

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN
THE GOVERNANCE OF MANITOBA'S
SECONDARY SCHOOLS

by
JOHN BIRNIE

A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the nature and role of student participation in the governance of Manitoba's secondary schools.

The data for the study was collected by a questionnaire and from group interviews with students of Manitoba's secondary schools. The data was treated descriptively. Analysis entailed relating structures for student participation and perceptions about the effectiveness of those structures to the following variables: size in terms of enrolment; school type (public, private); and the nature of student participation in the administration of secondary schools.

The data collected for this study revealed that students generally were unaware of how their schools were governed. Students had limited knowledge of the various structural formats for student government. Students indicated that their participation in the governance of their schools is limited and expressed their desire to be more involved.

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CHAPTER I

OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to investigate the nature and role of student participation in the governance of Manitoba's secondary schools. The study sought answers to the following questions:

1. What are the characteristics (type and size) of Manitoba's secondary schools which have provision for student participation in school administration?
2. What structures exist for student participation in the administration of Manitoba's secondary schools?
3. What is the nature of student participation in the administration of Manitoba's secondary schools?
4. Are structures for student participation in the administration of Manitoba's secondary schools related to school characteristics such as type (public, private) and size?
5. How, if at all, might the effectiveness of student participation in the administration of Manitoba's secondary schools be increased?

Significance

Educators often cite three basic reasons why students should participate in educational decision-making. Student involvement is a means to channel student interests and efforts into responsible activities and to prevent the disruption of the educational process. Another reason for student involvement in making decisions is to train students to be contributing, participating members of a democratic society and prepare them to cope with problems of the future. A third consideration supporting student participation in educational decision-making is that students ought to have their interest represented in the decisions affecting them.

Students who attended the Manitoba Association of Student Councils meetings and who participated in interviews for the purpose of this study, indicated general dissatisfaction with the role of students in the administration of their schools. This study will reveal what functions students feel are necessary to maintain an effective student representative body.

A student's experience with their student government is an encounter with representative government and collective decision-making. It is highly probable that the students' involvement in this process will contribute to the development of their general attitudes and responses toward the organizational, bureaucratic dimensions of the school and society in general. This study will explore some of these attitudes and responses.

Framework and Definitions

This study examined the structure, nature, role and effectiveness of approaches to student participation in the administration of schools. In this study four structures were identified in advance: a) the traditional student council, b) the student-faculty senate, c) the student advisory council, and d) ad hoc student groups.

The traditional student council is structured according to a charter or constitution which usually includes: name of the organization, purposes of the organization, power and authority of student representatives, organization and membership, qualifications and duties for officers and members, committee structure, meeting schedule, advisor, responsibilities, amendments and by-laws. This student body generally promotes school spirit, raises money, and sponsors academic, recreational, and social activities.

The student-faculty senate consists of representatives from the student body and the faculty. This group usually functions in open meetings, using rules of common courtesy to govern discussion. The senate reacts to issues brought to it by the school administrators or students, and recommends action that would be acceptable to the senate. This body does not necessarily implement decisions but lets the groups involved carry out any recommendations.

The student advisory council is a less formal group and is usually composed of the principal, some concerned faculty members, and a group of students. No parliamentary

procedures are followed and this council operates less formally in advising the principal. There is generally no charter or constitution.

Ad hoc student groups may be of any size and be representative of any group. An issue comes up and a group of students organize to deal with it in the best way they know how. As these issues change so do the students attracted to them, but these issues become incentives for new, informal student structures in the school setting.

The areas of involvement for student participation in administration of schools used in the questionnaire were identified by Ronald Armstrong (1972:3-6) and illustrated as follows:

- (1) instructional methods
- (2) curriculum planning
- (3) dress and appearance regulations
- (4) extracurricular activities
- (5) student publications
- (6) student tutoring program
- (7) selection of textbooks
- (8) selection of personnel
- (9) discipline regulations

Student roles in the decision-making process are described in terms of three levels of participation. These three levels of participation have been modified, as recommended by the students in the pilot group, from a study by Sherry Arnstein (1969) on citizen participation in urban

development. Her work suggests that gradations of citizen participation might similarly characterize participation in the administration of their schools.

Arnstein's conceptualization of citizen participation has two levels. At a general level she characterizes it as citizen power, token power and non-participation. Her second level of citizen participation is more specific. Overall, the Arnstein (1969:217) conceptualization can be summarized as follows:

General Level of
Citizen Participation

"citizen power"

"tokenism"

"non-participation"

Specific Levels of
Citizen Participation

citizen control
delegated power
partnership

placation
consultation
informing

therapy
manipulation

In this study the students of the pilot group felt that the use of Arnstein's general categories would be appropriate but that the specific categories would require adaptation when soliciting information from student representatives about the nature of student participation in secondary schools. The adaptation of Arnstein's approach to the purposes of this study can be illustrated as follows:

General Levels of
Student Participation

Specific Levels of
Student Participation

"student power"

setting the objectives
approving the objectives

"token power"

consulted about the
objectives
informed about the
objectives

"non-participation"

students do not participate

D. Murphy's (1974:8) outline of the functional requirements for an effective student body was used to examine the effectiveness of the student representative bodies identified in this study. According to Murphy an effective student body must adhere to:

- (1) leadership training
- (2) getting people involved
- (3) evaluation
- (4) fact-finding
- (5) resolutions
- (6) projects and activities
- (7) public relations
- (8) committee structures
- (9) record-keeping
- (10) co-operation and communication

Method

The data for the study was collected by a questionnaire and from group interviews with students. The questionnaire which appears in Appendix A was developed and sent to the presidents of student bodies of Manitoba's secondary

schools as listed in the Manitoba Association of Student Council's Mascalogue (a resource catalogue for High School Students, 1976-1977) during the month of June, 1977. The questionnaire was also distributed to student representatives of Manitoba secondary schools attending the Manitoba Association of Student Councils (M.A.S.C.) workshop in September of 1977. Interviews with groups of students were held at the M.A.S.C. workshop in September and at subsequent M.A.S.C. workshops during October and November of 1977. The interviews involving groups of students dealt with the questions outlined in the questionnaire.

The data was treated descriptively. Analysis entailed relating structures for student participation and perceptions about the effectiveness of those structures to the following variables: size (in terms of enrolment); type (public, private); and the nature and role of students' participation in the administration of secondary schools.

Limitations

The study was limited by the following factors:

1. A few respondents complained of the length of the questionnaire and this yielded some incomplete papers.
2. Many of the respondents had only a short involvement as a student representative and felt their contribution for information requested was necessarily limited.
3. Due to the cost of printing material the questionnaire was administered to a limited number of student representatives.

Assumptions

With the demand for increased numbers of skilled decision-makers in our society, it seems reasonable to give students the opportunity to become more involved and effective in making decisions. Students should share in the decision-making process in schools. It is possible to further student participation in the decision-making process in educational systems.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This review involves an examination of literature related to structures for, areas of, roles of, and functions for student participation in the administration of secondary schools. Much of the recent literature related to student involvement in schools centers on student rights and their legal status, rather than reference to student participation in the governance of their schools. The literature selected for this paper tends to agree on the need for student participation in the decision making process of our schools, but one finds a lack of agreement as to the areas and roles of involvement for students.

Representative Student Structures

A representative student structure is an organized group that participates in school decisions and activities. The structure has official recognition in the school. The traditional student council, student-faculty senate, student advisory council, and ad hoc student groups have been selected for review because they represent a cross section of the many kinds of student structures.

D. Murphy (1974:1-6) relates the strengths and weaknesses of these structures.

The Strengths of the Traditional Student Council

- (1) attracts interested (academic) students who can get things done and voice opinions
- (2) uses parliamentary procedure for the orderly discussion of issues
- (3) teaches parliamentary procedure to representatives
- (4) allows for active participation by interested students
- (5) teaches practical skills that will be useful throughout life
- (6) supports the democratic process.

The Weaknesses of the Traditional Student Council

- (1) attracts interested, academic students who don't always perceive what is on the disgruntled student's mind
- (2) uses parliamentary procedure as a game that the bright student plays well
- (3) teaches practical skills, but usually takes so much time at it the student concerns rarely get dealt with
- (4) has inadequate minority representation
- (5) spends too much time and energy on mock elections and staging political party conventions, rather than on getting involved in real political situations.

The Strengths of the Student-Faculty Senate

- (1) functions with few rules and regulations to inhibit

discussion

- (2) is small enough to allow for airing of all members' views
- (3) enables students and staff to present a united front
- (4) provides format for in-depth study of an issue of concern to the school
- (5) is problem-centered.

The Weaknesses of the Student-Faculty Senate

- (1) functions so loosely that discussion gets bogged down
- (2) is so small that the majority of students feel little or no representation
- (3) waters down student concerns
- (4) often does not deal with variety of issues
- (5) deals with individual problems of members rather than school problems.

The Strengths of the Student Advisory Council

- (1) provides for discussion between students and the principal
- (2) through its format, encourages students to present viewpoints openly and spontaneously
- (3) encourages the active, regular participation of the principal
- (4) stimulates discussion about more issues and problems than does a more structured student group
- (5) promotes active participation by its members.

The Weaknesses of the Student Advisory Council

- (1) has no built-in mechanism for carrying out decisions
- (2) sometimes frustrates student representatives because discussion, rather than solutions and action, is the main activity
- (3) provides little opportunity for students to develop and document positions
- (4) often results in discussion of individual student grievances rather than major student issues
- (5) does not have objectives which are readily understood by the student body.

The Strengths of the Ad Hoc Group

- (1) captivates the genuine interest of the student
- (2) is free to establish its own work schedule
- (3) seeks practical solutions
- (4) can dissolve when issues have been treated
- (5) is not hampered by traditional meeting agendas
- (6) has natural leadership.

The Weakness of the Ad Hoc Group

- (1) ignores regular leadership training
- (2) often cannot implement its solution
- (3) may not be able to provide continuous service to students
- (4) is difficult to control because of its looseness.

Murphy feels that the ideal student structure is the one that involves all groups in the school. School

community is a catch-all title used by educators to include students, faculty, administrators, custodians, supporting personnel, guidance counsellors, parents, and other structural community groups.

Not everyone shares Murphy's enthusiasm for shared decision making. Bruce Johnstone (1969:209) suggests that rather than the usual structure of shared decision-making we should think in terms of student power through various models of informal, indirect, and lower-level participation such as consumer preferences or lower-level communications at the course level. F. Kerlinger (1968) argues against giving students decision-making power. He bases his arguments on legitimacy, responsibility, competence, and he explains how their application would disqualify students from participation in governance.

Areas of Student Participation in Administrative Decisions

Opportunities for student involvement in school decision policies are numerous. They include decisions about such areas as building sites, curriculum content, salaries, textbooks, instruction methods, student discipline, student activities and student government. The role that students exercise in these areas is determined by the administration. Ronald Armstrong (1972:3-5) summarizes several publications that involve students in planning, evaluating and strengthening school programs and policies.

Instruction Methods

Wight (1970) contends that there is too much teacher-determined activity in the classroom which stifles creativity and may impede learning. Goals, methods, and subject matter are traditionally decided by the teacher. The most common traditional teaching method has been the lecture, an excellent means for imparting information but structured to preclude the participation of students.

Wight's solution is the use of small groups to guide students in assuming responsibility for their own development and learning. Students learn to work together, communicate and reinforce each other in their efforts to learn.

Flemming (1970) sees student evaluation in the classroom as another means of involvement. He feels that teacher evaluation by students is a valuable technique for student participation on the secondary level.

Curriculum Planning

A study by Trump and Hunt (1969) notes that seventy-five percent of secondary schools experiencing student protest reported criticism of the curricular program. Lohen (1973), Elserood (1970), Ferguson (1970), and Flemmings (1970), all cite the need for curriculum reform to increase the relevance of course offerings and content.

Ideas about the role of students in curriculum planning range from students offering suggestions for

courses to students doing the teaching. Brammer (1968) and Gudridge (1969) both suggest that students could successfully teach a course. Ashbough (1969) indicates there is a general consensus that students should have some institutionalized means of regular participation. The usual means, according to Bailey (1970), Elserood (1970), and Gudridge (1969) is for students to hold memberships with faculty and staff on curriculum committees.

Dress and Appearance Regulations

Trump and Hunt (1969) report that dress codes and appearance regulations account for the greatest number of complaints in schools experiencing student protests. The regulations range from hair length, skirt length, clothing styles and political expression. According to Gudridge (1969), such regulations often represent a previous generation's personal tastes in fashion.

Student unrest and protest become loud and clear when students were suspended and expelled for seemingly petty violations of appearance. Flemmings (1970) and Gudridge (1969) propose sufficient variability in a dress code to allow for personal expression, various subcultural "uniforms", or ethnic identification. As long as a student's appearance does not, in fact, disrupt the educational process, or constitute a threat to safety, it should be no concern of the school.

Extracurricular Activities

The elimination of all barriers to participation in extracurricular activities has been suggested by Erickson (1969), Flemmings (1970), and Gudridge (1969). The North Carolina task force recommends fees required for student participation be kept low to encourage the economically disadvantaged to become involved. It also suggests that grade requirements for membership and office-holding in clubs be eliminated.

Student Government

Student governments are often considered training devices for democratic participation. Flemmings (1970) observes that certain administration or faculty-imposed restrictions or qualifications for student council membership deprive a considerable number of students of representation. Bailey (1970) contends elimination of academic requirements would provide a more representative student council.

Just as the literature indicates some students are under-represented in student government, it suggests that the student governing body is under-represented in the policy and decision-making activities of the school. Brammer (1968) maintains that the student council often serves as a mechanism to siphon off student energies into a meaningless exercise. Armstrong (1974:5) states: The student council, if genuinely representative of student needs and opinions, can serve as an ideal instrument of

institutionalized communication, conveying the interests of the students to the board of education and the school administration.

Student Publications

Much of the literature concludes that student publications provide expressions of student opinion and are a source of communication with faculty and administrators. Drawing on court decisions, Gaddy (1971) states that the only restrictions administrators can place on the issuance and distribution of student publications are those in effect in the adult community, because students are guaranteed the constitutional rights of freedom of speech and expression.

The American Civil Liberties Union (1968), also citing court decisions, states that administrators can prohibit publication and distribution of material, whether school sponsored or independent, only if it disrupts the educational process, is of a libelous nature or constitutes a threat to safety. Gaddy (1971) notes that the mere presence of obscene language or material in poor taste does not necessarily justify prohibiting publication or distribution.

Roles of Student Involvement in Administrative Decisions

A student's decision-making role in administering the school can range from a passive position to an active

one.

The levels of student participation were adopted from S. Arnstein's (1969:217) ladder of citizen participation. The ladder can be illustrated as follows:

<u>General Level of Citizen Participation</u>	<u>Specific Levels of Citizen Participation</u>
"citizen power"	citizen control delegated power partnership
"tokenism"	placation consultation informing
"non-participation"	therapy manipulation

The non-participation or passive position is described as manipulative and therapeutic. She feels that these two areas have been designed by some to substitute for genuine participation to enable administrators to "educate" or "cure" the participants.

She goes on to describe degrees of tokenism as informing, consultation and placation. Under these areas, however, the participants lack the power to insure that their views will be heeded by the administrators. The participants have no assurance of changing their position as the administrators retain the continued right to make decisions.

Effective participation in decision-making is considered as partnership, delegated power and citizen control. These are the degrees of citizen power - the participants are able to negotiate or take full managerial

power. Arnstein admits this is a simplification but feels it makes the reader aware of how major distinctions between levels of participation might be characterized.

As a result of the unrest in schools and universities during the 1960's, several publications support a more active participation by students in the decision-making policies of their schools. H. Entwistle (1971:35) states that the case for pupil participation in school government in a democracy derives largely from the assumption that the disciplinary and socializing processes of the school are an important source of adult attitudes towards rights and duties, towards political authorities, law and order and the perception of one's capacity to alter the framework of the society in which one lives.

R. Kleeman (1972:6) states that students are not easily fooled when it comes to having a hand in making decisions that affect their lives in school. The farsighted school is changing its organizational chart to provide an adult who has the job of representing the students.

Joan Chesler (1975:230) describes several school experiences that have attempted to follow the format of partnership, delegated power and student control. Some of her findings were as follows:

1. In schools where students had initiated the program, student control increased.
2. High personal investment seems to increase the feeling of ownership and the desire to control.
3. After three or four years of intense participation, initiators of a program are increasingly able to give up control and pass on leadership to another group.
4. Generally the group to whom initiators pass on leadership share similar, but not exact goals.
5. The impetus for starting an innovation is similar in most cases: the initiators are experiencing pain in their current school setting.
6. Where power-sharing is not adequately provided, it fades, and the concept itself falls into disrepute.

Many authors indicate that schools operate on the basis of nonparticipation or mere tokenism on behalf of students' input toward decision-making policies. Wittes (1970:18) suggests that students never have direct representation in policy-making, and are rarely consulted in advance regarding their advice or influence. Student councils and student publications that are advised and censored by faculty and administration do not serve an effective political function. P. Stickney (1972:23) presents arguments for and against student participation. The pro

arguments he lists are:

- (1) the contrasts between institutional professions and actions
- (2) the sophistication of today's students
- (3) the need to educate students in democratic living
- (4) the contributions students could make to improve higher education
- (5) the improvement of instruction.

The objections to student participation are summarized as follows:

- (1) students will dominate the academic society
- (2) the immaturity of students
- (3) the brief involvement of students
- (4) the ignorance of professional values
- (5) the interference with study and gainful employment.

Functions Involved in Maintaining an Effective Student Representative Body

D. Murphy (1974:23-27) outlines functions needed to maintain an effective student representative body. They are as follows:

- (1) leadership training
- (2) getting people involved
- (3) evaluation
- (4) fact-finding
- (5) resolutions

- (6) projects and activities
- (7) public relations
- (8) committee structures
- (9) record-keeping
- (10) co-operation and communication
- (11) budgeting

B. Levin (1977:113) offers some specific suggestions needed to maintain an effective student representative body.

1. Ask for student's opinions. Survey them on current issues. Hold forums on school programmes and organization. Develop a mechanism for the expression of student ideas and set aside some money to implement those judged (by students and staff, perhaps) to be most worthwhile. Inform students of changes before they happen. If the input is significant and brings results it will begin to seem natural.
2. Give students meaningful tasks. Refer proposed curriculum or rule changes to them for comment. Ask for student positions on current issues. Request them to submit annual briefs on their concerns. Set up staff-student task forces to resolve problems and suggest changes. Make it routine, not exceptional, to have student input.
3. Provide resources to student organizations. Student councils should have some private office space and some

secretarial assistance. Students should select their own advisors and administer their own funds. Relevant student activities should take place during school hours.

4. Make participation a part of the curriculum. Offer credit courses in group dynamics, or school governance, or organizing skills. These courses could fruitfully combine a rich theoretical element with practical activity.

If some of these fundamental suggestions are not applied to our schools, a likely alternative will be for students to drift into the indifference and cynicism that already characterize far too many students today.

Conclusion

The literature on student participation in school decision-making emphasizes the need to develop positive student involvement with school systems. It becomes apparent that an increase in student participation has become an established trend. Educators seem hopeful that increased involvement of students in constructive educational decision-making will be reflected in decreased student disruption of the educational process. "If you don't want them to tear it down, let them build up" could well be the motto of educators who have recognized the value of channeling student energies into constructive action for educational improvement.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH PROCEDURES

The purpose of this study was to describe and analyze some factors that relate to the roles of the student representatives in the governance of their schools. This focuses on the following questions:

1. What are the characteristics (type and size) of Manitoba's secondary schools which have provision for student participation in school administration?
2. What structures exist for student participation in the administration of Manitoba's secondary schools?
3. What is the nature of the role students play in the administration of Manitoba's secondary schools?
4. Are structures for student participation in the administration of Manitoba's secondary schools related to school characteristics such as school type (public, private) and size?
5. How, if at all, might the effectiveness of student participation in the administration of Manitoba's secondary schools be increased?

Construction of the Instrument

The design of the questionnaire used in this study was influenced by the related literature and by the students involved in a pilot study. The students involved in the pilot stage were student representatives from the Selkirk Regional Comprehensive Secondary School of Selkirk, Manitoba.

The questionnaire that was used in the study was composed of six sections. Each section contained instructional guidelines complete with an example. The first section required information on school type (public, private) and the student enrolment of the school. Students involved in the pilot study had indicated an interest in the characteristics (type and size) of Manitoba's secondary schools which have provision for student participation in school administration.

The second section of the questionnaire was also initiated by the students. The students were interested in the percentage of schools in the province with student representation and some reasons why certain schools had no student representation.

The third section of the questionnaire was designed to solicit information on the various student representative structures. Students of the pilot study felt some direction regarding information related to the various structures would benefit student respondents. Murphy's (1974) outline of the various types of student structures was selected as a guide.

The fourth section solicited data on areas of student involvement based on R. Armstrong's (1972) concepts. The fourth section of the questionnaire also dealt with the role students perform in the various areas of involvement. The students of the pilot study recommended some modification to S. Arnstein's (1969) levels of citizen participation for the purposes of clarity in assisting student respondents in selecting their level of participation.

The fifth section requested data on student views regarding the effectiveness of various student functions, as outlined by D. Murphy (1974), in the administrative decision-making process for their schools. The length of this section was a concern of the pilot respondents, but the format was accepted to obtain the required information. Finally, the sixth section requested the views of student representatives as to how satisfied the respondents were with their student structure, the nature of student involvement, and their roles of involvement in the governance of their schools.

Administration of the Questionnaire

The study was conducted during the months of June, September, October and November of 1977. The survey was implemented with the aid of a questionnaire and interviews with student groups. The questionnaires sent out in June were addressed to the student presidents listed in the Manitoba Association of Student Councils (M.A.S.C.) catalogue with a stamped self-addressed envelope for their

return. A total of forty-eight questionnaires were returned of the one-hundred and forty-nine administered. The low percentage (32.2%) return can possibly be attributed to the time of year and length of the questionnaire.

The initial intent was to only survey student president representatives but with the low percentage of returned questionnaires, and because of what appeared to be some bias in content, a wider student representative response was deemed more beneficial. As a result, arrangements were made to distribute the questionnaires to students attending the M.A.S.C. workshop in September of 1977. One-hundred and twenty-three questionnaires were completed by student representatives (school presidents, vice presidents, newspaper representatives, school newspaper editors, student sport representatives, etc.) bringing the total completed questionnaires to one-hundred and seventy-one. The results of sections one, two, three, four and five of the questionnaire were analyzed and summarized.

Student group interviews were held at the M.A.S.C. workshop in September and subsequent M.A.S.C. regional workshops held during October and November of 1977. Students were asked to discuss and react to various questions from the questionnaire. The interviews with students proved invaluable as students openly expressed their feelings and views about the survey questions. These discussions were manually recorded and summarized.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

This chapter summarizes the information collected during the survey. The summary is presented in six sections as outlined in the questionnaire of Appendix A. The first section presents information on school type (public, private) and student enrolment. The second section contains data on the number of schools with and without a student representative body. The third section contains information on the type of student representative structures in the schools. The fourth section presents data on areas of student involvement and the role of the student in these areas. The fifth section contains data on student views regarding the effectiveness of various student functions in the administrative decision-making process for their schools. Finally, the sixth section summarizes the student representatives' views as to how satisfied the respondents were with their student structure, areas of student involvement, and their roles in the administrative decision-making process for their school.

Sizes and Types of Schools with
Student Representatives in the Sample

The questionnaire results revealed that the majority of respondents attend public schools and represent schools with a student enrolment of less than four hundred students. A small percentage of secondary public schools have an enrolment of more than eight hundred students and none of the secondary private school representatives indicated they attend a school with an enrolment of more than four hundred secondary students. (see Table I)

TABLE I

SCHOOL TYPE AND SIZE
WITH STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

School Size with Student Representation	Public	Private
Total Student Representation	158	10
Less 400 Students	114	9
400 - 800 Students	30	1
Over 800 Students	14	0

The Presence of
Student Representative Bodies

Of the total responses (171), only three indicated that the school did not have a student representative body. The reasons given for not having a representative body were as follows:

- "lack of interest"
- "no funds"
- "lack of knowledge"
- "no need for one"

Two of the schools were public schools and one was a private school. The private school and one public school had a student enrolment of less than four hundred students. The other public school had an enrolment of approximately four hundred students.

Types of Student Representative Structures

Four types of student representative structures were identified in the survey (student council, student-faculty senate, student advisory council and ad hoc student groups).

A fifth structure was to be identified by the respondent if the four defined structures did not apply to their school. (see Table II)

TABLE II
 DISTRIBUTION OF THE TYPES
 OF STUDENT STRUCTURES
 CLASSIFIED BY TYPE AND SIZE OF SCHOOL

School Type School Size	Student Council	Student Faculty Senate	Student Advisory Council	Ad Hoc Student Groups	Other
Public	125	5	10	0	5
Private	8	1	1	0	0
Less 400 Students	98	3	9	0	3
400 - 800 Students	24	3	1	0	1
Over 800 Students	11	0	1	0	1

The type or size of school does not appear to effect the choice of student representative structure. The public and private schools both indicate that the student council is most commonly followed. This structure has a constitution or charter which usually includes: name of the organization; purpose of the organization; power and authority; organization and membership; qualifications and duties for officers and members; committee structure; meeting schedule, advisor, responsibilities, amendments and by-laws. This student body generally: promotes school spirit; raises money; sponsors academic, recreational and social

activities. A few schools indicated their choice for the student-faculty senate, student advisory council and a format of their own design. Schools that designed their own structure indicated that there were fragments of similarities from each of the described structures. None of the schools followed the ad hoc student group structure as defined.

Areas of Student Involvement and the Nature of Their Actual and Desired Participation

This section presents summary information about the various areas of student involvement, how students participate in these areas and how they want to participate in the various areas of involvement (see Table III).

In four areas of participation (classroom instructional methods, course curriculum planning, selection of textbooks, discipline regulations) students were informed of their involvement and indicated that they would like to be consulted. The students indicated that they were informed about student tutoring programs and that was how they wanted to participate.

With regards to dress and appearance the students were consulted about the methods and indicated they wanted to approve the methods. Extracurricular activities, student tutoring and student publications were the areas of involvement that students actually participated the way

TABLE III

THE FREQUENCY OF STUDENT RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ABOUT
THE NATURE OF THEIR ACTUAL AND DESIRED PARTICIPATION
IN THE SELECTED AREAS OF INVOLVEMENT

Selected Area of Involvement	Frequency of Actual Student Participation			Average Response of Actual Student Participation			Frequency of Desired Student Participation			Average Response of Desired Student Participation			
	Setting the Methods	Approve the Methods	Con-sulted About the Methods	Do not partic-ipate	Student Partic-ipation	Setting the Methods	Approve the Methods	Con-sulted About the Methods	In-formed About the Methods	Do not Partic-ipate	In-formed About the Methods	Con-sulted About the Methods	Do not Partic-ipate
Classroom Instructional Methods	4	11	22	43	informed	11	22	57	28	14	57	28	14
Course													
Curriculum Planning	6	3	35	43	informed	9	20	56	39	9	56	39	9
Dress and Appearance	21	13	21	27	informed	45	18	36	18	8	36	18	8
Extra Curricular Activities	85	15	26	3	setting	80	19	24	9	6	24	9	6
Student Publications	94	5	9	22	setting	82	8	8	7	19	8	7	19
Student Tutoring Program	6	2	13	58	do not partic-ipate	10	4	19	22	30	19	22	30
Selection of Textbooks	4	4	17	82	do not partic-ipate	16	10	47	32	26	47	32	26
Selection of Teachers	2	5	3	121	do not partic-ipate	15	17	34	36	29	34	36	29
Discipline Regulations	12	4	33	36	informed	23	29	55	23	5	55	23	5

they wanted to participate. In the area of teacher selections, students did not overall participate and indicated they would like to be consulted.

Effectiveness of the Student Representative Body

This section summarizes the frequency of student responses to questions about the effectiveness of their student representative body. In this section items from the questionnaire are grouped and summarized under the following functions in Table IV.

- I. Leadership Training
- II. Committee Structure (getting people involved)
- III. Evaluation
- IV. Fact Finding
- V. Resolutions
- VI. Projects and Activities
- VII. Public Relations
- VIII. Elections
- IX. Co-operation
- X. Record Keeping
- XI. Budgeting

The responses related to leadership training (see Table IV - Section I, Page 41) indicate that students who have confidence in voicing opinions, who have the initiative to get things done, and who have a desire to contribute

towards an improved school community are generally the students attracted to the elected positions. Many of the students attended leadership workshop sessions sponsored by the Manitoba Association of Student Councils, but the questionnaire reveals that few schools initiate leadership programs on their own.

The questions that centered on school community involvement through committee structures (see Table IV - Section II, Page 41 - 43) revealed that occasionally students, student representatives, teachers, and administrators were involved in meetings, making decisions, and organizing various events. A student representative body was seldom regarded as a "do nothing group". The recorded response always was identified in reference to the opportunities for students to become involved in student representative meetings.

Seldom did student representative bodies evaluate (see Table IV - Section III, Page 44) how certain tasks were completed or how effective they as representatives were in completing specified tasks designated to them. Occasionally students felt they had learned practical skills from their involvement as a student representative that would be useful throughout life. Occasionally the student representatives felt the student representative body carried out all its duties according to what they were required to do.

The majority of student representatives revealed they seldom have fact-finding (see Table IV - Section IV,

Page 44) means for student concerns by using surveys and questionnaires. Student representatives indicated that their energy was directed more for the benefit of the school than themselves.

The students indicated that occasionally student representative meetings had objectives, were conducted with purpose, and were successful in implementing resolutions (see Table IV - Section V, Page 45 - 46) that were accepted by administrators. Student representatives conduct business by vote through formal and informal resolutions on an occasional basis.

The students established various committees and projects (see Table IV - Section VI, Page 46) to help organize and conduct school activities but seldom established school policies or guidelines for the school.

The student representatives generally meet regularly for meetings but seldom use these meetings to formulate individual and group grievances for presentation to school administrative officials. The student representatives indicated that students would occasionally complain about the publicity (see Table IV - Section VII, Page 46 - 47) for events and activities regardless of the student representatives efforts to publicize upcoming events.

Elections (see Table IV - Section VIII, Page 47 - 48) for the most part are held in the spring; occasionally outline the officers duties clearly; have mark standings for students wanting to participate; attract more interested

students who are aware of student views and conduct their elections on a serious campaign.

The students usually have a written system for wording resolutions, keeping records, and handling mail. (see Table IV, Section X, Page 49) Students indicated that rarely were they unable to fulfill their financial obligations. (see Table IV, Section XI, Page 49) The questionnaire suggests that for the most part there is a good rapport between student representatives, teachers and administrators.

Student Comments on Student Structures,
Student Areas of Involvement and
Roles in Administrative Decisions

The majority of students regardless of the type of school, size of school, or nature of the student representative format indicated they were satisfied with their present representative structure. Students indicated that some changes could be made but few elaborated as to what those changes should be. The following are some of the comments students made about student structures:

"No, there should be more interest."

"Yes, our structure did the job."

"Yes, quite satisfied although it was a little disorganized."

"Yes, quite satisfied. One does always hope, however, for ever increased co-operation by all students in the following years."

"Yes, I feel that in this structure every person can voice their comments."

"Fair, it seems it could be streamlined more."

"Yes, the structure is good but students need leadership training and encouragement."

"Yes, however, some adjustments to the construction will be required next year to facilitate greater student participation and involvement in council decisions."

"Yes, the student structure became very helpful throughout the year when we had to define the rules of someone's authority and also for general proceedings."

It became evident that there are many ways to organize student governments, but the students appeared to be most satisfied when they were allowed unlimited participation. This participation was most appreciated when centered on student needs and when given some freedom to exercise the responsibility of conveying the students interests to the school community.

The percentage of students satisfied with the areas of involvement was lower than the percentage of students satisfied with their student structure, but again the majority were comfortable with their activity in most areas of involvement. Students made it clear they would rather be consulted than informed about the various areas of involvement. Here are some student comments on this topic:

"I was satisfied in most of these areas, and have no major complaints."

"No, students should become more involved in areas such as extracurricular, student publications and discipline regulations."

"Yes, I am satisfied because many of these areas involve the school board which we cannot do anything about it."

"Yes, I feel the administration allowed us to do what we thought would be best for us."

"Students didn't have time to get involved."

"Greater enthusiasm would be appreciated."

It became obvious that students react in a similar fashion as adults when it comes to being informed rather than consulted. The students generally are not opposed to their involvement in many areas. What objection they have stems from the method of introduction into various levels of participation.

The student comments on their role in making administrative decisions revealed a high percentage of discontent amongst the representatives. The student representatives were concerned about the apathy of students towards decisions that affected them, rather than the opportunities open to students to get involved.

"Student involvement was okay."

"I was not entirely satisfied with the roles of student involvement in the administration of our school."

"Students always hope for more control but in many areas (eg. - selection of teachers) student suggestions should be important but not prevailing."

"Students aren't aware of many administrative decisions."

"Generally, okay."

"More student involvement needed."

"Greater student involvement must be encouraged and promoted."

"No, I feel that students should play a much larger role in the administrative of the school."

"On the whole, students are happy to remain uninvolved and allow administrators, staff and student representatives to make decisions."

TABLE IV

THE FREQUENCY OF STUDENT RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS
ABOUT THE FUNCTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS OF THEIR STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE BODY

Function	Question No.	Functional Area	The Frequency of Student Responses About Functional Effectiveness				Modal Response
			Yes, Always	Yes, Occasionally	Yes, but Seldom	No, Never	
I. Leadership Training	16.	Did your school elections attract interested students who can get things done and voice opinions?	63	73	18	3	Yes, Occasionally
	17.	Did any of the student representatives attend leadership workshop sessions?	55	40	22	41	Yes, Occasionally
	18.	Did the student representative body arrange for leadership programs to be conducted in your school?	6	18	11	109	No, Never
II. Committee Structure (getting people involved)	1.	A lot of people call student representatives a "do nothing" group. Did you think that your student representative body fits this category?	2	49	35	74	Yes, but Seldom
	4.	Many student representatives are concerned about the lack of student involvement in their school activities and events. Did you have a lack of student involvement in your school activities and events?	44	73	28	13	Yes, Occasionally

TABLE IV (Cont'd)

THE FREQUENCY OF STUDENT RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS
ABOUT THE FUNCTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS OF THEIR STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE BODY

Function	Question No.	Functional Area	The Frequency of Student Responses About Functional Effectiveness				Modal Response
			Yes, Always	Yes, Occasionally	No, Seldom	Never	
II. Committee (Cont'd)	9.	Many schools have difficulty getting students to run for a student representative position. Did your school have this difficulty?	38	54	26	43	Yes, Occasionally
(getting people involved)	15.	Many student representative bodies become a select, elite club rather than a representative governing body. Did your student representative body fall into this category?	7	30	33	89	Yes, but Seldom
(Cont'd)	26.	Did anyone teach parliamentary procedures to student representatives in your school?	44	38	28	50	Yes, Occasionally
	27.	Was parliamentary procedure used for the orderly discussion of issues during the student representative body meetings?	42	51	32	34	Yes, Occasionally
	29.	Did your student representative body meetings allow students to present viewpoints openly and spontaneously?	107	33	13	5	Yes, Always

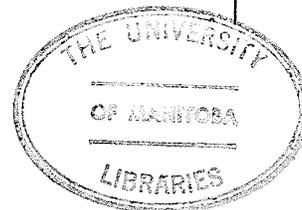


TABLE IV (Cont'd)

THE FREQUENCY OF STUDENT RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS
ABOUT THE FUNCTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS OF THEIR STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE BODY

Function	Question No.	Functional Area	The Frequency of Student Responses About Functional Effectiveness				Modal Response
			Yes, Always	Occasionally	Yes, but Seldom	No, Never	
II. Committee Structure (getting people involved) (Cont'd)	5.	Do at least 50% of the teachers in your school get involved with the student activities outside the classroom?	80	42	22	16	Yes, Occasionally
	6.	Were teachers invited by the student representative body to get involved with student representative decisions and activities outside the classroom?	58	59	32	8	Yes, Occasionally
	7.	Are the school administrators invited by the student representative body to get involved with student representative decisions and activities outside the classroom?	52	50	32	22	Yes, Occasionally
	8.	Are the students invited by the student representative body to get involved with student representative decisions and activities outside the classroom?	79	54	22	3	Yes, Occasionally

TABLE IV (Cont'd)

THE FREQUENCY OF STUDENT RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS
ABOUT THE FUNCTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS OF THEIR STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE BODY

Function	Question No.	Functional Area	The Frequency of Student Responses About Functional Effectiveness				Modal Response
			Yes, Always	Occasionally	Yes, but Seldom	No, Never	
III. Evaluation	19.	Did the student representative body specify a standard for evaluation on how well each task was completed?	2	10	36	110	No, Never
	20.	Did the student representative body specify a standard of evaluation for the personal effectiveness of each student representative in your school?	5	9	19	121	No, Never
	30.	Did any of the student representatives learn any practical skills that would be useful throughout life?	39	85	24	3	Yes, Occasionally
	40.	Did your student representative body carry out all its duties according to what they were required to do?	69	65	8	2	Yes, Occasionally
IV. Fact Finding	21.	Did your student representative body have a fact-finding means for studying student concerns?	9	38	51	61	Yes, but Seldom

TABLE IV (Cont'd)

THE FREQUENCY OF STUDENT RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS
ABOUT THE FUNCTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS OF THEIR STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE BODY

Function	Question No.	Functional Area	The Frequency of Student Responses About Functional Effectiveness				Modal Response
			Yes, Always	Occasionally	Yes, but Seldom	No, Never	
IV. Fact Finding (Cont'd)	28.	Did the student representative body deal mostly with individual problems of members rather than school problems?	5	18	57	79	Yes, but Seldom
V. Resolutions	22.	Many student representative bodies conduct business through formal resolutions which are voted on by the student representatives. Did your student representative body conduct business in this way?	67	44	29	19	Yes, Occasionally
	23.	Many student representative bodies conduct business through informal suggestions which are voted on by the student representatives. Did your student representative body conduct business in this way?	30	47	46	34	Yes, but Seldom
	24.	During meetings, many student representatives consider and vote on resolutions or bills. Was your student representative body successful in adopting and implementing a resolution that was approved by the principal?	53	52	14	23	Yes, Occasionally

TABLE IV (Cont'd)

THE FREQUENCY OF STUDENT RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ABOUT THE FUNCTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS OF THEIR STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE BODY

Function	Question No.	Functional Area	The Frequency of Student Responses About Functional Effectiveness				
			Yes, Always	Yes, Occasionally	No, Never	Modal Response	
V. Resolutions (Cont'd)	25.	The student representative body meetings are generally conducted according to some rules of operation. Were the student representative body meetings conducted with purpose and were the objectives clear?	78	58	18	2	Yes, Occasionally
VI. Projects and Activities	34.	Did your student representative body establish various committees to help organize and conduct school activities?	94	43	13	7	Yes, Always
	35.	Some student representative bodies feel that they should play a part in establishing school rules and policies. Did your student representatives have a major responsible role in revising and developing school rules and discipline codes in your school?	9	30	45	68	Yes, but Seldom
VII. Public Relations	2.	Representative bodies are charged with the responsibility of reporting back to the students they represent. Did your representative body communicate the events and their results?	69	54	31	6	Yes, Occasionally

TABLE IV (Cont'd)

THE FREQUENCY OF STUDENT RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS
ABOUT THE FUNCTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS OF THEIR STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE BODY

Function	Question No.	Functional Area	The Frequency of Student Responses About Functional Effectiveness				
			Yes, Always	Yes, Occasionally	Yes, but Seldom	No, Never	
VII. Public (Cont'd) Relations (Cont'd)	3.	Students often complain about the publicity related to events and activities in the school. Did you find this to be the situation in your school?	7	52	44	55	Yes, but Seldom
	32.	Did your student representative body meet for official business on a regular basis? (At least twice monthly)	105	30	18	6	Yes, Always
	36.	Did your student representative body ever claim the right to present individual and group student grievances to school district officials, using the student representative body as a first step?	6	28	41	72	Yes, but Seldom
VIII. Elections	10.	Were the student representative responsibilities made clear to the students before the elections took place in your school?	86	31	27	15	Yes, Always
	11.	Many schools hold their school elections in the spring. Did your school hold the elections in the spring?	119	9	3	24	Yes, Always

TABLE IV (Cont'd)

THE FREQUENCY OF STUDENT RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS
ABOUT THE FUNCTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS OF THEIR STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE BODY

Function	Question No.	Functional Area	The Frequency of Student Responses About Functional Effectiveness				
			Yes, Always	Yes, Occasionally	No, Seldom	Modal Response	
VIII. Elections (Cont'd)	12.	Many schools have a regulation regarding mark standings for students wanting to participate as a student representative candidate. Did your student representatives have to meet any specific mark standings?	57	10	11	80	Yes, but Seldom
	13.	Many school election positions attract interested, academic students who don't always perceive what is on the average disgruntled student's mind. Has this occurred in your school?	4	51	61	41	Yes, but Seldom
	14.	Many students and teachers contend that schools spend too much time and energy on mock elections and staging political party conventions, rather than on getting involved in real political situations. Did you feel this to be the case in your school?	2	7	24	121	No, Never
IX. Co-operation	37.	Did your student representative body cooperate with administrators regarding administrative decisions in your school?	74	40	20	16	Yes, Occasionally

TABLE IV (Cont 'd)

THE FREQUENCY OF STUDENT RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS
ABOUT THE FUNCTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS OF THEIR STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE BODY

Function	Question No.	Functional Area	The Frequency of Student Responses About Functional Effectiveness			
			Yes, Always	Yes, Occasionally	Yes, but Seldom	No, Never
IX. Co-operation (Cont 'd)	38.	Did the teachers co-operate with the student representative body regarding student representative decisions in your school?	68	56	23	2
	39.	Did the administration co-operate with the student representative body regarding student representative decisions in your school?	60	65	17	7
X. Record Keeping	33.	Criticism directed at student representative bodies often include references to sloppy working in resolutions, inaccurate files, and inefficient processing of student representative mail. Did your student representative body have a written system for wording resolutions, keeping records, and handling mail?	47	45	33	33
	31.	Fund raising usually has been a major task for student representatives. Was your representative body able to fulfill your financial commitments?	106	40	9	2

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to uncover some factors that relate to the roles the student representative bodies in the governance of their schools. The data collected for this study indicates that students generally were unaware of how their schools were governed. Students had limited knowledge of the various structural formats for student government. Students also indicated in this study that their participation in the governance of their schools is limited and the respondents expressed their desire to be more involved.

A study by Alexander and Farrell (1975) on secondary schools in Ontario concluded that students were generally unaware of how their schools were governed as well. This situation presents a paradox in our educational system. The paradox of course lies in the fact that secondary school administrators indicate that one of their goals is to teach students the skills to live in a democracy. M.A.S.C. (Manitoba Association of Student Councils) has been attempting to improve this situation with limited support. This situation will remain relatively unchanged unless students, teachers and administrators work together in providing an

atmosphere to improve the awareness of student potential in the governance of their schools. The following text provides some discussion on how students react to their roles in the governance of schools.

The Importance of School Type & Size

The results of this study indicate that the type of school has no effect in the choice of student representative structure, nature or role of the student in maintaining a student representative body. However, many students felt that the size of the school effects the opportunity for students to participate actively. The respondents in the group interviews felt a smaller school enrolment allowed more opportunity for students to participate actively. G. Wittes et al. (1975:259) support this with their statement: the smaller the school the more opportunity there is for students to participate actively.

Student Structures

The student representatives indicated that the student council was the most commonly used structure, the representatives felt this structure was suitable for their needs. It must be pointed out that many of these students were unaware of other structural arrangements.

The size or type of school had very little effect on the choice of student representative structure. One can

conclude that the type of structure does not affect the attitudes and behaviour of students to any great extent in the school. The student representatives are the students that appear to get the benefits from an organizational format. This experience seldom reaches the students at large.

It would not appear to be particularly profitable to invest a large amount of time and energy in instituting changes in one's constitution or structural format. B. Johnston (1969:209) supports this when he suggests that, rather than the usual structure of shared decision-making we should think in terms of student power through various models of informal, indirect, and lower level participation such as consumer preferences or lower-level communications at the course level.

D. Murphy (1974) is not convinced that structural arrangements are most beneficial and he outlines steps to be taken for change in various structural formats that may enhance involvement in decision-making. This will demand more direction from teachers and administrators in establishing the processes necessary to promote decision-making by the students.

The survey revealed that certain administrators prefer to keep students uninformed about decision-making expertise. F. Kerlinger (1968) agrees as well against giving students decision-making power. He basis the argument on legitimacy, responsibility and competence. This attitude is most restrictive for improving students awareness on how

to make responsible decisions. The basis for this attitude is fear. Alexander and Farrell (1975) contend that people are unlikely to attempt to work together to effect changes if they are afraid of one another and afraid of outside authorities. It is known that fear is a powerful inhibitor of innovative (which usually means risk taking) behaviour.

Nature and Role of Students in Decision-Making

The results of this study reveal that student representatives indicate that their actual participation does not match their desired participation. Only three (extra-curricular activities, student publications, student tutoring programs) do students actually participate in the manner which they desire. The other areas (classroom instructional methods, course curriculum planning, dress and appearance regulations, selection of textbooks, selection of teachers, discipline regulations) the students either are informed or do not participate. The results indicate they want to at least be consulted.

These results are described by S. Arnstein (1969: 217) as "token degrees of involvement" which include informing, consultation and placation. She explains that students under this directive lack the power to insure that their views will be heeded by the administrators. The participants have no assurance of changing their position as the

administrators retain the continued right to make decisions.

The uprisings in American secondary schools of the 60's did not seem to have much impact on the schools in Manitoba. As a result, many educators assume that there is no need for more student involvement and perhaps students should be left alone. I feel this assumption does not improve the decision-making skills level of participation. Part of the difficulty lies with the students. If the students appear to be unwilling or unable to show the ability to accept certain tasks and responsibilities, many educators find it easier to dictate policy. It is the administration that must take steps to make students aware of their potential in making decisions by supplementing this awareness with programs to develop these skills. Students must be allowed a great deal of patience and given continuous support to build confidence in order that they even begin to make progress with responsible decisions. It will mean that educators will have to be prepared to give up some of their own power and authority on a shared basis with students.

Functions Involved in Maintaining an Effective Student Representative Body

All organizations must perform various basic tasks to survive. The student representative body is no exception. D. Murphy (1974:23-27) outlines functions needed to maintain an effective student representative body. These

tasks include: building student leadership; recruiting representatives for student government; having regular evaluations; streamlining school election procedures; collecting fact-finding data; drafting, publishing and introducing student government resolutions; sponsoring school projects and fund-raising projects; and keeping a good relationship with the principal.

Groups of students interviewed felt the student representative body that is allowed to have freedom of expression, develop mutual respect with the principal - a respect that is facilitated by staff members to promote the student representatives' functions - is considered an effective atmosphere for developing decision-making skills.

The effective student government will develop a mechanism to keep students well informed of important issues that are under discussion. From the relationship that develops with the principal, staff and fellow students, student representative members will come to feel that not only can they speak their minds, but they can also effect important changes through co-operative efforts. Student representatives will then make decisions once they consider the well being of the school. If the students are allowed to exercise their experience in a democratic atmosphere they no doubt will feel a greater appreciation of the values of the democratic process. Educators must set forth these democratic values so that students can learn by direction and example.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following conclusions and recommendations summarizes data collected from the questionnaire administered, interviews with students, and from the related literature.

Type & Size

One can conclude from the results of this study that the type (public, private) or size of school did not appear to effect the choice of student representative structure, nature and role of maintaining a student representative body. Groups of students interviewed felt that schools with larger student enrolments had more difficulty in providing an opportunity for students to participate actively.

Several students recommended a home-room system for schools that have home rooms which meet together daily. The home-room period provides an ideal setting during which council proposals can be discussed by all students among themselves; council discussions can be explained; coming events promoted and opinions can be polled by room representatives to report back to council with. Some of the

larger schools adopt a grade or "house system" with selected or elected representatives to discuss and communicate school business back to the school.

Structures

The most common representative structure used in the administration of Manitoba's secondary schools is the traditional student council. The student advisory council, student faculty senate, and school initiated representative structures were used by only a few schools. The type of structure did not appear to affect the attitudes and behaviour of the general student body. Any benefits of structural procedures are limited to students who take part in these proceedings.

As a recommendation, the formal structure of a student representative body should be designed with the following objectives in mind:

1. It must provide representation of all interested parties.
2. It should facilitate a two-way flow of information and opinion, from students to council, and from council back to students.
3. It should allow the creation of an executive which assumes responsibilities for the general affairs of the representative body.

Meetings should be held regularly if possible, on the same day each week in the same room, so that students

can schedule their affairs in order that they may attend. It is important that meetings be open to all and be well publicized. Meetings that are well organized will be more effective in the long run. Most students have busy schedules and if meetings are chaotic in nature it creates frustration with valuable time lost. An agenda should be prepared in advance and distributed so that students may prepare and voice their concerns.

A responsible chairperson to conduct meetings is important. Discussions at these meetings should be productive and everyone should be allowed to voice their concerns. Cutting off a good discussion because of time is a mistake. It is better to continue with the meeting or arrange another as soon as possible. The chairperson must keep the discussion on topic and attempt to get reaction from students who do not readily speak up. Groups often waste good ideas from members who do not talk as loud or often as the rest.

Nature and Role of Student Participation

One may conclude that there are several considerations supporting student participation in educational decision-making. Student involvement is a means to channel student interests and efforts into responsible activities and to prevent the disruption of the educational process. Secondly, participatory democracy through sharing in actual decision-making activities is the best approach for the

relatively sheltered school environment. Thirdly, if students are to be considered a legitimate interest group, they ought to have their interests represented in the decisions affecting them. Students do not have the right to disrupt the proper activities of the school in seeking such representation.

The majority of students indicate in this study that they only participate in 30% of the areas of involvement outlined and indicated a more desired participation in the remaining 70%. Students under a directive of "token degrees of involvement" lack the assurance of changing their position as the administrators retain the continued right to make decisions. Lack of incentive and fear of shared responsibility by students, teachers and administrators has limited involvement in decision-making skills for students in Manitoba's secondary schools.

The phrase "student apathy" has become a well worn excuse used by student leaders, teachers and administrators to explain the lack of student involvement. Joel Lohen (1973:14) contends that students facing the prospects of lengthy periods in school, need more involvement and responsibility in their curriculum. If the school refuses to deal with these issues, it will surely continue to alienate its students. The curricula that schools advance may be only a master plan of a technology which does not understand the genuine human needs of people. Thus, schools have functioned to maintain the status quo rather than to innovate.

The main function of schools should be to enable students to develop meaningful goals and prepare them to meet these goals.

It seems necessary to note that any effort to increase student involvement will require commitment to the purpose and respect for those who we wish to be involved. It is imperative that educators take steps to involve students, even though success is likely to be difficult. If one argues that students must show maturity before being given responsibility denies the fact that there are few situations in which students illustrate a behavior more mature than what they are told. The key in promoting involvement lies in making students realize that their participation is wanted and valued. Eventually the students will gain skill and confidence.

Effectiveness of Student Participation

It has been realized that to have an effective student representative body several functions are necessary. These functions include: building student leadership; recruiting representatives for student government; having regular evaluations; streamlining school selection procedures; collecting fact-finding data; drafting, publishing and introducing student government resolutions, sponsoring school projects and fund-raising projects; keeping a good relationship with the principal.

If student representatives are allowed responsible

freedom of expression and an opportunity to develop mutual respect with teachers and administrators, students will eventually make decisions that benefit the school. Students given this opportunity will begin to appreciate the values of a democratic process. Administrators and teachers are in the position to be the motivating force behind students to enhance their ability to make decisions.

Recommendations were made by student representatives, D. Murphy (1974), and B. Levin (1977) on how to maintain an effective student representative body. These recommendations are as follows:

Building student leadership can occur in many ways. Workshops provided by the Manitoba Association of Student Councils, the government, or the schools themselves can assist students in developing leadership skills. Interrelationships are useful and students should be given an opportunity to work with principals, councilmen, mayors, provincial and federal delegates or representatives of these respective positions. Skilled leaders with some background in conducting intensive leadership sessions can be invited by school divisions to speak with students.

Recruiting representatives is often difficult for schools. If these positions are clarified so that students can understand the responsibilities and merits for their participation, it will assist in recruiting representatives. Providing a clear job description will allow students to measure success or failure more readily. Developing a

course credit and allowing school time for student oriented business will give students more incentive to get involved in the many time consuming duties of a student representative.

Evaluations are often neglected in schools. Specific job descriptions should be established, duties of officers outlined, and specific tasks outlined to be completed for projects. A specific checklist to guide students for each project should be implemented. Follow-up on tasks uncompleted so they can be discussed at meetings with suggestions for improvements recorded for future reference.

Elections should involve fairness, standardized balloting, equal time for candidates and some control over campaign literature. The continuity of student governments needs to be maintained from year to year. Spring elections allow new representatives a chance to become familiar with the responsibilities expected of them and allows for planning of activities or attending workshops during the summer months.

There should be a fact-finding means to find out about the student concerns. Whether questionnaires or personal interviews are utilized the method of feedback should provide the representatives enough direction to make a decision which will be well received by most of the students. Many students representative bodies take action through formal resolutions which are voted on by the representatives. A resolution which is well written adds much to the presentation of your case. A poorly developed resolution will

not only make your organization look weak in the eyes of teachers and administrators but it will detract from the convincing case being presented. Students should research the subject; look at past resolutions, school policies and procedures; accumulate some fact and statistics; survey some students and then make their presentation.

Projects and fund-raising activities are difficult as interests and fads change quickly. Projects that are creative and have some original thought behind them are most likely to succeed. Money-making is always a concern in schools. Some schools overshadow other important issues because of the time spent on fund-raising or planning activities. It is important to strike a balance among its functions, including fund-raising and governance. Student representatives should act as the co-ordinating group for other school groups within the school so that fund-raising functions do not overlap. The financial responsibility of a student government is a very serious one and should be given a great deal of consideration.

Regular communication between student representatives, principal, teachers and students must be maintained for any major accomplishments to be recognized. The use of the public address system, written newsletters, bulletin boards, newspaper articles, and oral presentations must continually be in effect. The important thing to remember is that students, as do others, get tired of listening, reading or hearing news in the same old way. It is important

to change the format frequently and not rely on one method.

Developing a relationship with teacher advisors and the principal is absolutely a must. Student representatives should take the time to acquaint themselves with the personalities of their advisors or principal. This will help in the approach one can effectively use for encouraging results. Students should be involved in realizing the kind of responsibilities they would like implemented, in reference to the advisor's role with the student representative body. If students develop a list of responsibilities it will help administrators become aware of student expectations.

Developing a relationship of trust with the principal will allow for more flexibility in the support students may receive in return. If student representatives take time to find out why certain school rules have been implemented and attempt to have their resolutions or requests well prepared before requesting permission to implement them they may find a more supportive administrator. An administrator who allows students an opportunity to have freedom of expression, who is determined to gain the respect of students and who encourages the staff to support student representative functions will most often find an effective atmosphere for developing decision-making skills.

APPENDIX A

LETTER TO THE RESPONDENTS
AND STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE

INTRODUCTORY LETTER TO THE RESPONDENT

THE STUDY OF STUDENT INVOLVEMENT IN THE
ADMINISTRATION OF MANITOBA'S
SECONDARY SCHOOLS TO THE RESPONDENT

The following questionnaire is designed to obtain your opinion about student participation in the administration of Manitoba's secondary schools. The purpose of this study can be summarized by the following questions:

1. What are the characteristics (type and size) of Manitoba's secondary schools which have provision for student participation in school administration?
2. What structures exist for student participation in the administration of Manitoba's secondary schools?
3. What is the role of students in the administration of Manitoba's secondary schools?
4. Are structures for student participation in the administration of Manitoba's secondary schools related to school characteristics such as type (public, private) and size?
5. How, if at all, might the effectiveness of student participation in the administration of Manitoba's secondary schools be increased?

INTRODUCTORY LETTER TO THE RESPONDENT

(Cont'd)

I am conducting this study as part of the requirements for a masters degree at the University of Manitoba. Your response will be held in confidence. Your assistance in completing this questionnaire would be appreciated. A stamped envelope is included for return purposes of the questionnaire.

Sincerely

John Birnie

QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION I

General Information

Name of School _____

Address of School _____

Secondary (10-12) Student Enrollment _____

Type of School (check one) Public _____ Private _____

SECTION II

Did your school have a representative student body in 1976-77?
Yes _____
No _____

If yes, please continue with the questionnaire.
If no, please state the reasons and return the questionnaire.

Reasons for No Representative Student Body:

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

SECTION III

The following information describes four student structures. Place a check (✓) in the space provided alongside the paragraph, which best describes your student representative body. If none of the following structures resembles your representative body, briefly describe your structure under Other.

Structures for Student Participation

_____ The student council is structured according to a charter or constitution which usually includes: names of the organization, purposes of the organization, power and authority, organization and membership, qualifications and duties for officers and members, committee structure, meeting schedule, advisor, responsibilities, amendments, and bylaws. This student body generally: promotes school spirit; raises money; sponsors academic, recreational, and social activities.

_____ The student-faculty senate consists of representatives from the student body and the faculty. This group would usually function in open meetings, using common courtesy rules to govern discussion. The senate would react to issues brought to it by the school administrators or students and recommend action that would be acceptable to the senate.

_____ The student advisory council consists of the principal, some concerned faculty members, and a group of students who frequently make the move to create a new less formal group. This body retains many of the vestiges of the old council, such as homeroom representatives and a slate of officers. No parliamentary procedures are followed and the council operates less formally in advising the principal. There is generally no charter or constitution.

_____ Ad hoc student groups may be of any representative or selective size. An issue comes up, and a group of students organizes to deal with it in the best way they know how. As the issues change so do the students attracted to them, but these issues become a jumping off point for new, informal student structures in the school setting.

_____ Other: (A brief description)

(E.g. structural format, purposes of the organization, organization and membership, qualifications and duties for members, power and authority, etc.)

SECTION IV

The following questions investigate suggested areas of student involvement and the role of the student in these areas. If these areas for student involvement apply to your school, place a check (✓) in the appropriate space provided.

Area of Student Involvement	How Do Your Students Participate	How Do Students Want to Participate
Classroom Instructional Methods	<input type="checkbox"/> setting the methods	<input type="checkbox"/> setting the methods
	<input type="checkbox"/> approving the methods	<input type="checkbox"/> approving the methods
	<input type="checkbox"/> consulted about the methods	<input type="checkbox"/> consulted about the methods
	<input type="checkbox"/> informed about the methods	<input type="checkbox"/> informed about the methods
	<input type="checkbox"/> students do not participate	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>want</u> to participate
Course Curriculum Planning	<input type="checkbox"/> setting the curriculum	<input type="checkbox"/> setting the curriculum
	<input type="checkbox"/> approving the curriculum	<input type="checkbox"/> approving the curriculum
	<input type="checkbox"/> consulted about the curriculum	<input type="checkbox"/> consulted about the curriculum
	<input type="checkbox"/> informed about the curriculum	<input type="checkbox"/> informed about the curriculum
	<input type="checkbox"/> students do not participate	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>want</u> to participate

Area of Student Involvement	How Do Your Students Participate	How Do Students Want to Participate
Dress and Appearance Regulations	<input type="checkbox"/> setting the regulations <input type="checkbox"/> approving the regulations <input type="checkbox"/> consulted about the regulations <input type="checkbox"/> informed about the regulations <input type="checkbox"/> students do not participate	<input type="checkbox"/> setting the regulations <input type="checkbox"/> approving the regulations <input type="checkbox"/> consulted about the regulations <input type="checkbox"/> informed about the regulations <input type="checkbox"/> students do not <u>want</u> to participate
Extra-curricular Activities	<input type="checkbox"/> setting up the activities <input type="checkbox"/> approving the activities <input type="checkbox"/> consulted about the activities <input type="checkbox"/> informed about the activities <input type="checkbox"/> students do not participate	<input type="checkbox"/> setting up the activities <input type="checkbox"/> approving the activities <input type="checkbox"/> consulted about the activities <input type="checkbox"/> informed about the activities <input type="checkbox"/> students do not <u>want</u> to participate
Student Publications	<input type="checkbox"/> setting up the publications <input type="checkbox"/> approving the publications <input type="checkbox"/> consulted about the publications <input type="checkbox"/> informed about the publications <input type="checkbox"/> students do not participate	<input type="checkbox"/> setting up the publications <input type="checkbox"/> approving the publications <input type="checkbox"/> consulted about the publications <input type="checkbox"/> informed about the publications <input type="checkbox"/> students do not <u>want</u> to participate
Student Tutoring Program	<input type="checkbox"/> setting up the program <input type="checkbox"/> approving the program <input type="checkbox"/> consulted about the program <input type="checkbox"/> informed about the program <input type="checkbox"/> students do not participate	<input type="checkbox"/> setting up the program <input type="checkbox"/> approving the program <input type="checkbox"/> consulted about the program <input type="checkbox"/> informed about the program <input type="checkbox"/> students do not <u>want</u> to participate

Area of Student Involvement	How Do Your Students Participate	How Do Students Want to Participate
Selection of Textbooks	<input type="checkbox"/> selecting the textbooks <input type="checkbox"/> approving the selection of textbooks <input type="checkbox"/> consulted about the selection of textbooks <input type="checkbox"/> informed about the selection of textbooks <input type="checkbox"/> students do not participate	<input type="checkbox"/> selecting the textbooks <input type="checkbox"/> approving the selection of textbooks <input type="checkbox"/> consulted about the selection of textbooks <input type="checkbox"/> informed about the selection of textbooks <input type="checkbox"/> students do not <u>want</u> to participate
Selection of Teachers	<input type="checkbox"/> selecting the personnel <input type="checkbox"/> approving the selection of personnel <input type="checkbox"/> consulted about the selection of personnel <input type="checkbox"/> informed about the selection of personnel <input type="checkbox"/> students do not participate	<input type="checkbox"/> selecting the personnel <input type="checkbox"/> approving the selection of personnel <input type="checkbox"/> consulted about the selection of personnel <input type="checkbox"/> informed about the selection of personnel <input type="checkbox"/> students do not <u>want</u> to participate
Discipline Regulations	<input type="checkbox"/> develop the regulations <input type="checkbox"/> approve the regulations <input type="checkbox"/> consulted about the regulations <input type="checkbox"/> informed about the regulations <input type="checkbox"/> students do not participate	<input type="checkbox"/> develop the regulations <input type="checkbox"/> approve the regulations <input type="checkbox"/> consulted about the regulations <input type="checkbox"/> informed about the regulations <input type="checkbox"/> students do not <u>want</u> to participate

SECTION V

The questions in this section are designed to obtain your views concerning the effectiveness of your student representative body in 1976-77. A space has been provided for any comments you wish to make.

Example:

- 1. yes, always 2. yes, occasionally 3. yes, but seldom
- 4. no, never

1 2 3 4

If you circle number 3, this indicates that your student representative body "yes, but seldom" acts in accordance with the question.

- 1 2 3 4 1. A lot of people call student representatives a "do nothing" group. Did you think that your student representative body fits this category?

Comments: _____

- 1 2 3 4 2. Representative bodies are charged with the responsibility of reporting back to the students they represent. Did your representative body communicate the events and their results?

Comments: _____

- 1 2 3 4 3. Students often complain about the publicity related to events and activities in the school. Did you find this to be the situation in your school?

Comments: _____

1. yes, always 2. yes, occasionally 3. yes, but seldom
4. no, never

1 2 3 4 4. Many student representatives are concerned about the lack of student involvement in their school activities and events. Did you have a lack of student involvement in your school activities and events?

Comments: _____

1 2 3 4 5. Do at least 50% of the teachers in your school get involved with the student activities outside the classroom?

Comments: _____

1 2 3 4 6. Were teachers invited by the student representative body to get involved with student representative decisions and activities outside the classroom?

Comments: _____

1 2 3 4 7. Are the school administrators invited by the student representative body to get involved with student representative decisions and activities outside the classroom?

Comments: _____

1. yes, always 2. yes, occasionally 3. yes, but seldom
4. no, never

1 2 3 4 8. Are the students invited by the student representative body to get involved with student representative decisions and activities outside the classroom?

Comments: _____

1 2 3 4 9. Many schools have difficulty getting students to run for a student representative position. Did your school have this difficulty?

Comments: _____

1 2 3 4 10. Were the student representative responsibilities made clear to the students before the elections took place in your school?

Comments: _____

1 2 3 4 11. Many schools hold their school elections in the spring. Did your school hold the elections in the spring?

Comments: _____

1. yes, always 2. yes, occasionally 3. yes, but seldom
4. no, never

- 1 2 3 4 12. Many schools have a regulation regarding mark standings for students wanting to participate as a student representative candidate. Did your student representatives have to meet any specific mark standings?

Comments: _____

- 1 2 3 4 13. Many school election positions attract interested, academic students who don't always perceive what is on the average disgruntled student's mind. Has this occurred in your school?

Comments: _____

- 1 2 3 4 14. Many students and teachers contend that schools spend too much time and energy on mock elections and staging political party conventions, rather than on getting involved in real political situations. Did you feel this to be the case in your school?

Comments: _____

- 1 2 3 4 15. Many student representative bodies become a select, elite club rather than a representative governing body. Did your student representative body fall into this category?

Comments: _____

1. yes, always 2. yes, occasionally 3. yes, but seldom
4. no, never

1 2 3 4 16. Did your school elections attract interested students who can get things done and voice opinions?

Comments: _____

1 2 3 4 17. Did any of the student representatives attend leadership workshop sessions? (An example is the Manitoba Association of Student Councils workshop held in Winnipeg).

Comments: _____

1 2 3 4 18. Did the student representative body arrange for leadership programs to be conducted in your school?

Comments: _____

1 2 3 4 19. Did the student representative body specify a standard for evaluation on how well each task was completed?

Comments: _____

1. yes, always 2. yes, occasionally 3. yes, but seldom
4. no, never

1 2 3 4 20. Did the student representative body specify a standard of evaluation for the personal effectiveness of each student representative in your school?

Comments: _____

1 2 3 4 21. Did your student representative body have a fact-finding means for studying student concerns? (Examples of fact-finding means are surveys and questionnaires.)

Comments: _____

1 2 3 4 22. Many student representative bodies conduct business through formal resolutions which are voted on by the student representatives. Did your student representative body conduct business in this way?

Comments: _____

1 2 3 4 23. Many student representative bodies conduct business through informal suggestions which are voted on by the student representatives. Did your student representative body conduct business in this way?

Comments: _____

1. yes, always 2. yes, occasionally 3. yes, but seldom
4. no, never

1 2 3 4 24. During meetings, many student representatives consider and vote on resolutions or bills. Was your student representative body successful in adopting and implementing a resolution that was approved by the principal?

Comments: _____

1 2 3 4 25. The student representative body meetings are generally conducted according to some rules of operation. Were the student representative body meetings conducted with purpose and were the objectives clear?

Comments: _____

1 2 3 4 26. Did anyone teach parliamentary procedures to student representatives in your school?

Comments: _____

1 2 3 4 27. Was parliamentary procedure used for the orderly discussion of issues during the student representative body meetings?

Comments: _____

1. yes, always 2. yes, occasionally 3. yes, but seldom
4. no, never

1 2 3 4 28. Did the student representative body deal mostly with individual problems of members rather than school problems?

Comments: _____

1 2 3 4 29. Did your student representative body meetings allow students to present viewpoints openly and spontaneously?

Comments: _____

1 2 3 4 30. Did any of the student representatives learn any practical skills that would be useful throughout life?

Comments: _____

1 2 3 4 31. Fund raising usually has been a major task for student representatives. Was your representative body able to fulfil your financial commitments?

Comments: _____

1 2 3 4 32. Did your student representative body meet for official business on a regular basis? (At least twice monthly)

Comments: _____

1. yes, always 2. yes, occasionally 3. yes, but seldom
4. no, never

- 1 2 3 4 33. Criticism directed at student representative bodies often include references to sloppy wording in resolutions, inaccurate files, and inefficient processing of student representatives' mail. Did your student representative body have a written system for wording resolutions, keeping records, and handling mail?

Comments: _____

- 1 2 3 4 34. Did your student representative body establish various committees to help organize and conduct school activities?

Comments: _____

- 1 2 3 4 35. Some student representative bodies feel that they should play a part in establishing school rules and policies. Did your student representatives have a major responsible role in revising and developing school rules and discipline codes in your school?

Comments: _____

- 1 2 3 4 36. Did your student representative body ever claim the right to present individual and group student grievances to school district officials, using the student representative body as a first step?

Comments: _____

1. yes, always 2. yes, occasionally 3. yes, but seldom
4. no, never

1 2 3 4 37. Did your student representative body co-operate with administrators regarding administrative decisions in your school?

Comments: _____

1 2 3 4 38. Did the teachers co-operate with the student representative body regarding student representative decisions in your school?

Comments: _____

1 2 3 4 39. Did the administration co-operate with the student representative body regarding student representative decisions in your school?

Comments: _____

1 2 3 4 40. Did your student representative body carry out all its duties according to what they were required to do?

Comments: _____

SECTION VI

General Information

1. Were you satisfied with your student structure? (As outlined under Section III)

Please comment: _____

2. Were you satisfied with the areas of student involvement in the administration of your school? (Outlined in Section IV, "Area of Student Involvement")

Please comment: _____

3. Were you satisfied with the roles of student involvement in the administration of your school? (Outlined in Section IV, "How Do Your Students Participate")

Please comment: _____

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