School Effectiveness and
School-based Management
Student Outcomes and the Reform of Education

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Student Outcomes and the Reform of Education series is concerned with the reform of public policy-makers, practitioners, researchers and scholars for much of the 1990s, with every indication of more to come with the approach of the new millennium. This series reports research and describes strategies that deal with the outcomes of reform. Without sacrificing a critical perspective the intention is to provide a guide to good practice and strong scholarship within the new arrangements that are likely to provide the framework for public education in the foreseeable future.

1. School Effectiveness and School-based management: A mechanism for development
   *Yin Cheong Cheng*

2. Transforming Schools Through Collaborative Leadership
   *Helen Telford*
School Effectiveness and School-based Management: A Mechanism for Development

Yin Cheong Cheng
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Introduction

Currently, numerous education reforms and school restructuring movements work towards educational effectiveness and school development, not only in the West such as Canada, USA, and UK, but also in the Asia-Pacific regions such as Australia, New Zealand, Mainland China, and Hong Kong. The search of effective schools, the shift to school-based management, the emphasis on development planning in school, the ensurance of school education quality, and the implementation of various school restructuring programs are typical examples of efforts on reform movements. From these reforms, several trends can be observed:

- **From improvement to development**: There is a shift of emphasis from school improvement to school development. In the school improvement tradition, it is often assumed that school goals are clear and static and schools should be improved if they cannot achieve these goals successfully. But nowadays, educational environments are changing very quickly and school goals are not so clear and unchanging anymore. In order to adapt to the changing environments, there is a strong need to continuously develop nearly every important aspect of the school, including school goals, staff, organizational structure, school process, and technology in management, teaching and learning. Continuous school development is necessary for long-term school effectiveness. Conceptually, school improvement is a narrow, short-term and remedial concept. On the contrary, school development is a comprehensive, long-term, and formative concept;

- **From quantity to quality**: A clear shift can be seen from education quantity to education quality. People are not satisfied only with the quantity of educational service provided in the school. They are more concerned about the quality. Whether the quality of school education can meet the high and diverse expectations of school constituencies, and how it can be enhanced and assured become key issues in most of the current educational reforms;

- **From maintenance to effectiveness**: Traditionally, people are more concerned about problems happening in schools, and they make great efforts to avoid troubles and maintain normal school functioning. They often ignore whether or not schools are effective. But now, there is a shift of emphasis from school maintenance to school effectiveness. Maintaining daily functioning is not sufficient to satisfy the need for high quality school education. The present school reforms aim at maximizing school effectiveness to serve diverse educational needs;
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- **From external control to school-based management**: The shift in school management from the external control mode to the self-management mode or school-based management is evident. The traditional centralized management often ignores school-based needs; it is found to be ineffective and too rigid to develop school-based initiative and meet changing school-based needs. In current school reforms, decentralization of power from the central authority to the school level, school autonomy and self-management, and participation of school constituencies are strongly encouraged to facilitate the school-based initiative for school development and effectiveness; and

- **From simplistic techniques to sophisticated technology**: In present school reforms, a clear shift of emphasis from using simplistic techniques to applying sophisticated technology in school management or planning can be observed. Traditionally, it is often assumed that school goals are obvious, static, standard and given by the central education authority. Schools are all under external control and are dependent on the management of the central authority. Therefore, there is no strong need to use any sophisticated management technology to deal with impacts from the changing environments. But now, following shifts in reforms, the use of sophisticated technologies such as the technology of strategic management, development planning, participative management, and quality assurance is strongly emphasized and promoted in schools.

Responding to these trends and developments in educational reforms and school changes, there have been considerable advances in knowledge, research, practice and policy particularly in the areas of school effectiveness and school-based management. But compared with the huge scale of the ongoing education reforms involving numerous schools, staff, and students, these advances seem to be too small to support the implementation of reforms. It is not surprising that many reforms with good will have experienced failure and frustration. There is a strong need for more empirical research and theory building to support the ongoing educational reforms and school restructuring movements. Particularly, at the current stage, how to integrate the different developments in school effectiveness research, school-based management and school strategic management into a coherent framework and to establish a mechanism for the continuous pursuit of school development and effectiveness should be a critical question to be answered if we hope to make any breakthrough to the ongoing reform movements.

This book is developed from my keynote speech presented at the International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement held in Melbourne, Australia in January 1994. In this book, I propose an integrative and dynamic view to understanding the complex nature of school effectiveness and school-based management, and develop a theory for establishing a school-based management mechanism for the pursuit of school development and effectiveness. There are three parts in the book. The first part focuses on the basic issues, ideas and theories of school functions and school effectiveness. The second part explains the theory of school-based management and multi-level self-management, and develops a school-based management
Introduction

mechanism for school development. The third part describes the practice of the school-based management mechanism in terms of leadership, staff development, curriculum change, and school-based change.

School effectiveness is a very vague concept even though it is frequently used in research and practice. Without discussing school functions, it is difficult to understand the concept of school effectiveness. In Chapter 1, school functions are classified as technical/economic functions, human/social functions, political functions, cultural functions and educational functions at the individual, institutional, community, society and international levels. According to the nature of school function, there may be as many as twenty-five categories of school effectiveness. From this classification, we can see that the traditional conception of school effectiveness is over-simplistic, making wrong assumptions about the complicated relationship between categories of school effectiveness. New directions should be proposed for studying school effectiveness. In Chapter 2, eight models are introduced to explain and assess school effectiveness from an organizational perspective. They are the goal model, resource-input model, process model, satisfaction model, legitimacy model, organizational model, ineffectiveness model, and total management model. How these models are related to the categories of school effectiveness, and how school effectiveness can be maximized on the multiple criteria are important questions in research and practice. These issues are discussed in the light of a dynamic perspective proposed in Chapter 3. According to this perspective, a school may be assumed effective if it can adapt to the changing internal and external environments and achieve the multiple goals of its multiple constituencies in the long run.

The rise of school-based management is closely related to the pursuit of school effectiveness. The theory and characteristics of school-based management are introduced in Chapter 4 to explain how school-based management can be developed as the necessary condition that facilitates schools to pursue school development and dynamic effectiveness. Also, the advantages of school-based management can be further developed and reinforced by the integration of the concepts of strategic management and self management at multi-levels in the school (Chapter 5).

In addition to the theory of school-based management and multi-level self-management, school process characteristics should be taken into consideration if we want to establish a school-based mechanism for pursuing school development and dynamic effectiveness. In Chapter 6, through generalizing the matrix conception of the school process, a new concept called layer management is introduced and used to construct a comprehensive unit for management. Matrix conceptions of school technology and school culture are developed to facilitate the understanding of internal school functioning. A principle of congruence is proposed to explain the effectiveness of the internal school process and direct the activities of management, teaching and learning. Finally, based on the school-based management theory, the multi-level self-management concept, the layer management concept, the matrices of school technology and school culture, and the principle of congruence, an effective school-based management mechanism is proposed for practice in school (Chapter 6).
The concept of the mechanism is new even though it is based on the integration of recent developments in theory and practice. Its theory is considerably different from traditional thinking and therefore its practice is correspondingly different from what people are now doing in schools. Leadership is the driving force for developing, establishing, and implementing this mechanism. Its nature and functions should be reconceptualized in the light of the theory of the mechanism. New concepts of strategic leadership and layer leadership are proposed and explained in Chapter 7.

Staff development and curriculum change are the key elements of current educational reforms. Whether they can be successfully implemented or not often directly influences the development and long-term effectiveness of the school. Based on the new ideas of the school-based management mechanism, the management of school-based staff development and school-based curriculum change should be different from the traditional practice. Chapters 8 and 9 introduce the alternative management models.

School changes can be divided into externally imposed school changes and school-based changes. The school-based management mechanism provides a framework for facilitating continuous school-based changes in the direction of long-term school development. In Chapter 10, the theory and strategies of managing school-based changes are developed with insights from the new mechanism.

Since the theories and ideas proposed in the above chapters are different from the traditional thinking about school effectiveness and school-based management, a new set of implications can be drawn for research, policy, and development for the ongoing or future educational reforms and school restructuring movements.

I hope researchers, educators, teachers, educational administrators, policymakers, reform consultants, and all those involved in school reforms would have opportunities to reflect on current developments and develop their schools successfully from a more comprehensive perspective. I believe this book can make a contribution to creating such an opportunity and can benefit the ongoing and future efforts on school development and effectiveness in different parts of the world.
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