Interdisciplinary Collaboration in the Elementary School a Case Study

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INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION
IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:
A CASE STUDY

by

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INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION
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The purpose of this study was to contribute to the descriptive and inter-
pretive knowledge base about collaboration based on two interdisciplinary teams of
elementary school educators representing disciplines of general education, special
education, speech-language, reading, and counseling. Using an educational
ethnographic design, data were collected through open interviews, team meetings and
classroom observations. These data supported the construction of two distinct case
studies as well as working hypotheses concerning interdisciplinary collaboration
among professionals from specialized disciplines.

One case study was characterized as *caseload collaboration*. The team
originated out of the desire among teachers from specialized disciplines to effect a
more coordinated system of support for children receiving services in reading and
speech-language pullout programs. The members of the team, while pursuing a goal
to transcend the boundaries of their own expertise, remained bound to the strong
influences of their disciplines.

The second case study was characterized as *classroom collaboration*. Within
this collaboration, the routines, decisions, and dilemmas of the team were directly
related to planning and coordinating curriculum and assessment for all students.
While the general and specialized discipline educators were successful in providing
in-class learning experiences for all students, including those with special learning

needs, their experiences suggest that positive relationships and open communication among team members is crucial for success.

Four working hypotheses represent themes common to both sites: (1) the negotiation of elements of dynamics within the team process to every member's personal satisfaction is the *sine qua non* of successful collaboration; (2) although structural issues such as time, administrative support, schedules, and space are important in the collaborative process, they are not the *sine qua non* of collaboration; (3) interdisciplinary collaborative teams will be more likely to experience success in their efforts if team goals are clearly articulated and developed in concert; and (4) successful collaboration involving educators from specialized disciplines will require reexamination of their roles and professional responsibilities.

The experiences of these teams suggest that interdisciplinary collaboration is a complex and challenging phenomenon.

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CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

What with the most recent move toward mainstreaming prompted by the regular education initiative and, more generally, the efforts to restructure schools, it is imperative that schools more clearly identify the roles and responsibilities of teachers who serve youngsters with disabilities.

Thomas C. Lovitt, *Integrating General and Special Education,* 1993, p. 69

The focus of this research project was on the collaborative structures and processes among educators from diverse fields of expertise. The specific aim was to examine the nature of interdisciplinary collaboration over the course of one school year in two teams of elementary teachers who represented the disciplines of general education, special education, speech-language, and reading. The focus was three-fold: (1) the nature of the collaboration within the team as a unit, (2) the influence of the cultural and structural elements on the collaborative process as perceived by the teachers, and (3) the influence of member's perceptions of the collaborative process on their interactions over the course of the year.

The research is discussed within the following organizational structure: Chapter I presents the background and purpose of the study, including an overview of the broader contextual issues within which the purpose and findings must be understood. Chapter II addresses through the literature those issues most germane to the specific questions guiding the study. Chapter III contains a discussion of those issues related to the process of the inquiry itself, including a discussion of

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educational ethnography as both a process and product of the proposed research. Chapters IV and V are the case studies of each of the two sites selected for the research and include working hypotheses related to each unique experience of interdisciplinary collaboration. Chapter VI offers working hypotheses pertaining to the broader aspects of interdisciplinary collaboration in elementary schools.

Background of the Study

In schools of the early 1990s, many students, who for the previous two decades were placed in educational contexts according to special education or compensatory education qualifications, are now spending more time in the general (regular) education classroom (Graden, Zins, Curtis, & Cobb, 1988). These changes in the ways in which special learning needs for children are met have been occurring at a time when the reform movement in education, which Cuban (1990) defined as planned changes, has captured significant attention in all segments of the educational enterprise (Fullan, 1991).

Those involved in the educational reform agenda have focused attention, both in rhetoric and in practice, on several domains. One reform issue has been how to provide an optimal learning environment for all learners, including those with special needs. As Murphy (1991) suggested, "Schools that were historically organized to produce results consistent with the normal curve, to sort youth into the various strata needed to fuel the economy, are being redesigned to ensure equal opportunity and success for all learners" (p. 19). The Holmes Group (1990) advocated the principle of making teaching and learning for understanding available to everybody's children (p. 29). The National Education Goals (United States Department of Education, 1991) emphasized goals for all students in the United

States, not just a select group. On a broad scale, the debate about homogeneous grouping and the call for outcomes for all students that are appropriate for the citizen of a democratic society in the 21st Century have reflected the philosophy that all students should have equal access to an optimal learning environment (Glickman, Lunsford, & Szuminski, 1995).

This broader debate regarding the optimal learning environment for all students has been repeated in the specific context of students who receive specialized services from such disciplines as special education, speech-language pathology, and reading. Past practice has seen the delivery of these services primarily outside of the general classroom, or in a pullout model of service delivery. Trends in the 1990s, however, have involved questioning the dual service system for those students served by special education and compensatory education programs (Allington & McGill-Franzen, 1989; Anderson & Pellicer, 1990; Lipsky & Gartner, 1989; Slavin & Madden, 1989; Will, 1986). Furthermore, the advantages for all children to be engaged in learning activities in the context of a classroom (Nelson, 1993) has precipitated the move toward the placement of more students with special needs in the general classroom.

Educators since the 1980s and the 1990s have been sounding the call for bringing a coordinated, integrated, unfragmented learning experience to all students (Allington & Johnston, 1989; Idol, Paolucci-Whitcomb, & Nevin, 1986; Idol & West, 1991; Kauffman & Hallahan, 1993) and that call has brought a new dimension to the concept of educating all students (Villa & Thousand, 1992). Those educators calling for these changes have argued that: (a) *"All students should have their needs met as regular or normal practice in the public schools,"* and (b) *"All students should be educated in the same basic system of education"* (Stainback &

Stainback, 1988, p. 18-19, italics in original). As Morsink, Thomas, and Correa (1991) suggested, "The proponents of these proposals believe that they can provide special students with a higher quality of instruction by serving them in the regular classroom and/or by eliminating formal classification as a prerequisite to special services" (p. 19).

The underlying issue driving these recommended changes related to special needs students is that special service programming in the public schools has not yielded the expected positive results for those children at-risk for failing in school (Montgomery & Rossi, 1994; Slavin, Karweit, & Madden, 1989). As Slavin et al. (1989) commented, "Both compensatory and special education are at a watershed. Both are dissatisfied with current practice and are ready for change, yet neither has a clear direction for the future" (p. viii).

In school classrooms of the 1990s, as the diversity of learners is recognized, professionals have accepted responsibility to support individual and unique learning needs (Montgomery & Rossi, 1994). For many practitioners in preK-12 settings, this has represented a dramatic change in the culture and practice of education with an emphasis on collaboration not traditionally supported within the isolated class- room. Such changes require radically different roles and relationships (Miller, 1990). These emerging configurations of professionals working together exist along a continuum from minimal interaction, such as the special service teacher con- sulting with the regular education teacher on an intermittent basis, to teaching teams who distribute responsibilities for the same students on a regular basis over an extended period of time (Thousand & Villa, 1991).

The issue of collaboration among professionals from specialized disciplines and general education, however, has remained controversial as the roles and rela-

tionships of the professionals in the school setting have shifted in response to these changes. Indeed, some of these shifts have been quite dramatic as the traditional categorical labels for teachers and students are eliminated or become blurred (Nevin, Villa, & Thousand, 1992; Villa & Thousand, 1992). As these roles and relationships have shifted, general education teachers, special education teachers, reading specialists, and speech-language pathologists have faced ambiguities and uncertainty within and across their professions as they have departed from the traditional models of collaboration (Bauwens, Hourcade, & Friend, 1989; Idol, & West, 1991; Pugach & Johnson, 1990).

As educators depart from traditional models of collaboration, they are exploring collaborative structures and processes that have not previously been attempted (Giangreco, Dennis, Clonniger, Edelman, & Schattman, 1993; Morsink, Thomas, & Correa, 1991; Villa & Thousand, 1992). These explorations have been a practical response to policy statements, such as the Regular Education Initiative (Will, 1986), which called for a merging of regular and special education services for students. Educators have also responded to research findings on such topics as supportive learning environments for children (Slavin et al., 1989; Stainback & Stainback, 1990) and the importance of collaboration in the development of the teacher as a professional (Johnson & Johnson, 1987; Rosenholtz, 1989). Although there does exist prescriptive literature pertaining to how professionals should collaborate (Friend & Cook, 1992; Morsink et al., 1991), the processes of collaboration among interdisciplinary teams are newly emerging and have not been well described (Nowacek, 1992).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the nature of collaboration among interdisciplinary teams of professionals from the fields of general education, special education, reading, and speech-language in the elementary school setting. The literature has described rational models of collaboration (Morsink et al., 1991) as well as prescribed patterns of interaction within interdisciplinary teams that will contribute to successful collaboration (Friend & Cook, 1992). Because the phenomenon of interdisciplinary collaboration within teams is emerging, there is a need among educators for more detailed descriptions of collaboration to guide team interactions. As Maxwell (1993) suggested,

> Teams engage in complex interactions affected by values, goals,
> background knowledge, communication style, personality, and the
> moment-to-moment dynamics of mutual influence. Additional studies
> of team interaction are needed to give us a balanced view of how the
> professionals are functioning. (p. 8)

In this study, the nature of collaboration was examined in depth within two teams of professionals representing the disciplines of general education, special education, speech-language, and reading. The ways in which roles and relationships changed through collaboration were also examined. Since the composition of each team was unique, the result of this research was two distinct case studies encompassing very different descriptions of collaboration. One purpose of this study, then, was to provide rich description of collaboration in two settings. That description of the process of collaboration will contribute to the body of knowledge about collaboration among professionals from different disciplines.

A second purpose of this research was to develop working hypotheses related to the process of collaboration in the elementary school setting. The descriptive knowledge base pertaining to interdisciplinary collaboration is sparse. While the

two case studies will contribute to a knowledge base about collaboration, the cases were not intended to be representative of collaboration as a whole and therefore not sufficient to support theory. Working hypotheses are "suggested links between categories and properties" (Merriam, 1988, p. 142) based upon data collection and analysis and are most appropriate as an outcome of qualitative research when the data are sufficient to offer suggestion, but not a theory. The unique nature of each study is emphasized in the interpretation. As Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested, "'When we give proper weight to local conditions, any generalization is a working hypothesis, not a conclusion' " (p. 124). These working hypotheses developed from the case studies as descriptions of local conditions will offer direction for future research upon which theories of interdisicplinary collaboration may be built. In the next section, the broader context within which this study was conducted is examined.

The Context for the Research: School Reform in the 1990s

The review of the literature in this study will be presented in two separate sections as a function of the varying degrees of connectedness of the topics with the research. The issue explored in Chapter I includes the educational reform agenda of the 1990s as a backdrop against which this study was designed, the data collected and analyzed, and the findings interpreted. It is intended that understandings related to this research be housed within the fabric of what the community of educators under- stands about teachers as they negotiate within the realities of today's educational reform agenda. The issues considered more germane to the specific purposes ad- dressed in the study are presented in Chapter II.

Much of the rhetoric associated with the discussions of the educational enter- prise during the 1980s and into the decade of the 1990s has centered on the issues of

educational reform, or planned changes (Murphy, 1991). Fullan and Miles (1992) argued that the reform agenda shifted from research on innovations, or first-order changes which affect only pieces of an entire system, to an emphasis on the deeper, second order changes in the structures and cultures of schools. As Fullan (1991) commented, "Ten years ago we 'studied innovations'; today we are 'doing reform'" (p. xiii).

The underlying emphasis of this second order, or new wave of school reform, according to some, is on enduring changes that will give a new look to schools and schooling. According to Murphy (1991), the forces behind this movement included the declining economic health of the United States as well as the highly publicized failures of the American educational enterprise (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). When one couples these factors with the history of repeatedly unsuccessful reform efforts in American education (Cuban, 1990; Fullan, 1991; Sarason, 1990), it is clear that a more dramatic approach to reform becomes necessary. The phrase "restructuring" has been adopted for describing these efforts at reform which have involved "a comprehensive attempt to rework the basic fabric of schooling" (Murphy, 1991, p. ix). According to Murphy,

> Restructuring generally encompasses systemic changes in any one
> or more of the following: work roles and organizational milieu;
> organizational and governance structures, including connections
> among the school and its larger environment; and core technology.
> (p. 15)

Those involved in the reform movement in education have focused attention on several arenas. On a macro level, it has been argued that significant, enduring change will only occur if changes in the structure and in the culture of schooling are implemented (Fullan, 1991; Fullan & Miles, 1992). On a micro level, efforts have addressed issues such as redesigning the roles, relationships and contexts within

which practitioners (teachers, principals, central office, and support personnel) operate. Included in this redesign are new relationships between preK-12 schools and universities. Governance structures (the decision-making process at the building and district level), curriculum and student outcomes (which relate to the basic issues of teaching and learning), and the impact of state and national policy agendas are also at play in the total picture of reform (Elmore, 1990; Glickman, 1991; Lieberman, 1992; Murphy, 1991).

Although multiple issues have been at the heart of the educational reform efforts of the 1990s, those issues directly related to students and the process of learning have been paramount. An education for all students, regardless of special learning needs, has become a prominent theme. The issues of special placement and tracking as responses to special learning needs bear significance for this study on the process of collaboration. As Miller (1990) commented:

> The way instruction has been organized has been subject to careful scrutiny. Of particular concern are the ways in which schools have grouped students by age, ability, motivation, learning style, and previous academic experience and achievement. Second wave educators are questioning their own acceptance of the notion that students are best served when they are placed into categories and categorical programs. From this perspective, practices such as tracking are viewed as fragmenting students' educational experiences and as denying large numbers of students access to knowledge and, in effect, denying access to an education of good quality. (p. 19)

In examining the issue of educating all children in new ways, it becomes clear that teachers and other educators are exploring alternative paths to providing the optimal learning environments. The changing landscape in schools has brought renewed emphasis on teachers and teaching as a profession (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992; Goodlad, 1994). This focus on the teacher has also involved a focus on the context within which the teacher functions, the culture of the school. As Fullan (1991) suggested, "Educational change depends on what teachers do and think--it's

as simple and as complex as that" (p.117). He further suggested, "Changes in the culture of teaching and the culture of schools are required. . . *cultural change is the agenda* " (p. 143).

Attending to school reform of the 1990s is a backdrop contextual issue within which this study of interdisciplinary collaboration must be interpreted. In Chapter II, the issues most closely related to this study are examined.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF SELECTED LITERATURE

Moreover, educational equity is a precondition for excellence in the post-industrial era, for collaboration means learning collaboratively with and from persons with varying interests, abilities, skills, and cultural perspectives, and taking responsibility for learning means taking responsibility for one's own learning and that of others.

Thomas M. Skrtic, *The Special Education Paradox:*
Equity as a Way to Excellence, 1992, p. 243

The purpose of this study was to examine the nature of the collaborative process among teams of teachers from the disciplines of general education, special education, speech-language and reading in two elementary schools. Many educators from these disciplines have found themselves engaged in evolving roles and relationships involving collaboration, and these evolving roles and relationships represent dramatic shifts from the roles and self perceptions which have traditionally shaped the teaching profession. This collaboration is in response to suggested changes in practice, including changing contexts for student learning, which are emanating from the current reform agenda as well as from specific agency guidelines for student placement. The culture of the school and of the classroom also bears on the changing contexts. These four major elements, changing contexts for student learning, the changing roles of the professionals in schools, collaboration, and culture are reviewed in this chapter. The research questions that guided this study are presented in the final section of the chapter following the review of the literature.

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Changing Contexts for Student Learning

Many forces in the educational scene have prompted discussions about both what is being taught and the context within which it is being taught (Miller, 1990). These discussions have been embedded within shifting philosophies about the nature of learning and the related issues of curriculum, assessment, and student placement. In some circles, this has represented a shift in theoretical orientation from a focus on individual differences to a focus on the creation of learning communities where students are actively engaged in cognitive processes in a social context (Moll, 1990; Prawat, 1992; Resnick & Klopfer, 1989).

On a pragmatic and implementation level, these discussions have translated to specific issues and have targeted certain populations within education. Issues have included the Regular Education Initiative (Will, 1986), the research demonstrating the lack of efficacy of compensatory education pullout programs (Anderson & Pellicer, 1990; Slavin & Madden, 1989), and the questioning of homogeneous grouping of students (Archambault, 1989). These discussions have set in motion changes in the prescriptions for how all students should be educated, but the changes have been most dramatic for those students with special needs.

In examining this issue, it must be kept in mind that special services for students originate from several different funding sources, the majority of dollars coming from special education and compensatory education program funding. While each program has its unique character within the totality of the educational enter-prise, the rationale related to how children have best been served within the special education system and the compensatory programs has also applied to broader issues of homogeneous grouping and learner-centered rather than teacher-centered classrooms.

One of the most complex and controversial issues of the 1990s surrounding the changing contexts for student learning has been related to those learners supported by special education services. The controversy has been evident in both legislative and policy arenas.

In 1975, PL 94-142, the Education for all Handicapped Children Act, mandated a free and appropriate public education for any child between ages three and twenty-one. The 1970s and 1980s found many students in buildings and classrooms devoted entirely to serving students with disabilities within self-contained settings. However, this structure for serving students with special needs came into question in the 1980s. Many educators began to question the dual track system then in place and arguments were developed to support a revamping of the special education and compensatory education services. The debate was heightened by the passage of PL 101-476, Education of the Handicapped Amendments of 1990. This legislation was an expansion of PL 94-102 and renamed the law the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1990. This legislation mandated, among other things, transition services from school to post-school activities. In short, many educators were questioning the purpose and structure of special education services.

In addition to federal legislation, policy statements pertaining to the services for children having special learning needs have brought attention to learning environments for students. One such policy statement came to be known as the Regular Education Initiative (Will, 1986) and can be summarized as follows:

> In essence, the goal of the REI is to make general educators more responsible for the education of students who have special needs in school, including those who are economically or socially disadvantaged and those who are bilingual, as well as those who need special education. This goal, proponents of the REI believe, can be achieved only if general and special education are "restructured" so that few students, if any, are taught outside the regular classroom for any part of the school day. Massive changes in educational policy would be

required if such restructuring were to take place. (Hallahan &
Kauffman, 1991, p. 63)

The debate about this restructuring has continued on a philosophical and on a
policy level. At the same time, educators have attempted to implement the spirit of
the Regular Education Initiative by finding new ways to bring all students into an
equitable system of education. Indeed, the debate has moved beyond the issues of
Regular Education Initiative and special education programming. Nevin, Villa and
Thousand (1992) suggested that a new paradigm of schooling is essential if we are to
address the issues related to how educators meet the needs of all students, "Demo-
graphic changes in the population of students who will require a different kind of
schooling magnify the need for an educational system that is flexible, responsive,
spontaneous, open to change, and ever evolving" (p. 44).

Even though educators have called for new ways to bring students into a fair
and equitable system of education, that call has not outlined in detail the structures
for how those changes are to be accomplished (Jenkins, Pious, & Jewell, 1990;
Jenkins & Pious, 1991). Indeed, as Jenkins, Pious, and Jewell pointed out, there is
a lack of consensus on the definition of REI, which makes the task of identifying
appropriate guidelines for how services are to be delivered very difficult.

There has also existed within the field of speech-language services some
ambiguities concerning how to best meet those related needs of children. Nelson
(1993) addressed the advantages and disadvantages of pullout programs for children
needing support in speech and language. Yet again, there has been no clear pre-
scription for the optimal learning experiences for children experiencing difficulties
related to language needs.

In their discussion of the status of compensatory education programs in-
cluding remedial reading, Allington and Johnston (1989) argued,

> Our experience suggests that coordinated efforts are not easily achieved, and most difficult may be obtaining shifts in the content of instruction offered in support of regular programs, in order to produce an integrated program of instruction for the individual student. (p. 348)

Slavin (1990) summarized the dilemma facing educators when he commented,

> Yet there is little agreement about exactly how the classroom might be changed to make it more responsive to the needs of a diverse student body and more effective for all, and how general, special, and remedial resources might be merged to meet the needs of all students. (p. 40)

Although there is no consensus and no clear prescription for how students should be served, there have emerged some models. Epps and Tindal (1987) described two broad models of placement for students qualifying for special education services: mainstreaming and the cascade model. Although mainstreaming, like the regular education initiative and least restrictive environment concepts, evokes little consensus in interpretation both philosophically and pragmatically, the literature has identified some common features. At a very basic level, "One common component in definitions of mainstreaming is the provision that special education students be educated, at least in part, in general education settings" (Epps & Tindal, 1987, p. 214).

Epps and Tindal (1987) also referred to the cascade model which represents a continuum of services or instructional arrangements including full time placement in a general classroom, a combination of settings such as the resource room and the classroom, and full time placement in special education classroom with no integration in the general classroom. There are also differing levels of services while a student is in a general classroom. These levels include: (a) indirect services such

as consulting from special educators, (b) direct instruction from itinerant specialists, and (c) instruction from resource room personnel.

A similar range of experiences also exists for students receiving services from a speech-language specialist. These services often represent a shift from the "pullout and fix-it" model that has dominated the speech-language discipline (Nelson, 1990). These could include a combination of one-on-one or small group direct instruction and coordination with the general classroom curriculum.

Students experiencing difficulties in reading and writing have often been placed in compensatory education programs, most notably programs federally funded through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. These programs have recently been reauthorized under Title I (formerly Chapter I) of the E.S.E.A., Helping Disadvantaged Children Meet High Standards, and are designed to serve children who are at risk, or disadvantaged, either educationally or economically (Summary, Nov. 9, 1994). Typically children who qualify for special education services do not receive compensatory education programming. The models for serving the children in compensatory programs are changing as well, but perhaps not as dramatically as special education programs. As Slavin (1989) commented, "Although use of in-class, add-on, and replacement models has increased in recent years, Chapter I funds still overwhelmingly provide pullout programs" (p. 9). The pressure for reform in compensatory education programs, however, is emanating from several sources, including federal legislation. The language of the reauthorization of Title I of E.S.E.A., allowed for school-wide projects if 60 percent (1995-1996) of their student enrollment (50 percent 1996-1997) come from low-income families. If schools do not qualify for school-wide projects, they must *minimize set-aside time for Title I students and not isolate Title I teachers*

(Summary, Nov. 9, 1994, p. 18, italics added). Walmsley and Allington (1995) referenced these changes in emphasis in the recent legislation and suggested that the redesign of instructional support for children in compensatory education programs should be based, in part, on the principle that all staff are responsible for the education of all students, a vision of schooling that would eliminate special categories for student placement.

Stainback and Stainback (1990) suggested a model of inclusive schooling that would bring all students into the learning community of a classroom without focusing on particular needs and disabilities:

> Inclusive schooling is related to, but different from, the movement to integrate or mainstream students with disabilities into their regular neighborhood schools. Integration and/or mainstreaming is the process of having students with disabilities (who have been excluded) become an integral part of the mainstream of their schools. Inclusive schools do not focus on how to assist any particular category of students, such as those classified as disabled, to fit into the mainstream. Instead, the focus is on how to operate supportive classrooms and schools that include and meet the needs of everyone. (p. 4)

It is clear that students with special needs are being placed in a variety of educational contexts and that these contexts often represent dramatic shifts from past practice. However, some have argued the issue of placement or setting has inappropriately risen to the forefront of concern and debate. Epps and Tindal (1987) argued that issues of instruction, not placement, should drive dialogue and decisions for students:

> In regard, then, to the question, 'Do students experiencing difficulty in school fare better when placed in special education settings or when allowed to remain in regular classrooms?', the appropriate response is, 'Wrong question.' Rather the efficacy issue should be shifted to a focus on identifying features of instruction that lead to improved student learning. The bulk of the evidence to date suggests that distinctions among traditional, remedial, and special educational classifications and among different placement options do not correspond to distinctions in instructional approaches that have been used. (p. 237)

However, others have argued that placement is not an independent variable, as Epps and Tindal (1987) would characterize it, but rather the encompassing social context in which students construct knowledge. Through classroom discourse, students and teachers are involved in building a learning community where learning becomes a social act and each member supports another in the construction of knowledge (Allen & Carr, 1989; Peterson & Knapp, 1993). So, where the student is engaged in the learning activity, and with whom, in this view, does become a critical piece of the complex puzzle that is the essence of learning.

In summary, national attention has been focused on the changing contexts for student learning. Whether the debate has related to special education, reading, or speech-language services, consensus exists among many educators that a more inclusive model of schooling should be implemented for all children regardless of special learning needs (Allington & Walmsley, 1995; Goodlad & Lovitt, 1993; Stainback & Stainback, 1990). This inclusive model of schooling, or *inclusion*, supports meeting identified needs of all students alongside their peers in the general education context (Snell & Raynes, 1995).

The issues of both context and instruction, then, have become intertwined in the complex reality of how best to support children in the learning process. Shifts are occurring in both content and context (Miller, 1990), and these shifts affect the teacher, or in the case of many children with special needs, many teachers. It follows, then, that the professionals who are serving these children are encountering new ways of meeting the educational needs of all students and in roles and contexts with which they may have not been accustomed. These changing roles and relation-ships of professionals will be the next issue for consideration.

Changing Roles and Relationships of Professionals in Schools

In this section the changing roles from the perspective of each of the disciplines, general education, special education, speech-language, and reading are addressed. Both research and the descriptions from educators are incorporated into this discussion.

The Teacher From Special Disciplines

As more students receiving special education services are spending time outside of special education self-contained or resource rooms, special discipline educators are moving from direct provision of services for these students to various types of support for the classroom teacher and other involved professionals. It has been suggested that one of the barriers to the effective delivery of this support among professionals has been the inherent expert status ascribed to the professional from a special discipline such as special education and speech-language. The special knowledge that these professionals have has placed them in a position to act as consultant to the general classroom teacher regarding students having special educational needs. As Pugach and Johnson (1988) commented:

> As a result of this hierarchical orientation on the part of support services specialists who practice consultation, the joint and collaborative intent of consultation is diminished. Instead, a top-down approach exists, in which general educators typically are characterized as needing assistance and specialists as typically being sources of assistance. (p. 2)

The hierarchical, expert consultant model has been embedded within the expectations that special education teachers hold for their appropriate role in the school. As Morsink et al. (1991) suggested,

> [The special or remedial educator] most often functions in a school-based setting, operating a resource program to provide part-time

intervention for students with specific academic and behavioral
difficulties. The primary functions of this role are student
assessment, program evaluation, and the provision of instruction.
(p. 102)

These primary functions were confirmed in research involving both

resource room (special education) teachers as well as general educators. Voltz and

Elliot (1990) found that resource room teachers felt their ideal roles should

encompass joint planning and assessment with classroom teachers regarding

children with special needs, but not team teaching with general classroom teachers.

The literature reinforces this expert status as well. Those educators who are from

the speech-language discipline are often referred to as 'speech-language

pathologists' or 'speech-language specialist.' Teachers who have specialized in

reading are often referred to as the 'reading specialist.'

The speech-language professionals have also carried the expert status and

specialized training and vocabulary which distinguishes them from other

professionals. Most speech-language professionals who work in school-based

settings are funded through Public Law 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped

Children Act, now the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Therefore, these

professionals are embedded within a similar context as special education teachers

and, as part of a similar context, are also responding to changes in the same legis-

lation guaranteeing special education services for all children. Speech-language

professionals have also seen shifts in their discipline. As Marvin stated (1987):

Recent research in the behavioral sciences, and the advancement of
social-interactionist theories in language development, however,
have prompted a shift away from a one-to-one instructional paradigm
that is heavily dependent on artificial contingencies, contrived
activities, and isolated learning environments. . . . SLPs providing
intervention to students in regular and special education programs in
the public schools, in particular, have begun to consider consultation
services to augment their isolated one-to-one or small group therapy
sessions. (p. 2)

Policy makers within the field of speech-language drafted a model for collaborative service delivery that outlined how children may be served within the naturalistic context of the classroom setting (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, 1991). The move from isolated, separate services in a dual track system toward an integrated, classroom-based instruction for all students, then, has dramatically changed the roles of both the special educator and the speech-language professional.

These changes are also evident for the reading teacher or specialist. While most children receiving services from a reading specialist have been in a pullout situation isolated from the classroom (Slavin, 1989), there is discussion among the reading profession regarding a change in their roles as well. Tutolo (1987) referred to these changes,

> Presently, the role of the special reading teacher has been in flux as local education agencies are expecting the reading specialist to work more and more with other teachers and parents and consequently provide less direct instruction for students. (p. 3)

Allington and Broikou (1988) characterized this new role for the reading specialist as that of working with the classroom teacher to develop a shared knowledge that will enhance the learning for students.

These perspectives and changing roles for the teachers from the special disciplines has shed some understanding on the complexity of how new roles and relationships will affect the professional lives of these teachers. The merging of perspectives also have implications for general education teachers.

The Merging of Perspectives

The reform agenda in general and reform related to specific issues such as the Regular Education Initiative and changing models for compensatory services have contributed to changing learning environments for teachers from all disciplines and

for students as well. Of particular importance to the topic addressed in this research was the relationship between classroom teachers and special educators (Jenkins, et. al, 1991; Phillips et. al., 1990; Thousand & Villa, 1990). This relationship has been seen as a function of both the unique perspective of each group and the coming together of these professionals in response to current trends.

Glatthorn (1990) suggested that "The relationship between the special education teacher and the classroom teacher is a complex one fraught with several types of serious conflict" (p. 29). First, the special education teacher and the classroom teacher conceptualize different ideal roles for the special education teacher. Second, Glatthorn suggested that the two groups come from different para- digms and frames of reference:

> The special education teacher is often more concerned with one student and how learning might be individualized; the classroom teacher worries about the entire class and how overall achievement might be advanced. The special education teacher tends to be concerned with developing a wide range of learning and coping skills; the classroom teacher focuses on academic skills and content. Neither of these frames is inherently better than the other; however, they yield different pictures of the classroom. (p. 30)

In addition, Glatthorn (1990) noted that methods and materials and differing perceptions of each other's competence in working with students with special needs are also sources for conflict.

Jenkins et al. (1990) also addressed the issue of potential conflict between the special educator and the general classroom teacher when the trend is moving from special placement toward more instruction in the general classroom. They commented, "However, it is far from easy to visualize an equal partnership between classroom teachers and specialists in the educational setting in the mainstream classroom, where questions about ownership of problems and hegemony are

paramount" (p. 485). Indeed, these authors suggested that the underlying issue really becomes one of "Who's in charge?" (p. 487).

Part of the issue of 'who's in charge' has resided in the concept of domain or territoriality. The classroom traditionally has been the sacred domain for teachers (Lortie, 1975), and this would include any space in which a general or special educator would work with children. The role of the teacher has also been related to domain, or territoriality. Voltz and Elliot (1990) compared the perceptions of resource teachers, regular education teachers, special education coordinators, and principals related to ideal and actual roles for resource teachers. One finding that supported the continued existence of a sense of territoriality was that none of the above groups supported the physical presence of the resource room teacher in the classroom. All groups did support, however, exchange of information about students and joint planning for students.

Merging perspectives of the multiple groups serving students with special needs has been related to the hierarchical structure issues mentioned previously. Sometimes this hierarchy assumes a somewhat paradoxical character with the dominance of the classroom teacher apparent in one line of reasoning and the dominance of the special discipline teacher in another. Jenkins et al. (1990) argued that the classroom teacher should bear the primary responsibility for the education of students in the classroom, regardless of need. This is contrasted with the top-down approach as described by Pugach & Johnson (1988) in which specialists act as experts.

The current trends in education have supported the placement of children in learning contexts which represent different structures and evolving philosophies. New roles and relationships are emerging among professionals as they come together

to meet the needs of these children in contexts which are changing. Conflicts have arisen as these professionals interact in new ways. The next section includes a discussion of attempts to support the necessary collaboration to provide optimum learning experiences for teachers and students.

Collaboration

The theme of collaboration has been a recurring one in the educational literature, with arrangements ranging from collaboration between two individuals in a research project or a classroom activity (Hunsaker & Johnston, 1992) to inter-institutional commitments between schools and universities (Goodlad, 1994). However, the consistent message across contexts is that a clear definition of collaboration has eluded those who purport to be engaged in collaboration. In addressing collaboration among faculty members in higher education, Austin and Baldwin (1991) noted that collaboration means different things to different people. They identified collaboration, however, "as a cooperative endeavor that involves common goals, coordinated effort, and outcomes or products for which the collaborators share responsibility and credit" (p. 5).

Clark (1988) posed the dilemma of terminology. He commented, "Individuals who seek to understand this topic, when studying the writings of others about these relationships, must not be lulled into the belief that they are studying the same things because they have the same name" (p. 41). Although the terminology may bear different meanings across different contexts and inter-institutional relationships, such relationships have proliferated as educators have emphasized the need for schools and universities to work together to reform

education (The Holmes Group, 1990; Sirotnik & Goodlad, 1988). Some common understandings have begun to emerge.

Although the issue of inter-institutional collaboration is an important one in the educational reform agenda, it is the collaboration among individuals within interdisciplinary teams in elementary schools that is germane to this current research. Such collaboration among individuals assumes a specific context and character. As Friend and Cook noted (1992), confusion regarding the concept of collaboration exists among those who are collaborating within the school setting. For example, terms such as teaming and collaborative consultation have often been used interchangeably. The Committee on Language Learning Disorders of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (1991) differentiated between multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and the collaborative model of transdisciplinary teams:

> However, the nature and function of educational teams differ widely across school settings. For example, the speech-language pathologist serves as a member of a multidisciplinary team composed of educators and parents, each of whom works independently; there is little or no collaboration among team members. . . .In other service delivery models, the speech-language pathologist serves as a member of an interdisciplinary team whose members meet and discuss findings regarding each student. However, little collaboration beyond discussion typically occurs, as each team member assesses and treats students within the confines of his or her own discipline. . . .The collaborative service delivery model is considered a transdisciplinary approach because it represents an attempt to overcome the boundaries of individual disciplines. (p. 44)

In an attempt to further clarify the concept of collaboration, Friend and Cook (1992) offered the following definition which will lay the basis for the definition of the construct of collaboration within this research on interdisciplinary collab-oration, "*Interpersonal collaboration is a style for direct interaction between at least two coequal parties voluntarily engaged in shared decision making as they work*

together toward a common goal" (p. 5, italics in original). Two elements of this

definition stand out in their importance: (a) the parties involved share equal status,

and (b) the parties share a common goal.

Considerable variety and complexity exist in the ways school-based

professionals are working together with each other to meet the needs of a diverse

student population. As Friend and Cook suggested (1992):

> The changes in professionals' roles are even more complex than they
> might first appear because they are so varied: If you visited schools
> across the country, you would find that no single model could describe
> all the different ways in which school professionals carry out their
> roles and responsibilities. (p. 2)

Although roles and responsibilities are changing, interaction among professionals is

a central feature of those new responsibilities. The models of this interaction are

characterized by several labels and descriptions. These models and labels include,

among others, collaborative consultation (Idol et al., 1986), interactive teaming

(Morsink et al., 1991), cooperative professional development (Glatthorn, 1990),

and cooperative teaching (Bauwens et al., 1989).

The specific models are interpreted differently within each unique school

setting and classroom context. Two general descriptions of this adult interaction

have emerged from discussions in the literature: *collaboration* and *consultation*.

Mosink et al. (1991) characterized consultation as any activity in which a

consultant acts as "the 'expert' who possesses more knowledge or skill than do other

team members about the issue being discussed" (p. 5). Collaboration, on the other

hand, according to Morsink et. al., can be characterized as "a mutual effort to plan,

implement, and evaluate the educational program for a given student" (p. 6). Other

educators (Bauwens et al., 1989; Thousand & Villa, 1990) suggested that teams of

professionals can work together in such ways that the traditional roles and labels

become blurred. The labels of special education teacher, speech-language specialist, reading specialist, and general educator become less important as the central feature of this type of collaboration becomes distinct.

The understanding of collaboration is also tied by many authors to the concept of the culture of the school (Rossman, Corbet, & Firestone, 1988; Lieberman & Miller, 1984; Sarason, 1982). In the next section the issue of culture as a component of the context in which these professionals are collaborating is described.

Culture

The culture of the school has been central to the ways in which teachers respond to change in education (Fullan, 1991). The relationship between change in schools and culture has been addressed by Goodlad (1984) and Sarason (1982) in an attempt to understand why schools have changed so little across time. More recently, some educators addressing the broader issues of reform in education argued that an acknowledgment of the importance of culture as a construct has been an important piece of the complex pictures of schools and schooling in the 1990s. For example, Heckman (1987) referred to the need for creating a renewing culture in schools in understanding the process of change. Fullan and Miles (1992) argued that change that does not address the deeper issues of culture will not result in enduring reform. Leithwood (1992) outlined the role of the principal in establishing a school culture which is based upon collaboration and inquiry. A description and working definition of culture within this research study follows.

Depending upon the discipline and position within the social sciences that one finds himself/herself, culture carries different meanings and connotations. Goetz and LeCompte (1984), ethnographic researchers, defined culture as the "shared

beliefs, practices, artifacts, folk knowledge, and behaviors of some group of people" (p. 2). Schein (1992), in his discussion of culture within organizations, discussed the ambiguous nature of culture as a construct. However, he pointed to a critical aspect of culture, and that is those things within a group which are *shared or held in common* (p. 8, italics in original). Some of the elements which Schein pointed to as held in common included observed behavioral regularities when people interact, group norms, espoused values, formal philosophy and shared meanings (pp. 8-9). Schein defined culture as follows:

> *A pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid, and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems.* (p. 12, italics in original)

Deal (1987), in writing about the culture in schools, referred to culture as "an all-encompassing tapestry of meaning. Culture is the way we do things around here" (p. 5). Deal referred to those tangible cultural forms in schools as shared values, heroes, rituals, ceremonies, stories, and the cultural network (p. 6). For the purposes of this study on collaboration among professionals from different disciplines in two elementary schools, the concept of culture is defined as shared assumptions of meaning as evidenced through values, heroes, language, ceremonies, and the cultural network of the school.

The concept of culture can apply to, among other arenas, the culture of an entire school, the larger community or system within which that school is embedded, the culture of the teaching profession, or the culture of the specific classroom. For the purposes of this study, those cultural elements most closely connected with the teachers in the study are examined. Those elements include those embedded within the culture of the collaborative team itself.

Guiding Questions

In a naturalistic inquiry which seeks to describe and interpret the lives of those engaged in the study, with the inquirer as the instrument, questions emerge and evolve over the course of the study. The original purpose, that of describing and interpreting the process of collaboration among speech-language, special education, reading and general education professionals, remained intact as the questions evolved.

The following initial framing questions guided the inquiry:

1. What is the nature and substance of the collaborative process among team members (i.e. regular education, special education, speech-language, and reading) during the course of one year of interdisciplinary team efforts? During the initial stages of the research, the conceptualization of the description of the nature and substance of the process included planning, instruction, and normal classroom routine from the beginning of the 1993-94 school year until the close of that school year.

2. How does each team member perceive the structural elements of the context and the cultural elements of the team itself as an influence on the collaborative process?

3. How do the perceptions of each team member shape the evolution of the collaborative process?

The design of the inquiry process was intended to provide a framework for developing a description of the lived experiences of a team of educators as they collaborated to meet the needs of children. It was also the intent that from this description working hypotheses would be developed about the nature of the

collaborative process and the dynamics between the process and the individual.
Those hypotheses appear in Chapters IV, V, and VI.

CHAPTER III

THE PROCESS OF THE INQUIRY

Reflexivity is a social scientific variety of self-consciousness. It means that the research recognizes and glories in the endless cycle of interactions and perceptions which characterize relationships with other human beings. Research is a series of interactions, and good research is highly turned to the interrelationship of the investigator with the respondents.
<div align="right">

Sara Delamont, *Fieldwork in Educational Settings, 1992, p. 8*
</div>

Investigators do not have direct access to another's experience. We deal with ambiguous representations of it--talk, text, interaction, and interpretation. It is not possible to be neutral and objective, to merely represent (as opposed to interpret) the world (Peller, 1987).
<div align="right">

C.K. Riessman
Narrative Analysis, 1993, p. 8
</div>

The process of qualitative inquiry can be viewed as a journey that encompasses the initial foreshadowing of what is to be studied, refining that foreshadowing to guiding questions, selecting those participants whose lives and experiences relate to the research questions and who are willing to share those experiences with the researcher, and then experiencing those lives for a period of time. All the while during this journey, the researcher is sorting and sifting the language, observations, and artifacts as the analysis of the data informs and shapes data collection. The sorting and sifting yields those pieces of data that can then be put back together in some sense-making scheme. Out of this journey emerges one construction of reality, in this case which may serve to enhance the understanding of interdisciplinary collaboration in elementary schools. This process is not linear, but rather more like a maze as the questions, data, and data analysis interact with

the inquirer's experiences and theoretical and philosophical grounding.

There was a framework to this particular journey, however, and it is that framework that is the heart of this chapter, the process of the inquiry. The design of the research is the structure for understanding that process. It includes the following components: (a) the participants and settings for the research, (b) the researcher as instrument, (c) data collection, (d) data analysis, and (e) evaluation of the research.

The purpose of this study was to contribute to the descriptive and inter-pretive knowledge base of current processes of collaboration among professionals from different disciplines as they met the challenge of serving heterogeneous student populations. The research questions that guided this study resulted in a description and sociocultural interpretive analysis of a bounded system, collaborative interdisciplinary teams operating within elementary schools. The process of collaboration itself, as well as the related structures within the school and the culture of the team, were examined and interpreted. Furthermore, the dynamic interaction between the individual members of the team with the collaborative process, as perceived by both the researcher and the participant team members was also a focus for the research.

Given the purpose and questions stated above, the inquiry process employed for this study was embedded within the educational ethnography tradition as described by LeCompte and Preissle (1993):

> Educational ethnographers examine the process of teaching and
> learning, the intended and unintended consequences of observed
> interaction patterns, and the relationships among such educational
> actors as parents, teachers, and learners and the sociocultural
> contexts within which nurturing, teaching, and learning occur. They
> investigate the variety of forms education takes across cultures and
> among subgroups within society, the manifest and latent functions of
> educational structures and processes, and the conflicts generated when

> socializing agents are confronted by rapid social change. *They*
> *document the lives of individual teachers, students, and*
> *administrators for unique and common patterns of experiences,*
> *outlook and response* . (p. 28, italics added)

Educational ethnography as a design was consistent with the purpose of the study. First, I examined interaction patterns as well as the relationships among the different actors within the sociocultural context of interdisciplinary teams within the elementary school over the course of one school year. Second, I did attend to the conflicts that were generated as the participants in this study faced multiple changes in response to changing patterns of student grouping and of teacher interaction. Finally, I also documented the lives of teachers and other educators as they engaged in the process of collaboration within the context of the elementary school.

Within the educational ethnography design, the qualitative case study methodology was employed (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Goetz & LeCompte, 1984; LeCompte & Priessle, 1993; Merriam, 1988). Case study methodology was well aligned with the purpose and questions that guided the initial phases of the inquiry process. As defined by Merriam (1988),

> A qualitative case study is an intensive, holistic description and
> analysis of a single instance, phenomenon, or social unit. . . . Case
> studies are particularistic in that they focus on a specific situation or
> phenomenon; they are descriptive; and they are heuristic--that is,
> they offer insights into the phenomenon under study. (p. 21)

Although a definitive definition of ethnography as both a process and a product has eluded researchers (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1990), the particular type of case study research reviewed and implemented in this study is the ethnographic case study that takes the level of the case beyond pure description to the next level of interpretation based upon a sociocultural framework. The ethnographic case study incorporates the element of culture into the research as a critical component (Merriam, 1988).

Participants and Setting

Selection of participants for this study was based on criterion-based, or purposive, sampling (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). The basic criterion for selection of participants was that a group of teachers from different disciplines had stated the intent to work together in a regular and consistent fashion over the course of the 1993-1994 school year. Selection was predicated upon the condition that the teachers had committed to engage in regularly scheduled interaction; that is, the occasional hallway conversation would not constitute collaboration. An indicated interest and voluntary participation in the collaboration activities were essential elements of that criterion. A second criterion for selection was that the teams were in the initial phases of their collaborative interaction. An additional factor in the selection process was that the sites had close proximity to the university where I taught during the course of the research. The selection process was initiated through word of mouth and my professional interaction with team members.

The disciplines originally targeted for selection were the disciplines of general (regular) education, special education, speech-language pathology, and reading. This choice of disciplines did not mean that other school specialists such as counselors, social workers, and occupational therapists are unimportant in meeting needs of all children; rather, the professionals from special education, reading, speech-language pathology, and general education have most commonly participated in ongoing dialogue and in the daily classroom routines with students.

Two sites were chosen for the research rather than a single site. This decision was based primarily upon pragmatics. The intent was to spend one school year in the field. Given the unpredictability of schools and schooling, I was un-comfortable relying on one site for data collection. In the event that a team might

have dissolved after a short time, there would still be a site from which to collect data over the course of an entire year. Teams did collaborate at both sites throughout the year, however, and data were collected from the two sites. Therefore, two case studies are presented as the product of the research. Brief descriptions of the settings follow, but more detail on the participants and settings is embedded within each case study, in Chapters IV and V. All names of locations and participants are pseudonyms.

The first setting was a K-5 elementary building in a suburban area, Willow Hill Elementary. The team from Willow Hill consisted of three professionals: two reading teachers and a speech-language specialist. It should be noted here that the term "specialist" is one that is used in the discipline of speech-language itself. I use the term educators when referring to these professionals as a group. These educators provided instruction for children primarily in a pullout situation, or where children leave the classroom and come to the specialist's room. The reading teachers and the speech-language specialist became aware at the end of the prior school year that they were providing services for some of the same children. They wanted to find a way to coordinate services for these students, and they received a local grant to support travel to a conference that addressed integrating the fields of speech-language and reading. Their collaboration during the school year was initially an outgrowth of the grant activity as well as the coordination of services for students.

The second site, Lakeside, is a K-5 elementary school in a rural area. At the beginning of the 1993-1994 school year, the team included four (4) fifth grade teachers, a special education teacher, a reading teacher, and a counselor. The fifth grade teachers had engaged in some collaborative planning and activities the previous

school year, but 1993-1994 was the first year they had intended to bring into the team the other educators who regularly worked with the fifth grade students.

The initial conversations with the Willow Hill team members during July and August 1993 and the Lakeside team members in September 1993 indicated that they had intent to conduct regularly scheduled meetings and that they had voluntarily agreed to collaborate. In both sites, the 1993-1994 school year was their first year of formal collaboration as a team. Based upon those indications, both teams met the stated criteria for selection.

The Researcher as Instrument:
The Lens of Inquiry

The process of the inquiry incorporated an educational ethnographic design. By virtue of that design, the researcher becomes the research instrument and therefore, the inquirer's theoretical and philosophical biases shape the lens through which data are collected and analyzed.

The particular lenses of the researcher, however, must be made public. As Wolcott (1994) suggested, "In the very act of constructing *data* out of *experience*, the qualitative researcher singles out some things as worthy of note and relegates others to the background" (p. 13, italics in original). The decision points and rationale for those choices of what justifies attention and what should be relegated to the background become part of the fabric of the inquiry. The researcher must be reflexive in the recognition of those decision points and disclosing to the audience in order that this presented construction of meaning may be seen as a process of continuous mediation between the researcher, the participants, and the context.

Before engaging in this research project, I had been involved for two years in a federally-funded project designed to engage speech-language professionals in

collaborative experiences with teachers from other disciplines (Nelson, 1991). As part of that project, graduate students in general education, special education, and speech-language planned and implemented curriculum with a population of elementary students who had been referred by teachers from the surrounding school districts in a six-week summer experience. The focus of the project was on how collaboration among these professionals could enhance learning opportunities for students identified as having special learning needs. I also have interviewed interdisciplinary teams and some initial thoughts on those conversations were published (Nelson & Kinnucan-Welsch, 1992). An important lens entering this research project was previous experience with collaboration as a process and some sense that collaboration may be an important element in providing optimal learning experiences for all children.

A second lens influencing the research was shaped by my own professional discipline of reading. In reflecting upon conversations with the teachers, I found myself noting those times I resonated to statements that were in alignment with my own beliefs about literacy and learning. My belief is that the best learning environments for children tend to be those that are natural and authentic. Children learn to read by reading real books. Learning language, both oral and written, is a process in which children actively construct meaning. My beliefs about literacy and learning, while not directly related to the research questions, did surface during conversations and became part of the dynamic of the interaction. My background in reading also entered into the dynamics of the team at Willow Hill. Two of the members of the team were reading teachers, and I found myself asking fewer clarification questions during discussions that related to reading.

A third element of my experience that entered into the fabric of the inquiry was my position as instructor in the undergraduate teacher preparation program at the nearby university. I brought to the context some degree of expertise in education as perceived by the participants. For example, I noted in my personal journal on 10/1/93 that the teachers in Lakeside were struggling with planning math curriculum, and they asked me if I could help or suggest someone who could. This type of request changed the dynamic of the process. As I noted on 10/1/93, "I do change the context once I enter the setting."

Given these lenses as a frame for the inquiry process then, what drew my attention during the process of inquiry? The guiding questions shaped initial attention. I attended to both the collaborative process itself as it manifested within the team and those issues that were most closely connected with team interaction. Issues peripheral to the team interaction, such as professional responsibilities outside of the team interaction and personal lives, were not recorded as germane to the study.

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The Researcher as Instrument:
The Role of the Researcher

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Because the inquirer is the instrument in naturalistic inquiry, the role of the researcher becomes an important element in the research setting as the process unfolds. As detailed in the next section, the primary modes of data collection were interactive; that, is I interacted with the participants through interviews and through participant observations. Therefore, that level of interaction was kept in mind, as well as the impact of that interaction, as issues of access and role main-tenance were negotiated.

Entry into both settings was negotiated through my contacts with teams members in other contexts. Willow Hill emerged as a potential site during the Project Collaborate summer session, 1993, when the speech-language specialist on the project, Diane, told me about the collaborative arrangement that she and her team members had begun the past April at Willow Hill. After a meeting with the three team members in August during which the research focus was conveyed, the Willow Hill teachers agreed to participate. Lakeside emerged as a potential site during a committee meeting at the local university. Again, conversation with one of the teachers at Lakeside precipitated a meeting with all team members and the ensuing agreement to participate in the research project.

The process formalizing the research included application to, and the resulting approval from, the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (see Appendices A and B, respectively). Access to the two sites was also formalized. Individual meetings with each principal were held to explain the purpose of the research. Formal letters were sent to each principal outlining the purpose and activities of the research (see Appendix C), and the requests were approved at both sites.

The role of researcher in these sites evolved as a major issue over the course of the study (Kinnucan-Welsch, 1994, 1995). I did not anticipate the dilemmas, questions, and decision points that confronted me, particularly in the first four months of data collection. The role that I had decided to assume in both settings was that of participant observer. LeCompte and Preissle (1993) described this role as follows: "Participant observers watch what people do, listen to what people say, and interact with participants" (p. 196). I had made a conscious decision to maintain researcher status during the process of the inquiry. This study was not an action

research study where the researcher was a clear member of the team with a role and set of responsibilities in the team operations (Adler & Adler, 1987). The research design was more focused on how collaboration may evolve among professionals where the influence and input from a person outside of the school context is minimal.

This role did pose some problems for me, however. The teachers at both sites indicated they would be more comfortable if I were an active participant in the team interactions. The dilemmas that the teachers faced on a daily basis were often difficult and challenging. Issues ranged from changing assessment practices to clarifying understanding of language difficulties among children Often I was approached for my perspective on the topic at hand. The question then arose for me: How do I respond to the requests for input and support that come from teachers who are struggling with difficult issues of change and collaboration?

On November 8, 1993, I sent the following message over an electronic mail qualitative research bulletin board:

> I am a doctoral student researching teacher collaboration in elementary schools. I am looking for any writings/reflections/shared experiences on the ethical dilemma related to the role of researcher in a study which is an ethnography rather than an action research study. . . . In particular, how does the researcher respond to those events and evolving relationships which would see a shift in roles from participant observer to part of the change process? Any thoughts and suggested references would be appreciated.

The following is an excerpt from a reply from Judith Preissle (1993):

> All field relationships change over time. There are even some people who have tried to suggest invariant stages we pass through from beginning to end. In many situations, participants attempt to incorporate the fieldworker into the group. Some people see that as a sign that they've really been adopted by their tribe; others worry about going native. I believe that it's all part of this kind of research. How you respond to it is part of your task as inquirer. Other people's accounts and reflections are essential to place your experience in the broader context of fieldwork relations, but ultimately you resolve the situation on the basis of what you're trying to learn, who you are, and who the people you're studying are. Just be sure you record as much

as you can of how you're making your choices and viewing developments.

By November 1993, I found myself becoming more comfortable with the process of role negotiation itself. It had become what Marshall and Rossman (1989) referred to as a negotiation of multiple roles.

The multiple negotiation of roles took on different character in each site, but in each site the issues of researcher reciprocity came into play. In both sites, my contributing thoughts and suggestions were ones which could support the learning experiences of children. I did, however, make a conscious effort to remain an observer in those discussions that related to the collaborative process itself. When asked a direct question, I tried to respond with another question that affirmed the central role the teachers were playing in developing their own collaborative dynamics.

My role as researcher in both sites did evolve over time. In October, a personal journal entry recorded my concern that the team in Willow Hill had given the label "Katie's group" to our team meetings. From my perspective, this label evidenced a much higher degree of influence than I was comfortable with. I had set out to explore the nature of collaboration among educators as it might exist without any influence from an outside influence. I came to realize that the reality is there was an outside influence in both settings, the researcher. The year would have evolved differently for those teams if I had not been there. Maybe slightly, maybe significantly, but there would have been differences. The challenge became attending to those comments and things unsaid that might be clues to the ways in which I was influencing the collaborative process.

My attention to the issue of role did diminish over time as I came to some degree of comfort with decision points. By January, my personal journal entries had

turned to issues of themes that were emerging in the data. A comfortable routine was established in both sites, but it was not without some questioning and decision-making along the way.

Data Collection and Strategies

Constructing a case study of interdisciplinary collaboration in two elementary schools required data depicting the lived experiences of these educators across one school year. The data collection strategies employed included participant observation, individual interviews, document analysis of any artifacts generated through the process, and recordings in my personal journal.

Visits to each site were planned to encompass the variety of activities in which the teams were engaged. Because the nature of the teams was different at each site, the activities varied as well. In Willow Hill, the teachers were engaged in instruction of children with special learning needs in reading and speech-language in a pullout setting. The activities were primarily team meetings and the wide variety of other responsibilities assumed by the special discipline teachers. These teachers did not become involved in classroom collaboration, so observations were not done in classrooms. The Willow Hill teachers met as a team about every two or three weeks until January. During the weeks the team did not meet, I was in the building once a week for observation or informal conversation. In Lakeside, the team members met once or twice a week. I attended at least one team meeting a week until the teachers met less frequently after mid-March. I also observed in the classrooms at Lakeside as much of the collaboration among the classroom and special discipline teachers took place in the classroom. Not only did I record observation notes directly into a laptop computer for these visits, but the team meetings were audio taped and transcribed.

The transcribed team meetings yielded several hundred pages of transcript for both sites.

All team members were interviewed individually three times throughout the year. Initial interviews were conducted in conjunction with the opening of school, September and October 1993. All interviews took place in the teachers classrooms or, in one case, the counselor's office. Midyear interviews were held February 1994. Final interviews were conducted during April and May 1994.

The initial interviews at the beginning of the school year focused on the initial impressions of the participating teachers regarding their roles in the team as well as initial thoughts about collaboration itself. Guiding questions for the interview at the beginning of the year included: What do you perceive to be your role as a teacher right now? What are your expectations for this team? What circumstances do you think led to the formation of this team? Interviews during the middle of the year and at the end of the year were "taking stock" interviews. I asked the teachers to comment on "how they thought the collaboration was proceeding at this point in time." In all interviews, I assured the teachers I was not looking for anything specific. Their impressions of the collaboration were important and that they would have an opportunity to review the transcripts.

The interviews were transcribed verbatim, including pauses filled with 'um' and false starts. The transcription conventions employed the following notations:

1.   --   a pause in speech

2.   //   overlapping speech

3. . . .   deleted material from a direct quote

I made a conscious choice to remain true to the transcripts; I did not edit the false starts and spoken pauses. Some would argue that editing those would improve

readability (Wolcott, 1994, p. 66), but I found that the exact transcription yielded embedded meaning as well as explicit meaning.

The interviews followed the format for ethnographic interviews as suggested by Spradley (1979). I started with a grand tour question about collaboration, then followed with clarification and refinement questions using the participants' language. The interviews were also audio taped, and the tapes were transcribed for analysis.

The interviews and taped meetings were transcribed directly using the software program, HyperQual (Padilla, 1991), a qualitative data management program. I transcribed the first three team meetings, but all subsequent meetings and all interviews were transcribed by a research assistant who was instructed to transcribe them verbatim. I listened to all tapes and edited any errors. The accumulated raw data from both sites totaled approximately 1175 single-spaced pages.

Analysis of Data

As LeCompte and Preissle (1993) noted, "The basic goal of ethnography is to create a vivid reconstruction of the culture studied" (p. 235). This vivid reconstruction requires the researcher to make sense of the experiences of the participants as revealed through the data by constructing categories and establishing relationships between those categories from the data.

In qualitative research, the analysis of data begins with the first data collection experience. By attending to certain events and artifacts at the exclusion of others, I began an analysis in the very early stages of the research. The data consisted of transcribed interviews and meetings, observations, and personal journal entries. The description of the overview of the analysis follows, but it is

important to keep in mind that the analysis and interpretation influenced subsequent data collection episodes. For example, analysis of the fall team meetings indicated a specific concern about the responsibilities of team members at Lakeside. The second round of interviews at that site began with a general "taking stock" question, but soon moved to a focus on the responsibilities of the team members.

After editing each team meeting transcript or set of interviews, each one was read again to begin to search for those segments, or units of data that would support intensive coding and analysis. Lincoln and Guba (1985) described this process as "unitizing" the data and offered the following definition of a unit: "What we are dealing with is *units* of information that will, sooner or later, serve as the basis for defining categories" (p. 344). Topics were marked in the margins of the hard copy that seemed to be prevalent in a segment of data. The development of these first coding schemes, or classifications, were the initial searches for regularities in the data (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993) was ongoing, and served to shape the collection of data throughout the year.

Following the data collection phase, the complete data set was organized for each site and put each into a separate box for what Merriam (1988) called the intensive analysis. These two boxes became the storage area for the "case record" (Merriam, 1988). Each site's data set was read two times in entirety to set the holistic context, almost to regain a sense of gestalt through chronology. During these readings, I noted my thoughts and questions about major ideas, possible categories, and/or codes. Using those initial coding schemes, I developed a outline for each data set representing in broad brushstrokes the collaborative experiences of these teams for the entire year. These broad brushstrokes eventually became the headings and subheadings for each case study.

Following that task I began the process of intensive coding. This was the phase of intensive analysis where I literally pulled the data apart. Each chunk that could stand alone as representative of an episode or a phenomenon was pulled out of the data and given a tentative label, or code. The chunking was initially done on the hard copy of the transcripts. Each subsequent unit, or chunk of data, was then compared to previously identified chunks. If it was similar to one already pulled from the data, it was given the same label. If there were properties that set it apart from previously identified chunks, then that sentence or paragraph was set aside and given a new label. As each set of units of analysis began to develop, the properties that defined that unit became more distinct. For me, asking questions helped to define the codes and thus establish decision points. For example, why does this segment fit into this category? What differentiates this segment from another?

Each time a segment or chunk of data suggested a new code, the segment that suggested that code was entered into the computer with the corresponding code label. Questions, properties, and rationale for inclusion or exclusion from a category were also noted. In that way, a permanent record of decision points was created for developing the codes (see Appendix D for example).

After the entire data set was manually coded on hard copy and assigned code labels, I coded the set in the HyperQual (Padilla, 1991) computer program and printed the set according to code labels. The data set now included the raw data by type (interview, team meetings, personal journal, observations) and by code that included all instances of each code across all data sources. This phase of the inquiry might be characterized as the divergent phase (Merriam, 1988) where all instances of each code were organized into separate file folders and reread again by category while taking note of how each segment fit into the category. This step reaffirmed the

decisions made at the divergent stage of the analysis, and the entire list of codes and

properties was typed for review (see Appendix E)

The next step was to bring the data chunks back into a sense of whole. The

guiding question in this process was "What is important about the lived experiences

of these educators when looking through the prism of several codes?" At this point,

the analysis moved back to bringing it all together, or the convergent phase. For

example, all instances of a specific code were read. In this phase I employed constant

comparison strategy (Glaser and Straus, 1967; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). I

read about a particular unit in all instances in which it occurred. In this convergent

stage I was able to suggest a hypothesis about why the category was so important to

the participants as supported by the data from the category across all instances of

occurrence. Although it was not the intent of this research to suggest theory, the

hypotheses based upon the constant comparative strategy may be used for future

theory construction.

Inherent in the constant comparative strategy of qualitative research is

triangulating, or confirming, the data analysis across data sources (Lincoln & Guba,

1985). Four primary data sources were employed in this study: what the teachers

said during *interviews,* what the teachers said during *team meetings,* what I

observed during team meetings and site visits, and what I said to myself in my

personal journal.

The product of this analysis was the construction of two distinct case studies

of the nature of the collaborative process among teachers from different disciplines

in an elementary school setting. At the point of writing the case studies, I was faced

with another decision point. Wolcott (1994) suggested one way in which

researchers may think about what to do with data is to recognize the different

emphases in description, analysis, and interpretation: *Description* relies heavily on lengthy excerpts from original data; the informants (participants) are telling their own stories. *Analysis* expands upon the description through careful, systematic ways to identify key factors and relationships among them. *Interpretation* reaches out for understanding beyond the limits of analysis (p. 10, italics added).

The case studies offered here employ a heavy emphasis on description. There is, however, a level of interpretation embedded within this research that approaches the analysis emphasis as defined by Wolcott. For example, in the case studies that follow, I frame most lengthy quotes with an introductory and concluding statement of what that quote exemplified. Several topical discussions are linked together and conclusions drawn based upon those linkages. Those elements can be considered analysis based upon Wolcott's (1994) typology.

<div align="center">Evaluating the Research</div>

The purpose of this research was to contribute to the body of knowledge about the process of collaboration among professionals from different disciplines. How does one know that the findings represent a reasonable construction of reality of the lived experiences of interdisciplinary teams? Lincoln and Guba (1985) referred to this issue as one of trustworthiness of the research. As Lincoln and Guba posed the question, "The basic issue in relation to trustworthiness is simple: How can an inquirer persuade his or her audiences (including self) that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of?" (p. 290).

Four domains were addressed to ensure that the research will be worth taking account of. These include, as Marshall and Rossman (1989) refer to them, the four criteria of soundness: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirm-

ability. Credibility refers to the assurance that the inquiry produces credible findings; that what is reported can be seen as accurately described. Transferability ensures, not that the findings of the study can be imposed to other instances, but rather the findings represent "working hypotheses together with a description of the time and context in which they were found to hold" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 316). The concept of dependability refers to the issue of whether what was observed and interpreted by one researcher would be observed and inter-preted by another. The analog for this criterion in positivist research would be reliability. Confirmability is related to the objectivity with which the research was conducted.

Several strategies outlined by Lincoln and Guba (1985) were integrated into the process of the inquiry to support the trustworthiness. It should also be noted that many of the strategies are appropriate for supporting more than one of the criteria listed above. These strategies are: (a) prolonged engagement, or extended observation over time; (b) triangulation of data from multiple sources; (c) member checking, or verifying data and interpretation from sources; (d) examination by a panel of experts; (e) a rich description from the data source; and (f) auditing the entire process and product.

The prolonged engagement over time has three purposes: to learn the "culture," to test for misinformation or distortions, and to build trust (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 301). Prolonged engagement is one of the hallmarks of ethnographic research; learning the cultural meanings of a phenomenon is best accomplished over extended periods of time. The research was conducted over the period of one school year to ensure that prolonged engagement would support trustworthiness.

The triangulation of data in this research context refers both to multiple sources and multiple methods. Data from several team members were collected; and

multiple methods were used to collect the data. The multiple methods included observation of classroom activity, audio-taped team meetings, audio-taped interviews, and personal journal entries.

Team members were also asked to continuously check the data and interpretation as the research progressed. During both interviews and team meetings, clarification questions were often asked as part of the conversation. I met with each team prior to my first presentation on preliminary findings as part of the member check process (Kinnucan-Welsch, 1994). Where the nature of the quotes may have been sensitive, I asked each team member individually if the quote was representative of that person's perceptions and if he or she was comfortable with my interpretation. Finally, I met with each member of the teams during the final stages of writing the case studies. Again, because some of the topics were sensitive, the meetings were held with each member individually to afford them the opportunity to react in confidence. Condensed versions of the case studies were provided to each member of the teams as well as excerpts incorporating their quotes pertaining to sensitive issues. Each member responded verbally during the meetings and was also asked to respond in writing with points and/or questions of clarification (see Appendix F). Where the responses from each team member provided clarification of my interpretation, those changes were incorporated into the final draft of the case study.

The panel of experts for this process comprised two mentors as part of the Western Michigan University Research Fellows Program. During mentor meetings, methodological issues, in particular, were examined and resolved. In addition, the doctoral committee also served as a panel of experts by examining and reflecting upon the descriptions and working hypotheses generated from those descriptions.

The case studies have incorporated a rich description based upon the language, behaviors, and perceptions of the team members. The culture of the teams at both sites was also described as evidenced by the ceremonies, rituals, and shared assumptions indicated by the members.

An audit trail has been provided by the researcher so that the audience for the findings may judge for themselves the trustworthiness of the research. Merriam (1988) suggested that an audit trail include detailed descriptions of "how data were collected, how categories were derived, and how decisions were made throughout the inquiry" (p. 172). Chapter III meets the requirements for an audit trail.

The descriptive and interpretive case studies of interdisciplinary collaboration are presented in Chapter IV and Chapter V. Because these are offered as two distinct case studies, they are organized as two chapters. There really are two stories here, and while the temptation will be to compare the experiences, the intent is to portray interdisciplinary collaboration in two distinct settings and contexts.

CHAPTER IV

WILLOW HILL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:
CASELOAD COLLABORATION

I think that we were just trying to get a group together, a relaxed group to primarily share information and to problem-solve for kids and I think . . . that our expectations were primarily that, information sharing and trying to coordinate services and feeling relaxed about trying to work with each other, and letting down some of the barriers between the disciplines.
Diane, speech-language teacher, 6/94

The three educators, Bob, Jennifer, and Diane, who formed a team at Willow Hill Elementary School for the 1993-1994 school year are at the center of this case study of interdisciplinary collaboration. It must be kept in mind that the unique lens of the researcher as instrument does filter their experiences, and this case study is one reconstruction and translation of their collaborative experiences over the course of one school year.

The lived experiences of Bob, Diane, and Jennifer as a team for that year originated in and revolved around their caseloads of children with whom they had direct instructional and diagnostic contact. As the research evolved over time, it became clear to me that "caseload" was a central feature of the team members' interaction. Midway through the school year, I had begun to interpret their collaboration as "caseload collaboration," and that interpretation remained throughout the construction of the case study.

This case study of interdisciplinary collaboration is presented in three main parts. The first two sections offer the description of caseload collaboration through

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a detailing of, first, the context in which the collaboration occurred and, second, the nature and substance of the collaboration itself. These descriptions are based on team members' experiences as revealed through conversation during team meetings, through interviews, and by observations at the site. Within the third section of the case study is offered an interpretive portrait of caseload collaboration as derived from the description and, from that portrait, suggested working hypotheses from which future explorations of interdisciplinary collaboration may be guided.

<center>The Context of the Collaboration</center>

Context can be defined as "the interrelated conditions in which something exists or occurs" (*Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 1994). Mishler (1986) has commented that meaning of any phenomenon can only be understood within the context within which it has evolved over time. A description of the context within which these teachers operated as an interdisciplinary team for one year, therefore, is an important element of the description of the collaborative process itself.

The multiple interrelated conditions that gave meaning to the experiences of the team of educators at Willow Hill were both interconnected and sometimes embedded within one another. These teachers were engaged in professional lives as educators at Willow Hill School. Willow Hill School is part of a larger school district. The district adheres to State of Michigan guidelines, and the school, district, and state contexts are all embedded within the national policy, legislative, and economic context as well. The context of this case study of interdisciplinary collaboration at Willow Hill also encompasses the origins of the team, the teachers' definition of the team, the structures influencing the team, and the cultural

characteristics shaping the collaboration within the team. Before I address the issues of context, however, I will describe the members of the team at Willow Hill Elementary School.

The Participants

Bob was one of the two reading teachers in Willow Hill Elementary School. He has considerable experience in education; at the beginning of the 1993-1994 school year, he had a total of eighteen and one-half years of teaching experience. Bob has two advanced degrees; a Master's degree in Teaching of Reading and a Master's degree in Teaching in the Elementary School. Bob had been a reading consultant at Willow Hill School for five years prior to the 1993-1994 school year. During the 1993-1994 school year he was a half-time Reading Recovery teacher and half-time reading consultant.

Diane was the speech-language specialist in the building. She was also part time at two other schools, but her primary responsibilities were at Willow Hill. She has a Master's degree in Speech-Language Pathology as well as twenty graduate hours in Early Childhood Education. Diane had seventeen years of experience in education at the beginning of the 1993-1994 school year, the five most recent at Willow Hill.

Jennifer was the other reading teacher at Willow Hill. She also has a Master's Degree in Reading, and this was her second year as a Reading Recovery teacher in the Pacific Heights District. She, too, was a half time Reading Recovery teacher and half time reading consultant. Most of educational experience, seventeen years, has been in the general classroom.

The School, District, State, and National Contexts

Willow Hill Elementary School in one of seven elementary schools in the Pacific Heights District. The district is located adjacent to a larger metropolitan area. During 1993-1994, there were 9056 students enrolled district-wide; 761 students were enrolled at Willow Hill. There were forty-two professional staff members at Willow Hill during that year.

The district context carried special significance for these educators. Bob and Jennifer were both Reading Recovery teachers. Reading Recovery is a one-on-one, early intervention program for children who are at risk of failing to learn to read (Clay, 1979). Children in the program are given individual instruction away from their classrooms five times per week for an average of fourteen to sixteen weeks. Reading Recovery teachers must undergo one year of intensive training to participate in the program, and the Pacific Heights District was a training site for Reading Recovery.

Diane was a speech-language professional, or as they are referred to in the Pacific Heights district and the State of Michigan, Teacher of the Speech-Language Impaired. Her professional activities were under the auspices of special education programming, and therefore strictly bound by district, state and national rules, regulations, and guidelines for special education. The district had a recommended number of children, or caseload, she should serve at any one time, and the State of Michigan has published rules and recommended guidelines for various facets of programming and eligibility. The district context, then, included structures and guidelines that influenced the lives of these professionals.

There was another element of the school and district contexts which influenced this collaborative effort. Although these teachers operated within

guidelines, there was a sense that the district was amenable to innovative practices that purported to meet the needs of children. As Jennifer said during the initial interview, "Oh, I think you can do almost anything you want if you just do it. You know, I think there's nothing--that's the thing about Pacific Heights, I've never had anybody saying 'you have to' you know. In particular, they give you enough freedom to work things out." Diane echoed this sentiment during team meetings in October when she indicated that the director of special education had given support for Diane to attend a conference with Bob and Jennifer in January. Diane, however, did not perceive the atmosphere to be as supportive in the building. She indicated early in the year that Willow Hill as a building was not open to change, as having "quite a reputation as being a difficult building to work in." This reference was not directed to the administration, but more toward the teachers; that new practices were difficult to implement with the teachers.

The national context carried legislative mandate and policy issues as did the state and district. Federal legislation is a prominent contextual factor in this case study as it has directed the education of students with disabilities (PL 94-142 and PL 101-476, among others). One additional feature of the national educational context that affected these teachers was the increasing pressure to provide instruction for all children regardless of special needs in the general classroom, commonly referred to as "inclusion." This national agenda was evident in the Pacific Heights District during 1993-1994. There were several "inclusive ed." students within the district, and Diane referred to "the inclusive ed. student in one of the kindergarten rooms" during the initial interview in the fall. It was within these environmental contexts that Bob, Diane, and Jennifer engaged in collaboration for

the 1993-1994 school year. In the next section the other elements of context that influenced and shaped the team's collaboration are addressed.

The Origin of the Team

Bob, Jennifer, and Diane were all special discipline teachers in Willow Hill Elementary. Their professional responsibilities with students primarily lay in either small group or individual student sessions away from the general education classroom. Bob and Jennifer were reading teachers, Diane a teacher of speech-language impaired, and they all had specific lists, or caseloads of children, whom they served. Some of these children received services for both identified reading difficulties as well as identified speech-language difficulties. It was their desire to meet the needs of these children that provided the impetus for them to form a team. The team members' perception that their group of three comprised a team was gradual, and each member of the team brought their own unique perspective and contribution to the evolution of the team as a formal entity.

Bob's interest in this collaborative effort was two-fold. First, because he most often worked with children in isolation from other teachers, Bob was continually cognizant of the need to maintain open lines of communication with other professionals in the building. As Bob commented in the initial interview fall, 1993:

> I'm generally interested in collaborating, working together with
> other teachers, just because it benefits the kids. That the more--I
> believe--that the more that we're able to do to coordinate our
> programs, then the child is receiving a single message instead of
> many different messages.

There was a second issue motivating Bob, however. In his first year as Reading Recovery teacher, Bob had begun to see the connections between language, particularly from a speech-language specialist's point of view, and the reading

process. Those connections had not been specifically addressed in his professional preparation as a reading specialist. He had worked with a child in Reading Recovery in a building other than Willow Hill that was identified as having a language disability, and he had started to talk to the speech-language teacher in that building about those connections and what he could do to support that child. Those conversations were informal, but they served to heighten Bob's awareness of the connections between language and reading. These informal conversations continued with Diane when Bob returned to Willow Hill full-time.

In 1992-1993, Bob had several children that he served in reading who also had language disabilities. The frustrations he encountered in attempting to provide for them the optimal educational experience elevated his interest in the connections between language and reading. In his description of how the team came together, Bob recounts how those frustrations led to a more formal collaborative team arrangement:

> And then last year, I was having some problems with--some real specific problems with specific kids--and, I really got more of into asking for specific help as to what could be done with this child. One, in the fall, I made a referral and I was--that Diane see this child but she was maxed out on her caseload, and so I was real frustrated that, nothing, it was stalled. The whole thing was stalled. And I knew that he needed help and he wasn't getting it. So I started asking her, "Well, what can I do to help this kid out?" And I mean, his problems weren't **that** severe, so she was able to give me some suggestions. . . . And then, we saw that there was going to be this conference in Madison [Wisconsin] last June specifically relating to this so we wrote up in the grant proposal asking for money for the three of us, Jennifer, Diane, and I. And part of the proposal was that we would collaborate in a more formal way this year which was what we had been kind of edging along that way anyway. But that kind of formalized it. It also gave us some responsibilities as far as we're going to have to report back to the group that gave us the grant; and also our departments are probably going to expect something from us.

Bob's comments reveal that the origin of this team, while it can be most clearly identified with writing a grant and attending a conference, evolved from his own

professional concern related to the connection between reading and language. As Bob

commented later in the interview, "Let's get down to brass tacks as far as, in this

particular case, how is this kid's language affecting what he's doing in reading."

Diane's perception of the origin of the team was, in many respects, similar to

Bob's. She, too, realized that sharing information and experiences with one another

about children they both served would benefit the children. She spoke in the

interviews of a child that they had both been following and about whom they had

several conversations. The patterns of communication between Bob and Diane, then,

had already been established. It was during this time that Diane received

information on a conference that addressed the issues of language and reading:

> But at about the same time, a flier came to me from ASHA [American
> Speech-Language-Hearing Association] from their mailing list about
> a conference in Madison, Wisconsin combining language--speech and
> language problems and reading difficulties and how they were woven
> together. And so I had approached Bob with that and said "This might
> be fun to go, if we possibly can, or maybe you'd be interested in
> going." And Bob said' "Well, you know, we have the Pacific Heights
> Education Grant coming through. Why don't we apply for this?" So
> we did and we were accepted. So the three of us [Bob, Jennifer, and
> Diane] went to the conference in Madison, Wisconsin. That's basically
> how it all started.

Diane emphasized in her interview the notion that the origin of the team was

almost fortuitous--a series of events coming together:

> I don't think it really developed at a cognitive level, as a team. . . . So,
> it was just a lot of things kind of spontaneously came together, and
> that's what happened.

Jennifer entered into this collaborative team with the self-awareness that

she was a recent entry into the discipline of reading as a specialized professional. As

she said, "Well, for me, not having done this job before, I'il take tips from anybody."

She, too, recognized the value in communicating with Diane about specific children

they both served, but that communication was often happenstance and irregular. For

her, the possibility of formalizing the lines of communication about specific

children served to bring this group together in more regularized ways:

> Katie: So you see that one of the primary reasons is that you had the
> opportunity then to share things about children that you may each
> serve. For example, N was one that you served and D as well.

> Jennifer: Yes. And otherwise I was so involved in what I was doing
> that I didn't even know that that was another possibility to gain
> information from Diane. And we didn't have a list of kids - it was just
> hearsay. And if you happened to find out that they're working with
> somebody, there's no procedure for letting us know. And that just
> seemed kind of goofy to me. We needed to do something about that.

All three teachers indicated that the origin of this team was a formalization of a

process of communication and sharing about children in which they had already

engaged, albeit irregularly. Receiving the grant to attend the conference in Madison,

Wisconsin prompted the delineation of a more regularized collaboration about

children. As Jennifer commented: "It was like you'd have to catch her [Diane] on the

fly. But I think it will be better now that we've established a regular routine."

The Definition of the Team

The membership of this team was distinct: Bob, Jennifer, and Diane

comprised this collaborative team. Perhaps a more salient issue for the purposes of

this case study was the process through which the teachers distinguished their group

interaction as 'team-like' from other groups in which they participated that may not

have carried the connotation of team. There were some similarities in the descrip-

tors the teachers brought to the forefront of this issue. There were also some

differences.

All three members of the team identified the level of involvement and

interaction about specific children as one identifying characteristic of the team.

Their interaction originated in a need to coordinate and share information and ideas

that would hopefully address identified difficulties in learning for these children.

Diane was the most emphatic in this identifying characteristic of the team at the

beginning of the year:

> Katie: What makes that group a team?
>
> Diane: They're working with a specific student, with cares and
> concerns I think. *So I think it's the child that would define the team.*
> Does that make sense? [italics added]

Diane saw that the level of involvement among the members of a group as

distinguishing a team from a loosely organized group:

> Diane: And at other times I might be on the peripheral edges. You
> know, they may come and say "We've noticed this problem, could you
> provide materials, or how would you tackle this problem?" And
> therefore I would become an information giver--I might not be part
> of the team.
>
> Katie: Okay. Because you didn't necessarily have that child.
>
> Diane: Right.
>
> Katie: The team is defined by the child.
>
> Diane: I would think.

Bob saw the definition of the team as a product of mutual respect for one another's

ideas and expertise. He, too, saw the level of engagement and involvement as a

distinguishing characteristic between a group that was a team and a group that was

not:

> Well, the level of involvement for one thing. And, are they all work-
> ing towards the same ends and actually doing something? Are you
> seeing changes in behavior because of what this team is doing? Are
> you changing your teaching because of what's happening in this team?

In the beginning of the year, Jennifer conceptualized the team as a function of

time and commitment, perhaps another indicator of level of involvement as a

criterion:

> I mean, there has to be time set aside for meetings and they've been, I
> mean, we just are busy all the time and so the commitment of time,
> commitment to be able to do that. I mean, it's easy to say we're going
> to talk and then slide by, you know, it's iffy. If we just made a
> regular time during the week that that's what we want to do, just get
> together and share, I think the time has to be there.

The members of this team, then, identified that a focus on children and the

commitment as defined by time and involvement differentiated this team from

other groups of professionals who might not have the designation of team.

Structural Elements Influencing the Team

There were several elements of the context outside of the school, district, and

national agenda that influenced the collaboration among these educators. These

elements may be interconnected with the building, district, and national settings,

but they carry an identifiable topical label that suggests they should be discussed as

entities in and of themselves. These elements include the role of the building

administration in the collaboration, mandates and regulations, schedules and

caseloads, and time.

The Building Administration

There were two building administrators in Willow Hill Elementary School: a

principal and an assistant principal. The assistant principal, Donna, was the more

involved of the two administrators in the specific issues about which the team

collaborated. References to her in the interviews and the team meetings were much

more frequent than references to the principal. Donna had been a special education

teacher, a reading consultant, and a Reading Recovery teacher in the district. She,

therefore, had professional discipline links with all three team members. As Bob

commented during the first interview, "I have a strong role with the principals. And in my case, particularly Donna, because she's got the reading background."

Many of the team members' responsibilities emanated from requests from the principals, particularly Donna. Much of the information about and referral requests for specific students originated from Donna. As Diane commented in a team meeting in September, "He [referring to a specific student] was referred to me, not really referred, but Donna put a note in my box last year just to let me know he had quite a discrepancy on some type of achievement test that was done in third grade." The team also kept Donna informed in those areas for which they had primary responsibility. For example, Jennifer met with her in September about the Michigan Educational Assessment Program, and Donna asked Jennifer to share that information during a faculty meeting in October. Bob, Jennifer, and Diane felt secure that Donna supported their efforts, and it was Donna with whom I had original conversations about conducting this research on collaboration at Willow Hill.

There was only one incident of which I was aware in which a collaborative activity attempted by the team was not approved by the principal. Bob, Jennifer, and Diane had discussed screening all kindergarten children to identify those who might be at risk for language and/or reading problems. The purpose of this screening was to identify children and provide support for the classroom teachers to lessen this risk, either through inservice on specialized programming for the teachers or training volunteers to come in and provide assistance. The discussions during the team meetings in September focused on how they would use the information. The team finally decided that the screening would not place any children on anybody's caseloads, but that support could go directly to the classroom teacher. As Diane said in the midyear interview: "What are some of the things that

the teacher, that we can do, to help these kids develop some of these skills in the classroom? We don't want to pull them out." Diane talked with Donna and had suggested that graduate students in speech pathology and audiology at the local university could perform the testing. Donna was receptive to the idea, and agreed to talk to the principal about it, but the principal did not approve the request. During the midyear interview, Diane reflected on the fact that this effort did not come to fruition but there was hope for next year:

> The principal didn't want us to do some of the assessment techniques that we had proposed, because if we identified all these children, what were we going to do? And she didn't understand the implications that we were going to be helping other people and supplementing pro- gramming, hopefully, to help these children grow. It was going to be like our pilot study. We're going to approach Donna [she will be assuming the principal's position in 1994-1995] with that next year and follow the first group through and kind of see who comes up as high risk. I think we're going to approach it differently this time than we did the first time. It was, you know, such bad timing with the principal being out after surgery and all of that kind of thing hap- pening.

With the exception of this one attempt, however, all data I collected suggested that the team had support from the administration within the existing structures and guidelines. It was apparent, however, that those guidelines were somewhat confining.

Mandates and Regulations

Bob, Jennifer, and Diane were educators within specialized disciplines. Bob and Jennifer were reading consultants for the Pacific Heights School District, and more specifically, were Reading Recovery teachers. As such they were required to attend the state Reading Recovery Conference and the monthly follow-up training sessions. Bob and Jennifer provided reading support services to several children a year. While Bob and Jennifer did extensive testing with children to determine those

who would receive reading support services, there were no formal guidelines for eligibility.

All children who received speech-language services from Diane came under the auspices and regulations of special education. In other words, Diane was required to comply with federal and State of Michigan guidelines for special education. Some of these guidelines include a formal referral process including parental consent before a child can be tested. Once diagnostic information is obtained, there are guidelines on who should be considered eligible to receive services based upon that information. Every child who receives special education services must have an Individual Education Plan (IEP), and this plan must be reviewed annually in meetings with parents and those educators who are responsible for implementing the plan. As these three professionals came together, then, the mandates related to their professions shaped the collaboration in diverse ways.

Bob, Jennifer, and Diane entered into a collaborative arrangement to share information that would hopefully enhance the support they were providing for children with special needs. Bob had alluded to the fact that he was frustrated the previous year in attempting to secure help for a child, but Diane had already exceeded the number of children she could serve according to state guidelines. Bob then decided to approach Diane for specific suggestions on how to help this child. It could be argued, therefore, that the regulation limiting the number of children Diane could serve was one of the precipitating factors in the formation of the team. Diane also referred to the relationship between the regulations under which she operated and the collaboration during a team meeting in December:

> It's **my** handicap, not yours. You're much freer than I am. And that really nips collaboration in the bud, you know, in a way--sharing of ideas and time and kids, and stuff. It really--there's certain things I

can't do that we need to work through that. . . . I just find it very restricted.

Bob saw their collaboration as a way to circumvent some of the roadblocks that they encountered due to the mandates. On one level, developing his own expertise related to speech-language difficulties would provide a child with immediate support that was not tied to a formal process. He was able to articulate this outcome, particularly related to diagnostic issues, by the midyear interview:

> So, I'm expecting that in the future we can make it happen faster. The fact that I can do the preliminary things for Diane [related to diagnosis], that keeps it on the informal level. She's not locked into her state guidelines.

The funding issue also became paramount in these dilemmas. Diane illustrated that point with this example:

> Technically, I'm not supposed to be doing a hearing screening on a child who's **not** on my caseload. Because it's special ed. moneys being used for regular ed. confirmation.

The State of Michigan guidelines for eligibility of services based upon diagnostic information became quite a sensitive one between Bob and Diane. I will discuss how this mandate, or perception of mandate, affected the collaboration among these team members in the "Issues and Concerns" section later in the case study.

Schedules and Caseloads

Bob, Diane, and Jennifer were special discipline teachers during the 1993-1994 school year. They did not have general education classroom assignments. Rather, their primary contact with children was with small groups or individual students. During 1993-1994, Bob and Jennifer worked with an average of twenty-eight children at any one time, and Diane with fifty-two. All three team members had their own rooms in the building. Bob's and Jennifer's rooms were in the

corridor on the front of the building close to the office. Diane's room was on the back corridor, directly across from the gym/cafeteria. The children that were served by the team members were referred to by these teachers as "caseload." The more frequent use of the term, by all team members, was in reference to the children that Diane served. Bob and Jennifer often referred to their children either as "one of my Reading Recovery kids" or by another group designation such as "literacy group" or "my fourth grade group."

The structural element that is important to note here is the fact that each of these teachers was serving a specific set of children, either for reading support or for speech-language support. Crossing this structural boundary became a major challenge, and as was suggested in the discussion in the section related to the origin of the team, one of the precipitating factors in coming together as a collaborative team.

There was also a constraint related to eligibility for services in the Pacific Heights District. If a child is receiving special education services (as distinct from speech-language services) that child is not eligible for reading support services. That was a factor when these teachers decided to form a collaborative team. They made a conscious decision not to include special education teachers in the building in their discussion about mutually shared children because they knew that Bob and Jennifer would not be serving any of the same children as the special education teachers. This caseload constraint, then, defined those professionals who should logically collaborate.

Jennifer saw the constraints related to caseload in a different light. One of her goals for the year was to try to go into classrooms and offer instructional support for the classroom teachers. In the district guidelines for reading

consultants, however, there is a stipulation that the support only be provided to those classrooms where there are children who are currently receiving reading support. Jennifer commented on this during the first interview:

> Katie: So you are, you can only go into classrooms, then, where there are children who are on your caseload?
>
> Jennifer: Yeah. I don't know that I would, you know, that's even a--I don't know if that's written in stone anywhere. But I don't know that you have time to do anybody else.

Each teacher spent the first part of the year determining which children would be eligible for services and developing the schedule for pullout services. Many of Diane's children were already set on her caseload from the previous year. For her, it was a matter of setting the groups and scheduling them into their block of time. Bob and Jennifer were heavily involved in diagnostic work during the month of September, both for Reading Recovery selection from first graders as well as for children from grades two through five who would receive support. By mid-October, all teachers had settled into their schedules which were posted in their rooms, and these schedules provided the structure for their daily activity and routines.

It is important to note the elaborate process in which these special teachers engaged to develop a schedule. Factors that had to be considered in this process included avoiding scheduling children at times when their class had a "special," such as art, music, or gym. Bob and Jennifer also tried to pull children from rooms where the teachers were following comparable schedules in the curricula. They also tried to avoid pulling children from class during reading or math. The following excerpt from my observation notes of 10/11/93 details some of that process:

> Jennifer began setting out piles of papers
>
> Katie: So, what is it we are doing?

Jennifer: We're trying to figure out time slots when we can take our groups. Bob is bringing in a schedule-we have to work around specials. It's a mess.

Bob and Jennifer walked in together and sat down to work on the schedule. They picked up piles of papers.

Bob: I guess we'd better figure out the groups first. We can do all the fourth graders if we do a four/fifth combined. I was talking to the teachers-they all pretty much stay together for the quarter-so we can put L's kids with the fifth grade kids-and it won't make any difference.

OC:[1] It's interesting to see that it seems that B and J are trying to put the kids together depending upon what the teachers are doing. An indication of trying to stay with the teachers in curriculum?

The process was complex, and after a considerable amount of time into it, Bob

made the following comment:

Bob: We may get to the end of this and say this doesn't work at all. The first grade goes to lunch here--pull the second grade and pop them into here.

After I observed this process, I integrated this observation into some questions that I

pondered about the broader implications for the move toward a more inclusive

schedule:

OC: Scheduling for pullout is still very tied to traditional structure. How does inclusion change this? If the teacher is in a room, all the kids are blocked in one room--this is a different way to deal with the structure. Yet, if that occurs, the special teachers have commented that when they are in the rooms, they are spread too thin and that all of one category of child is in one room. For example, all of the 4th grade Chapter I were in DT's room in PV [another school in which I had observed]. All of M's kids are in either J or S's rooms, and all of the special ed. kids are in Pamela's room for language arts [again, another site]. This seems to be an interesting way to shift the placement, but it is still very dependent upon categories and specialties by discipline. No pullout vs. pullout; classroom vs. specials oriented.

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[1]OC is a transcription convention for observer's comments. It refers to thoughts and questions that I had as researcher, either while recording field notes during an observation or while editing a taped transcription of an interview or team meeting.

The questions that I considered while observing the maze through which these teachers traveled while scheduling were not questions that they asked of themselves. This was an indication that they had accepted, for the present time at least, the pull out structure for serving children. This was, in part, a function of the Reading Recovery program; pullout was a required element.

Once this process of scheduling was completed, and the teachers had settled into their scheduled routines, the schedule was a dominant force in their lives. There were many children who did not receive services from Bob and Jennifer due to the schedule, and that was a source of frustration. At the end of the year, Jennifer saw their schedules as one of the limiting factors to what could be accomplished:

> Oh, we just--scheduling, you know, we're just doing different things
> at different times, we're lucky when we have that lunch time
> together. But, that's just part of the territory.

Schedules are related to time, the final structural issue to be discussed.

Time

Of all the structural elements facing these teachers, time emerged again and again in the interviews and team meetings as a perplexing problem. The teachers were constantly balancing their perceived responsibilities with the available time. During a site visit in late September, I was chatting with Jennifer outside of her classroom as she was waiting for one of the children in the Reading Recovery program. The following comment reveals the pressure she felt about time:

> I'm trying to get them to come by themselves. I'm hoping she'll come
> a little early. Every minute counts in this deal.

Bob also recognized the constraints as he juggled his other professional respon-sibilities as well:

> Before school, I'm always looking for time to interact with the
> teachers. We've got, what, thirty classroom teachers in this
> building? And so, that's a lot of people to keep tabs on.

The value that these teachers ascribed to this commodity was made explicit in their

comments that they devoted the time to team meetings; that very choice put a

priority on the team over other responsibilities. As Diane said in response to a

question asking what helped to make the collaboration happen, "making the time." It

was evident that time was one of the determinants that set this group apart as a team.

Time, however, was also a factor that contributed to a decline in team

activities by early spring. The teachers presented at a Reading Recovery Conference

in January, and they did not meet as a team again until May 18. All three teachers,

while acknowledging that there were other factors, agreed that time pressures

contributed to the infrequency of the meetings in the spring. As Diane said:

> I just think if you're going to do this, you really need to set a time and
> stick with it. And that's what I think we tended to do until we got
> really busy in the spring. But the bi-weekly luncheon meetings, you
> know, you were there, we came prepared with things to discuss. We
> often ran out of time before we ran out of topics. But, I think you
> really need to just set it up and keep with it.

Jennifer summed it up in this comment from the midyear interview: "The time

factor in this job. It's just so--the determining for almost, for a lot of things that

you do."

Cultural Elements Influencing the Team

In an ethnographic case study the element of culture is a critical component.

What were those rituals, underlying assumptions, group norms, espoused values,

shared meanings, and physical representations of beliefs held in common among

these team members? This team had, perhaps, too recent a history to have

supported the development of a sense of culture. Culture evolves over time, and this group had not yet shared enough time and space to begin to see the hallmarks of culture emerge from their interaction. The culture that was more evident and more of an influence on these educators was the culture unique to each specialized profession to which they belonged.

Bob and Jennifer were Reading Recovery teachers. Some of the stories they told during team meetings recounted their experiences as teachers-in-training, as participants in the Reading Recovery conference, and the like. The team all attended a Reading Recovery Conference in January, 1994 where they shared some of their collaborative activities. There was a sense that there was a bond among the Reading Recovery teachers that was evident at the conference. One of the main texts for the training is *Early Detection of Reading Difficulties* (Clay, 1979), and the folklore among these teachers is that when you are in training, that book never leaves your side.

As Reading Recovery teachers shared in this expertise, they often operated from common assumptions about reading instruction. Bob spoke of having a professional relationship with another Reading Recovery teacher in the district that was particularly satisfying to him. He commented during the initial interview:

> I would just--you know, we were both working with kids, different kids in reading. I'd say "Gosh, you know, this kid--here's what's happening", and then, she could throw out "Well, gee, have you thought about this-- or have you thought about this--or have you thought about this?" And that was enough to get me going and get me unstuck. I think that a lot of the reason that she was able to make a lot of appropriate suggestions was that, she knows a lot about reading in the first place, but we also have a comfortable enough personal relationship and knew each other also professionally well enough so that she could make a suggestion that I wasn't just going to go "yck." You know. "I would never do that with a kid," you know, she would just tell me things that were sort of within my scope of the kind of things that I do.

Diane was also influenced by the professional culture of her specialized discipline, speech-language. She was a frequent attendee at the national conference for the prominent organization within this discipline, the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. She regularly assumed professional responsibilities such as supervision of students in the Speech, Pathology, and Audiology program both in the Speech-Hearing Clinic at the local university and in her classroom at Willow Hill. She often shared journal articles from her discipline at the team meetings as well.

It was evident from the team meetings and interviews that each of the team members was quite comfortable with their strong affiliation with their disciplines. Bob and Diane had more experience within their disciplines. As Jennifer had commented early in the year, she hadn't done this job before and she would take tips from anybody. Bob, however, indicated that one of his interests in their collaborative team was in learning what he could from the perspective of those professionals in Diane's field that would enhance his knowledge of the reading process. During the May 18 team meeting the team members talked about the approval and funding Bob received to attend the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Conference that following November. Diane, however, seemed more comfortable staying focused in her own discipline. When the teachers were making plans to present at the Reading Recovery conference, Diane indicated she probably would not spend the night; there would be no reason for her to as she did not indicate an interest in attending any of the sessions. So, there was a strong affiliation with one's own discipline within the team, but Bob gave the strongest indication of moving out of his discipline to expand his expertise.

In considering the sociocultural context of a team in which these educators functioned, the data did not indicate that a team culture was emerging. Perhaps more striking were those cultural influences from the disciplines toward which these teachers directed their professional lives. Bob and Jennifer identified themselves as reading teachers with a specialization in Reading Recovery. Diane's language and assumptions about providing services for children were firmly grounded in speech-language as a special education service. Some of those influences were revealed in the tension that was created about how eligibility for services is determined. These issues are explored further in later sections of the case study.

The elements of context, including setting, the origin of the team, the definition of the team, the structural influences, and cultural influences, shaped the essence of the lived experiences of the educators from specialized disciplines as they collaborated for the duration of one school year. The nature and substance of their collaboration evolved within that context, focused on their caseloads, and is described in the next section.

The Nature and Substance of the Collaboration at Willow Hill

The description of the context of the collaboration provides a backdrop for and gives meaning to the nature and substance of the collaboration among these professionals. Within the description of nature and substance, the following are discussed: (a) the goals of the teams members, (b) the focus and activities of their collaboration emanating from those goals, (c) the dynamics that developed among the team members, (d) the impact that the year's experience had on these educators, and (e) an analysis of their collaboration as seen through two issues and concerns. In

the final section of the case study, the threads of context and nature and substance are woven together into a representation of caseload collaboration.

The Goals of Team Members

Bob, Diane, and Jennifer had clearly articulated, shared team goals that had been explicit since the origin of the team. The grant they received from the Pacific Heights Educational Foundation served to clarify those goals from the outset. Goals were referenced during interviews and team meetings that were perhaps less clearly articulated, but they were a dynamic force within the team functioning. Consider-able agreement existed among the team members about specific goals for the team. These goals were identified during the initial interviews in the fall of 1993 and they were confirmed by team activities and through artifacts produced during the team meetings. The primary goal for the collaborative efforts was to share information about children they mutually served. This sharing of information had begun on an informal basis during the previous year with Bob and Diane, but these teachers wanted to formalize the process through regular communication about specific children.

An important additional goal for this team was to better serve the children they did not share. Each of the teachers saw the opportunity that this collaborative effort could have in serving children that were on their individual caseloads and not shared. In expanding their own expertise, each of the children for whom they provided support could benefit. Bob summarized both opportunities in the fall interview:

> And then you touched on something too where I guess I see this
> collaboration with Diane as having a couple of possibilities. One
> would be that we're actually sharing a child, that we're both seeing
> the same child so that we would want to be integrating what we're

doing, again, for the same reason that I integrate with the classroom teachers--so that we're telling the child the same thing. And then, also in the case of a child who has--there are lots of kids who have some speech or language problems who are not severe enough to qualify. So I'd like to pick up enough expertise to be able to help them myself even if Diane can't see them.

Diane's goals were quite consistent with those goals that Bob explicitly stated. She, too, was most clear in delineating a focus on the children, either those children who were on both the reading and the speech-language caseloads or those children served by only one of the team members. For her, too, there was the additional goal that they would all develop their professional expertise through team interaction. These teachers were aware of the differences between their professional disciplines, and they all commented that crossing those barriers would ultimately benefit all three. As Diane commented during the fall 1993 interview:

> Diane: So I think just the sharing of knowledge, mutual problem solving. . . . We're approaching language and reading from two different ways and I think it will be fun to see how the reading specialists do it and I hope they're interested in how we teach phonics and our articulation approach. . . . So hopefully some intermingling of skills to better all of us in helping the kids and the classroom teachers.
>
> Katie: So right now you will be sharing the information and the initial focus, I'm clarifying here, the initial focus is on children you may serve.
>
> Diane: Right, right. And so hopefully learning how to do that, we can help maybe some children that Bob serves only. Or maybe if I have a student that I notice has some mild reading difficulties, maybe through my course of therapy I can help support some of those with information to the teacher and parent, and they wouldn't have to go on Bob's caseload--or vice versa. *So it's just sharing of the information to benefit the student, I think ultimately, is our goal.* [italics added]

The following excerpt from Jennifer's initial interview further supports the conclusion that the team members were quite consistent in these goals. There was an additional dimension to Jennifer's expectations, however. Not only was she com-

mitted to better serving children, but she was also interested in the developing

relationship among the team members:

> Just that I'll be better able to serve children, I think. And I think it's
> fun developing this relationship with them, too. I think we'll get
> closer and feel more comfortable all the time, working as a team. I
> think we'll just get more accomplished that way.

Jennifer alluded to one goal that was perhaps related to the relationship among team

members that was developing among them. She saw their collaboration as perhaps

an avenue for ensuring speech-language services for children that she was serving.

Jennifer had held an expectation that perhaps their collaborative arrangement would

somehow ease those constraints and frustrations. As she commented during the final

interview:

> I was hoping I'd get preferential treatment for one little boy and it
> never worked out. She's [Diane] just so overloaded that she could
> never get to this guy, and I have big concerns about him and I just
> wish she would have been able to something for him.

As noted previously, Bob was committed to learning more about the con-

nections between language and reading. Not only was this evident in the interviews

and in the team meetings, but in my informal conversations with Bob as well. The

goal of enhancing their own professional expertise for the purpose of helping

children was a goal that was stated by all team members. Bob's was clearly targeted

to enhancing his understanding of language; Diane's and Jennifer's foci were less

well-defined.

Finally, the teachers had hopes of collaborating not only with one another,

but with classroom teachers as well. The teachers on this team shared a bond in that

they all were primarily engaged in working with children in settings isolated from

the classroom. Bob had gone into some classrooms in the previous year, but working

in classroom settings was not a common occurrence for them. Jennifer had been a

kindergarten teacher prior to assuming the responsibilities of reading consultant,

but she had not been in the classroom during her first year as reading consultant.

Bob, Diane, and Jennifer emphasized the efforts they made to communicate with the

classroom teachers, particularly about the children they served from those rooms.

But that communication was often incomplete at best. Diane spoke of this

frustration:

> We only have different pieces of the child's ability. And we all need to
> come together and say "Gosh, I didn't know Julie could do that. I've
> been working on this, but now maybe I need to focus on this." . . . So
> just kind of non-threatening, willing to let go, willing to take a
> chance with the kid, to get some of those barriers down so we're not
> all in little boxes of expertise.

For these teachers, better communication with the teachers and improved support

for the children might mean going into the classroom, a phenomenon that is

increasingly prevalent nationwide. All three teachers were hopeful that they would

spend more time in the classroom this year. As Diane said:

> I need to share more, and stop thinking of them as my children in my
> speech room, and I need to get out into the classroom a little more.
> And do some more whole group things. And that's, more of that, is one
> of the professional goals I selected this year. Trying to get **out** of the
> speech room and more within the classroom.

For Bob, however, spending time in the classrooms was not a goal in and of

itself. If a special discipline teacher is going to be effective in the classroom, then

there must be an element of planning involved with that. From Bob's perspective,

the benefit of the planning translated directly to coming up with "more on-target

things that are going to be more helpful to kids." So, the ultimate, overriding goal of

supporting the children on their caseload was evident in many facets of their goal

structure. As a component of the nature and substance of the collaboration, the goals

were directly related to focus of their collaboration as well.

The Activities and Focus of the Collaboration

The collaborative team at Willow Hill was directed toward goals of supporting children and enhancing professional expertise. In this section I examine the two major activities in which they collaborated to meet their goals. These activities included team meetings and professional conferences. Within those activities the foci of the collaboration were realized. These foci included individual children, instructional activities and materials, assessment, and professional development.

Team Meetings

The core of this collaborative venture encompassed the time Bob, Diane, and Jennifer spent in conversation about those topics of mutual interest. The teachers did set regular meeting times which were held at frequent intervals until January, 1994. The meeting dates included 9/1, 9/10, 9/17, 10/15, 10/22, 10/29, 11/5, 11/17, 12/30, 1/11, and 5/18. The teachers most often met at lunch, and the meetings were always held in Jennifer's room. The setting was informal. The participants brought lunch to the meetings, and the meetings typically opened with a general catching up on personal lives. With the exception of the first two meetings, the team was bound by a forty minute time constraint, which was self-imposed. As Bob said after the meeting on 9/1/93, "We may have to set a time limit, because if we eat up an hour every time we're going to be hurting."

At the beginning of the year, the teachers were not entirely clear on what they would discuss, or do, during these meetings. They were, however, very clear on the notion that if they did not set aside the structured time to meet, the extended level of involvement about children that they had set as a goal would not occur. They

were also clear that they as team members would benefit from discussion about specific children. Bob alluded to both of these issues during the initial interview:

> What are we going to do at these meetings? I know we have to have them. Because if we don't set aside a time it's not going to happen. And if it's all informal then we're not going to get to a level of collaboration that I'd like to. So, I suspect that what we'll start out with is just talking about what our own expectations are for each other. And try to throw out some ideas of how we might see ourselves working together through the year. Certainly we can look at Diane, what her caseload is, I think, or if she has a pretty good idea of holdovers from last year or whatever. So we can see if there is a match already, to identify certain kids. And I suppose as we get going into the school year, it might be more specifically related to particular children that we're working with. Once you get the actual kids, then that gives you the basis for whatever your conversations are going to be.

The original focus was to have conversations about specific children that they were working with. I will return to that focus later in this section. By October, however, the teachers had made another commitment that narrowed the focus of their team meetings. During the first team meeting, 9/1/93, Bob brought to the group a request from one of the other Reading Recovery teachers in the Pacific Heights District that the team present their experiences in interdisciplinary collaboration at the State Reading Recovery Conference to be held January 13 and 14. It was discussed during the meeting on 9/10, and by 9/17 they had learned that their proposal had been accepted. On 10/22, the teachers had their first discussion of how they might organize their presentation and there were references to what might be appropriate interspersed throughout the team meeting discussions. On 12/30, the teachers met at Bob's house for two hours to plan their presentation, and they met again on 1/11 to rehearse their presentation. That was the last team meeting until 5/18.

A point of interest in this case study is the perception of the teachers related to why the team meetings did not occur after the presentation at the Reading

Recovery Conference. The teachers commented on this issue during both the midyear and final interviews, and an understanding may be constructed within the context of the goals and foci that had originally been voiced.

Perhaps the dominant reason that led to a decline in the scheduled meeting times was the fact that the teachers did not share as many children across the two disciplines as they had expected to. The teachers had anticipated that there would be specific, identifiable benefit to those children supported by the sense of shared responsibility and level of involvement. Because there were only three children they actually shared, the time invested in the collaboration had diminishing returns for these professionals. As Jennifer said, "Well, I kind of thought that we might be further, but I think a determining factor is that we aren't sharing as many children as we had thought."

Another reason that was voiced by all three teachers was that they had met their goal of establishing some common ground for communication. This was accomplished during the regular time together during the fall and early winter. Once that had been set, however, they could depend upon the more informal meetings times to exchange information or raise issues of concern. That informal, catch a person in the lounge, communication style was a familiar practice for these teachers already. Abandoning the scheduled lunch meetings represented a return to familiar territory, particularly for Bob and Diane. As Bob commented during the midyear interview:

> I'm comfortable now--we have not been meeting together formally since the conference but I'm fairly comfortable with that because we seem to be talking quite regularly, more informally, just "quick catch" as you can. So like this whole thing with M. L., the artic [articulation] case happened very quickly and off the cuff.

As discussed in the section on time, every minute was a precious commodity for these teachers. Deciding how to allocate that commodity brought to their lives a balancing act of cost-benefit analysis of everything they did. The primary goal of their team was to support the children they mutually shared through more regularized communication. The secondary goal was to extend their own professional expertise. When the first goal was somewhat thwarted by circumstances, the teachers did resort to the secondary goal, but only for a short period of time. Once the Reading Recovery Conference presentation was over, the teachers were confident that they had both established open lines of communication with one another and extended their expertise beyond where they were in the fall. The need to meet regularly and in structured settings diminished. Bob summarized these points in the final interview:

> Early on we needed to get ourselves coordinated, define for ourselves what we were trying to do--we met in order to have a time to share with you [referring to this research]. Then, we met in order to plan our presentation at the conference and that became our focus for a while-- and then we didn't really have a reason to meet anymore. So any meetings as such would be at a child assistance team meeting or a kind of on the job, just in the hall, stopping by, talking things over.

The team meetings served their purpose early in the year. They met to discuss children, then they met to prepare for the Reading Recovery Conference. Bob was learning more about the connection between language and reading. After these goals had been met, the formal team meetings were not perceived as a necessary collaborative activity.

When the team at Willow Hill met during the first half of the 1993-1994 school year, the topics of the meetings were varied. As part of the team conver-sations, Bob, Diane, and Jennifer frequently talked about the following:

(a) individual children, (b) instructional activities and materials, (c) assessment, and (d) professional literature.

Individual Children. As noted previously, individual children who were experiencing learning difficulties in reading and speech-language development were the primary reason these teachers formed a team. The first priority was to share information about children who were receiving both reading and speech-language services. An additional focus was to take those tips, strategies, and enhanced professional expertise to support all children the team members served. Working from their experiences with specific children provided a clear context for discussion during team meetings and other team activities. The point to be made here, however, is that each child posed a unique set of challenges through which the team members could share information and problem solve strategies.

These teachers were quite accustomed to meeting with other professionals about specific children. Examples of these meetings included Child Assistance Team, Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team, and Individualized Education Plan Committee. The purpose in these meetings was to bring the diverse expertise of professionals together, school psychologist, speech-language, school counselor, classroom teacher, and principal, to problem solve next steps for the child. As Diane described the Child Assistance Team: "And so we share the information, we try to make sense of all the clues that are coming in . . . and people are given different roles, different assignments." As Jennifer commented about the Child Assistance Team, "You get to see that child from everybody's perspective."

These other school-based professional teams had a singular purpose, problem-solving and educational planning for specific children. The purpose for the collaborative team was quite consistent with existing teams. There was one

important differentiation that Bob, Diane, and Jennifer made regarding their team and those teams similar to the Child Assistance Team. That differentiation was the level of involvement. It was their intent that their team would go beyond assigning responsibilities. Rather, the team members envisioned a coordinated level of support that would provide almost a safety net for the children with whom they came into regular contact. Diane referred to this as "shared responsibility."

During initial team meetings, this focus on specific children was actualized in the first tasks the team members as a team. On 9/1/93, the teachers came together to talk about those children they thought they might share. Although they had not yet set their caseloads, they did have the names of students that were either on their lists from last year or who were potentially eligible for services. The teachers set a routine during the meeting whereby referring to their own lists, they would name a child and then look to other team members to see if there was a possibility that he/she would be receiving services from both reading and speech-language. Researcher field notes from 9/1/93 described the process:

> The task was to go through the list and look for children that they both might serve. These were designated by stars and question marks. This conclusion about the task was confirmed when Bob said about one child: "I don't think we are interested." The focus here was definitely in individual children and what needs they had.

> After they went through Diane's list, Bob had a folder of referrals from the classroom teachers from last spring before school was out. Bob went through the names and Diane responded with her knowledge about them, and whether or not they would be a possibility for service from her.

The lists became an important artifact related to the focus on specific children. Every team meeting during the month of September and early October involved some discussion over a list. On October 15, the team members each had a final "caseload" list and it was from those lists that they determined whether or not they would have

children they mutually served. The excerpt from the October 15 team meeting

details this process:

> Bob: [to Jennifer] Do you have a list of our students so we can
> compare and cross-check and compare with Diane?
>
> Jennifer: The long one, you mean?
>
> Bob: The one that's going to be caseload?
>
> Diane: That would be good because I'm starting to set up our ETC's
> [annual review meeting] and N. E., I need to give you that date.
>
> Bob: Yeah, N. I know we share.
>
> Diane: Okay. And I'm just going to do an annual review on him.

The cross-checking of lists continued through November. The result of this process

was not, however, as productive as the team members had hoped. The number of

children that were receiving both speech-language and reading services was low, and

therefore disappointing. Bob's observation is from the team meeting on 10/11/93:

> We aren't matching up very well. It doesn't bode well for the project.
> I was talking to M [another Reading Recovery teacher in the district],
> all four of her Reading Recovery kids have language problems. It
> doesn't look like any of mine have language problems. M should be
> doing this project.

In this comment, Bob clearly indicated that he considered the goals of collaborating

on mutually served children of paramount importance. The primacy ascribed to that

goal was not as clearly delineated by Bob during the interviews nor the initial team

meetings. The OC notation immediately following the field notes indicate my reaction

to this specificity voiced by Bob:

> OC: This group is called a project. Also, B had a very specific pur-
> pose in mind here for this collaboration. He and D would both have
> kids that have language problems. B sees that as a criterion for the
> collaboration, since he doesn't seem to meet it very well, he thinks M
> should be doing it, possibly benefit more???

The focus on children they shared, and the disappointment that the comparison did

not produce that mutual list was reiterated during the team meeting of 10/15/93:

> Diane: We don't overlap too much then really.

> Jennifer: Not as much as we thought.

> Bob: It's kind of disappointing.

The exchange immediately following those comments, however, underscores the

secondary goals that the teachers had identified: supporting those children that were

receiving reading or speech-language support, but not both. Diane was more clear

in this focus:

> Diane: Well, yes and no. A lot of my kids in the younger grades were
> already identified as either PPI [Pre-Primary Impaired] or right
> away.

> Bob: Well it's disappointing to me because of the focus on--you
> know, on this project. If we don't have kids in common then//

> Diane: Well, but we do, part of the focus of the problem is to help
> support, if you see some areas of difficulty, too. So you know, you can
> support me with a kid that I see that has some reading weaknesses and
> hopefully I can provide some information and support for children
> with language weaknesses and both of us can go to the teachers. But,
> yes and no--you know, I see what you're saying.

> Katie: Can I clarify something there, Diane? You're talking about
> even for kids that you don't share--you're talking about the kids that
> you're serving and the kids that you're serving [turning from Bob to
> Diane]//

> Bob: So, if you have a child that is a weak reader but isn't seeing
> us//

> Diane: Um hm. Didn't qualify for your services//

> Bob: You might do something.

Despite this disappointment, however, the focus on children, even ones they

did not share, was maintained. During the team meetings in September and October,

there were long stretches of conversation about children. There was an enormous

variety contained within these conversations. Family life, diagnostic information, instructional activities, implications for those children for whom English was a second language, and incidents of peer group interaction are but a few of the topics that were discussed. These topics, however, were most often couched in the team members' daily experiences with children who were on their caseloads. An example of those experiences were the instructional activities in which these children engaged in those settings in Bob's, Jennifer's or Diane's rooms.

Instructional Activities and Materials. Much of the team members' daily routine comprised instructional activities with the children that were directed toward their specific learning needs. For example, the children in the Reading Recovery Program that Bob and Jennifer served were engaged in thirty minute lessons. These lessons, while unique to each child and requiring teacher decisions at several points in the lesson, all followed the same basic format. There were also children in first and second grades that Bob and Jennifer saw who were members of "literacy groups." This instruction was intended to support those children who may not be receiving individual instruction in Reading Recovery, but who might benefit from small group instruction based upon many of the same principles and practices upon which Reading Recovery was based. Diane often saw children in small groups who were experiencing difficulties in one area of speech-language disability. For example, in one group which I observed, all children were working on improving their articulation.

The team members often shared those instructional routines during team meetings. It was through these exchanges that the goal of enhancing their own professional expertise was realized; the recounting of an instructional incident by one team member was followed by statements of how the other team members could

incorporate that instructional sequence with their own children. Or perhaps the team members followed the discussion about instruction with questions that precipitated thoughts on their own practice in general.

The following excerpt from the team meeting of 9/17/93 illustrates how a recounting of a bit of instruction offered specific strategies for consideration. Bob asked Diane to explain a specific strategy, "word chaining," and then commented that the strategy might have relevance for the classroom teachers. The child about whom they were talking was a child that only Diane was serving at this point in time:

> Diane: G. I'm working with and he's doing the writing clinic at [the local university]. He's gone twice. He was much more enthusiastic about it yesterday than he was on Tuesday when he was going and then we did some word chaining today. I'm starting at square one with him.
>
> Bob: What's word chaining?
>
> Diane: It's kind of like brainstorming, but it's a little more organized. You take a word, and then you start playing off that word to other things that are related. So the word that he selected was basketball, and so we had things like *uniforms, tennis shoes, score board, ball, net, fans, loud.*
>
> Kate: Word chaining?
>
> Diane: Chaining, chaining.
>
> Katie: OK
>
> Diane: So we did about ten word chains, and I said, "Okay, let me show you what we can do with that. We can even make a paragraph out of what you've got here. You've been brainstorming, there's all these good words here," and so I showed him how to take several words and we formed a brief paragraph. So his assignment in speech was to word chain another word. He wanted to do *go cart*, that was something he was real excited about, so I said, "fine." So I told him, "You know, we wrote and put a circle around it" and he is to chain at least six words to go with *go cart* so when he comes back I can show him how to sequence that and put it in a sentence. This is from Writing To Go. It's a program type of a thing and I'm supplementing it with some other stuff for him. I see him by himself on Friday mornings.
>
> Katie: Is it a computer program?

Diane: No, it's not.

Bob: That could tie in well with the classroom because a lot of the teachers will do like the semantic map.

Diane: Yeah, and he knew what mapping was, we talked about that and I had told his parents about mapping at the spring IEPC and that was something that I hoped they would do over the summer and I have some more structured activities for that to bring him back to a more simplistic level. I'm going go fast right now and then when we start breaking down is when I'll start slowing down. But we're just getting going and he did really well--he was really excited about that this morning.

In this excerpt from a team meeting conversation, not only did the teachers share a specific instructional activity, but a specific instructional program as well. Bob saw the potential connection for classroom teachers, and the teachers also incorporated a term that perhaps had been unique to Diane, "word chaining," and related it to an activity that may have been more familiar to Bob, Jennifer, and the classroom teachers, "semantic mapping."

The teachers also made it a point to share instructional materials that they felt might be useful to the other team members. Sometimes during discussions about materials as well as instructional routines, the differences between the disciplines of reading and speech-language, at least from the perspectives and experiences of these particular professionals, became apparent. In the following excerpt from the team meeting on 10/15/93, Diane was showing Bob and Jennifer some materials that she used during her instruction. The discussion of these materials led to a more broadly-based discussion on professional practice about segmenting sounds. Of importance here is the indication that Bob and Jennifer as reading teachers approach segmenting sounds differently from the way Diane does as a speech-language teacher.

Jennifer: . . .We're just beginning, when we write you know, hearing beginning sounds, they're beginning to hear something inside too, but--but anyway my kids they do--like red--rrreeeddd.

Diane: Oh, it's the//

Jennifer: Yeah, they go, ruh, ruh, red.

Bob: Yeah, I get that a lot too.

Jennifer: They can do it, but how do you get two of them that can do that?

Bob: It's real hard for them to break off the first sound from the vowel.

Jennifer: The vowel.

Bob: It's real unnatural to do that. And that's the hardest thing for them.   .

Jennifer: Yeah. So that's what I have, that's where I keep--we'll just keep//

Bob: Yeah, I've still got one in particular that I'm working on with that.

Jennifer: We're just getting it apart.

Diane: Do you throw it back at them the other way? Because we do it the other way, where I would break it apart and they have to put it together initially. So I might say "at--attt--what word is that?", and then they have to synthesize it. And that's how we approach that first.

Bob: Well, we're always starting with their language and something that they know. Something that they've said.

Diane: Well, and then I would just throw it back at them too, first for some examples, especially if they don't know what you want them to do yet and can't separate it.

Bob and Jennifer were detailing a specific strategy that is taught in a Reading

Recovery lesson, segmenting sounds in words by pushing markers into little boxes

that represent each individual sound in a word. Diane responded to this information

by saying that she typically would segment the word for the child and then have the

child synthesize the sounds into the word. So what began as a sharing of instructional

materials evolved into a discussion of the merits of segmenting and combining sounds

to produce words. This issue was related to instruction. Much of the team members' interaction with children was also focused on assessment. The following section describes how this focus was woven into the team interaction.

Assessment. Bob, Diane, and Jennifer were all engaged professionally in supporting those children who had been identified as having some type of special learning need. That identification was often effected through comprehensive assessment of an individual child's performance in reading, speech, and language tasks. At the beginning of the year, Bob and Jennifer spent the bulk of their time testing children to provide the information they deemed necessary to make the choices about whom they should include on their reading caseload "lists." Diane was more bound by mandate in terms of assessment of speech-language impaired children. Because she was operating under the guidelines and mandates for special education services, she could only test a child for whom there was a formal referral process that had been completed.

It was in response, in part, to those constraints that Bob became interested in some of those assessment procedures that Diane often used. While Diane could not test a child unless the formal process had been completed, including signed consent from the parent or guardian, Bob and Jennifer could proceed with testing as part of normal instructional routines. Bob also saw the potential in more effective communication between him and Diane about a child if he could come to her with more specific information based upon some testing he had done. As he said during the team meeting on 9/10/93:

> Bob: What I'm concerned about is, I get this kid and I think, "Something's not right with their language here, but I don't know what". . Instead of coming to you and saying "I think there's something wrong here but I don't know what," would administering something like this [referring to a specific test]//

Diane: Yeah, it can. The theory behind imitation tasks like this is the child doesn't have the structure really developed. Even if he hears you say it correctly he's going to put it in another form to repeat it back to you. And then there's a lot of argument and discussion about is that valuable or not and some people say "yes" and some people say "no." It's something we can look at. It reminds me of the OLSIST test-the Oral Language Sentence Imitation Test, or something like that, we used to give.

Bob: So I guess the general area of concern is I want to be able to refine my observations before I come to you. . . . This is the kind of thing that apparently Clay [Marie Clay, Reading Recovery], anyway, believes impacts the reading.

For Bob, enhanced knowledge about the kinds of diagnostic instruments and procedures that speech-language teachers are accustomed to using would serve two purposes for him. First, he would have more specific information to share with Diane about children that were experiencing difficulties, particularly in language, that perhaps did not qualify for Diane's services. Second, this enhanced knowledge would also help Bob in meeting the needs of those children in either his classroom or in the general education classroom. The focus of the team on assessment was a natural expansion from their professional responsibilities. The interest was also embedded within the broader professional development goals that the team members had articulated at the beginning of the year.

The interest in specific tests surfaced in team member interaction beyond the team meetings. The team members observed one another during diagnostic episodes. Bob and Jennifer both administered tests that are familiar to the speech-language discipline and they collaborated in scoring procedures. Jennifer acknowledged that familiarity with these tests was not particularly useful in working with her children. Bob related his expanded knowledge to his goal of being able to help children with language problems, and in that domain, felt positive about his new expertise. Diane also saw the benefits, as indicated from the midyear interview:

Diane: Bob gave me the tape and said listen to this tape, because he's [a specific child] doing weird things with the ends of his sentences. He takes the sounds and prolongs them and does odd things. Bob said "You'll know right away when you hear it, you'll catch it right away, it's so distinctive." So I have to listen to the tape. That's kind of neat to have the tape already there, and so basically what we've done is we've done maybe one-fourth of a language evaluation without even going to special ed. referral and can say "wow, this one looks really suspicious." So that's kind of neat--all I have done is score what they have done.

Katie: Good--that's interesting.

Diane: Yeah. So if it goes to referral, I only have to supplement and not a lot of my time will be taken up--not as MUCH of my time will be taken up. But this is the one where the classroom teacher had concerns about this child, I think specifically reading ability and comprehension, but noticed some grammatical errors too. And then Bob listened with the classroom teacher, said "oh, I think you're right on," so it was like a classroom teacher to Bob. And they were problem-solving then Bob brought it to me and then now all three of us are working together. So it was kind of neat.

It appears that the sharing was predominantly in the direction flowing from Diane to Bob and Jennifer. Perhaps that is related to the comment that Bob made during the team meeting of 10/29 about the speech-language professional knowing more about reading than reading people knowing about speech language. Perhaps learning from a discipline beyond his own was had a higher priority for Bob in this collaborative effort.

Professional Literature. The members of the team had a shared goal that they would benefit professionally from the collaborative effort. Some areas had been specifically targeted by the team members. For example, Bob wanted to know more about the connections between language and reading, and as a corollary to that, he wanted to be able to gather information about children through assessment procedures that were more related to language.

Each of the team members had prior experiences relating to professional development. Diane had attended national, state, and local conferences for the professional organizations encompassing speech, language, and audiology. References to presentations that Diane had attended were sprinkled throughout team meeting discussions, most often in the context of discussion about a specific topic such as word retrieval. Bob and Jennifer had both attended the Reading Recovery Conference, and while the references were not specific, their sharing of Reading Recovery activities was grounded in their Reading Recovery Training, including attendance at the conferences. The conference in Madison, Wisconsin integrating reading and language that, as Diane said, "started it all," attested to their commitment to professional development from the inception of the team.

The team members also frequently referred to professional literature that might help other team members. For example, during the team meeting of 9/17/93 Diane brought a series of articles that she thought might be of interest to Bob and Jennifer:

> So, this whole journal is on whole language [picking up another out of a pile] and speech language pathology--a whole series of articles written by different authors and how they perceive our role and what is whole language--their definition--and that kind of thing. I pulled that one for you. I pulled this one: debatable issues underlying whole language philosophy--a speech language pathologist's perspective. Some assessment in derivational morphology--we talked about that with some of the kids.

Diane also became familiar with the professional literature common to many reading professionals, most specifically, the books related to Reading Recovery. She took Jennifer's copy of *The Early Detection of Reading Difficulties* (Clay, 1979) with her to the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Conference in November.

After some exposure to the literature from the speech-language orientation, Bob had the following comment during the 10/29 team meeting about the literature:

Bob: Generally, I found that, it seems to me from what I'm reading anyway, that speech-language pathologists are a lot more knowledgeable about the reading skills than reading people are about speech and language skills.

Diane: Oh? That may very well be true.

Bob: Although, as I'm working my way through the language of these articles, which I find really obtuse and difficult to read//

Diane: We find them really difficult and obtuse to read, too.

Bob: It seems like the actual things that are happening are kind of common sensical. It's not some magical thing that is going on in whatever your therapies are. That's an area that I'm really weak in as far as knowing what//

Diane: What we do in therapy.

Following that exchange, the team members decided that an important next step in their professional development element of their collaboration was to observe other member's instructional sessions. It was somewhat of a revelation for Bob that while the language in the professional journals from speech-language and hearing was somewhat difficult to follow, reading about their practice was somewhat demystifying for him.

In the team meetings, then, Bob, Diane, and Jennifer did address initial goals by having conversations about individual children, instructional practices, assessment, and professional literature. The conversations also included a recounting of their experiences with diagnostic and instructional materials they had shared. The other activity that dominated their interactions for the year was attendance at professional conferences.

Professional Conferences

The importance of professional conferences as a team activity was evident through the year with the team members. Two conferences played an important role in team activities, Madison, Wisconsin and the Reading Recovery Conference. The theme of the importance of extending professional expertise was evident in these conferences as a team activity.

The origin of the team was closely linked to the team activity of attending the conference in Madison, Wisconsin. It could be argued, in fact, that the first activity in which these teachers engaged as a team was writing the grant to the Pacific Heights Education Foundation that supported their attendance at the conference on Language and Reading in Madison. As was the case with the professional reading and materials, this conference was one that originated from the discipline of speech-language. Diane had received the information about this conference from a flier that she received by virtue of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association membership mailing list. The teachers received the grant and attended the conference in June, 1993.

It was during this conference that Bob and Jennifer became more critically aware of the differences between the disciplines of speech-language and reading. These differences were most evident through terminology and specialized vocabulary. Jennifer was somewhat disclosing about her unfamiliarity with the terminology from speech-language during the initial interview:

> I mean, I feel comfortable enough with saying "I haven't got a clue,
> Diane" to show my ignorance. You know, just let me know what this
> is.

Jennifer also commented, however, on her observation that the presenter's morning talk which focused on the language from the speech-language perspective was

difficult for her in terms of terminology, but that just the exposure to that perspective was helpful:

> I just thought it was really interesting--the first half of the day was real informative for me because that gave me more of a perspective of what all they're doing and how it relates--how they're feeling that it relates to language and reading and just all of that stuff. I felt kind of like a ding-dong when he'd use that kind of stuff and I'd kind of nudge Diane, "this is great," and wrote those kinds of things down and you know, I just needed to know those kinds of things. That was really helpful to hear those--the terminology And you felt like you were part of a bigger picture of things, I thought. And it was just a different perspective for me, you know, you pretty much stay at your own little niche here in the reading, especially you know in elementary, and I've never gone to anything that sounds a little more scientific.

The afternoon session, however, which was intended to bring in the perspective of a reading professional, was somewhat less than Jennifer had expected. For her, there was really no new information, or any information that related to the specifics of connecting speech-language and reading. As she commented, "The other half-day presentation was pretty weak."

Bob also saw the benefit of the conference as a team activity that heightened his awareness of the specialized vocabulary. There was another aspect specifically related to the team itself, however, that Bob considered to be important. He felt that attendance at the conference was an important team-building activity. Spending those days together helped to bring a sense of cohesion to this group.

> I think that going to the meeting in Wisconsin did something for us. At least gave us a sort of a common language. And it also gave us a common experience too, that we hadn't had. You know, we're all off to Wisconsin and finding the motel--it was just [trailing off].

Diane's perception of the importance of the attendance at the conference was somewhat similar to Bob's. From her vantage point, that conference was "basically how it all started," so it assumed a place of central importance in terms of team activity.

The other conference which assumed a place of primacy in terms of team activity was the Reading Recovery Conference in January. Bob and Jennifer were expected to attend this conference as participants in the Reading Recovery Program in Pacific Heights District. As discussed in earlier sections, this conference became a focus for professional development when the program co-chair for the conference, one of the other Reading Recovery Teachers in the Pacific Heights District, asked Bob if the team would be willing to present their collaborative experiences at the conference. During the team discussion about the request, it became clear that the preparation for and the attendance at this conference was an activity that both enhanced their understanding of and communication with one another as professionals, yet also heightened their awareness of the disciplinary differences between reading and speech-language.

Discussion of their presentation at the Reading Recovery Conference became a topic in the team meetings as early as 9/1/93, when Bob first approached the group about the possibility. There were times of humorous interchange as Bob, Diane and Jennifer joked about being nervous for the presentation and about the opportunity to go shopping. Bob mentioned early in these conversations that they could talk about the connection between language and reading, evidence that his goal of making connections between language and reading was a consistent theme in his focus for team activities.

The references to their presentation at subsequent meetings in September and October were exploratory in nature as they considered the possibilities of topics and organization. The following exchange during the team meeting of 9/10/93 is illustrative of those initial explorations:

Diane: What are we doing?

Bob: Well, it could be on//

Diane: On our//

Bob: On language and it could be two-pronged really. Some sort of background information between the connection between language and reading.

Diane: And why we are doing this.

Bob: And we could also report on what it is that we're doing, whatever it is that we're doing by then. Something concrete by then.

As a team activity, the responsibility that the team had assumed in presenting at a conference required a level of commitment and accountability that went beyond the team members' own sense of what they felt the team should accomplish. Bob's reference to the fact that they could report on "what they doing that was concrete by then" was evidence that, for him at least, the team had not yet identified concrete activities to meet their stated goals. The conference presentation may have provided extra impetus to do that.

During the team meeting of 10/22, Bob first suggested that since their presentation was to those people interested in Reading Recovery, it should be oriented to a reading perspective and those points of interest to professionals in that field. Bob became even more specific during the team meeting on 11/5 about the need to target their comments to the audience. His suggestion followed a lengthy exchange among the team members and myself about a common occurrence in a Reading Recovery lesson wherein the child experiences difficulty in remembering a sentence he has dictated. The discussion focused on whether or not the child was experiencing a language problem, and following the discussion, Bob observed that sharing how the team had integrated a discussion of reading into their team meeting might be useful for Reading Recovery teachers. The following excerpt offers a summary of this discussion:

Bob: He's [the student in Reading Recovery] generated the sentence. We work together to get it written down. And then I write it on a strip of paper and I cut that up into pieces and I mix it up and then he puts it back together. So he's working from his own sentence.

Diane: [interjects m-m-m acknowledging understanding several times during Bob's explanation]. And he's also reading at the same time but he's reading something that he's very familiar with because you have done this step ahead of time --

Bob: We'll occasionally get a kid who's not getting the words back in the right order, and that's what we're talking about as sequencing//

Diane: A sequencing error

Bob: Okay.

Diane: Is he not getting them back in the right order because he's not reading them correctly or he just doesn't understand syntax?

Bob: That' what I assumed, is that he wasn't monitoring the visual-- you know, the way the words//

Jennifer: Like my example I told you about P.

Bob: So I'm asking is there another, could it be a language issue, is what I'm asking.

Diane: Yes, it could be a language issue.

Bob: So if he says the sentence correctly, points to all the words, now what he's pointing to isn't matching what he's saying, but he's saying the original sentence.

Katie: The language is okay.

Bob: That's not a language problem.

Diane: It's more of a reading problem.

Bob: But it would be--what would it sound like if it was a language problem?

Diane: But you know also, if you were--if you put it together and it's incorrect and you have him read that in the incorrect fashion, is he monitoring that to hear the differences and can he make the corrections?

Katie: And you would say, so the cue would be--if he's put it back and he can read it correctly but it's jumbled, out of order, not "does that look right?"

Bob: "Does that sound right?"

Katie: "Does that sound right?"

Bob: Okay

Katie: And if he can't, if he can't, if I'm understanding, I'm being the interpreter here, so if I'm understanding what Diane's saying, if he says "yeah, that sounds right", that's a language problem.

Diane: Could very well be.

Bob: Now is it a kid who forgets the sentence that he's written--this is a common Reading Recovery//

Diane: That would be short-term memory problem.

There were several more comments during the exchange on the connection between language and reading as evidenced within the context of a Reading Recovery lesson. As the team members put closure on this discussion, Bob related the entire sequence as possibly of interest to Reading Recovery teachers:

Bob: What we would be looking at [is] what could a Reading Recovery teacher do in the context of a lesson? You know, you've got this kid that this is happening, that this is something we need to do right now.

Diane: Okay. Let me write that one down.

Jennifer: That would be a good one for the people at the presentation.

On 12/30, the teachers met at Bob's house to organize their presentation. It was during this team meeting that the discussion of the connection between language and reading assumed a higher level of importance as the team members struggled to enhance their own understanding in areas somewhat unfamiliar to them. There were long segments of discussion where Bob and Diane offered their interpretation of the concepts of language and processing. Trying to organize these conceptualizations into a cohesive unit that could be understood by conference participants was a major

challenge for this meeting. The artifacts of the differences in terminology and

conceptualization went beyond their dialogue; the team members developed a chart

using different colors for how Bob and Diane would organize the principles of

language. As Diane suggested:

> Okay. What I'm wondering is maybe you do it like in black and then
> when I talk about the areas as they relate to speech and language, I can
> just write in a different color. Not cross out, but just maybe
> underline or say you know, here's a difference in terminology that
> we're working through. And I have two more areas of language to add
> to that. And one of them is pragmatic and one of them is processing.
> And processing often is going to throw the kids off. Vocabulary and
> processing are maybe more detrimental to learning to read than some
> of the other areas. They all interfere.

After these long segments of discussion trying to disentangle the concepts of language

and processing from the different perspective, Jennifer brought a sense of reality

back to the team members when she commented, " We're going to do two seconds with

this. You guys spent 20 minutes here. We're going to do this in two seconds."

Not all conversation during this meeting was absorbed with the terminology

and assumptions of the specific disciplines. There was a sense of accomplishment as

the members chronicled the positive interaction and outcomes of their collaboration.

Preparing their remarks for the conference was an organizing framework for the

teachers to recount their areas of collaboration: sharing information about

children, sharing ideas about instructional procedures, and extending professional

expertise about assessment. The teachers also decided to share some of their

experiences pertaining to specific children about whom they had collaborated,

almost miniature case studies. The chronicling of their activities as a team was

often interspersed with theoretical and practical issues such as detailed above in the

segment about a Reading Recovery lesson.

The meeting lasted for over two hours, and at the end of that time, the teachers had developed an outline for the presentation. The presentation title as it appeared in the Conference Agenda was "Dealing with Language-Based Reading Problems: A Collaborative Approach." A two-page outline was given to the attendees at their presentation which summarized the collaborative efforts for the team. A reconstruction of the outline is displayed in Figure 1.

The outline highlights the specialized discipline focus that these team members maintained throughout their collaboration. It must be kept in mind that this particular presentation was tailored for an audience of persons familiar with Reading Recovery. Bob, Diane, and Jennifer were consistent across the year, however, in maintaining their orientations and perspectives from either reading or speech-language.

The presentation itself was well attended, and the teachers felt that it was successful. There had been considerable energy expended in planning for the presentation, and it brought to the team a sense of credibility to their collaboration. The focus and the activities were the context of this interdisciplinary team's collaboration, and the dynamics represented the process of their collaboration. Those dynamics are discussed in the next section.

The Dynamics of the Collaboration

Collaboration among team members representing the specialized disciplines of reading and speech-language creates the context for describing and interpreting

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Dealing with Language Based Reading Problems:
A Collaborative Approach

January 14, 1994
Diane B., Bob D., Jennifer L.

- Description of the collaboration
  - ° Three educators looking for ways that work
  - ° Language basis of Reading Disabilities--Madison, Wisconsin
  - ° Participants in research on collaboration by doctoral candidate

- How language affects reading: Clay's view
  - ° structures cues on the running record
  - ° the four cueing systems
  - ° language defined
    1. structure
         grammar
         syntax
    2. semantics
         vocabulary
    3. phonology
         articulation
         sound segmentation

- Diagnostic tools

  °informal observation

  °CELF-R: Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals-Revised
  (The Psychological Corporation). Assesses formulation of
  simple, compound, and complex sentences.

  °SPELT-II: Structured Photographic Expressive Language
  Test-II (Janelle Publications). Assesses production of syntax
  and morphology in a controlled setting.

  °TOLD-2P: Test of Language Development-2 Primary, Oral
  Vocabulary Subtest (Pro-Ed). Assesses child's ability to give
  oral definitions to common English words.

  °PPVT-R: Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Revised
  (American Guidance Service). Assesses single word receptive
  vocabulary.

  °K-BIT: Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test (American Guidance
  Service). Assesses intelligence with two subtests:
  Expressive vocabulary and matrices (non-verbal)

- Case histories
- Questions

Figure 1. Outline for Reading Recovery Conference Presentation.

the dynamics[2] of the relationships among the team itself. It is within the description of these dynamics that the essence of the experiences within this team comes to life. The dynamics of the collaboration represented the process of their collaboration. The context, goals, focus, and team activities are elements that are directed from the team toward their environment. The dynamics of the team represents those elements that focus on the team itself. Although the elements of context are still there, the team and its members, Bob, Diane and Jennifer, are brought more clearly into focus. The components of the dynamics of the team examined are: (a) the individual responsibilities of the team members and how those responsibilities connected with the team functioning, (b) the relationships among the team members, (c) the communication among the team members, and (d) the underlying assumptions that shaped the relationship and communication patterns.

Individual Responsibilities

The responsibilities that Bob, Diane, and Jennifer had assumed as part of their role as specialized discipline teachers in Willow Hill Elementary School were intricately interrelated. One request, or assumed responsibility, often led to another, and one week often looked very different from another. The purpose of this study was to examine the nature and substance of the collaboration among these educators, so a complete description of their responsibilities outside of the team is

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[2] The term "dynamics" is borrowed in modified form from the literature pertaining to the study of small groups, or group dynamics. Cartwright and Zander (1968) defined group dynamics as "a field of inquiry dedicated to advancing knowledge about the nature of groups, the laws of their development, and their interrelations with individuals, other groups, and larger institutions" (p. 7). Group dynamics as a field of inquiry is comprehensive and complex. I have restricted the discussion of the dynamics of the collaboration to a select set of components, and have hence referred to this discussion as "dynamics."

not detailed in this section. The description that is offered here is a partial representation of the complexity of these teachers' lives apart from their team functioning. The teachers did not operate as a team in a vacuum, and a cognizance of the influence that their other responsibilities had on the successes and challenges within the team enhances an understanding of the nature and substance of their collaboration.

Bob, Diane, and Jennifer saw themselves as supporting two populations, the children at Willow Hill and the teachers at Willow Hill. The ways in which the team supported the children often led to support for the classroom teachers in whose classrooms those children were placed. But there was also support for the classroom teachers apart from those instances of specific needs among children. For example, Bob and Jennifer represented expertise in the area of literacy and they had a unique responsibility in terms of loosely coordinating the reading program in the building. Diane had expertise in the area of speech-language. One example of her responsibility was to help those teachers develop sound curricula in areas such as language development and the awareness of sounds in words.

Perhaps one way to give some indication of their responsibilities is to detail one day, from their perspective. Bob typically began the day by preparing his Reading Recovery lessons for the four children he would see in that program for thirty minutes each. Preparing those lessons included selecting books the child would read and reviewing teaching points from the day before. Bob then would go around to converse with teachers in the building about specific topics. The topics could be specific child related, conversation about materials the teacher needed to teach a unit on a novel, or anything of concern to the teachers as it related to reading and writing. As Bob commented during the initial interview:

My relationship with them is supposed to be sort of managing the reading program in the sense of if they need materials or suggestions for what novel would make sense right now, or advice on particular kids, and that sort of thing. Just generally see how things are going. The whole literacy thing in the classroom, reading writing, spelling, the whole bit.

During the school hours, Bob was primarily in his room with children who were experiencing difficulties in reading. Four of these children were Reading Recovery children. The other time was devoted to small group instruction from grades two through five. This small group instruction also entailed some dialogue with the classroom teacher. For example, Bob tried to coordinate instruction in his sessions with the children with what was going on in the classroom. This posed somewhat of a problem at Willow Hill as many of the teachers had discontinued use of the basal series and were using novels in their classrooms. In the year previous to the one in which I spent time with these teachers, Bob had spent time in the classroom, providing support, so the coordination with the teacher was much more readily achieved. That in-class collaboration did not evolve during the 1993-1994 school year.

The time that Bob was not engaged in individual or small group instruction, he had a variety of responsibilities. Much of the time was engaged in diagnostic sessions with children that were experiencing difficulties. The diagnostic work was most heavily concentrated in the beginning of the year, but was also ongoing as teachers referred children and as children moved into the district. Bob also attended the meetings that were convened to discuss specific children who were experiencing difficulties. The Child Assistance Team met every other Wednesday before school, and Bob or Jennifer, or both, usually attended. At the end of the year, Bob was involved with the screening of all kindergarten children that would be entering the elementary schools in the Pacific Heights District. Interspersed with all of these

duties that were somewhat regularized, Bob often had special requests from the principal or assistant principal to attend a meeting with a parent, or to prepare an information session for the classroom teachers on how to prepare for the state mandated proficiency tests. On Fridays, district-wide reading department meetings were often held from which additional responsibilities would emerge. One example of this was the request that Bob and Jennifer do some longitudinal research on the effectiveness of the Reading Recovery Program in the district using standardized test data for the previous three years.

Jennifer's orientation to her job was very similar to Bob's. Jennifer was also most consumed with testing at the beginning of the year as she and Bob were setting their schedules to work with individual children and with groups. Once her schedule was set by October, she also had four Reading Recovery children for thirty minute blocks during the day. She began her day with preparation as well, and she often was a greeter for the children as they came into the building (her room was directly opposite the main entrance). She also had groups of children during the day for whom she tried to coordinate instruction with the classroom teacher. One day when I was shadowing Jennifer, she went into a fourth grade teacher's room to obtain a copy of the social studies text so she could use a familiar context for that child during her instruction. An additional responsibility was attendance at the Child Assistance Team and other group meetings that convened to provide support for children that are potentially at risk for failing in school. As Jennifer said during the initial interview, "You kind of go with the flow here. You never know what you're called on to do," Extra duties. You're the kind of person, you know, 'Can you man the office for a minute?' "

Diane characterized her role as a speech-language professional in Willow Hill as "very traditional." She was engaged in pullout instruction for children on her caseload either in a one-on-one or in small group setting. She was heavily engaged in diagnostic work at the beginning of the year in setting her caseload and again at the end of the year for kindergarten screening. She also tried to coordinate her instruction with the classroom teacher, "I also would like the teachers to work with me on coordinating my goals with the classroom goals so that we can use the classroom materials, books, you know, focus some of the therapy activities, too, in a one-on-one."

Because Diane's program was considered part of special education services in the Pacific Heights District, many of her responsibilities were related to special education requirements. Diane spoke of having a child on her caseload as an "inclusive ed." child this year, and she had already spoken with the classroom teacher on how they would collaborate in a variety of ways. As she commented during the initial interview:

> We have a girl coming out of the pre-primary impaired program who's microcephalic, and she will be entering kindergarten. That's an "inclusive ed." student. And that's the kindergarten teacher that I would like to work with on the phonics program so that some of the sessions, her speech sessions, will be right in the classroom with the other children. And then I have to do one pullout for her because of the oral motor problems she has.

In addition, there were meetings required by special education regulations such as ETC and IEPC meetings. Diane also was a frequent participant in the Child Assistance Team meetings, and there were district special education meetings as well.

The examples above give some indication of complexity with which these team members operated on a daily basis. They are by no means a comprehensive depiction of their responsibilities, but they do give a sense of the intricacy of their

professional domains. These domains were a juxtaposing of a focus on the individual

children they served on their caseloads with a classroom connection that made the

instruction for the children more relevant to the rest of their school day. Diane

summarized that juxtapositioning in the following comment from the initial

interview:

> It gets confusing because Bob and I are doing one thing, and then we
> have the CAT team, the Child Assistance Team, for the diagnostic, and
> then P. L. and K. N. and I, they're the resource room teachers, are
> going to be doing some collaboration on a Friday morning language
> group in their rooms for mutually shared children also. So I'm
> involved in several different activities. Also including myself
> working with a classroom teacher with a child who may not be in any
> other program. So it would be the classroom teacher, the parent and
> myself working. So yeah, I wear a lot of different hats, I guess you
> could say.

The team relationships, communication patterns, and assumptions are also part of

the team dynamic, and must be examined in light of their diverse and almost,

absorbing, professional responsibilities.

Relationships

Bob, Diane, and Jennifer formed a team to provide better services for

children on their caseloads. All three team members saw as a prerequisite to better

serving children the development of a sense of who the other members were. There

needed to be a mutual sense of understanding among the team that would lead to better

communication and more effective collaboration. The groundwork for that

understanding had already been established through the common ground of the shared

goals the teachers held. As Jennifer commented during the initial interview:

> And I think Diane and Bob and I just clicked sort of, and as far as a
> relationship I mean if there had been somebody who had been
> unapproachable maybe it would have been different. But Diane's
> easygoing, Bob, you know, we're up for finding what's best for kids. I
> think that's the common deal here.

That sense of approachability that Jennifer identified during the beginning of the year continued into the spring. Jennifer saw that her professional relationship with Bob continued by virtue of their common job responsibilities, and the team interaction had allowed for a strengthening of the relationship with Diane.

Bob also valued that level of understanding of professional perspectives that could only come from establishing a relationship that went beyond occasional interaction. It was that professional understanding to which Bob referred when talking about the other Reading Recovery teacher in the district with whom he could start a conversation and there was an almost immediate productive level of problem solving related to the issue at hand. There was an element of relationship here that Bob had identified, "It means that you have to know each other well enough and what we do well enough so that we have kind of an understanding of what each of us is trying to do with kids."

From Diane's perspective, she felt that more effort was required to develop this relationship, and that this effort was partially a function of the barriers that existed between their disciplines. Establishing the necessary relationships for the level of collaboration they had envisioned would necessitate removing some of those barriers and developing a relaxed atmosphere in which they could interact. Diane saw just the step of asking for help or providing input on a specific problem as a milestone that would evolve from more comfortable communication. The following comments from the initial interview summarize Diane's perception about the necessity for a level of comfort:

> Just getting everyone more comfortable with asking for help--and just saying, you know, "Gee, I saw you do this with so and so," or "I tried this, do you have any suggestions?" . . . But I think it needs to be more mutually defined and shared. And I think that's what we're trying to do, share some of the techniques and responsibilities, you

know, so that everyone can help everyone else and feel comfortable coming for information and sharing information.

This theme of feeling relaxed and comfortable was again evident in the midyear interview with Diane when she commented on what she thought had been positive thus far in the year, but that there were still areas of limitation imposed by the barriers of the disciplines:

> Diane: I think we're getting more free about asking for help, and suggestions, and you know, letting some of that defensiveness down, willingness to ask for help when you need it.
>
> Katie: What barriers, or things that tend to make the working together difficult, do you think still need to be addressed?
>
> Diane: I still think there's more information we need to share about what our jobs are, how they're defined. . . because there are still limitations that are put on both of us, both the reading and the speech people that maybe need to come down. It's very restrictive.

Diane was not the only member of the team who had identified the barriers of the disciplines as somewhat problematic. All team members encountered difficulty with the vocabulary of the disciplines, a topic discussed in the next section. Barriers in communication also existed that were a function of time and the responsibilities that the teachers faced on a daily basis. As Bob remarked during the initial interview: "You just wouldn't believe all the catch-all things."

The relationships that these teachers established, then, were defined by the members of the team as a comfort level in approaching one another. Those possibilities were limited by their job responsibilities and by the barriers encountered in trying to communicate across disciplines. It is a discussion of their communication which appears next.

<u>Communication</u>

There was evidence in the team meetings and in the interviews that the communication among the team members was both a source of feelings of accomplishment as well as a sense of frustration as their collaboration evolved. The team members had established a goal to develop more regular communication about children. The realization of that goal during team meetings often took the form of sharing diagnostic information and observations of instructional activities they employed with children. During these sharing sessions, the similarities and differences between the disciplines of speech-language and reading became apparent to the team members. There were several exchanges where one member of the team would be describing an instructional sequence and the other member of the team would recognize that sequence, but by a different label. An example of that type of exchange follows (team meeting 12/30/93):

> Diane: Okay, the other thing on the word retrieval was to teach them to talk about using phonemic cues, phonemic cueing where if the word is like "book" and they're just kind of sitting there and hopefully they have the sound but in word retrieval cases you give them the first sound sometimes the word will pop right in. You don't have to give them any more than that. If it's a true word retrieval problem. They may see that word, they may not be able to come out with it--but if you give them "buh" or "boo" then they can come up with a certain word.
>
> Jennifer: We could give that a whirl a couple of times, see if it helps. If we know that they are having a word retrieval problem that you would use that.
>
> Diane: It's more information for the speech therapist because a kid with serious word retrieval problems, retrieval problems has to look//
>
> Bob: That's one of the things that is the next step is to actually make the sound for the kid. That's morphology.
>
> Diane: And we call that phonemic priming.

The teachers discovered throughout the year that there was considerable overlap and common ground from which they were operating. The descriptions of activities often revealed that common ground as the above example indicates. Bob commented that much of what he had thought would be complex "therapies in speech-language" were really very much grounded in common sense and very consistent with what reading teachers do on a regular basis. During the team meeting of 9/17, Diane was sharing a set of materials because there was a specific emphasis on language, an interest that Bob had indicated at the beginning of the year:

> Diane: This is something else for older kids. This is something through the DLM company and it's tying language and artic [articulation] with published materials. They give you a story and talk about things you can look for. We can program in--
>
> Bob: And these questions are all designed with language in mind?
>
> Diane: For that particular book.
>
> Bob: More than developing comprehension?
>
> Diane: Well, there's some comprehension in there too, I'm sure.
>
> Bob: But it's all sort of got this language slant to it?
>
> Diane: Now I haven't looked it over real carefully. I got it last year and sort of tucked it away, but this is something we could share.
>
> Bob: This looks OK. I mean these are all appropriate reading activities, too.

Diane also recognized the similarities across the disciplines. During the team meeting of 9/1/93, the team members were sharing some basic information about their respective programs. Bob and Jennifer were describing a running record, which is an informal assessment of a child's oral reading that is part of a Reading Recovery lesson. Diane commented that while speech-language teachers look for "disfluent episodes" in oral reading, there are areas "where we overlap."

It was evident that while there were similarities across the disciplines, the differences in terminology were ever-present. Jennifer had commented to Diane during the conference presentation in Madison that "she didn't have a clue" about certain terms. Bob had referred to the language in the speech-language journals as "obtuse."

For Diane, the issue of interpretation of the terminology from her perspective also posed some problems. but there was opportunity within the communication of the team meetings to resolve those difficulties. During the team meeting of 11/17, Diane asked about the interpretation of a score on the running record, the informal assessment of oral reading in Reading Recovery. Bob and Diane had both participated in a Child Assistance Team meeting that morning, and one of the pieces of information that Bob reported was that the child under discussion had read the text with an 87% accuracy rate. In the Reading Recovery program, that level of performance is considered at the child's frustration level, or an indication that the material is too difficult. As Diane indicated before she understood the interpretation of the performance, "But you know, I'm sitting in those CAT meetings, and sometimes I'm not sure, but to me an 87 or a 91 would be pretty good." That was one example where the specific communication among this team enhanced understanding across the disciplines.

Bob summarized the role that the enhanced communication played in the dynamics of the team. In his comments during the end-of-year interview, he addressed that issue:

> [We have] fewer misunderstandings because we know what we're talking about a little bit better. Diane has picked up some of our lingo and what some of our standards are for testing that were different from hers, and that we've been able to pick up some knowledge of the kinds of instruments that she works with and what they're for and what she's looking at, and also have learned some of the vocabulary.

> She still says things I don't understand sometimes, I have to ask for clarification, but not as much. So, that leads to things happening faster between you, and the communication is clearer the first time. You're not dealing with "you walk away from a meeting wondering why was this was the way it was, and then deciding whether or not it's worth it to go back and rehash it and find out what it was it's like." You either know, or you're close enough to knowing that you can ask a good question to get the issue clarified for yourself. And I think I see that happening both ways with Diane and myself, that's just more relaxed and comfortable, really.

The perceived enhanced communication that evolved as a result of the increased interaction may have, in fact, contributed to the decline in team meetings after the Reading Recovery Conference presentation. The team members felt that they had met their goals in terms of establishing that level of comfort. Support for children could be accomplished in more efficient ways now that these teachers had a better understanding of each member's responsibilities and perspective. They could now accomplish the same goal through those more informal conversations that might take place in the hall before school or at lunch time. Again, Bob's comments are enlightening here:

> And our ways of working with each other are getting to the level now where it's pretty informal and easy which is nice. You know, I realized the other day. . . we are still working on it but we don't have meeting times and agendas and it's more like an issue comes up and we talk about it.

Not only were Bob, Diane, and Jennifer communicating through conversation, but also through written notes. Diane commented that Jennifer had begun to write Diane notes about children for whom Diane had an interest, "Jennifer gives me all kinds of wonderful notes on some of her students; 'This is what I noticed Sean doing today. He substituted this sound for this,' and it's great, she's even writing it in appropriate terminology."

So, not only had communication lines been clearly established, the barriers of the disciplines had also been removed as evidenced by Jennifer's use of the

terminology in ways that Diane would most readily understand. Terminology, however, is only an artifact of the barriers between disciplines. Although the team members may have successfully dealt with terminology, there were underlying assumptions about themselves as professionals and about their disciplines that became part of the dynamics of the team.

<u>Assumptions</u>

The conversation during the team meetings among Bob, Diane, and Jennifer indicated that there were both similarities and differences in the disciplines of speech-language and reading. These similarities and differences were most apparent in the discussions about diagnosis and instruction. Beneath the differences about diagnosis and instruction, however, all team members at some point in time acknowledged that there existed some differences in the very ways that these professionals "approached things."

Addressing the issue of assumptions is an attempt to examine those tacit belief structures, or cognitive maps, upon which decisions in practice are based. Perhaps these belief structures have been developed after many years of experience in the profession. Perhaps the structures have been formed and reinforced by existing cultures in the building and in the district. Local, state, and federal guidelines and regulations also have their place in the development and reinforcement of the assumptions that guide professional practice. Whatever the source and evolution, assumptions are an important force in who professionals are and what they do. Three examples of interaction between the members of the team offered glimpses of how underlying assumptions contributed alternately either to a sense of cohesiveness among the team members or to the fragmentation of the team.

First, the team members all operated with the belief that their primary goal, both as a team and as individuals, was to provide support for children who had special challenges in learning. That assumption was made explicit in the goal statements that were offered during the interviews, in the foci of the collaborative efforts, and in team activities. This assumption served to bring a cohesiveness to the team. In terms of how to best support children, however, there were some differences that did appear among the team members.

One of the precipitating events that led Bob to develop some understanding of and competence in working with children in the area of language was the frustration that he encountered during the year prior to the one under study. There was an instance where he perceived that a child needed support in the area of language, a domain typically handled by the speech-language teacher, and the support system was not there to the extent that Bob felt was necessary, because "Diane was maxed out on her caseload." A similar instance occurred during the 1993-1994 school year. A child was, in Bob's view, experiencing difficulties. He approached this subject at a Child Assistance Team meeting about this child. The comments from Bob and Diane about this event indicate that based on Diane's interpretation of the diagnostic information guidelines recommended by the State of Michigan, the child did not qualify for support services from Diane. The following excerpt from Diane's midyear interview recounts this dilemma from her perspective:

> Diane: Yeah, I think the one that we had the biggest problem on recently was if the child didn't qualify for special ed., why didn't they qualify-- and then when we explained why they didn't qualify, the regular ed. person would come back and say "but they're still failing in regular ed., what are YOU special ed. people going to do about that?"

> Katie: I see.

> Diane: And we explained the situation//

Katie: We being?

Diane: The school psychologist and myself--to Bob, who was having difficulty grasping that concept, and he either refused to understand deliberately because he wanted us to do something else with the student, or really didn't understand where we were coming from.

Katie: Okay

Diane: This child is coming back to team. This is a child we did a complete assessment on a year ago, and she has normal intelligence and on a one-on-one situation scores very normally--she has some different scores. She has some gaps between her scores, but they're well within the normal range. And his argument was, and rightly so, if she can perform with a score of say 110 on this language task, but she's down at 80 on this language task, that's a gap of 40 points. Thirty points. Why does she not qualify for your services? And we had to talk about how our rules and regulations are based on IQ being in the average range--even if your IQ is above, we still consider 100 and subtract a standard deviation and a third from that, and then below that is where you qualify. And so I understand where he was coming from, with the dif--discrepancy in scores.

Katie: But there's more to it than that, is what your point is.

Diane: Yeah.

Katie: It's more complex.

Diane: And it was very difficult for us to get that message across, I'm not sure we ever did. So--and his argument was, and maybe rightfully so, the child is failing, why are you not working with her, why is she not qualifying? And our argument was, right back, the child has very normal abilities, why is she not succeeding in your regular ed. classroom, what do YOU need to do, to support this child? We've proven to you she has the abilities to do this work. And so it was kind of like disciplines were at cross purposes.

Katie: Disciplines in terms of?

Diane: Regular ed., reading.

Katie: Whose responsibility?

Diane: Right.

In this excerpt, Diane revealed two issues that relate to underlying assumptions about working with children with special learning needs. Her first assumption

seemed to be test scores provide an accurate picture of what a child can do. Diane said, "We have proven to you she can do the work in the classroom." In another example of this discussion, a discussion about Nick (one of the children they shared on caseloads), Jennifer and Bob suggested that Nick may be experiencing some processing difficulties. As Jennifer had said, "There's something else cooking in his little head." Diane's response to that was to try another test to see if she could isolate the difficulty with diagnostic information. The operant assumption there is that the battery of tests through which the particular child in question was placed "prove" what the child can or cannot do. This is not to say that Bob and Jennifer did not use diagnostic information to make decisions about children. Much of their time during the months of September and October was consumed with testing. The day they were setting their schedules, they had piles of diagnostic information in front of them. Bob gave indication, however, that he believed that there were limitations to the information that one could gain from testing and that he was frustrated that a child would not receive special support because he or she did not meet the requirements according to tests.

That frustration related to diagnostic information is interrelated with another set of underlying assumptions, or belief structures, that surfaced in the exchange quoted above. It was also a topic with which Bob struggled as well. His question seemed to be, Who is responsible for providing the support for children with special needs? During the beginning of the year, Bob commented that one of his concerns pertained to the perception often held by classroom teachers that if a child is receiving any kind of special support services, then that teacher's responsibility for helping that child grow and learn is somewhat diminished. The issue of responsibility was also a topic of concern in Diane's remarks. If the child does not

qualify for special education services, just whose responsibility is that child then?
Bob referred to this issue of responsibility in an excerpt from the midyear
interview. The conversation was about the same incident relayed in Diane's
comments above:

> Bob: If I see that the child has real low language scores, even though
> their intelligence is not real high, I'm not willing to say, "Oh, those
> two things are in line that's why we're not going to deal with it." I
> still think the language is low so the teacher in the classroom and I
> should be doing whatever we can to develop that child's language. And
> because of the-- there not--there not being a discrepancy between
> the IQ and the language then that child is disqualified from working
> with Diane. So I understand that she's out of the picture at that point,
> but it still seems that perhaps I could get some kids//

> Katie: Bob, this goes back to something that you said in the initial
> interview, and the tape recorder may even have been turned off at
> that point, so you may not have reread it, but you talked about the
> mindset that was somewhat bothersome to you, that a child, for
> example, who was experiencing language problems, the classroom
> teacher would think "I don't have the expertise to do this," and push
> that responsibility out to the specialist in the building, whether that
> be you or whether that be Diane, and the Catch 22, as I see it, really
> comes when, if the child doesn't qualify and the teacher isn't
> comfortable addressing the problem within the classroom, then what
> happens to this kid? Is that what I hear you saying then?

> Bob: Right. The problem should be addressed, is what I'm saying.
> And so I want to certainly take the responsibility for myself being
> able to address it--I don't want it to be a case of "I can't do it, because
> I don't know what to do."

> Katie: Right.

> Bob: Being able to do it, once you know what to do, that's a whole
> other problem. But if you don't know what to do, then there's no way
> that it's going to happen.

It is the underlying assumption that people have about assigning
responsibility for the learning needs of children based upon what Diane called "little
boxes of expertise" that precipitated this group of specialists to come together in the
first place. The goal of heightened levels of involvement and shared responsibility
for children was attempt to come out of those boxes of expertise and provide a

coordinated effort to help all children learn. It appears from the comments above that ambiguities exist among these professionals related to who can or should assume responsibility.

The Impact of the Collaboration

Bob, Diane, and Jennifer all identified areas in which their collaboration had impact on them as professionals. Some of the areas of impact were related to the original goals that had shaped their focus and activities from the outset. Some of the areas of impact were not anticipated. The areas of impact that addressed are: (a) providing better support for children, (b) improved communication among the team members, (c) personal professional development outcomes, and (d) a heightened awareness of the positives of collaboration.

Coordinated Support for Children

All three team members were confident at the end of the year that they had provided a more coordinated system of support for children. This support was available for those children who were receiving services from both speech-language and reading. Even though there was a sense of disappointment that they did not share as many children as they thought they would, the ease of communication and increased comfort levels with one another opened the doors for a sense of shared responsibility. From Bob's perspective, this shared responsibility translated to a more efficient process in effecting that support. As he commented during the midyear interview:

> So, I'm expecting in the future we can make it [the diagnostic process] happen faster. The fact that I can do the preliminary things for Diane . . . that keeps it [diagnosis] on the informal level.

While comments from the team members indicated that they felt they had accomplished more coordination of support for children, this support was still very much defined by the specific disciplines, or boxes of expertise, within which the teachers operated. The team members felt that they could better meet individual children's needs because they had a better sense of what the other team member might be trying to accomplish with that child. That awareness of those discipline-specific goals served to enhance the instruction with the child, but that instruction still remained very strongly within the culture and practice of the specialized discipline.

There were still reading goals and speech-language goals that had been identified for these children. There was still the influence of the terminology that was specific to each discipline. While the teachers had accomplished a higher level of coordination for children receiving special services, the dominating influence of the disciplines was still very evident.

Improved Communication

The more coordinated support for children among children receiving speech-language and/or reading support services was a function of, to a large measure, the improved communication among the team members. The team members felt more comfortable in approaching each other by midyear. Bob and Jennifer had already established that level of comfort as a function of the similarity of their roles in the building. The improvement in the line of communication was most apparent between Diane and Jennifer and Diane and Bob, and they all agreed that was a major outcome of the collaboration. By the end of the year, the lines had been well established, and there was enhanced understanding of the topics at hand.

The members of the team had also come to be more comfortable with the vocabulary and terminology of the other discipline represented on the team. They were more at ease in knowing the significance of diagnostic information that was often reported during Child Assistance Team meetings. There was a sense that the instructional routines that were part of their professional lives were somehow demystified. This ease with the discipline other than their own was a result of the communication during team meetings and the exposure to procedures and routines other than their own.

There were still areas, however, in which problems encountered in communication hindered the team. One example of that difficulty was discussed in the section on assumptions. The confusion about responsibility and qualifications for receiving services created some tension between Bob and Diane. A conversation during the team meeting in which the team was preparing for the Reading Recovery Conference presentation revealed that there was some dissonance between Bob and Diane about the notion of processing. Diane referred to that incident in the midyear interview:

> Katie: . . . What have been some of the problems in the team?
>
> Diane: Well, I think Bob and Jennifer will tell you difficulty in communicating. I think that happens in any team with vocabulary. And understanding. Coming from the other person's point of view sometimes. We had that terrible problem at that meeting to prepare for the conference, and I was trying to discuss what auditory processing was. . . and he had a terrible time understanding and I wasn't sure if he was approaching it differently, had a preconceived notion, and I wasn't touching what he thought it was, or I wasn't communicating well enough to get my point across to him.

So, while all team members were satisfied that they had improved their communication by establishing a comfort zone with one another and by an increased

familiarity with the terminology and routines of another discipline, some barriers remained.

Professional Development

All of the team members indicated that they expanded their professional expertise and knowledge through the team's collaboration. They knew more about another discipline from which support is provided to children. The actual use of that knowledge in their own professional responsibilities differed among the team members, however. Jennifer spoke of knowing more about what Diane does, but that she actually used very little of that knowledge in her daily interaction with children. Diane also spoke of knowing more about reading in general and about what Bob and Jennifer do as reading consultants, but she gave no evidence that she directly applied any of that knowledge in her professional setting.

For Bob, however, his perception was that an enhancement of professional expertise was incorporated into his interaction with children. One of Bob's goals had been to better understand the connection between language and reading. Many of his questions during the team meetings were directed toward that issue, and a major piece of the Reading Recovery Conference presentation outlined the elements of language as they related to the area of reading. This increased understanding of the issue of language development directly affected Bob's work with the children on his caseload. He felt more comfortable and competent in addressing the language-related issues. It was almost as if the discussions about language released him from a sense of uncertainty that somehow he was missing something important. As he said in the final interview:

> I'm not so worried about some other of my kids as maybe I used to be.
> That anybody I had, a child that was making slow progress, I'd be

thinking "Is this a language problem?" and I wouldn't have any idea
whether or not that I knew. That lets me relax on some other kids and
say "No, I'm not seeing those things here."

The teachers also spoke of the sense of professional accomplishment they felt at

presenting at a professional conference for the first time. Much of their team

discussion from November through December was devoted to preparing for that

conference. The team members were committed to preparing well and presenting

themselves in the best professional manner. They were pleased with the

presentation, but there was no talk of future endeavors in professional presentations

as a team. The final area of impact to be discussed is the perception of the team

members related to collaboration itself.

Heightened Awareness of the Positives of Collaboration

The team members spent considerable time and energy in collaborating, at

least for the first half of one school year. To what extent did they generalize their

experiences to perceptions about collaboration on a broader scale?

Jennifer was able to visualize how she might collaborate in the future, even

should she be in a different setting. When I interviewed Jennifer in June, she was

unsure of what her position would be the following year. She speculated how her

participation in the team this year might come into play next year:

If I was in some other building in reading, I would certainly want to
get right with the speech person and explain what we had done and how
it can work and how I'd want it to work. If I'm in kindergarten, then I
know I have access to those people and those people should be able to
work like this together, and if I have a child in need then I'll know
what needs to be done. So it'll be useful in kindergarten too, and I'll
want those kids looked at sooner than a lot of people think. I'll know
that there are some things that can be done that I wouldn't have known
if I hadn't had this job and worked with Diane and Bob in this capacity.

During the initial interview, Bob had commented that he was "generally interested in collaborating, working together with other teachers just because it benefits the kids." At the end of the year, Bob also was faced with the possibility that he might be in a different professional position the next school year and the importance of collaboration assumed a district-wide importance. As he commented:

> I think these situations I'm always looking for. In our district right now there's a real need for things to be pulled together a little bit. There's been a lot of innovative efforts going on that are sort of emanating from different spots in the district, so there's a certain amount of fragmentation. And that lends itself to people getting involved in teams, to try to pull together some kind of a harmonious program for the kids. So I can see, if I do get this reading position, actually trying to get the reading department as such and the speech and language pathologist to work more closely together on a district basis.

Diane, too, was looking ahead to the next year for opportunities to collaborate with other teachers and in other settings. Two specific examples she mentioned were working with the special education teachers with a group of children who will be receiving special education support in the area of language and some group time in the classrooms. She described that possibility in the final interview:

> I approached the kindergarten teacher and the fourth grade teacher and said "Because you have so many of my students in your room, lets look at some alternative service delivery for next year." And, luckily, right now they're very responsive to that. And the fourth grade teacher is a brand new teacher. He's just finishing his first year, so he's used to working with other professional within the classroom. He's not threatened by that at all; in fact, he said, "That'll really be great." And he said "We're teaching reading by novels. How are we going to do that?" And I said, "Well, let me tell you some of the things you want to do."

For all three team members, then, their collaborative efforts this year had led them to think about how they might extend their collaboration into other areas.

Collaboration as Filtered Through Issues and Concerns

The collaboration of the team members at Willow Hill Elementary brought together on a regular basis the expertise of professionals from the disciplines of reading and speech-language. Bob, Diane and Jennifer all agreed that they had learned more about the discipline that had heretofore been somewhat unfamiliar to them. They also agreed that there was now in place a more coordinated system of support for children who were either receiving support services from either one or both of the programs.

There are many themes through which their collaboration can be interpreted beyond the description that has been offered in this case study. Two of those themes chosen for a more interpretive examination are (1) the barriers that hinder the collaboration among professionals from special disciplines, and (2) a chronological portrait of the collaboration of one of the children they shared on caseload.

Caseload Collaboration: A System of Barriers

Early in the collaborative efforts among these three professionals, Diane revealed one way in which she characterized professionals from specialized disciplines. That characterization referred to "being in our own little boxes of expertise." While Bob, Diane, and Jennifer ventured outside of their own little boxes of expertise in numerous ways over the course of the year, they were often battling a system of barriers that was embedded in the institution of education and in their own belief systems as well. There are several examples of those barriers already described that are summarized below.

The teachers identified very early in the course of the collaboration that the terminology germane to each discipline was one of the barriers that had to be

crossed. Part of the comfort level that the team began to feel with one another was due to overcoming the reluctance to ask one another what a term meant, or perhaps the significance of a test score. While I would not suggest that they developed a shared language over the course of the year, at least they had an enhanced level of understanding of formerly unfamiliar and often mysterious "lingo."

The mandates associated with each discipline were a second barrier that often caused tension and frustration. This barrier was ascribed more to Diane's discipline, and all team members came to a greater appreciation of how difficult it was to work within the system. Bob and Diane in particular experienced this difficulty, and Bob acknowledged that an important outcome for him was to be able work with a child if Diane was unable to provide services.

One of the mandates that guided speech-language services quite rigidly were the "rules and regulations" associated with the necessary criteria of eligibility. A regulation to which Diane referred more than once was that a discrepancy between an intelligence score and a score representing functional level had to be demonstrated through a series of diagnostic instruments. The first time this topic came up was during the team meeting of 9/1/93. I was quite surprised by this regulation as indicated by my annotations to the transcription. Excerpts from the meeting follow:

> Bob: When you get these--when they test their achievement and if it's in the same area as measured by a standardized score, and there has to be a 20 point discrepancy between the IQ and achievement in order to be considered LD, Learning Disabled.
>
> Katie: How about another category like EMI?
>
> Bob: That's below the 70's.
>
> Diane: That's 70 or below.
>
> Katie: So there's a window there where kids don't receive services

[OC: voice rather incredulous]

Diane: That's right.

There was one child in particular for whom this issue of a required discrepancy in scores created some tension between Diane and Bob, a topic discussed in the section on assumptions. Several conversations between them were relayed during the interviews and the topic also came up for discussion during team meetings. The conversations about this had raised enough question in Diane's mind that in the final interview, she indicated that she had done some research on this issue.

> Katie: I remember that specifically, that the--almost the frustration that Bob voiced one time, I can't remember when it was//

> Diane: It was when we were meeting at his house, trying to understand//

> Katie: About the, you know,--a kid can only qualify if the discrepancy occurs, and Bob's point was that they still need the help

> Diane: And we agreed//

> Katie: And you agreed, but that's not how those--it's legislated, or not legislated, but that's not how it's written up in terms of qualifying, in Pacific Heights.

> Diane: Well, and I had talked with [a professor from the local university] about that too, because she felt that the 20-point discrepancy was an [intermediate school district] rule and I looked it up in the Michigan guidelines and it was in the Michigan guidelines.

> Katie: Oh, it is Michigan guidelines then?

> Diane: In the suggested guidelines in the book that was given to all the speech pathologists, hopefully to make services similar across the state. It does in there say that that's considered a significant discrepancy.

Diane was well aware of the restrictions that the interpretation of the guidelines placed on her program. It is also important to note that the Michigan guidelines do address the discrepancy issue, but only as a recommendation, not as set parameters. What Diane had perceived as guidelines and Bob had questioned mirrored a debate at

the national level about discrepancy in scores as a criterion for eligibility (Nelson, 1993).

While Diane was firmly grounded in the mandates, guidelines, rules, and regulations of special education, she and Bob did often have conversations in which they searched for ways to circumvent the barriers to providing service to children. Resolving those dilemmas was not always, possible, however, as evidenced in the discrepancy issue. It was there that the goal of shared responsibility was most seriously challenged.

Caseload Collaboration: The Story of Nick

The collaborative team at Willow Hill Elementary had come together as a team primarily to improve the support they were providing for children with special needs. This goal was evident in their comments during the three sets of interviews. This goal also dominated their topics of discussion during the team meetings in September and October. As it became evident that the numbers of children they would share was not as great as they had expected, the focus of the team shifted at times to those concerns other than individual children such as preparing for the Reading Recovery Conference presentation and learning about diagnostic procedures unfamiliar to them as individuals. The goal of helping kids, while somewhat thwarted from their first perceptions of how they could accomplish it, was evident in their collaboration. The following story of Nick, as seen through the eyes of Bob, Diane, and Jennifer, Illustrates the paths these educators chose for collaboration.

The story of Nick begins during the first team meeting of the year, 9/1/93.

It is during this meeting that the teachers become aware that Nick was receiving

both reading and speech-language services:

> Diane: Okay, I didn't realize you had Nick E, I guess
>
> Jennifer: Yeah, Nick's my buddy, see what I did with him at the end [of the year 1992-1993] was take him for my own idea of Reading Recovery. I mean, I wasn't doing Reading Recovery here, but at the end of the day, between 3-3:15 sometime I'd get him for like 10 or 15 minutes and try to do something with him.
>
> Diane: You know, his language skills are age appropriate, I almost have to decertify him.
>
> Jennifer: Really?
>
> Diane: Yeah.
>
> Jennifer: Well, then something else is cooking in that little head.
>
> Diane: We'll need to look at him a little more carefully.
>
> Jennifer: Yeah.

On 9/17/93, the conversation again turns to Nick, but with more specific sharing

of information. Bob brought in a little of the family context. Diane and Jennifer

shared their somewhat different perspectives of Nick's needs. Diane had seen a lot of

growth in articulation and structure of language; in fact she was considering

decertifying Nick for language. Jennifer was concerned about attention and

processing, so perhaps further exploration into his difficulties in processing was

warranted:

> Diane: Well, to be perfectly honest Nick barely qualified for language last time. He's been doing a terrific job and I was going to look at him again to do some more assessment. So maybe I need to do some deeper testing with different devices and see if I can pinpoint any area that maybe we could address. Grammatically, you know, morphological ending, pronouns, you know those kinds of things were his weakest area at one point, but he's shown a great deal of growth. I originally picked him up in kindergarten because his articulation was so bad. He was unintelligible in kindergarten, and he was just a super worker

and really got it pretty well under control. He still has a few unintelligible sounds, but not like it used to be.

Jennifer: You know, a lot with him though is attention, focus, and processing. I think for him//

Diane: I can look more carefully at the processing. I've done more surface stuff.

There were some references in that excerpt that are illustrative of several issues. First, teachers who work with and make decisions about children that demonstrate special learning needs are operating within multiple contexts. Three of those contexts were the context of the child's family, the context of the guidelines under which children are eligible to receive services, and the context of the classroom in which children need to function. Jennifer was most concerned about Nick's ability to focus and processing. Diane had not observed that, but was willing to do some additional testing. Diane's reliance on formal testing becomes very evident in this case. The importance of what the child can do in the classroom or in small group assumes less credibility, perhaps, than what is demonstrated on a test.

On 10/15, Diane informed Bob and Jennifer that she would holding an annual review meeting on Nick and that she would give them that date so they could attend. On 10/22, the team again discussed his difficulties bearing in mind that Diane was not seeing as much difficulty from her perspective:

Bob: And he just doesn't--I was teaching a new strategy, like if it was complex, it was a way of studying words and out of the four kids he was not even in the ballpark. The other kids were much more in tune with it and he was--

Diane: When I did the language assessment a year ago, as I recall on the basic language battery except for grammatical structure everything was right at a hundred, or very close or slightly above.

Bob: So he was//

Diane: But I'll have to look at it again.

Bob: He's having difficulty learning, processing directions.

Diane: But see I didn't assess that because we were looking at grammatical structure. What I did was give him a normal basic language battery, the TOLD primary. . . . I have no idea at this point in time, although the only weakness I've looked at or have seen in him started out with horrendous articulation, which we were able to remediate rather quickly with him, he caught on and took off with that, then we started working on grammatical structures which were low and we're still focusing on grammatical structures at this point in time.

Bob: Well what about something like being able to follow directions? Isn't that an area that you get into?

Diane: Yeah, but I've never questioned it, because everything that I've done with him for directions has been very appropriate and sometimes better than other students within the group situation that he's involved with. We're having an annual review IEPC in November and I've included your name on that during conferences and what I'm going to be doing between now and then is I'm going to give him the ALL, the Analysis of Language and Learning, the new test that we have, and I'm going to give him the CELF-Revised, which is a harder language assessment, and maybe [my student intern] for practice, can give him the TOKEN test, which is for direction following and the TAP and we can present that at the IEPC just for further planning and updating goals and objectives.

The topic of Nick did not come up again during team discussion. They did focus some

of their remarks during the Reading Recovery Conference about Nick, as one example

of their collaboration, and Bob had the following comments during the midyear

interview:

[I did get some help with Nick] because of the collaboration. Basically I got, when I noticed this categorization problem, I had mentioned it to Diane and said "I would treat it this way, this is what I would do," and she confirmed that for me that was basically the way to go.

The case of Nick presented enough substance in collaboration for the team members

to feel comfortable that their discussions about him had provided benefit to Nick as a

learner. Jennifer and Bob offered their concerns that had arisen through their

observations of Nick during small group time. While Diane's observations did not

confirm those concerns, Diane did do more testing and Bob felt he had received enough input from Diane to make sound instructional decisions.

A Case Study in Caseload Collaboration

The description of the context and nature and substance of the inter-disciplinary team at Willow Hill can be characterized as "caseload collaboration." The team originated out of the desire among teachers from specialized disciplines to effect a more coordinated system of support for children receiving services in reading and speech-language pull-out programs. The members of the team, while pursuing a goal to extend professional expertise beyond their own disciplines, were still very much bound to the strong influences of their disciplines as evidenced by the language employed by and assumptions revealed by the members of the team. The major activities of the team reinforced the focus on the caseloads of children. While there were efforts to step out of the "little boxes of expertise," the members of the team were still diagnosing and instructing children within the clearly identifiable boundaries of reading and speech-language. The influence that mandates, rules, regulations, and guidelines, both in perception and in reality, has in caseload collaboration is almost overwhelming, as is the reliance on diagnostic instruments. Based on the detail offered in case study, I now link some of the properties of caseload collaboration through working hypotheses. It is intended that these hypotheses will guide future research on interdisciplinary collaboration.

The Influence of the Specialized Discipline

The collaboration among the team members at Willow Hill was focused on the special learning needs of individual children, and that focus clearly remained within

the specialized disciplines of reading and speech-language. Learning goals for children were discipline-specific. There was no evidence during the team meetings that these teachers softened the boundaries of their disciplines to establish mutual goals. The collaborative efforts for children often assumed the direction of discovering where the mutual ground might lie, such as in instructional activities that were similar, but referenced by different terms. The "shared responsibility" element of the collaborative efforts sometimes involved almost a turn-taking ritual with responsibilities. Bob might administer a test, for example, either to save Diane time or to circumvent the barriers of the restrictive special education system. Based upon these interpretations, the first working hypothesis of caseload collaboration is:

1. In interdisciplinary collaborative experiences where the specialized disciplines are strongly evident, support for children will remain fragmented and discipline-specific.

The Focus on Diagnostic Information

Considerable attention was given to diagnostic information in this case study of caseload collaboration setting. The team participated in several meetings a month about children who were experiencing difficulties in which sharing diagnostic information was a major agenda item. In fact, one of the major accomplishments in communication for this team was the sense that they now knew the significance of information from the other discipline, a knowledge that had been less complete prior to their collaboration. Much of the discussion in team meetings revolved around diagnostic instruments and the team members all participated in diagnostic activities with which they had not previously been familiar. There was almost a

sense that diagnostic instruments were a guiding force in their lives and in the lives of the children for whom they provided support. Hence, the second working hypothesis related to caseload collaboration follows:

2. Where the focus of interdisciplinary collaboration is on individual children outside of the context of the classroom setting, formal diagnostic information becomes paramount in the decision-making process about instructional needs for children with special learning needs.

Caseload Collaboration and Classroom Curriculum

Caseload collaboration is about providing support for children who are experiencing learning difficulties. The teachers in this team all had lists of children for whom they felt responsibility. The team members engaged in frequent conversation about unique learning difficulties, diagnostic instruments that might more clearly identify those difficulties, and once identified, specialized instruction, or therapy, that might be employed to help that child move beyond those difficulties. Although there was considerable effort expended by all three team members to bring their instructional support into the context of classroom curriculum, and while it was not the intent of their collaboration to concentrate on integrating with the classroom curriculum, they did operate very much in isolation from the classroom. The isolation reinforces the perception that the Willow Hill team ascribed to many classroom teachers: if the child is receiving special support services, the responsibility for that child's growth lies primarily within the expertise of the specialized professionals. This suggests a third working hypothesis related to caseload collaboration:

3. In a context where caseload collaboration has a strong influence, meaningful integration of specialized discipline support for children on caseload with classroom curriculum and activities is jeopardized.

These working hypotheses about caseload collaboration are only suggested by the experiences of one interdisciplinary team in one setting. Future research across multiple sites will be necessary to begin to build theory about the phenomenon of caseload collaboration.

A second interdisciplinary team shared their lived experiences in collaboration. The case study of that collaborative team is presented in Chapter V.

CHAPTER V

LAKESIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:
CLASSROOM COLLABORATION

Pamela and I started heading in that direction two years ago. At the end of the year we attended a wonderful workshop and started implementing some of the ideas. And we were still teaching in isolation at that point. But Pam and I formed kind of a team and Carl and Janice, we talked about what we were doing. So we pulled together as a foursome a year ago and started doing joint lesson plans and started joint project oriented and hands-on activities where the kids were actively engaged and not just standing up here and kind of spoon feeding them the information.

Sharon, 5th grade teacher, 9/93

The portrait of the collaboration that was the lived and shared experiences of the educators from different disciplines at Lakeside Elementary School is a complex one. The seven educators who came together centered their collaborative efforts on the fifth grade as a unit within the school. This case study, then, attempts to capture the variety of events, routines, incidents, and decisions confronting this team on a daily basis. As with the case study of caseload collaboration, this story, although a trustworthy representation of the team's collaborative experiences, bears my unique perspective and must be interpreted with that in mind.

One of the themes of this multifaceted story that emerges is that the collaboration among these educators focused on the fifth grade classrooms within which they practiced their professions as educators. The multiple physical settings, historical events, and other contextual influences were often beyond the classrooms themselves, but the team members' interpretation and focus came back to their

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primary concern, the students who spent a good part of their lives in the fifth grade classrooms.

This case study of one year of collaboration is organized into three sections. The first section includes the descriptive elements of the context of their experiences as a team. The second section of the case study includes a description of the nature and substance of their collaboration. In the final section, the interpretation of the context and of the nature and substance of classroom collaboration support working hypotheses related to future inquiries of the collaborative process among interdisciplinary teams in elementary schools.

The Context of the Collaboration

The context of the collaboration among these educators can be seen as a series of concentric circles radiating outward from the team itself: influences from the school, the district, the state, and the national educational scene. The context also includes the perceptions and recollections of the teachers related to the origins of the team itself, the definition of the team, the structures influencing the team, and those elements of the culture of the team that underlie the functioning of the team.

The School and the District

Lakeside Elementary School is located in a rural school district that encompasses approximately 45 square miles and a village with a population of 2,000 people. The district had a student enrollment of 1,171 during the 1993-1994 academic year. The facilities of the district include one high school, grades 9-12, a middle school, grades 6-8, and an elementary school, grades K-5. The middle school and the elementary school are connected by an enclosed walkway along which

are located the gym/cafeteria, the library/media center, band/music room and art room.

The layout of the elementary school is that of a "U" shape. The kindergarten, and first grade classrooms are along one long corridor where the school office, the staff lounge and workroom, and counselor's office are located. Parallel to that corridor separated by a courtyard area is the hallway where three of the four fifth grade classrooms are located, along with two fourth grade classrooms, a storage room and a room housing the bilingual program. The other fifth grade classroom, the second and third grades, and a special education resource room are located in the corridor perpendicular to the primary and upper elementary corridors.

There were a total of thirty-two certified staff members in Lakeside Elementary. They served a student population of 582 during the year of this study. The certified staff included twenty-three classroom teachers, one counselor, two music teachers (one served K-12), one physical education teacher, one art teacher, two special education teachers (one of which was also half/time in the middle school) and a Chapter I reading teacher (also part time in the middle school).

The daily schedule for the fifth grade teachers is an important part of their story. The fifth grade daily schedule was the same across all fifth grade classrooms, with minor exceptions for special classes such as DARE (a drug awareness program) and the elementary counselor's curriculum which included one-half hour per week in each of the fifth grade classrooms. The schedule is outlined in Figure 1 below.

During 1993-1994, there were 106 students enrolled in the fifth grade on the fourth Friday official count. Each fifth grade student had two teachers, a homeroom teacher and a language arts teacher, and the schedule they followed reflected the grouping pattern.

Students arrive	8:10
Homeroom	8:10-8:20
Final bell	8:20
Language Arts	8:25-10:25
Specials	10:25-11:25
Homeroom	11:25-Lunch
Lunch	11:55-12:40
*Homeroom	12:35-2:50

*Homeroom included Math, Science, Social Studies

Figure 2. Daily Schedule for the Fifth Grade Lakeside Elementary School.

The students began the day with their homeroom teacher and changed at 8:30 for a two hour language arts block. At 10:25, all of the students went to one of their specials, art, gym, music, or band, on a schedule that rotated every nine weeks. After the specials, the students returned to their homeroom teacher for an approximately thirty minute block of time before lunch and for the remaining afternoon classes. All of the children, then, had two of the four teachers across the course of the day, and the teachers had daily contact with more than fifty students rather than a class of twenty-five or thirty.

The Participants

The participants were selected based upon initial contact with one of the fifth grade teachers, Carl. There were four (4) fifth grade teachers, a special education teacher, and a Chapter I (now Title I) Reading teacher. After the first set of interviews, it became apparent that the elementary school counselor was an important part of the team process and she was interviewed throughout the year as

well. Because the team included both teachers and a counselor, the term *educators* will be used in this case study when referring to the team as a whole.

Among the four fifth grade teachers, Pamela was the member with the greatest amount of experience as an educator. She had a total of twenty-five years of teaching experience, all of them in the Lakeside District. Janice had a total of nine and one-half years teaching, six of them in the Lakeside District. Janice and Pamela had come into the fifth grade together when it was moved from the middle school to the elementary school in 1988. Janice and Pamela, then, were beginning their fifth year in fifth grade at Lakeside Elementary when the teachers began the 1993-1994 school year. Carl and Sharon were the other two fifth grade teachers on the team. They had both entered the teaching profession the same year, 1990. In that year, they both came into Lakeside Elementary School into the fifth grade.

The other members of the team had considerable experience in education as well. The elementary school counselor, Marcia, had been in education for twenty-seven years, twenty of them in Lakeside. The special education teacher, Angie, had fifteen years of experience, eight of which were in the Lakeside District. The Chapter I reading teacher, Martha, had twenty-three years of experience, the last eleven of those years in Lakeside.

The Origin of the Team

The four (4) fifth grade teachers at Lakeside Elementary, the core of the team, evolved into working as a unit while collectively teaching fifth grade the three years prior to the 1993-1994 school year. Pamela had been teaching in the district for several years, and she and Janice were both teaching fifth grade in the middle school in 1989-1990. In 1990-91, the fifth grades went back to the

elementary school and it was that year that Carl and Sharon came in as first year

teachers in the fifth grade. In recounting their early experiences, the teachers

talked of managing their classrooms and curriculum pretty much in isolation during

those first two years, but as the dynamics of the group lent itself to talking and

sharing, a more cohesive unit was formed. As Janice commented during the initial

interview fall, 1993:

> And then when we made the transition back over to this building the
> following year that's when Sharon and Carl came in. And you know, it
> was pretty evident right from the start that they were open to doing
> things and they were first year teachers and so they had enthusiasm
> going and Pamela and I started--I had--well, about the end of my first
> year I kind of made myself stop in Pamela's room every once in a while
> just to try to get to know her and you know, as I did get to know her
> realize what a great teacher she is and understood why she kind of kept
> herself isolated from other people and stuff, trying to avoid that
> negativity that tends to go on. Once we made it back over to this
> building, we just all started to click.

Sharon recalled the origin of the team as related to a move toward an outcomes-based

education [OBE] approach to curriculum and assessment. While there is

considerable controversy about the meaning of outcomes-based instruction, a simple

description of OBE follows: "At one level, outcomes-based education is the simple

principle that decisions about curriculum and instruction should be driven by the

outcomes we'd like children to display at the end of their educational experiences"

(O'Neil, 1994, p. 6). Sharon's comments about the origin of the team follow:

> We went outcomes-based at the probably, oh, I'm trying to think,
> Pamela and I started heading that direction two years ago. At the end
> of the year we attended a wonderful workshop and started
> implementing some of the ideas. And we were still teaching in
> isolation at that point. But Pamela and I formed kind of a team and
> Carl and Janice, you know we still talked, we talked about what we
> were doing. They said they were real interested in doing that. So we
> pulled together as a foursome a year ago [fall 1992] and started doing
> joint lesson plans and started joint project-oriented, hands-on
> activities where the kids were actively engaged and not just us
> standing up here and kind of spoon-feeding them the information.

The team came together out of an interest among teachers who had fairly recent histories in the building (with the exception of Pamela) to try some new approaches to curriculum, instruction, and assessment; and to try these new approaches as a group effort across the fifth grade.

The teachers knew they wanted to structure curriculum and assessment, particularly language arts, based upon a project-oriented, hands-on experience for the fifth grade children. When they experimented with that during the 1992-1993 school year, they became dissatisfied with the fact many of the children receiving special services in reading and in special education were missing out on the total program. The children would come back to the room after spending time with the reading teacher or with the special education teacher and ask if they could also participate in the long term projects the other children were doing. This prompted the fifth grade teachers to approach the reading teacher, Martha, about serving those children within the general classroom curriculum rather than pulling them out. Angie, the special education teacher, had already talked to the fifth grade teachers in the summer of 1993 about serving the children on her caseload in the classroom rather than in a pullout situation, so her involvement had already been set in motion.

Many factors, then, including a shift in how the teachers organized curriculum and instruction as well as a desire to serve all children within the context of the classroom, provided the impetus for a more formal organization of a collaborative team. While the origin of the team may have been loosely conceived, the constitution of the team evolved over the course of year as the members' definition of "the team" indicates.

The Definition of the Team

       The teachers knew at the outset of this inquiry that the story that I wanted to tell was that of their experiences as a team, so their perceptions of **what** precisely constituted the team and **why** became important dynamics both in their functioning and in their collective construction of reality. In the beginning of the 1993-94 school year, Carl, Janice, Sharon and Pamela all considered the team to be the four fifth grade teachers.

       The relationships of the other professionals and paraprofessionals who had contact with the fifth grade teachers and the students in the fifth grade was somewhat undefined at the onset of the year. As Sharon commented during the fall interview: "Well, I think that the team is at this point the four fifth grade teachers with everybody else still trying to feel where they fit in with the team." The "everybody else" Sharon spoke of included Angie, the special education teacher, Martha, the Chapter I Reading teacher, and Marcia, the elementary school counselor. The Chapter I aide was also mentioned. Carl at the beginning of the year also included those teachers who had contact with the fifth grade students during those "specials," including art, band, music and gym. By midyear, however, Carl felt that team definition was really restricted to the four fifth grade teachers, Angie (special education) and Marcia (the counselor). What prompted this revision in conceptualization of who was a member of team?

       The teachers spoke of two distinct criteria for being a part of the team: (1) working with the fifth grade children on a daily basis, and (2) engaging with the fifth grade teachers in planning, instruction, and assessment. All of the fifth grade teachers were comfortable in identifying Angie as a member of the team, but Martha,

the Chapter I teacher, was less connected according to the teacher's perceptions by

her own sense of responsibilities outside of the fifth grade.

Angie came into Pamela's room daily during one hour of the two hour block of

time for language arts. At the beginning of the year, Martha and one of the Chapter I

aides, Naomi, went into Janice's and Sharon's room to serve those children who were

identified for Chapter I reading support. By November, Martha was no longer going

into Janice's room and another aide was fulfilling that role. How did these circum-

stances influence the perceptions of what precisely was the constitution of the team?

By midyear, Carl was able to articulate a clearer sense of those criteria:

> Katie: And who would you say is a member of the team?
>
> Carl: Well, obviously the four fifth grade teachers. I would include
> Angie, I would Marcia, I think I would end up having to stop there at
> this point. The Chapter I aides are in the rooms in the mornings and
> from what I understand they do a very nice job. But they don't mix
> with us as far as the planning, the concerns of the kids, those types of
> things. They come in and whatever project the kids are doing at that
> time they jump into and they go around and help the kids that might
> need help with the projects and with the writing skills, the reading
> skills. But they don't actually do any planning or long range planning
> that we do.

When asked what made the difference of why one would not see oneself as part of the

team, Angie responded: "Probably because they're not as involved on a daily basis."

Pamela also saw team membership as related to the process of working together:

> That we--work together. That we can share ideas. That when
> conflicts--not conflicts necessarily, I don't want to say that--when-
> -we compromise when we all have different ideas of where things
> should be slotted in or how they should fit in, that we should
> compromise and we're comfortable with it.

It was clear that the team originated and was defined according to criteria

that a person was working with the children on a daily basis and by a working

relationship among the teachers (and the counselor) which included planning and

sharing ideas. There were also structural elements that were part of the context that influenced their collaboration.

Structural Elements Influencing the Team

The fifth grade team at Lakeside Elementary School operated within a broader social, political, and educational context outside of their team. That context included both structural and cultural elements. Structural elements included: (a) schedule issues such as school calendar and their daily schedule; (b) time related to the schedule element; (c) the curriculum and assessment requirements; (d) the building and district administration and the corollary to that element, financial resources; (e) local, state, and national educational policy and legislated mandates; and (f) space issues including classroom arrangement in the building. Each of these elements influenced the collaboration among these teachers across the course of the year.

The Daily Schedule

The fifth grade teachers had built into their schedule a common planning time from 10:25 to 11:25 every day. During this time the children went to the various specials to which they were assigned. All of the teachers commented that this was a necessary ingredient if they were to work together as a team to plan curriculum, design assessment procedures, and to maintain a sense of cohesion about the fifth grade. This was their second year of having this time block available to them. One negative aspect related to this time block was that the other teachers who were involved in this collaborative venture, Angie (special education), Marcia (the counselor), and Martha (the reading teacher), did not have planning time at the

same time as the fifth grade teachers. That structural element was an inhibiting factor in bringing the special discipline teachers and the school counselor into the team structure and process.

Time

Despite the one hour block of time every day, the teachers all commented that time, or rather lack of it, was a constraint that inhibited both the successful accomplishment of the tasks they had set for themselves as individuals in their own classrooms and as team members as well. The issue of time, or rather lack of it, is a common theme among educators (Lieberman & Miller, 1984), and the Lakeside educators are no exception. At the beginning of the year Sharon had already identified time as a critical element in trying their new approach to assessment:

> Katie: What do you see as some of the problems?
>
> Sharon: Finding the time. Time management--finding the time to meet together, finding the time to assess all of these students. I mean when you have a team assessing each individual child, it's going to be a phenomenal amount of time. Setting up conferencing is going to be phenomenal. Trying to set up enough time--we may have to give up an extra day or two of our own because the parents will be meeting with the language arts teacher, the home room teacher, the special teacher--how we envision it that we'll all be sitting down and talking about that student together.
>
> Katie: Special teachers including//
>
> Sharon: Including art, music, gym, band, those are the four specials that they have third hour right now. So we would like to get their input at the same time.

As it turned out, time was a constraining factor in this vision. Those teachers for band, music, art, and gym did not meet as a group with the fifth grade teachers. The schedule was not favorable for meeting that goal. By the end of the year, all of the teachers had identified time as one of the problems related to the broader goals they

had identified across the year. As Pamela commented in May, "I think because we tried to do so many things differently and there was not enough time to ever just sit down together and discuss 'this is the way things are going,' or 'you know, hey, let's try it this way.' "

Angie, Martha, and Marcia, as professionals outside of the fifth grade unit with accompanying responsibilities, also recognized the structural constraints imposed by time as a resource. Angie spoke of how she has had to allocate her time as a special education teacher and what the future holds for that allocation:

> So I don't think it's lack of interest to be on the team; it's just a time factor. I don't know if next year when I pick up two more teachers and I'm actually in their room if I'm going to have as much time with the fifth grades. But I'm hoping after spending a year in intensive planning with them that I'll know enough as to what they do that if I can't be as intensive next year, because I've got to spend a lot of time with the sixth grades. it won't matter as much.

Martha's concern of how to best use her time led her to shift responsibilities from providing reading/writing support for fifth grade children designated as Chapter I in Sharon's language arts classroom to providing support in another grade. She was able to assign one of the Chapter I aides to Sharon's room to maintain the reading/writing support for those eligible children. This issue was grounded in and had implications beyond the issue of time and will be discussed in a later section of this case study. Marcia also voiced her concern about time as a constraining factor. She too would have liked to have had more opportunity to meet with the fifth grade teachers on a regular basis. She was committed to integrating her skills as a counselor and her contributions to the regular fifth grade curriculum, but felt the necessary time for communication and planning for that was unavailable.

The time pressure gave rise to some creative ways for capturing some of that precious resource outside of normal channels. As Angie continued from her

comments recounted above: "I walk with two of the teachers every day too and I did all last year. So, that kind of helped too. That gave us an out of school time."

The fifth grade teachers, Marcia, Angie, and Carol, the gym teacher, also met for lunch once a week in the principal's conference room. However, the lunch times were staggered so by the time Pamela came into the room for lunch, Sharon had only twenty minutes before she needed to return to her classroom.

The pressure related to time was felt as teachers tried to meet team respon- sibilities and individual responsibilities in their own classrooms. By the end of the year, Sharon summarized a theme that had surfaced by November and continued throughout the year: "I think that the frustrations that I'm feeling are frustrations of not having enough time in my own classroom. It seems that there's always things that need to be done for the group but having personal time to sit in my room is-- I'm still not getting that." Again, as with Martha's declining involvement with the team, the structural issue of time is complexly interrelated with other issues and will be discussed in later sections of the case study. In addition to time as a structural issue, the teachers also adjusted to curriculum and assessment structures.

Curriculum and Assessment Structures

The Lakeside educators' efforts to collaborate over the course of one year were attempted within broader contexts and constraints beyond the team itself. The teachers were attempting to implement new directions in curriculum and assessment while operating within a district, as well as a school, curriculum and assessment structure that was often misaligned with the changes in the fifth grade

program. This misalignment often brought pressures upon the team as a whole and upon the individual members within the team.

One striking example of this pressure was the frustration the teachers experienced related to the changes they were attempting to make in the assessment of the fifth grade students. All Lakeside Elementary students second grade and above, with the exception of the fifth grade, received letter grades on their report cards. The fifth grade team had implemented a new assessment program based on perform- ance outcomes and a reporting scheme which included "Observed" and "Not Observed" rather than the traditional letter grade format. Because only the fifth grade implemented this system, this difference in assessment procedures created a ripple among the students, the parents, and other teachers in the building which con- tributed to the sense of frustration among the team as they tried to mesh a new way of thinking with the old structures. The following excerpt is from a meeting with Pamela, Sharon and myself after I had offered some suggestions about how they might think about the assessment:

> Our checklist--what you [referring to researcher] had been giving us this little spark of--maybe our checklist doesn't meet with the way we are trying to change the assessment of kids. Maybe that was more the old way, and we're getting really bogged down in it and we hate it. So we've tried to condense it by not nit-picking all of the skills apart like we were and it was so hard to go through and check each one of those separate, little, individual [skills].

The teachers also had concern about the parents' reaction to changes in the existing curriculum and assessment. As Sharon commented during the fall interview:

> Katie: The parent meeting [a meeting during the summer prior to opening of school] was focused on the new form of assessment?
>
> Sharon: Um hum.
>
> Katie: That was the primary thing?

Sharon: That was the primary thing so that they would not be totally shocked when report cards came home. We revised the report card, a checklist, talking about portfolios, talking about the different projects we did.

Marcia also spoke of the difficulties the students might have in understanding assessment reporting that was very different from the structures to which they had been accustomed. During one of the lunch meetings in the fall she suggested that the students have an opportunity to conference with the teachers individually about report cards so that they might gain a better understanding of the new reporting system for the fifth grade.

Existing structures in curriculum and assessment provided an often turbulent context within which these educators were operating. One of the potential structures available to mediate that turbulence was the support from the administration for the team collaborative efforts.

Administrative Support

During the 1993-1994 school year the Lakeside fifth grade teachers and the other involved educators were engaged in working together to make some radical changes in curriculum, instruction, and assessment within the fifth grade. Their perceptions of the kinds of support they might need at both the district and at the building level were an important element of the context within which they were operating. The teachers presented to the Lakeside Board of Education their plans for the 1993-1994 school year during a Board of Education meeting in the summer of 1993. The teachers received board approval for the revamping of the curriculum, instruction and assessment that the teachers had envisioned.

The superintendent also recognized the efforts of the team during the all-district staff inservice held at the beginning of the school year. The comments from

the superintendent, in fact, were so positive that the teachers and Marcia thought

that there might be some hard feelings among the other staff members related to the

positive attention they had received. As Carl commented: "I think the administration

needs to be supportive of us, but sometimes quietly supportive."

The team members perceived that the administration was in favor of the

changes that were being implemented in the fifth grade. Receiving the financial

support was another matter. Carl did mention during the beginning of the year

interview that requests for materials beyond textbooks to use for their revamped

curriculum and instruction were fulfilled. However, the one commodity for which

all the teachers indicated need was time. Time for planning as a group, or a way to

reallocate some of Angie's, Martha's and Marcia's time to meet with the fifth grade

teachers were both considerations that the teachers suggested to Barbara, the

building principal. By November, the group was engaged in serious discussion and

resulting tensions over several issues that will be discussed in later sections.

During one of the lunch meetings in November, Marcia raised the issue of requesting

a large block of planning time so the teachers might work through these issues:

> I think that because you're trying all this new stuff that a lot of times
> the old and familiar look better because it's all this trying and I think
> that this would be a real good time, sometime during the month of
> November, not right away, but I think that we could get a time when
> the four of you [the fifth grade teachers] could sit down and talk about
> what's been working and not working. You know, I think we're all
> feeling a lot of stress in certain ways and maybe it would be time to
> look at what we're doing and if we could do it easier.

After some talk and agreement among the teachers about this idea, Marcia agreed to

talk to Barbara, the principal about the request. By January, Barbara told the

teachers she had requested a full day for all of the teachers in the elementary school,

but the superintendent would not approve that. The next plan was to bring in

substitute teachers for a full day, and each grade level would receive half day for

planning. That request was approved, but it was mid-March before the necessary arrangements had been made.

Policy and Mandate

Educators in local districts are operating within contexts that are shaped by national, state, and local policy. The policy at the national level can be seen through laws passed by Congress as well as position papers and published research/funding priorities. The legislation at the national level that influenced the team at Lakeside included, but not exclusively, those laws mandating a free and public education in the least restrictive environment to those children with handicapping conditions, or disabilities. Related to this legislation are the debates among educators as to what constitutes the most effective learning context for children with disabilities (see Chapter II). At Lakeside Elementary School, the debate surrounding the interpretation of the national policy has emerged as ongoing dialogue and concern over the best way to serve children with diverse learning needs.

At the beginning of the year, informal conversation with Barbara indicated her support of inclusion, a term that was used by the members of the team, particularly Angie and Martha. As described in Chapter II, inclusion as a concept is one interpretation of Public Law 94-142 (1977), the guarantee to all children of a free and appropriate education in the least restrictive environment, and another related policy statement, the Regular Education Initiative (1986). The fifth grade teachers had organized curriculum, instruction, and assessment in ways that all children, including those who were eligible for special education compensatory education (Title I) services were receiving that support within the classroom. The teachers who were primarily responsible for that support were Angie, the special

education teacher and Martha, the Chapter I reading teacher. Angie's comments are very reflective of many of the advocates of placing all students within the general classroom:

> Katie: What has prompted you to want to come into the fifth grade classrooms this year? What led up to that?
>
> Angie: This is my second year doing inclusive ed. So, my whole idea of wanting to come into the classroom is that I see it as a better way to serve my special ed. students' needs instead of doing it in an isolated setting. Simply because they're going to need--they're going to need to learn how to sit in the real world, and what better place for them to do it is to learn to compensate for their deficiencies in the real world instead of an isolated setting. So, I guess that's why I'm with the regular teacher instead of doing a total pullout program.

Martha, the reading teacher, was a little more tentative about her reasons for going into the fifth grade classroom:

> Katie: Talk to me a little bit about what has prompted you to be in the classroom this year--what did you see//
>
> Martha: Oh, there are several things. The principal, Barbara, does want us to go toward inclusion but that's not the only reason because inclusion is not mandated for Chapter I. I found that the scores for the 5th and 6th, 7th and 8th graders aren't that good. And if they're in my program from first and second grade on, and they're still in my program, and they're still having a lot of problems, and in the last few years, that's where I don't see a lot of growth. There's not a lot of growth. And Barbara is interested in inclusion, the fifth grade teachers really wanted me to come into the room, so I said to myself "I don't see what harm it will do."

A policy issue related to designing appropriate learning contexts for all children is the policy of mandatory testing at the state and national levels. At Lakeside, this mandatory testing would include the Michigan Assessment of Educational Progress as well as the designated assessment procedures to qualify students for Chapter I and special education services. The influence of these assessment policies have powerful implications for teachers who are radically changing learning contexts, and therefore curriculum, for students with special

learning needs. By the end of the year, the students in both Chapter I and in special education had gains on the standardized tests that were disappointing to Angie and Martha. This assessment policy and mandate had implications for the planning for these teachers for the following year. As Angie commented during the end-of year interview:

> So I think we have jumped the gun to a degree because I don't know---we're pulling back, [that] is basically what we're doing next year. As a department we decided that what these kids need is direct support instruction, real structured reading, real structured spelling, and all those other things because they're not going to get up to the third grade level we expect them to be at, minimum, by the time they get out of high school. I mean, that's what we aim for is third grade reading level.

Angie went on to talk of the concern over the scores:

> And see Martha saw the same kinds of things with the CAT [California Achievement Test].. . . And I'm, I'm in a dilemma.

So, the results from mandatory testing for students who receive special services left the teachers questioning how to best serve all children, and by the end of the year it was still not clear how much of Angie's and Martha's time would be spent in their own classrooms with students in a pullout situation as opposed to time in the general classroom.

The state of Michigan's mandatory assessment program, the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) also imposed structural considerations upon all of the educators across the district, including the fifth grade teachers. Marcia was responsible for coordination of the MEAP administration in the elementary school, and as she commented: "Now it's going to become more driving what we teach, whether we like it or not."

As I reviewed the teachers' comments about administrative support, time, inclusion, and testing, it became clear to me that those elements that can be seen as

structural influences are complexly interwoven throughout the team's efforts in collaborating as a team. The time constraints were related to the space constraints of each teacher having an individual classroom and the concomitant responsibilities to the team as well as to individual space; the time constraints were also related to the mandated requirements for providing special education services and the standardized assessment that is part of the structure of Lakeside Elementary School.

Space and Location

Space as a structural consideration for the process of education has long been recognized. Goodlad (1984) referred to the egg-crate structure of schools, and the classroom layout and organization at Lakeside was no exception. Each fifth grade was assigned to a specific classroom, and was referred to each of these teachers as *my room*. While the fifth grade viewed themselves as a unit, and three of the four classrooms were clustered together in the same hallway, the distinct individuality and responsibility associated with their room was expressed by each of the fifth grade teachers. Angie and Martha (along with the other Chapter I personnel) also had rooms located in the middle school; Marcia had an office and a comfortable sitting area in the wing close to the school office. Each member of the team maintained a distinct space of their own.

Location also became relevant as the year progressed. Sharon and Janice were directly across the hall from one another and Carl was next door to Sharon. The remaining classrooms on that hall housed fourth grade classes. Pamela, however, was around the corner in the corridor perpendicular to the "fifth grade hall," separated by two other classrooms. The separation of Pamela's room from the

other classrooms had implications for the cohesiveness of the fifth grade as a unit. I

noted in my field notes in December:

> As I'm recording these notes from tape it's clearer to me how
> important the issues of space and location are. Issues of space had a
> lot to so with this [a language arts project]. Pamela is not in the
> same hall--it affected how they set up computers, etc.

Just as Pamela's separation from the other fifth grade classrooms had impact on the

team unit, so did the close proximity of Carl, Janice, and Sharon. This corridor was

known as the "fifth grade hallway," and symbolic connotations were attached to this

space (a section on Hallway appears later in this chapter). Janice spoke of popping

into Sharon's room frequently just to "touch base" on how to do something during the

day. When the students changed classes, the teachers often took the opportunity to

come into the hall and touch base on an activity or event scheduled for later on in the

day. It is important to note, however, that despite the separation of the classrooms

by some distance, Pamela and Sharon maintained close and regular contact through-

out the day.

The structural elements that influenced the team, schedule, time,

curriculum and assessment requirements, administration, policy and mandates, and

space were readily discernible in the daily routine of the team. The cultural

elements were not as obvious.

Cultural Elements Influencing the Team

The culture within a group or an organization is a strong influence on the

members of the group. Many educators who have examined the change process in

schools suggest that changing structures without attending to the deeper cultural

aspects will not result in substantive change. How, then, do educators identify those

cultural elements? Very simply, a culture is the collective of things that a group

shares or holds in common (Schein, 1992). These could include behavioral regularities when people interact, group norms, espoused values, formal philosophy, shared meanings, and physical representations and artifacts of those commonly held beliefs.

While cultures evolve over a period of time, there were elements of culture within the team at Lakeside Elementary School that had begun to emerge over the course of the four years the fifth grade teachers had worked together, and most specifically, over the two years the fifth grade had operated as a unit. The elements of culture of the Lakeside team that will be described here are: (a) the underlying value that working together should be fun, (b) the underlying assumption that the fifth grade should operate as a unit wherein the fifth grade students are all engaged in the same learning activities that have been planned by team members, and (c) the hallway is an important visual representation and artifact of the fifth grade unit.

The Value That Working Together Should be Fun

The fifth grade teachers had constructed a working environment over the course of the three years they had taught fifth grade wherein they enjoyed one another's company as colleagues. According to their recollections, this camaraderie began to develop the first two years they taught fifth grade, but really began to coalesce during the year prior to the 1993-1994 school year. During that year, 1992-1993, the teachers often walked for exercise together, met for gatherings during out of school hours, and enjoyed the time together engaged in professional activities.

The 1993-1994 school year brought a multitude of pressures into their lives that came into conflict with this pattern of fun and camaraderie they had

established. An evolved definite division of responsibilities within the team, an issue to be explored in a later section, splintered the camaraderie that had been so valued in the previous year. The pressures of added responsibilities with major revamping of curriculum and assessment cast a pallor of seriousness and distress that was in conflict with the sense of joy and fun that they all valued. Each teacher was able to articulate this sense of conflict in a different way. Carl was able to identify a time during the month of February when they had a meeting that reminded him of the fun they had the previous year:

> And I don't know if it was so much frustrating because of the people we were working with, but it was very frustrating because we knew our potential was there and yet we weren't doing what we said we wanted to do. It became really difficult and it almost at times separated us in a lot of ways. But now, we're back together. The other day we sat down for one whole planning period and just laughed and joked and goofed around the way we did all of last year pretty much.

Sharon had a similar comment in February:

> [We're] still working on how do we do this and still make it fun, because it was fun last year and I think somewhere along the line we've lost that fun element, and we had a difficult group of kids last year. And everybody that had them through the building kept talking about this horrid group of kids, but we had fun. So, you know, I don't know, somewhere along the line we've lost that fun.

By the end of the year, Janice was able to talk about the positive outcomes for the students, but only in contrast with her perception that they had not had as much fun as a group: "I haven't felt, we haven't had as much fun as a group outside of the class stuff."

At the end of the year, Pamela also summarized the experience from her point of view:

> We were all sort of doing it on our own with just having the lesson plans holding us together; I think [it] is really all that held us together an awful lot this year. We did not--we did not have the camaraderie or the fun that we did with it last year.

This belief that working together as a unit defined membership in the team as well as set expectations for behavior within the group. Those educators who had contact with the team, but who may not have been as closely tied to the team, did not speak of enjoying the humor that was part of the team. Angie referred to really enjoying working with Pamela, but her relationship within the team was more closely aligned with Pamela than it was with the team as a unit. Furthermore, there were activities that provided a context for the fun and camaraderie that were fifth grade respon- sibilities only. These included decorating the fifth grade hallway and providing a public forum for student products through displays and presentations.

The Assumption of the Fifth Grade as a Unit

The teachers in the fifth grade at Lakeside Elementary School believed that they wanted to engage all students in hands-on, project-oriented activities that would better prepare them for life in the work world of the 21st Century. They wanted to involve all students in these activities, including those students who qualified for special services under special education and Chapter I designation. Angie as a special education teacher was quite comfortable in this underlying assumption; it meshed with her own personal goals of bringing special education students into the broader learning community. Martha was interested in exploring operating in this way as opposed to her traditional pullout delivery for reading support, but was somewhat uncomfortable giving up working with the students on their basic skills. Marcia was concerned, particularly later in the year, that the planning required to maintain the fifth grade as a unit was overloading some members of the team more than others. These issues will be discussed in those sections describing the content of the collaboration, but it is important to note here

that the fifth grade teachers, Angie and Marcia saw the teachers and the students as a unit, and that their goals, activities, and evaluation of their successes and problems was premised on that assumption.

All of the fifth grade activities were accomplished as a unit; for example, the turkey trot, a competitive walk scheduled right before Thanksgiving, was a fifth grade activity. The fifth grade students, parents, and teachers all participated in a square dance as a culminating activity as the end of their "Westward Ho" unit. The students made presentations related to the Civil War unit, both during the day and again after school for those parents who could not attend during the day.

These teachers also were operating with some basic assumptions about the outcomes that students should be accomplishing. In the interviews conducted during the fall, the concept of the project orientation and broad outcomes for students was a recurring theme. As Janice commented :

> You know, I think like the stuff that we've been doing with science,
> you know, keeping our focus on doing as much hands on as we can,
> trying to do more hands on with the math. I guess you could say
> hands-on across the board, you know, getting the kids to produce as ,
> much as they can that's relevant, you know, to them. We've moved far
> away from the, I think, "take out your English book and do page
> twelve" kind of thing and tried to come up with more activities that
> are relevant to where the kids are right now or where they will be.

So, the teachers and students in the fifth grade saw themselves as a unit, and they were perceived by colleagues as a unit as well. The public display of projects and the extracurricular activities related to the curriculum reinforced that sense of unity. The hallway along which three of the four fifth grade classrooms were located is a powerful indicator of the importance attached to project display and sense of unity.

The Visual Artifact of the Fifth Grade Hallway

Three of the four fifth grade classrooms were clustered in the corridor that was the passageway from the elementary school to the gym (which also served as the cafeteria) the media center, and through to the middle school. All elementary students passed through this hall at least once a day. The fifth grade teachers had developed a custom and ritual wherein they decorated that hallway along a theme.

During the 1993-1994 school year, the first major decoration activity that was observed involved turning the hallway into the Christmas train after reading *The Polar Express*, a well-known piece of children's literature by Chris Van Allsburg (1985). The teachers' discussion during the team meeting on November 22 included the colors and backdrop they would use to create the sense that one was actually riding the train. The fifth grade students drew self portraits that were placed along the walls to appear that they were looking out of the window of the train. The teachers also included the current hallway motif in the newsletter home to parents, and invited other teachers in the building to bring their students down to the fifth grade hall to read *The Polar Express*.

The following excerpt from the team meeting of December 1 and my accompanying field notes reveal the ritual nature of the hallway:

> Janice: I just get a kick out of the kids walking through the hall trying to figure out what the heck we're doing out there.
>
> Katie: Well, see they know in years to come that's what they'll be doing//
>
> Carl: Oh, yeah, we get questions about that all the time. "What are you going to be doing in the hallway this year?"
>
> OC: As I am listening to this tape I see that this is an example of ritual for this team. The hallway has become an event for the whole school.

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The importance of the hallway arose as a central element related to curriculum planning and student grouping by the second semester of the school year. Because the teachers had planned instruction for the four fifth grades as a unit, those products/projects that were completed by the students at approximately the same time were often put into the hall for display. By March, the planning had evolved from a tightly-knit process across the fifth grade to a more loosely organized, individualized process, a topic to be discussed in a later section. The ramifications for the hallway, however, were such that not all projects going up in the hall were on the same time frame. Carl commented during the all day planning meeting in March that the "kids were noticing that they were different and they wondered why."

The issue of Pamela's location in a different corridor became apparent in the exchange immediately following Carl's comment:

> Sharon: I think with Pamela being where she is [in another corridor], we've talked briefly about the fact that she doesn't see the reaction of the kids, necessarily as they go by looking at things-- because her room is//
>
> Carl: Right--and they were very--it distracted them//
>
> Sharon: Because her room is over there--they're kind of looking like--okay now why do they do theirs this way and [referring to projects that were hanging in the hall]//

The teachers had observed that the children in Carl's, Janice's, and Sharon's rooms were commenting that the projects that had taken on different characteristics because the planning was more loosely organized and open to interpretation by each fifth grade teacher. The students in Pamela's room did not seem to have as much objection to the differences in the projects because their displays were in another area of the hall. As Pamela commented:

> Pamela: It sounds kind of nit picky, but--I don't get that response at all. I mean, my kids never wondered why their Presidents reports weren't out and I have not heard anything from my kids that our

Native American things looked any different from yours or our Presidents look any different. I don't get that.

The children were not the only ones, however, voicing concerns about the differences in the projects. Janice perceived the differences as a more deeply embedded and disturbing indication that the team was not as cohesive as they should be:

> Janice: I think if we get away from doing the same things at basically the same time I think that's what the kids are really going to notice.
>
> Sharon: And that's what I hear you saying is that your concern is that because we're going to have a month long plan that we're going to have - -
>
> Janice: If I do this one first and you don't --
>
> Sharon: Yeah, I see what you're saying. The concern is that we're going to be pulling apart instead of coming together as a group, is that what I'm hearing?

In this exchange during the team meeting, the surface topic of discussion, the hallway, evolved into a discussion that revealed the importance of the hallway as a ritual and artifact of the culture of the underlying assumption of the team. That underlying assumption was the team represented the entire fifth grade as a unit and the hallway and public display was a demonstration and artifact of that common team planning and common time frame for instruction for the students. By March, Pamela was not as bound to that underlying assumption for several reasons, one of which apparently was her location away from the fifth grade hallway.

The evolving culture of the team was an important issue with which the educators contended during these early attempts at collaboration. It was an important element of the context, and as such, contributed to the very nature and substance of the collaboration itself.

The Nature and Substance of the Collaboration at Lakeside

The context of the collaboration among the educators at Lakeside Elementary School during 1993-1994 was a complex dynamic that shaped and was shaped by the collaboration itself over the course of the school year. In the description of the nature and substance of the collaboration, I am including those topics that were included in the team meetings among the teachers during their common planning time at from 10:25 to 11:25 as well as during their meetings at lunch. My observations in the classrooms across the course of the year also yielded impressions about what the teachers considered to be important as a team and as individuals as did their individual interviews. Based upon the data from these sources, the nature and substance of the collaboration is described through the following elements: (a) the goals of the team at the beginning of the year; (b) the activities of the team; (c) the focal points around which the collaboration centered; (d) the dynamics, or roles and relationships, within the team process; (e) the impact of the collaboration as perceived by the team members; and (f) an overview of classroom collaboration through two issues and concerns.

The Goals of the Team

The members of the team at Lakeside were able to articulate what they felt should be accomplished as a team over the course of the 1993-1994 school year. They were also, however, influenced by those personal goals that may or may not have been consonant with the team goals. It is in the articulation of the team goals that the core of the team, the four fifth grade teachers, became very apparent. The other members of the team, Angie, the special education teacher, and Marcia, the counselor, expressed individual goals that were related to their professional

responsibilities within a broader context. Martha's goals as stated in the beginning
of the year were very specific to the ways in which she as a reading specialist could
best support those children with special needs; when she felt she was not meeting
those goals in the most effective way possible, she diminished her connection to the
team. I now examine each of the member goal statements in more detail.

The fifth grade teachers were committed, at the beginning of the year, to
providing a common curriculum for all fifth grade students so that the fifth grade
was very much operating as a unit. It was not clear from the interviews whether the
goal of keeping the children together as a unit preceded the changes in curriculum,
or whether the unit structure and changes in curriculum evolved concurrently. But
what does emerge from the data is that the teachers slowly evolved into the ways of
operating as a unit.

The changes in grouping the students, each child having both a language arts
as well as a homeroom teacher, influenced developing a goal of forming a cohesive
fifth grade unit. As Carl commented:

> When I first started I taught my first year pretty much in isolation,
> chatting with other fifth grade teachers and that was about it. Our
> second year we decided to do our switching of kids that we do now
> where we have a morning block of one group of children and an
> afternoon block of another. But at that stage we only did half the kids
> switching and half the kids stayed in our rooms all day. So it allowed
> me to start interacting with them a little bit more and getting to see
> what was going on and really developing some wonderful ideas that
> they had for their classrooms and being able to implement into mine.
> Especially, I think for Sharon and Janice and myself--this is really a
> wonderful thing for us.

Although Carl may have seen the fact that the teachers shared children as a precip-
itating factor in coming together and sharing ideas, Janice recognized the value in
asking Pamela, a more experienced teacher, for suggestions and ideas in designing
curriculum and instruction. Whatever prompted the teachers to begin to interact

more, which in turn led to planning curriculum that was consistent across all fifth grade students, one of the goals for the team was that the teachers share ideas and plan curriculum that was implemented as a unit across all fifth grade classrooms. An initial goal that was evident was for the teachers to formalize the coming together to share ideas as a group. This goal was fairly consistently stated among the fifth grade teachers.

The teachers also had very clearly stated goals for the students in the initial phases of their collaboration. They clearly wanted **all** students involved in the curriculum as members of the fifth grade. The teachers were not supportive of having some children pulled out for different periods of time across the day. Furthermore, the teachers were trying to focus on providing learning opportunities for the students that were focused on broad outcomes rather than mastery of specific subject matter content. The teachers felt that there was a common direction in terms of what they wanted for the students, a vision if you will, that guided, directed, and could be interpreted as a goal statement:

> Janice: But I feel, you know, I have felt since last year and going through this year, I feel like we're heading in a certain direction. We're all going in the same direction.
>
> K: What is that direction?
>
> Janice: To get our curriculum set, you know, so that we are doing as much across the curriculum as we can. Doing as much large group as we can, you know, building that team feeling with the kids and changing the forms of assessment where we're looking at this kid, not as a fifth grader who's going into sixth grade, but as a person who's going to have to live in a community and hold a job and be an adult someday. And working towards that end.

The goal of keeping the fifth grade together as a unit was more clearly articulated by some of the team members more than others during these initial interviews. It was clear that the fifth grade teachers and Angie wanted to avoid a pullout situation where

children requiring special support left the classroom. It was not clearly articulated, however, that all teachers felt equally committed to having all fifth grade children engaged in the same activities at the same time. It was implied by the fact that there was common curriculum planning, but it was not explicitly stated as a goal.

The students, the curriculum, and the assessment were the major foci of the goals for the four fifth grade teachers. For the educators from the other disciplines, however, the goals had a somewhat different focus depending upon the discipline and related job responsibilities. There was an element of sharing ideas and concerns that was important to all members. As Marcia, the counselor, commented in talking about the reason for the team, including Marcia and Angie, to meet at lunch time, "Basically, I guess as a necessity in order to have a time where we all get together over things that concerned us all."

As outlined in the discussion related to policy and mandate in Chapter II, many teachers who have traditionally supported students with diverse needs in contexts isolated from the classroom are now setting goals to work within those classroom environments. Angie was committed to working as a member of the team in order that the children receiving special education services would not be isolated from their peers. Martha's goal in the beginning of the year was based upon her realization that providing reading support in classroom settings was important, but she was still unsure of how to accomplish that within her other goal of providing the support the students needed in basic skill areas: "I guess that's my goal. I'm trying to search for a way to help not only the teachers, but those kids I feel need to strengthen their basic skills." These slightly different goal structures for these individuals translated into varied responses to team interaction. Angie and Marcia

remained very much integrally involved in the team unit while Martha had ceased going into the fifth grade classrooms by mid November. Her interaction with the team diminished quite drastically. I will return to this issue under the Issues and Concerns section. The goals were a critical element of the nature and substance of the collaboration as were the activities that realized those goals.

The Activities of the Team

The team engaged in several activities as a unit over the course of the 1993-1994 school year. They actually started working together during the summer prior to the beginning of school, fall 1993. The major team activities included: (a) team meetings, (b) professional conferences, and (c) formal interaction with the various stakeholders of the school.

Team Meetings

The fifth grade team included by mid-February, according to the interviews, the fifth grade teachers, Angie (the special education teacher), and Marcia (the counselor). They met regularly across the span of the 1993-1994 school year. It was these regular meetings that provided much of the sense and structure that there was indeed a cohesive team of educators working with fifth grade students. The team members had articulated two goals at the beginning of the year that were held in common: (1) to operate as a unit of professionals, including special education and counseling, through sharing ideas in planning curriculum and assessment; and (2) to plan those curriculum activities and assessment structures that were in line with the broad outcomes that the teachers had identified for the students. Team meetings provided the forum within which the team could operate as a unit.

There were also frequent meetings where two or three members of the team met to accomplish the various tasks for which they were responsible. The most striking example of these meetings was the curriculum planning meetings where Sharon and Pamela planned the curriculum for the fifth grade. This was not an entire team effort, therefore it will not be discussed in this section. It was, however, a major issue and concern throughout the year and as such will be discussed in the Issues and Concerns section of the case study.

Two distinct types of meetings for the entire team evolved over the course of the year: (1) the meetings with only the fifth grade teachers during their regularly scheduled planning time between 10:25 and 11:25, and (2) the lunch time gatherings that included the four fifth grade teachers, Marcia, Angie, and the gym teacher. These meetings each had their own distinctive flavor and outcomes.

It was not clear from the interviews and the initial observations that the intent to meet from 10:25 to 11:25 on a weekly basis was clearly stated and planned at the onset of the school year. I did not enter the Lakeside site until the first week in October, but the routine to meet during planning time and during lunch had not been established prior to my entering the site as a researcher. During several conversations of 9/30/93, none of the teachers was clear on whether or not they were going to meet on that day as a unit, even though I had made that assumption based upon information I had received from Carl.

The teachers did meet for the first time that day. The meeting was in Pamela's room, as were all subsequent team meetings. The major topic for the discussion during the first team meeting was the check lists that the teachers were intending to use as midterm progress reports. Carl reported that they had not yet come back from the printers, so the teachers would not be able to complete them for midterm

reports as they had intended. It was decided, then, that since they couldn't complete the progress reports, there wasn't much point in them meeting, a conclusion that supports the notion that these meetings were for specific and task-oriented purposes

It was also after this first meeting of 9/30/93 that I recorded in my field notes the impression that the meetings were not yet planned and that Pamela and Sharon were intending to use this time to do the curriculum planning, a responsibility that had been assumed by them:

> OC: Pamela and Sharon have a different agenda for meeting. They are the planners for the entire 5th grade. Carl later shared with me that this was Pamela's and Sharon's decision. It was not efficient for all four 5th grade teachers to sit and plan. Carl and Janice take care of materials. It seems to me that Pamela and Sharon have taken on the lion's share of the work. I need to find out why kids were included in the classrooms. . . I'm also feeling a little disconcerted that Carl has given me a little different idea about what is going to happen than what I've actually seen. Janice and Sharon didn't even seem clear that the group was meeting today. Communication???? Sharon was most concerned that she and Pamela were meeting today. However, Carl did remind me that things got a slow start this year because of Pamela's car accident.

My first lunch meeting with the larger group reinforced the impression that a planned lunch time meeting had not yet been established during those first weeks of school prior to my entering this site. Again, this was possibly due to the fact that Pamela had just returned to school following an automobile accident. The fact that the teachers had not yet set a lunch time meeting as well as my perception that my presence may have influenced the team meeting structure is revealed in the following excerpt, also from observation notes 9/30/94:

> Went to lunch with the teachers in the conference room off the principal's office. Discussion started with the newsletter. Pamela had some ideas and wanted to know if Angie, Marcia [the counselor], and the PE teacher wanted to add anything. Topics included special conditions for MEAP testing for special ed. kids; 504 individual plans for ADD kids (one of the teachers asked what a 504 was. Think it was Sharon). It was interesting to note, the counselor offered to help Pamela with the newsletter. There was somewhat of a silence and

Janice said, "I'll type it. Is it ready? That's my job." Pamela indicated she wasn't ready yet to let go of it. *Someone asked "will we meet again on Wednesday?" That was after my prompting that I said I would probably be in on Wednesday and could I join them for these lunches. Pamela jumped right in and said "I would like to." This is consistent with my impression from the 5th grade teachers last week that there isn't enough talking going on between them. So, while I don't think I shaped their regular meeting times, I do think that I acted as a catalyst on this issue.* [italics added]

So, it was after my initial extended time in the building, from 8:30 until 1:00 on 9/30/93, that the teachers began to meet on a regular basis. It is not clear how much of this was due to the fact that I had entered the scene; they had not been meeting prior to 9/30/93, but that could have been due to Pamela's absence. They did, however, recall that the regular meetings in Pamela's room were part of the routine for the previous year and that they did recognize the need to return to those structured meetings. Whatever the prompting, the teachers did meet on a regular basis starting in October, both during their common planning time at 10:30 and at lunch.

The meeting held during the common planning time only included the fifth grade teachers. The day typically chosen for this meeting was Monday, and they were usually held every week until March. There was seldom a formal agenda for these meetings; they carried with them almost a kaleidoscopic flavor of bouncing spontaneously from one necessary detail to the next, related to the logistics of implementing the curriculum that had been planned by Pamela and Sharon across all four classes of fifth grade students. There was a sense that the logistics of having everybody in the right place and the right time ruled these meetings. Examples of the topics for discussion included ordering computer software, how to reach the author of *Polar Express* so that the students might send pictures of the hallway designed around that motif, what time to schedule taking the children to the gym so

they might practice getting on and off the risers for a performance, issues related to a specific student, and what movie to show for a special Christmas event. This meeting time was also a time where Carl and Janice could raise any questions about the curriculum that had been planned by Pamela and Sharon. It was also a time where Carl and Janice would confirm that they had taken care of procuring any necessary materials, like the ingredients for a science experiment, for the learning activities for the week.

The members of the team also met at times for a specific purpose. These meetings were very task-oriented and followed a specific agenda, perhaps not written, but at least verbally articulated. One example of those meetings included completing the assessment reports for the children. Since the teachers had two separate groups of students, language arts and homeroom, they met as a group to complete the assessments on a professional work day, 10/29. During that meeting about assessment, the reading teacher and the Chapter I aides joined the group to more efficiently complete the task.

During these task-oriented meetings, there was very little discussion related to how the team was functioning or how things were working out related to curriculum. The teachers did not use this time together as an opportunity to reflect upon teacher practice or upon the goals and outcomes they had targeted for the fifth grade students. Most of the talk focused on what I would characterize as taking care of the details of daily routine in the fifth grade classrooms.

The meetings at lunch had a much different flavor. The group that typically met for lunch included the four fifth grade teachers, Angie, Marcia, and the gym teacher. The teachers met in the conference room adjacent to the principal's office. Because the fifth grade classes went to lunch on a staggered schedule, Sharon was

first to arrive, often a full 10-15 minutes before Pamela and Janice. They would bring their lunches in with them, and the atmosphere was much less task oriented, although there were often issues that the teachers would raise at this time for discussion and decision, such as attendance at conferences or the best way to organize the student portfolios.

Laughter was sprinkled throughout these meetings, as were several simultaneous side conversations. It was often a time when the teachers would voice their frustrations, as they did with the issue of assessment. It was a time when the teachers would talk of issues beyond their own world in Lakeside; state mandates related to assessment and the differentiated diploma system were topics during one meeting. The meetings at lunch were also an opportune time for the principal to come into the conference room and talk to the fifth grade teachers about a specific issue. Since the fifth grade had opted for several changes, particularly in assessment, the questions or comments were often related to assessment, such as the fifth grade report card the teachers had designed with the "Observed" and "Not Yet Observed" categories. Since the teachers did not assign letter grades in subject areas to the students, there was no provision for honor roll status for their students. This was a problem that had to be discussed. The following exchange from 1/26/94 addresses this :

> Principal: Were your 5th graders satisfied with receiving just a MacDonald's coupon without being on the honor roll?
>
> Pamela: I don't think the MacDonalds meant much to them.
>
> Carl: I think parents have more of a problem with that.
>
> Principal: Of not getting on the honor roll?
>
> Carl: Well, when it's posted in the newsletter--all the grades but the 5th grade--that's hard for the parents to take.

> Principal: But see, working in this kind of a system, if someone has all O's, or observed, it doesn't make them any better than the child who only has a couple N's, and you know each time a couple more N's disappear.
>
> Carl: I guess my feeling is in that at the elementary level anyway we should focus more on the intrinsic.
>
> Principal: You mean, not have the honor roll? But I see the children need the rewards.
>
> Carl: A way around that is to establish a student a week.

There were some substantive conversations at lunch, but there were also instances of laughter and humor. There were no formal agendas for these meetings, however, and by April the teachers were no longer meeting at lunch time. When I asked Carl why they were not meeting, he indicated that they just kind of slipped away from it after their planning meeting in March, the next major team activity to be described.

Neither the 10:25-11:25 team meetings nor the lunch time meetings evidenced in-depth discussion of honest and open conversation about serious issues. Some of these serious issues included refining the assessment procedures, the division of responsibility among the team members, and the way in which the students were divided into homeroom and language arts groups. It was during a conversation about whether or not to change the student grouping organization that the suggestion of an extended meeting time was first raised on November 3 by Marcia, the counselor:

> Sharon: I think what has happened is that we've bitten off so much that at times it gets so overwhelming our vision of where we wanted to be isn't necessarily where we are.
>
> Janice: But that's all going to take time. That's like I tell the kids, when we're doing math, or we're doing anything--you don't take a pizza and shove the whole thing into your mouth at once--you know you take it bite by bite and I think we are trying to take it all at once. [I missed something here] I think we can do that and still provide a quality program for the kids.

Marcia: But I think it's something you're going to need time to discuss this, and so maybe we can look at something where other people could have your kids

Janice: Like a week with them?

[laughter, lots of comments I couldn't catch]

Marcia: We're talking about all four of you at the same time; it would mean some coordination with something.

Carl: Day long specials.

[laughter]

Marcia: Would it be all right with you if I talked to Barbara about it//

Janice: //Sure//

Marcia: //to set this up?

Carol: It would probably be all right with the lower elementary teachers if they didn't have specials for the day.

[laughter]

Marcia: I'll talk to Barbara.

The teachers decided that since the meeting had not happened by Thanksgiving, they would prefer to wait until after Christmas. During the December 1 lunch meeting, the principal stopped into the conference room and Marcia again raised the issue with the principal. She replied that she could not secure approval for all-day release time for the teachers, so she was working on a plan where all the staff would have one half-day staggered over more than one day. That would be an efficient use of substitute teachers. At this time, they were looking at a day in February. The meeting still had not been scheduled when I returned to the school on January 10. At the end of February, I received a phone call in my office from the principal informing me of the date and time of the meeting, March 16 from

10:30 to 3:00. The teachers had also requested that Angie and Marcia attend so they could discuss issues related to students receiving special services.

The meeting on March 16 was major team activity for the teachers. There was a prepared agenda for the meeting that is represented in Figure 3. Most of the outcomes from this meeting will be discussed under the "Issues and Concerns" section of the case study. As can be seen from the agenda items, many of the issues to which I have referred throughout this case study appeared on the agenda list. Angie was able to attend most of the meeting; she had been in a meeting earlier that morning with her colleagues in the Special Education Department. Martha was also there for some of the meeting, but Marcia, who had been the open advocate for requesting this meeting, was unable to attend due to illness.

AGENDA
I.   Parent Survey
II.   Self-Assessment
            A. Vision
            B. Inclusive Ed.
            C. Evaluation
            D. Team
            E. Fifth Grade Split?
            F. Division of Tasks
III.   Long Range Planning
IV.   Review of Plans for the Remainder of March

Figure 3. Agenda for March 16 Meeting.

Team meetings, then, were an important activity for the team. The teachers had established a history of meeting during the previous year and they had met over the course of the summer as well. They were slow in getting started in their routine of meeting during the fall of 1993, but this was most likely due to Pamela's absence the first four weeks of school. There were other activities, however, in which the team members engaged, professional conferences and sharing with stakeholders.

Professional Conferences

The members of the team did attend several professional conferences and workshops over the course of the year. Sometimes they attended individually, sometimes they attended with another member of the team. For example, in November, Pamela and Carl attended a portfolio workshop together and all the teachers, including Angie, attended a math conference on Saturday, October 30. Sometimes the teachers felt the conferences were worthwhile, sometimes not. The teachers very seldom shared the information from the conferences as a planned agenda item during the team meetings, but they often commented that the person attending the conference had shared with the other team members in a more informal way. The teachers did feel, however, particularly related to their attempts to revamp the math curriculum and to design new assessment structures and processes, that they were on the cutting edge. The innovations they were trying to implement were similar to innovations being attempted at other sites. Furthermore, the frustrations they were experiencing were similar to other educators attempting the same things. So, while the team members may have felt there was not much of substance at the conference in terms of how to do what they were attempting, at least there was some sense of comfort that they were in the same situation as other professionals.

<u>Sharing With Stakeholders</u>

The fifth-grade team placed a high priority on sharing the goals in curriculum and assessment and those classroom curriculum activities related to the goals with the various stakeholder audiences of Lakeside School. These audiences included the Board of Education, the parents of the children currently in the fifth grade and parents of future fifth graders, other teachers in the system, and the students themselves. This communication took a variety of forms.

Communication with parents was very important to the team. The teachers sent a fifth grade newsletter home every month to the parents detailing the activities for upcoming month. The newsletter was also used as an additional vehicle for reporting student progress and achievement. Since the students did not receive letter grades based upon the traditional system of A through F, they were not eligible for honor roll recognition. In January the teachers decided to use the newsletter as a forum to recognize the students based upon their performance in relationship to the established outcomes as they were stated in the report card. Student recognition in the newsletter focused on a different area of performance every month: study time, teamwork, etc.

The teachers also recognized the value of input from the parents in relation to the new structures established in fifth grade, such as an alternative report card and inclusion of all children into the general classroom. The topics during the team meetings often turned to what a particular parent had communicated to the teachers, and often that communication was based on parent confusion, misunderstanding, or displeasure. In fact, the parent-teacher conference experience was a major catalyst for the teachers to revise the checklist and reporting system. Pamela had commented by the beginning of November that she felt they were completing the

checklists "by the seat of their pants," that they had no substance for what they were reporting to parents. In the same conversation, Sharon used the term "accountable." The teachers were concerned that they were not meeting the needs of their parents in terms of reporting student progress.

On another plane in terms of parent involvement, the fifth grade team planned several activities where the students could publicly demonstrate and celebrate their learning activities. The hallway as a gallery for student work is one example of public display. The students also prepared presentations based upon Civil War characters as a culminating activity and these were presented twice; once during the school day and once in the evening to accommodate parents who could not come during the day. The teachers also planned a square dance as a culminating activity for the unit on westward expansion.

One final example indicating the importance of parent as audience was a parent survey that requested feedback from the parents about the fifth grade program. One of the agenda items for the March 16 planning meeting was the preparation of that survey; the teachers spent from 10:30 until 11:45 developing the items for the survey. The teachers distributed the survey during spring conferences, but only nine surveys were returned. While the teachers were disappointed in the response rate, those surveys that were returned were positive.

Another group from whom the teachers wanted formal communication about the impact of the program were the fifth grade students themselves. In December, the teachers prepared a student survey to which the students could respond in writing anonymously. The responses were discussed during team meetings and reported to the Board of Education in May.

One audience that is important in a school district is that of the Board of Education, the policy-making body of a school district. The Board of Education is also responsible for final approval of curriculum and personnel issues. The fifth grade team had presented their program to the Board during their August, 1993 meeting and at that time had received approval for the changes they were proposing for the 1993-1994 school year. By the end of the school year, the principal forwarded a request that the teachers update the Board on how the program had evolved over the course of the year. During one of my visits to the school, an impromptu meeting evolved where the teachers discussed how they would organize their presentation to the Board. I responded to their request for help in summarizing the surveys, and the fifth grade team and I presented to the Board on May 16, 1994. It was a brief presentation, and the Board response was favorable. The teachers were granted approval to continue their program for 1994-1995.

The Focus of Collaboration

Telling this part of the story of the collaboration among the team members at Lakeside was a series of starts, stops, rereading, rethinking, as I tried to unravel the complexity that embraced the very essence of the collaboration. About what did these educators collaborate? Sifting through the interviews, the transcriptions of the team meetings and the field notes from the observations yielded a picture of their collaboration that was rich and varied. Their collaboration was an ever-changing pattern as the pieces of their collaboration shifted and changed within the whole. Trying to separate one thread or theme of the substance of the collaboration distorted the gestalt. Each topic central to the substance was interrelated to other themes in such a way that unpacking one theme for discussion left the story not quite right,

somehow missing essential pieces that were critical to the whole. Despite the caveat that a discussion of themes of the collaboration is somewhat distorted without the entire context, I will address in this section of the story of the collaboration at Lakeside Elementary School the very substance of their collaboration. There are issues embedded within these themes, and they will be addressed in this section only to the extent necessary to tell this part of the story. Many of those themes will be discussed in greater detail in later sections, as many have been discussed in earlier sections.

Very simply, the focus of the collaboration at Lakeside Elementary School among the four fifth grade teachers primarily, and including Angie and Marcia to differing degrees at different times, was the complex mosaic that represented life in the fifth grade classrooms. The focus of the collaboration was clearly articulated across the interviews, the transcriptions of the team meetings and in the observations: how to provide the optimal in-classroom and out-of-classroom experience for all fifth grade students. This focus translated into collaborative discussions that covered the wide variety of issues that faced the teachers as part of the routine of daily life in an elementary school. The topics during the scheduled planning meetings at 10:25 and at lunch time as well as the informal, collaboration that would occur in the hallway were sometimes planned, sometimes spontaneous; sometimes long range, sometimes in response to immediate needs. They were, however, always dynamic as was the daily routine of the fifth grade classrooms.

The curriculum itself guided a major portion of the daily routine and thus became a recurring topic of discussion. Related assessment issues were also of major concern to the teachers and encompassed much team discussion as well. Another example of focus of collaboration included those activities that were an

important part of the daily life of the fifth grade community that were peripherally related to the curriculum. These included the special activities such as a fifth grade run at Thanksgiving, a turkey trot; presentations for the students' Civil War units; decorating the hallway; gift exchange for Christmas season; a newsletter to parents; parent-teacher conferences; and the like. Discussion of individual students, both in a humorous, story-telling mode as well as strategies for meeting a special need demonstrated by a student, was also prevalent in the team discussions. When looking at the collaboration in broad brush strokes, a mosaic of the complex daily classroom life of the fifth grade emerges. It is in the examination of each of these topics, curriculum planning, assessment, fifth grade activities, and individual students, that related themes are revealed.

<u>Curriculum Planning</u>

The fifth grade teachers were aware of their focus on planning and developing curriculum. The curriculum encompassed those traditional subject areas mathematics, science, social studies, science, and language arts. Because the teachers were committed to a revamping of the curriculum that was moving away from individual subject as content area to integration across curriculum through broad themes and outcomes, the planning was a complex process of moving back and forth from one content/subject/skill to another. As Pamela indicated during a team meeting in March:

> When we sit down and do lesson plans you can never go straight
> through and do like language arts, do like math, science because you
> come to a point where you say "we'd better see what we're going to be
> doing in social studies or science to see what we want to do in language
> arts and it may not fit." And there are even times that we have to
> rearrange what's in the works here because of something else that
> may be better because of what's happening in a different subject area.

It also became clear that the teachers were more comfortable with planning in some areas more than others. For example, language arts was very time consuming to plan. Many of the project activities in which the students engaged required descriptions of extra materials, a variety of resources, and details of steps that all needed to be described in detail in the plans. Math continued to be a source of consternation and frustration for the teachers throughout the year. The teachers met with a person having expertise in mathematics education from the local university, and her time with the teachers did seem to alleviate some of the frustration. The struggle with math continued over the course of the year as indicated by Janice's comment at the end of the year: "Science is pretty much set; math needs a lot of work."

The curriculum was such a central topic for the collaborative conversations; two related issues discussed in later sections are as follows. First, Pamela and Sharon were primarily responsible for planning curriculum. This division of responsibility had been accepted by the teachers during the summer prior to the 1993-1994 school year, but it affected the team dynamics throughout the year. Second, language arts was very time consuming to plan and in March Pamela and Sharon made a decision to change how the plans were completed. This decision created some tension that carried throughout the rest of the year.

Assessment

The topic of assessment consumed much time and energy among the team as they grappled with an evolving curriculum that was no longer in alignment in the traditional mode of assessment. The teachers had already decided by the end of the 1992-1993 school year that changes needed to be made in the traditional report card organized around subject matter. The fifth grade teachers did not give letter

grades in the traditional subjects. Rather, students received a grade of "Observed,"

or "Not Observed," in performance outcome categories. The focus was not on specific

content knowledge such as math and science; the focus was on what the child can do

and how that prepares the child for life in the 21st Century. Janice articulated this

orientation to the assessment in the beginning of the year

> [We're] changing the forms of assessment where we're looking at this
> kid not as a fifth grader who's going into sixth grade but as a person
> who's going to have to live in a community and hold a job and be an
> adult someday.

The fifth grade teachers approached the principal at the end of the 1992-1993

school year about revamping the assessment over the summer. As Sharon recounted

in the fall interview:

> It was the way we were instructing that was the motivation between
> changing the way we assessed. Because it just didn't feel right, you
> know, to have to give a letter grade to the best thing a child ever did
> and still have it be a C compared to everybody else's. . . . We had
> worked this way for a year [team planning, project-oriented,
> integrated curriculum] and assigned letter grades and that drove us at
> the end of the year to approach Barbara [the principal] with "Is it
> possible for us to look at dropping letter grades?" and she said "Come
> up with a plan and show it to me." So then we sat the last week of
> school [1992-1993] and devised our checklist, which is checking
> specific skills. And then the report card itself, which is looking more
> at the outcomes of what we want that child to be like when they exit
> the school system itself and use those Spady six outcomes, exit
> outcomes, and use those as our ---we don't have math any place,
> science is not listed, it's, you know, we've taken away the subjects
> and made the child more a person in what we're observing. And the
> checklist answers specific skills that they need to have. So, we don't
> know how it's going to work. I mean, every time we look at it, we've
> planned on sending one out last week. And we look at it, there's
> nothing to check, they haven't mastered anything yet, or very few of
> them, we can say have mastered it, so we've revised out thinking. So,
> I mean, it's going to be continually changing.

It was in planning for this alternative assessment the last week of the school year

and several weeks over the summer that Angie first became integrated into the team.

She also was present during the parent meeting where the teachers informed parents

that the children would not be receiving traditional report cards and at the Board of

Education meeting where the teachers presented their program and received ap-

proval for departing from the assessment structure that was followed by the rest of

the elementary school. So, by the beginning of the 1993-1994 school year, the

teachers had put into place a new direction, if not a firm plan, for how assessment

would be structured, and the special education teacher had played a major role in the

planning and public presentation of that new direction. Initially, there was a sense of

excitement among the teachers about the new direction for assessment. As Sharon

commented during the initial interviews:

> And I think that we all feel that we enjoy what we're doing, we like
> what we're doing, we're willing to put the time into it and we know
> that it's going to take time and it's going to take saying "we really
> messed up on this; we'll scrap it and try something else."

There was a sense of excitement about the new approach to assessment, and a bit of

notoriety as the fifth grade teachers began to receive school and community attention

for departing from the traditional grading structures. As Angie noted during the

initial interview:

> There's a real, because the fifth grades are so cohesive, it's such a
> tight unit, other grade levels don't like that. And so I have to be very
> careful when I'm with other grade level teachers not to constantly
> refer to what the fifth grade is doing, because there are hard feelings
> there.

There was also mounting pressure on the teachers over the course of the year

as they struggled with development and refinement of the system. The teachers

attended several workshops pertaining to alternative forms of assessment and the

topic found its way into many of the team meeting discussions during the fall and

early winter months as they searched for ways to make it work.

Part of the difficulty with assessment related to the amount of time, effort,

and energy that was consumed by the new scheme, particularly in the midterm

progress report. The teachers were attempting to report the children's progress in a detailed checklist format. This created some difficulty for the teachers, the parents, and the students as they adjusted to the new system. Adjustment was not the only issue, however. The teachers found by the end of the first quarter that they were not satisfied with the checklist system. It was not working for them in ways other than the time and effort expended to implement as the following exchange during the team meeting on October 13 indicated. The excerpt captures the layers of frustrations that the teachers were feeling early in October about assessment. Also evident are the beginnings of the evolution of Marcia's role as a supportive person in resolving some difficult issues.

> Janice: I'm finding it's hard to keep the kids motivated because they don't really care, I mean whether their work gets done or not, because there aren't really any//
>
> Carl: I'm not seeing that at all.
>
> Sharon: I have not had any of that; that's what I've been expecting to have//
>
> Janice: I'm seeing it starting to kind of creep in there; that's what I'm getting concerned about it's like they don't really know how they're doing, you know, because that's just because that's the only way they've ever been measured. So that's kind of what they're//

The teachers began to notice that the children were experiencing difficulty in interpreting the new report card, and Marcia entered the conversation with a specific suggestion:

> Marcia: Do we need to look at building some time in for students to talk with the teacher individually at certain points, or . . .
>
> Janice: I think, you now, now that we have hindsight, I think those check lists and stuff are something we go over with the kids the first day, you know, the first week of school so they know what's on there.

The conversation continued on this topic for several minutes, an indication that the teachers were struggling with some very difficult issues. The amount of work in

completing the checklists and translating that information to report card format was
more than what the teachers had bargained for. It is in the brainstorming about
possibilities for revamping the system that Angie assumed a central role as a
contributing team member:

> I'm wondering if we had some kind of a checklist whatever sheet that
> you could have in a small spot that has some of the main goals that
> we're working on right now and if you see it being observed you could
> mark it or something so you just have a running record so you have to
> keep writing yourself notes and at least it might help to jog your
> memory later on, oh yeah, I saw him doing good cooperative learning
> on this day and this day and this day, you might have some kind of a
> record of it.

Several issues surfaced during this exchange. The teachers were struggling with the
management of the checklist. Angie reaffirmed her contributions to the assessment
process through her suggestions. The teachers commented on the difficulty the
students were having in interpreting this assessment, a concern that was echoed by
Marcia, the counselor. In addition to the difficulties the children were experiencing
in interpreting the midterm progress report, several parents had questioned the
teachers and administrators about how to understand the report of their child's
progress. Some resolution to these concerns began to evolve in early December.

During a team meeting at lunch on December 1, the teachers were
emphasizing how dissatisfied they were with the checklist form of reporting. The
following exchange took place:

> Katie: But maybe you're trying to think of how to do this, maybe
> you're trying to import the old, the traditional way you have done this
> into a totally new model and it doesn't import, it doesn't fit. Maybe
> you're trying to think about portfolio assessment with still dealing
> with the skills and maybe that doesn't quite jive somehow. I mean,
> maybe there's another way to think about it that would mesh better
> and I don't know what it is. I'm just raising questions here 'cause I
> hear your frustration [sigh].

Pamela: Yeah, cause you have to, in order to look at those writing skills you have to look at everything they've done and condense that down into one weekly sheet.

Katie: I wonder if you have to do that. That's what I'm wondering.

Janice: I'm not doing that. I figured if, you know, we wouldn't do that in the old system. To me, that's unmanageable and I'm not willing to turn my entire life over to school. I was talking to Carl about that yesterday. That doesn't mean I care any less about the kids, and I don't love them as much as I would love them any other way, shape, or form, but I need my life, too.

Carl: Last year we had down time and we were able to sit around and laugh and joke together and, well, even like putting up this hallway last year, when we put up hallways together it was fun and we would sit out there and laugh and now we're just rushed, we've got to get up, and it's just not fun. It's a big difference.

There was some additional comments of dissatisfaction and Carl, Janice and Sharon

had to return to their classes. The following exchange took place between Pamela,

Marcia, and myself:

Pamela: It's not the portfolio, it's the checklist. The checklist is skills, it's nitpicky.

Marcia: Specific skills.

Katie: Well, see how out of alignment that checklist is with what you've done with the portfolio. That's what you're unhappy with.

Pamela: [emphatic] Yes.

Katie: It's totally out of alignment with your philosophy.

Pamela: Yes, so I mean, it's the checklist. It's unmanageable.

Katie: Then give yourself permission to give it up.

Pamela: Because it's like when I look at their social studies book [not the published text, a student-generated project], I can't just look at the content because I have to look at this kid in my homeroom class whether he's giving me the periods, the capital letters, the complete thoughts, all these kinds of things. Every time you even look at his history card, you can't just look at the history card for the sake of the history card, you also have to go back and pick out all these other things that you're supposed to be able to report and that's the mind boggling part of it.

> Katie: What Marcia said made a lot of sense to me. You don't have to do that every time.

On December 6, Pamela and Sharon asked that I meet with them and they shared a new format for record keeping on a regular basis that was more in line with the report card that went home at the end of the quarter. Angie had helped develop the new checklist, a contribution that solidified her position as a members of the team. The fifth grade teachers, particularly Pamela, felt comfortable going to Angie and asking her to share her expertise in the area of individualized assessment, something Angie was accustomed to in her professional role of serving children with special needs.

By the time the teachers needed to send out formal reports for the next marking period, the tension related to assessment had been relieved. This could only have occurred, however, after the teachers experienced frustration, sought some expertise from another team member, and faced their own assumptions about assessment. I also played a part in this exploration; Pamela and Sharon both reiterated that it was my comment that triggered a new way of thinking about assessment. The revision on the checklist was not a total team effort, however. As Pamela told me during the meeting where Pamela and Sharon showed me the revised checklist, Angie sat down and revised it during class time in Language Arts. Angie and Pamela took the initiative to develop the revised checklist. The entire team was comfortable with it, but it was not developed by the team as a unit. There was a sense, however, that the team had made great strides in resolving an issue that had created some difficulty and tension. As Carl noted during the midyear interview February 10:

It feels much better to us. We're hoping it's going to go home in a
couple of weeks to parents, and we're hoping it feels good to them, too.
Maybe easier for them to understand anyway.

By the end of the year, the assessment issue had been defused as a topic of concern for the teachers, at least on the surface. During the last team meeting and during the end-of-year interviews, assessment did not come up as a topic for discussion. The focus was on other topics of immediate concern such as grouping the students and curriculum planning. Those issues are discussed in detail in subsequent sections.

Fifth-Grade Activities

The topics for discussion during team meetings, and therefore the focus of the formal collaboration, reflected the tremendous complexity and diversity encountered by the fifth grade teachers as well as the counselor and special education teacher on a daily basis at Lakeside Elementary School. Although the curriculum and assessment were frequent topics, the daily classroom routine, and the necessary logistics to maintain a sense of orderly progression within that routine, also commanded attention from the teachers. Because the teachers had set as a goal that the fifth grade operate as a unit, there was a tremendous amount of planning in simply moving over one hundred children through planned events. The teachers were committed to providing for the children a variety of out-of-classroom experiences. These experiences entailed managing the accompanying details to make it happen. Examples of these activities included a 3K walk during Thanksgiving week (the Turkey Trot), an evening of square dancing as a culmination to the Westward Ho unit, and individual student presentations for the unit on the Civil War.

Each of these events required extensive phone calls and attention to details, a time consuming endeavor for those responsible. For example, the Turkey Trot

entailed finding parents to help monitor the walk, printing or purchasing the certif-

icates for the children, finding the stop watches to record accurate times, marking

off the route the children would take, and the like. Whether it was making several

trips to the gym to find out if the teachers could get the fifth graders time on the

risers to practice a performance, or whether it was discussing the special activity

for children who used their homework planning folder on a regular basis, because

all of these activities were for all children, the logistics of planning the details were

part of the substance of the collaboration. The final focus of the collaboration to be

discussed is the individual student.

<u>Individual Students</u>

The Lakeside team came together to plan instruction, assessment, and extra

activities that would provide, they hoped, an optimal learning experience for the

fifth grade students. The focus on the life in the classroom included teachers telling

those stories about the daily life in the classroom, out on the playground, and the

other contexts in which the children found themselves across the course of the school

day. In short, Carl, Sharon, Janice, Pamela, Angie and Marcia talked about those

events with the students who were the focus of their professional lives. These

stories often took the form of vignettes, often humorous, sometimes poignant, about

individual children. The discussions often centered on homelife happenings that may

be affecting a child's performance in school. Another topic often raised were those

special supports in the learning environments that the teachers were attempting to

provide for those students who may have been pulled out for special services in

previous years. So, the reasons for discussing individual children were varied as

were the outcomes of the discussions, but the general overtone was that these

teachers demonstrated their care and concern, shared joys and frustrations, right along with the children's concerns, joys, and frustrations. The following short selections exemplify the variety within the discussions about individual children (from team meetings 10/13/93, 10/20/93, 11/15/93):

> Angie: Any of the special ed. kids you think shouldn't be in the MEAP [the Michigan Educational Assessment Program] now that you've watched them do it for forty-five minutes?
>
> Sharon: L seems to be doing all right with it.
>
> Angie: If you see any major frustrations - -
>
> Carl: He had to, he kept raising his hand asking me to read words to him and I told him he couldn't do that, he had to sound them out and so I made him go finger by finger and he got them.
>
> Angie: OK. Good.
>
> Sharon: That was real hard for the kids, I was surprised at how many kids wanted help, because they didn't last year. They took these last year and they know it is something we do the best we can and if you don't understand the questions, you give it your best guess.
>
> Carl: I kept getting something like, "What's a foghorn?"
>
> Carol [the gym teacher]: Is that like a Leghorn?
>
> [lot's of laughter]

The following excerpt from 10/20/93 exemplifies some of the light hearted conversation:

> Sharon: I was telling Marcia she's been so cute with that bat and ball. She came up to me yesterday and said Ms. Jackson's [the gym teacher] letting me borrow her bat and ball to practice with and I'm afraid somebody might take it for recess. Can I put it in your closet? I said, "Sure" and I have this plastic bat and ball and she came in today and said "We won." I said, "It was practicing with that bat."
>
> [Lot's of laughter]

One of the children was a fairly frequent topic of conversation. She was often absent at the beginning of the year and was experiencing difficulty with the instructional

activities. The teachers focused quite a bit of attention on her in an effort to prompt

her to come to school regularly and to experience success when she was there. The

following excerpt from team meeting 11/15 illustrates the effort:

> Carl: D was absent today. And well, I didn't tell you, I sent her to
> Marcia [the counselor] and they talked about projects and things, and
> I got a letter back from D that said: "Mr. Hamilton, I do want to do my
> project, I just didn't know how to do it and I was afraid to ask you.
> Can I get help this afternoon, because I really do want to turn it in."
> And so this was the afternoon of grandparent's group, so luckily B
> [another student] didn't have grandparents there and she agreed to sit
> down with D and explain it and go over and try to help her. . . And so
> hopefully I'll get it. But, I can't do that for everything she has to have
> done in my class.

> Pamela: And like today, she missed the intro to the project and my
> example of it. So she's just going to be handed a piece of paper.

> Carl: Which she won't have the same understanding.

The teachers concentrated their efforts on supporting improved attendance for D. By

the beginning of the second semester, that was accomplished as well as improvement

in her performance in school. So, the conversations about the individual children

often provided opportunities for humorous exchanges as well as exploring ways to

meet the needs of individual children.

The focus of the collaboration was consistent with the team goals in keeping

the fifth grade together in common curriculum. It is the dynamics of the

collaboration that posed some difficulties for the team.

The Dynamics of the Collaboration

The topic of dynamics among the team members at Lakeside Elementary

School evolved as a category and therefore a code early in the data collection process.

I soon realized how often those things both said and unsaid, the engaging and

distancing body language, concerns shared with some members of the team and not

with others, reflected the ways in which the team members were relating to one another. The dynamics among the team were tidal waters, ever fluid, ever changing, as the individuals reacted to the joys and sorrows, successes and concerns, and stresses and reliefs of the reality of implementing curriculum, instruction, and assessment among all fifth grade students. Each team member reacted as an individual and as a member of a team, and those reactions set up chain reactions with other team members.

This part of the story of the collaboration within the Lakeside team will encompass the essence of the relationship among the team members. Included in relationship factors are: (a) responsibilities of the team members and how those responsibilities affected the team relations, (b) the relationship patterns between and among team members, and (c) the communication styles and patterns among the team members.

<u>Team Member Responsibility</u>

The responsibilities of the fifth grade team comprised a complex set of duties to the team as a unit and to individual responsibilities connected with specific roles and territories within their own classrooms or as co-teacher in a team members' classroom. Perhaps the clearest format to outline these responsibilities is to detail those responsibilities recognized and performed by each member of the team. I will then address those responsibilities that were less clear in terms of assignment and performance, an issue that most definitely affected the team relations throughout the course of the year. It is important to remember here that the goals for the team as articulated at the beginning of the year included planning curriculum and designing assessment that was in line with the broad outcomes that had been identified for the

fifth grade students. A secondary goal was to include in all of the curriculum and assessment activities all fifth grade children, including those who had been designated as having special needs either through special education or Chapter I Reading. The responsibilities of each team member as perceived by the team members themselves must be seen in that light.

The fifth grade teachers, while operating as a unit for the 1993-1994 school year, also were teachers in their own self-contained classrooms for which they had primary responsibility. Each teacher had instructional contact and assessment responsibilities for two sets of students, the language arts groups and the homeroom group. It is the responsibilities associated with each classroom that comprised the bulk of the individual responsibilities for each teacher. The four fifth grade teachers also had responsibilities to the team as a unit primarily encompassing curriculum planning and assessment. They had devised a division of responsibilities wherein Sharon and Pamela were responsible for curriculum planning and Janice and Carl were responsible for securing all materials and for setting up science experiments and math projects. They had tried to plan as a foursome over the course of the summer, but the participants indicated that the arrangement did not work. Sharon and Pamela found a comfortable working routine where the curriculum planning meetings with the two of them were time consuming, but consistently productive. All fifth grade teachers assumed responsibility for assessment, and this was often done in group meetings. Each student in effect had two teachers, and these teachers would sit together as a pair and complete the reports for each child.

Other responsibilities were accepted by members of the fifth grade team on an as-needed basis. For example, Carl offered to mark off the run for the Turkey

Trot, the walk for the fifth grade students during Thanksgiving week. During one team meeting, Janice offered to make sure the VCR and movies were in the rooms during those days when the teachers scheduled movies. All teachers worked in the hall to prepare those display areas for the student projects. There was no pattern apparent to me, however, to the assignment of these responsibilities, and that may have created some confusion and tension among the teachers. For example, it had evidently been decided during the 1992-1993 school year that Carl would take care of producing the newsletter that went home to parents and he had not remembered that at the beginning of the 1993-1994 school year. Pamela reminded him that he had assumed that responsibility and had not yet met that obligation, a reminder that she later told him was uncomfortable for her. Carl replied he was not offended, and that he was glad to do it. While the issue of the newsletter was seemingly an easy one to resolve, division of labor and assignments of responsibilities was source of tension throughout the school year. The main source of tension revolved around curriculum planning.

Perhaps because the planning was so time consuming for Pamela and Sharon, Pamela in particular felt that Carl and Janice were not assuming appropriate levels of responsibility for the team in other areas. Marcia also echoed this assessment of the situation during the initial interview in October:

> I have a concern about the four fifth grade teachers working together.
> I think that Pamela and Sharon end up doing more of the work than
> Janice and Carl. I think they wanted to, and I think they're very good
> at what they do. I don't think Janice and Carl are aware of what goes
> into everything that Pamela and Sharon do, the amount of time. And so
> I don't think that Janice and Carl are doing it on purpose.

By November, Pamela had begun to formalize her thoughts about her concerns related to the division of responsibilities among the team members. It was in this

area of concern that communication among the team members was a dynamic that shaped the collaborative process.

During a meeting on 11/12, Pamela shared a suggested list of responsibilities with the other team members. When I asked Pamela how the list of suggested responsibilities was received [I had been unable to attend] she replied: "I think Carl listened--I could tell today when he was talking about the Turkey Trot and the hallway that he is sharing and taking some of the responsibility." In that same conversation, Pamela indicated she was unsure of Janice's reaction to the suggested responsibilities. Although the list as a formal document and/or an agenda for team meetings did not come up in subsequent team meetings, it was apparent to me that Carl and Janice did become more proactive in sharing the status of their responsibilities at team meetings.

The underlying factor in the emergence of team member responsibility as an issue and concern was that Pamela and Sharon felt so overwhelmed with curriculum planning. Although Pamela and Sharon had agreed to assume this responsibility, they were unhappy with the arrangement. They often expressed the frustration they did not have the time to set things in order within their own classrooms. As Sharon commented during the midyear interview in February:

> The workload, the overwhelming amount of time that's spent, because I never have any time in my classroom. I feel like, with Pamela and I doing all the planning, and we do it every day, that hour the kids come back into room, the kids are already here, I have nothing organized on the board, I have to sit and think, okay, now what are we doing today because I'm already two weeks ahead in the planning, so my mind is never on what I'm doing today. . .

So, the four fifth grade teachers felt they had responsibilities to the team as well as to the organization and operation of their own classroom. It was clear from the comments that Pamela and Sharon felt that the responsibilities were inequitably

distributed, leaving them feeling somewhat disorganized and unprepared for the responsibilities in their own classrooms. I will explore this issue more completely, including from Janice's and Carl's perspectives, in the Issues and Concerns section of the case study.

Angie, the special education teacher, had a role and a set of responsibilities somewhat distinct from the four fifth grade teachers. She entered the fifth grade classrooms in support of the special education students on her list two times a day. She was in Pamela's room for one hour (9:25 to 10:25) of the two hour language arts block of time. Eleven of the students in Pamela's room for language arts were those targeted for special education support. During the one hour block of time scheduled for math instruction, from 1:00 until 2:00, Angie floated between the other fifth grade classrooms where the children receiving special education support were placed. Pamela did not have any students from Angie's list during math. During the rest of the day Angie served students from the middle school, the building adjacent to the elementary school, in her classroom located in the middle school.

Going into the classrooms to support the children as opposed to pulling them out for instruction in her own classroom was not a new instructional arrangement for Angie. She had spent time in the classroom with these students last year in the fourth grade classrooms, so she had some history of an inclusion model. It was a new arrangement, however, for Pamela as well as the other teachers. Keeping all fifth grades students in the classroom throughout the day was a goal new to the fifth grade during the 1993-1994 school year, but they were somewhat tentative as to how it would work out.

The primary responsibility for Angie at the beginning of the year was to provide support for the special needs students. It was clear from the beginning that

both Angie and Pamela, and to some degree the other fifth grade teachers, wanted a more clearly defined co-teaching arrangement where there was a sharing of responsibilities in the classroom. Pamela and Sharon indicated to me after one of the first team meetings in October that they wanted Angie to feel that she was more than an aide; the connotation to this being that a paraprofessional would come in to provide limited and specific support to individual children. Angie also articulated this goal during the initial interview in her description of what she felt her role and responsibilities should be:

> Angie: I'm doing more as a consultant to the teachers, too. Not just the students. I mean, I'm helping the teachers learn how to meet needs of special ed. students in their rooms//
>
> Katie: Do you have any hopes or expectations for what it would be like when you go into Pamela's room for language arts or when you go into the other three rooms for math?
>
> Angie: Good question. Um, I guess it's basically what I see my role as and I like being on equal footing with the teachers which means that part of the time I'm going to be teaching the whole class. And part of the time she is or he is. And I guess that's what I see. That both of us are sharing the responsibilities of teaching the class, and having the number of low children that we do in there, it sure helps to have another adult to be fielding questions out with the kids too when there are questions. So, I guess that's what I see.

So, at the beginning of the year, Angie felt that her responsibilities included support for special education children, support for the teachers in how to provide instruction for these children in the classroom, and teaching responsibilities. As the year progressed, Angie assumed additional responsibilities that were more in the domain of assumed responsibilities of the fifth grade teachers as they related to the team as a unit: planning curriculum, designing assessment, and some participation in sharing with the various stakeholder audiences. Angie was a major contributor to revising the midterm checklist after Pamela had requested her help. By March, Angie and Pamela had established a working relationship during language arts that met Angie's

goal of being on an equal footing with Pamela. They were meeting regularly to adapt

the language arts plans for the students requiring special support and Angie was

comfortable taking a co-teaching role.

Pamela and Angie were very much in agreement in terms of what Angie's role

and responsibilities were in Pamela's room. Those shared responsibilities never did

develop between Angie and Carl, Sharon, or Janice, the teachers who had Angie's

students during math time. Angie did not have a set schedule for going into those

rooms; she entered those classrooms wherever she felt she was needed. Her

presence in those classrooms was often more happenstance and spontaneous rather

than planned contributions, and that spontaneity diminished the sense of cohesion.

As Carl commented during the midyear interview:

> Carl: They're [referring to Marcia, Angie, and the Chapter I aides]
> all still there, and they're still working with us, but I think what we
> envisioned for them to actually come into our classrooms has never
> materialized. Angie has taught an occasional lesson in my class, but
> it's never been a pre-planned thing. It's been an instance where she's
> walked into my room and I've said "Have you done this in anybody
> else's classroom yet?" and she said "Yes." and so I said "Well, then,
> why don't you just take it? It's yours, if you want it." and then she
> goes ahead and teaches. And she does a FABULOUS job and the kids
> really love having her do it and I really wish that she felt comfortable
> coming into my room saying "I know what's going on today, why don't
> you let me do it?" or "You know, I'd really like to teach this lesson."
> Those types of things. So, I'd still like to see that happen.

So, Carl, Janice, and Sharon did not feel that Angie had clear responsibilities in

their classrooms to the extent that Pamela had. This was despite the fact that Angie

attended the lunchtime conversations and was present for the group assessment

meetings where the student reports were completed.

Martha began the 1993-1994 year with some question and doubt about her

new role as Chapter I Reading teacher supporting the students who qualified for her

services in the classroom. All of the students who qualified for special education

were in Pamela's room for language arts; all the student's qualifying for reading

support were either in Janice's room or in Sharon's room during the morning block

for language arts. Martha went into Sharon's room to provide support and one of the

Chapter I aides, Naomi, went into Janice's room. Martha expressed her concerns

during the initial interview in October about how the arrangement would work out

during the year:

> Martha: Well, first, in Sharon's room, and this is just the beginning
> of the year, I feel that I really don't do enough, but the way the
> curriculum is set up there's nothing else that I can do at that minute
> without interfering. The students do write every day and I go around
> and make sure, I even correct them for their misspelling and their
> punctuation and I listen to them read part of the sentence, whatever. .
> . But I'm still kind of really torn about the children that I have on my
> list because I'm so used to helping them so much and I'm so used to
> like working with basic skills and trying to catch them up to where
> they should be. And in her room I'm not finding that as much this
> year. My students that I have had are really well-behaved, they're
> real good, they keep on track. I haven't been able to help them as
> much as I have helped in the past with them being right in my
> classroom. I find that's a difference and I don't know what kind of
> difference it's going to make in the end//
>
> Katie: You mentioned that last week//
>
> Martha: That bothers me a little bit. The kids seem to be really doing
> well though, so I can't say that it's worse or better at this point, and
> as I said, the kids in my group that I have had on my list, are on track.
> . . I guess that's my goal, I'm trying to search for a way to help not
> only the teachers, but those kids that I feel need to strengthen their
> basic skills.

So while Martha had only positive things to say about the fifth grade curriculum, she

felt that the time in the classroom was not as productive in terms of targeting the

support that she was accustomed to and comfortable with providing for the children

on her list. Sharon also had some concerns about Martha's role in the beginning of

the year. She, too, as Pamela had, indicated that she did not want Martha to assume

an aide's role; she wanted her to be more of a co-teacher:

Katie: Describe that a little bit for me. What it, what it is that you think is more like an aide, and what it is that you think would be more like team teaching with you?

Sharon: What I see her as an aide now is that she comes in, whatever the kids are working on, she's just kind of walking around the room and monitoring, whatever they happen to be doing that day. We haven't had any reading novel assigned yet or any assignment yet, it's been working on "A Book About Me," things that are pretty artsy and that kind of thing, getting to know the students. I see her role being more as a team teacher talking about special needs of students, working with individual students maybe groups of students that are having difficulty and the two of us communicating, you know, where we need to go next rather than just walking in and kind of monitoring the room.

Although Sharon did briefly approach Martha about her concerns, they never did come to the point where they had comfortably worked out an arrangement where Martha was incorporated into the team. Like Angie, she was in two buildings, the middle school and the elementary school, and her schedule and other responsibilities were not conducive for her to participate in the team meetings on a regular basis. She did attend the meeting in October when the teachers were completing assessment reports as a group, and she did attend the March 16 group planning meeting for a portion of the day.

By mid-November, Martha was no longer coming into Sharon's room. A Chapter I aide was meeting that obligation and Martha was going into another classroom. The teachers were unsure as to why that switch had been made, and it was not until the March 16 planning meeting that Martha revealed that the switch had been made, not due to her discomfort with the arrangement in the fifth grade, but rather because she felt the teachers were doing such a good job supporting the children with special needs that she could go into another classroom where her support was more critical. So, although there had been expectations set at the beginning of the year that Martha would integrate into the team, that never did

become a reality. As Sharon said during the midyear interview: "I think with Martha leaving, I don't ever see her as really being an integral part of the team."

Marcia's role with the team evolved over the course of the year, and because of her position as counselor her role did not carry with it the implications that the inclusion model carried for Angie and Martha. At the beginning of the year, she was responsible for implementing a portion of the fifth grade curriculum every week. She was scheduled to go into each fifth grade classroom to address such topics as self-esteem and conflict resolution, a curriculum goal for which she felt well-prepared as guidance counselor. By midyear, she was not entirely satisfied that the role had developed as she had envisioned. She was not as integrated into the curriculum as she had expected, nor was she spending the time in the classrooms that she would have liked. She was unable to attend the planning meetings with the fifth grade teachers at 10:25. As she commented during the February interview " But to be more like an integrated part of the group, that hasn't happened. . . The fifth grade has kind of gone by the wayside except when they needed help or when I saw a concern that I wanted to deal with.

Another role for her emerged, however, one that neither she nor I had expected during my initial weeks in the school. Marcia often assumed role and responsibility of mediator within the team as well as advocate for the team to outside parties. Pamela and Sharon often shared with her their frustrations, and she, Angie and Pamela were often together for those last few minutes of the lunch time when Carl, Janice, and Sharon had already gone back to their classrooms. I asked her to comment on that role, again during the midyear interview:

> Katie: I have observed a very important role you've assumed, and I don't know if that was by design or by event, in terms of being a facilitator for the team process. Do you recognize that?

> Marcia: That wouldn't have been one that I would have thought, I wouldn't have chosen that. Because I didn't see it as necessary in the beginning. . . and so I think then it helped for them [Pamela and Sharon] to have somebody to come to and bounce ideas off of, and how to involve Janice and Carl more. And, I felt very comfortable in that because I did not see Janice and Carl as an adversary, I just saw them as not being aware, and that either Pamela or Sharon making them aware or even my making them aware, wouldn't have been upsetting to them.

The responsibilities that were held by each member of the team were part of the dynamic that affected the relations of the team. Pamela and Sharon voiced the feeling that their obligations to team planning interfered with the responsibilities they had in their own classrooms. Angie wanted to mesh her responsibilities to the students receiving special education support with her responsibilities to the team as well as to Pamela as a co-teacher in Pamela's classroom during the language arts time. Those responsibilities affected the relationships among the team members.

Relationships Among Team Members

The relationships among the team members, like all of the issues related to the team, were a complex web that posed many starts and stops in analysis and interpretation of the data. The image of untangling a ball of string came to my mind in telling this part of the story. This topic is organized around a description of the relationships that seemed to affect the team in the most significant ways. For the most part, the most striking relationships were dyads where two members of the team established unique interactive patterns often, but not always, based upon mutual responsibilities.

Pamela and Sharon began the year with an established working relationship with each other. I asked Sharon about her working relationship with Pamela during the end-of year interview:

Katie: Talk about working with Pamela, sitting down and working with Pamela, as opposed to sitting in a meeting with the other three teachers or with the other teachers and Angie and Marcia.

Sharon: Okay, I think what Pamela and I have developed is a working relationship, so that when we're together we get right to it and we don't talk about our family life, we don't talk about what's going on outside of school--she's very--she's very organized, I'm not. I'm the kind of person who gives ideas and I'm willing to help. But she has a way of getting things--okay, we need to do this, this and this and that's what we do and that's it. So I think that that's the main difference and when we get together we it's actual work--it's a working time.

Katie: Okay.

Sharon: So you know, there's no distractions, there's no anything except getting what we need to do finished and we've got a list that we go through and as we complete each task we just cross it off and go on to the next thing on the list. So it's very organized. I think that that's probably -- probably the difference

Katie: I mean that's//

Sharon: We share, you know like I'll write down things that I think we need to do, she writes down things that she thinks we need to do, and we'll just compile a list--of okay, by the end of the week we need to have this done.

I had noticed this matter-of-fact orientation to planning the times I observed Pamela and Sharon do the curriculum planning. There was very little distraction. Pamela kept a green-covered teacher planning book in her room. The green planning book was usually in front of Pamela, and they worked from Post-it notes and other materials as they planned the curriculum. Pamela and Sharon also made sure that they communicated regularly throughout the day. This, too, was associated with the planning as they touched base to see where their classes were to determine whether or not they needed to change the plans based upon how the children were progressing in the planned activities. As Pamela commented during the March 16 group meeting: "It's [touching base with each other] a deliberate effort. I mean it's like we go find

the other one and we always sit down and talk about what we've done and where we're going before we start to do the lesson planning."

Pamela and Angie also developed a close working relationship that deepened across the course of the school year. Pamela had indicated both during the initial interview and during an impromptu conversation among Sharon, Pamela and myself in my second visit to the school that Pamela had some specific ideas about how she would like the time she and Angie spent together in Pamela's room to look. The following excerpt from the initial interview in the fall recounts our conversation and also serves to clarifies Pamela's concern about Angie's feelings:

> Katie: In our impromptu conversation, not last week, I think it was the week before, one of the things that I heard a response from all four of you [the fifth grade teachers] is that you had some ideas about how you wanted to work with Angie, and I think Martha was included in that conversation as well. And what I heard you say is that you didn't want them to just come in and be an aide. I think that's the phrase that, I think that's the one you used, and Sharon used the phrase as well. Could you talk to me a little bit about "this is what I **really** would like it to look like" and then contrast it with I'll use the aide//
>
> Pamela: Okay. I think we've already gone away from the aide and it was because after we talked to you, and you said, "Well, maybe you ought to go," Sharon and I deliberately that day went and found Angie, actually brought her here because we sat her down here the two of us and said to her, "Are we doing what you want us to with you?" Because, we said, "We're sometimes overwhelmed by the amount of work we do with the planning and we would have approached you much sooner." And of course, I hadn't been here consistently yet, I said, "We did not mean to ignore you, we did not mean not to come back to you sooner." And she just burst into tears that we'd even thought about her because I guess she was having trouble over in the other school. And she was very touched that we had thought about her in that way.

Angie also echoed her awareness of that concern during the initial interview, "They didn't want me to feel like an aide. . . They were afraid I was going to feel uncomfortable with that."

These initial overtures of concern between Pamela and Angie developed and deepened as the school year progressed. There was respect and a level of comfort between these two teachers that extended across both professional and personal lines. Pamela ascribed to Angie an expertise in many areas, one striking example being the issue of assessment. It was Angie that developed the revised checklist "in ten minutes" during language arts time. Angie and Pamela also found time, that precious commodity, to meet as a pair about the language arts class. As Angie commented during the midyear interview:

> I'm real happy with the way things have gone this year. Pamela and I have really meshed as a team with our language arts kids, and it worked as well as I had anticipated it was going to. And she's real comfortable, too. We've talked, we found time to actually sit down and meet, the two of us, a couple days a week, at lunch. So, that seems helpful.

The relationship between Pamela and Angie was more tightly knit at the end of the year than it was at the beginning. Both Angie and Pamela were evaluating all of the students' work by the end of the year; the line between Angie's students and those students not eligible for special education services had blurred. Perhaps the most eloquent statement of their close relationship occurred at the end of year team meeting when Pamela announced that she may leave the fifth grade team and move to another grade level, Angie said with humor and kindness, "I'll kill her."

Carl and Janice had developed a relationship that seemed to be rooted in the responsibilities for the team they both shared. They were responsible for gathering the materials for the learning activities, especially math and science. They also had formed a carpool from where they lived to Lakeside, but this was not mentioned in conversations or interviews until the end of the year meeting when Carl also announced that he was leaving Lakeside for another position. Their relationship was not mentioned as often as the relationships between Pamela and Sharon and Angie and

Pamela, but perhaps my questions and the direction of the interviews with them did not address that issue.

Marcia seemed to adopt a role as mediator for the team. It was not a role that she had anticipated, as indicated in a quote cited earlier in the case study. It also appeared that Pamela, Angie and Sharon were more free in voicing their concerns to Marcia than to Carl and Janice. That same freedom did not seem to be demonstrated by Carl and Janice. It was not evident during the team meetings nor during the interviews that Carl and Janice shared with Marcia their concerns. Marcia did, however, appear to respond with care to Pamela's and Sharon's concerns about the distribution of work and responsibility among the team members in a way that was also supportive of Carl and Janice.

It was not evident from any of the interviews nor from the team meeting conversations that Marcia approached Janice and Carl directly with the issue. There were indirect prompts during the lunch meetings about securing planning time together and about who was assuming responsibility for the turkey trot, but no direct communication. It was not until the team meeting in March that the issue of planning, and therefore the felt inequities of responsibilities, was addressed. Marcia was not present at the meeting due to illness.

Although there were relationships that were developed, deepened and extended throughout the time that these teachers collaborated, there was a sense among all of the teachers that the relationships among the team members as a whole suffered strain as the year progressed. There was somehow a set of circumstances and reaction to those circumstances that caused the cohesiveness among the four fifth grade teachers to diminish. Pamela referred to this strain during the midyear interview:

Katie: What is your sense about the relationship within the team itself?

Pamela: Strained, I guess is the way I would put it. I think we're, we've been trying to work together but it's not anywhere near as comfortable as it was last year, at the tail end of the year. And I haven't quite put my finger on it as to why, it just doesn't, we all, I don't know, I guess it comes back to some of use think always in terms of four and never of our own because we've given that up, and some of us have not given up or own identity and have been able to keep it because they're not responsible for the other stuff. . . And I think that's made a conflict there.

Sharon addressed the sense of cohesiveness during the team meeting on March 16:

Sharon: Yeah, and that has been when I sat down and self-reflected that's the kind of thing that I was looking at. That somehow we need to make it so we're pulling back together as a group instead of splintering off as a group, and yet giving each of us the same amount of time to reflect.

This comment on March 16 was the first time that the underlying frustrations and sense that the team was falling apart due to overwhelming pressures was openly addressed. There were different reactions following this team meeting. Carl indicated that he felt that it was a most positive airing of feelings and concerns, but no substantive and lasting changes were made to bring a sense of cohesiveness back to the team. Pamela expressed the feeling that she did not feel at all positively after the meeting, that issues for her were not resolved at all.

After the March 16 planning meeting, the team did not meet as frequently, and they did not meet for lunch at all after March. The dynamics of the relationship among the team members shifted and changed courses over the year that these teachers engaged in this collaborative effort. Much of the dynamics of the relationships was evidenced by their patterns of communication with one another.

Team Communication

In a most general sense, the elements of communication among the team members were part of the dynamic that evolved within the process of collaboration. In going back to the team member goal statements for the team, the desire to work collaboratively to maintain all fifth grade students, including those with special learning needs, as a unit in a common curriculum was the primary goal. The team members did not mention increased communication among themselves with frequency during those initial interviews and team meetings. Perhaps they simply assumed that communication among the members of the team would be part of the ongoing process, almost too obvious to mention.

There were two exceptions to the lack of overt attention placed on com-munication as a dynamic by the team members. One was the goal stated by all fifth grade teachers that they wanted increased communication with the special discipline educators, in particular Martha, the reading teacher, and Angie, the special educa-tion teacher. The fifth grade teachers had all children including those identified as having special learning needs in the general classrooms for the entire day. In order to better meet the needs of all children in the classroom, they expressed the hope that there would be increased communication between the fifth grade teachers and the special discipline teachers. As Carl commented during the initial interview, "So I guess I would really like to see them come in and begin to feel comfortable expressing their ideas and in sharing what they know."

It was this regular level of communication primarily through planning that represented for the fifth grade teachers moving Angie and Martha from an "aide" in the classroom to more of a co-teacher. When Angie and Pamela began to have their meetings over lunch, there was increased time to talk away from the classroom

about planning, grading, and individual children. Although the importance of communication among the fifth grade teachers may have been assumed, it was clear that the fifth grade teachers regarded it as necessary for building a team with the educators outside of the core team of fifth grade teachers.

The same value on communication was also openly expressed by the special discipline team members. Marcia spoke of having "a time where we could all get together over things that concerned us all" and "for this to be really effective they [the fifth grade teachers] need more time together. Or we need more time together." Martha, the reading specialist, also addressed the issue of communication within her stated priority of meeting the needs of the children 'on her list.' She commented during the initial interview:

> Martha: Could be any reason to connect with the teacher. I don't feel I do that enough, as a matter of fact. I can't seem to get around to everyone. And most of the time it should be one to one or in groups. The nice thing about the fifth grade is they have all their planning periods at the same time.
>
> Katie: Right, right. What do you typically talk about when you connect with teachers?
>
> Martha: Um, first the child and how the child is progressing. This year, how does what I'm doing fit in with their curriculum. Because like with the third grade group, I am working with their materials. And at the present time I don't know if I have enough communication going there writing it on a piece of paper. And every day I say that I have got to go to the computer and get something, really figure it out, and hand it to them, But every day it seems like I get involved with something else and I haven't gotten everything that I need to do.

So, the members of the team other than the four fifth grade teachers spoke of the value and need for communication, but that constraints such as time and other responsibilities made it difficult to accomplish that communication.

When examining the communication on a more microlevel, the patterns mirror the relationship patterns that evolved among the individual team members,

particularly as the relationships related to roles and responsibilities. Pamela and Sharon were responsible for curriculum planning; they met formally several times a week in Pamela's room and communication bonds between them were very strong. Sharon spoke of the history they had in terms of a working relationship and was even able to describe the way they interacted when they went to conferences: Sharon took the notes and Pamela was the idea person.

Janice and Carl had established patterns of communication rooted in their responsibilities, that of gathering materials for curriculum activities. By March, Pamela and Angie had developed very regular communication patterns based upon their co-teaching arrangement in Pamela's classroom for language arts. In fact, by the end of the year Carl speculated that the communication between Angie and Pamela was so close that it "almost pushed out even more so my input and Janice's input."

All of the teachers communicated with one another regularly about specific children. These communications were evident in the team meetings, both at lunch time and during the 10:25-11:25 team meeting. These patterns were almost based upon the tasks, routines, and responsibilities embraced by the team members. Perhaps as telling, if not more so, are the dynamics of communication that emerged around issues that created tension among the team members. Perhaps most exemplary of those dynamics related to curriculum planning.

As I reread the transcripts searching for "pieces" related to communication, it occurred to me that there was much that was left unsaid over the course of the year. In October, Marcia expressed to me that Pamela and Sharon, but particularly Pamela, was overwhelmed with the amount of work that was going into planning. She also commented that Pamela and Sharon were hesitant to say anything to Carl and Janice because it might appear that Pamela and Sharon were "complaining."

There were also tangible artifacts of this communication pattern. During the November meetings when Pamela began to formalize her frustrations by writing "self-reflections," she often shared the content of those lists with Sharon but not with the other team members. As the year progressed, Pamela also felt comfortable sharing with Angie. Pamela revealed her communication preferences to me during the midyear interview:

> Pamela: The distribution of work, or whatever you want to call it, is not equal yet, so it's bound to have that ability to pull back and say "Nope, I still need to deal with or think about my own classroom. If this is going to run the way it is, I'm bound to have to give that up."
>
> Katie: Is it hard for you to openly talk about that?
>
> Pamela: Yes. Me, I feel very comfortable with you, so I could say, I can say it to Marcia, I feel very comfortable with Marcia. I can do it with Sharon. People that I know are not going to come back at me, I can do it very easily with. I can do it with Carl easier that I can with Janice, and I'm just not sure why, but with Janice it's much more difficult for me to feel very comfortable and open and not feel that something's going to come back at me. So, yeah, it is a difficult thing to do. Conflict has never been one of the things I do well with.

So there were things left unsaid by Pamela and by Carl as well. Marcia, because of her pivotal role in the team dynamic, began to act as a subtle catalyst to bring this issue into the open. The following excerpt from the team meeting of November 10 illustrates this point:

> Marcia: Do you guys ever have time during your planning time that the four of you get together? I mean, do you say--every Tuesday we're gonna all four get together.
>
> Carl: We do that every Monday but it hasn't been as consistent as it was last year. Last year//
>
> Marcia: It was rain or shine.
>
> Carl: Yeah, no matter what--yeah--this year I think we, because we are doing so many things we have so many other things that need to be done during that time it seems like that we don't always get to sit down and just say we're going to spend this time to talk about what we're doing this week --it starts off that way but then--well, "Yeah, I need

to go get that ready," "bye, I gotta go," stuff is going on--so we
haven't been as cohesive, I guess as we were last year.

Marcia: Do you guys find it a problem?

Carl: Yes, very much so.

Marcia: Maybe we need to look at what else is possible, then 'cause//

Carl: Yeah//

Marcia: If it needs to go back to "we have to be here on Monday" and
"We have to stay" [referring to all team members consistently
participating in the team meetings], I don't know what happens next. .
. . Do you ever feel you need to be part of the planning?

Carl: Yes, yeah. I was going to suggest that for math, especially what
we're headed into. I think all four of us need to sit down and talk about
that, to get a good vision of what we want to do for the trickle down. I
think that has to occur, that vision has to occur for that program
especially, because that's where we're all feeling very flustered. We
have to get a common idea of where that's going.

In this excerpt from the team meeting, Marcia asked some prompting questions about

Carl and Janice feeling the need to be part of the planning. Carl's responses indicate

that he felt somewhat frustrated about not knowing where the curriculum is headed

and that he thought all four of them needed to sit down to come up with a vision, a

common idea, of where the curriculum was going. Carl also indicated a perceived

reliance upon Pamela for direction in the curriculum. So two aspects of this

exchange seem particularly relevant here. First, Marcia was acting as a prompter

in bringing this issue out in the open. Second, Carl indicated as early as November

that the group needed more opportunity in coming together as a planning unit.

The issue of the tension that surrounded the division of responsibilities

related to curriculum planning is one that will be explored in more depth in the

Issues and Concerns section of the case study. But it is significant to note how the

patterns of communication as part of the dynamic of collaboration shaped the

evolution of that issue. There was a realization at the end of the year that somehow

the teachers did not communicate as often about the substantive issues as they should have. As Pamela commented during the final interview: "I think because we tried to do so many things differently and there was not enough time to ever sit down together and discuss 'this is the way things are going,' or you know, 'hey, let's try to do it this way.'" While the dynamic of the collaborative process is a substantive element in the portrait of the collaboration among these teachers, the outcome as perceived by the teachers is important as well.

The Impact of the Collaboration

The educators that were engaged in collaboration at Lakeside Elementary School over the course of the 1993-1994 school year had articulated goals at the beginning of the year that shaped their perceptions of what the outcomes, or impact, of that collaboration to be. The primary goal for the fifth grade teachers was to provide optimal learning experiences for the fifth grade students. The teachers were engaged in collaboration so that all the fifth grade students could be participating in curriculum and assessment activities based upon broad student outcomes. The teachers were also hopeful that they would establish stronger ties with the other educators who were connected with the fifth grade students. Furthermore, while it may not have been as clearly delineated as the other goals, the fifth grade teachers did also have a sense that they wanted to deepen the ties that they had established in the previous two years of working together. The team members' reflections during interviews at the end of the year as well the dialogue during final team meetings shed some light on what they perceived the impact of the collaboration to be.

Impact on the Students

The collaboration within the fifth grade team was focused on curriculum, instruction, and assessment for the fifth grade students. The conversations during the team meetings included topics that were directly related to the students, either with the fifth grade as a whole or as individual students. There were occasional strands of conversation that included district, state and national educational issues. There were also brief interchanges about personal lives. Very rarely did the team meetings focus on pedagogical issues or reflections of professional development.

Reading the transcripts and my field notes left me with the interpretation that these teachers were working together because they had ideas about how the fifth grade students should be engaged in the educational process at Lakeside Elementary. The frustrations that the teachers voiced when the planning and assessment became overwhelming were most often related to the lack of time in their own classroom and to the commitments they felt toward their students. Because of this sense of purpose directed at the students, the teachers had some clear ideas about how the collaborative effort affected the students, and the impact on the students was the standard against which the experience should be evaluated. As Janice said in the final interview: "I think you know the good things are the stuff we've done with the kids. I think we've done a lot of really good things with and for our kids".

Specific areas in which the team members commented about the impact on the fifth grade students included: (a) the whole unit structure for the fifth grade through common curriculum, (b) the integration of students identified as needing special support in the classroom, (c) student accomplishments, (d) student grouping, and (e) the new assessment structure.

Fifth Grade as a Unit

The fifth grade team articulated a goal at the beginning of the year that the fifth grade students share a common curriculum. An important piece of that common curriculum included displays, performances, and culminating activities that were representative of the learning in which the students were engaged. The displays of the work in the fifth grade hallway were indicative of the importance of "keeping the students together" as a unit. The teachers were, for the most part, confident that keeping the students together in a common curriculum had positive impact on the students. Janice commented during the end of year interview:

> Janice: And, there is, I think there's been a lot of consistency in terms of expectations, you know, pretty much what we expect of the kids, kinds of things we want to see happen. Kids are hearing pretty much the same story from each teacher.
>
> Katie: Okay. You attribute that to the collaboration, to the teamwork?
>
> Janice: I think so.
>
> Katie: Okay.

The teachers' perceptions that the students would benefit from common curriculum were held in common at the beginning of the year. As the year, progressed, that goal was somewhat modified by the reality of the work related to that goal, particularly for Sharon and Pamela. During the March 16 meeting, Carl raised the issue that the students were noticing that some of the displays of student projects were showing diversity in content and in the time when they were appearing in the hall. This diversity was a direct result of a change in the planning procedure that Sharon and Pamela implemented. They had decided to only develop a broad framework for plans and leave the individual decisions for daily implementation to the four fifth grade

teachers individually. This decision will be discussed more fully in the Issues and Concerns section, but for now the point is that this change had ramifications for the fifth grade unit structure. Carl and Janice were particularly concerned that some of the sense of team would be lost if the students were not doing pretty much the same thing on a daily basis. As Carl commented:

> We want these things all done by conferences so all the fifth grade classrooms, since we have presented ourselves as a team to the community, to the parents, and to the children, that it wouldn't, I mean if I had, let's say I didn't do the All About Me Books, and I'm the only one at conferences who doesn't have those displayed out in the hallway, . . . the kids will be upset by that.

Pamela particularly was not as committed to keeping the students together as a group. She observed that her kids were not at all troubled that their projects in March were not the same as the other fifth grades. In fact, she said, they didn't notice that at all. Sharon pointed out that Pamela's children were not in the same corridor as the other fifth grade classrooms, a point described in a previous section of this case study. Angie and Pamela also reiterated that adapting the lesson plans was a necessity for them because they had a group of learners in the language arts class that came to the situation with diverse and special learning needs. The unique situation in Pamela's room with the large number of students identified as qualifying for special education services, the location of Pamela's room on another corridor, and the stress from the planning responsibilities all came together to reduce Pamela's commitment to keeping the fifth grade students together as a unit.

In turn, this also altered the teachers' perceptions of how the collaboration had affected the students. Janice and Carl felt that the unit structure had a very positive impact on the students, Sharon was committed to it, but saw that revisions would have to made in the planning responsibilities if the teachers were going to continue with that structure. Pamela's perceptions that the unit structure was a

positive one for students was diminished by the end of the year. As she commented during the team meeting on June 7:

> And I guess to me, I don't feel that to have the fifth grade program we all have to be clones. That might be a different point of view from what some of the other ones have, but I think there can be more flexibility. That there are things we can do together but it does not have to be identical, and still have the feeling that we're a fifth grade and that we're a team.

For Pamela, then, the perceived negative impact on the students as expressed by the other fifth grade teachers was not held in the same light.

The Integration of All Students in the Classroom

The second impact for the students was related to including all children who had been identified as qualifying for special education and compensatory education services into the fifth grade unit. The teachers' perceptions on that issue were mixed. All of the teachers were unanimous in their observations of positive learning behaviors for all students. The teachers at midyear commented that the children identified as having special learning needs were progressing with this learning arrangement very well. In fact, both Janice and Sharon commented that they could not identify those children who were on the Chapter I list for language arts and those who were on Angie's list for Special Education. The teachers were all satisfied that integrating the children into the classroom has positive effects for those children in that all children were involved in the projects and out-of-class activities. As Angie commented during the second interview in February, "One of the main things is they've been able to stay in the room full time. They've been able to be a fifth grader as opposed to being a fifth grader in special ed."

Student Accomplishments

How did the teachers perceive that their collaboration affected the students in terms of their accomplishments? There was little in the team meetings and interviews that addressed this issue specifically. It is possible that the teachers addressed this issue, particularly at parent conferences and when report cards were due. However, despite the paucity of direct comments, there are comments from which the teachers' perceptions can be inferred.

The impact on individual students in terms of learning can be inferred from teacher comments about the projects completed as curriculum activities. Examples of these activities include "All About Me Books," "Wildflower Booklets," "Civil War Cards," and a student presentation about a Civil War character. While the teachers spoke of individual students and successes or frustrations related to these projects, the overall student learning and accomplishments that were expected to evolve from the common planning and collaboration were rarely discussed during team meetings. There was a brief excerpt during the last team meeting on June 7 that does give some indication that the teachers perceived that the students had indeed made progress over the course of the year:

> Carl: I guess that's why I keep going back to the perception the kids have, when they leave here.
>
> Janice: To me that carries a whole lot more weight than what anybody else would say, anything at all. When the kids were tellin' me these last couple days, I learned responsibility because I had to get my stuff from one place to the next, I mean using those kinds, I mean those were the words they were using.
>
> Sharon: They're starting to pick up the lingo of the report card, quality work this is, you know, I've learned to be responsible. They are picking up the vocabulary.
>
> Carl: But that's good though, because then they have the feeling that they really are.

Sharon: But do they understand what the vocabulary means?

Carl: I really do feel that they are those things.

Janice: I think they did, I really do.

Carl: They have internalized it I think, in a lot of ways and they feel that they are those things. They feel that they can produce quality work and that they are responsible and they're self-directed. I think if a child has those perceptions, I mean, it's just telling them that you can do it and that's our job, to tell these kids that they can succeed, they can do it.

Janice: That's what they were saying, I learned that I can do things. And I can be afraid to do something, but keep trying to keep pushing, to challenge myself and you know--it's like--ooh, you learned something.

[laughter-overtalk]

Janice: I didn't feel except for A. H., who said "If you're going to keep outcomes based education." [laughter] Obviously, she was spitting back the lingo, but I think you know, for most of the kids they were very sincere, you know, in how they felt that the year had gone.

Carl: "I have an observed student" bumper sticker.

[laughter]

Katie: What a riot.

[laughter and indistinguishable overtalk]

Janice: He said you helped me get one close -- how is that? -- one step closer to being an adult, or something like that and///

Sharon: "I want to thank you very much for helping me realize," I mean it was really nice, "and I'm one step closer to being an adult."

Angie: "You people have really challenged me."

Janice: Is that what he said? He said that on the first survey that we did.

Carl: But what a challenge, meet the goal, meet the goal.

The context for this conversation about those positives for the students came at the

end of the year, perhaps a time when reflecting on a difficult year would yield those

"it really was a good year" comments. In addition, the comments were mainly from Carl and Janice, with an occasional interjection from Sharon. Notwithstanding those observations, at this point in time at least, some of the members of the team were confident that the students had positively gained from their collaborative efforts in planning and alternative assessment procedures.

Student Grouping

The fifth grade students each had two teachers: one for language arts and one for homeroom. The teachers had adopted this grouping during the 1992-1993 school year. By November of 1993, Pamela had begun to express her concern openly to the team that this arrangement was not a comfortable one for her. She felt she did not know the children as well as she would like. When I asked her during the second interview when she began to experience discomfort with the grouping arrangement, she commented that it had begun as early as the previous year. There were initial comments during the March 16 team meeting about this issue, and it was the first item for discussion for the June 7 meeting. The comments explored both the impact of this arrangement on the teachers and on the students, but I will focus on the teachers' perceptions of the impact on the students in this discussion.

Janice, Carl, and Sharon commented that they observed that the students felt that having two teachers was a positive for them in that the students felt that the structure prepared them for middle school. Janice specifically asked the students in her classes so that she could report their feelings about the issue at the team meeting:

> And overwhelmingly they feel, in their words, they said "This has taught me responsibility. I feel ready for the middle school. This has helped get me ready for middle school. I've had to learn how to deal with, you know, at least two other teachers."

Sharon also reported what the students had to say about the issue, "But when I think you do ask the kids, it is overwhelmingly that the kids enjoy having these two teachers, they enjoy the fifth grade program being different from the other program." Carl addressed the feelings of confidence that he perceived among the fifth grade students in leaving the fifth grade program where they had to move between two teachers. So, based upon teacher interpretation and representation of the student attitude, it does seem that Janice, Carl, and Sharon suggested that the students were positively influenced by the student grouping pattern in the fifth grade.

Pamela, however, saw the situation somewhat differently. She felt that the teacher-student relationship suffered in this arrangement. She had expressed discomfort early in the year that she didn't know the students well enough for herself and well enough to be accountable to parents about their progress. She reiterated this discomfort at the June meeting:

> I told Katie, I tried that, you know, the good-bye letter I did in the morning and I was almost in tears. Well, I tried that with the afternoon kids today and it was an entirely different feeling. The rapport was not there with that afternoon group.

Angie echoed Pamela's sentiments about rapport. She, too, suggested that it was more difficult to build rapport "when a teacher has two groups of kids." While Pamela's and Angie's perspective is not a report of student perception, they do bring an alternative view from the other team members for consideration.

Assessment and Reporting

The teachers expressed concern early in the year that the students were not grasping the meaning of the nongraded assessment. The midterm progress reports reported progress (observed, not observed, and does not apply at this time) in terms

of specific skills such as editing, computational skills, and ability to follow written and oral directions. The report cards reported student progress in terms of broad outcomes such as "can work together in a group" using the same scale, O and N. There were no subject areas on the reports and no letter grades. The teachers were aware that this represented a radical departure for these students who had come through a system where a more traditionally graded subject matter report card was established. As Pamela said in November, "I don't think it [the checklist] means anything to them, really." During the June team meeting the teachers were still looking at ways to revamp the assessment based upon the impact on the students. The following excerpt from the team meeting illustrates this point:

> Sharon: The one comment I did get from a lot of kids is that they really still dislike O's and N's and I'm not sure if it's just they dislike the O's and N's or if it's -
>
> Angie: First, second, third made more sense than O's and N's.
>
> Sharon: They want to know how they're doing, they want a ranking.

So, despite considerable collaboration in revision of the assessment procedures on the checklists, the students were still somewhat confused about how to interpret their reports of progress, a consideration that remained with the teachers over the course of the year.

Impact on the Teachers

The outcomes, or impact, of the year-long collaboration from the perspectives of the team members must be interpreted within the context in which those perspectives were expressed. The year had been a stressful one for these teachers. Several times during the year, both in team meetings as well as inter-views, the fifth grade teachers spoke of the overwhelming task they had assumed.

Planning curriculum and revamping assessment procedures were major under-takings that required significant amounts of time and energy. The final interview was intended to be a "How do you think it went?" interview, and the teachers were still close enough to the stress of the year that their reflections were influenced by the impressions of the difficult year.

As Pamela commented during the final interview "I have such a hard time this year finding the positives." These stresses were felt most by the fifth grade teachers. The special discipline educators who were members of the team, Angie and Marcia, and to some extent Martha, had a much different experience with the team from which to assess the impact. I will use extensive direct quotes from interviews and team meeting transcript in this section to convey, as closely as possible, the team members' perceptions at the end of the school year of how the collaboration impacted them personally.

Michael Fullan (1991), in writing about change, spoke to the fact that all change must be viewed in terms of how it affects the individual. If one were to ask the question "What this a successful venture in collaboration?", one would have to reply "Whom are you asking?" When I interviewed the teachers in May for the final time, they brought unique perspectives to a sense of how this collaboration affected their lives. Pamela, perhaps the one most vocal and adamant that the 1993-1994 school year had been a difficult one, brought the greatest sense of "it didn't work very well" to the gestalt of collaboration at Lakeside Elementary School for one school year. The following excerpt from the final interview provides a glimpse of that negativity:

> It just seems this year to have been so overwhelming that I've really
> had a hard time zeroing in on the things I liked about this year . . . We
> did not have the camaraderie or fun we did with it last year.

These comments were in reference to the planning primarily:

> We were always running daily, weekly, lesson plans and worrying
> about them all the time and we definitely have to change that somehow
> so we can get back to a breather of being able to step back with that
> and discussing with each other how things are going, what we want to
> do, and those kinds of things. And we didn't have a lot of time for that
> this year.

Pamela's collaboration with Angie was a positive, however. They developed patterns

of working together both in the classroom and outside of the classroom that were

very comfortable for Pamela. As Pamela commented:

> We worked very well together and we both feel very comfortable
> being in each other's room or my room and her room coming in. . . and
> so I think it just worked out really well.

Carl, too, was quick to emphasize the negatives that had occurred over the course of

the year. It must be remembered that he was moving from his position as fifth grade

teacher to a position at the nearby university. For Carl the negative experience in

the collaborative venture was also rooted in fact that the team never did resolve the

issue of how to organize the planning among the team members in a way that was

comfortable for all. Carl had hoped that the all-group discussion about the planning

during the March 16 meeting would break some ground in that arena, but the

resolution never did materialize. As Carl said during the final interview:

> I never felt that my opinion was heard. I never felt that I was
> respected enough to be heard. I guess that's the only thing I can really
> say. That's the one thing I felt really strongly about this year. . .
> Bottom line is I've learned from the experience that even though
> collaboration and teaming I feel is incredibly essential, that
> administrators need to and the teachers themselves, if they are going
> to collaborate, need to be careful and choose very wisely people
> they're going to collaborate with. That all people are not meant to be
> team players and to collaborate and that's been something I've
> learned, because I, and I think I learned it even more this year at the
> university that some people just don't want to work with other
> people.

Janice and Sharon were somewhat more tempered in their responses, almost somewhat more philosophical, if you will. There was a tone of frustration that they had encountered so much stress during the year, but that they as a group had learned from it and now it was time to plan for and look forward to next year. Janice was especially nostalgic about the fact that they had lost some of the fun they were used to experiencing as a team:

> Things flip-sided at--I haven't felt--we haven't had as much fun as a group outside of the class stuff. I don't feel like we've had as much fun, just shoot the bull and laugh, whatever. And that's, I mean, we were--we went through--have been going through a lot of changes. There's just a lot of stuff. And Pamela starting out the year coming in late and you know -- we didn't get off to a good start, I don't think it ever really clicked after that, not like it did last year. So that, I've missed that part of it.

Sharon was perhaps the strongest voice for the positives that are still possible in collaboration. It was her voice that so often was a tempering one. She often acted as a mediator and voice in compromise during team discussion, and her commitment to collaboration was strongly stated as the following excerpt demonstrates:

> I think the benefits outweigh the negatives. It's just we still need, we're still in the process of trying to figure out how this can work for all of us, and not just work for some of us. And you know, I believe that it's the best way to teach. I really do, but it just needs to be something that we can set aside time to do and still have time for reflection so the balance needs to be there, and we're not there yet [laughter]. And I don't know how long that'll take to get to that balance but, no, I see collaborating--I don't think I'm the kind of person that wants to shut my door and be in here by myself.

Angie's end-of year reflections were focused on her original goals of finding some appropriate and effective ways to bring her children, those children identified as having special learning needs, into the general classroom. As discussed in the section above about impact on the students, the end-of-year standardized test scores for the fifth grade were not what these teachers would have liked them to be. The

student outcomes, then, possibly affected Angie's perception of whether her

professional goals were accomplished. As she said during the third interview:

> Katie: I guess what I'm saying, do you feel you've learned about the process?
>
> Angie: Oh, definitely--I've gone from thinking it [inclusion] was the answer to everything to realizing that no there are still some problems and as I tell everybody, it's not the answer for every kid and I think we've convinced administrators that it's not--and I think this year paved the way for special ed. as a department being able to say this is the way we want to do inclusion because--and we've got the experience now, and the scores--to back why we're saying things need to be certain ways and why we can't go one hundred percent inclusion.

Angie spoke of another outcome, for her, however, and that was the establishment of

the positive collaborative relationship with Pamela. During the last team meeting in

June, Angie often entered the discussion with a viewpoint that was in line with

Pamela's, and when Pamela mentioned to the group that she was considering taking a

second grade position in the building and leaving the fifth grade team, Angie fondly

commented that she wanted to 'kill her.'

The team met one last time for the 1993-1994 school year on June 7,

1994. Present for this meeting were the fifth grade teachers, Angie, Marcia, and

myself. Also present was another teacher who was considering joining the team as

Carl's replacement in the fifth grade. Marcia indicated both to me in phone

conversation prior to the meeting and in her opening comments that she had called

the meeting "because I feel it's important with everything you've done this year to

try and end some things up and get things started again for next fall because I know

that [voice dropping] . . . and you guys can work together so well that we want to

keep it going."

The tone of the meeting was a very business-like. The major decision facing

them was whether or not to maintain the grouping pattern wherein the students had

one teacher for language arts and another one for homeroom. Once the teachers
reached a decision on that issue, the conversation turned to the topic of planning. It
is in discussion of this topic that the reality for the teachers of how the pressures
from the planning and almost overwhelming responsibilities took its toll on
collaboration becomes apparent. The teachers reiterated the challenges that faced
the team over the year, but emphasized the continued respect for one another:

> Sharon: This year it was too much of changing everything and we got
> so tied into the new outcomes and the new way of looking at kids that
> we lost that ability to get together as a foursome--always together--
> do fun things together. Everything was just work--and it got a little
> old//
>
> Janice: Cause we were trying to do everything at once.
>
> Sharon: We were trying to do too much.
>
> Janice: We need to let things go.
>
> Carl: And I think we divided ourselves too much--you do this, you do
> this, you do this, and--then boom--we were divided.
>
> Sharon: And we were never back into a group.
>
> Carl: And we never pulled ourselves back together, we were never
> able to do that//
>
> Sharon: And we can't get back into that group then it's gonna fall
> apart//
>
> Carl: And even to the point where we said it and we realized it//
>
> Sharon: But we never//
>
> Carl: But by that time, coming together was uncomfortable//
>
> [murmurs of agreement]
>
> Carl: I guess this will be a good time to say that even though things
> didn't work out this year as well as I know we all had hoped they
> would, I don't think any of the respect for each other or the desire to
> work together, the liking of each other as people has changed one bit
> and I want to say that right up front//
>
> Pamela: I don't think that's changed.

Carl: I don't think it has at all.

Pamela: I think the feeling of doing the work has changed drastically, not the feeling for the four of us, that is still there with me, but the feeling for the work has changed drastically.

Carl: I think that's all of us.

Several points were put out in the open during the brief exchange. First was the fact that the teachers tried to change significant pieces of their routine in one year. Second, it seemed to surface that the division of responsibilities may have destroyed the very strength of the team, their unity and sense of camaraderie. Third, they recognized that there was an evolving sense of discomfort where each teacher knew things just weren't right but there was not a clear sense of how and what to communicate to bring it back together. In terms of impact for the teachers, however, there was still that sense that even though things were difficult, the mutual respect was still there. The impact of the collaboration, at least as articulated in this point in time, at the end of a very busy school year, was a mixture of successes and rough times.

Writing the depiction of the collaboration of these educators at Lakeside Elementary has seemed, at times, to me like writing in shifting sand. One topical description has embedded within it and networked to it other topical discussions that are part of the descriptive and interpretive process. In this last section of the case study of Interdisciplinary collaboration at Lakeside Elementary School, I will link some of those embedded and networked topics into issues and concerns that evolved over the 1993-1994 school year. Much of the description underlying these issues and concerns has been detailed in earlier sections of the case study. What I will do in this following section is to bring the description of the nature and substance of the collaboration together into an interpretive collage of both how the members of the

team perceived the effects of the collaboration as well as how those perceptions influenced and shaped the collaborative process. I will assemble this collage through a discussion of the issues and concerns of curriculum planning and inclusion.

Collaboration as Filtered Through Issues and Concerns

There was often a sense of a daily routine and commonplace occurrences within the collaboration and communication among the educators at Lakeside Elementary School. At other times, the collaboration pivoted around crucial issues and concerns. It is two of these issues and concerns, curriculum planning and inclusion, that I will now address in the final section of the case study pertaining to the nature and substance of the collaboration of this interdisciplinary team. While I will provide enough description of this issues to set the stage for discussion, the focus in this section will emphasize how the issues shaped the collaborative efforts throughout the year.

Curriculum Planning

It has been discussed in the responsibilities of team members section that the primary responsibility for the curriculum planning for the fifth grade students was assumed by Pamela and Sharon. There is a definite chronology in the evolution of this issue and how that evolution impacted the collaboration.

The pattern of Pamela and Sharon planning the curriculum for the fifth grade had been established at the end of the previous school year. As Pamela commented during the initial interview the four teachers had tried to plan as a foursome during the summer and that "it just didn't seem to work." The teachers began the year, then, with the assumption that Pamela and Sharon would plan and Carl and Janice

would secure materials. It must be kept in mind that Pamela did not start the school year until late September due to the auto accident in which she was involved.

Regardless of how the division of responsibilities for planning curriculum evolved, it was clear that as early as the initial interviews in October that it was a difficult situation for all four teachers. Pamela and Sharon were sharing with Angie and Marcia that they felt overwhelmed. During the November 10 lunch meeting, Marcia tried to bring the topic into the open by suggesting that the team get back into the routine of meeting one day a week for planning. Carl spoke of the problem of "not knowing where I'm headed sometimes," but still the solution to this problem was elusive. After Carl, Janice, and Sharon left to return to their rooms, the conversation became much more directed and pointed at the issues from Pamela's perspective. Pamela was assessing the situation as Carl and Janice not being committed to the team effort, but rather they were more content to spend the time in their individual rooms. The following excerpt from the conversation gives some insight into Pamela's sense of ownership of the planning process:

> Marcia: I'm not sure that's all of it. I think part of it is he thinks you and Sharon do such a good job that he doesn't feel he can do it.
>
> Angie: Did Pamela share with you what I told them what they had to do? Turn it over to them. And say okay "you're doing two weeks." And you should have seen the look on Pamela's and Sharon's face when I said that because they said "I don't think I could teach like that," and I said "But you've got to do it," and//
>
> Katie: Clarify for me what//
>
> Angie: To let them do all the planning. Let the other two team members do all the planning and to have Pamela and Sharon teaching their class.
>
> Katie: OK and what was your response?
>
> Pamela: Neither one of us knew, we knew we didn't want to do that, which is why--we couldn't do what they do. And we don't understand how they can do that, not want to be part--I mean, we've tried to

bring them in. And they don't want it--the time commitment, they don't want to do that.

Angie: I was saying they should switch roles. And feel the discomfort of teaching to somebody else's class and--I mean, because that's a valid thing too that they're feeling the frustration of not//

Katie: Knowing where to go//

Angie: Even in how to think--granted, they're not taking the initiative to do it, but--they don't--I mean, you flip/flop and you have to see it from what they're doing//

Pamela: I could not do what they do. I don't know how they--Cause that's essentially what we do when we walk into that room--when you have not had a chance to pre-think//

Angie: Oh, yeah.

Pamela: //and I could not do that all day. I could not not know where I'm going. I couldn't have somebody else write my lesson plans, I don't know how they do that.

Angie: Maybe you should try it.

Pamela: And actually we couldn't even turn over that green notebook--I mean, that's our life's blood. I could not hand that over to somebody and say "here you go, here's all our work."

There are some interesting points that seem to have been made in this exchange.

First, Pamela indicated a strong sense of ownership for the planning process where

Carl and Janice were concerned. She talked of the green planning book being her

"life's blood." She also admitted to being able to turn the curriculum over to Angie,

but not feeling as comfortable with having Carl and Janice assume the same

responsibility that she and Sharon had assumed. She also indicated those things that

she would feel comfortable having Carl and Janice assume responsibility for: the

Turkey Trot, the Christmas crafts, the monthly calendar. While these are important

to the fifth grade curriculum, they do not represent the heart of the content and

substance of the learning activities. A paradox seems to emerge here. Pamela was

quite distressed by this point in the year that the planning was overwhelming, but

she did not seem to see a way that Carl and Janice could participate in the planning process. They had tried it once during the summer, and it didn't work. By November, the topic was one that represented a strain within the team dynamics and was discussed in round-about ways.

It would be inaccurate to imply that Carl and Janice did not participate in discussions of substance about the curriculum. During the November 15 team meeting, Carl was explaining the science experiments pertaining to chemical and physical change. Sharon and Pamela indicated to Carl that they appreciated the refresher on which ones were physical and which ones were chemical. This was one of the few team meeting discussions among all four teachers that addressed specific content and the associated pedagogy to enhance the learning opportunities of the related concepts.

On November 22, Pamela did broach the subject of how the responsibilities could be divided more equally. The team decided that the Monday team meeting would be reserved for looking at the big picture and that the Thursday team meeting would be a touch-base meeting to see where everyone was in the curriculum. The field notes and transcriptions indicate that the Monday topics after November 22 were still very much addressing the routines of fifth grade activities rather than the substantive issues related to content and planning.

In February, Pamela and Sharon drastically changed how they went about the planning for language arts. Rather than provide the detailed lesson plans, they selected broad unit topics and prepared a list of suggested activities that could be incorporated to fit into the overall outcomes of the unit. It was this change in planning that brought the topic to the table during the March 16 all day meeting. Because the plans were more open for individual implementation, the children were

noticing that the projects in the hallway were assuming a different character for each of the classrooms. For Pamela and Angie, this was an improvement. They were able to adapt to the needs of the many children identified as having special learning needs. Carl, Janice and Sharon commented that the children were disturbed by moving away from the fifth grade as a unit. These comments led into a the most open and frank discussion about the planning up to this point in the year:

> Sharon: I think that for our own sanity at some point we need to get to the point where we say Monday, Wednesday, and Fridays we work on lesson plans. Tuesday, Thursday we're in our rooms and we're going to think about lesson plans and I think that's where we need to go in order to get it so that we have that reflection time.
>
> Carl: Okay.
>
> Sharon: That reflection time, so I, and that's something too//
>
> Carl: Well, that cohesiveness, then, maybe we need to set that up in a more solid structure where Janice and I are included in that.
>
> Sharon: I think that needs to be, I think that that's//
>
> Carl: Because we haven't felt, at lest I'm speaking for myself, I haven't felt comfortable doing that, even though I did approach it a couple of times earlier in the school year.
>
> Sharon: Um hum.
>
> Carl: Still, when I was coming in and sitting down the process was stuck.
>
> Sharon: Right.
>
> Carl: And I had interrupted what you were doing, just by coming in and sitting down.
>
> Sharon: And that may be our fault.
>
> Carl: You stopped working and//
>
> Sharon: Because of the fact the two of us have worked at this so long that we know where we're going//
>
> Carl: Yeah.

> Sharon: //with it and so we're always kind of stopping and waiting to see if there's going to be any input. And I think that that's probably, without us meaning to do that may be the perception.

Behaviors during the planning process that Pamela and Sharon may have interpreted as a possible lack of commitment were explained by Carl as a sense of discomfort that he was interrupting the process and not really included. By the time this was discussed at a level of disclosure, Sharon observed that "those roles are pretty much established."

After this exchange, Carl suggested that they try planning as a foursome the next science unit. The topic was electrical charge within atoms:

> Sharon: What do we want, I guess, what do we want them to get from this?

> Carl: The idea that static electricity is caused by electrons moving from one object to another.

The next several minutes of dialogue involved a planning and discussion of the demonstrations and learning activities that would support learning that concept.

The teachers' perceptions of that planning session were mixed. Carl and Janice were very positive about the opportunity for the four of them to plan as a group. Pamela shared in the final interview that the March 16 meeting left her feeling even more uncomfortable. During the June 7 team meeting Pamela shared some of the sources of her discomfort about the planning and why she and Sharon in February had moved from complete comprehensive planning for the fifth grade to planning a list of topics and suggested activities from which all fifth grade teachers could choose:

> Janice: Because I didn't know what the kids in language arts were doing any more. Whereas even though we were a couple of days off maybe, at least there was still that same general basis that we could work from and I felt we really got away from that and I felt that that really took away from what we were.

> [a side comment about Pamela's group of special needs children]

Janice: Well, I know that was a different situation but I'm saying//

Pamela: No, it wasn't just for that language arts group. That had to be for me. That gave me back me. Because, otherwise, what I have given you is me. And it's like handing you a teacher's guide. And you get to pick and choose how you want to do it because you haven't put all of you into that.

The topic of curriculum planning and the impact of that issue on the collaboration was a critical point throughout the school year. Issues of relationships and communication patterns were woven into the issue as were personal boundaries and feelings of comfort. Pamela felt that she had given of herself beyond her comfort level. Janice felt insecure and uncomfortable in participating in the planning at times because, as she said, "I don't have as many ideas as those guys." Carl felt that his efforts to contribute were not heeded. Sharon recognized a structure that had been adopted for convenience may have been destructive from the beginning.

Perhaps through these teachers' reflections and disclosures one can begin to realize that the collaborative efforts of this team represented both integration and disintegration of personal and group goals. While the group, at the beginning of the year, wanted to keep the fifth grade together as a team, personal issues of concern were not being addressed within the context of the entire group. By the time the issue of planning was more openly discussed, patterns had been established and personal perspective were somewhat solidified.

Inclusion

The educators at Lakeside Elementary reflected a prominent national theme in education. That is, there is a prevailing move to integrate the dual systems of education that had in the 1960s and 1970s evolved into separate educational delivery systems funded by Special Education and Compensatory Education programs. As

Martha, the Chapter I Reading Specialist, said in her initial interview: "The principal, Barbara, does want us to go toward inclusion, but that's not the only reason because it is not mandated for Chapter I." Angie, the special education teacher, commented during that initial interview "So, my whole idea of wanting to come into the classroom is that I see it as a better way to serve my special ed. students' needs instead of doing it in an isolated setting." The fifth grade teachers as a team were also committed to having all students who had been identified as having some special needs involved in the fifth grade curriculum throughout the entire day. There was consis-tency and commitment among these teachers with this goal.

These teachers had defined inclusion as having all students in the fifth grade in the classrooms for all instruction. It became clear over the course of the year, however, that the roles and responsibilities and issues of territory and space were not as well defined for these teachers. There were no set guidelines for them to follow as they entered the uncharted waters of providing support for all children in the classroom. Angie had attended some conferences where the topic of inclusion had been addressed and she had also done some reading in her courses at the university, but this exposure was not brought to the team in a formal way. I will describe here how their efforts at inclusion were interwoven into the fabric of their collaborative effort.

Roles and Responsibilities. As I have described in an earlier section of this case study, the teachers struggled with how to define roles and responsibilities as they found themselves sharing spaces in the fifth grade classrooms on a daily basis. Angie was in Pamela's fifth grade language arts room for one of the two hours in the morning that had been scheduled for language arts. There were eleven children that had been identified as eligible for receiving special education services that were

placed in Pamela's room for language arts. At the beginning of the year, Martha was in Sharon's room and Naomi, the Chapter I aide, was in Janice's room to support those children who were on "Martha's list" for Chapter I reading support services. In the afternoon, the children had moved to their homeroom teachers. The children who were blocked into Pamela's language arts class were now dispersed among Carl's, Janice's, and Sharon's room for homeroom classes. Angie went into these three rooms on a rotating, flexible basis for math to serve those same children who were in the morning language arts block. That was the schedule and structure these teachers had decided upon. The implementation of that structure, however, was an evolutionary process.

Although the teachers had not, at the beginning of the year, clear prescriptions of how sharing responsibilities for instruction would look, they had differentiated the way an aide would act in the classroom as opposed to the way a teacher would act. This is not to diminish what contributions the aides could make, but that if Martha and Angie were to be an integral part of this collaborative team, then there were certain roles that all would take within the team structure, and they would not take the role of aides.

Possibly the most important indicator to these teachers that there was a sense of shared responsibility in supporting all students was a condition that Angie and Martha knew in advance the curriculum for the day or for the week so that they could take an active role in instruction and support. This active role would be more of a co-teacher, one who comes into the classroom and brings their expertise into the environment to support all students. As Sharon said at the beginning of the year:

> I see her [Martha] more as a team teacher talking about special needs
> of students, working with individual students, maybe groups of
> students, that are having difficulty and the two of us communicating,

you know, where we need to go next rather than just walking in and
kind of monitoring the room.

The teachers tried to accomplish this foundation work in two ways. First, they
copied the lesson plans for Martha and Angie so that they would be prepared in
advance to integrate into the instruction for the day. Second, they had hoped to
secure time when both of these teachers could be included in the planning. It was
perhaps this common planning effort that signaled for the teachers that Martha and
Angie were truly integrated into the team and providing optimal support for all
students. Angie saw these efforts as positive signs in the beginning of the year:

> They [the fifth grade teachers] like to get together with me. We sit
> down and talk about whether what they're doing is meeting the needs
> of me and special ed. kids which is a real important issue, just the
> fact that they're concerned. They're taking the time to run extra
> copies of all lesson plans for all subjects just so I know what's going
> on in the room even when I'm not there. There's an awful lot of
> sharing of information back and forth which helps, so you're not
> walking in not knowing what's going on in the room. That's a big part
> of the help. Plus, they're very open as to include me or asking me at
> least if I want to be included in things. That's what seems so
> supportive. Whereas other grade levels that I'm working with right
> now seem to not want you to know what's going on and you know, they
> don't, they're not so willing to share and they're very intimidated by
> anybody new.

Although Angie conveyed here the importance of the information the fifth grade
teachers were sharing with her, she also communicated the sense that not all
teachers in the building with whom she was trying to collaborate were as open and
supportive. I will address that perception in the discussion on territoriality.

Martha also sensed that it was important that the teachers share common
efforts in the planning. Initially, the fifth grade teachers had hoped that Angie and
Martha would be able to participate in common planning time with them during the
10:25-11:25 block of time. Angie's schedule did not allow that, and Martha found it
difficult as well:

> I left a block of time on Fridays to talk with the fifth grade during
> their planning time. Well, the first month and a half of school I was
> still going through curriculum changes, schedule changes, and also I
> was inservicing a new person because she hadn't taught before and she
> hadn't been in the classroom, so I found myself very, very busy and I
> didn't get to the meetings. And I haven't, except to talk with them on
> the side.

So, it did not work out that Angie and Martha have common planning time with the fifth grade teachers. That reality affected Angie and Martha in different ways. Martha was somewhat unclear on her role coming into the classroom. For her, this arrangement posed some conflicts and redefinition of her sense of responsibilities for the children who needed special support in reading/language arts. As she said, "So, there's been no direction and there's been no real direction from me except I said to them 'I want to help as much as I can, including all the other children in the room.' " There was an additional factor that posed some dilemma for Martha. She was still committed to serving these children in supporting the development of basic skills in reading/language arts. She was not sure, however, that she was able to address this in the fifth grade curriculum:

> Well, first in Sharon's room, and this is just the beginning of the
> year, I feel that I don't really do enough. But the way the curriculum
> is set up there's nothing else that I can do at that minute without
> interfering.

As demonstrated in the quote from Angie above, there is a mixture of a sense that Martha really was not sure how to best provide support based upon her expertise combined with the sensitivity that Sharon's room really was not her territory. Martha felt that she may have been interfering with the curriculum as planned. The combination of a lack of clear expectations and a conflict in how to best provide these children with support in basic skills in the fifth grade curriculum may have con-tributed to Martha's decision in November to move her support to another classroom.

Angie, however, defined her role and responsibilities in a different way. As depicted in the section on relationships, she and Pamela developed a working relationship that strengthened over the course of the school year. By March, she and Pamela were meeting at lunch time to plan language arts and she had assumed an ownership within Pamela's room as evidenced by Pamela's comment that Angie graded *all* student projects, not just her students'.

The experiences of Angie and Martha depict two contrasting ways in which these teachers adapted to the need to redefine roles and responsibilities based upon a changed structure of supporting students with special learning needs. There was evidence that structural support was not built into their system to maximize their chances for success in this new endeavor. Or at least, they did not see the ways in which they could change that structure to maximize the opportunities. All members of the fifth grade had identified the need to find that time to plan together. It was that common planning time, that communication about curriculum and about students that differentiated for the fifth grade teachers the role of an aide from the role of a co-teacher. Angie and Pamela found that common planning time, and as their end-of-year interviews indicated, they felt that had successfully negotiated those paths of shared responsibilities.

Territoriality. The organizational structures of schools create boundaries the distinguish and delimit spaces for teachers from another. Teachers speak of *my* classroom, *my* students. These bounded spaces were very evident among the team of educators at Lakeside school as well. While they were trying to change that, the sense of "my own space" was still evident. Carl referred to this sense of isolationism during the initial interview:

I don't expect miracles to happen in the course of one year, because I know it's taken me - this is the third year that I've been working with them as a team and it's taken me this long to feel really comfortable sharing everything and taking other people's stuff. When you're in college you do that a little bit when you're working developing lesson plans, you share a lot of ideas. But I remember my first year teaching, it was "this is my classroom, my door is closed" type feeling of teachers in the building. And to go and share amongst each other was almost taboo. And I'm seeing a lot of change in that. A lot of people are seeing how much fun the four of us have together, because we really do just bounce off of each other.

There was almost a sense that these teachers were trying to achieve a balance of maintaining the integrity of their own classroom identity with the collaborative structure that they had hoped to accomplish. One of the themes of discontent about curriculum planning was that Pamela and Sharon did not have time in their own rooms. Martha and Angie alluded to the fear that they were interfering with the classroom teacher when they come into the classroom. Perhaps one of the most eloquent statements of that fear came from Angie during the March 16 team meeting when the team had turned to a discussion of how the tension of curriculum planning had set into motion barriers between the members of the team:

Angie: I think probably what you felt is somewhat how Martha and I feel--in on things.

Carl: [nodding his head in affirmation] Oh yeah, I'm sure, and it's funny for you to say that.

Sharon: [nodding in affirmation] Uh huh.

Carl: Because I never thought of that but it must be exactly what you feel. A little bit outside of everything.

Angie: And I felt that very strongly last year and you just kind of get to the point of "I'm going to get in here and grab the paper and write what I'm going to do." Which is what I do with you guys.

OC: Carl and Sharon are interjecting "right" and Um-hum.

Angie: And the days I can sit//

Sharon: In on the planning//

> Angie: You just pull up between them and you just kind of do it. And
> it is an uncomfortable feeling. But you just kind of have to go "tough."
>
> Katie: Don't you think having been in the classroom breaks that
> barrier a little bit more though because you're there? Or not?
>
> Angie: No. I go through that feeling every day when I open the door to
> walk in.

The fifth grade teachers were also sensitive to the dilemmas faced by the special

discipline teachers in relation to territory. During the midyear interview Carl

referred to possibilities that had not yet evolved in Angie's support of math in the

afternoon homeroom classes:

> Carl: I really wish that she felt comfortable coming into my room
> saying "I know what's going on today, why don't you let me do it," or
> you know, "I'd really like to teach this lesson," those types of things.
> So I'd still like to see that happen.
>
> Katie: What would it take for that to happen, do you think?
>
> Carl: I--I don't know. It's--that's a difficult one because I think
> there have been things said -- and not negative things at all, but it is
> true that Angie's coming into MY classroom. And that's difficult. Even
> though the kids share teachers and they're very comfortable with
> that, each teacher still has their own space. Where Angie doesn't.
> Angie shares everybody else's space. It's not like Sharon and Pamela
> and Janice are coming and teaching in my room, they're not. They're
> still in their room, even though we share kids. And I think that's
> very difficult for inclusive ed. people. I never realized that so much
> until sitting down and talking with Angie -- and, we're friends, so
> that helps it come out a little more than I think it would if we were
> strangers, I don't think anything would be said at all. But uh, you
> know -- I just don't feel comfortable sometimes.
>
> Katie: So you're aware of that, that she's coming into your room --
> you kind of became more aware of that I would guess, after you had
> kind of heard me talk about it at the presentation.
>
> Carl: Yes.
>
> Katie: Were you aware of that through her comments as well?
>
> Carl: Oh, yeah, yeah.
>
> Katie: Okay.

Carl: Yeah, definitely aware of that through her comments, and just through the fact that it didn't turn into what we had talked about it turning into, so obviously there was a--a problem there somewhere, obviously there's a roadblock. But -- it's getting there. I think--the first year that this has really been done, I think if it were three years down the road you'd see a much different story.

As a team, it appears that the teachers did not feel that their efforts at collaboration supported the ideal they had constructed about their vision of "inclusive ed." The common planning time was not secured to effect the kinds of collaboration they had envisioned. The clearly delineated territories of each classroom posed boundaries for Angie and for Martha, and the teachers were not quite sure how to effect the blurring of those boundaries. Angie and Pamela experienced more success than other members of the team, and perhaps this was due to the time they were so insistent upon securing.

Time is not the only factor, however. As indicated in the section on relationships, there was a special relationship that developed between Pamela and Angie. Time together was not structured for them any more than it was for other members of the team. Yet, they were insistent upon building in that time for collaboration. The importance of relationships in this effort at collaboration cannot be ignored. While the structures did influence how these teachers negotiated the spaces and responsibilities related to bringing all children into the general classroom, the relational dynamic between and among all the members of this collaborative team was a strong force in the patterns of this team's definition of 'inclusive ed."

A Case Study in Classroom Collaboration

The collaboration among these educators at Lakeside Elementary School, was by context and by nature and substance, an effort that was focused upon the fifth grade classrooms. Hence, the characterization "classroom collaboration" seems appropriate. The routines, decisions, and dilemmas were directly related to the goals that had been articulated at the beginning of the year by these teachers, and those goals were to plan curriculum and organize assessment for all fifth grade students. The focus of the collaboration was consistent with the goals, as were the team activities. Curriculum, assessment, fifth grade activities, and the fifth grade students provided the focus for the team's collaboration. The collaboration of these educators was complex and mirrored the complexity that has been ascribed to life in classrooms (Lieberman & Miller, 1984). Drawing upon the detail offered within the case study, I suggest the following working hypotheses to guide future research in interdisciplinary collaboration.

Integration of All Children Into Classroom Curriculum

There was overwhelming evidence that the interdisciplinary team at Lakeside Elementary School was successful in maintaining all fifth grade students in a cohesive unit for the 1993-1994 school year. The hallway and the fifth grade activities attested to the fact that common curriculum for all students, including those with special learning needs, was in place. All teachers met as a unit to complete report cards, and again each student benefited from input from at least two teachers. That cohesiveness was threatened toward the end of the year as Pamela and Sharon changed their approach to planning and provided only a broad framework and left detailed planning to individual teachers. The inclusion of all children into the

curriculum, however, was maintained for the entire year. The teachers viewed this accomplishment, for the most part, in a positive light. Thus, the first working hypothesis for classroom collaboration:

1. The hallmark of classroom collaboration, common curriculum and total in-class learning experiences for children with special learning needs, does support integration of all children and special discipline teachers into one learning environment.

Team and Individual Responsibilities

Classroom collaboration embraced children and educators into a complex web of fifth grade life. Each fifth grade classroom had its own identity that contributed to the gestalt of the fifth grade as a unit. Each fifth grade teacher still had his or her own territory through which two groups of students and various other team members moved on a daily basis. There were tremendous responsibilities and requirements for each team member maintaining the integrity at two levels, the classroom level and the total fifth grade. At least two of the team members felt overwhelming pressures in balancing preparation in the room with preparation for the team. The unresolved conflict that emanated from those pressures contributed to the eventual demise of the team at the end of the year. The second working hypothesis relates to that demise:

2. Classroom collaboration requires that team members negotiate as a team ways in which both individual responsibilities and team responsibilities can be met with equity.

<u>The Importance of Dynamics</u>

The members of the Lakeside team were in agreement that the team had fragmented because they established patterns for curriculum planning that were destructive. Only two members of the team had substantive responsibility for curriculum planning. As the other two members attempted to participate in the planning process to alleviate some of the inequity in workload, the patterns of communication had been too well entrenched to overcome. The topics of concern were not addressed until March. Team members were communicating about sensitive issues, but in dyad or in triad situations, which further contributed to the fragmentation of the team. The counselor attempted to act as a mediator, but she assumed that role almost by default and not all team members saw her in that light. This fragmentation and avoidance of open and honest dialogue suggest the third working hypothesis:

3. Interdisciplinary teams in complex settings must attend to issues related to the dynamics of the team, including relationships and communication. These issues should be a regular agenda item during team meetings.

The case study of classroom collaboration has been challenging to construct. Hopefully the detail contained within the case study and the hypotheses emerging from the categories will shed light on further explorations into this phenomenon. While I engaged in this process of inquiry with the understanding and intent that two distinct case studies would be the product, there were some common threads pertaining to interdisciplinary collaboration that were woven through both case studies. It is to those commonalties that I address my comments in Chapter VI.

CHAPTER VI

INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION:
FUTURE DIRECTION AND PROMISE

The thing that distinguishes collaborative communities from most other communities is this desire to construct new meanings about the world through interaction with others. The collaborative community becomes a medium for both self-knowledge and self-expression.
Michael Schrage, *Shared Minds: The New Technologies of Collaboration*, 1990, p. 48.

The stories of two teams of educators who engaged in interdisciplinary collaboration for one school year represent lived experiences that were quite different from one another. The phenomenon of caseload collaboration as typified by the team at Willow Hill was bound to specialized disciplines and specific children. Classroom collaboration, as experienced by the team of educators at Lakeside, pulls energy, activity, and expertise into the daily life and routine of classrooms. There is no suggestion here that the cases of caseload and classroom collaboration observed here can be identified as phenomena that would occur in other settings under similar conditions. It will be left to future research in which sites are selected based upon salient criteria to discover if these typologies of collaboration extend beyond the particulars of this inquiry.

Some broad themes related to collaboration did emerge as the stories of both sites unfolded, however. These themes are suggested here as working hypotheses, as were the hypotheses in Chapters IV and V, to guide the future explorations into collaboration among educators from different disciplines.

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The Primary Importance of Dynamics

In both the Willow Hill and the Lakeside teams, the team members encountered issues that were difficult to bring to the team meetings for dialogue and resolution. At Lakeside, the troublesome issue was the division of responsibilities related to curriculum planning. Patterns of behavior and communication were established that fragmented the team and caused feelings of distress. At Willow Hill, the team operated in a more loosely organized arrangement, so unresolved troublesome issues did not carry the negative valence and emotion that was experienced at Lakeside. The conflict about strict guidelines for eligibility for services, and the question of responsibility for providing support for children with special needs, did create some tension in the Willow Hill team, however.

In both of these case studies the elements of the dynamics of the collaboration surfaced as a critical component in the team operation. In Lakeside, the relationship structure and communication patterns evolved into dyad arrangements. The sensitive issues remained unvoiced to the team as a whole until March. In Willow Hill, the tension about the criterion of eligibility based on regulations further solidified the boundaries that were in place for the specialized disciplines. Both teams had experienced a decline in activity by the end of the year. It is suggested here that while the reasons for decline are complex, and quite different at each site, an important contributing factor in each site pertains to the dynamics among the members of the team.

Collaboration entails attention to and work on the relationship aspects among the team members. Friend and Cook (1992) alluded to the central role that interpersonal dynamics play in collaborative relationships in their use of the term "interpersonal" in conjunction with "collaboration." Communication patterns,

relationships, emotional responses, and personal boundaries are examples of those interpersonal domains that require attention in successful relationships. Interdisciplinary collaboration, as encompassing team process and dynamic similar to other personal relationships, requires attention to the interpersonal domains as well.

A second indication that issues of interpersonal dynamics among group members are paramount in collaborative efforts arose during team member interaction. A sense emerged from team members at both sites that there is something intangible, but readily recognizable, when making choices about with whom to collaborate. Angie spoke of that "feeling" that it was right for her to collaborate with Pamela. Bob spoke of that sense of ease and comfort when talking to another teacher in the district. It is that sense that "this is right for me to be working with this person." The importance of relationship and communication evidenced in both sites suggests the first working hypothesis:

1. The negotiation of elements of dynamics within the team process to every member's personal satisfaction are the *sine qua non* of successful collaboration. These dynamics include relationships, communication, and a sense of equitable distribution of responsibilities within the team.

The Secondary Importance of Structural Elements

Just as the process within the nature and substance of the collaboration assumed a position of paramount importance within the team function at both sites, those elements of structure, although important, emerged as secondary to the eventual success of the team.

It has been suggested by others examining the process of collaboration that time is a prerequisite for successful collaboration (Idol & West, 1991; Nowacek, 1992; Snell & Raynes, 1995). Time is one of those structural elements, like administrative support, that is part of the context within which teams operate. The teachers in both sites acknowledged the fact that they had set aside specific time to collaborate as an indication of commitment to the success of the collaboration. There was support from the administrations in both sites for this collaborative effort. Yet, both teams experienced frustration and a decline in collaborative activity by the end of the year. Furthermore, Pamela and Angie did not have the luxury of large blocks of time during the day at Lakeside. They did, however, capture the time at lunch and after school to collaborate. This suggests a second working hypothesis related to the first.

2. Although structural issues such as time, administrative support, schedules, and space are important in the collaborative process, they are not the *sine qua non* of collaboration. If the relationship aspects are in place, the structural issues will be resolved.

Establishing Team Goals

Within the teams at both sites, there were multiple goals that had been articulated at the beginning of the year. There were team goals that were fairly consistent across all team members. In Lakeside, the common team goal was to provide a common curriculum and learning experiences for all fifth grade students through a revamped curriculum and assessment plan. In Willow Hill, the goal was to provide a coordinated system of support for children receiving both reading and speech-language services. The shared team goals were explicitly stated and

discussed in Willow Hill. In Lakeside, the goal of incorporating all students into the curriculum was clearly stated, but the goal of maintaining all students within the same curriculum in the same time frame was less clearly articulated.

Multiple individual goals were also held by the team members. These goals were often shared with one or two members of the team, but not with the team as a whole. Instances occurred where the individual goals were either met through the course of the collaboration, or the individual goals were in conflict. Bob, for example, was able to feel confident that he had met his goal in the Willow Hill team of learning more about the relationship between language and reading. That goal was not in conflict with the goals of the team. For Pamela, the goal that the fifth grade students engage in the same curriculum on a daily basis was in conflict with her individual goal to adapt language arts instruction for a heterogeneous population in her language arts class. In some cases, as with Angie and Pamela, their personal goals were met outside of the whole team structure.

In both sites, indicators suggested that the team goals and the personal goals were not in concert for all members of the team. One of the key elements of collaboration is that parties engaged in collaboration must be pursuing common goals (Austin & Baldwin, 1991; Friend and Cook, 1992). Educators from specialized disciplines who are collaborating to provide support for children with special learning needs also emphasize the need to establish mutual goals to meet those needs (Morsink, Thomas, & Correa, 1991; Nelson, 1993). In both sites, team members seemed to realize individual goals outside of the team structure. Pamela and Angie developed a dyad relationship; Bob pursued his exploration into the relationship between language and reading after the team at Willow Hill disintegrated. The issue of goals, then, suggests a third working hypothesis:

3. Team goals that have been clearly articulated and developed in concert are an important element within interdisciplinary teams. It is important that team members make their individual goals explicit to the team in order that the team may assume a position of support for realization of individual goals.

The Challenges of Inclusion

It appears from the experiences of the teachers in both Willow Hill Elementary and in Lakeside Elementary that the call to bring coordinated, integrated, unfragmented learning experiences to all students (Allington & Johnston, 1989; Idol, Paolucci-Whitcomb, & Nevin, 1986; Idol & West, 1991; Kauffman & Hallahan, 1993) is being heard at the local level.

Inclusion, as defined as meeting identified needs of all students alongside their peers in the general education context (Snell & Raynes, 1995) was evident in the every day routine of the fifth grade in Lakeside. Students who were eligible to receive special education and reading support were in the general classroom all day. Although the educators seriously questioned, based upon end-of-year test scores, the efficacy of having the students with special learning needs in the classroom all day with only periodic support from the specialized discipline teacher, consensus did emerge among the educators that students experienced positive elements of impact.

Inclusion was also a topic of discussion among the team members at Willow Hill. Although there were no students on their caseloads who had been "included" into the general classroom, team members discussed how to cluster children with special learning needs in classrooms for reading and speech-language support. In addition, the team members often discussed how to bring coordinated and

unfragmented learning experiences to students. Indeed, that was the primary goal of the Willow Hill team.

Although coordinated and cohesive learning opportunities for students was clearly a goal in both teams, it was clear that the educators were experiencing some confusion and frustration at how to best accomplish that goal. It was almost as if there was a strong element of trial and error. Angie had been to conferences during the 1993-1994 school year on the topic of inclusion. She and Pamela spent the better part of a school year negotiating an arrangement for team teaching that was comfortable for them. The team at Willow Hill was somehow thwarted in reaching their goals because they did not share as many students on their caseloads as they had hoped. Their collaboration and attempts to bring a more coordinated support for children having special needs moved to a more informal setting.

A national trend for inclusive models of schooling is emerging (Snell & Raynes, 1995), yet confusion and ambiguity have hampered the processes for implementing these more inclusive models (Allington & Walmsley, 1995; Jenkins, Pious, & Jewell, 1990) From these two case studies of collaboration, it appears that confusion and ambiguity related to implementing coordinated, integrated, learning opportunities for all students leaves educators uncertain and disoriented.

Little guidance and direction was provided for team members as they moved into uncharted waters. The collaboration in each site evolved in idiosyncratic ways in response to the unique origin, goals, and dynamics of the collaboration. The models of collaboration as explicated in both the prescriptive as well as the descriptive literature (Bauwens et al., 1989; Glatthorn, 1990; Idol, et al., 1986; Morsink et al., 1991) did not seem to provide appropriate structure and support for

the educators who were attempting coordination of services, curriculum, and instruction for children with special learning needs.

For the team at Lakeside, the process was especially difficult as they attempted to change the roles and relationships of both general and special educators. In both Willow Hill and Lakeside teams, educators from specialized disciplines spent a part of their lives for one year collaborating with colleagues. Their experiences that were detailed in this research were those most connected with the teams who participated in this research. Each of the special discipline educators, however, Angie, Margaret, Marcia, Bob, Diane, and Jennifer, revealed through their interviews and comments that their lives were complex to a degree that was incomprehensible to the general educator.

In both of these buildings, a strong move developed to bring the specialized support into the classroom. In Willow Hill, that did not happen with Diane, Bob, and Jennifer, a cause for some remorse among them at the end of the year. In Lakeside, both Angie and Margaret spent considerable time in the general classroom, but they were left at the end of the year questioning the efficacy of "inclusion" as it was developing at Lakeside. Test scores for both Chapter I and special education children dropped.

The issue of territoriality and the potential for conflict between the special educator and the general educator (Glatthorn, 1990) arose at Lakeside. Angie spoke of the barrier that she had to cross every day when she entered Pamela's classroom. Angie and Pamela did negotiate that potentially difficult dynamic through shared planning and the blurring of boundaries that separates the special and the general teacher in the classroom. Martha was not as successful in crossing those boundaries.

The challenges facing both general educators and specialized discipline

educators as schools are attempting to become more inclusive are monumental. Bob, Diane, Jennifer, Martha, and Angie were engaged in multiple relationships and bore multiple responsibilities. These challenges suggest a fourth working hypothesis:

4. As schools and districts are moving toward a more inclusive model of schooling for all students, the complexity of the professional lives and the ambiguity of roles facing the educator from a specialized discipline such as reading and speech-language are increasing dramatically. Successful collaboration involving the educator from the specialized discipline will require a reexamination of the current roles and professional responsibilities of those educators.

The hypotheses suggested in this chapter represent a linking of experiences among the educators from two sites. During the time I spent with these educators, I was struck by the kaleidoscopic quality of their daily lives. The stories that have been shared in these case studies are a reasonable construction of their reality for one year. But it was only a portion of their reality, that time they spent in collaborating with colleagues. Their days were filled with events and routine, dilemmas and decisions, joys and sorrows, humor and frustration, and woven through all of that was the effort and energy expended to collaborate, to maintain a relationship with several others under competing pressures. The future of collaboration does hold promise, and perhaps interdisciplinary collaboration as a term will give way to other terms that may better capture the importance that relationships and communication bring to bear on the process. Hopefully, the stories of the future will enhance our understanding of collaboration and pave the way for a clearer direction.

Appendix A

Human Subjects Institutional Review Board Application

$93-08-02$

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
HUMAN SUBJECTS INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (HSIRB)
HUMAN SUBJECTS APPROVAL FORM

> RESEARCH MAY NOT BEGIN UNTIL THE PROTOCOL HAS BEEN REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY THE HUMAN SUBJECTS INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD, WHICH MEETS ON A REGULAR MONTHLY BASIS. PROTOCOLS MUST BE RECEIVED BY RESEARCH AND SPONSORED PROGRAMS AT LEAST SEVEN DAYS PRIOR TO A REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING IN ORDER TO BE ACTED ON AT THAT MEETING. THE FORM MUST BE TYPEWRITTEN, EXCEPT FOR SIGNATURES.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR*   Kathryn Kinnucan-Welsch

DEPARTMENT   Educational Leadership

Office address: 2427 Sangren Hall   Office Phone: 387-3489

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Home Phone: 616 699-7739   (Zip Code)

PROJECT TITLE: Interdisciplinary Collaboration in the Elementary School: A Case Study

PROPOSED PROJECT DATES   From   8/93   To 9/94

SOURCE OR POTENTIAL SOURCE OF FUNDING University Research Fellow

APPLICATION IS   New XXX_____   Renewal_____

Protocols for projects extending beyond one year from date of HSIRB approval must be submitted annually for renewal.

If this proposal is approved by the Institutional Review Board, the Principal Investigator agrees to notify the HSIRB in advance of any changes in procedures which might be necessitated. If, during the course of the research, unanticipated subject risks are discovered, this will be reported to the IRB immediately.

_____   7/30/93
P.I. Signature   Date

*If the Principal Investigator is a student, complete the following:

Undergraduate Level Research _____   Graduate Level Research   XXX

Faculty Advisor Dr. Zoe Barley   Telephone 387-3791

Department: Educational Leadership

_____   8/1/93
Advisor Signature   Date

RECEIVED

Rev. 8/92 All previous forms are obsolete and should not be used. AUG 0 1 1993

1   H.S.I.R.

VULNERABLE SUBJECT INVOLVEMENT (Fill out if applicable)

Research involves subjects who are (check as many as apply)

1. _____ Children (any subject under the age of 18) Approximate age _____
2. _____ Mentally retarded persons
3. _____ Mental health patients
   _____ Check if institutionalized
4. _____ Prisoners
5. _____ Pregnant women
6. _____ Other subjects whose life circumstances may interfere with their ability to make free choices in consenting to take part in research;

_____

_____

_____
(Describe)

LEVEL OF REVIEW

To determine the appropriate level of review, refer to WMU Policy Guidelines for categories of exempted research (Appendix B).

XXX_____ Exempt   (Forward the original application to the Chair of the Department for a cover letter, then forward to HSIRB Chair via RSP)

_____ Subject to Review   (Forward original application plus 8 copies to HSIRB Chair via RSP)

BLOOD PRODUCTS INVOLVED

If your research involves the collection of blood or blood products, then pick up and complete an addendum (HSIRB Collection of Blood and Blood Products Form).

PLEASE TYPE THE REQUESTED PROTOCOL INFORMATION ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES OR USE THE ELECTRONIC FILE AVAILABLE. You may attach additional sheets as necessary and reference the appropriate page.

2

ABSTRACT: Briefly describe the purpose, research design, and site of the proposed research activity.

The goals of this project will be to examine and analyze the nature of the collaborative process among professioanls from different disciplines: special education, general education, reading, and speech and language. The design will be an ethnographic design focusing on procedures appropriate for educational case study methodology, interviews and participant observation. The research will begin with the initial meetings to form the team and will follow the team members as they operate in one classroom throughout the year. Furthermore, the cultural context within which that collaborative arrangement operates will be examined and analyzed to determine what elements of the culture of the school, classroom, and the organization of the collaborative relationship itself either support or inhibit the collaborative process. In addition, the structural context of the classroom, the school, the district, and those forces external to the school (i.e. the state mandates) will be examined and analyzed in terms how it impacts the collaborative process. Interviews, participant observation, and personal journal keeping with will the primary data collection methods. The result will be case study of collaboration based upon two elementary school sites in Lakeview School District, Battle Creek and Portage Public Schools.

BENEFITS OF RESEARCH: Briefly describe the expected or known benefits of the research.

It is intended that this research contribute to the body of knowledge about interdisciplinary collaboration among professionals in elementary schools as educators are faced with the challenges of increasingly diverse student populations.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SUBJECTS: Briefly describe the subject population (e.g., age, sex, prisoners, people in mental institutions, etc.). Also indicate the source of subjects.

Teachers and adminsitrators in two elementary schools.

3

SUBJECT SELECTION: How will the subjects be selected? Approximately how many subjects will be involved in the research? (Attach advertisement for subjects [Cover letters used in survey research are equivalent to advertisements. Script are equivalent in oral solicitation procedures].)

Subjects were selected through prior professioanl interaction with the researcher. There will be approximately 10 subjects involved.

4

RISKS TO SUBJECTS: Briefly describe the nature and likelihood of possible risks, or discomfort (e.g., physical, psychological, social) as a result of participation in the research.

None

PROTECTION FOR SUBJECTS: Briefly describe measures taken to protect subjects from possible risks, or discomfort if any.

None needed

CONFIDENTIALITY OF DATA: Briefly describe the precautions that will be taken to ensure the privacy of subjects and confidentiality of information. Be explicit if data is sensitive. Describe coding procedures for subject identification numbers.

All interviews will be transcribed and identifying comments changed in the transcripts. The oringinal tapes will be coded, locked in the researcher's ofice, and the master list of codes locked in a separate place.

INSTRUMENTATION: Questionnaires, interview schedules, data collection instruments, should be identified. Attach a copy of what will be used in this project. Coding sheets for video-tape or audio-tape data collection procedures are required.

Open-ended ethnographic interviews (Spradley, 1979) will be employed.

INFORMED CONSENT: For further information on writing consents (assents not covered), see the book Informed Consent by T. M. Grundner, on reserve at Waldo Library. Attach a copy of the informed consent and assent (if applicable). Each subject should also be given a copy.

Copy attached

5

Information to Participants

This letter is a description of the research and the protection assured the participants conducted by Kathryn Kinnucan-Welsch titled "Interdisciplinary Collaboration in the Elementary School: A Case Study." This research is intended to provide a description of collaboration among professionals in the elementary school and will take one year to complete. It is understood that the participants will be providing taped interviews. The tapes will be transcribed, and the transcriptions will not include specific identifying characteristics of the data since pseudonyms will replace the names of personnel and location.

Immediately after the tapes have been transcribed, the tapes will be destroyed. Coded transcriptions will be kept for analysis along with a master list of code numbers associated with names of interviewees; the lists of code numbers will be separate from the names. However, it is completely understood that only the researchers will have access to those lists, they will be locked in a secure location, and the identity of the interviewee will be kept confidential.

It is also understood that participation in this study will not affect the employment of any subject. No person other than the researcher will have access to the data, and the researcher is bound not to reveal any professional conduct issues to employer.

Any published results of the research will not reflect the identity of the subject nor the school district site.

Each participant will receive a copy of the information letter to participants. Furthermore, all participants are able to withdraw their consent to participate in this research at any time.

Please contact Kathryn Kinnucan-Welsch, 387-3489 with any questions.

Appendix B

Human Subjects Institutional Review Board Approval

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Date: August 19 1993

To: Kathryn Kinnucan-Welsch

From: M. Michele Burnette, Chair

Re: HSIRB Project Number 93-08-02

This letter will serve as confirmation that your research project entitled "Interdisciplinary collaboration in the elementary school: A case study" has been approved under the exempt category of review by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board. The conditions and duration of this approval are specified in the Policies of Western Michigan University. You may now begin to implement the research as described in the approval application.

You must seek reapproval for any changes in this design. You must also seek reapproval if the project extends beyond the termination date.

The Board wishes you success in the pursuit of your research goals.

Approval Termination: August 18, 1994

xc: Barley, Ed. Leadership

Appendix C

Letter to School Principal

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October 8, 1993

Ms

Dear Ms.

This letter is a formal request to engage in research in   Elementary School on the process of collaboration among multidisciplinary teams. This is a follow-up to preliminary conversations which we have had about my research. The purpose of this letter is to share the details of the research with you and to invite any questions or concerns that you may have.

The purpose of my research is to study in an indepth manner over the course of 1993-1994 school year the nature of the collaborative process among professionals when they come together to form a team to serve children with special needs. I will be conducting this study at two sites including   Elementary School. The teachers I will be observing will be the fifth grade teachers,   and   I will be conducting interviews three times over the course of the year. I will also be observing the team members during their regular team meetings as well as during regular classroom instruction time.

The initial plan is that I will be in   Elementary once a week. This time will include team meetings and classroom observations. The research will not in any way interfere with the normal routines and responsibilities of the teachers involved. In fact, the intent of the research is to capture and describe the normal routines of the teachers and of the collaborative process as much as possible. The focus of this research is on the teachers, not on the students.

I am attaching an information letter about the research which I will be sharing with the teachers. If you have any questions about the research, please feel free to call me at any time at Western Michigan University, 387-3489. I am looking forward to spending some time in   Elementary during the course of the school year. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Kinnucan-Welsch, Doctoral Student
Department of Educational Leadership

attachments

Appendix D

Coding Notes

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Open Coding Scheme
Code Labels and Coding Notes

List of Codes derived from first read through 7/21-8/16

EXAMPLES OF TEXT	CONCEPT	CATEGORY
Team MTG Transcriptions		
#7847 A: They have to summarize and write a complete sentence	summarize	CRCLMACTIV
write a three to five sentence paragraph, and all those things I'm	write a com sentence	CRCLMACTIV
looking for, them doing every day, so you know with my objectives,	objectives	CRCLMINCHILD
plus the objectives that we're grading on.	objectives we're gr on	ASMTCRCLM
#7847 C: I got into trouble today for spinning kids on the merry-go-round.		
A: I heard - you should have heard them in P's room (laughter)		
K: It was a riot.		
C: The acting prinicpal had to come to the room to talk to me.	playground activity	DAILYACTIVITY
#8224 A: We were at a birthday party Saturday night with 200		
people and I think there were four people there that didn't smoke	social activity	PRVTLIFE
#8224 K: You know what they do in Edwardsburg? It's zero hour.	comparing w other dist	COMPAR
Band comes in at 7:15.		
. . . A: In high school we had phys ed and everything but we had		
band for study hall		
OC: This code was really developed based upon code from other project		
#8224 C: Here are the people that I have that didn't show up for con-	listing from p-t conf	PTCONF
ferences, because yours wasn't marked. Janice's was marked. Let me		
know if I've got anybody on here that didn't show up.		

Appendix E

Code Lists

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Code List
Willow Hill

Code Acronym	Description
ARTICULATION	Articulation - a specialized focus in speech-language therapy
ASMT	Assessment - general reference to any assessment procedure
ASMTMAT	Assessment material - specific tests or diagnostic procedures
ASSUMPTIONS	Assumptions - those underlying and often implicit beliefs that guided behavior within the team
BLDG	Building - any reference to conditions, context, activity in Willow Hill Elementary
BLDGADM	Building Administrator - reference to the building principal
CASELOAD	Caseload - any comment pertaining to either the group of children that the participants were serving during the year of the project
CATTEAM	Child Assistance Team - the team of educators at Willow Hill that met regularly to discuss the learning needs of specific children
CLASSROOM	Classroom - any reference to either a specific classroom or to classroom contexts in general
COLLABORATION	Collaboration - comments pertaining to collaboration either among the team or among individual team members with other educators outside of the team
CONFPRES	Conference presentation - reference to the Reading Recovery Conference presentation
DISTRICT	District - any comments about the Pacific Heights District
ED351	ED 351 - the course taught by the researcher at the local university

ESL	<u>English as a Second Language</u> - a descriptive label for students for whom English was not the primary language
EXPERTISE	<u>Expertise</u> - references to a particular expertise either ascribed by the team members to themselves or to another person
GRANT	<u>Grant</u> - the grant from the Pacific Height Foundation that funded the team's trip to Madison, Wisconsin
IEPC	<u>IEPC</u> - a formal meeting required by special education guidelines
INCLUSION	<u>Inclusion</u> - this term was coded both when the term itself was used by the members and when the comments referred to "inclusive ed." students
INDIVCHILD	<u>Individual Child</u> - any conversation about specific children excluding curriculum and assessment activity
INDIVGOAL	<u>Individual Goal</u> - the goals held by the individual team members in relationship to the team activities
INDIVOUTCOME	<u>Individual Outcome</u> - the impact of the collaboration on individual team members
INDIVRESP	<u>Individual Responsibility</u> - the professional responsibilities of the team members
INSTACTIV	<u>Instructional Activity</u> - any reference to a specific instructional activity. These references were usually part of a team member's instructional routine
INSTMAT	<u>Instructional Material</u> - A professional resource that was used during instruction
LANGUAGE	<u>Language</u> - the specialized area of development that has important implications for reading and communication.
LIST	<u>List</u> - the list of children the team members served
MADISON	<u>Madison</u> - the location of the professional conference on the relationship between language and reading
MANDATE	<u>Mandate</u> - reference to rules, regulations, and guidelines. This code most often appeared in conversations about eligibility for services

PLANNING	Planning - reference to any activity in preparation for another activity. Usually in reference to planning for instruction.
PROFDEV	Professional development - any topic that referenced activities that enhanced the professional development of the team members. Examples included attendance at conferences, membership in professional organizations, etc.
PROFMAT	Professional Materials - professional resources, usually related to instruction.
PROFRDG	Professional Reading - professional literature such as books and journal articles
PROGRAM	Program - specific instructional programs, such as those already packaged for computer use
PRVTLIFE	Private Life - any reference to private lives of participants
RCHMETH	Research Methodology - any reference to the methodology of the study excepting the researcher role
RCHROLE	Researcher Role - any reference to the role of the researcher
RDGRECOVERY	Reading Recovery - the specific program of early intervention for first graders
RESEARCH	Research - reference to any research the team members were asked to do. Did not pertain to the Interdisciplinary Collaboration research project described in this document
SCHEDULE	Schedule - the caseload schedule for the individual team members
SPECNDSUPPORT	Special Need Support - any description of support, either form the team members or from other sources, that individual children needed
STOUTCOME	Student Outcome - the impact of collaboration on students as perceived by the team members
TECHVOCAB	Technical Vocabulary - the terminology specific to a specialized discipline

THEORY	Theory - the underlying principles guiding instructional decisions such as Marie Clay's theory of the relationship between language and reading
TIME	Time - any reference to time as a resource
TMACTIV	Team Activity - any comments about the team activities
TMACTIVASMT	Team Activity Assessment - a subcode of team activity. A reference to any time assessment was part of team activity
TMACTIVINSTACTIV	Team Activity Instructional Activity - a subcode of team activity. A reference to instructional activity done or discussed by team members
TMACTIVINSTMAT	Team Activity Instructional Material - a subcode of team activity. A reference to sharing instructional materials during team meetings.
TMDEF	Team Definition - the definition of the team as perceived by the members
TMDYNAMIC	Team Dynamic - any mention of relationships, communication patterns, conflict, support among the team members
TMGOAL	Team Goal - the goals of the team members
TMMTG	Team Meeting - any reference to the team meetings as a topic
TMMTGPROC	Team Meeting Process - the discussion of agenda, turn-taking during conversation, the tenor and flow of the team meetings
TMORIGIN	Team Origin - the factors that brought the members of the team together
TMOUTCOME	Team Outcome - The perceived impact of collaboration on team as a whole
TMTCHNG	Team Teaching - reference to two or more professionals teaching together in one space

CODE LIST
LAKESIDE

Code Acronym	Description
ASMTCRCLM	Assessment Curriculum - reference to the specific assessment activities that were part of the curriculum in the fifth grade Rubrics for projects would be an example of this category.
ASMTDEV	Assessment Development - refers to the specific activities that the teachers engaged in to develop the new assessment procedures
ASMTREPT	Assessment Report - the new reporting system that the teachers in the fifth grade were working on during the year.
BLDG	Building - any reference to activities, colleagues, events at the building level
BLDGADM	Building Administrator - reference to the building principal
CHANGE	Change - anytime the conversation turned to the multitude of changes that the teachers had undertaken. Also used to code discussion about change in education in general but that was seldom used.
CLASSINDIVRESP	Class Individual Responsibility - references to the responsibilities of the fifth grade teachers specific to their own classrooms
CLASSLIFE	Class Life - the description of the routines and events of specific fifth grade classrooms as differentiated to activites common to the fifth grade as a unit
CRCLMACTIV	Curriculum Activity - any activity that was part of the fifth grade planned curriculum
CRCLMINCHILD	Curriculum Individual Child - any reference to the engagement of a particular child in activities pertaining to the curriculum
CRCLMMAT	Curriculum Materials - Materials needed to implement the planned curriculum

CRCLMPLNG	Curriculum Planning- description and discussion related to planning the fifth grade curriculum
DISADM	District Administration - reference to the district administrator, the superintended as well as to the school district in general
DISTRICT	District - comments pertaining to the district in general
GR5ACTIV	Fifth Grade Activity - activity outside of the regular curriculum. Examples included the Turkey Trot, field trips, etc
HALLWAY	Hallway - the hallway connecting three of the four fifth grade classrooms
HUMOR	Humor - those time in the conversation that were touched with humor
INCLUSION	Inclusion - this term was coded both when the term itself was used by the members and when the comments referred to "inclusive ed." students
INDIVCHILD	Individual Child - any conversation about specific children excluding curriculum and assessment activity
INDIVGOAL	Individual Goal - the goals held by the individual team members in relationship to the team activities
INDIVOUTCOME	Individual Outcome - the impact of the collaboration on individual team members
INDIVRESP	Individual Responsibility - the professional responsibilities of the team members
LANGUAGE	Language - the technical terminology of specialized disciplines that might not be understood by all members of the team
OBE	Outcomes Based Education - a reference to broad student outcomes as a way to organize and plan curriculum
PARCOM	Parent Communication - communication with parents
PARIMPACT	Parent Impact- refers to the reaction of parents of the fifth grade students to the changes in program
PARINV	Parent Involvement - discussion related to how to get more parents involved in the fifth grade

PROFDEV

Professional Development - references to those activities that were designed for professional growth, such as conferences, etc

PRVTLIFE

Private Life - comments about the private lives of the team members

PTCONF

Parent-Teacher Conferences- the regularly scheduled meeting between parents and teachers

RCHPROC

Research Process - the process of the research itself, such as description of the questions to the participants

RCHROLE

Researcher Role - comments about role, reciprocity, researcher influence on context

REFLECTION

Reflection - comments made by the teachers that were indicative of their own reflections on their experiences as a teacher and as a team member

SPACE

Space - the bounded space of the classrooms and the relative orientation of the fifth grade classrooms to one another

STACHVMT

Student Achievement - the achievement level of the students, both as indicated by classroom performance and on standardized test scores

STATE

State - comments pertaining to requirements, policy, funding, etc from the state of Michigan

STGROUPING

Student Grouping - the specific organizational pattern in the fifth grade wherein each student had two different teachers during the school day

STMNDT

State Mandate - the state requirements that influenced students and teachers, most often in the form of tests

STOUTCOME

Student Outcome - the impact of the collaboration on the students as perceived by the teachers

STSPECND

Student Special Need - a reference to a specific special need demonstrated by a student, most often in terms of adaptation in instruction

STWORK

Student Work - the specific products of the curriculum

TIME

Time - the reference to time as a resource

TMCOM	Team Communication- the specific communication patterns among the team members
TMDEF	Team Definition - The definition of the team as offered by team members
TMDYNAMIC	Team Dynamic - any mention of relationships, patterns, conflict, support among the team members
TMGOAL	Team Goal - the goals of the team members
TMINDVRESP	Team Individual Responsibility - the responsibility of the members to the team
TMMTGPROC	Team Meeting Process - the discussion of agenda, turn-taking during conversation, the tenor and flow of the team meetings
TMORIGIN	Team Origin - the factors that brought the members of the team together
TMTCHNG	Team Teaching - reference to two or more professionals teaching together in one space

Appendix F

Member Check Form

Date: March 15, 1995

To:

From: Katie Kinnucan-Welsch

Re: Team collaboration project

As I indicated in my memo of January 28, I am interested in knowing
your reactions to my interpretation of the team collaboration
experience last year in   The first draft of the case study is over 100
pages, so I have included for each of you a condensed version
highlighting my interpretations.

I have also included those segments of the case study where your voice
may have been particularly important, and I have shared those pieces
only with each individual team member.

An outline and overview is also attached to help guide you through the
condensed case study.

Please read the attached and make any comments on the attached sheet
and return to me in the self-addressed stamped envelope.   I will make
any changes based upon your clarifications in the final draft.   If you
have any questions, please feel free to call me at home at 616 699-7739.

Thank you again for sharing your lives with me over the course of last
year.

Case Study Comments

Name:

Please address below any issues in the case study that may need clarification. Cite a page number in the condensed version of the chapter for reference. Thanks for your input.

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