways of implementing single-track Year-Round Education in Muskoka which included a) a pilot school, b) a single-track school within a school and c) a magnet school.

In February, 1991, the following motion regarding YRE was passed:

Be it resolved that the Board extend the mandate of the Year-Round Education Task Force so that it can monitor and examine other school boards in Ontario who are presently examining and reviewing the concept of Year-Round Education in their schools.

A second motion asked "that the Year-Round Education Task Force continue as the YRE Ad Hoc Committee and report its findings to the Board through the Planning and Development Committee by the end of October, 1991."

On April 24, 1991, Dan Patterson and the Superintendent of Planning and Development were invited to attend the inaugural meeting of the Canadian Centre for Year-Round Education (CCYRE) at the Ontario Council for Leadership in Educational Administration (OCLEA) in Toronto. According to the letter of invitation:

CCYRE was created to explain and explore the educational, management, financial, and social issues related to (school) calendar modification. The purpose of this meeting is to lend shape and definition to the Centre and to identify services and activities appropriate to assist Canadian educational organizations in examining this issue.

On May 8, 1991 the YRE Ad Hoc Committee met and were cautioned by a trustee that if invited to speak on the topic of YRE, to make it clear to their audience that they were sharing information about the concept and that the "Muskoka Board of Education is continuing to research the topic and has yet to take a position on the future of YRE in

schools." The committee members were invited to contribute to the production of a Muskoka Resource Document on YRE which would be presented to the Planning and Development Committee in October, 1991.

Board Decision in Early 1990s

In October, two motions were again passed. The first one instructed the Board to join the Canadian Centre for Year Round Education. The second motion extended the mandate of the existing YRE Ad Hoc Committee with an expectation that a report be presented to the Planning and Development Committee in February, 1992. The Board also approved the attendance of one trustee at a YRE Conference in Toronto in November, 1991.

Since the municipal elections were also to be held in November of 1991, it was felt that the Board extended the mandate of the Task Force to avoid making YRE an election issue. In the data that were provided for this study, there was only one reference to YRE in the Board minutes of the year 1992 and that occurred on February 18th when a motion was moved and passed:

Be it resolved that the Muskoka Board of Education, through its membership in the Canadian Centre for Year-Round Education, continue to monitor developments in YRE in Ontario and Canada.

Therefore, the decision of the trustees to continue to monitor YRE effectively delayed the creation of a YRE policy within the Muskoka Board in the early 1990s. When the respondents in this study were asked what factors they thought influenced the Board decision at that time, the most frequently mentioned factor in all three groups was that Muskoka was a conservative community which was not ready for change. (See Table 4 in Appendix A for a summary of the eight different categories of factors that the participants in the study thought had influenced the Board decision).

The concept of YRE was seen as "too drastic a change" at that time. According to one employee, "They were pretty status quo, and to be the first at anything was pretty scary for them." Generally the parents thought that people were afraid and not ready to try

something new. Addressing the conservative nature of the community, one parent said, "I think society was a little bit, maybe not quite geared for it yet," while another one responded, "It was a new thing that had never been tested and I would have to think there was some leanness in that. It's hard to go out on a limb the first time." One trustee said, "There was a lack of education, a lack of knowledge and a lack of willingness to change, which stems from fear."

The general lack of readiness and willingness of the conservative Huntsville community and the Muskoka Board of Education to try something new was reflected in the responses of participants in the study. This lack of capacity for change resulted in anxiety as outlined by NAYRE (1995) in its Model of Managing Complex Change. Consequently, anxiety is seen as producing fear. In turn, this would gradually evolve into some form of resistance to change, which would inevitably reduce the community's overall capacity for change. According to Fullan (1991), not only the leader has to have the capacity for change, but also others, in order for change to be effective.

In the early 1990s, the Board decision to defer action was made because more than half of the trustees were opposed to YRE at that time. In all Board decisions, the trustees have legitimate top-down power by virtue of having voting roles within the organization. According to French and Raven (1959), influence can also be exerted by expert power and referent power, which in this case would have been held by the Board Administration and the Principal. However, influence can come from the bottom-up, as in the early 1990s when the negative opinions of parents and the community had an upward influence on the trustees' decision. In the political sense, the Board decision reflected the resistance of the residents of a conservative community to organizational change.

Board Decision in 1995

In January, 1995, Dan Patterson made a proposal to the Muskoka Board of Education to implement a pilot project at Huntsville Public School that would follow an

alternate school year calendar. The project involved one class in the junior division with grades 4/5/6 students and would run for one year with a follow-up evaluation. In the proposal it was stated that "This pilot would allow us to evaluate the impact of this change on the learner, on the parents, on the teacher, on the administrator, and on the trustee." With evaluative data from these people, the decision makers would then have the option to expand the program or to reject the concept as not being appropriate for schools in the Muskoka Board.

The proposal for the YRE pilot project contained the following timeline:

Term 1 August 1 to October 10, 1995

50 instructional days with 1 PA day

Holiday: October 9 to 27: - 3 weeks

Term 2 October 30 to December 22, 1995

38 instructional days with 2 PA days

Holiday: December 25 to January 5: - 2 weeks (traditional)

Term 3 January 8 to March 8, 1996 (traditional)

44 instructional days with 1 PA day

Holiday: March 11 to March 29: - 3 weeks

Term 4 April 1 to June 14, 1996

53 instructional days with 4 PA days

Holiday: June 17 to July 31: - 6 weeks - students

Holiday: June 24 to July 31: - staff

The Board unanimously voted to approve the pilot YRE project at Huntsville Public School for the 1995/96 school year, pending approval from the Ministry of Education and Training. According to the minutes of the Board meeting on February 21, 1995, the following motion was passed:

Be it resolved that the Alternate School Year Proposal be approved in principle for one junior classroom at Huntsville Public School for the 1995-96 school year, if voluntary enrolment warrants and Ministry approval is granted.

Among the participants in the study, two thirds believed that the Principal's commitment, leadership and enthusiasm were the most important factor in this

decision. This opinion was particularly strong among the parents, almost all of whom attributed the Board's decision to the Principal's dedication and persistence. Table 5 in Appendix A provides a summary of the most frequent responses.

One parent's immediate comment was, "Definitely Dan Patterson! I mean he has just been so gung-ho on this project, so I think he was one of the biggest factors." More than half of the trustees credited the Principal as being an important factor in obtaining Board approval of the YRE project. One trustee referred to Patterson as a "very, very strong proponent of it [YRE] who was willing to go out of his way and take on a lot of the extra duties and involvement at no extra cost to the Board." In reference to the Principal's commitment to YRE, another trustee said, "When they decided not to do it in the 1980s, it was never put to bed and forgotten about. So there was always this bubbling on the back burner and information being shared." At the same time, half of the employees also thought that the Principal was the key influence. "I think the biggest factor was Dan Patterson who had done so much research on YRE and believed that it is the way to go and the way of the future."

Many Board employees also referred to the financial fact that the program was not going to require additional tax dollars. One stated, "As long as it wasn't going to cost anything, and people were willing to do it, therefore they were willing to give it a try." Parents shared this opinion and, to a lesser extent, trustees did also. One former trustee felt that the new slate of trustees "would want to be able to show that they were doing something innovative that wasn't going to cost any money."

Unlike the employees and the parents, many trustees thought an important factor was "the different makeup of the Board" which was viewed as being "perhaps a little bit more progressive in terms of trying new ideas." As one trustee said, "I think the [new] trustees were far more willing to go ahead with a pilot project in the 90s than they were in the 80s." As well, half of the trustees indicated that the implementation strategy used to start small with a pilot project was an important influence on the decision. Although timing was mentioned by half of the employees who thought that introducing this sort of

reorganization of the school year in 1995 was much better timing, it was not considered important by the parents and the trustees. In fact, only the parents felt that parent support was a key factor. Some of the group realized that YRE made sense and they were willing to give it a try. One parent said, "Lots of parents who work, like myself and my husband,... we have overtime in the summer and August does get to be a time where your child is in daycare and this was wonderful for us."

The respondents referred frequently to the fact that the YRE program would not cost the taxpayers any additional money. This should not be misinterpreted as meaning that the single track YRE is a money saving venture, but rather that there was no additional outlay of funds necessary to establish the program. For example, the parents were willing to transport children in August who normally used a bus during the traditional school months.

According to Dalin (1993), the three minimum conditions required in the change process in education are leadership, ownership and change capacity. Since the leadership had remained constant, the differences between the late 1980s and 1995 were the new slate of trustees and a different school community. Therefore the ingredient, capacity for change, that was missing in the late 1980s from the Model of Managing Complex Change (NAYRE, 1995), was now present along with vision, motivation, resources and action plan.

An important part of the capacity for change involves the political dimension. The Board decision in 1995 was the result of lobbying by the Principal and pro YRE trustees in order to overcome potential opposition. According to Arnold, Feldman & Hunt (1992), one of the conditions necessary for political behaviour to occur is organizational change. With a new slate of trustees and new administrative personnel, there was heightened political activity and a greater opportunity to influence those in positions of power.

Role of School Board Administration

The Muskoka Board administration played an important role in determining the feasibility of the YRE policy prior to implementation. When asked about the role of the administrators, the responses of the participants in the study were summarized into six categories which are displayed in Table 6 in Appendix A. The most frequently mentioned responses were the supportive role, the consultative role, and the overseer role, while half of the parents did not comment on this aspect of the program.

The largest number of employees thought the administration's role was that of an overseer who handled the responsibilities involving politics, research, report writing, and ensuring the no cost factor. Half of the employees identified the importance of the administration having a supportive role that was demonstrated by their interest, positive attitude and willingness to take risks. One employee mentioned that the new administration has "...challenged the middle school management to come up with innovative ways of delivering education to the students of Muskoka." Another employee reported, "No matter what change we're trying to do in our schools, you set out clear guidelines and a process through the Muskoka Board's long range planning process for these changes to occur."

While half of the parents did not know what the administration's role was, some of them felt it was a supportive role. One parent speculated that "Dan had to saturate them with what was going on before it was accepted, but I think they were willing to give it a shot in the end." . Another parent commented that "there's been watching and listening and obviously [they] allowed themselves to change their minds."

While a majority of the trustees felt that the administration played more of a consultative role, one trustee commented that the administration was "involved in the research of it, in setting up the nuts and bolts too, and... in presenting things to the Board." Another trustee commented that the administration kept the trustees "apprised of everything" and they were depended upon "to bring forward words for policies." The same trustee shared an opinion, "I believe that in any Board, a lot of the morals and the

values of the Director are reflected in the policies that your Boards will see." As well, a few of the trustees felt that the administration had supported the concept of YRE in the early 1990s, but were not ready to commit to it at that time. One trustee recalled that "the previous Director and Superintendent were probably wondering just what might happen and didn't have as positive an attitude."

As Table 6 in Appendix A indicates, those who were connected officially with the system, the employee and trustee groups, seemed better able to comment on the role of the administration in the implementation process. The data suggest that the parents, as taxpayers, have little knowledge or apparent interest in the administrative roles within the School Board.

It was felt by some of the employees and trustees who had been involved in the process in the late 1980s that the administration at that time supported the YRE concept in principle, but were not ready to commit to a YRE program in Muskoka. According to Schein, in supporting the vision of YRE, the administration must "provide a path and a process of learning to assure the members of the organization that constructive change is possible" (1992, 333). Indeed, the current administration's role was viewed as supportive in providing a path and a process to implement the program. The administration was perceived as being consultative in determining the feasibility of YRE policy, and instrumental in challenging schools to take risks.

Changes in Economic Conditions

During the timeframe of this study, from the late 1980s until the mid 1990s, there was a downslide in the economy throughout Ontario. Throughout this recession, many companies were put into receivership, corporations began to downsize and everyone tightened pursestrings. The tax base of municipalities shrunk as more and more businesses and individuals could no longer afford to pay taxes. With fewer tax dollars to go around, the provincial government slashed grants and educational funding to

local municipal councils which in turn reduced the total educational dollars available without increasing the local mill rates.

The changes in the economic conditions that the participants in this study thought may have contributed to the Board decision to implement a YRE pilot project can be found in summary form in Table 7 in Appendix A. While the parents and trustees most often identified changes in reduced funding and grants, budget cuts and the increased cost of education, the employees were more inclined to mention the fact that the YRE proposal did not require additional money.

While referring to reduced funding and increased costs, one parent stated that the Board's decision "made education better for the same amount of money." One trustee observed that "economically, the Board's funding situation has gotten worse over the years." According to another trustee, "with the whole cuts in funding, came an accountability for education and the process." Seeing the decision as a cost free measure, an employee commented that "the whole idea of the project was it was not to cost any more money." One trustee summed up both concerns. "I think with accountability and decreasing dollars and, you know, unrest with people paying taxes, then you've got to be very clear about finding different ways to implement education that are cost effective and palatable."

The ability of YRE to make better use of capital equipment and existing facilities was mentioned by four of the parents. As one parent commented "most of the ratepayers are starting to realize that we can't leave our buildings sitting empty." While another parent said that with YRE, "you are using the school all the time, so economically it's better for the Board." However, another employee reflected, "I think they did it [decided to implement YRE] more to address a need, rather than to find ways to save money or to meet some political agenda."

It is interesting to note that although there has been no indication that single-track YRE saves money, the participants in this study have identified financial considerations as an important factor. Throughout Ontario, Boards of Education have been challenged

to find ways to better deliver services using fewer dollars. The participants in this study responded to this reality by recognizing that the YRE program provides many advantages to the students and their families without expending additional tax dollars. They feel that they are getting more for their money and thereby meeting the challenge of the provincial government.

For the stakeholders who believe that the YRE program provides a better model of the delivery of services, the advantages of the YRE program are not always measurable in dollars and cents, but they feel there are many direct and indirect educational and other benefits. The additional time spent using computers and experiencing the program at the Board's outdoor education centre, and being part of what is perceived to be a happier classroom environment, are recognized by the stakeholders as being educational benefits. Having holidays in October and returning well rested and ready to learn is recognized as being a sharp contrast to the weary students and stressed teachers in the traditional program in November. They appreciate that the balanced lifestyle that results from the alternate school calendar may not save money, but it is cost free.

It is also interesting to note that it was the parents who most often mentioned that YRE made better use of capital equipment and buildings by using them eleven months of the year. Computers that sit idle in summer were used to maximum capacity. The Yearly Outdoor Education Centre that is operated by the Board was employed to full advantage in August. The frequency of use of the books, the classrooms, the library and the gymnasium by the students in the YRE program was decidedly greater than in the traditional program.

Changes in Political Conditions

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Muskoka was considered to be a very stable, conservative region of Ontario. Then, after decades of dominance by the Conservative Party in provincial politics, a majority Liberal government was elected. At the same

time, the Muskoka Board of Education had had the same Director for approximately twenty years. Although the 1990s brought a new NDP provincial government, the slate of trustees remained virtually unchanged after the 1991 municipal election. The decisions of the Board of Education at that time reflected a conservative character of the Muskoka community that was not conducive to change.

However, by the fall of 1994, many changes had occurred. The NDP government went through several Cabinet shuffles that produced three different Ministers of Education within a four year period. Provincial cutbacks in spending in general and in educational grants in particular had an impact on the Board of Education.

During this time, the Director of Education retired and an interim Director oversaw the operation of the Board for eighteen months prior to the hiring of the present Director. At the same time, there were changes in other senior personnel and two new superintendents were appointed. During the 1994 election for positions on the Board of Education, the trustee positions were strongly contested. Subsequently, a new slate of trustees was elected with a mandate for change.

When the participants in this study were questioned about the changes in the political conditions that they thought affected the Board decision to implement a YRE pilot project, the change most frequently mentioned by the employees and the parents was the prevalence of cutbacks, reduced funding, and money saving ventures. A summary of the most frequent responses can be found in Table 8 in Appendix A. One parent reflected, "I suppose as far as the political, it has been to save, to try and cut costs, and to try and somehow do the same or better, with the same money or less money." At the same time, a trustee referred to the "cut and slash methods" of the Harris government, while another speculated, "I think if the boards that were there in the 80s had been presented with the same economic conditions as severe as we are right now, they would have been forced to look at alternatives as well."

As well, the employees and trustees felt that there was a climate of change within the Board that produced a "highly charged milieu of change" that resulted in "a

willingness to try something new that hasn't necessarily existed so much in the past on the part of politicians." The same two groups of participants felt that the new slate of trustees, who were elected with a mandate for change, represented a political change that affected the decision to implement a YRE program. One trustee suggested that the new trustees "were willing to risk, to be part of something new. With the assurances, of course, that it wasn't going to cost them anything, the risk wasn't that great."

Summary of the Pre-Implementation Period

Initially in the late 1980s, Patterson's idea of YRE became a shared vision with a few trustees and educators who became part of a YRE Task Force. However, most of the trustees on the Board were not in favour of the concept at that time, and continued to defer it, eventually changing the Task Force into an Ad Hoc Committee with a role of monitoring the progress of YRE in other Boards throughout Ontario.

According to information in the Board documents and from the interviews of the participants in this study, initially there was resistance to the whole concept of an alternate calendar program. Associated with this were two other factors, namely, the reluctance of the trustees to adapt to change and their lack of capacity to deal with change. Of the five components necessary for change to take place according to NAYRE (1995), the group in the late 1980s had a vision, the resources and an action plan, but could not be successful without the capacity and the motivation for change. Moreover, the senior administrative staff did not appear to make any attempt to build a capacity for change within the educational community.

However, in the mid 1990s, there were many changes within the Board. There was a new slate of trustees with a mandate for change, a new Director and new Superintendents who challenged schools to be innovative. As well, there was a more informed group of stakeholders who shared the vision of YRE and strongly supported an alternate calendar program. The proposed program itself offered more input from the stakeholders and more choice for parents. There was a deliberate strategy to start

small with a pilot project of one junior class using an alternate calendar within a traditional school. Evaluation and feedback were part of the plan in order to determine if it was feasible to continue operating the pilot program and whether to expand it to the primary and intermediate divisions within the same school.

It was also a political era when Boards were being pressured into being more accountable for progressive education in the Province of Ontario. Outcome based learning became an important part of the Common Curriculum as Boards of Education were challenged to do more with fewer tax dollars and resources. Site based management was heralded as the solution to decentralization which in turn provided the Principal with more independent authority to operate a YRE program. The stakeholders, employees, parents and trustees felt convinced that the YRE policy would indeed benefit and enhance the public good. With all these things taken into consideration, the timing was ideal for change.

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY

The Board approval of a pilot YRE program for the 1995/96 school year was the second step of an implementation framework whose timetable was as follows:

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| 1. Proposal to Senior Administration | January |
| 2. Board approval in principle (1 year pilot) | A.S.A.P. |
| 3. Tentative budget implications | February |
| 4. Ministry approval to alter school year | A.S.A.P. |
| 5. Federation approval to alter school year | after steps 2&4 |
| 6. Initial parent meeting to present concept | March |
| 7. If enough interest, proceed with implementation | April |
| 7.1 Registration | |
| 7.2 Staffing | |
| 7.3 Curriculum Design | |
| 7.4 Evaluation of Program | |
| 8. Deadline - parent/staff commitment (go / no go) | May 1 |
| 9. Timetables finalized | June |
| 10. P.D. activities established | June |
| 11. School Opens | August |

On February 27, 1995 letters were sent to trustees, employees and the parents of students in grades 3/4/5 to invite them to attend an information meeting on February 28 to discuss the alternate school year calendar pilot project. At the meeting, Dan Patterson, the Principal of Huntsville Public School addressed the motion that had been passed by the Board of Education, explained the concept of an alternate calendar program and outlined the timeline for the proposed pilot project as shown on page 44. The parents, students, trustees, teachers and community members were welcomed to ask questions. Parents were requested to discuss the program at home with the members of each of their families prior to making a decision. Following this meeting, parents were invited to register their children on April 2, 1995. A copy of the registration form can be found in Appendix E.

On April 11, 1995, letters were sent to the parents who had registered their children, to inform them that there was sufficient enrolment to operate the program. In fact, because of demand, a waiting list for this program had to be established. Subsequently, parents, staff and trustees were invited to participate in an organizational meeting to share information and to have input into decisions such as the school hours and the types of class excursions.

On Tuesday, August 4, 1995, the program began at Huntsville Public School. Enrolment was limited to the first twenty-five children in the junior grades who had been registered by their parents. Daily transportation to and from school in August was provided by the parents, while buses for field trips were paid for in the same way as regular class trips were financed.

The academic staff involved one junior grade teacher and other qualified teachers who volunteered to help with physical education or field trips. The administrative staff included the Principal and Vice-Principal who were available on an alternating basis to supervise, support and evaluate the pilot project. The regular support staff, including secretarial, library, computer, and special education teachers had prepared necessary materials in June such as arranging the equipment and software for one computer per

pupil for August. French and Physical Education were partially integrated in August, but extra time was allotted for these subject areas throughout the remainder of the school year to meet the Ministry requirements.

Roles of the Stakeholders in the Decision Making Process

The different roles that the participants in this study thought that the parents, the teachers and the community played in the decision making process can be found summarized in Table 9 in Appendix A. The majority of those participants believed the role was a consultative one in which input from the stakeholders was welcomed and encouraged. While the majority of employees commented on the teachers' input in the process, to a lesser amount, all three groups made reference to the ongoing dialogue at public meetings after the Board had approved the program.

The consultative process was seen as a systematic method of obtaining input from stakeholders that involved "a logical sequence of teachers, parents, children and community." According to one employee, Patterson, the Principal, "heard a lot of input from parents and what they were looking for and what they wanted and that was taken into consideration." A parent mentioned, "There were a lot of meetings to discuss every facet of it [YRE]. It was nice to feel like your opinion counted." Another parent added, "One of the decisions that we as parents had to make was having the students starting at 8:30 in the morning in the summer, which meant they still had almost all of their afternoons to still feel like they were on vacation." A trustee speculated, "I think that people who were interested got a chance to talk to Dan about it [YRE] and maybe have some of their thoughts incorporated."

In commenting on the teachers' input, one of the employees reported that "certainly as teachers, we had input towards the programming and scheduling." While another employee commented that teachers "had a significant role in designing that program and helping to develop it with the Principal." Although it was agreed that the Principal coordinated the process, some of the employees felt that "the Principal

basically came up with a plan and then it was agreed to." As well, some of the parents felt that while there had been "extensive outreach to interested parents", their input consisted of agreeing to a plan that had already been decided upon. "Dan pretty well had the calendar set up beforehand. I don't think we had a lot of say in that." Another parent commented, "He [Dan] made the process. It was done and we agreed to it." While none of the trustees shared this opinion, for one trustee, the bottom line was that "...the teachers had to agree with it... the community had to not object too vocally, and the parents had to register their kids."

Since the three groups of participants were also stakeholders, the pattern of responses was not surprising. Each group was more knowledgeable about its own role in the implementation process. Generally there was overall agreement by all three groups of respondents that the process for this program had been consultative. As stakeholders, they felt that they had been encouraged to provide input through the ongoing dialogue at public meetings and in private conversations with the Principal. Some decisions were made by a show of hands at these public meetings, but it was reported that everyone at the meetings basically agreed with the plan that had been designed by the Principal.

It has been suggested that, a triangular relationship should involve the three main ingredients of change: leadership, ownership and capacity for change (Dalin, 1993). The participants develop a sense of ownership of the ideas and a sense of ownership of the change process itself by feeling part of the new process. This happens when individuals trust each other enough to talk about school realities. The community meetings facilitated the building of trust. As well, open communication facilitates the development of common vision, and commitment to shared goals which are components of the change process (Hargreaves, 1994).

In summary, the participants identified the role of the stakeholders as being that of providing input in a consultative process. The employees and the parents appeared to be involved more directly in the process, while the trustees were more concerned about

the demand for the YRE program as evidenced by the waiting list to get children into the program.

Leadership of the Principal

One of the most important aspects of the development and implementation of the YRE policy was the leadership of the Principal. Certainly the participants in this study felt that Dan Patterson played the instrumental role of prime facilitator, the role of a committed, hard-working leader as well as the role of an organizer and idea person. (Table 10 in Appendix A summarizes the responses.)

Many of the employees identified leadership characteristics that Patterson exhibited in his role as Principal when they described him as an organizer, an innovator and a committed believer. One commented that Mr. Patterson "... had so many ideas. If something wasn't working, he would figure out a better way. He was go, go, go from day one." Another said, "He's able to draw people around him who are supportive of these kinds of innovative ideas." Still another employee mentioned, "Dan had been working on it for a long time and he had modified it significantly in order to get something that the Board would accept."

As well, employees mentioned the value of a leader being a prime facilitator. As one staff member said, "I think he's a forward-thinking person and ahead of his time in many areas and he's the reason why we have it [YRE]." One employee commented on the principal's ability to "...get community support for all kinds of programs." Another stated, "He's been able to bring other people on side as well as to build that team." The employees also recognized the enthusiasm and energy of the Principal. One reflected, "I think his enthusiasm and his style probably did play a major role in the way the public embraced it [YRE] and indeed the way ultimately the professionals, including trustees, came to see it."

The employees' opinions were shared by the parents. One parent commented, "He has put a lot of time and effort into the literature and stuff about the school year, to

prove how beneficial it would be to our children here in our community." Other parents characterized the Principal as a knowledgeable leader, an enthusiastic entrepreneur, as well as an expert in public relations and communications. A parent stated, "He explained things in detail that could be easily understood by the parents." Another parent reported, "His enthusiasm did affect my decision to be part of it [YRE] last year." As well, a few parents felt that YRE would not have happened in Muskoka without Patterson. One parent stated, "He believed in it from the start and was the role model that we followed and I think if it wasn't for him, the program never would have taken place in this area."

The majority of trustees also thought the Principal played the key role of facilitator in the implementation of the YRE program. One trustee expressed it this way. "He was a key and prime facilitator in bringing everyone together so that we could have it in a form to discuss and understand what the modified school year really was, back at the initial part of this." Another said, "Dan had the idea, but I think he realized that it had to be a partnership with everyone to make it a success." The trustees also valued his role as knowledgeable leader and persistent dreamer. One trustee summed it up by saying, "Dan has worked beyond the role of a Principal in bringing this program to implementation."

It is interesting to note Patterson's response to this question. He said, "I don't think any change works in the schools if the teachers and the parents and the students perceive the leader of the school isn't committed to it, or [the leader] doesn't understand the educational reasons why it's better for children." He went on to say, "I think it's critical in a new school, whether it's year-round or not, that the Principal understand the reasons why and go through a collaborative process for the change to occur." And as a final comment, he added, "If it's top down, I don't care what it is, I don't think it's going to work."

In the overall analysis of this data, the patterns of responses by the three groups are somewhat different. The employees were strongly aware of the Principal's

leadership skills and his commitment, while the parents provided a general overview of his public relations skills while the trustees concentrated to a lesser degree on the Principal's acquisition of expert knowledge in his pursuit of a dream.

These support the findings in the educational leadership literature. The Principal, Dan Patterson, was the initiator of the process by which YRE was seriously considered in the Muskoka Board. According to Schein (1992), leadership is especially important at the start of any group process. Schein states that "the most important point is that leadership starts the change process in the first place" (1992, 332). In fact, many of the participants in this study believed that without the leadership role that the Principal played at the beginning of, and throughout the process, the YRE program at Huntsville Public School would not be in existence.

Of the three theories of leadership styles in educational administration summarized by Sergiovanni (1995), the 'High Performance Theory' epitomizes the collaborative model used by Patterson who strongly encouraged the participation of all the stakeholders in the decision-making process. Louis and Miles (1991) state that strong support from stakeholders inside and outside the school is critical in educational leadership, echoed by Fullan (1992) whose criterion for a successful leader is one who has the ability to bring people together with a shared vision as a collective exercise.

Some of the employees believed that the Principal had learned from the process, and through reflection, had grown to better understand the politics of change. One employee suggested that Patterson "...probably learned the politics as well from what he went through in the 80s. He was dealing with different people, different administration, different trustees certainly than he was then..." One of the Senior Administrators added, "I think if Dan has learned anything, or together we have learned anything, [it] is that having a passionate idea is not good enough. You have to be able to play the political game."

Half of the trustees felt that the Principal's style had not changed, but rather his expectations were modified. One trustee commented, "When we stopped the project

from going in the late 1980s, that didn't disappoint him to the point that he sat back and forgot about it. He continued and coming ahead with a much smaller project was definitely the way to go." A former trustee stated, "I think he has learned how to prepare in a different manner. I think his proposals contain various options rather than providing one option to which people say yea or nay."

It is interesting to examine Patterson's response to this question. "Well I think this whole thing has been a vehicle for learning because it's forced me into looking into all aspects of school administration, not just curriculum, not just the roles of the teacher in education, but it's forced me to look at all the exterior factors that impact on the administration of a school." He went on to say, "My leadership style if anything has become more understanding... of the financial restraints and I can articulate those when we get parents saying 'Yah but, how come, why not!'" As well the Principal said, "So if anything, my leadership style can be seen as short of completion, as I've come to realize the importance of all the stakeholders in change." And finally he added, "So I guess my leadership style has changed. I've certainly come to realize how important the teachers are to any change. If they're not on board, then nothing's going to work."

In discussing how the Principal managed change, some of the employees, parents and trustees mentioned examples that related to the management of situations that arose when the YRE students were off-track. An example that one parent put forth was when the Principal arranged for the students who were on vacation to go to the Health Unit to be vaccinated. Another parent mentioned that they "were given a list of all interschool sports events ...and what time they were and it was up to us to get him [our son] to these races." And yet another parent said, "So they went out of their way to make sure we were aware of what was happening when they weren't in school."

A few of the employees mentioned a problem that was averted involving the collective agreement and the Teachers' Federations. At issue here was the amount of preparation time that was available to the teachers in August as well as a forty minute uninterrupted lunch period. The students would not receive French language instruction

in August which usually provides preparation time for the classroom teacher. However, the time would be made up during the remainder of the school year, so the required amount of preparation time would be provided. One employee said, "I think the Federation challenge might have been a major issue, had it not been for Dan employing the style that he does." A trustee speculated, "I think Dan, every time there was a perceived situation or a perceived problem, would act and deal with it immediately as compared to letting it slide, because it was very important to him to dispel any rumours or dispel any negative problems so the program would continue."

The Principal's response to this question was, "I guess I've been at it for such a long time, that I had pretty well heard all the things that could happen, and had some sort of a strategy to deal with it." In reference to the teaching federations, he mentioned that "...both Federations questioned the collective agreement in the first year without really consulting the teacher who was teaching the program. Once that [the calendar] was explained to them, they realized that the contracts or obligations weren't being abused." The Teachers' Federations also thought that all teachers in the Board should have the opportunity to teach in the YRE program, but Mr. Paterson said, "It was a site based management decision... that the position would be offered to a Huntsville Public School teacher."

Also, according to the Principal, the only other oversight was with the rules of the Superannuation Commission. In the province of Ontario, teachers shall not teach more than two hundred days a year. By 'year' is meant a school year which runs from September 1 to August 31. In the initial year of the program, a teacher would teach an extra 20 days in August and would technically teach more than 200 days in that particular school year. But the Principal said that it was "just a paperwork thing with the superannuation of teachers. It balances out over two years."

An important aspect of leadership is how change is managed since the resulting behaviour becomes a model for others to follow. Effective leaders must exemplify their own willingness to change which includes looking at change as a challenge (Oakley &

Krug, 1991). This was the attitude and the frame of mind that was used by Patterson to address many of the problems that arose in the YRE project in this study. The challenge of problem solving became a joint venture and a collaborative process amongst teachers, the Vice-Principal and the Principal.

Role of the Ministry of Education and Training

Information collected from The Ministry of Education and Training included documents and correspondence related to YRE. One document was the second report issued in July 1989 by an all party Select Committee on Education which was set up in February, 1988 by the Ontario Government. The committee's mandate was "to examine a broad range of issues affecting the province's education system" and it issued three recommendations.

- 1) That the Education Act and its regulations be altered to give local boards, within both the public and the separate systems, the flexibility to adjust semester lengths, and to make minor adjustments to the total span of the school year, or school day.
- 2) That pilot projects, aided by funds from the education ministry, implement and evaluate year-round calendars in selected, representative areas.
- 3) That any change take place within firm parameters established by the Ministry and requiring consultation with parents, teachers and community groups.

Although this committee unanimously urged the government to allow school boards to use YRE calendars while keeping the actual length of the school year the same at 185 days, this report has merely gathered dust and was never acted upon. It was interesting to note that this report was supported by the Ontario Metis and Aboriginal Association which wanted "a school that functions as a continuing part of

cultural life of the community during the entire year, rather than as a credit factory for 10 months."

This 1990 Report by the Select Committee on Education indicated that moving to a Year-Round Education calendar would require an amendment to the Education Act. However, according to Regulation 822, which at that time governed the school year and school holidays, there was a provision for school boards to submit proposals to the Ministry for calendars that modify the school year. In November of 1990, the Durham Board of Education wrote a letter of inquiry to the Minister of Education and Training. In her written response to this inquiry, Marion Boyd, the Education Minister of the day, discussed the requirements of Regulation 822, outlined the Ministry expectations and stipulated the procedural requirements prior to the granting of approval.

The Minister's written response, a copy of which can be found in Appendix F, clarified that Regulation 822 is not restrictive in regards to changes in school calendars that do not fall within the traditional ten month school year. The Durham Board was directed to forward their YRE proposal to the appropriate regional office for approval. However, the letter cautioned that there would be no money available to fund a YRE program at that time. Ministry approval would only be considered if the following criteria had been met by the local school board:

- a) wide consultation and acceptance within the community
- b) consultation would involve meetings with all appropriate stakeholders including students, parents, educators and support staff, neighbouring boards, community agencies and local business community
- c) a model would be submitted with an outline of purpose, education plan, implementation process, expected benefits, possible adverse consequences and an evaluation plan.
- d) the program would run from two to five years on a pilot project basis in a limited number of schools

- e) students should have a choice of attending either a YRE school or a traditional calendar school program

The information in this letter was eventually incorporated into a draft version of the *Ministry Guidelines for Year-Round Education* in November of 1995 by the Minister of Education, John Snobelen. However, in the meantime, the section of the Education Act which governed the school year and school holidays was replaced by Regulation 304. A copy of these draft guidelines can be found in Appendix F. The wording of the 1995 draft guidelines is almost identical to that of the Minister's 1991 letter to the Durham Board. The only difference is the additional requirement of consulting with the Ontario Teachers' Federation and the Teachers' Pension Plan as well as submitting a summary report two years after approval had been granted. Since these guidelines were not available at the time, the Muskoka Board of Education's application fell under the former requirements in order to obtain Ministry approval for the modified calendar program at Huntsville Public School.

Although the various political parties that have formed governments in Ontario since the late 1980s have shown an interest in Year-Round Education to varying degrees, there have been no financial incentives in the form of provincial grants to encourage school boards to attempt to modify their school year calendars. Some of the trustees had made reference to the fact that in the late 1980s it was assumed that the Ministry would provide start up funding for this venture. According to Weiss (1993), the Muskoka Board would have ventured into a YRE pilot project in the early 1990s had there been financial support from the Ministry to pilot an alternate calendar program.

A problem within the Ministry of Education and Training during the late 1980s and the early 1990s was the number of changes within the education portfolio which resulted in four different Ministers holding the Education portfolio within a four year period. Before there was any commitment made to supporting YRE, a cabinet shuffle would occur along with the announcement of a new Minister. However, the concept itself continued to be discussed locally and eventually two YRE projects began to

operate in the 1995/96 school year in Ontario without additional funding. One YRE adult education program operated in a secondary school in the Niagara Board, and the second was the elementary YRE program in the Muskoka Board that is the focus of this study. Therefore the implementation of YRE programs was a grassroots process based on more intrinsic reasons rather than monetary ones.

In February of 1996, the Minister of Education, John Snobelen, announced that the government would accept "four day work weeks (and) year-round classes where needed to cut costs." Minister Snobelen was quoted as saying "I believe local communities should have the option of picking the time lines that work best for their community" (Globe & Mail, February 22, 1996). This was the first public recognition by the Minister of Education that it is important for school boards to adapt school calendars to meet the needs of the community. Whether adaptation is implemented as a cost-saving measure is a whole other issue.

Reaction of the Media

Information collected from media reports included local newspaper articles, television news clips, as well as media coverage of YRE issues in other parts of Ontario. The first time YRE was reported locally was in the Huntsville Forester on July 12, 1989 in an article entitled *Long summer holiday for students may be thing of the past*. Reference was made to an announcement on July 4 by the Minister of Education at that time, Chris Ward, in which he agreed to allow school boards to educate all year round. According to the article, the Director of the Muskoka Board at the time said that "...if the Board likes the plan, it would probably test it in a few schools before deciding whether to implement it across Muskoka."

In December, 1990, there were three articles related to YRE in the Muskoka Advance. A news article entitled *Year-round education studied by task force* appeared in the December 16 edition. It reported what was discussed at a Planning and Development Committee meeting on December 12. The article briefly outlined the

technical aspects of YRE, mentioned the formation of the Task Force in November to study the feasibility of a program in Muskoka and indicated that there would be a report back to the Board in February.

The article also mentioned that the Task Force was changing the name of the pilot project to 'Alternate School Year Program' because parents did not understand the YRE concept and thought it meant the students would be in school 365 days. In the article, Patterson was quoted as saying, "If an alternate school year program was implemented, it would be presented as a choice to parents, as French immersion is now." In the Muskoka Board, one whole school was dedicated to French Immersion, similar to the early 1990s proposal of a school that would house only students using a YRE calendar. The Superintendent of Planning and Development was reported as to have said that a YRE pilot project would cost the Board more money than the traditional calendar program because of the extra transportation costs.

The same edition of the Muskoka Advance carried an editorial entitled *Time to rethink the school calendar*. Although favouring the concept, the article stated, "There is no argument [that] the alternate calendar is the better program, from a learning perspective. The question the Board of Education has to answer now is, 'Can it work in Muskoka?'" In the same month another article debating the pros and cons of YRE also appeared in the Advance.

The Herald-Gazette reported on a February 13, 1991 meeting in an article entitled *Year-round education could work in Muskoka*. The paper stated that a Task Force comprised of "parents, educators, trustees and administrative staff" gave YRE "the stamp of approval." The chair of the Task Force indicated that although single-track YRE was operationally viable in Muskoka, there would be no economic benefit for the Board. The multi-track system that has the potential advantage of alleviating overcrowding, required a minimum of 750 students which was a larger enrolment than any of the existing elementary schools in Muskoka. According to this article, the Planning and Development Committee of the Board recommended that the YRE Task

Force continue as an Ad Hoc Committee which would monitor other school boards in Ontario that are interested in this concept.

A week later, the Herald-Gazette published another article entitled *Ken Silcox votes for killing year-round education study*. It was reported that at a meeting of the Muskoka Board on February 19, Trustee Silcox was the only trustee to vote against extending the mandate of a Task Force to continue to study YRE and to monitor other Boards. On April 17, 1991, both the Forester and the Herald-Gazette wrote identical articles about a local Home and School Association that was holding an information evening which would be open to the public concerning Year-Round Schooling. Dan Patterson and the Superintendent of Planning and Development for the Muskoka Board of Education were the guest speakers.

It was not until four years later that any issue concerning YRE in the Muskoka Board was mentioned in the media. On June 24, 1995, an article in the Toronto Sun featured the pilot program that was about to start at Huntsville Public School. Following this, during the summer of 1995, a total of six articles appeared in the Muskoka Advance, the Huntsville Forester and the Herald Gazette. Five of the articles reported the factual information in a positive way concerning the one grade 4/5/6 class of 25 students in the YRE program at Huntsville Public School. In most cases Dan Patterson was interviewed and in some articles the classroom teacher, trustees, parents and students made comments. Reference was made to the Board discussing YRE in the early 1990s, but it was reported that approval was not obtained at that time because "Muskoka wasn't ready for it."

The sixth article, an editorial entitled *Break needed?*, touched on the position of the advocates of YRE, but philosophically disagreed with the concept. The author, Ev Van Duuren, believed that "kids need what he called 'structured neglect,'" which basically meant they should be left alone to enjoy the summer with supervision at an arm's length. The two arguments against YRE were that kids mature the most in the summer when they are away from school and in our fast-paced world they need this

time to learn how to relax. The article ended with a reminder that most of the readers are products of the traditional school calendar and that the long summer break has not appeared to have harmed most of Ontario's population including those people who are now YRE advocates.

An editorial column called the *Learning Curve* in the Kingston Whig-Standard of February 5, 1996 referred to the YRE project at Huntsville Public School in an article entitled *Muskoka school offers education for all seasons*. In it, Shawn Thompson chastised the Kingston Boards of Education for being "prisoners of time and tradition" in the way children are being educated. Apparently the Catholic School Board had received a report that concluded that while there are good reasons for changing the school calendar to YRE, the community may be hostile to the concept and therefore it was decided that there was "no compelling need or demand" for the change.

Dan Patterson was interviewed for this article in which he referred to Huntsville Public as a "school for all seasons". It was reported that Dan referred to the old agrarian calendar as a form of mythology that in Ontario school is scheduled around the need to use children as farm labour in July and August. He was quoted as saying, "Year-Round Education may not be traditional, but it suits the rhythm of the way people learn. It creates an attitude that learning is continuous and lifelong, which to me is what learning's all about."

The majority of participants in this study thought that the media responded positively to the concept of YRE in the Muskoka Board from the late 1980s until 1996. A summary of the responses can be found in Table 11 in appendix A. An employee said, "I really don't remember a lot about the coverage when it was initiated [in the late 1980s], but I can tell you that I've been amazed at the response, how interested the media have been in last summer's piloting and then even this summer again when we had television crews here and even radio stations calling in."

Some employees felt that YRE was treated as a novelty or as something different and as a result it interested most people and made good press. One employee

commented, "Last year in particular, when we began the program at Huntsville Public School, there was a big kafuffle [commotion], and everybody and their uncle from the media were here taking pictures, writing articles and all that." Some employees also mentioned the abundance of out of town media coverage by Toronto newspapers and television stations.

One parent commented on a recent television report. "You know I remember watching the Barrie station last Tuesday... and the actual anchor people were introducing the story as 'Back to School... Already?', you know, and I'm thinking, 'yah, OK, that's what people used to think'." In commenting on the media response, another parent mentioned that "recently everyone's been very positive and interested to hear what it's like to go to school in August."

The trustees had no difficulty remembering the media coverage in the late 1980s. One recalled, "It was kind of put out there as something different and of course that makes good press... it was something that would interest people." Another offered appreciation to the Board's communications person who over the years has developed a good rapport with the media. Yet another commented, "I think I detected [in the media] a little note of excitement that the Board was willing to look at options for offering education that perhaps it hadn't looked at before."

Participants in this study from all three groups reported a positive response from the media to the concept of YRE in Muskoka. Part of the reason for this was the fact that the Board took control of the situation by assigning the job of spokesperson to one employee, a communications consultant, whose job included the issuing of media releases with all the relevant information in a timely fashion.

The Muskoka Board had learned from the experiences of the York Region, and Durham Region Boards that the mishandling of information in the media had caused tremendous problems. In early 1991, a YRE conference had been held at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education in Toronto. When reporting about speakers at that conference, a local newspaper reported that the York Region Board was planning to

implement YRE programs in some of its schools. The Board had established a committee to study alternative calendars, but had not informed the public of the possibility. According to Weiss (1993), the public reacted to the lack of consultation and a group of parents opposed to YRE formed an Anti-Modified School Year Coalition. They found every opportunity to voice their complaints at YRE information meetings sponsored by the Board, all of which were reported in the media. As the municipal elections approached in the fall of 1991, the Board withdrew its interest in alternative calendars to avoid further controversy.

In the Durham Region, there was a concerted effort to consult and include all the stakeholders in the process of developing a YRE policy. However, in the fall of 1991 when the schools were being selected to pilot YRE programs, there was one taxpayer in particular who was opposed to the concept of YRE and had access to unspecified materials from the United States that questioned the value of alternate school calendars. This person undertook to send these materials to the Parent Teacher Associations and the media. Weiss (1993) reported that a battle resulted when letters, written by strong opponents and proponents of YRE were published along with controversial articles in local newspapers. As a result of media coverage, public meetings turned into debates as candidates for the election of trustees took sides on the issue of YRE. The pilot project did not materialize as a result of the negative publicity at that time.

On the whole, the media coverage of the YRE program in Huntsville was positive because of the systematic way the Board controlled news releases prior to newsworthy events taking place. As well, Dan Patterson made a concentrated effort to educate the press about YRE whenever reporters were at the school. He felt that if the reporters were knowledgeable about all aspects of YRE, there would be less chance of misinformation being published. The local press was also encouraged to contact the media relations staff at the Board if clarification was needed.

Previous attempts to implement YRE in other areas of Ontario were not successful, partly because of the negative press received. Because the timing of the consultation meetings to discuss YRE also coincided with the fall election of trustees, the issue became political and even more appealing to the press. The messages about YRE that were received by the community, and in particular by the parents in the community, were important because they helped to shape the perception of what people were thinking about the issue. Confusion resulted when the messages became mixed, biased or inaccurate. According to the findings of Weiss (1993), during the process of public communication, confusion became a consequence in the Durham Region because there was no control over the message that was being received.

In this study, the media became a non-issue because they were managed well by the Muskoka Board of Education. Research into the previous media problems in Southern Ontario in which the power of the press was underestimated, provided valuable information that was used to design strategies on how to relate to the media in Huntsville. Again timing was important since it was crucial to avoid having the YRE program become an election issue that would be debated at length in the press.

Board Decision in 1996

In December, 1995, an Alternate School Year Interim Evaluation was conducted by a consultant from the Board office. This involved the creation, distribution, collection and collation of surveys of trustees, school staff, parents, students, administrators, Federation representatives, and community partners. A five page summary report of the findings was given to the Board on February 20, 1990.

With fourteen of the sixteen trustees responding to the survey, continuity of the students' learning process was identified by 78% of the trustees as an advantage to the program. Better utilization of facilities and family benefits such as quality time were also mentioned as advantages. Concerns mentioned by trustees were the need by the

community for student employment during the summer, if the program expanded to the secondary level, and the necessity of educating the public about the program.

Of the twenty-five children in the class, twenty parents representing twenty-two of the students responded to the survey. In the Alternate School Year Evaluation Report (ASYER), it was stated:

Parents were asked if they had observed any differences, this year compared to other years, which could be attributed to the Alternate School Year Calendar in their child's enthusiasm for school, behaviour, and school work (1996, 1).

In observing differences in their children's attitude toward school, 72% of the parents reported an increase in enthusiasm, 43% reported a positive difference in behaviour and 77% observed improvement in school work. Of course, these are perceptions and are not based upon quantifiable data.

Benefits included more continuous learning for their children, use of facilities and programs during the summer, fewer number of students during the summer and opportunities for family trips during the off-season (ASYER, 1996, 2).

Disadvantages quoted were the "summer planning of vacations, becoming accustomed to something which is different, having children on two different schedules, and lack of transportation" (ASYER, 1996, 2).

Of the twenty-five students surveyed, it was reported that 92% had no problem with the modified school calendar during the current year and the reasons they enjoyed school were "because they went a number of places, there were fun activities, they got lots of breaks, and their friends were in their class" (ASYER, 1996, 3). The junior students in the traditional program were not surveyed, so no comparisons were available as to the reasons why the junior students in the traditional calendar program enjoyed school. Twenty-two of the students (88%) in the pilot project wanted to continue the YRE calendar the following year because of "fun, holidays, enjoyable program, not such a long summer gap, and the novelty" (ASYER, 1996, 3). A

comparison of the students' report cards from previous years indicated that the achievement of the students appeared to be similar for the two year period.

It was reported that approximately half of the staff responded to the survey which included "School Resource Team members, a Core French teacher and an administrator" (ASYER, 1996, 3).

Advantages of the program mentioned by the teachers included: enthusiasm of the students, fewer students on the playground during break time, the varied August program which also provided opportunity for social bonding, and students were well settled before the start of Special Education assistance and Core French (ASYER, 1996, 3).

Since it was felt that one year was too short a period to compare the students' progress in the traditional and YRE programs, the staff did not comment upon student achievement. Of the teachers who completed the survey, 82% responded that they would be interested in teaching in the YRE program the following year. However, if the program were to be expanded, some of the issues that needed to be addressed would include "transportation, suitable summer environment, recruitment of interested teachers... and the scheduling of caretaking and intramurals" (ASYER, 1996, 4).

In the Board survey, personnel from outdoor education, community facilities, maintenance and caretaking were interviewed in person or by telephone. The community facilities included the Muskoka Pioneer Village, the Port Carling Museum, and the Yearley Outdoor Education Centre. Having the students at these facilities in August was considered to be an asset. All but one of them could accommodate more classes the following summer. Maintenance and caretaking supervisors reported that minor scheduling changes were necessary to accommodate the YRE program, but they did not foresee any problems with an expanded program.

The Evaluation of the Alternate School Year at Huntsville Public School concluded in January, 1996 and was presented to the Board of Education meeting on February 20, 1996. The summary of the report indicated a positive evaluation. The final statement of the Alternate School Year Evaluation Report states:

Success of the program would appear to be enhanced by the following:

- voluntary nature
- interesting programming in August
- accommodation of siblings in the program
- early notification of plans to support staff such as maintenance and caretaking
- Collective Agreement issues addressed.

At the same Board of Education meeting, Patterson presented a proposal to the Muskoka Board of Education to extend the YRE program to three classes (primary, junior and intermediate). According to the minutes of the Board meeting, the following motion was discussed:

Be it resolved that the Board endorse the implementation of an alternate school year calendar, 1996-97; and further, that it endorse an alternative school year program in one primary, one junior, and one intermediate class at Huntsville Public School during the 1996-97 and 1997-98 school years as per the proposal presented on February 13, 1996.

It passed, conditional upon Ministry approval and sufficient enrollment. Again letters were sent home and parents registered their children on a first come first served basis and another waiting list was established because the demand was greater than could be accommodated.

On Tuesday, August 6, 1996, the school year began with the three classes attending a welcoming breakfast. Each week a newsletter was sent home to keep the parents informed of what was happening. A copy of these newsletters can be found in Appendix E. There were 22 children in the primary class, 25 students in the junior class, and 28 students in the intermediate class, along with two full time teachers, one half time teacher, and the Vice Principal who taught the junior class in the mornings. Officially, the Principal was credited as working half-time as well. The Principal and the Vice-Principal alternated time off during the off-track holidays throughout the year to make up for the time worked in the summer.

The factors that the respondents in this study thought had influenced the Board to vote to expand the YRE program are summarized in Table 12 in Appendix A. Consistently, a majority of the persons in the three participant groups attributed the

success of the pilot project in the first year as the reason for the unanimous decision to continue the initiative. The teaching staff felt strongly that the factor that influenced the Board decision was the immense satisfaction of the parents who spoke highly of the YRE program. One parent stated that "it was so successful the prior year, there was a lot of demand for it", while a trustee commented that the decision was made because the Board was "greatly impressed with the pilot project."

The parents referred often to the students' positive opinion of the program and commented that the "kids were happy." Also considered important was the community support of the program which is reflected in the high degree of satisfaction on the part of the stakeholders. Parents were impressed that "the Principal was getting phone calls from outside communities wanting to know if their children could come to this school too. It was very popular with children." A few of the parents also mentioned the value of including siblings in the expanded grade one to eight program, as well as the continuation of the same calendar at the secondary level.

Public demand was responsible for the unanimous Board vote according to the majority of trustees. One trustee reported that "Kids were talking about it with their friends. Parents were talking about it with their kids' friends." According to another trustee, "...the knowledge that there certainly were far more who wanted their children to participate", influenced the expansion of the program. Some of the trustees also thought that the positive results of the independent evaluation had an impact on the decision to expand the YRE program. Generally, the trustees were more concerned about public demand, the parents were more concerned about students' enjoyment and the employees were more concerned about pleasing the parents.

Summary of the Implementation of the Policy

The reasons why the Board unanimously voted to expand the YRE program are identified in the literature on the policy-making process. The pilot project had been successful and had gone through the stages of initiation, creation, testing, choice and

installation as outlined by Downey (1888). The trustees were aware of the level of commitment of the stakeholders and the extent of community participation in decision-making, the scale and complexity of the change, the contextual suitability and stability of the school environment, the function of leadership and the availability of expertise, and the potential political implications.

According to the responses of the participants in this study, although there was resistance from the community in the late 1980s and early 1990s to the whole concept of an alternate calendar program, there was sufficient interest amongst the educators to manage a YRE calendar change. However, there was a lack of readiness on the part of the trustees to adapt to change and some question about their capacity to deal with this type of change. Of the five components necessary for change to take place according to NAYRE (1995), the group in the early 1990s had a vision, the resources and an action plan, but could not be successful without the capacity and motivation for change. There also did not appear to be senior administrative staff who made any attempt to build a capacity for change within the educational community, a task which Fullan (1991) considers important.

However, in the mid 1990s, there were many changes within the Board. There was a new slate of trustees with a mandate for change, a new Director and new Superintendents who challenged schools to be innovative. There also was a more informed group of stakeholders who shared the vision of YRE and strongly supported an alternate calendar program.

The proposed program itself offered more input from the stakeholders and more choice for parents. There was a deliberate strategy to start small with a pilot project of one junior class using an alternate calendar within a traditional school. Families who did preferred the traditional calendar could still send their children to their local school. This differed from the proposal in the early 1990s which involved the entire population of one elementary school. Families who preferred the traditional calendar at that time would have had to send their children to a school other than the neighbourhood school.

It was felt at that time that the families had no choice if they wanted to send their children to the local neighbourhood school. The proposal in 1995 allowed for choice within the local school and accommodated all of the family lifestyles.

Other crucial aspects of the 1995 proposal were the evaluation and feedback components. These were important parts of the plan in order to determine if it was feasible to continue operating the pilot program and whether or not to expand it to the primary and intermediate divisions within the same school. In the policy-making process, Downey (1988) includes testing and the estimation of consequences as important phases in the process as well as the choice component which functions to facilitate judgment.

At all stages of the implementation process, it is important to seek consensus and make every attempt to avoid public conflict. In the early 1990s, the Board avoided public conflict by deciding to further study YRE rather than approve a pilot program. In the meantime, the concept of YRE was studied, communicated and marketed to key stakeholders in the community. By the mid 1990s, many strategies had been used to reduce the potential for public conflict which in turn increased the chances of successfully implementing the policy.

This avoidance of public conflict by the Muskoka Board of Education contrasts greatly with the attempts of other school boards in Ontario to implement a YRE policy. In the cases of York Region, Durham and London Boards, timing was a problem because the issue arose the year prior to municipal elections. In all three situations, YRE became an election issue and the public was divided into three camps; those who supported it, those who were vehemently opposed to it, and those who had no interest. In all three scenarios, the most vocal group, those who were opposed to it, received the most media attention and gained the most momentum as a cause. The Boards were forced to withdraw their proposals for YRE programs.

In Muskoka in the mid 1990s the timing for the pilot project was right for many reasons. A new slate of trustees had been elected in fall of 1994 with a mandate for

change. In the current political era when Boards were being pressured by both the Ministry of Education and the media into being more accountable for progressive education in the Province of Ontario, the mood was ripe for any change that suggested greater accountability on the part of schools for the students and the funds for which they were responsible. Outcome-based learning became an important part of the Common Curriculum as Boards of Education were challenged to do more with fewer tax dollars and resources. Site-based management was heralded as a partial solution to decentralization and, in turn, it provided the Principal with more independent authority to operate a YRE program.

The stakeholders who had been involved in the successful implementation of the YRE program were proud to be associated with the leading edge of a new revolutionary development in education in Ontario. Educators, parents and trustees felt convinced that the YRE policy would indeed benefit the students and enhance the public good of the community. The stakeholders had achieved the capacity for change which, along with educational leadership, and policy implementation, formed the three interdependent components of successful policy making.

POST IMPLEMENTATION VIEWS OF YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION

Throughout August of 1996, while three classes of students attended Huntsville Public School in the second year of the YRE program, ten employees, ten parents, and ten trustees were interviewed for this study. As stakeholders in the process, they offered valuable insight into various aspects of implementing the YRE calendar program.

The remainder of this chapter will address the participants' perceptions of the advantages and disadvantages of YRE, the factors that influenced the Board decisions, the geographic and cultural aspects underlying the decision, as well as the perceived impact of Year-Round Education on the students, their families and the community at large. Information gathered from the thirty interviews and tables was drawn to

summarize the most frequent responses. Information from these tables was compared in relation to the three different groups of participants, the findings from other tables, research discussed in the literature review and information provided from Ministry and Board documents as well as from the media sources.

Advantages of Year-Round Education

The advantages of YRE most frequently identified by the participants in all three groups are the perceived educational benefits emanating from continuous learning as well as the belief of improved academic retention by the students. Table 13 in Appendix A provides a summary of the most frequent responses.

The educational advantages were expressed in a variety of ways by the employees, with no distinction among administrators, teachers or support staff. One employee mentioned that "it allows kids to have their own learning in more equal blocks of time so the pattern or the rhythm of the learning is more consistent throughout the year." Another employee thought that the modified calendar reduced "that large block of time when students are out of school and out of the formal learning process." A different educator said, "They wouldn't spend so much time reviewing because you know they wouldn't have been away from it as long." Still, another employee thought that the children "remain sort of in tune with the educational experience."

The educational benefit was the advantage most frequently identified by the parents. One parent referred to YRE as "non-stop education" in which "kids don't lose what they've been doing throughout the year. There's very little time off, very few weeks off in a row, so that they retain a lot of their schooling." Another parent reported, "For my son, he was having problems with reading, and... I think he's had more retention of what he learned the year before. It's more continual learning for him rather than stopping for this long period and then [in] September it's hard to get back in gear. For him it's worked out academically."

The trustees also identified retention as being one of the biggest advantages of YRE. According to one trustee, "I think it's well pointed out that over nine weeks children will probably lose maybe 20% of what they've learned over the year. And cutting this down would certainly mean they would retain a lot more of the knowledge." Another trustee reported that YRE "...proves very advantageous because of the fact that you have almost a seamless year. They have shorter periods of time off; therefore retention is better. The teachers are not faced with the problems of reteaching, if you want to call it that, every September, and the waste of time there when you have to bring the kids up to speed and get them going again. There's [sic] advantages to every facet in the education spectrum." These opinions are discussed in Chapter 5.

The employees considered the reduction of stress to be an important factor. It was reported that YRE resulted in fewer sick days and less burnout for teachers and students. One employee thought that "they [students] perhaps have a little bit more rested approach to it [school]." Another educator commented that with YRE, "...fatigue didn't seem to be there because of all those breaks." The same person went on to say, "There wasn't the stress at Christmas because they had just come back fresh and were eager to take on all the things that go along with Christmas concerts and that kind of thing."

Half of the parents mentioned the children's relief from summer boredom as an advantage of the program, but the other two groups did not mention this as often. One parent reported, "My kids, especially my boys, get really bored in August after the lacrosse season is done, so they need the structure." Another parent said, "As far as [my son's] holidays... by the time August comes, he's a little bored and he's perfectly happy to come back to school and see his friends and have something to do kind of thing." A third parent commented, "I find with the older child especially, it keeps him interested in school, and in August I find he is bored, so it gives him something to do." On the same subject a trustee agreed, "I think for parents it will be an advantage because [in] those last days of August, kids really get bored."

Family lifestyle was a matter of lesser concern for all three groups in the study. Half of the trustees felt that there was a positive relationship between YRE and family lifestyle in that it allowed the parents to have quality time with their children. One trustee who initially was strongly opposed to YRE, admitted that "...perhaps Year-Round [Education] may give more flexibility to a family as other areas of their life are changing." A second trustee, referring to parents who work in the tourist industry in the summer, said that when the "...slow time comes, they're able to spend some time with their children, whether it's staying right at home or doing the family trips or whatever. That isn't [sic] as available to them at other times." Yet another commented on the fall season being "...an ideal time for the children to have vacation time with Mom and Dad when the rest of the province is busy, and they can do their own thing often at a reduced rate."

While commenting on improved family lifestyle as an advantage of YRE, an employee stated that it gives "...parents a chance to be with their kids in a way they haven't been before. It allows them to work in their own employment patterns in a way that they haven't been [able to] before." One mother said, "My husband is a builder and so the times, especially October and March, are when he can take breaks and we can do family things. In the summer that wouldn't happen." And the final comment by a parent that provided some food for thought was, "I'm finding that with this Year-Round schooling, the parents and the kids that are in it, they're real family oriented, and I see that as a really big advantage."

Another perceived advantage was the opportunity for optimal use of community and historical facilities at a time when there was a reduced demand for them. According to one employee, "It frees up the use of computers and other types of resources like that. Because of less demand, [computers] are available in greater numbers for these students." Another educator stated that it allowed them to "...use the community in a new way, particularly in the month of August... when the resources were available." A second advantage expressed by the employees was their observation that the children

enjoy the program and are more enthusiastic about going to school. One educator commented, "Indeed with the calendar that we have devised here, I see an awful lot of enthusiasm both on the faces of the children and parents when we begin at the beginning of August." A third advantage noted by the employees was that school was a happier environment where "the children get along better" and where there were fewer discipline problems than in the traditional classrooms.

An advantage expressed by some of the parent group more often than the other two groups was that the YRE program reduced the need for daycare because of their having to work in the summer in the tourist industry. A parent commented "My busiest time is the summer so it [YRE] definitely helps me out. It's not so much an advantage now that they are getting older, but it certainly was for daycare before, and I have more time for them in the other seasons." Another commented on the children of people in the tourist industry. "From a parent point of view... their kids have pretty much had enough of summer by the end of July, like a lot of kids everywhere, and they're also still heavily into tourists due to their making a living. So it's great to be able to send their children back to school... and then the holidays come for everyone at a later date." On the same topic, a trustee commented, "Families that are in the tourist industry, you know, they don't have the advantage of being able to take the summers off with their children in the traditional time off."

As Table 13 in Appendix A indicates, the employees' group perceived more advantages in YRE than the parents' or trustees' groups. Moreover, those advantages tended to be felt more strongly than they were in the other two groups. The only advantage that was strongly identified by all three groups was the perception that Year-Round Education provided more continuous learning with subsequent greater retention of previously learned skills and subject matter.

The perception of the respondents that the educational benefits are an advantage of YRE reflects the findings of Alcorn (1992), Winters (1994), and Kneese (1995) whose studies indicated that the test scores of YRE students in reading and

mathematics were higher than those of students using the traditional school calendar. In fact Alvarez, et al. (1994), noted that 41% of YRE schools in the United States operated on single track YRE schedules because of the educational benefits.

The results of the responses of the participants are also similar to those reported by the University of Central Florida concerning the overall satisfaction of the stakeholders with YRE calendars (Mussatti, 1995). The observations that there was a reduction in stress, that the YRE classrooms were much happier environments, and that fewer sick days were noted by the participants in this study concurred with the findings of Brekke (1992). At the same time, the observation that there were fewer discipline problems was also reflected in the work of Greenfield (1994).

In observing the pattern of responses of the three groups, it is interesting to note that the trustees did not recognize the importance of students enjoying the program nor did they recognize the teachers' feelings of reduced stress as being advantages of YRE. With the present Conservative government's tendency to treat the delivery of education in Ontario as a business, there has been more emphasis placed on servicing the needs of the client in order to achieve customer satisfaction. Being aware of the opinions and attitudes of the clients is an important aspect of this equation. At the same time, just as in the business environment, it is important to increase efforts to minimize the stress of the employees in order to maximize the outcomes of production.

Disadvantages of Year-Round Education

Although there was much discussion about possible disadvantages of YRE throughout the interviews of the participants in this study, only two disadvantages of the Year-Round Education program emerged. At the same time, a third of the participants replied that they were unaware of any academic disadvantages of YRE. A summary of the categories of responses can be found in Table 14 in Appendix A.

A frequent disadvantage cited by the employees was that there was no transportation provided in August and that it was the responsibility of the parents to

drive their children to school. As one employee commented, "The one [disadvantage] I think of off-hand is the bussing. The students who live very far away and couldn't get bussing or car pooling, wouldn't be able to join the program, so that's one of the downfalls." However, only two parents and one trustee identified this as a disadvantage. One parent reported, "We're quite a bit out of town, so we've been working it in with our own work, the driving, and I've been sharing driving with neighbours so it hasn't been too bad."

Summer heat was seen as a problem by almost a third of the interviewees. A parent lamented, "The only disadvantage is possibly submitting the children to the enormous heat in the summer ... and there's no air conditioning in the facilities because they weren't due for summer use, but that's the only downfall I can see." An employee commented, "The only disadvantage I can see is last week when it was so terribly hot, the fact that we don't have air conditioning in this school." Another employee was referring to the heat when she said it was a "slight disadvantage. But you could get that heat in September and in June too, so it's not controllable."

The necessity for air conditioning in hot summer weather, viewed as a disadvantage in this study, was also found by Kirman (1996), Glines (1994), and Sardo-Brown & Rooney (1992). The added expense of transportation mentioned by Glines (1994) and Peltier (1991) was more of an inconvenience for the parents for the month of August. Other disadvantages that have been found in the literature were not of significance in this study. The fact that the parents identified the fewest number of disadvantages could be explained by a comment made by Patterson, "In researching YRE, I found that the perceived disadvantages by parents and students very often disappeared after the students had experienced it."

Cultural Aspects of a Tourist Region and the Role of Geographic Location

Because the cultural aspect of this tourist region are so closely related to the geographic location of Muskoka, the responses from the participants were very similar.

The ways in which the participants in this study thought that the cultural aspects of a community in a tourist area influenced the creation and the implementation of a YRE program in an elementary school can be found in summary form in Table 15 in Appendix A, while the different ways in which the participants in this study thought that the geographic location might have contributed are summarized in Table 16 in Appendix A. One fact that was mentioned often, in varying degrees by the three groups, was that the many parents of school-aged children were busy in the summer with seasonal work in the Muskoka tourist area.

The employees and the parents felt that the cultural aspects and the geographic location were related to tourism which is the prime industry in the Muskoka area. A parent commented, "Because we are in a tourist area, it [YRE] certainly appealed to a number of parents here because of their businesses in the summer time and lack of time off to spend with their children at that time." An employee said that "because of our geography, we are a tourist town and therefore we are busy in the summer. So that affects jobs, which affect parents, which affect in turn the teachers and the students." An employee took it one step further. "Muskoka is a tourist area and because a lot of families would be involved in that, they take holidays at other times of the year and this [YRE] certainly would fit their program better than trying to take holidays in the summer." Another reflected, "We're looking at where geographic location has affected the economic base [and] is the economic base. Therefore we have families in perhaps slightly different lifestyles, a year-round type of lifestyle."

Part of the culture, according to half of the employees, centered on the fact that the parents, either by choice or otherwise, took alternative vacation times that allowed for quality time with their children during the off-season. "People with young children usually have less seniority in their jobs and aren't able to take holidays during the summer vacation when their children are off." However, an employee said, "I don't think you have to live in a tourist area to go to YRE." Similarly, another stated that "a lot of the people that had opted into this thing [YRE] and liked it, had nothing necessarily to

do with the tourist industry." Yet, a third employee speculated "It's just an alternative and they liked the alternative, I guess some people would just rather vacation somewhere else in the winter time and they would like to stay here in Muskoka in the summer."

A majority of the trustees thought that the cultural aspects of the community in a tourist area did not have anything to do with the creation and implementation of YRE. As well, one of the more seasoned trustees talked about the cultural aspects of the conservative community of Muskoka whose residents are resistant to change. This trustee exclaimed, "People don't like to change! It surprised me that Muskoka was the first Board in the province to get this program because Muskoka is not an area very conducive to change."

The majority of trustees also thought that the geographic location had nothing to do with YRE or questioned the relationship. According to one trustee, "There's nothing unique about Muskoka that would have contributed to this other than Dan Patterson." While another wondered aloud, "I don't know if the location would really make a difference... I don't know whether it's so much geographic as it is the staff involved." Yet another stated, "I don't think it would have mattered if we lived in Timbuktu." From a different vantage point, one trustee thought that the geographic location "would be detrimental" to creating and implementing a YRE program.

In spite of the differences in responses, there was a sense of pride in all three groups that their community was special because so many people from southern Ontario and the United States want to vacation in Muskoka's picturesque location. In fact, there were suggestions made that local residents prefer to stay in Muskoka in the summer months because of the natural beauty of its geographic location and would rather vacation elsewhere at other times of the year.

Generally there was a sense among the employees and the parents, but not trustees, that the YRE program was a result of the uniqueness of the community, that the culture and lifestyle of a tourist region gave them the freedom to try something that

was not traditional. This concurs with the Louis theory that change only occurs when the environment accepts the "existence of anomalies, and an acceptable alternative to existing practice" (1994, 14).

This unique lifestyle is an accepted reality in the culture of the community. Some of the respondents who lived in Huntsville had a sense of closeness, a sense of being a special kind of community, a sense of pride in being the hub of Muskoka. This pride was also reflected in their feelings towards the school and the uniqueness of the YRE program. According to Dalin (1993), the differences in capacity of a school community to change depends on its innovation history as well as the degree to which the school organization is tightly woven which is seen as an important part of the school culture.

The pattern of responses in each group was unique. While half of the employees felt that an important aspect of the culture of the families in the YRE program was that they valued quality time with their children in the spring and fall off-track period, the parents did not feel as strongly about this. Perhaps from their vantage point, the educators have a more objective awareness of the unique quality of family lifestyle. Or perhaps they have made inferences about the families of the children in the YRE program that are not based in reality. Nevertheless, the participants in this study could not agree on the ways in which the cultural aspects of a tourist community may have influenced the creation and the implementation of the YRE program which leads to the conclusion that the cultural aspects had not real impact on the decision to implement the YRE program.

Impact on Family Lifestyle

The parents who participated in this study strongly believed that the off-season holidays allowed the families to have more quality time together. According to one parent, "I think it's made it more enjoyable. We've been able to do things at other times of the year." While another parent looked forward to having "time in October when leaves are beautiful and you know, going and camping at that time of year is wonderful.

And at March Break being able to do, you know, more outdoor winter sports." The ways in which the parents in this study thought the modified calendar program at Huntsville Public School impacted on the lifestyle of their families can be found in summary form in Table 17 in Appendix A.

The parents also felt strongly that there was less stress in the household. This was especially true in families where an older sibling was a high school student on a different calendar than the younger student in the YRE program. A parent remarked, "I have a teenager and I think we all enjoy each other more because... there's less stress in the household because they're not arguing in the middle of the summer. They're separated for a while so you enjoy each child individually." Another parent of similarly aged children commented, "They don't spend a lot of time doing similar activities anyway, so different calendars have given my husband and me more time with them on holidays individually."

Half of the parents believed that their children were learning better in the YRE program. Some of the parents said that their children had plenty of holidays and were no longer bored in the summer. A parent stated, "Actually he's not as bored. He was latterly getting bored near the end of August and now it sort of keeps him going all year long." Another said, "I think this calendar puts better use to time off school... In many ways, it's better for him [son] to have his holidays staggered throughout the year." When asked how the YRE program had impacted on their family lifestyle, one parent replied, "Humorously!" Apparently her youngest child managed to get up early every morning in his holidays to remind his high school aged siblings that they had to go to school and he did not!

As Table 17 indicates, the parents interviewed felt that there had been a positive impact on the lifestyle of their families because of the modified calendar program. According to the literature, there is a positive relationship between YRE and the quality of life issue. Mussatti (1995) found that there was a high degree of satisfaction with YRE by all the stakeholders, including parents and students, while Brekke (1992)

reported that families benefited from the shorter periods of school followed by frequent vacations since they appear to be beneficial to the health and well-being of the students. Shields and LaRocque also found that "once parents had first hand experience with YRS [Year-Round Schooling], their responses became increasingly and overwhelmingly positive" (1995, 12).

Impact on Academic Performance

Academic performance is often stated as one of the major justifications for the existence of YRE programs. When asked to list the five factors that influenced the Board to implement a YRE program in Huntsville, academic achievement was the third most frequently mentioned factor. The perception of the employees in this study in relations to the impact on academic performance can be found summarized in Table 18 in Appendix A.

A majority of the educators reported good academic progress, while some indicated an attitude improvement, and a reduction in the needs of special education students. One employee said, "because these children chose it [YRE], and are committed to it, I just noticed a big attitude change in some of the children that were so called 'at risk' students. Through the IPRC process, they [two students] have been deemed no longer at risk."

However, half of the employees thought it was too early to tell if there had been any kind of impact. Nevertheless, one employee commented, "We just haven't been at it long enough to say for sure. I think that one thing we can say fairly confidently, although we don't have the data to back it up either, is that it certainly doesn't seem to hurt their performance." At the same time, another employee reported, "In no case was there a decline in academic performance."

Other ways in which the employees reported that YRE impacted on academic performance were a "...tremendous gain in momentum in August"; less stress on the students which indirectly impacts on academic achievement and less review required.

A teacher said, "I didn't have to review as much. The kids remembered how to read and remembered to date their work. Just simple little things. And it's only been five weeks since they read their last book or whatever, so I think they are that much readier to get back to work."

In the literature, it has been found that all students appear to benefit academically from continuous learning in a seamless school year calendar. There has not been one reported study that found that students suffered academically as a result of participating in a YRE program. Alcom (1992), Winters (1994) and Kneese (1995) found that most American studies indicate that reading, language, and math test scores improved more in YRE programs than in traditional schools. In fact, 41% of schools with YRE programs in the United States operate on single track schedules because of the educational benefits (Alvarez, et al, 1994).

In a recent Canadian case study, Shields & LaRocque (1997) warn that YRE researchers must be careful in how findings are interpreted. When it has been reported in the literature that the relationship between academic achievement and YRE was inconclusive, people have misinterpreted that to mean that YRE makes no difference to student outcomes. Shields & LaRocque have found that "the literature affirms that the impact is generally positive rather than neutral or negative" (1997, 5). Even if educators found that there was no difference in student outcomes between traditional and YRE programs, that should be considered a positive finding (Shields and LaRocque, 1997). It is a win/win situation when there is a major change in the structure of the calendar that results in increased use of facilities and resources, and reduced stress, without any negative consequences to academic performance. Based on this one study, the fact that there were no reports of any negative consequences to academic achievement as a result of the implementation of the YRE program at Huntsville Public School, it could be viewed as a positive finding.

In the American studies, the schools involved in YRE programs have been operating for years and are no longer prone to the Hawthorne effect. However, the

students in the YRE program at Huntsville Public School received an inordinate amount of attention especially in the first month of operation, and to a lesser degree throughout the school year. Initially the students were inundated with reporters from newspapers, radio and television. The class in the first year had many visitors observing the program and the students participated in a survey that evaluated the YRE program which was designed and conducted by a Board consultant. Therefore, at the time of the study, the Hawthorne effect could not be ruled out. Improvement in the students' academic outcomes could have been partly due to the amount of outside interest that was directed towards their alternate calendar program.

However, the findings in this study concerning academic achievement are rather inconclusive. Any evaluation that was done was purely subjective since the only data available were the anecdotal comments that had been written on previous report cards. Unfortunately, the students had not participated in standardized testing prior to the implementation of the YRE program, so there was no objective means of evaluating their progress as compared to students who remained on the traditional school calendar. However, the fact that there was no mention of any negative impacts of YRE on the academic performance of the students should not be forgotten.

Impact of YRE on the Community

There were differences in opinions as to how the participants in this study thought the modified calendar program at Huntsville Public School impacted on the community in the one year period. A majority of the employees and trustees thought there was a positive impact on the students' self esteem and the school notoriety. However, a majority of the parents did not think the YRE program had much impact because it involved only a small group of students. A summary of these responses can be found in Table 19 in Appendix A.

The employees also mentioned how the students were contributing to the community by planting flower boxes and maintaining them "... for the beautification of

the main street" as part of the August program. An employee said, "The children that came year-round were invited to partake in decorating the town, planting the planters that were going to go on main street... and I think it helps the children to feel a part of the community and to feel that they are contributing and helping." Another commented, "I think the parents of the students who are in the program were pleased that the community resources could be used by their students during the summers."

Some of the parents thought that the YRE program shocked people and got people talking because it was "a novelty, a first, something new and untraditional." A few of the parents thought that the publicity that the program had received in the media had a positive impact on the community. On the other hand, the trustees observed that the use of the community facilities by the students had a positive impact on the tourism industry. One trustee reported, "It made the Pioneer Village a lot more interesting for people visiting it last summer to find a class of students dressed in period costume and participating in the kind of thing that pioneer children would have participated in." Another commented, "Certainly the people who are users of the program have been very positive."

While generally there are mixed opinions as to what impact the modified calendar had on the Huntsville community, it is important to note that there were no reports of any type of negative impact on the community. However, it can be concluded that according to the respondents' perceptions the YRE program did not have a significant impact on the Huntsville community.

Impact on Other Areas of the Board

The ways in which the trustees in this study thought the modified calendar program at Huntsville Public School impacted on the other areas of the Muskoka Board in the past year have been summarized in Table 20 in Appendix A. Many trustees remarked that there had been inquiries from parents in other parts of the county and that the communities of Gravenhurst and Bracebridge had expressed an interest in

establishing a YRE program. One trustee commented, "I have a feeling that in the future, we certainly will be trying trial projects in other areas of Muskoka."

The six trustees who reported that there was interest shown by parents, teachers and principals in other communities, thought that the YRE program had had a positive impact on the community. However, there were four trustees who did not know or did not believe that YRE had had any type of impact on the community. These particular trustees had varied backgrounds, were from different parts of Muskoka including Huntsville, and had a diversity of experiences as trustees. They did not appear to be indifferent to the YRE concept, but honestly felt that the pilot project involved such a small number of families, that it really had not impacted on the rest of the community.

Survey of Influential Factors

The thirty participants in the study identified twenty-three different factors that they thought contributed to the Board's decision to implement a YRE program. All the interviewees listed five factors with the exception of two parents who individually chose to mention only three factors. A copy of the one page survey can be found in Appendix B. The most frequently identified factors including a miscellaneous grouping, have been summarized in Table 21 in Appendix A.

In the analysis of this data, there is an interesting pattern of the perceptions of the participants. The Principal was the factor most often identified by 93% of the participants. The perception of each group is that the YRE program would not have come into existence without a leader such as Dan Patterson. The employees also thought the election of new trustees was an important political reality. The parents thought YRE would not have been supported if there had not been the perception of improved academic outcomes or if there had been additional costs to the taxpayer. The trustees believed strongly from past experience, that the public would have rejected the YRE concept if they had not been offered a choice in the matter. There were three different perceptions from three different groups of stakeholders.

The other factors that were perceived to a lesser degree by all the participants were the importance of parent and community involvement in the implementation process, family lifestyle, the support of the Director and Superintendent, employment patterns in a tourist area, starting on a small scale with a pilot project, economic changes, political changes, media coverage, climate of change, changing values in education, base of knowledge, public relations, geographic location, educating the public, better use of school facilities and policies of the Ministry of Education and Training.

The results of the Year-Round Education Survey, while concurring with information found previously in the literature, placed strong emphasis on the importance of the leadership role in influencing the decision of the Board to implement an alternate calendar program. This also relates to the responses during the interview questions concerning the role of Patterson's leadership in the implementation process. The factors listed by the participants in the survey proved to be of great significance throughout the interview process which followed the completion of the Year-Round Education Survey.

Summary of the Post Implementation Views

When the three groups of participants were asked to assess the impact of the YRE program on different aspects of their environments, the employees perceived a somewhat positive relationship between YRE and academic achievement, although the students had only been involved for a short period of time. The parents described a variety of positive relationships between YRE and family lifestyle. At the same time, most of the trustees identified the interest of teachers and parents and principals in other communities as evidence that YRE had had a positive impact in other areas of Muskoka. In all three groups, there was no mention of any kind of negative impact that had resulted because of YRE.

This finding is supported by the responses of the participants to questions concerning their perceptions of the advantages and disadvantages of Year-Round Education at Huntsville Public School. The number of advantages mentioned far outnumbered the number of disadvantages, while the only skepticism noted was that of one trustee who was strongly opposed to YRE initially for the reason that Muskoka was too conservative a place to adapt to that type of change. The same trustee was surprised at the success of the program and was genuinely pleased that the modified calendar was of benefit to the participating families within the Board.

The findings of this current study suggest that the readiness of the parents to adapt to change, the capacity of the educators to change and the availability of administrative leadership will together determine whether YRE will succeed in the other areas of Muskoka. This finding relates to findings from previous attempts in Southern Ontario to implement YRE, as reported by Weiss (1993). In that study, it was found that the community consultation which was an important factor in the implementation of YRE, a factor which has been an ongoing fundamental process in the implementation of a YRE program at Huntsville Public School.

However, the differences between the Muskoka experience and the previous efforts of Boards in Southern Ontario are more than a matter of consultation. Some of the participants in this study felt that the geographic location that supports a thriving tourist industry had an influence on the success of the YRE program. They felt that the Muskoka experience was unique because of the location and that YRE would never become a reality in Southern Ontario, but other participants felt that YRE could work anywhere and that the location was immaterial.

Could the difference be leadership? There were different leaders in each of the Southern Ontario Boards, while the Durham and Simcoe Boards had one educator in paid positions to coordinate the projects. The implementations did not become a reality in the London, York and Durham Boards on the initial attempts. It could be speculated that even if Patterson had been an employee of any of these Southern Ontario Boards

that the results would have been the same. Even in Muskoka, with the leadership of Patterson, the first attempt to implement a YRE programs was unsuccessful.

The pattern that is emerging in Ontario is that initial efforts to implement a YRE program have not been successful. The four Boards of Education that made an attempt to modify school calendars met with resistance the first time modifications were introduced and the trustees decided against adopting a YRE policy for political reasons. In all cases, timing the introduction of YRE immediately prior to an election posed a problem. The issue polarized the public and the anti-YRE voices were the loudest and caused a great amount of negative press which proved to be too damaging to ignore.

However, in Muskoka, the issue of YRE did not disappear after the first attempt in the early 1990s. According to Patterson, "it took a few years for the idea to grow on people". It took time for the public to look at the facts, to absorb the information and to seriously consider the concept. The educators, the parents and the trustees had to go through a process of readiness before any acceptance of change and ownership of the concept of YRE could result. By the time the proposal was made in 1995, the stakeholders had developed a capacity for change and the newly elected Trustees were at a level of readiness to approve a YRE pilot project.

Therefore, from a post implementation perspective, the participants in this study felt that the YRE program was successful in Muskoka. Along with the three components of the conceptual metaphor of the braid, leadership, ownership and change capacity, the combination of timing, consultation with stakeholders, and positive working relationship with the media produced a workable YRE policy and a win-win educational experience.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Why did the Year-Round Education program at Huntsville Public School reach the implementation stage in 1995, while efforts to introduce a YRE program failed to materialize at a different school in the same Board of Education in the early 1990s? To address this question, the data will be examined in relation to the various groups of stakeholders, the issue of change capacity, the importance of leadership, and the acceptance and ownership of the YRE policy. The crucial factor of timing will also be discussed in relation to the political process in an educational context. And finally, the conceptual metaphor of the braid that provided the framework for this study will be revisited.

The Stakeholders

In this study, the stakeholders comprise the following:

- the families that the school serves, including the students and their parents,
- employees of the school and the Board,
- current and former trustees,
- members of the community including local business and industry and
- the Ministry of Education and Training.

In comparing the makeup of the stakeholder groups from the early to the mid 1990s, there were several changes in the composition of each group, with the exception of the community in general, which remained fairly constant. The school in question in the early 1990s was located on the outskirts of the town of Huntsville and most of the students are bussed to school. In contrast, Huntsville Public School is located in the heart of the town and most of students live within walking distance of the school, although some students are bussed from outside regions. As is the case in the

rest of the community, the majority of the students come from two-parent working class families.

Since the pilot project operated in a different school in 1995 than that of the proposal in the early 1990s, the employees were entirely different with the exception of the Principal. As well, the Senior Administrators had completely changed over the same course of time. There also was a turnover of the trustees during those years, as well as three provincial elections which resulted in three different political parties coming to office. The people who make decisions, namely the Senior Administrators, the trustees, and the Ministers of Education and Training, were different people in 1995 than in the early 1990s. As a result of these turnovers in personnel, there were new groups of stakeholders who were less set in their ways and more open to new ideas. They had more opportunities to become involved in the decision-making process which allowed for greater understanding, acceptance and ownership of the YRE concept. This in turn influenced the political process in education and had an impact on the implementation of Year-Round Education in the Muskoka Board of Education.

In the early 1990s, the stakeholders were more enshrined in the traditional school calendar. At the same time, there was a limited choice offered to the parents that would have resulted in many of the students moving to another school. The extent of this disruption to family lifestyles caused discontent among many of the families. However, in the mid 1990s, by offering a range of choices, the stakeholders were allowed to make informed decisions about their role in the process of change which reduced any skepticism (Dalin, 1993). According to Sergiovanni (1995), the inclusion of all the stakeholders in the decision-making process is associated with the "High Performance Theory leadership style" which is the optimal way of producing feelings of acceptance and ownership.

According to the participants in this study, the factor that influenced the decision of the Board not to implement YRE in the early 1990s was the fact that Muskoka was a conservative community which was not ready for change. The trustees at that time

were viewed as being uncomfortable with taking risks, suspicious of change and afraid to be the first to do anything innovative. As one trustee phrased it, "I think at the time, the trustees were leery about getting into something that they weren't sure what the outcomes would be".

A majority of the stakeholders in this study felt that the culture of their community was unique because it was a tourist area. Their unique lifestyle was due in part to the seasonal employment pattern in a community where four-season tourism is the primary industry. There was a sense among the parents and the employees that the culture and lifestyle of a tourist region gave them the freedom to try something novel and untraditional. Therefore, it was felt that the community would be more accepting of an alternative program because of its different lifestyle from other communities. This concurs with the Louis theory that change occurs when the environment accepts the "...existence of anomalies, and an acceptable alternative to existing practice" (1994, 14).

However, some of the stakeholders thought that being in a tourist area had absolutely nothing to do with the creation and implementation of a YRE program. These trustees thought that having children in school in August was convenient for most working parents, regardless of where the parents were employed. This had been discussed with the local Chamber of Commerce and the majority of businesses felt that having a few children in school in August would not interfere with the tourist industry, but rather might help to alleviate day care problems of some of the employees during August.

A few of the stakeholders believed that the context of a tourist region had a negative impact on the implementation of a YRE program. Because students are needed for summer labour in the Muskoka area, initially many people were opposed to the idea until they realized that it only involved the younger elementary school children and not the older secondary school students. As well, organized resistance to YRE in the United States from Camping Associations was a local concern of the owners of

camp facilities but not really a concern of the tourist business associations in the Muskoka area.

The final group of stakeholders from the Ministry of Education and Training established Draft Guidelines for Year-Round Education to regulate the implementation of modified calendar programs in the mid-1990s. School Boards were invited to submit proposals to the Ministry once the individual schools had received local School Board approval. However, School Boards were cautioned to consult with the community and to obtain widespread acceptance prior to submitting a proposal. The YRE programs were to be initiated on a pilot project basis ranging in length from two to five years. Proposals were to include "the purpose of the project, education plan, implementation process, expected benefits, adverse consequences, an evaluation plan and any other details which would assist the decision making process" (1995, 1).

In summary, in the mid-1990s, the employees, the parents, the teachers and the community were more involved as stakeholders in the decision-making process than had been the case in the early 1990s. As well, there were various changes in the different stakeholder groups from the late 1980s to the early 1990s that influenced the decision to implement a Year-Round Education program in the Muskoka Board. Although it could not be determined by the findings from the data if any one group was the most influential, the implementation of the YRE policy occurred after there had been changes in three of the groups of stakeholders.

Change Capacity

In the Model for Managing Complex Change, NAYRE (1995) attributes the success of a project such as YRE to the inclusion of vision, capacity, motivation, resources and action plan. Unlike the early 1990s, all of these components were present in the 1995 proposal for the pilot project. In both cases, the vision, resources and action plan were established, but were modified in 1995 to ensure the acceptance of the concept of YRE.

The vision of YRE in the early 1990s was wider and on a larger scale than the mid 1990s version. Following their attendance at the annual NAYRE conference in San Diego in the late 1980s, Patterson and one of the trustees thought the best plan was to convert one school to a modified calendar, much the same as designating a school for a French Immersion program. In contrast, the vision in 1995 was more simplified and on a smaller scale. It involved a pilot project with just one junior class of students within a traditional school. The idea was to start small and to grow gradually, rather than to expect too great a change at once. As a result of proceeding slowly, there was time for the stakeholders to understand, adopt and share the vision.

Once the stakeholders had developed a shared vision, the process of assuming ownership of the YRE concept was facilitated. According to Dalin (1993), the three minimum conditions that were required in the change process in education in order to meet the "real needs" were leadership, ownership and capacity for change. However, in the early 1990s, although there was the leadership of Patterson, the necessary leadership component of the Senior Administration was not forthcoming. At the same time, the trustees were not motivated to implement a YRE program because there was not enough public demand or support (ownership) for the YRE concept. Similarly, the other stakeholders were not motivated to change the school calendar because there had not been enough time to take ownership of the new concept. The lack of capacity for change is reflected in the unwillingness of employees, parents and trustees to take a risk because of the fear of being first, of being different, of breaking away from tradition, and of trying something new without feeling confident about the outcomes.

Change capacity was also related to the competence of educators to challenge their own capacity for personal growth. Oakley & Krug (1991) found that in the change process, the leadership, which includes administrators such as the Director and Superintendent, involved the modelling of their own willingness to change in order for others to change. Fullan (1991) found that the district administrator was the key figure in establishing the expectation of change and must build the capacity of schools to

handle future innovations and change. The senior administration of the Muskoka Board were credited with creating a milieu of change throughout the school system and it was reported that the principals and teachers were challenged and encouraged to be innovative in their approach to quality education. In 1995, the improved capacity for change was reflected in the willingness of the new slate of trustees to take risks in approving the program.

The resources necessary for implementing the YRE program were similar in both cases with the exception of the computer lab. With the passage of time came access to more computers to the point that there was one computer per student in the summer of 1995. The outdoor education facilities and Pioneer Village were utilized in August of 1995, and could have been available for the students' use in the early 1990s as well.

In the action plan stage in the early 1990s, the YRE Task Force proposed the establishment of NAYRE calendar at the kindergarten to grade eight school in which Patterson was the Principal. Since a majority of the students were bussed to that school, those who preferred a traditional calendar would have to be bussed to the next closest school. This would potentially cause disruption to any family that did not want the type of calendar that was being offered at the neighbourhood school. In contrast, the action plan in the 1995 proposal accommodated any parents who resisted the change. They had the option of having their children continue to participate in the traditional calendar program, which reduced potential opposition from parents.

According to the NAYRE Model of Managing Complex Change, in Figure 4 on page 19, all five of the components, vision, capacity, motivation, resources and action plan, must be in existence in order for change to occur. If any one of the components is missing, there will be a different end product. Without vision, confusion occurs. Without capacity, anxiety results. Without motivation, gradual change takes place. Without resources, frustration happens. And without an action plan, false starts occur. Using this model, in the early 1990s the limited capacity and motivation for the stakeholders to change resulted in confusion and anxiety. The stakeholders did not consider YRE to

be "an acceptable alternative to existing practice" which Louis believes is necessary for change to occur (1994, 14). The Muskoka community was not ready at that time to be first in Ontario to implement a modified calendar in one of its elementary schools.

Leadership

Patterson, an experienced elementary school Principal, was the initiator of the whole idea of YRE in Muskoka and the catalyst in bringing it to the attention of the Board. According to the literature, leadership is especially important at the beginning of all group processes. "The most important point is that leadership starts the change process in the first place" (Schein, 1992, 332). Patterson's vision and initiative at the beginning of the process were essential behaviours that most influenced the implementation of YRE in Muskoka. In fact, almost all of the participants in this study believed that without the leadership role that he played at the beginning and throughout the process, the YRE program at Huntsville Public School would not exist.

Of the factors that contributed to the Board's decision to implement a YRE project in 1995, Patterson's leadership, commitment, and enthusiasm were the most frequently identified. Leadership was also one of the three minimum conditions that Dalin (1993) believed were required for the change process in education in order to meet the "real needs" of the stakeholders. The Real Needs Model can be found in Figure 3 on page 17. In the present study, the leadership included a relatively new Director and a new Superintendent of Education, as well as the Principal who was reported to have grown intellectually and politically throughout the whole process.

With the arrival of a new Director and a new Superintendent of Education in early 1994 came the creation of a culture of change within the Muskoka Board. Principals were challenged to find innovative ways to deliver quality educational programs. Together with Patterson, the Senior Administrators incorporated community consultation into the process and crafted the proposal for a YRE pilot project. They were models of Fullan's criteria for successful leaders which involve being

"...responsible for making vision-building a collective exercise" (1992, 20). They respected each other's visions and worked collaboratively together, to create a culture of change. According to Schein, they were able "...to provide a path and a process of learning to assure the members of the organization that constructive change is possible" (1992, 333).

In supporting the vision of YRE, according to Schein, the administration must "...provide a path and a process of learning to assure the members of the organization that constructive change is possible" (1992, 333). The roles of the Director and the Superintendent were much more than being overseers of a variety of administrative responsibilities. Fullan found that an integral part of their responsibilities was to "...make vision building a collective exercise" (1992, 20). However, the vision and initiative of one person alone cannot create change. As a leader, Patterson was an effective communicator of the YRE vision in such a way that others took ownership of it and shared the vision which then became a collective cause in the pursuit of constructive change.

The study of leadership has been one of the most researched subjects in the study of educational administration. Schein (1992) believed that leadership was especially important at the beginning of any change process. This was indeed the case with Dan Patterson, the Principal of Huntsville Public School, who had championed the cause of YRE from the late 1980s and had played an instrumental role as the prime facilitator throughout the implementation process. He had a strong vision and the ability to obtain the support of key stakeholders which Louis & Miles (1991) found were critical leadership qualities. He also had the ability to communicate a vision and to collectively build a shared vision, which Fullan (1992) believed was necessary for successful leaders.

Many other leadership behaviours were reported by the participants in this study. Patterson was viewed as being committed, industrious, organized, understanding, dedicated, persistent, determined, knowledgeable, enthusiastic, and energetic. The

names used to describe him were "leader", "dreamer", "idea man", "prime facilitator", "negotiator", "politician", and "entrepreneur". In summary, while all of these leadership characteristics had an impact, the one behaviour that most influenced or facilitated the implementation process of the Year-Round Education policy was his persistence.

Another characteristic of Patterson's leadership that played an important role in influencing other stakeholders was his attitude towards personal growth and lifelong learning. Part of the reason that he was so committed to the concept of YRE was his strong belief that continuous learning throughout a seamless year is better for students than the traditional school calendar. Patterson himself was a role model in this regard. Before YRE was adopted in the mid 1990s, he considered this experience as a "vehicle for learning", reflected on the process and applied the lessons he learned to create an improved YRE pilot project on a smaller scale that better met the needs of the community. Schein (1992) maintains that in order to be effective, leaders must be perpetual learners and be prepared to change their leadership styles. This on-going learning should include improved perception, tenacity, and openness to changing assumptions.

Throughout this process, Patterson developed a better understanding of the politics involved in the process and in developing relations with different parents, new trustees and changing administrators. One of his colleagues remarked that "...having a passionate idea is not good enough. You have to be able to play the political game." Patterson waited until after the municipal election in November of 1994, then discussed the issue of YRE with each of the newly elected trustees prior to making a proposal to the Board in January of 1995. At the same time, he worked collaboratively with the new administration at the Board to design a proposal for a YRE pilot project in a way that ensured their approval and support.

As a participant in two annual conferences of the National Association of Year Round Education (NAYRE) in San Diego, California, Patterson had the opportunity to establish a network of educators throughout the United States who had successfully

implemented various models of YRE. He had attended a multitude of workshops and read all the literature that was available on the subject of YRE. Patterson did not hesitate to ask questions and to seek advice from the presenters at these sessions, and he continued to communicate with NAYRE upon his return to Canada. All materials from the conferences were distributed to interested parties and Patterson took the leadership initiative to share any relevant information with parents, teachers, trustees and Senior Administrators.

Another important aspect of leadership is an understanding of how change is managed since the resulting behaviour becomes an example for others to follow. The competence of educational leaders to challenge their own capacity to change was examined in Chapter 2. According to Oakley & Krug (1991), an effective leader must model his or her own willingness to change. This includes looking at change as a challenge. Openness to change was the attitude used by the Principal to address any problems that arose in the YRE project in this study. However, according to Fullan, "To be effective, capacity for change cannot reside only at the central leadership level" (1991, 214). Problem solving for Patterson was often a joint venture and a collaborative process amongst the stakeholders. He facilitated shared decision making at the community meetings in which interested parties took ownership of the design of the YRE pilot project. Through his collaborative leadership style, Patterson gained the trust and support of the stakeholders.

In summary, according to the responses of the participants in this study, leadership was indeed an important factor in the establishment of a YRE pilot project at Huntsville Public School. In the early 1990s, the leadership of one Principal alone and a few supportive parents, educators and trustees was not enough to convince the Board to implement a YRE policy. However, with time, persistence, and the support of new Senior Administrators, the concept matured into wider acceptance. The passage of time also allowed for the refinement of leadership skills in communication, public relations and diplomacy. Indeed, the strategy of introducing the YRE proposal following

the election of a new slate of trustees who had been given a mandate for change was perfectly timed.

Ownership of the YRE Policy

Drawing from the literature, it appeared that the implementation of a YRE policy failed to materialize in early 1990s because it did not meet the criteria for success outlined by Downey (1993) which included "the stages of initiation, creation, testing, choice and installation." It is not only the stages that are important, but what happened at each stage. The perception of the trustees in the early 1990s was that the families did not have a choice; either they had to enrol in the local YRE school or bus their children to a different school. The shareholders refused to take ownership of the concept of YRE and the installation phase was never reached.

However, according to one of the trustees in the study, following the Board decision to monitor YRE in other school boards in Ontario, the concept of YRE was never forgotten. "When they decided not to do it [implement YRE] in the early 1990s, it was never put to bed and forgotten. So there was always this bubbling on the back burner and information being shared." The development of the policy implementation was carefully timed in order to ensure success.

In order for the YRE policy to be implemented, it was initiated from a bottom-up source, an elementary school Principal, rather than from a top-down source such as the Ministry. This initiation period took the most time, since all of the stakeholders had to be introduced to the concept and made aware of the strengths and weaknesses of a modified calendar in order to make informed decisions about its feasibility in Muskoka. In the mid-1990s, the trustees who supported YRE and the Principal continued to discuss the issue with key people, including incoming trustees. Since the new trustees had been elected with a mandate for change, the timing was ideal to initiate a YRE policy.

In the second stage, creation, the Principal designed a program and presented it to the new senior administrative personnel. The new Director of Education had attended a Year-Round Education conference in Toronto in the late 1980s and had acquired considerable background knowledge on the subject. He encouraged new projects that were educationally sound and supported the YRE concept. The Director and Superintendent assisted the Principal with the development of a proposal for the creation of the policy.

In the third stage, estimation, the proposal was submitted to the Board and a pilot project was approved, which enabled the estimation of the extent of the demand for an alternate calendar program by the families in the school community. Meetings were scheduled to inform the community of the program, to answer questions about the alternatives and to provide opportunities for input into creating the modified calendar itself. This provided opportunities for the stakeholders to accept and take ownership of the YRE concept. Parents were invited to submit applications for students in grades four, five and six on a first come, first serve basis. Prior to the deadline, the program was filled with twenty-five students and a waiting list of three children.

In the fourth stage, choice, parents and students were given a choice of calendars within the same school setting which helped to facilitate their decision. Students in the junior grades could either attend the regular traditional calendar program, or begin school the first week of August in a grade 4/5/6 class which followed a modified calendar. In 1995, siblings who were in the primary and intermediate grades could only attend the traditional calendar programs, but in 1996, when the pilot project was expanded, all siblings in the same family had the option of attending either program.

The component of choice is considered to be one of the crucial ingredients in the success of any new policy, and YRE is no exception. In the early 1990s, families did have a choice of calendars, but in two different locations. At the time, the families felt that they had to choose YRE if they wanted to continue sending their children to the neighbourhood school. Therefore, it was perceived by the families and the trustees that

they did not really have a choice. Because it was perceived as forced change and unwanted change by some of the parents, the trustees decided to continue to study the concept of YRE rather than to implement it.

In the fifth phase, installation, the implementation was planned and completed while strategies were developed to overcome potential problems. The schedule for the program in August allowed for early arrival and dismissal, so as not to be in school during the hottest part of the afternoon. The classroom selected for use was on the lower floor which was cooler in the summer. Computers that were not being used elsewhere in the school were placed in the library to form a lab, so there would be one computer for each child to use. Arrangements were also made for the class to attend weekly sessions at outdoor education facilities and the local Pioneer Village.

In summary, this study has shown that the concept of policy making is indeed a complex process as demonstrated by the two attempts by the same Board to implement YRE in the early and the mid-1990s. Unlike the mid-1990s, the last two stages outlined in Downey's policy implementation process, choice and installation, were not evident in the unsuccessful implementation of a YRE policy in the early 1990s. Including the stakeholders in the decision making process at all stages in the policy development encouraged the ownership of the concept which was an important part of the 1995/96 implementation process.

Timing and the Political Process

In the typology of change outlined by Hopkins et al. (1994), and found in Figure 2 on page 16, the YRE proposal in the early 1990s could be categorized as planned change which was considered to be an 'innovation' that was rooted in an external source. It was not implemented because the decision makers at the time did not consider it to be 'purposive'. However, the success of the pilot project in 1995 falls into the category of incremental change that resulted in 'personal development and growth' stemming from internal sources. Some would also argue that it was 'environmental'

since the geography of Muskoka District lent itself to the tourist industry, which in turn matches well with the YRE calendar. No matter how much planning went into the original project, it involved a whole school on a larger scale, and was not successfully implemented until it was reduced to a smaller design of one classroom and implemented gradually each year in an incremental manner.

Timing was also an issue in planning the proposal to coincide with the election of a new slate of trustees, who coincidentally had a mandate for change. Earlier experience in London, Durham Region, and York Region Boards of Education established that introducing the concept of YRE to parents, teachers and the community immediately prior to a municipal election was a problem. In the first attempt to introduce it, YRE became an election issue which produced adversaries on two opposing sides, with public meetings as the battleground. The media sensationalized the controversy by reporting the negative aspects of YRE, and in all three Boards, the debate escalated until the proposals were withdrawn.

In summary, in establishing the policy in 1995, the Muskoka Board went through the five major stages of initiation, creation, testing, choice and installation which are outlined in Downey's 1988 conceptual model in Figure 5 on page 23. Prior to that time, there had been skepticism about the viability of YRE in Muskoka, which Dalin (1993) would suggest had to be removed in order for the implementation process to be effective. But reducing resistance and dealing with negative reactions takes time, patience and perseverance. It is interesting to note that in the literature on policy implementation, very little attention is paid to the importance of timing, when in fact, temporal sequence played a key role in the development of a YRE policy in the Muskoka Board as well as in the other Ontario Boards.

Revisiting the Conceptual Metaphor

The evolution of implementing a YRE policy in the Muskoka Board of Education in Ontario has been compared to the creation of a braid. The three components of the

Dalin's Real Needs Model (1993), educational leadership, change capacity and ownership have become inextricably intertwined like the three strands of a braid. Together they are strong and interdependent on each other for continuity, while the diversion of any one of them affects the future viability of the other two. Together they play an integral role in determining the success of implementing all educational policies including that of Year-Round Education.

The success of a YRE policy implementation depends of the relationships among the three components. Each of the strands cannot function independently. Leadership is not possible without followers, and if the stakeholders do not have the capacity to change or an understanding and ownership of the concept, they will not follow the direction of the leader. Similarly, the stakeholders may respect the leader and approve of the new policy, but may not be ready to change and may passively or actively resist any type of change. Or the third possibility would be open minded stakeholders who are eager follow a leader and try new endeavours, but for whatever reason do not feel comfortable with the idea of YRE and have not developed a sense of ownership of this concept. All three strands of the braid must be synchronized in order for the change to be successful.

One of the reasons that policy implementation is such a complicated process is the crucial element of time. Indeed, timing is a key ingredient in formulating a Year-Round Education policy. Just as hair needs time to grow before it is long enough to be braided, a new concept needs to be developed over a period of time before it gains acceptance. It takes time for people to adjust to any new idea. As well, the timing must be right for each stage of the process. Introducing a proposal prior to municipal elections proved to be untimely at Muskoka and at some Boards in Southern Ontario in the early 1990s. Their plans unravelled like an unfinished braid. Temporal sequencing is a key element in determining the success of a Year-Round Education policy implementation.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There are many reasons why a Year-Round Education policy at Huntsville Public School reached the implementation stage in 1995, while other programs in Ontario remained at the policy or consultation levels. The final chapter provides a summary of the study, conclusions from the three time periods in the chronology of YRE in Muskoka that include the five areas of interest that were the focus of this study, and suggestions as to the reasons why the Muskoka Board was first in Ontario to successfully implement a YRE program in an elementary school. Following the discussion of the findings, recommendations for the study of Year-Round Education are presented and areas for further research are suggested.

It must be remembered that the design of the calendar in this study was really a modified calendar with the same number of teaching days as the traditional calendar program, but with a different distribution of the amount of time spent in school and on vacation. Holidays were spread more evenly throughout the school year. With the single track model, there were periods of time when there were no classes taught and the school sat empty. Even though the school was not in use 52 weeks of the year, this particular model of scheduling was referred to as single track YRE.

Summary of the Study

The purpose of this study is to document the evolution of a successful Year-Round Education policy making process in the Muskoka Board of Education in Ontario from its initial vision stage through to its implementation. As part of this study, a literature review was conducted on research that related specifically to Year-Round Education in North America as well as research related to leadership, change capacity, ownership, and policy implementation.

Data were collected from several sources including interviews, a one page survey, documents from the Muskoka Board, Ministry of Education and Training documents, and media reports. Interviews were conducted individually with thirty stakeholders in the YRE program including ten Board of Education employees, ten parents and ten trustees. The individual responses from the twenty questions which composed the interview schedule were collated, formulated into tables, discussed and analyzed according to the order of frequency distribution.

The five areas of interest that were the focus of the study included the chronology of events in the history of YRE in the Muskoka Board, the role that the tourist resort area played in developing a YRE policy, the roles of the stakeholders, the factors that influenced the trustees to unanimously vote to implement a YRE pilot project and the role of leadership in the policy implementation process. The chronology of events, which incorporated the other areas of focus, is being revisited in order to summarize the findings of this study.

The study of Year-Round Education in the Muskoka Board of Education was written from a historical perspective that was divided into three sequential parts. The first portion of the study examined the pre-implementation period commencing with the initial Board discussions in the late 1980s. The Board established a Task Force on YRE and when it recommended the establishment of a single-track YRE program in the fall of 1991, the trustees decided to continue to study YRE rather than to implement the program. It was felt by most of the trustees at that time that residents of Muskoka were too conservative in nature to accept such a radical change in education. The timing also coincided with the 1991 fall municipal elections, and the trustees viewed this as being too risky and too controversial an issue at that time. In February of 1992, the newly elected trustees, a majority of whom were re-elected from the previous term, passed a motion to "continue to monitor developments of YRE in Ontario and Canada."

Also during the pre-implementation period, between the late 1980s and the mid-1990s, many political changes occurred. The provincial government changed from

Liberal to New Democratic to Conservative, which resulted in frequent changes of the Minister of Education and Training. The municipal elections for the Muskoka Board of Education had many candidates running on a platform of reform, which resulted in the majority of newly elected trustees coming into office with a mandate for change. At the same time, there was a turnover of Senior Administrators within the school system resulting in the appointment of a new Superintendent and Director of Education.

Moreover, there was a downturn in the economy of the province and government funding was being reduced. Tax bases eroded as business enterprises faced hard times and bankruptcy. Boards of Education throughout Ontario were challenged to find new ways to cut expenses and to balance their shrinking budgets. It was during this period of time that Weiss reported that "... the public and political perception [was that] education can and should become more effective and efficient than it already is" (1993, 2). Because the YRE proposal presented to the Board in January 1995 involved the use of school property that was sitting empty in the summers, it was generally thought of as a cost saving measure, and therefore a positive way to meet the challenge of making the best use of tax dollars.

The second period of time investigated in the chronology of YRE was the actual implementation of the YRE policy that had been passed by the newly elected trustees. Their mandate was reform and they had a greater capacity for change than the previous slate of trustees. The YRE proposal involved a summer pilot project that started on a small scale with one junior class of students in an elementary school that also housed students using a traditional school calendar. The parents of the students were given a choice of calendars from which to choose.

The stakeholders were kept well informed of the program through a consultative process in which several evening meetings were scheduled to share information and to allow stakeholders to have input into the decision making process. The parents in particular felt included in all aspects of the process, took ownership of the concept of

Year-Round Education, and became advocates of the program that they felt provided more continuous learning for their children.

The role of leadership was viewed as instrumental by all of the participants in this study during the implementation period. The Principal was viewed as being the prime facilitator of a collaborative and consultative implementation by all the stakeholders. Having been the initiator of the YRE idea in the late 1980s, Patterson's commitment to the concept was highly recognized as an important factor. Throughout the years, he had grown in his ability to manage the political aspects of policy making. He had learned from his experience that, as one employee said, "Having a passionate idea [was] not good enough. You have to be able to play the political game." Associated with Patterson's political adeptness was the timing of the proposal to the Board in January of 1995, so that YRE did not become the focal point of heated arguments as it had prior to earlier municipal elections. Similarly, the Principal's presentation to the Board to expand the YRE program to three classes the following year was well timed because it was presented to the Board part way into the term of office of the trustees and did not become an election issue.

During the implementation period, the reaction of the media was either positive or neutral because the Board had initiated a systematic procedure for the release of information to the press. One staff member at the Board office was designated to issue news releases and to field any inquiries concerning the YRE program. Special efforts were made to inform media reporters of the facts about Year-Round Education in order to avoid the reporting of false or misleading information. There was no need for damage control of negative press because of this diligent monitoring of information.

The third time frame involved post-implementation views about YRE. In this retrospective look at the whole process, the participants in the study reported that the number of advantages of the YRE program far outweighed the two disadvantages noted, which were the lack of air conditioning and transportation in the month of August. Included in the post implementation phase was a survey of the factors that

influenced the Board decision to implement the program. This survey may be found in Table 15 in Appendix A. There were mixed responses to this, but passing mention was made of the role of geographic location and the cultural aspect of a tourist area in establishing a YRE program in Muskoka.

During this final time period, perceptions of the participants in this study were also elicited concerning the impact of YRE policy upon academic performance, on the community, on family lifestyle, and on schools in other areas of the Board. Although the responses appeared positive, it was generally felt that one year of operation was not sufficient time, especially in the case of academic achievement, to adequately assess the overall impact of the YRE policy. In Muskoka there was no evidence that YRE had made a positive impact on students' academic performance since there had not been any standardized tests given prior to the implementation of the YRE pilot project. As well, in this study there was no evidence to show that there were financial savings as a result of the implementation of the YRE program.

This case study focused on five areas of interest as outlined previously. The first area of interest looked at the YRE policy implementation from a historical perspective and presented the three stages of its development, the pre-implementation, the implementation, and the post-implementation periods, in chronological order, from the late the 1980s to the mid 1990s. The second area of interest, the role of the context of the tourist resort area, while holding some mystical notion of uniqueness that could be a contributing factor in the creation and implementation of the YRE program, proved to be a non issue. The participants in the study did not perceive it to be an important factor in the implementation process.

The third area of interest, the roles played by the stakeholders in determining the feasibility of YRE prior to implementation, proved to be an essential component in the process. Table 9 in Appendix A summarizes the perceptions of the stakeholders in response to this question. The degree to which the stakeholders accepted or resisted the notion of change, and their capacity to cope with change were important factors.

Involving all the stakeholders in all aspects of the decision making process on a consultative basis proved to be the most effective form of communication and public relations. In several attempts to implement YRE programs, the timing of introducing the stakeholders to the concept has been extremely crucial and should never be attempted immediately prior to a municipal election.

The fourth area of interest, the factors which influenced the trustees' decision to adopt and implement a Year-Round Education policy and to expand the program the following year, proved to be multiple in nature. A copy of the results of the survey that addressed this area of interest is self explanatory and can be found in Tables 5, 12 and 21 in Appendix A.

The fifth area of interest, the leadership role of the Principal of the pilot school which most influenced and facilitated the implementation of the YRE policy, is summarized in Table 10 in Appendix A and dealt with extensively in Chapter 5. As stated previously, the leadership of the Principal proved to be one of the most important factors in the implementation of the Year-Round Education pilot program at the Muskoka Board of Education.

Comparison With Other School Boards in Ontario

Why was Muskoka the first Board of Education to successfully implement a YRE program in an elementary school in Ontario? The York Region, Durham Region and Simcoe Boards that had made attempts to establish YRE programs at the elementary level approached YRE differently and had different experiences because of "such factors as perceived need, origins of interest (e.g., administration-driven, trustee driven, school-driven), amounts of resources committed, timing and consultation process" (Weiss, 1993, 25).

In the first case, the York Region Board of Education did not include the stakeholders in their attempts to assess the feasibility of establishing YRE programs. In the literature of YRE, Weiss notes that one message that consistently emerges is that

"the people whose lives are affected by educational change must participate in the process if the changes are to be successful" (1993, 1). If the stakeholders are not included in the process, they will not have an opportunity to develop a capacity for change, which is imperative for the successful implementation of a new policy. As well, the timing of the York Region community consultation in the fall of 1991 coincided with the election of trustees. The lack of sufficient consultation and capacity for change of the stakeholders, as well as the inopportune timing coinciding with the municipal election resulted in an aborted attempt to implement the YRE policy.

Trying to implement change is always a difficult venture and is magnified by the complexities of YRS [Year-Round Schooling]. Clearly, successful implementation requires a grassroots consultation involving staff, parents, and the community at every stage of information-gathering and decision-making. Successful consultation means that people feel they have ownership of the decision, and have not been co-opted (Weiss, 1993, 14).

In the second case, the Durham Board of Education had hired a Vice Principal to work full time, a person who Weiss described as a YRE coordinator of "information-gathering, decision-making and implementing processes" (1993, 30). However, there was a general lack of ownership of the YRE concept by the Board Administrators. As well, the timing of the selection of pilot schools occurred in the fall of 1991, just prior to the Board elections, and the community consultation coincided with the election campaign of the candidates. Ownership of the concept was also a problem for other stakeholders because of the mixed messages that were being given in the media by those who were strongly opposed to YRE. With the election of a new slate of trustees, some of whom had been bitterly opposed to YRE, the new Board also declined to take ownership of the venture and voted to reject the implementation of YRE in two pilot schools.

In the third case, the Simcoe Board, although still at the planning stages in the summer of 1996, used well researched processes in order to avoid any of the timing mistakes made previously by other Ontario Boards. The coordinator of the project

developed a network of educators with experience in YRE in Canada and the United States as resources. She visited the program at Huntsville Public School and arranged for Patterson to speak to groups of parents, teachers and trustees. A consultative approach was adopted and the issue of ownership did not appear to pose a problem. The timing of the election of the trustees did not interfere with the consultation process, as advised by Weiss, who issued a warning to those planning to implement a YRE program or any controversial change in education. "Elections in the middle of the [YRE] process are to be avoided, if at all possible, by planning around the political cycle" (1993, 58). As a result of the strategic planning, in the first week of August 1997, YRE programs began operation in two elementary schools in Alliston and Barrie.

Recommendations of this Study

This study provides insight into the dynamics of educational change in relation to the implementation of a single-track Year-Round Education program at an elementary school. For Boards of Education that are contemplating the possibility of incorporating a YRE program in one or more of their schools, it is recommended:

1. that the leadership component is so important, that Boards must be prepared to assign a full time YRE coordinator at least a year prior to initiating the program in order to design a program that meets the needs of the community, to facilitate the coordination of various components of YRE and to manage the implementation process.

2. that a consultative model be used to involve all of the stakeholders in the decision making process and to provide opportunities for the community and the Board to collaborate on a new educational initiative.

3. that Boards offer choices to families and employees by ensuring that they have reasonable access to programs using traditional calendars.
4. that YRE programs start on a small scale as pilot projects and grow according to the community's capacity for change and the acceptance of a modified school calendar by the community.
5. that initiators of the YRE program be aware of the timing of the elections of Board of Education Trustees and above all else, avoid introducing a policy as potentially controversial as Year-Round Education immediately prior to municipal elections.
6. that Boards of Education appoint an educator with public relations expertise who, among other things, will assume the proactive role of media spokesperson and will develop news releases which invite the public to become involved in the Board's investigation of YRE and provide continual updates of possible choices of calendars for community schools.
7. that Boards recognize the importance of encouraging the YRE coordinator and stakeholders to become more knowledgeable in the subject of YRE by attending conferences and developing a network of support with colleagues in other areas who are in the process or who have implemented YRE policies in their Boards of Education.
8. that Boards of Education recognize the importance of providing ongoing evaluations of YRE pilot programs that involve all of the stakeholders while offering feedback of the findings to all interested parties.

As we venture towards the millennium with a more futuristic vision of lifelong learning, the implications of this YRE study become more evident. At the same time, we are moving away from the concept of scheduling schooling around the agricultural seasons that no longer involve the vast majority of elementary students in Ontario. In restructuring the delivery of educational programs in Ontario, the configuration of the calendar is an important piece in the increasingly complex puzzle.

Suggestions for Further Research

Many questions have been generated from the collection and analysis of the data gathered in this study and the literature that has been read on the topic of Year-Round Education. In keeping with the parameters of this study, the suggestions for further research relate to single-track YRE programs at the elementary level in Ontario.

A majority of the participants in this study had the perception that the students in the YRE were better able to retain information taught in school because of the shorter holiday breaks. Research could be done to compare student retention in a traditional calendar school and a modified calendar school in the primary, junior and intermediate grades at different times of the year. By matching the socioeconomic backgrounds of students in the two types of programs, a similar study could replicate the work of Kneese (1995) in the United States, and a comparison of the findings could be done.

Does the context of the setting of the YRE program play an important role? In this study, the participants' perceptions of the importance of the geographic location, and the cultural aspects of a tourist area were inconclusive. It was mentioned that there had been substantial change in Senior Administration and in the mandate of the new trustees. To what extent does the context of change of the main decision-makers have on the implementation of a new initiative such as YRE? How important was the fact that Senior Administration had created a culture of change and had challenged the principals to find new ways to provide quality education? Does the context of change create a breeding ground for new initiatives?

In the 1988 Ministry report to the Select Committee, the Ontario Metis and Aboriginal Association supported the concept of YRE and wanted "...a school that functions as a continuing part of the cultural life of the community during the entire year." What could be done to help the First Nations communities to implement a YRE program that meets their cultural needs? Are there certain times of the year when it would be advantageous for the children to be away from school in order to participate in seasonal native practices? In other countries such as New Zealand, and Mexico, how has the YRE model been used to meet the cultural needs of aboriginal groups?

In April, 1996, the Environics Research Group conducted polls province-wide and a poll in the Greater Toronto Area for the Toronto Star that involved interviewing 1021 adults. Included in the telephone opinion poll was a question about YRE. Environics asked Ontarians whether they supported Year-Round schooling, which would eliminate traditional summer holidays and replace them with shorter but more frequent breaks. Thirty-two percent agreed with Year-Round schooling while sixty-three percent disagreed. It is interesting to note that the same percentage of those polled supported YRE as the percentage of students in the YRE program at Huntsville Public School in the 1997-98 school year. In the third year of operation, two thirds of the school community still prefer the traditional calendar. Is this a reflection of all school communities? Does one third of the population in general have a greater capacity for change? Or perhaps they are more open minded about considering different calendars for the delivery of educational services.

These research questions are aimed at creating further discourse regarding the implementation of Year-Round Education in Ontario. As the concept of modified school calendars becomes more accepted throughout Canada, further research leading to answers to these questions will assist in the expansion of our understanding of the implementation process of Year-Round Education programs.

The Future of Year-Round Education in Ontario

To update the reader on the progress of Year-Round Education initiatives in Ontario as of the writing of this paper in the January of 1998, there are now six Boards of Education operating modified calendar programs. The Muskoka Board has initiated YRE programs in two elementary schools in Gravenhurst and in Bracebridge. The program at Huntsville Public School has expanded to include a third of the school population, and in all locations there are waiting lists of students who want to enter the YRE program.

In the rest of Ontario, the Simcoe Board opened two elementary schools in the Alliston and Barrie areas in August 1997 with single track YRE programs, with the intention of changing to multi-track calendars in the future. In the next few years it has been forecast that because of the unprecedented population growth in Simcoe County due to new housing developments, the student population will continue to outgrow present school facilities. It is believed that groups of students may attend schools on a rotating schedule to avoid the cost of constructing new buildings.

In London, Ontario, a secondary school that provides various special needs programs began to operate on a modified calendar in August of 1997. In the same month, two traditional elementary schools in Sudbury opened classes that use modified calendars. With the two elementary schools in Oshawa, and one high school in Niagara Falls, there are now eleven YRE programs operating in Ontario.

A Final Comment

Why did a Year-Round Education program at Huntsville Public School reach the implementation stage in 1995, while other programs in Ontario remained at the policy or consultation stages? The data clearly show that in order to implement a policy, the three components that are crucial in addressing the needs of the community are leadership, ownership and capacity for change. They are unique components that operate independently, but need to work together in harmony to strengthen the

implementation process. However, even when all three components are working collaboratively, the endeavour could fail to materialize if the timing of elections interferes with the consultative process. Just as braiding needs someone to co-ordinate the process, the implementation of a YRE policy needs the commitment, the expertise and the perseverance of a leader to manage the timing of each step throughout the process.

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Appendix A

Tables of Data from Interviews

TABLE 1
BACKGROUND OF THE EMPLOYEES

EMPLOYEE	PRESENT POSITION	GENDER	# OF YEARS WITH BOARD	# OF YEARS AT SCHOOL
# 1	CONSULTANT	F	26	N/A
# 2	PRINCIPAL	M	23	3
# 3	V.P. - GR. 7/8	M	26	1
# 4	JR. / INT.	F	5	4
# 5	GR. 4 / 5 / 6	F	9	2
# 6	GR. 1 / 2 / 3	F	27	13
# 7	DIRECTOR	M	3.5	N/A
# 8	SUPERINTENDENT	F	30	N/A
# 9	7 / 8 HALF TIME	F	18	14
# 10	SECRETARY	F	17	9
TOTALS	10	M - 3 F - 7	AVERAGE 18.6 YEARS	AVERAGE 6.7 YEARS

TABLE 2
BACKGROUND OF THE PARENTS

PARENT	GENDER (PARENT)	CHILDREN IN YRE	GENDER (CHILDREN)	AGE(S)	GRADE(S)	YEAR IN PROGRAM
# 1	F	1	M	10	6	2ND
# 2	F	1	F	7	2	1ST
# 3	F	1	F	11	6	2ND
# 4	F	2	F	11	7	2ND
			M	10	5	2ND
# 5	F	1	M	11	6	2ND
# 6	F	3	M	13	7	2ND
			F	10	5	2ND
			M	9	4	1ST
# 7	F	2	F	10	6	2ND
			M	8	3	1ST
# 8	M	1	F	12	7	2ND
# 9	M	2	M	10	5	2ND
			F	7	2	1ST
# 10	F	2	M	12	7	2ND
			M	9	4	1ST
TOTALS	M - 2	16	M - 9	RANGE	GRADES	1ST - 5
	F - 8		F - 7	7 - 13	2 TO 7	2ND - 11

TABLE 3
YEARS OF SERVICE OF THE TRUSTEES

TRUSTEE	GENDER	# OF YEARS A TRUSTEE	PRESENT TRUSTEE	FORMER TRUSTEE
# 1	F	7.5	YES	YES
# 2	M	7	NO	YES
# 3	F	20	NO	YES
# 4	F	9	NO	YES
# 5	F	8	YES	YES
# 6	M	5	YES	NO
# 7	F	1	YES	NO
# 8	F	8	YES	YES
# 9	M	1.5	YES	NO
# 10	F	9	NO	YES
TOTALS	M - 3 F - 7	RANGE 1 - 20 YEARS	6	7

TABLE 4**FACTORS THAT INFLUENCED BOARD DECISION IN EARLY 1990S**

FACTORS	# OF RESPONSES			
	E	P	T	TOTAL
E = 10 EMPLOYEES, P = 10 PARENTS, T = 10 TRUSTEES				
Muskoka conservative community - not ready for change	4	4	6	14
Political will - trustee fear of taking risks - lack of foresight	2	3	3	8
Financial concerns - cost factor - would cost money	3	2	2	7
Lack of knowledge and understanding of concept of YRE	3	1	2	6
Different plan than current program - whole school	2	0	3	5
Lack of public interest - no public input or demand	2	0	3	5
Don't know about 1980s - not sure - not aware	2	3	0	5
Miscellaneous - less than 3 responses in any one group	5	3	10	18
TOTALS (8)	23	16	29	68

TABLE 5**FACTORS THAT INFLUENCED BOARD DECISION IN 1995**

FACTORS	# OF RESPONSES			
E = 10 EMPLOYEES, P = 10 PARENTS, T = 10 TRUSTEES	E	P	T	TOTAL
Principal's commitment - leadership - enthusiasm	5	9	6	20
Financial - no extra cost to taxpayer	6	7	4	17
Timing better - better prepared - adjust to idea of YRE	5	3	3	11
Voluntary - choice	3	2	4	9
Strategies used - pilot project - start small - feedback	3	1	5	9
Political climate changed - new trustees - open minded	3	0	5	8
People willing to give it a try - realized it made sense	1	5	1	7
Teacher interest and support	2	4	1	7
Miscellaneous - less than 4 responses in any one group	10	5	5	20
TOTALS (9)	38	36	34	108

TABLE 6**ROLE OF SCHOOL BOARD ADMINISTRATION**

ROLES OF SCHOOL BOARD ADMINISTRATION	# OF RESPONSES			
E = 10 EMPLOYEES, P = 10 PARENTS, T = 10 TRUSTEES	E	P	T	TOTAL
Supportive - interested, positive attitude, willing to risk	5	4	4	13
Consultation with principal - shared information	4	2	6	12
Overseer - research, reports, politics, feasibility, cost	6	0	5	11
Something I wouldn't know about - I have no idea	3	5	0	8
Late 1980s - supported concept but not ready to commit to it	2	0	4	6
Climate of change - new people - challenge to be innovative	2	0	1	3
TOTALS (6)	22	11	20	53

TABLE 7
CHANGES IN ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

CHANGES	# OF RESPONSES			
	E	P	T	TOTAL
E = 10 EMPLOYEES, P = 10 PARENTS, T = 10 TRUSTEES				
Reduced funding & grants - budget cuts - increased costs	3	6	6	15
YRE proposal didn't cost more money	5	0	2	7
Board needs to look at ways to save money	3	2	2	7
YRE made better use of capital equipment & buildings	1	4	1	6
Less education money impacts on programing - downsizing	3	0	2	5
Forced Ministry & Board to look at new ideas & options	1	1	3	5
Miscellaneous - less than 3 responses in any one group	5	4	6	15
TOTALS (7)	21	17	22	60

TABLE 8
CHANGES IN POLITICAL CONDITIONS

CHANGES	# OF RESPONSES			
E = 10 EMPLOYEES, P = 10 PARENTS, T = 10 TRUSTEES	E	P	T	TOTAL
Reduced funding & cutbacks - trying to save money	4	4	3	11
Change in Board - new slate of trustees	3	1	4	8
Climate of change - highly charged milieu of change	4	0	3	7
Board perception as progressive - risk taking	3	1	2	6
Pass - no response - don't know - can't recall	2	3	1	6
Miscellaneous - less than 3 responses in any one group	2	7	8	17
TOTALS (6)	18	16	21	55

TABLE 9**ROLES OF PARENTS, TEACHERS, AND THE COMMUNITY**

ROLES IN DECISION MAKING PROCESS	# OF RESPONSES			
E = 10 EMPLOYEES, P = 10 PARENTS, T = 10 TRUSTEES	E	P	T	TOTAL
Consultative process - input from stakeholders	4	6	6	16
Ongoing dialogue after board approval - public meetings	4	4	3	11
Teachers' input - YRE jobs, calendar design, hours	6	1	3	10
Principal coordinated process - others agreed with plan	4	4	0	8
Parents registered kids for YRE - demand / waiting list	2	2	4	8
Miscellaneous - less than 4 responses in any one group	10	2	6	18
TOTALS (6)	30	19	22	71

TABLE 10**ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL**

ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL	# OF RESPONSES			
E = 10 EMPLOYEES, P = 10 PARENTS, T = 10 TRUSTEES	E	P	T	TOTAL
Main person - key role - instrumental - prime facilitator	5	6	7	18
Leader perceived as committed, hard worker, strong believer	6	6	3	15
Long term pet project - his baby - persistent dream	4	3	4	11
Leader knowledgeable about YRE - attended conferences	2	4	4	10
Enthusiastic style - excited - energetic - entrepreneur	4	4	2	10
YRE wouldn't have happened in Muskoka without him	3	4	3	10
Public relations - got community support - partnership	2	4	3	9
Skills - organization, innovation, progressive, idea person	6	1	1	8
Communication strong point - parents, staff, kids, trustees	2	4	2	8
Highly visible - media - travelled & presented at conferences	3	2	3	8
Obtained teacher & trustee support - collaborative model	4	0	2	6
TOTALS (11)	41	38	34	113

TABLE 11**MEDIA REACTION TO YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION**

MEDIA REACTON	# OF RESPONSES			
E = 10 EMPLOYEES, P = 10 PARENTS, T = 10 TRUSTEES	E	P	T	TOTAL
Positive response - reported success - nothing negative	8	8	7	23
Don't remember the 1980s	5	7	0	12
Novelty - different - interested people - made good press	4	1	3	8
Lots of out of town coverage - Toronto Sun, TV stations	4	1	1	6
Sensationalize it - emphasize the negative - misinformation	1	1	3	5
Media just reported facts - local media support was neutral	1	1	3	5
Miscellaneous - less than 3 responses in any one group	1	4	5	10
TOTALS (7)	24	23	22	69

TABLE 12**FACTORS THAT INFLUENCED BOARD DECISION IN 1996**

FACTORS	# OF RESPONSES			
E = 10 EMPLOYEES, P = 10 PARENTS, T = 10 TRUSTEES	E	P	T	TOTAL
Success of pilot in 1st year - 100% satisfaction	7	7	7	21
Community support - public demand - waiting list	3	5	6	14
Parents liked YRE - spoke highly of it	8	4	0	12
Students liked YRE program	4	6	1	11
Included siblings in primary and intermediate divisions	3	4	1	8
Independent evaluation - positive results	3	0	4	7
Staff / teacher support	4	1	1	6
Miscellaneous - less than 4 responses in any one group	11	6	9	26
TOTALS (8)	43	33	29	105

TABLE 13**ADVANTAGES OF YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION**

ADVANTAGES	# OF RESPONSES			
E = 10 EMPLOYEES, P = 10 PARENTS, T = 10 TRUSTEES	E	P	T	TOTAL
Educational - continuous learning - academic retention	7	7	7	21
Family lifestyle - quality time - off season vacations	4	4	5	13
Relieves summer boredom of children	3	5	4	12
August use of facilities - outdoor ed. - pioneer village	5	3	2	10
Reduced stress - fewer sick days - less burnout	6	2	1	9
Happier environment - get along better - better behaviour	5	2	1	8
Kids enjoy the program - more enthusiastic	5	2	1	8
Tourist industry - parents work in summer - need daycare	1	4	3	8
Increased use of computers	4	3	0	7
Miscellaneous - less than 4 responses in any one group	14	9	7	30
TOTALS (10)	54	41	31	126

TABLE 14
DISADVANTAGES OF YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION

DISADVANTAGES	# OF RESPONSES			
E = 10 EMPLOYEES, P = 10 PARENTS, T = 10 TRUSTEES	E	P	T	TOTAL
No academic disadvantages - do not know of any at all	3	4	3	10
Weather - summer heat - no air conditioning	3	3	3	9
No transportation in August - parents have to drive	4	2	1	7
If it would cost more money for air conditioning or bussing	3	0	2	5
If high schools go YR, no cheap labour for tourist industry	2	0	3	5
If not voluntary - no choice - disruptive to families	3	0	1	4
Miscellaneous - less than 3 responses in any one group	8	2	6	16
TOTALS (7)	26	11	19	56

TABLE 15**ROLE OF THE CULTURE OF A TOURIST AREA**

ROLE OF CULTURE IN A TOURIST AREA	# OF RESPONSES			
E = 10 EMPLOYEES, P = 10 PARENTS, T = 10 TRUSTEES	E	P	T	TOTAL
Four season economy - summer peak / no holidays	6	5	2	13
Employment patterns/welfare - downtimes fall/winter/spring	2	5	3	10
Vacation time for families spring & fall - quality time	5	1	1	7
Cultural aspects do not have anything to do with YRE	0	2	5	7
Availability of resources in Aug. - outdoor ed. - pioneer v.	2	3	1	6
Miscellaneous - less than 3 responses in any one group	9	4	5	18
TOTALS (6)	24	20	17	61

TABLE 16**ROLE OF GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION**

ROLE OF GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION	# OF RESPONSES			
E = 10 EMPLOYEES, P = 10 PARENTS, T = 10 TRUSTEES	E	P	T	TOTAL
Muskoka tourist region - seasonal work - busy in summers	9	7	3	19
Holidays off season - young parents less job seniority	6	1	1	8
Location has nothing to do with it - don't know if it does	1	1	6	8
Availability of interesting programs in August - outdoor ed.	3	2	1	6
4 season economy & recreation - YR tourist area	3	2	0	5
Miscellaneous - less than 3 responses in any one group	5	2	0	7
TOTALS (6)	27	15	11	53

TABLE 17
IMPACT ON FAMILY LIFESTYLE

RESPONSES FROM THE TEN (10) PARENTS	TOTAL
MORE FAMILY QUALITY TIME - HOLIDAYS	7
LESS STRESS IN HOUSEHOLD	7
CHILDREN LEARNING BETTER	5
CHILDREN NOT BORED / PLENTY OF HOLIDAYS	4
MISCELLANEOUS - LESS THAN 4 RESPONSES	7
TOTALS (7)	30

TABLE 18
IMPACT ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

<u>RESPONSES FROM THE TEN (10) EMPLOYEES</u>	TOTAL
GOOD ACADEMIC PROGRESS	6
TOO SOON TO TELL	5
SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS REDUCED	4
ATTITUDE IMPROVEMENT	4
GAIN TREMENDOUS MOMENTUM IN AUGUST	4
MISCELLANEOUS - LESS THAN 4 RESPONSES	12
TOTAL (6)	35

TABLE 19**IMPACT OF YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION ON THE COMMUNITY**

IMPACT ON COMMUNITY	# OF RESPONSES			
E = 10 EMPLOYEES, P = 10 PARENTS, T = 10 TRUSTEES	E	P	T	TOTAL
Positive impact - student self esteem - school notoriety	5	1	4	10
Don't think it had much impact - small group of students	1	7	2	10
Use of community facilities - enhances tourist industry	3	2	4	9
Students feel part of community - contribute flower boxes	5	0	1	6
Miscellaneous - less than 4 responses in any one group	16	12	11	39
TOTALS (5)	30	22	22	74

TABLE 20

IMPACT ON OTHER AREAS OF MUSKOKA

RESPONSES FROM THE TEN (10) TRUSTEES	TOTAL
OTHER COMMUNITIES INTERESTED	6
PARENTS / TEACHERS/ PRINCIPALS INTERESTED	5
DO NOT KNOW / DO NOT BELIEVE SO	4
MISCELLANEOUS - LESS THAN 4 RESPONSES	4
TOTALS (6)	19

TABLE 21**YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION SURVEY RESULTS****FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE BOARD DECISION
TO IMPLEMENT AN ALTERNATE CALENDAR PROGRAM
ACCORDING TO FREQUENCY OF RESPONSE**

FACTORS	Employees (10)	Parents (10)	Trustees (10)	Total (30)
PRINCIPAL	10	9	9	28
CHOICE / VOLUNTARY	5	5	8	18
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT	4	8	5	17
NO EXTRA COST	3	7	4	14
PARENT/COMMUNITY INVOLVED	5	4	4	13
SLATE OF TRUSTEES	6	1	3	10
FAMILY LIFESTYLE	4	3	1	8
DIRECTOR / SUPERINTENDENT	4	0	0	4
MISCELLANEOUS (LESS THAN 4)	9	9	16	34
TOTALS (9)	50	46	50	146

Appendix B

Year-Round Education Survey

YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION SURVEY

List the five most important factors which you think contributed to the decision of the Muskoka Board of Education to implement an alternate calendar program at Huntsville Public School.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Here is a list of some factors for your consideration:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Academic Achievement | <input type="checkbox"/> Ministry of Education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advisory Council | <input type="checkbox"/> No Extra Cost |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Choice / Voluntary | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent / Community Involved |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Aspects | <input type="checkbox"/> Political Changes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Director / Superintendent | <input type="checkbox"/> Principal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economic Changes | <input type="checkbox"/> Slate of Trustees |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Lifestyle | <input type="checkbox"/> Start Small |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Geographic Location | <input type="checkbox"/> Tourist Area |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Media Coverage | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

Appendix C

Structured Interview Questions

Structured Interview with Employees

1. How many years have you been an employee of the Muskoka Board of Education? Please give a brief history.
2. When people ask you about the modified calendar at Huntsville Public School, what do you tell them?
3. What do you see as the advantages of Year-Round Education?
4. What do you see as the disadvantages of YRE?
5. In the late 1980s, the Muskoka Board discussed YRE but decided not to proceed at that time. What do you think were the factors that influenced the Board to make this decision at that time?
6. In 1995, YRE was again discussed by the Muskoka Board, but this time the Board proceeded with a pilot project. What factors do you think contributed to the approval of this project?
7. In 1996, the Board unanimously voted to expand the YRE program at Huntsville School? Why do you think this happened?
8. Since the late 1980s, have there been any changes in the political conditions in the region and the province that may have affected the decision of the Board to implement a pilot YRE project?
9. Since the late 1980s, have there been changes in the economic conditions in the region and the province that may have contributed to the decision of the Board to implement a pilot YRE project?
10. In what ways do you think the geographic location of the Muskoka Board contributed to the creation and implementation of a YRE program?

11. In what ways did the cultural aspects of a community in a tourist area influence the creation and the implementation of the YRE program in an elementary school?
12. What roles did parents, teachers, and the community have in the decision making process concerning the modified calendar at Huntsville Public School?
13. What are some examples of situations in which the members of the advisory council participated in the decision making process?
14. How has the media, (newspapers, radio, & television), responded to the concept of YRE in the Muskoka Board from the late 1980s until the present time?
15. What roles did the school Board administration, specifically the Director & Superintendent, play in determining the feasibility of a YRE policy prior to implementation?
16. As a leader, how would you describe the role the Principal played in the implementation of the YRE program?
17. How has the leadership style of the Principal changed throughout out the stages of consultation, policy development and implementation from the late 1980s to the present time?
18. What are some examples of how the Principal handled problems and managed the complexities of change throughout the implementation of the YRE program?
19. How has the modified calendar program at Huntsville Public School impacted on the Huntsville community in this past year?
20. How has the modified calendar program at Huntsville Public School impacted on the academic performance of students?

Structured Interview with Parents

1. You have children who are students at Huntsville Public School. How old are they? What grades are they in?
2. When people ask you about the modified calendar at Huntsville Public School, what do you tell them?
3. What do you see as the advantages of Year-Round Education?
4. What do you see as the disadvantages of YRE?
5. In the late 1980s, the Muskoka Board discussed YRE but decided not to proceed at that time. What do you think were the factors that influenced the Board to make this decision at that time?
6. In 1995, YRE was again discussed by the Muskoka Board, but this time the Board proceeded with a pilot project. What factors do you think contributed to the approval of this project?
7. In 1996, the Board unanimously voted to expand the YRE program at Huntsville School? Why do you think this happened?
8. Since the late 1980s, have there been any changes in the political conditions in the region and the province that may have affected the decision of the Board to implement a pilot YRE project?
9. Since the late 1980s, have there been changes in the economic conditions in the region and the province that may have contributed to the decision of the Board to implement a pilot YRE project?
10. In what ways do you think the geographic location of the Muskoka Board contributed to the creation and implementation of a YRE program?

11. In what ways did the cultural aspects of a community in a tourist area influence the creation and the implementation of the YRE program in an elementary school?
12. What roles did parents, teachers, and the community have in the decision making process concerning the modified calendar at Huntsville Public School?
13. What are some examples of situations in which the members of the advisory council participated in the decision making process?
14. How has the media, (newspapers, radio, & television), responded to the concept of YRE in the Muskoka Board from the late 1980s until the present time?
15. What roles did the school Board administration, specifically the Director & Superintendent, play in determining the feasibility of a YRE policy prior to implementation?
16. As a leader, how would you describe the role the Principal played in the implementation of the YRE program?
17. How has the leadership style of the Principal changed throughout out the stages of consultation, policy development and implementation from the late 1980s to the present time?
18. What are some examples of how the Principal handled problems and managed the complexities of change throughout the implementation of the YRE program?
19. How has the modified calendar program at Huntsville Public School impacted on the Huntsville community in this past year?
20. How has the modified calendar program at Huntsville Public School impacted on the lifestyle of your family?

Structured Interview with Trustees

1. How many years have you been trustee of the Muskoka Board?
2. When people ask you about the modified calendar at Huntsville Public School, what do you tell them?
3. What do you see as the advantages of Year-Round Education?
4. What do you see as the disadvantages of YRE?
5. In the late 1980s, the Muskoka Board discussed YRE but decided not to proceed at that time. What do you think were the factors that influenced the Board to make this decision at that time?
6. In 1995, YRE was again discussed by the Muskoka Board, but this time the Board proceeded with a pilot project. What factors do you think contributed to the approval of this project?
7. In 1996, the Board unanimously voted to expand the YRE program at Huntsville School? Why do you think this happened?
8. Since the late 1980s, have there been any changes in the political conditions in the region and the province that may have affected the decision of the Board to implement a pilot YRE project?
9. Since the late 1980s, have there been changes in the economic conditions in the region and the province that may have contributed to the decision of the Board to implement a pilot YRE project?
10. In what ways do you think the geographic location of the Muskoka Board contributed to the creation and implementation of a YRE program?

11. In what ways did the cultural aspects of a community in a tourist area influence the creation and the implementation of the YRE program in an elementary school?
12. What roles did parents, teachers, and the community have in the decision making process concerning the modified calendar at Huntsville Public School?
13. What are some examples of situations in which the members of the advisory council participated in the decision making process?
14. How has the media, (newspapers, radio, & television), responded to the concept of YRE in the Muskoka Board from the late 1980s until the present time?
15. What roles did the school Board administration, specifically the Director & Superintendent, play in determining the feasibility of a YRE policy prior to implementation?
16. As a leader, how would you describe the role the Principal played in the implementation of the YRE program?
17. How has the leadership style of the Principal changed throughout out the stages of consultation, policy development and implementation from the late 1980s to the present time?
18. What are some examples of how the Principal handled problems and managed the complexities of change throughout the implementation of the YRE program?
19. How has the modified calendar program at Huntsville Public School impacted on the Huntsville community in this past year?
20. How has the modified calendar program at Huntsville Public School impacted other areas of the Muskoka Board in the past year?

Appendix D

Letters of Consent

YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION STUDY

Dear Employee of the Muskoka Board of Education,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study of Year-Round Education (YRE). This research will contribute to a better understanding of the process of implementing a YRE policy in an elementary school in Ontario.

By interviewing parents, trustees, board staff, and members of the advisory council, more can be learned about the factors that contributed to the successful implementation and expansion of a modified calendar program at Huntsville Public School.

The information which is gathered in this interview will be kept in strict confidence. All information will be reported in such a way that you cannot be identified, unless you request or agree to otherwise in writing. The information collected today will be stored in a secure location and all data will be destroyed after five years.

Please sign below to indicate that you have received an explanation of the project and are willing to participate. You may, of course, withdraw from the study at any time. Thank you.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Bernadette Walsh, Name: _____

45 Roanoke Road, Address: _____

Don Mills, M3A 1G2. _____

416 449 8780. Phone #: _____

YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION STUDY

Dear Parent,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study of Year-Round Education (YRE). This research will contribute to a better understanding of the process of implementing a YRE policy in an elementary school in Ontario.

By interviewing parents, trustees, board staff, and members of the advisory council, more can be learned about the factors that contributed to the successful implementation and expansion of a modified calendar program at Huntsville Public School.

The information which is gathered in this interview will be kept in strict confidence. All information will be reported in such a way that you cannot be identified, unless you request or agree to otherwise in writing. The information collected today will be stored in a secure location and all data will be destroyed after five years.

Please sign below to indicate that you have received an explanation of the project and are willing to participate. You may, of course, withdraw from the study at any time. Thank you.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Bernadette Walsh, Name: _____

45 Roanoke Road, Address: _____

Don Mills, M3A 1G2. _____

416 449 8780. Phone #: _____

YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION STUDY

Dear Present or Former Trustee of the Muskoka Board of Education,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study of Year-Round Education (YRE). This research will contribute to a better understanding of the process of implementing a YRE policy in an elementary school in Ontario.

By interviewing parents, trustees, board staff, and members of the advisory council, more can be learned about the factors that contributed to the successful implementation and expansion of a modified calendar program at Huntsville Public School.

The information which is gathered in this interview will be kept in strict confidence. All information will be reported in such a way that you cannot be identified, unless you request or agree to otherwise in writing. The information collected today will be stored in a secure location and all data will be destroyed after five years.

Please sign below to indicate that you have received an explanation of the project and are willing to participate. You may, of course, withdraw from the study at any time. Thank you.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Bernadette Walsh, Name: _____

45 Roanoke Road, Address: _____

Don Mills, M3A 1G2. _____

416 449 8780. Phone #: _____

Appendix E

Board Correspondence

45 Roanoke Road,
Don Mills, Ontario. M3A 1G2.
June 11, 1996.

Ms. Evelyn Brown,
Superintendent of Education,
The Muskoka Board of Education,
14 Pine Street, Bracebridge,
Ontario, P1L 1N4.

Dear Ms. Brown,

The purpose of this letter is to apply to conduct research in the area of Year-Round Education with the Muskoka Board. I agree to honour the procedures and limitations outlined in the Board Policy on Research. Enclosed please find a copy of my proposal for this research.

Although the timelines are not consistent with your policy, it is hoped that my research may begin in August when the alternate calendar program begins at the Huntsville Public School. As mentioned on the telephone, the Principal of the school is aware of the intentions of my research and the potential benefits of this study.

Thank you for considering this request. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 416 449 8780 if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Bernadette Walsh

45 Roanoke Road,
Don Mills, Ontario, M3A 1G2
August 30, 1996.

Dusty Papke, Director,
The Muskoka Board of Education,
76 Pine Street, Bracebridge,
Ontario, P1L 1N4.

Dear Dusty,

With the approach of Labour Day comes the end of the research component of my doctoral study of Year-Round Education. The time spent in the Muskoka region has been a most enjoyable experience and a refreshing change from the usual routine of student life.

However, it is important that I send my sincere thank you to all of the people in your Board who played such valuable roles in my study. Your support staff at the Board office were of tremendous assistance. I am also indebted to the ten trustees, ten employees and ten parents who gave so generously of their time to be interviewed. The eager willingness of all participants to share their insights and experiences made the task a pleasure indeed.

I would also be remiss if I did not make special mention of three people whose efforts contributed to the completion of this study. Evelyn Brown, Superintendent, provided encouragement, expertise and liaison with the Board. Doris Monahan, the Chairperson of the Board, offered to contact past and present trustees to enlist their participation. And, last but not least, Dan Patterson, Principal of Huntsville Public School, allowed me to use the school facilities to contact and interview parents and teachers of students in the alternate calendar program at the school.

My goal is to complete my thesis within a year. I look forward to a trip to Muskoka to hand deliver a copy of the final product to you!

Sincerely,

Bernadette Walsh

c.c. Evelyn Brown
Doris Monahan
Dan Patterson



THE MUSKOKA BOARD OF EDUCATION

14 Pine Street, Bracebridge, Ontario P1L 1N4
 (705) 645-8704 385-2341 765-3281
 FAX (705) 645-8452

ALTERNATE SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR – PILOT PROGRAM REGISTRATION

(for August 1995 to June 1996)

PLEASE PRINT

Student's Name: _____	Date of Birth: _____
Surname	Given Name(s)
Year / Month / Day	

Address: _____	(Street & Number)	(Mailing Address)
----------------	-------------------	-------------------

Phone Number: _____	(home)	(business)
---------------------	--------	------------

**I understand the intent of the Alternative School Year Calendar Pilot Program,
 and believe that my child would benefit from placement in it.**

Parents wishing to enrol their junior division students in an "alternate school year program" will have that opportunity at Huntsville Public School during the 1995-96 school year. This voluntary program, contingent on enrolment, will provide the same number of instructional days (in-class days for students) as the traditional September to June school year. However, the structure of those days within the alternate school year plan will differ slightly, offering more continuous learning and shorter, more frequent breaks throughout the year. The alternate school year still allows most holidays to mesh with those within the traditional school year.

For students enrolled in the alternate year program, school would start on August 1, 1995. No transportation would be provided during August. However, regular transportation (according to Board Policy 7300 and Board Regulation 7310) would be in effect for the remainder of the school year. For students, the first term would run until October 6, 1995. Students would then have a three-week break from October 9 to 27, 1995, returning to class for the second term on October 30. Students would complete the second term on December 22, and this would be followed by the traditional Christmas break. The third term for students on the alternate school year would run from January 8 to March 8, 1996 followed by the traditional one-week March break and an additional two-week holiday. Students' final term would begin April 1, and run to June 20, completing the school year.

**TO BE COMPLETED BY
 SCHOOL OFFICE ONLY:**

Date Registration

Received: _____

Received By: _____

- Mr.
 Mrs.
 Ms.

(signature of Parent/Guardian)

(please **PRINT NAME** in full)

 Date

**Completed Registration Forms are to be returned to:
 HUNTSVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOL, Attention: Dan Patterson, Principal
BEFORE APRIL 30, 1995**

DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
 AND SECRETARY

D. L. Papke

SUPERINTENDENTS OF SCHOOLS

E.R. Brown
 K.N. Thurston

SUPERINTENDENT OF
 BUSINESS AFFAIRS AND TREASURER

E.R. Hodgins

Appendix F

Ministry Documents and Correspondence

cc: Minlog #CU9009191
Official File
Minister
Deputy Minister
W. Beevor, ADLP
M. Liebovitz, PIRB
M. Powell
Sheila Roy, CORO
Bruce Walker, Superintendent
Durham BOE

Mr Ian D. R. Brown
Chair
Ms Pauline Laing
Director of Education
The Durham Board of Education
555 Rossland Road West
Oshawa, Ontario
L1J 3H3

JAN 13 1991

Dear Mr Brown and Ms Laing,

Thank you for your letter of November 22, 1990, regarding your year-round education project entitled the "Alternate School Year Program". The enclosed report provided a clear description of your initiative.

At present, Regulation 822 governing the school year and school holidays provides an option for school boards to submit a proposal for a modified school year calendar. For the most part, modified school year calendars have consisted of requests for changes within the traditional ten month school year; however, the regulation is not restrictive in this regard. Therefore, any proposal for year round education would be forwarded, in the usual manner, through the appropriate regional office.

Prior to the Ministry of Education's approval of a modified school year calendar, it is expected that proposed changes to the standard calendar would be approved by the local school board only after wide consultation and acceptance within the community. This consultation should include meetings with and reaction from all appropriate constituent groups such as students, parents, teaching and support staff, neighbouring boards, community agencies, and the local business community.

.../2

With respect to a submission regarding year round education, it would be necessary to include the model which would outline the purpose, education plan, implementation process, expected benefits, adverse consequences, an evaluation plan, and any other details which would assist the decision-making process. The proposal should be undertaken for a limited number of schools on a pilot basis for two to five years and should provide students with the choice of the modified year-round school or of attending a traditional ten month school program.

Since the modification may be significant it would be advantageous to submit your proposal well in advance of the required date under the regulation to allow sufficient time for the approval process to be completed.

... At the present time the ministry has no plans to provide incentive funding for year round schooling projects. However, ministry staff would be available to assist in the review of your pilot project should your board decide to seek approval for an alternative school year program.

Any proposal to modify the school year calendar is to be forwarded through the regional office. I have forwarded a copy of your letter and report to Sheila Roy, Director of the Central Ontario Regional Office, and to Malcolm Powell, Provincial School Attendance Counsellor, Program Implementation and Review Branch, for their information. If you have any further questions please contact them at your convenience.

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention.

Yours sincerely,

Marion Boyd
Minister

DRAFT

GUIDELINES FOR YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION

NOV 1995

The following guidelines are intended to provide clarification of the process for the establishment of year-round education projects.

Legislative Authority

- Regulation 304 governing the school year and school holidays provides an option for school boards to submit a proposal for a "modified" school year calendar. For the most part, "modified" school year calendars have consisted of requests for changes within the traditional ten month school year; however, the regulation is not restrictive in this regard.
- School boards who wish to submit a proposal for year-round education should submit, therefore, their proposal in the usual manner through their appropriate regional office.

Individual Schools and School Boards

- Individual schools that are proposing to follow a "modified" school year calendar which reflect year-round education, are to submit their proposed changes to the standard calendar to their local school board for approval.
- Proposed changes to the standard calendar are to be approved by the local school board only after wide consultation and acceptance within the community. This consultation should include meetings with and reaction from all appropriate constituent groups such as students, parents, teaching and support staff, neighbouring school boards, community agencies, and the local business community.
- The submission to the ministry of a request for approval of a proposed "modified" school year calendar reflecting a year-round education project(s) for an individual school(s) should include such details as: the purpose of the project, education plan, implementation process, expected benefits, adverse consequences, an evaluation plan, and any other details which would assist the decision making process.
- Proposals for a year-round education project(s) by a school board should be undertaken for a limited number of schools on a pilot basis for two to five years and should provide students with the choice of attending the modified year-round school program or of attending a traditional ten month school program.

With respect to a submission regarding year round education, it would be necessary to include the model which would outline the purpose, education plan, implementation process, expected benefits, adverse consequences, an evaluation plan, and any other details which would assist the decision-making process. The proposal should be undertaken for a limited number of schools on a pilot basis for two to five years and should provide students with the choice of the modified year-round school or of attending a traditional ten month school program.

Since the modification may be significant it would be advantageous to submit your proposal well in advance of the required date under the regulation to allow sufficient time for the approval process to be completed.

... At the present time the ministry has no plans to provide incentive funding for year round schooling projects. However, ministry staff would be available to assist in the review of your pilot project should your board decide to seek approval for an alternative school year program.

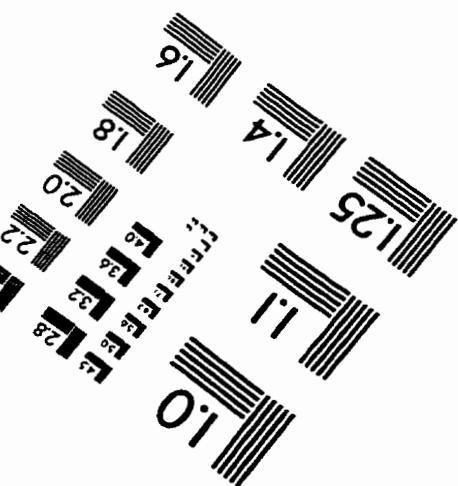
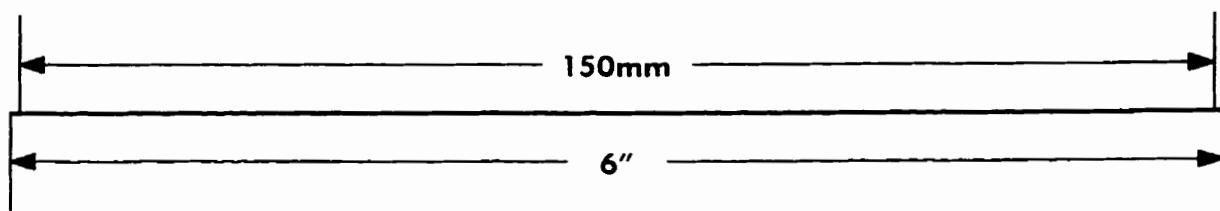
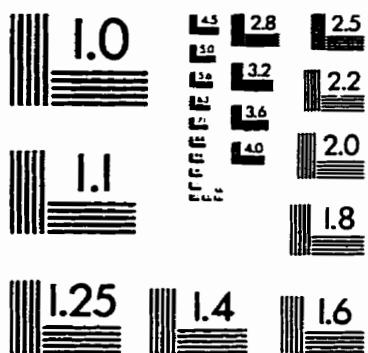
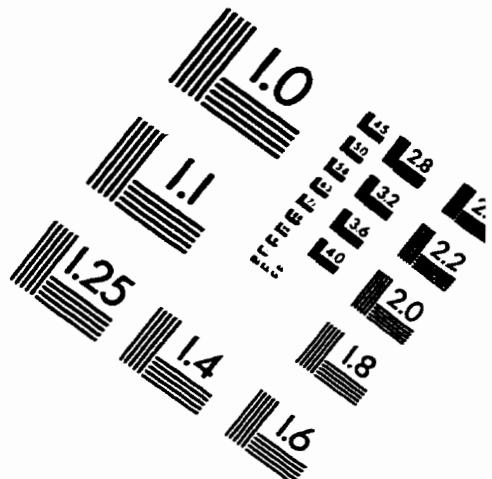
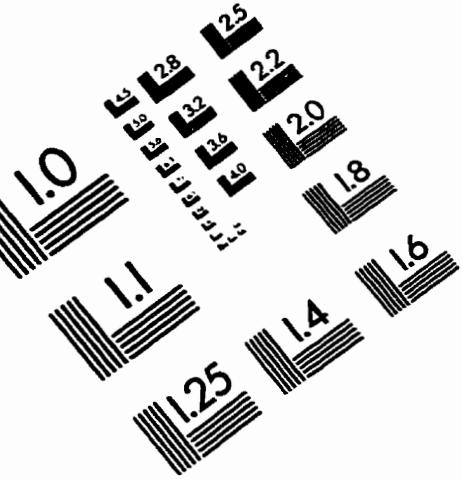
Any proposal to modify the school year calendar is to be forwarded through the regional office. I have forwarded a copy of your letter and report to Sheila Roy, Director of the Central Ontario Regional Office, and to Malcolm Powell, Provincial School Attendance Counsellor, Program Implementation and Review Branch, for their information. If you have any further questions please contact them at your convenience.

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention.

Yours sincerely,

Marion Boyd
Minister

IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (QA-3)



APPLIED IMAGE, Inc
1653 East Main Street
Rochester, NY 14609 USA
Phone: 716/482-0300
Fax: 716/288-5989

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