

**THE CLOSED CAMPUS APPROACH: A CASE STUDY OF ONE
MIDDLE SCHOOL**

CLARK JAMES BOSCH

B. Ed., University of Lethbridge, 1983

A Four-Credit Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Education
of the University of Lethbridge
In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF EDUCATION

LETHBRIDGE, ALBERTA

March, 1998

DEDICATION

To Angela, Keaton and Kacie; three points of brilliance in my life.

To my parents for their continued support of my choices and the resulting endeavours, regardless of how strange they seemed.

ABSTRACT

This study is an exploratory case study of one middle school's attempt at the alleviation of a number of problem areas through the implementation of the closed campus approach to scheduling. This work outlines a 2 year qualitative and quantitative case study that allowed the researcher a genuine opportunity to examine a radical departure from the normal mode of educational delivery provided to this age group. It was felt that a case study of the well-grounded theory of the closed campus model of scheduling would be beneficial to others interested in possible vehicles for school improvement.

A discussion of the condition of the sample school the year prior to the implementation of the closed campus is included as well as an account of both the logistical and physical steps taken by the sample school in implementing the closed campus.

The study suggests that the closed campus approach did appear to improve a variety of student and staff factors shown by research to be related to a safe and orderly learning environment and important learning outcomes, as compared to conditions observed during the previous year under the traditional, open campus approach. These variables included incidents of late arrival by students, student suspensions, student behaviour problems, physical altercations, verbal abuse of staff by students, verbal abuse of students by students, subject related behavioural concerns, student absenteeism and staff absenteeism.

Although the quantitative comparisons included in this study show directional trends, they do not reflect a causal relationship. It is hoped that readers of this study will be able to generalize its findings to other situations they may find appropriate.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer wishes to express his thanks to Dr. Richard Butt, thesis supervisor and chairman of the thesis committee, for his patience, encouragement, and kind advice throughout the many stages of this study.

Thanks are also extended to Dr. Nancy Grigg and Dr. Frank Sovka, members of the thesis committee, for their support and guidance.

Appreciation is also extended to Dr. Peter Chow who acted as external examiner for the study.

This study was made possible thanks to the cooperation of Lethbridge School District No. 51 and the students and staff at Wilson Middle School. I would like to extend thanks to all of the partners of this fine institution, in particular Principal Mel Fletcher, for taking part in this research and making the experience complete.

I wish to also express my appreciation to my wife Angela, my sister Debbie, and Donna Provick for their talented efforts in getting this manuscript to its final stage.

Finally, I would like to thank Angela, Keaton and Kacie for their encouragement, understanding, and love during my years of graduate study and the preparation of this thesis.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION.....	1
I. THE PROBLEM	
Introduction.....	6
Description of the Problem.....	7
Purpose of the Study.....	9
Importance of the Study.....	10
Longitudinal Aspect of the Study.....	11
Permission to Conduct Study.....	11
Sample School.....	12
Delimitations of the Study.....	12
General Assumptions and Limitations of the Study.....	13
Research Approach.....	14
Organization of the Thesis.....	14
II. REVIEW OF PERTINENT LITERATURE	
Introduction.....	15
Structural School Reform.....	16
Time on Task.....	18
Student Behavior and the Importance of an Orderly School Environment.....	20
School Violence.....	22

Student Attendance.....	27
Staff Absenteeism.....	29
Summary.....	30
III. METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURE IN RELATION TO OUTCOMES OF THE CLOSED CAMPUS APPROACH	
Introduction.....	31
Operational Definitions Related to Research Methods.....	31
The Case Study Approach.....	36
Definition of the Case Study as a Research Method.....	37
Selected Audience.....	38
Rationale for Single Case Design.....	38
Unit of Analysis.....	39
Qualitative and Quantitative Study Questions.....	39
Methodology Related to Qualitative Data.....	40
Validity and Reliability of Qualitative Data.....	41
Methodology Related to Quantitative Data.....	42
Sampling Procedure for Grouping Students.....	42
Procedure for Gathering and Organizing Quantitative Data....	43
Quantitative Design.....	45
Internal Validity of Quantitative Research Design.....	46
External Validity of Quantitative Research Design.....	48
Summary.....	49

IV. SUMMARY, FINDINGS, AND IMPLICATIONS

Introduction.....	51
Summary of the Study.....	51
Qualitative Findings of the Study in Regards to the Implementation Process.....	57
The Condition of the Sample School Prior to Implementing the Closed Campus.....	57
The Implementation Process.....	61
The Closed Campus Approach.....	63
Qualitative Findings of the Study in Regards to the Closed Campus Approach.....	68
Parental Reaction to the Closed Campus Approach.....	68
Student Reaction to the Closed Campus Approach.....	70
Teaching Staff Reaction to the Closed Campus Approach.....	73
School Administrator Reaction to the Closed Campus Approach.....	75
School Support Staff Reaction to the Closed Campus Approach.....	76
Quantitative Findings of the Study.....	78
Speculation in Regards to Quantitative Findings.....	83
Recommendations for Changes in Practice.....	86
Recommendations for Further Research.....	88
Summary.....	88
References.....	92

Appendix A: Transcript of Interview with the Principal of Sample School.....	99
Interview Blueprint.....	100
Interview Legend.....	101
Interview Transcript.....	101
Interview Summary.....	115
Appendix B: Pertinent Minutes of Staff Meetings and Parent Advisory Council.....	119
Appendix C: Correspondence.....	128
Appendix D: School Based Forms.....	137
Noon Hour Contract Form.....	138
Pupil Plan of Action Form.....	139

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
1. Teaching Staff absences Due to Illness.....	75
2. Total Incidence Score Comparison by Group.....	78
3. Incidence Rate/Student/Year Comparison by Group.....	79
4. Student Incidence Rate Comparison by Group A-B.....	80
5. Student Incidence Rate Comparison by Group A-C.....	81
6. Student Incidence Rate Comparison by Group A-D.....	82
7. Student Incidence Rate Comparison by Group C-D.....	83

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE	PAGE
1. Student Groupings.....	44
2. Comparison Groups.....	44
3. Closed Campus Schedule.....	65

INTRODUCTION

This study is an account of one middle school's experience with organizational change. It is the intention of this researcher to ensure that the account of this experience contributes to educational theory. The amount of effort that has been devoted to the construction of educational theory is massive, as is the resulting theory, but understanding and applying this theory is problematic. Taylor and Saarinen (1994) discussed this dilemma by suggesting that information is not knowledge and knowledge is not understanding. The question of how educators can create understanding in a context in which information, knowledge and theory are out of control is one school-based practitioners face on a daily basis.

The cumbersome nature of educational theory as a body of knowledge leads to difficulty when one attempts to come to understand just what educational theory means in a given educational setting. Dearden (1984) stated that what is often meant by the term educational theory is simply an idea that is impractical. Hartnett and Naish (1976) concluded their two-volume work entitled *The Philosophy of Education* by stating that they were unconvinced of the relevance of educational theory. These opinions suggest that the importance of educational theory lies in the connection between one's ability to analyze theory and then to integrate the understandings gleaned into the real educational world that exists everyday in classrooms.

Wilson (1979) suggested that when one tries in practice to make sense of educational theory, it quickly becomes apparent that questions of procedure must be immediately dealt with. Wilson advised that these questions could be classified under a category entitled “educational common sense”. What makes sense in the classroom may not make sense in theory and the resulting gap between the two has been a source of discontent for educators for a long time. Carr (1995) characterizes education as being a practical, rather than a theoretical activity and suggested that a gap between the theoretical and practical can occur when the procedures normally employed in theoretical undertakings are unsuitable to a given situation. Teachers have long argued that the theory of their craft often conflicts with its practicality.

Unsuccessful schools, like unsuccessful teachers, are not perceived to be that way as a result of their lack of theoretical knowledge. Poor teachers are identified when it becomes clear that the practical environment of their classroom is not conducive to learning. Student teachers are a perfect illustration of this point. A student teacher arrives at a school armed with a more recent study of educational theory than most classroom teachers but they are less aware of existing realities in today’s schools. Unsuccessful student teachers are not identified by a lack of knowledge of Plato or Aquinas. Student teachers, like all struggling teachers, fail due to a lack of knowledge about how to deal with the children who grace their classrooms. Ryle (1949) distinguished between knowing how and knowing that. According to Ryle, intelligent practice, that is, knowing how, is not a step child of theory. He strongly

opposed the view that performance must be preceded by an acknowledgment of theoretical rules. He hoped to correct intellectualist doctrine which tended to view all knowing as being the knowledge of theory, or knowing that.

It is difficult to disagree with the importance of practice in education. Each day in the life of an educator is a learning experience in the art of pedagogical practice. Studying the educational theories of Locke or Plato can not be discarded as they had many important and relevant things to say but it should be left to the individual educator to decide their worth and applicability in given situations.

To many teachers today, successful educational theory means something that works in their personal situations. How can they do something better in their own classrooms? How can a school improve the way it facilitates the learning of its students? The ears of all educators might be attuned to the answer to this question but, in reality, the answer does not exist. Education does not fit into the mold of scientific methodology although many educational theorists have tried to make it fit. Education is a process that deals with human beings and human beings are inherently unique. Thompson (1981) states that the social world in which education operates consists of speaking and acting subjects who constantly make sense of themselves and others, and whose meaningful and willful activities can not be comprehended by the methods of natural science. All too often, educational theory is based on empirical findings. Grounding theory in empirical discovery works well in science but it can not be applied

with any degree of certainty in the field of education as is evidenced by the following quote:

It may in fact be true that personality is the most important factor in teaching and the fact that no adequate research program has been developed to explore this possibility has nothing to do with its truth or falsity. It does, however, have the consequence that all observation of teaching strategies must be imperfect in as much as this variable is not under control. It is therefore a regrettable tendency in many branches of study, but in particular education, to focus on the empirically researched. It is regrettable because there is no reason to assume that things have to be quantifiable to be significant, and every reason to assume that in the interests of quantification, a great deal of distortion unavoidably goes on (Barrow, 1981, p. 179).

Educators generally accept the notion that learning occurs in unique sets of circumstances. It can also be said that many schools and teachers strive to be in a state of perpetual improvement. They never cease to create new practices born out of the desire to improve their craft and their environment. These improvements in practice differ from the traditional building of educational theory, which seems to find its genesis in the distant observation of impractical

goals and circumstances. Society today seems to expect that education is all things to everyone and it is this view which causes conflict in that it is not based in reality. Hope for erosion of the gap between theory and practice is based in the anticipation that new theories will arise from the practical world of classrooms producing grounded theory which has pragmatic and procedural relevance to the everyday occurrences in schools.

This study is an example of the application of one such pragmatic theory that has been tried out as a result of problems that arose in one middle school. It is an exploration of a strategy implemented in an effort to improve the school's environment. Robert Owen (1771-1858), was a strong supporter of the concept that a favorable environment must be created in order to deliver a good educational program. Owen gave his greatest attention to plans to restructure the environment so that human development could follow its proper course (Gutek, 1991). The project under consideration in this study, that of closing the campus of a middle school is nowhere near as grandiose as Owen's vision. It can, however, be seen as one step in creating a favorable learning environment through restructuring the school day by eliminating the traditional noon hour. Closing the campus of any given school could be viewed as an example of the exploration of educational practice as a means of educating educational theory or maybe, in cyclic fashion as Wilson (1979) suggested, it is an example of educational theory being extrapolated into educational common sense.

CHAPTER ONE

THE PROBLEM

Introduction

Bearing in mind the way society, technology, communications, jobs and the human, social, and ecological environments are rapidly changing, improvement and change must be a goal for all educational institutions today. Evidence of various attempts at achieving positive growth in our schools can be found in the hallways and classrooms of many buildings. Some attempts are successful while others go on to a legacy of ridicule by the very individuals who, at one time, shouted their praises. Although all schools share the desire to be in a state of perpetual betterment, many find the roads towards improvement rocky at best, and sometimes completely blocked.

Funding for additional programs has all but dried up and, as a result, institutions are left to improve from within. Schools have been unable to renew themselves through the hiring of new staff. As a result, many schools focus their hopes of improvement on changing the structures and processes that have been selected to implement their programs. Nowhere have these structures been changed more than at the junior high school level. Despite many structural changes, schools still find themselves faced with realities that mute the impact of these efforts. Poor attendance, increased behavior problems and negative peer interaction are just a few of a set of many factors that continue to hamper the effectiveness of schools. This is especially true in regard to judging the impact

of innovations on the effectiveness of the middle school. It is this set of factors upon which this study will focus.

Many educators have expressed the concern that, in order to be more effective, schools must provide a safe and orderly environment. If an environment is both safe and orderly, it should reduce the number of negative situations. The question of how to create such an atmosphere is open to debate. What is not open to debate is the fact that every school should have the desire to improve itself on a continuous basis, regardless of the barriers with which it is faced.

Description of the Problem

Improving the way in which we attempt to meet the needs of students at the Junior High School or Middle School level has always been a topic of concern. The recent trend towards Middle School philosophy has led to a number of distinct changes in the educational programs offered to the early adolescent. Teachers now are often teamed in horizontal, or grade specific groupings rather than by subject area. Middle schools are realizing that the students at each of their grade levels have vastly different needs. What works for the students in Grade 7 may not be successful at the Grade 9 level. Educational leaders are beginning to recognize the possibility that the delivery of instruction to the junior high aged student is not necessarily best served by a miniature version of the current high school system. This researcher would suggest the recent trend towards age specific strategies at the middle school level has led to significant improvements. This case study examines how one

middle school altered its program through a change in structure in order to eliminate some of the unwanted complexities children may experience in the educational setting.

The nature of a group of students aged eleven to fifteen is unique to say the least. The variety in the level of student maturity is, at times, staggering. It is an age group characterized by a seemingly innate sense of the universe where, at times, they seem to know the answer to everything while, at the same time, knowing very little of anything. Relationships with peers are intensified by inexperience in social situations and negative peer role models are extremely visible and are, all too often, imitated. Today's economic climate has led to a proliferation of absentee parents and the problem of how to address children who do not go home to a parent at the end of the day. It is rare today to find a student who has two parents who work at jobs which allow them to keep regular hours both at work and at home. The child who is a product of absentee parenting is often misguided by peers who are also misguided and the hidden curriculum for these students becomes skewed towards behaviors that are considered negative in nature. The disintegration of the family and the inherent confusion it brings to the students of this age group serves to further bewilder young learners. In turn, parents are far more vocal than they have been in the past and they are beginning to let educators know that one of the expectations they have for schools is the provision of a safe environment for their children.

One of the major sources of problems, disruptive activities and other issues related to the smooth running of the school is the lunch hour. Some

might say that dealing with the problems students encounter during the noon hour experience should be the responsibility of the parent. Unfortunately, the school is often left to sort out incidents or actions its students have viewed, or taken part in, during the noon hour. It is often the case where incidents at noon hour serve as distractions which carry on through the remainder of the day causing young learners to lose focus of educational tasks at hand.

Purpose of the Study

The overall purpose of this research is to develop a case study of one school's efforts to improve through the implementation of a closed campus model of scheduling. There are two specific subsidiary purposes of this work. First, this study provides a description of one school's attempt at improving the junior high school environment. Improving the way education is delivered to the early adolescent will always be a target of many educators. This inquiry will provide educators with a reality-based picture of how one school sought to deal with the problems it faced, and the degree of relative success, or lack of success the school realized as a result of the actions it chose to take.

The second purpose of this case study is to examine the relationship between the closed campus environment at the middle school level and its effect on a number of variables, as compared to the more traditional, open campus, environment. The project took place over a period of twenty-two months and represented two complete school calendar years at the same middle school. For the first year of the study the school involved employed the traditional timetable

concept while during the second year of the study the same school operated with a closed campus schedule in place.

Importance of the Study

There are many reasons why this study is important. As stated earlier, every school is in a continuous cycle of improvement and this project will serve as a benchmark in the study of closing the campus of a middle school in Canada. Although the closed campus has become relatively common-place in many areas of the United States, it is still a rather unknown phenomenon in Canada and the findings here may be informative to other schools who find themselves with similar circumstances.

This study will deal with problems shared by virtually all schools today. It will examine a situation where a major structural change was used in an effort to improve a school's environment in the areas of student discipline, student attendance and staff absenteeism. A search of the available literature in the domain of school effectiveness revealed a plethora of studies that showed the above factors to be key components of successful schools. Research notes numerous strategies aimed at improving each of these factors but there is a void in the literature when it comes to the effect that closing a campus has had on these fundamental areas.

This work will provide a contemporary source of information of interest to many teachers and administrators. It will provide schools contemplating the closed campus with the results of one case study. If positive effects are found, a school might be able to make an informed decision on proceeding with the

implementation of all or parts of this study. If positive effects are not found, this study could save an inordinate amount of time and discussion about a concept that is being bantered about more and more of late. If the findings of this study are nebulous in nature, it may provide a framework for improvement where a school could alter the project implementation in their own institution in hopes of enhancing positive outcomes in the target areas.

Longitudinal Aspect of the Study

The data for this study covers the period in time from August of 1995 to June of 1997. Inclusive in this time frame was two complete school calendar years. During the first of these school years, from August 1995 to June 1996, the sample school used a traditional timetable where students were free to come and go as they pleased during the noon hour break. During the last school year of the study, from August 1996 to June 1997, the school operated with the closed campus schedule where students were only allowed to leave the school during the day if they had permission from their parents.

Permission to Conduct Study

Permission to conduct this study was requested from both the sample school and the School District Office. Permission was granted in both cases. The researcher received complete cooperation and was given full access to all documentation requested from all concerned. Copies of all correspondence can be found in Appendix B.

Sample School

The population to be utilized for this study was limited to the students, parents, and staff of a middle school with an enrollment of 626 students in the 1995-96 school year and an enrollment of 629 students in the 1996-97 school year. The school is centrally located in a working class neighborhood of a city with a population of close to 70, 000.

The school has been in operation since 1955 and had, in 1993, changed its designation from a Junior High School to a Middle School. The school employs 34 teachers and has a Principal and two Assistant Principals. The sample school is the site of special needs programming and is also home to the district's English as a Second Language program at the middle school level. The restriction of the population to only one school was necessary since it was the only known school implementing a closed campus schedule.

Delimitations of the Study

1. The population for this study consisted of the population of one middle school in the Province of Alberta. Generalizations and applications to other situations beyond the scope of this study will be left for the reader to decide upon.
2. A purposeful study of school improvement requires the careful selection of criteria for investigation. This study was confined to the investigation of those criteria that were identified either in the literature, or revealed in meetings prior to the study, as being important. The criteria selected are all internal to the operations of the sample school.

3. The data gathered for this study was collected over a period of twenty-two months and encompassed two complete school years. This study did not deal with any events that occurred after the completion of data collection in June of 1997.
4. Data collected for the quantitative portion of this study was of a nominal/categorical nature. It excluded community-based data, as it is the intention to focus on students and the nature of the experience within the school.

General Assumptions and Limitations of the Study

1. Changes in school population will not have a significant effect on statistical totals found throughout the course of this study. For example, the second year of the study involved a new group of students at the Grade 7 level while the Grade 9 students from the first year were not present for the second year of the study.
2. The reliance upon nominal categorical data in the quantitative portion of this study limits the researcher's ability to draw a causal relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variables.
3. The nature of the data collected for the quantitative portion of this study may be subject to some error due to varying practices of teachers used in the gathering of the data. For example, a student may be incorrectly recorded as being late, or a student may be given a chance reprieve by one of her

teachers and not be recorded as being late at all. This study operated with the assumption that the rate of error will be consistent from year to year.

Research Approach

This study employed a case study approach to document the introduction of a closed campus model of scheduling and to investigate whether using this model resulted in improvements to a variety of factors related to student and staff behavior as compared to the traditional, open campus, model of scheduling.

Organization of the Thesis

The purpose of this chapter has been to acquaint the reader with a general overview of the problem and the nature of the research of this study. Chapter 2 offers a review of pertinent literature through a discussion of the research concerned with the various aspects of the study. Chapter 3 discusses the study's methodology and procedure in relation to outcomes of the closed campus approach while Chapter 4 provides a summary of the study, its findings, and implications.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF PERTINENT LITERATURE

Introduction

School improvement is a goal of many schools. Schools find themselves motivated by a desire to do things better and more efficiently than ever before. The problem faced by all educators, however, is where to start and where to best invest their efforts in order to maximize their level of excellence. Another concern of schools is the development of educational goals for the future. What should be the end result of school improvement programs? Gipe (1992) studied institutions around the world and found that most school improvement initiatives have goals that focus on student achievement. There is no question that student achievement and school effectiveness have become focal points for many schools today. The pressure to prove the quality of a public school through student achievement scores is becoming increasingly important. Schools in some areas are being ranked publicly according to student's achievement scores. This kind of publicity has only served to intensify the expectation that a school should be continually in a state of improvement.

Educators generally agree upon the notion that student achievement test scores are not truly indicative of the effectiveness of a given school. The practice of ranking schools according to test scores alone should be considered vague at best. Kendall (1995) found ranking schools according to test score results was misleading and showed that a school's ranking differed markedly depending on the measure of outcome being considered. Despite this, schools

will continue to take aim at improving student achievement as it is generally accepted that achievement is inexplicably tied to many other desirable targets of school reform. The process of school reform comes in multifarious forms. The chosen method of reform for this study is the scheduling of the school day. Notwithstanding the preceding comments related to achievement, the dependent variables chosen for this study could be seen to be indirectly related to achievement in that all of them may effect time on task, a topic that has been proven to effect achievement. Further study of the closed campus will assuredly involve its effect on achievement although, at the sample school selected for this study, it is too soon to include student achievement as the schedule has only been in place for only one school year.

A thorough review of available literature has been unsuccessful in locating a study that addresses the same variables examined by this project. As a result, the literature presented below is representative of studies in the areas of student achievement and school effectiveness, as they are affected by many different factors, and the concept of the closed campus and its implementation in schools today.

Structural School Reform

Merriam and Merriam (1974) defines reform as the process of making something better by the improvement of, or the removal of faults, or the improvement or correction of what is corrupt or defective. By definition, it is obvious that the task of school reform is rather ominous indeed given the realization that there are innumerable faults and an ocean of defects inherent in

education. This coupled with the reality that school's desire to improve is often blocked by forces beyond its control or scope. Schools today do not have the ability to readily change teaching staff or their administrative team. They have little control over curriculum and necessary improvements to the physical plant are left to the discretion of higher authorities. These obstacles force schools to concentrate their improvement efforts in areas that they feel are within their bounds such as the use of structural changes in time, space and the process of teaching and learning.

Elmore (1995) noted that educational reformers like to change structures because they believe that structures exercise a strong influence over their work and that structures often constrain their ability to do things they think are good for students. Wilson and Corbett (1991) found that the development of new rules, roles, and relationships within a school represent significant first steps in restructuring middle school education.

Closing the campus is a highly visible attempt aimed at making things better for students in a middle school setting. One of the goals of requiring students to remain on campus for the entire school day is the development of a less distracting environment where students can feel secure. The importance of order in the school environment is a factor that shows up time and time again in the research on effective schools and improved student achievement. Pechman and King (1990) identify the stability and safety of the school environment as the first criteria critical to successful school reform. The importance of order is not a novel idea and its recognition as being a valuable quality in the school

environment is generally accepted. Unfortunately, disorder seems to be a characteristic more commonly associated with the early adolescent and the education of students in middle schools.

This thesis is an attempt to show how a change in middle school scheduling can affect the middle school environment. Koepke (1990) showed middle school innovations in class scheduling improved student's behavior and academic achievement. Koepke's study involved the use of block timetabling as opposed to the more traditional seven or eight period day. The closed campus does not involve this type of change, but rather it simply eliminates the type of distractions that may arise out of an unsupervised lunch break where students leave the school grounds. The possible elimination of some of the more undesirable elements inherent in the traditional style of scheduling where students are unsupervised during the lunch hour may lead to an increase in the quality of time spent by students in the classroom. If one assumes that within the closed campus approach that students will be distracted less outside of the classroom, one may also assume that the student potential for distraction would be even lower inside the classroom.

Time on Task

Goodlad (1984) suggested the time children and youths spend in school appeared to affect rather directly the amount of their learning as measured by tests. It seemed apparent through his study that simply the amount of time spent on a given subject was a powerful factor in learning. The concept of lengthening the school year has been the focus of researchers for many years.

Harnischfeger and Wiley (1974) found that increasing annual attendance from 175 to 185 days appeared to enhance student achievement. Conversely, Pittman, Cox, and Burchfiel (1986) showed that increasing the length of the school year would not produce marked changes in test scored performance.

Arguments for lengthening the school day and/or year are often predicated on the notion that more time devoted to learning will lead to a better education for the student. Ellis (1984) found, however that the correlation between time and achievement was far smaller than expected. He suggested that the quality of instructional time is more important than the quantity; moreover, the costs of extending school time are disproportionate to any resulting instructional gains. According to Rossmiller (1983), a typical school year of 1080 hours may result in as few as 364 hours of time on task, after deducting time for non-instructional activities, process activity (distributing material, keeping discipline), absenteeism, and other time not on task. Goodlad (1984) found that teachers spent, on average, 74.9% of their time in class on instruction and the remainder of the time on routines, behavior control, and social activities.

Researchers have found that increasing time on task will lead to significant improvements in a student's education (Seifert and Beck, 1983; Lutz, 1983; Egbert and Kluender, 1984; Crawford, Kimball, and Watson, 1985; Hess, 1987; Neukam and Gilman, 1996). This agreement leads to the question of how a school, or a classroom teacher, can best go about in improving the amount of time on task in their situations. Brigham (1992) suggested that the

level of teacher enthusiasm had an effect on the amount of time students spent engaged in their work. He found that the more enthusiastic a teacher was in presenting material had a positive effect on student achievement and led to lower levels of off task behavior. Sanford (1983) conducted a junior high school management improvement study and found that when teachers can establish orderly classroom environments and maintain students' cooperation, time on task in appropriate learning tasks is more likely to occur.

Today's educational climate comes complete with larger class sizes and low teacher morale. As a result, schools must recognize the importance of creating environments that would lead to more orderly classrooms, within which teacher enthusiasm can be fostered. The closed campus concept of scheduling attempts to enhance the establishment of a more secure environment for students. Students in a closed campus setting are supervised from the moment they arrive until the conclusion of the school day. This eliminates many opportunities where they could witness, or get involved in, unwanted activities or situations that could cause an increase in time spent off task. In turn, the closed campus might offer an improved working environment for teachers whose higher level of satisfaction could translate into higher enthusiasm.

Student Behavior and the Importance of an Orderly School Environment

One factor of school environment discussed regularly by educators is discipline. Wynne (1990) found discipline to be a key component in facilitating student achievement while Enger (1995) revealed gains in test scores of 250 seventh graders were negatively correlated with the number of disciplinary

referrals. Wentzel (1993) completed a study based on 423 students in the seventh grade which indicated both pro-social and antisocial behavior are related significantly to grade point average and standardized test scores.

Osborne (1977) studied 2500 junior high school students who were experiencing behavioral problems which had led to a suspension and found that higher achievers were suspended less often than any other group. Safer (1986) concluded that junior high school non-promotion was correlated mainly with behavioral problems and suspensions and suggested further that grade retention in junior high does not lead to an increase in a student's performance the following year.

Given the research on the impact behavioral problems have on student success, schools need to discover and implement strategies that will reduce the number of discipline referrals that seem, at times, to bombard those dealing with the early adolescent. One of the purposes of studying the effects the closed campus schedule may have on student achievement is to investigate whether the concept is successful in reducing discipline problems in the school. Grice (1986) explored attempts at reducing school suspensions at the secondary level in order to eliminate the negative effects suspensions had on student learning. Grice's recommendations suggested that prevention should be a major objective in improving discipline. Schools should not simply stop suspending students, but rather they should be examining strategies that may lead to an environment in which fewer suspendable offenses occur. The closed campus is a prevention-based strategy that is intended to reduce behavioral problems, including the

most severe discipline situations, by simply allowing students fewer unsupervised situations throughout the course of a normal school day.

Could a closed campus schedule at the middle school level actually make a school more effective? Sweeny (1982) found school effectiveness to be enhanced by effective principals who emphasize achievement, set instructional strategies, provide an orderly atmosphere, and support teachers. Newberg and Glatthorn (1982) studied four successful inner city schools and suggested the principals of these schools were able to create a more positive learning climate by establishing a sense of order and discipline in their schools. A Pilot Project (University of Florida, 1994) concluded the effective school characteristics providing the greatest contrasts between high and low achieving schools were a safe and orderly learning environment, instructional leadership, and high expectations for students. There is a possibility that closing the campus of middle school could be seen as a reasonable step towards the development of the safe and orderly climate that has been shown to be effective in the research.

School Violence

What effect does violence, in and around schools and their playgrounds, have on school effectiveness and student achievement? Does violent behavior affect those who perpetrate it, or those who are the victims of it? Research suggests the answer to the above question is that violence may affect both groups. Wentzel and Asher (1995) studied over 400 sixth and seventh grade students and found violent or aggressive children to have problematic academic profiles while Lucking and Manning (1996) suggested anxiety concerning peers

was a factor that contributed to low academic achievement. Anxiety in students may be intensified by the possibility of being a witness to, a part of, or a victim of, violence. Many schools in the United States have implemented the closed campus model of scheduling as a way of curbing excessive violence and other related safety issues in their schools (Porterville Union High School District, 1993).

A recent American national survey listed school order and safety as the parents top priority right along with teaching the basics of reading, writing and arithmetic (First Things First: What Americans Expect From the Public Schools, 1994). This discovery hardly seems surprising but would the same result be realized in a similar Canadian study? Should Alberta schools be contemplating the same solution as an inner city school in Houston? Do schools in Alberta have a problem with violence? MacDonald and da Costa (1996) derived data from a questionnaire of 231 students in Grades 7, 8, and 9, at five Alberta junior high schools along with 28 administrators. Findings indicated:

1. Students may be increasingly accepting violence as part of their schooling experience.
2. There are more student observers than victims or perpetrators of violence.

3. Students are indecisive about the gravity of certain behaviors and hesitate to report violence due to fears of retaliation.
4. Administrators perceived violence to be less of a problem than did students and believed that they were more aware of the extent of violence than were students.

A closed campus schedule keeps students on campus for the entire day and it has been seen in some areas as a choice that might allow the student body to be safer. If one is to accept there is a problem with violence in schools, then one must also accept responsibility to put plans in place that would attempt to improve the situation. Kaplan (1996) concluded middle school educators could help prevent violence by ensuring an orderly and attractive physical environment and clear expectations for student behavior. The closed campus may be a step towards the realization of each of these areas.

A report by the National School Boards Association based in Alexandria, Virginia (1993) surveyed more than 2000 school districts in the United States. The study included urban, suburban, and rural schools and was aimed at identifying what measures were typically being used to control disruptive influences. This survey found that 44% of schools who responded were using the closed campus concept as a means of controlling disruptive influences on their students.

The following Board Policy, #S-5112.5, of the New Haven Unified School District was given second reading on the first of March, 1994:

In order to keep our students in a supervised, safe, and orderly environment, the Governing Board establishes a closed campus at all district high schools. Once students arrive at school, they must remain on campus until the end of the school day unless they have brought written authorization from their parents/guardians and received permission from school authorities to leave for a specific purpose. Students who leave campus without such authorization shall be classified as truant and be subject to disciplinary action.

The Board finds that school facilities and resources are adequate to serve lunchtime needs of all of our students. The Board further perceives that a closed campus benefits students by encouraging them to participate in school activities, rather than following other pursuits which may not be in their best interests. The requirement to keep students on campus is part of the Board's efforts to maintain a safe school climate and to reduce afternoon absenteeism.

The administration shall provide educational, recreational, organizational, and social opportunities for students during the lunch period.

The Superintendent or designee shall design a system of identification and passes appropriate for use at each school. Each high school principal shall be expected to enforce

mechanisms whereby all students may be accounted for at all times during the school day. Parents/guardians shall be informed whenever students are unaccounted for.

Student handbooks shall fully explain all rules and disciplinary procedures involved in the maintenance of the closed campus.

Legal Reference: California Education Code

44808.5 Permission for pupils to leave school grounds.

The above policy indicates the maintenance of a safe school climate as an expected outcome that the board hopes to achieve with the implementation of the closed campus. As has been shown in this review of the research, the development of an orderly and safe environment in schools should lead to an improvement in student success. A Safe Schools Project (1992) funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Protection found that as schools became safer over a three-year period, they also became more effective places of learning. The closed campus is not considered a way of eliminating the problem of student violence and school safety, however it has become a popular route for many schools concerned with attempting to better manage their individual situations. Miron (1995) agreed with the sentiments of parents when they stated that if children, teachers, and administrators do not feel safe in schools, then increased student achievement - the traditional measure of student outcomes - is virtually meaningless.

Student Attendance

It makes sense that in order for students to succeed in school, they must be in school. School attendance problems often are the result of factors not including a student's physical well being. Schools can not make their students healthier in the physical sense but they can attempt to foster environments that may give students fewer reasons to stay away and, as a result, provide students with an improved opportunity to succeed.

Moore (1987) studied 63 public middle schools and showed schools with higher attendance rates to have higher achievement scores. Other researchers have realized findings similar to Moore's, showing that student attendance, or lack of, has a significant impact on academic achievement (McNamara, 1978; Estcourt et al., 1986; Miller, Torres, Simmel, Frummerman, Mulkey, 1987; Ehrenberg, Ehrenberg, Ehrenberg, and Rees 1991; Malcolm, Thorpe, and Lowden 1996). Safer (1986) found student absenteeism to be a major factor leading to student retention while Owings, Hennes, Lachat, Neiman, and Facchina (1990) found that students who had higher rates of absenteeism were more likely to have been suspended than other students.

One effort to improve student attendance has seen the implementation of mandatory attendance policies by many school districts. Wise (1994) studied the impact of mandatory attendance policies and found they had little impact on improving attendance or student learning. He further argued student motivation and the ability to learn are factors that have greater impact on academic achievement. Researchers have identified many other factors that may have an

effect on student attendance. Some of these factors fall within the scope of schools.

It has been suggested that students may not be going to school as a result of negative experiences they are having with their peer group. Nielson and Gerber (1979) found that truancy in early adolescents was commonly associated with difficulties at home, at school, and with peers. Robinson, Jacobsen, and Conway (1979) agreed when they concluded that junior high school truancy was highly related to peer influence. Robinson further stated that improved communications between students, teachers, and parents would result in improved attendance. Closing the campus and keeping students in a supervised environment from the time they arrive at school until the time they leave should allow for a more positive climate at school. A less threatening environment where student feel comfortable can only serve to enhance the desire to be present at school. An Evaluation of Project Inspire (1975) found that an increase in positive feelings towards school led to decreases in the areas of tardiness, student dropout rates, absenteeism, suspensions and detentions.

There is little doubt that attendance affects student success, however, combating the attendance problem for schools has been difficult and rather unsuccessful. Mervilde (1981) suggested that student absenteeism has had an effect on many things, including student achievement and over all school morale. He also concluded that the solutions being suggested to improve situation of poor attendance have yielded only mixed results. Zafirau (1982) concluded that academic indicators (those relating to achievement) are more

powerful predictors than non-academic or school process indicators (student suspension, racial composition, and poverty level). Zafirau suggested that the attendance problem would never be fundamentally remedied until actual academic performance is improved.

As has been demonstrated through a review of the related research, the problem of student attendance at school is incredibly complex and the possible solutions are infinite. Implementing the closed campus is an attempt at addressing the concerns that have been expressed as they relate to student attendance. The sample school feels that the implementation of the closed campus schedule will lead to a reduction in behaviors which may be the root of peer related attendance woes. An environment with fewer behavioral related concerns should also be suitable for increased communication between all of the educational partners.

Staff Absenteeism

The issue of teacher absenteeism has drawn a great deal of attention in educational policy. Besides the obvious financial implications, research has suggested teacher absenteeism may have a direct impact on other educational areas as well. Manlove and Elliot (1979) cited a New York study which noted that substitute teachers are significantly less effective than regular teachers, leading to a reduction in student achievement. Madden, Flanagan, and Richardson (1991) concluded that teacher absenteeism was not correlated with improved student achievement, however, they did suggest that schools winning incentive awards possessed higher teacher attendance rates than schools who

did not receive the awards. Ehrenberg et al. (1991) agreed with Madden et al. (1991) when they concluded that teacher absence was not largely associated with student test performance.

It was the intention of this study to include teacher absenteeism as a simple point of interest. Recent government cutbacks and wage rollbacks have caused teacher morale to decrease and teaching days lost to illness to rise. Skillern, Richardson, Prickett, Wallman, and Marion (1990) identified that teachers were most stressed by three factors.

1. Length of the school day.
2. Competition generated among students and teachers.
3. Overall lack of communication.

The closed campus implementation being studied for this thesis resulted in an earlier dismissal time for the sample school and therefore, staff absenteeism was included in this study.

Summary

The purpose of this literature review has been to present research which may represent the necessary background and setting for this present study. A thorough review of available literature was unsuccessful in locating a study that addresses the same variables examined by this project. As a result, an effort has been made to present works which were seen as supplying insight into a possible relationship between the selected dependent variables of this study and the implementation of the closed campus concept at the middle school level.

CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURE IN RELATION TO OUTCOMES OF
THE CLOSED CAMPUS APPROACH

Introduction

This chapter will inform the reader of the methods used in the course of this study. The chapter will be broken down into four parts. The first part provides the operational definitions related to the research methods while the second part discusses the rationale and the methods behind case study approach undertaken by the researcher. The third part of the chapter will deal with the methods used in relation to the study's qualitative data while the final part of the chapter will provide the reader with information regarding the methods used in gathering the quantitative data used in the study.

Operational Definitions Related to Research Methods

Middle School – a school consisting of students in grades seven through nine.

Students - children who have been registered at the sample school during the 1995-96 and/or 1996-97 school year as documented by the school's computerized attendance records.

Closed Campus Schedule - a schedule where, at noon hour, students are required to stay in the school or on its property under continuous supervision of school staff. The hour is broken down into three twenty-minute periods. Students are given twenty minutes to eat, twenty minutes of free time either outside or in the gymnasium, and a twenty-minute advisor period. Closed

campus noon hours are staggered by grade level and, as a result, each of the three grade levels is completely separated.

Traditional Timetable - a schedule where, at noon hour, students are free to leave the school for a period of one hour. Students taking part in the traditional noon hour have been encouraged to go home for lunch and are required to leave the vicinity of the school. Students who return to the vicinity of the school before the expiration of the noon hour must immediately proceed to wherever their grade level is at that time.

Students Who Opt In to the Closed Campus Schedule - students who have participated in the closed campus schedule at the sample school for the entire 1996-97 school year. These students include all that have been registered at the sample school as documented by the school's computerized roll, but excludes all who have opted out of the program with parental permission. Parental permission to opt out of the program is obtained when a parent signs a student contract in the presence of an administrator.

Students Who have been Opted Out of the closed campus Schedule -- all students who attended the sample school in the 1995-96 school year and those students whose parents have opted them out of the closed campus schedule at the sample school for the entire 1996-97 school year. As a result, these students are free to leave the school at noon hour for a period of one hour. The parents of students who have opted out of the closed campus program must sign a contract in the presence of a school administrator, giving the student permission to leave the school at noon hour. The administrator signs the contract as well and the

contract is then filed in the main office at the school. Copies of all contracts were gathered from the school office at the conclusion of the 1996-97 school year. In order to be included in this category, the contract must have been signed by the parent on or before October 1, 1996. Any students, who were opted out after October 1, 1996, were excluded in all categories for the purpose of this study.

Closed Campus School Year - the year beginning in August 1996 and concluding in June 1997.

Traditional Timetable School Year - the year beginning in August 1995 and concluding in June 1996.

Incidents of Late Arrival by Students - the number of times students arrived after the scheduled start of the school day in either the morning or the afternoon. School policy requires all students arriving late to register at the office. Upon registration at the office, students are given a permission slip noting the time of arrival. The slip, signed by office personnel, is then taken by the student and presented to the teacher of the class they are to enter. Students arriving late to school in either the morning or the afternoon are not to be allowed in to the classrooms without first presenting the teacher with an official late slip. All incidents of late student arrivals are documented by the office and are entered into the school's computerized attendance record. All late student arrivals recorded on the school's computerized attendance record were included for the purposes of this study.

Absences of Students - according to the computerized roll, the total number of absences for all students throughout the school year. This total reflects both excused absences and unexcused absences. The unexcused absence totals include truant situations, as well as those situations where parents did not contact the school to explain the absence of their child. All student absences are recorded on the school's computer as being excused, unexcused, or truant in nature.

Student Suspensions - documented instances where students were suspended, out of school. Upon being suspended, the parents of the offending student are notified by phone and by letter of the incident, the length of the suspension, and the conditions of the suspension. A copy of all suspension letters are kept on file by the Administrator most responsible for the given grade level for the remainder of the school year. For the purpose of this study, all letters were gathered from the grade level Administrator upon the completion of the school year.

Behavior Problems - all behavior problems documented by supervising teachers on a Pupil Plan of Action Form and forwarded to administration. Pupil Plan of Action Forms are kept on file by the Administrator most responsible for the given grade level for the remainder of the school year. For the purpose of this study, forms were gathered from the grade level Administrator upon the completion of the school year.

Physical Altercations (sub set of Behavior Problems) – behavior problems documented on Pupil Plan of Action Forms that involved altercations between students, which were physical in nature. Pupil Plan of Action Forms are kept on file by the Administrator most responsible for the given grade level for the remainder of the school year. For the purpose of this study, forms were gathered from the grade level Administrator upon the completion of the school year.

Verbal Abuse of Staff by Students (sub set of Behavior Problems) – behavior problems documented on Pupil Plan of Action Forms where students were found to be verbally abusive towards staff members. Pupil Plan of Action Forms are kept on file by the Administrator most responsible for the given grade level for the remainder of the school year. For the purpose of this study, forms were gathered from the grade level Administrator upon the completion of the school year.

Verbal Abuse of Students by Students (sub set of Behavior Problems) – behavior problems documented on Pupil Plan of Action Forms where students were found to be verbally abusive towards other students. Pupil Plan of Action Forms are kept on file by the Administrator most responsible for the given grade level for the remainder of the school year. For the purpose of this study, forms were gathered from the grade level Administrator upon the completion of the school year.

Subject Related Behavioral Concerns (sub set of Behavior Problems) – incidents documented on Pupil Plan of Action Forms noting behavior problems which were curricular in nature. Examples include, not wearing gym strip, not

doing homework and not bringing supplies. Pupil Plan of Action Forms are kept on file by the Administrator most responsible for the given grade level for the remainder of the school year. For the purpose of this study, forms were gathered from the grade level Administrator upon the completion of the school year.

Teaching Staff Absenteeism - number of days teaching staff were absent from school due to illness. All staff absences are recorded through the School District's "Staff Employment Management System" computer. Upon reporting to this system, a teacher must include a reason for the absence. Only staff absences due to illness were included for the purposes of this study.

Information regarding teaching staff absenteeism was gathered directly from records obtained at the School District Office.

The Case Study Approach

Griffiths (1959) stated that, for exploratory studies, rather than the experimental method, researchers should be using an observational approach. Best and Kahn (1989) describe the case study as a way of organizing social data for the purpose of viewing social reality. It is the intention of this researcher to observe the implementation and practice of a closed campus situation and then to organize the data in order to provide readers with an opportunity to do their own generalizing. This study deals with the events and dynamics of one middle school and it is hoped that the reader will be able to look beyond the isolation of the case and see what is typical and representative within the case's obvious uniqueness.

Definition of the Case Study as a Research Method

The main aim of a case study is to portray how things happened and to speculate as to why things occurred. This simple explanation illustrates the basic commonalities that exist between experimental research and the case study. Although both forms of research attempt to satisfy the same end, the difference is that the case study does not attempt to control events but rather the aim is to understand what has occurred within a given contextual reality.

A technical definition of case study research has been developed by Yin (1981, p. 23). A case study is an inquiry that:

- a) Investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context when
- b) the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident and in which
- c) multiple sources of evidence are used.

The current study meets the above definition in that the closing of a middle school campus is certainly a contemporary notion that, as yet, has remained unexplored in the research. Just how the life of the selected middle school is effected by the change will be examined from many viewpoints and, as a result, a wide variety of sources of data will be called upon to provide necessary evidence.

Selected Audience

The nature of the case study is one that appeals to a wide variety of audiences and this study is no different. The situational focus of the current study on the closed campus at the middle school level in education will be of interest to a diverse group of people including administrators, teachers, parents, and community leaders among others. Given today's educational climate where schools are attempting to deal with situations from within, without the luxury of increased or even maintained funding, many schools and communities are looking for ways to do things better. This study will provide a portrayal of an alternative delivery of services that will include data from sources that are both quantitative and qualitative in nature, designed to address a number of audiences.

Rationale for the Single-Case Design

Yin (1981) identifies the primary distinction in case study design as being between single-case and multiple-case designs. He offers situations that call for the use of the single-case study. Yin suggests there is rationale for the single-case when the case represents an extreme or unique case as well as in situations where the case being examined is revelatory. This study meets both of these criteria. The decision to close the campus of a middle school in a small city in the Province of Alberta may be seen as an extreme measure by some in the field and it is certainly unique in that no other schools have implemented this approach. This case study could also be considered revelatory in that it has provided the researcher with an opportunity to observe and analyze a situation

that has previously gone without formal study. The problems faced by middle schools today have many commonalities. It is hoped that the observations and insights provided through the course of this study will enable others who may be considering change to be aware of the story of how one school attempted the closed campus approach and with what outcomes.

Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis for the purpose of this study will be the selected middle school (Yin, 1981) only in relation to the open campus and closed campus status and associated factors. Clarification of the unit of analysis is required here due to the realization that studying a school in its totality is far beyond the scope of this project. The study questions and propositions discussed earlier will provide focus for this study and will enable the researcher collect data relating to those areas and avoid the collection of everything which is not only impractical, but also impossible. The specific time frame for this study will be from August 28th, 1995 to June 28th, 1997. This time boundary encompasses two complete school years and will allow for some quantitative data to be collected for simple comparative purposes.

Qualitative and Quantitative Study Questions

1. What was the condition of the sample school the year prior to the year the closed campus model of scheduling was implemented?
2. Which educational partners played a role in the process prior to implementing the closed campus model of scheduling?

3. What steps were taken by the sample school in order to implement the closed campus model of scheduling?
4. How did the selected school actually implement the closed campus from a physical and logistical standpoint?
5. What are the ways in which the closed campus model of scheduling effects a middle school? Did the closed campus approach improve a variety of student and staff factors shown by research to be related to a safe and orderly learning environment and important learning outcomes, as compared to conditions observed during the previous year under the traditional open campus approach? These variables include incidents of late arrival by students, student suspensions, behavior problems, physical altercations, verbal abuse of staff by students, verbal abuse of students by students, subject related behavioral concerns and student absenteeism and staff absenteeism.

Methodology Related to Qualitative Data

In order to provide the reader with an accurate portrait of the sample school, evidence was gathered in a number of ways. Relevant documentation was collected from letters, memoranda, minutes of meetings and school newsletters.

The unique nature of the observer in this study provided certain opportunities. Since the researcher became an Assistant Principal at the sample school he was able to gain access to events and groups that may have otherwise been inaccessible. Although the position of the researcher in this case could be

viewed as a potential source of bias, it is accepted here as a necessary potential shortcoming related to studying a contemporary issue in its natural context.

Sources of qualitative data regarding the perceived success of the closed campus approach included parents, students, teachers, administrators, and support staff. Methods used included formal and informal discussion, interview, and on site observations. Field notes were maintained in regards to what life was like at the school prior to the implementation of the closed campus model of scheduling as well as life after the implementation. An interview conducted with the Principal of the school is included in its entirety in Appendix A.

Validity and Reliability of Qualitative Data

Agnew and Pyke (1990) stated that certain kinds of behavior are best observed as they occur naturally. In these situations the observer purposely controls and manipulates nothing and in fact works very hard at not affecting the observed situation in any way. Guba (1981) maintained that validity and reliability are terms that do not fit into the naturalistic paradigm. Instead he argues that credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability are more appropriate terms to use whenever questions about the trustworthiness of naturalistic research are asked. In this study the observer did not, in any way, manipulate data or control the situation or variables. It is the opinion of the observer that the data gathered here is credible, transferable, dependable and confirmable and that any argument to the contrary should reconsider the value of data gathered in a natural setting.

Methodology Related to Quantitative Data

The quantitative data gathered included computerized archival records that were gathered in the areas of student attendance and staff attendance. Non-computerized archival records were retrieved in order to study the behavior problems displayed by students and formally documented to administration. Both forms of archival data described above were gathered in each of the two years of the study for comparative purposes. Survey data relating to the closed campus was also collected where possible.

Sampling Procedure for Grouping Students

The sampling procedure for the quantitative aspect of this study involved all students who were enrolled at the sample school. This procedure resulted in a sample of 626 students for the 1995-1996 school year. This group will be referred to in this study as Group A (see figure 1). The 1996-1997 school year resulted in a sample of 629 students. This group of students will be referred to in this study as Group B. Group B students were used as a complete entity for a statistical comparison with Group A. Group B students were also separated into two groups for the purposes of comparison with each other.

The first comparison group derived from Group B (see figure 2) will be called the Group C. Group C consisted of those students who participated in the closed campus schedule. There were 500 students in this group. The quantitative collection of data related to the students in the Group C was included only if the student was an active member of the group for the entire year.

The second comparison group derived from Group B will be called Group D. Group D consisted of students whose parents had opted them out of the closed campus schedule by signing a release form that would allow them to leave the school at lunch hour. There were 102 students in Group D. The quantitative collection of data related to the students in the Group D was included only if the student was an active member of the group for the entire school year.

Data collected pertaining to students who were members of both Group C and Group D during the school year was excluded from the study. For example, if a student's parents signed a contract at any time between October 1, 1996 and the end of the school year, that child's records were not included in any category for the purpose of this study.

Group B, the total school population during the closed campus approach, which included both the closed campus group (Group C) and those who opted out (Group D), was included to ascertain if overall improvements occurred when the statistics for the whole school population were considered.

Procedure for Gathering and Organizing Quantitative Data

Data relating to the selected dependent variables was gathered on an ongoing basis. Student data was retrieved from the computer system of the school as well as internal discipline documentation. Data related to staff absence due to illness was gathered through a search of District Office records generated by the district's computerized "Substitute Employee Management System".

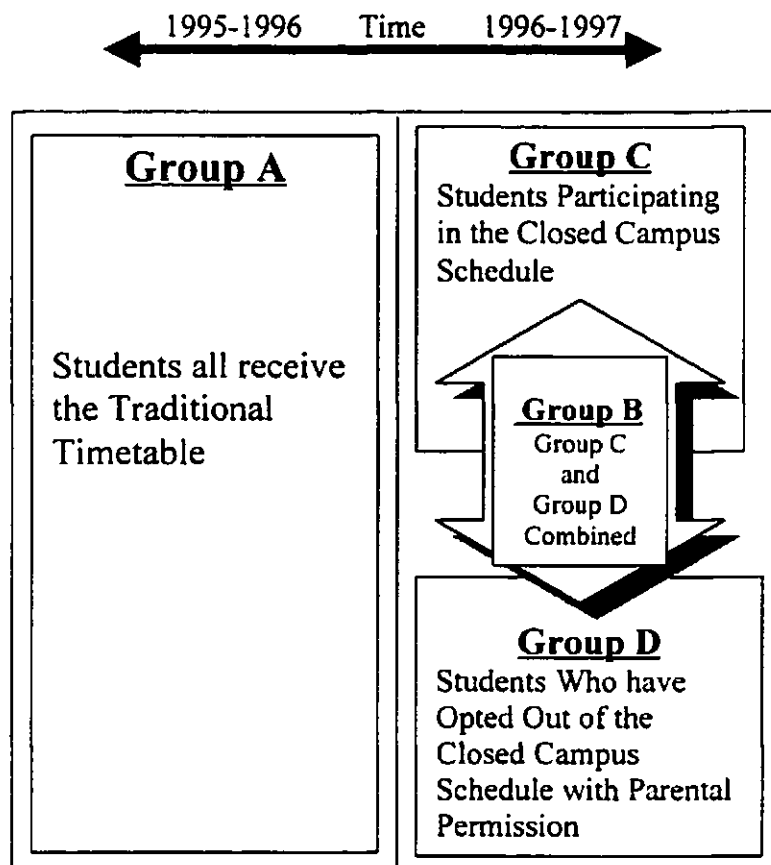


Figure 1. Student Groupings.

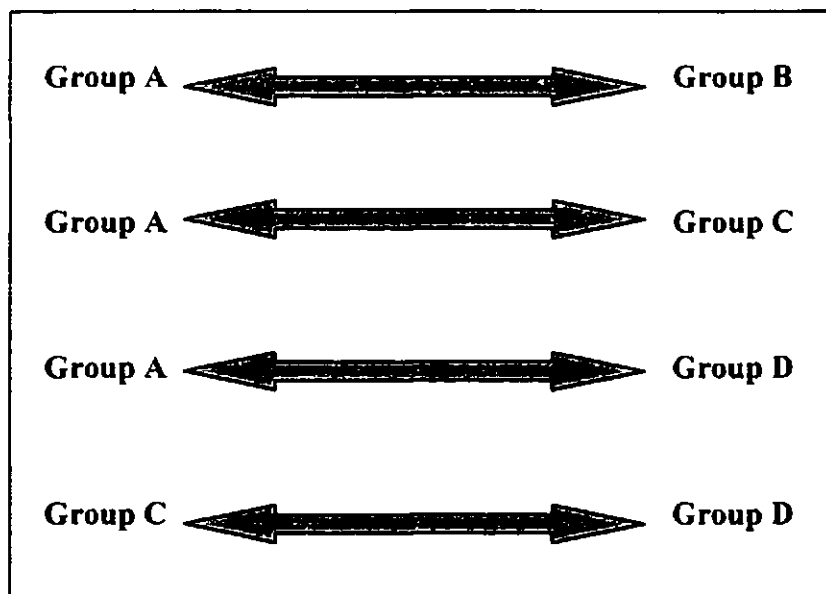


Figure 2. Comparison Groups.

Quantitative Design

The design employed by the researcher for the quantitative element of this thesis would be considered quasi-experimental in nature. The phrase “Quasi-Experimental Design” refers to the application of an experimental mode of analysis and interpretation of data not meeting full requirements of experimental control (Campbell, 1966). This design was selected for this part of the study since this body of research was being conducted in a real educational setting.

Lang and Heiss (1984) stated that quasi-experimental designs should be used when random assignment is not possible. They further suggest that, in many experiments conducted in an educational or industrial setting, it is impossible to randomly assign students or workers into experimental or control groups and that the researcher must deal with existing groupings which will remain intact. This is certainly the situation in this study as there was no element of control over the grouping of students available to the researcher. The decision was made in this study to consider the entire student population and selected sub-groups of the population as it became evident the school involved desired this to be the case.

Although Campbell (1966) stressed the importance of true experimentation, he also recognized that where true experimentation is not possible due to ethical considerations, lack of power or feasibility, the application of quasi-experimental analysis has much to offer. He stated that the social sciences must do the best they can with the possibilities open to them and

that these possibilities must include the making of inferences from data lacking in complete control. Rossi, Freeman and Wright (1979) went a step further than Campbell by suggesting that, if properly conducted, quasi-experimental designs are as effective as experimental designs.

This researcher agrees with Chadwick, Bahr and Albrecht (1984) when they wrote that the quasi-experimental design leaves open the question of whether variation in the dependent variables is due to the program treatment or to other variables. It is not the intent of this study to prove a causal relationship between the implementation of the closed campus and the selected dependent variables. The intent is simply to probe the possibility of a relationship in order to add to the general theoretical framework dealing with ways to improve the delivery of education to the middle school student.

Since only one school is being studied, and the school is the unit of analysis, inferential statistics cannot be used in tests of significance and interpretation of data. In this part of the exploratory case study, we are only interested in comparing means and directionality of means.

Internal Validity of Quantitative Research Design

The central question of internal validity is whether the independent variable is responsible for changes in the selected dependent variables (Sowell and Casey, 1982). Cook and Campbell (1979) describe internal validity as the approximate validity with which we infer that a relationship between two variables is causal or that the absence of a relationship implies the absence of cause. As mentioned in the earlier discussion dealing with quasi-experimental

research, it would be wrong to assume the implementation of the closed campus has caused any or all of the observable differences in the dependent variables. Although the possibility of a relationship between variables is certainly an issue in this study, both the nature and the design of the study were born out of necessity rather than the desire to meet ideal internal validity concerns of experimental research.

When attempting to complete this research in a real educational setting, it was impossible to compensate for each of the multitude of factors that could jeopardize the internal validity listed by Campbell and Stanley (1963). One must acknowledge the fact that the sample population used in this study is susceptible to such factors as maturation, selection bias, history, and mortality but, at the same time, this researcher accepts these factors as risks inherent to a study of this type.

Another threat to the internal validity of this study would be the instrumentation used to gather the data. Although the processes discussed in the operational definitions section of this chapter have not changed throughout the course of the study, changes may have occurred in the observers which may produce changes in the obtained measurements. The behavioral portion of this study relied on the documentation system of the school, which in turn relied almost entirely on the discretion of the teaching staff. It was the teaching staff who were responsible for deciding whether situations of student misconduct were serious enough to require documentation. The experimental design

employed here left open the possibility that the teachers used to gather data may have themselves been exposed to factors such as history and maturation.

External Validity of Quantitative Research Design

External validity refers to the condition that results are generalizable, or applicable to groups and environments outside of the experimental setting. In other words, the results of the study, the relationships found, can be expected to be reconfirmed with other groups, in other settings, at other times, providing conditions are similar to those of the study (Gay, 1996).

Threats to the external validity of this study are numerable to be sure. As is the case with all social research situations, this study must be aware of the existence of reactive arrangements resulting from the subjects' knowledge that they are involved in an experiment and the resultant effect this may have on internal validity. The effect that such knowledge can have on the behavior of subjects was demonstrated at the Hawthorne Plant of the Western Electrical Company in Chicago in the 1930's (Roethlisberger and Dickson, 1939). This effect on subjects is called the "Hawthorne Effect" and it is an area of concern for this body of research. The staff of the sample school, as well as its student body were both aware that the closed campus was being put in place as part of an experiment aimed at school improvement. Although the majority of the staff supported the idea of the experiment, only 20% of the students expressed a desire for the implementation of the program. These results served to alert the researcher that the subjects' behavior may be the result of being involved in the experiment, and not by the treatment selected. Most subjects involved in the

study were aware that an experiment was being conducted but very few knew the extent of the research, or possessed knowledge of which dependent variables being examined.

Bracht and Glass (1968) classified threats to external validity into two categories. Threats affecting “to whom”, to what persons, results can be generalized, are referred to as problems of population validity; threats affecting “to what”, to what environments (settings, dependent variables, and so forth), results can be generalized, are referred to as problems of ecological validity. Problems concerning both population validity and ecological validity are present in this study as they are in all research that is based in the real world of education. It would be wrong to deny the ability to generalize this study’s findings to other samples in other settings based on any number of threats to its external validity. McCutcheon (1981) stated that the “generalizability rests on the reader’s ability to generalize personally to their own situations rather than on the researcher’s generalizing to populations larger than the sample used in the particular study.” While the findings of this study may not be entirely transferable to another population or school, it is hoped that the results found may enable readers to find areas which may have some personal relevance to their own situations.

Summary

The function of this chapter is to inform the reader of the methods used in the course of this study. Operational definitions for each of the important variables was provided complete with a description of the relevant process of

documentation. Methods used by the researcher regarding both qualitative and quantitative data gathered for the study were also discussed along with possible threats to the validity of the data collected. Details of the student groupings being used for comparative purposes were also provided.

CHAPTER FOUR
SUMMARY, FINDINGS, AND IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the study along with a discussion of the findings and their implications. Suggestions for further research possibilities resulting out of the findings of this study are also discussed.

Summary of the Study

This study arose out of the desire to investigate a practical innovation in the scheduling of a middle school that was aimed at the alleviation of a number of problem areas that have plagued this division of education for some time. This study provided the researcher with a genuine opportunity to examine a radical departure from the normal mode of educational delivery provided to this age group. It was felt that a case study of the well-grounded theory of the closed campus model of scheduling would be beneficial to others interested in possible vehicles for school improvement.

The purpose of this study was to provide a description of one school's attempt at improving the middle school environment. This inquiry provides educators with a reality based picture of how one school sought to deal with the problems it faced, and the degree of relative success, or lack of success the school realized as a result of the actions it chose to take.

This study also examined the relationship between the closed campus environment at the middle school level and its effect on a number of variables, and the more traditional open campus environment and its effect on those

same variables. The comparative portion of the project took place over a period of two complete school years at the same middle school. The data collected in the areas of staff absenteeism and cafeteria profit included the 1994-1995 school year simply because the data was securely in place at the time the study was initiated. Yearly comparisons are not meant to reflect a causal relationship but are provided more to allow the reader to generalize where possible to situations they may find appropriate (see Appendix D for comparison tables).

This study was felt to be important for the following reasons:

1. Every school is in a continuous cycle of improvement and this project will serve as a benchmark in the study of closing the campus of a middle school in Canada. Although the closed campus has become relatively common-place in many areas of the United States, it is still a rather unknown phenomenon in Canada and the findings here may be informative to other schools who find themselves with similar circumstances.
2. A search of the available literature in the domain of school effectiveness reveals a plethora of studies identifying key components of successful schools. However, there is a dearth in the literature in the area of the possible effects closing a campus has had on these fundamental areas.
3. This work will provide a timely and contemporary source of information, which could be of interest to teachers and administrators. Schools may be interested in whether or not the closed campus can lead to positive results. Given the information provided in this study, a school might be able to

make an informed decision on proceeding with the implementation of all or parts of the closed campus model of scheduling.

The study was delimited as follows:

1. The population for this study consisted of the population of one sample middle school in the Province of Alberta. Generalizations and applications to other situations beyond the scope of this study will be left for the reader to decide upon.
2. A purposeful study of school improvement requires the careful selection of criteria for investigation. This study was confined to the investigation of those criteria that were identified either in the literature, or revealed in meetings prior to the experiment, as being important. The criteria selected are all internal to the operations of the sample school.
3. The data gathered for this study was collected over a period of twenty-two months and will encompass two complete school years. This study did not deal with any events that occurred after the completion of data collection in June of 1997. Data pertaining to the areas of staff absenteeism and preliminary school surveys on the issue of the closed campus was collected for the 1994-1995 school year due to the fact that it was securely in place prior to the initiation of the study.
4. Data collected for the quantitative portion of this study was nominal and categorical in nature. It excluded community-based data.

Bearing in mind the purpose of the study and the delimiting constraints, the following study questions were posed in the study:

1. What was the condition of the sample school the year prior to the year the closed campus model of scheduling was implemented?
2. Which educational partners played a role in the process prior to implementing the closed campus model of scheduling?
3. What steps were taken by the sample school in order to implement the closed campus model of scheduling?
4. How did the selected school actually implement the closed campus from a physical and logistical standpoint?
5. What are the ways in which the closed campus model of scheduling effects a middle school? Did the closed campus approach improve a variety of student and staff factors shown by research to be related to a safe and orderly learning environment and important learning outcomes, as compared to conditions observed during the previous year under the traditional open campus approach? These variables include incidents of late arrival by students, student suspensions, behavior problems, physical altercations, verbal abuse of staff by students, verbal abuse of students by students, subject related behavioral concerns and student absenteeism and staff absenteeism.

The review of literature conducted for this study revealed a dearth of evidence dealing with the closed campus model of scheduling. The literature review instead focussed on a number of areas and the effect these areas had on the effectiveness of schools and the quality of education. Since a factor such as quality education is nebulous in nature, this study recognized the suggestions of

Goodlad (1984) and began to focus on the importance of the time children spend on task in the classroom.

The obvious solution for increasing the time a child spends on task would be to increase the length of the school day or year. Arguments advocating this solution are often predicated on the notion that more time devoted to learning will lead to a better education for the student. Ellis (1984) found, however that the correlation between time and achievement was far slighter than expected. He suggested that the quality of instructional time is more important than the quantity.

One of the foundations for quality instructional time identified in the literature was the need for an orderly school environment. Many factors defining an orderly school environment were examined and cited in the literature review. These factors included student behavior, school violence, student attendance, time on task, and structural school reform. Although student achievement will always be a goal for those interested in school improvement initiatives, this study recognizes that improvements in student achievement take far longer to come to the fore than the longitudinal aspect of this study allowed.

The qualitative data collected for the purpose of this study came from a variety of sources. All of the data collected dealing with the first year of the study was of a historical nature while the data collected during the second year of the study was done so with the researcher being in a participant/observer position. Relevant documentation was collected from letters, memoranda, minutes of meetings, and school newsletters.

The quantitative data gathered in the course of this study was nominal and categorical in nature. Computerized archival records were gathered in the areas of student attendance and staff attendance. Non-computerized archival records were retrieved in order to study the behavior problems displayed by students and formally documented to administration. Both forms of archival data described above were presented in a comparative manner and it is not the intention of the study to imply causality between the dependent and independent variables. It is hoped that the reader will analyze the data in an independent fashion and then generalize all or parts of it to situations they themselves are party to. Survey data relating to the closed campus was also collected where possible.

The unique nature of the observer in this study provided certain opportunities. Since the researcher became an Assistant Principal at the sample school he was able to gain access to events and groups that may have otherwise been inaccessible. Although the position of the researcher in this case could be viewed as a potential source of bias, it is accepted here as a necessary evil of studying a contemporary issue in its natural context. Notes were made of informal discussions about what life was like at the school prior to the implementation of the closed campus model of scheduling as well as life after the implementation. These discussions involved many educational partners including parents, students, teachers, administrators and support staff. The only formal interview conducted in the course of this study was with the Principal of the school and it is included in its entirety in Appendix A.

Qualitative Findings of the Study in Regards to the Implementation Process

The school selected for this study implemented the closed campus schedule in August, 1996. The program was implemented with the hope that it would impact on many aspects of a middle school student's education, including the dependent variables identified in this project. In a quest for improvement and in order to possibly curb unwanted actions, the school undertook a one-year trial of the closed campus where students were not permitted to leave the school during the lunch hour. The evaluation of this one-year trial is the focus of this study.

A description of the events and situations leading up to the implementation of the closed campus and will be written in three parts. The first part, the condition, will inform the reader of the situations that lead the sample school to the realization that there was a need to improve the way in which the school day was being delivered. The second section, the implementation process, will discuss the process of implementation from its initial, formative stages to the point at which the educational partners at the school made the decision to change the structure of the school day. The third part, the treatment, will allow the reader to understand the specifics of the restructured school day as it was implemented at the sample school.

The Condition of the Sample School Prior to Implementing the Closed Campus

Although change is often looked at as if it is something to be avoided, it has also become a reality to those in education. The focus of this study is the implementation and trial of the closed campus at a middle school in Alberta. To

many educators in this part of the country, the notion of the closed campus was one that was greeted with a great deal of skepticism. These emotions were not isolated to those outside of the sample school. There were feelings of doubt among the staff and community of the sample school as well. The decision to begin the process of implementation came after all parties examined the conditions that were present at the school prior to the 1996-1997 school year. Following this examination, the school felt the elimination of the traditional noon hour where all students were free leave the campus unsupervised would allow for improvement in some areas of growing concern.

One area of concern was that of the cafeteria and the delivery, or lack of delivery of food services at the school. The cafeteria of the sample school seats 180 students comfortably and considering the school's total student population of 620, the number of students staying at school over the lunch hour was inordinately high. In 1995-1996, when the school was operating with a traditional timetable, 400 students would routinely use the facility daily. Only 80 students at the school arrive by bus, and therefore, the expected number of students staying over the lunch hour would not be higher than the above stated capacity of the cafeteria. The school felt that an alternative to hosting over 400 students each day was to offer services only to those whom arrived at school by bus or had other business at the school, be it academic or of an intramural nature. Another solution would be to introduce a rotating system where the Grade 7, 8, and 9 students would eat separately. In addition to the obvious problem of overcrowding, the fact that students of all ages were eating together

in the cafeteria often resulted in incidents of intimidation and other forms of negative peer interaction across the grade levels. It was felt that the rotating system would alleviate the pressure on the cafeteria and the obvious frustration faced by students and supervising staff.

The question of student supervision was another concern of the school community. Providing adequate supervisory services for over 500 students on the school campus during the noon break was a rather ominous task. The school's supervisory model called for two teachers to be on supervision each noon hour and it was generally recognized by all concerned that this number of supervisors was inadequate for the job at hand. The physical make up of the school, the school grounds and the surrounding community led school officials to accept the fact that the number of supervising teachers would have to be increased to five or six per day in order to meet the needs of the situation.

During the 1995-1996 school year, approximately 35% of tardy students were arriving late following the noon hour break. In addition to the problems of tardiness, the majority of the school's truancies were occurring after the lunch hour break. These attendance issues were only part of the negative situation the traditional timetable was fostering. The administrators at the school were concerned that far too much of their time was being spent dealing with incidents which had developed at lunchtime. The school is situated in close proximity to both a high school and an elementary school and the problems with students from other schools confronting students from the sample school were escalating to the point where fights were becoming commonplace and increasingly

problematic. Some of the problems with the students from other schools were occurring after school but it was felt that many of these situations were being promoted through negative interactions between students during the lunch break.

As a result of the types of incidents discussed above, it was felt that the relationship between the community and the school was becoming strained. Neighbors were calling the school to complain about students, or groups of students, and the behaviors they were displaying. In addition to the complaints of neighbors, local businesses were often in contact with the school to discuss negative situations that were taking place while the students away from the campus for the lunch break.

Augmenting the social, supervisory and attendance problems the school had over the lunch hour, there was also concern expressed for the way in which the school itself was operating. Concerns were raised over the way in which support staff were being utilized. Secretaries were responsible for completing the attendance procedures, and the inherent phone calls home, twice a day. This process involved about four hours of secretarial time each day to complete. School administrators were also of the opinion that the school day was unnecessarily lengthy which had caused an inefficient use of support staff. Caretakers were regularly called upon to spend a great deal of time cleaning up the school and its grounds following the hour of unhindered freedom.

The Implementation Process

It was the condition of the sample school that led those involved to believe that there could be a way to structure the school day that would successfully address some of the trouble areas mentioned previously. The condition, coupled with the desire for improvement started the school and its educational partners on the search for a better way. The initial stages of this search began with a quest to find how other schools were approaching their own noon hour concerns.

The idea of a closed campus was generated through staff professional development days as well as staff visitations to schools throughout Alberta and Montana. Preliminary polling of the staff showed that 70% were in favor of exploring, and only exploring the idea of closing the campus on a trial basis. Armed with the initial approval of the staff to explore the possibility, the administration of the school proceeded to the next step, which was to have the concept considered by the parents in the form of a preliminary survey. In the spring of 1995, a survey regarding the closed campus was sent home to parents. The results of this survey indicated that 60% of the parents who responded were in favor of the idea while 40% were opposed. School administration felt this result was a sign from the parents that the idea was one that the parents were definitely interested in, but it was also an idea that the parents would require more time to allow for a thorough exploration of the topic before they would endorse it.

The 1995-1996 school year saw the school and its partners examine the possibility of implementing the closed campus schedule. Through whole group discussion, school staff examined possible advantages and disadvantages of a proposed closed campus. The school Parent Advisory Council held an open Town Hall meeting in March of 1996 in order that parents might discuss the issue. This town hall meeting was advertised at all feeder schools by individual memos being sent home to parents. Parental attendance at this meeting was the highest it had ever been. Following the discussion of the notion of the closed campus, the results of a straw poll showed that 80% of parents attending wanted to see the school pursue the concept further (see Appendix B for edited minutes of each Parent Advisory Council meeting where the matter of closing the school's campus was discussed).

The next formal step in the process was the development and administration of a survey by mail to all parents with students from Grade 6 to 9. In addition to parents, school staff were again surveyed, as were the students. The surveys suggested that 60% of the parents, 70% of the staff, and 20% of the students were in favor of implementing the closed campus noon hour. These results were intended to be taken to the School Board in the spring of 1996 where the school was hoping to propose the concept of a closed campus as a way in which the school could be improved through the realization of the following goals.

- 1) Increased student achievement
- 2) More efficient use of time

- 3) More efficient use of facilities
- 4) More efficient use of school time and resources
- 5) Improvement of school climate
- 6) Improvement of the supervision of students
- 7) The provision of a safer and more pleasant environment for students
- 8) Addressing the needs of parents and the community

The proposed presentation to the School Board did not occur due to time constraints. The School Board was not in opposition to the plan of a trial implementation of the closed campus and this allowed the administration of the school to inform the staff and the Parent Advisory Council that the restructured school day would be implemented in the fall of 1996.

The Closed Campus Approach

The format of the rescheduled school day was the result of many discussions regarding how the closed campus could be implemented most effectively. Figure 3 shows the bell schedule that was implemented in the fall of 1996.

Parents were informed of the decision to implement the closed campus through the school newsletter in June of 1996 (see Appendix C for pertinent portions of the newsletter). The final Closed Campus schedule called for a rotating noon hour for each of the three grades at the school. Each grade would receive just over an hour for lunch and that hour would see student activities broken up into three distinct parts. Grade 7 students would have an opportunity to eat their lunch in the cafeteria first at 11:16. While the Grade 7 students were

eating in the cafeteria, the Grade 8 students would be attending their advisory/health class and Grade 9 students would be in the first half of their fifth class of the morning. The Grade 9 timetable included five periods in the morning and two in the afternoon while the Grade 7 and 8 timetables called for each grade to have four periods in the morning and three after lunch.

At 11:38, the Grade 7 students would leave the cafeteria for a twenty-minute activity session in the gym or outside the school in the playground or field. While the Grade 7 students were going to their activities, Grade 8 students would be making their way from advisory/health class to the cafeteria where they would spend twenty minutes eating lunch. At the same time the Grade 7 students were in activity and the Grade 8 students were in the cafeteria, the Grade 9 students were finishing up their last class of the morning.

At 12:02, the Grade 7 students would leave their activity period and return to the classrooms for a twenty-minute health/advisory class. While the Grade 7 students were returning to health advisory, the Grade 8 students would go from the cafeteria to the gym or the playground. Meanwhile, at 12:02, the Grade 9 students would leave their fifth period class and head directly to the cafeteria for lunch.

<u>Closed Campus</u>			
<u>Bell Schedule</u>			
	<u>Grade 7</u>	<u>Grade 8</u>	<u>Grade 9</u>
11:16 - 11:38	Lunch	Advisor	Period 5
11:38 - 12:02	Break	Lunch	Period 5
12:02 - 12:22	Advisor	Break	Lunch
12:22 - 1:06	Period 6	Period 6	12:22 - 12:42 Break
			12:42 - 1:06 Advisor
1:08	Period 7	Period 7	Period 7
<u>Contract Noon Hours</u>			
Grade 7 11:16 - 12:16			
Grade 8 11:16 - 12:16			
Grade 9 12:02 - 1:02			

Figure 3. The Closed Campus Schedule.

At 12:22, the Grade 8 students end their activity period and head back to class for the first period of the afternoon while the Grade 7 students are going to their first period of the afternoon from health/advisory class. The Grade 9 students, meanwhile, are leaving the cafeteria and going off to their activity period.

At 12:42, the Grade 9 students leave the activity period and head off to their advisory/health class while the Grade 7 and 8 students are in the second half of their first period of the afternoon. Finally, to complete the rotation at 1:08 all three grade levels begin their second last class of the day. The Grade 9 students leave advisory and go on to their sixth class of the day at 1:08 while, at the same time, the Grade 7 and 8 students are finishing their fifth class of the day and beginning their sixth.

School officials realized that students might want to go home for lunch for a variety of reasons just as there are families who wish for their children to be home for the lunch hour. As a result, the opportunity was provided for any student to opt out of the closed campus program by way of a noon hour contract. The contract (see Appendix D), which must be signed by a parent/guardian in the presence of an administrator, allows the student to leave the campus during the lunch hour. The length of the contractual noon hour is exactly sixty minutes, which allows ample time for the students to get home, eat lunch, and return. Students on contract are expected to leave the vicinity of the school and are required to promptly join in their group's activity upon their return to the school. Students are not permitted to loiter within sight of the school's campus during the lunch hour. Contract students who choose to not follow proper noon hour protocol risk having their noon hour privileges revoked for a specified period of time. Continual open defiance of school noon hour rules is dealt with in accordance with the school's discipline policy.

In addition to the obvious scheduling differences between the traditional timetable and the new closed campus schedule, there were some other areas that changed slightly with the newly implemented creative noon hour.

The supervision model was changed from one where teachers provided the noon hour supervision to a model calling for all of the noon hour supervision to be done by either the administration of the school or the option teachers of the school. This meant that core teachers of the school were completely free of any obligations to supervise the students at the lunch break. In exchange for 20 minutes of daily supervision of students in the cafeteria, six of the school's option teachers would not be assigned to teach a health/advisory class. This proposed trade off was accepted by all of the option teachers involved. The administrators of the school took on the responsibility of supervising the activity period for each of the three grade levels.

A teacher who had been providing leadership to the cafeteria for several years coordinated cafeteria service at the sample school. It was important to both the school and the students for the cafeteria to be able to provide the variety of food available to the students outside of the school. The sample school's cafeteria provides the students with reasonably priced food from a variety of local fast food establishments frequented by the students. On Mondays the cafeteria brings in hamburgers and fries in addition to the regular types of foods such as pizza and submarine sandwiches. Tuesday is Chinese food day while Wednesday the students are offered tacos and homemade soup. Thursday's fare includes fried chicken and hot dogs.

The activity period for each of the grade levels were organized in such a way that the students were able to visit, do their homework, or play sports such as football, soccer and basketball in either an organized or unorganized setting. Homeroom competitions, dance competitions and other special promotions were held during the activity period. Once a month, a school dance was held during noon hour. All three grade levels participated in these dances. In order to facilitate these whole group activities, the entire school would follow the Grade 9 timetable for the day.

Qualitative Findings of the Study in Regards to the Closed Campus Approach

The qualitative findings regarding the 1996-1997 school year have been categorized according to group. The five specific groups selected for the purpose of reporting findings here are parents, students, teaching staff, administrators, and school support staff. The methods used to gather data included on-site observations, the maintenance of field notes pertaining to both formal and informal discussion with all groups, formal and informal interviews, and surveys conducted by the school.

Parental Reaction to the Closed Campus Approach

The methods used to gather qualitative data regarding parental reaction to the closed campus approach included formal and informal discussion, and on site observations. Field notes were maintained in regards to parental reaction and the pertinent minutes of Parent Advisory Council meetings were consulted (see Appendix B).

The parents of students at the sample school were satisfied with the closed campus model of scheduling. Although there will always be dissenting

voices, parents were virtually unanimous in their support of the program. At the beginning of the year the tone of the parents was one of interest, as they perceived the new model to be rather radical. Some were concerned about the long morning for the Grade 9 students while others were leery of how the staggered noon hour would effect those families with two or more children in the school in different grades. The feelings of the parents soon changed to one of support as the school and its staff began to hear positive comments from the parents and the community in general. The substance of these comments was generally that the parents now knew where their child was during the school day. The Principal of the school indicated in his interview (see Appendix A) that he felt the school would be inundated with calls and letters of complaint regarding the new noon hour but the reality proved to be just the opposite. As the year went on, other unexpected supportive comments were received from parents. Although the school had thought the earlier dismissal time would be looked down upon by parents, the feedback received by the school suggested that the parents were pleasantly surprised by the results of students being dismissed earlier. Parents felt that students were able to complete homework before supper, allowing for better use of time after supper. Some parents expressed that their children could now complete their sport practices, chores or their music lessons prior to the parents arriving home from work, which allowed the family to do family things in the evening. The parents voiced their approval of the closed campus model of scheduling by voting 89% in favor of its continuation in a survey completed in April 1997.

Student Reaction to the Closed Campus Approach

The methods used to gather qualitative data regarding student reaction to the closed campus approach included many informal classroom discussions as well as discussions on an individual or small group level with students of all grade levels. Field notes were maintained in regards to student reaction throughout the 1996-1997 school year.

The sentiments of the students of the sample school underwent an interesting metamorphosis over the course of the school year. The students were the group that perceived themselves as having the most to lose with implementation of the closed campus model of scheduling. The Grade 9 students were completing their stay at the school and were coming from two years of a traditional timetable while the Grade 8 students had one year of a traditional timetable under their belts. The Grade 7 student body was new to the sample school and had not known life before the closed campus. These subtle differences in grade levels allowed for a certain amount of uniqueness and difference in their response to the scheduling change. The fact that the students the previous year had voted only 20% in favor of implementing the closed campus, did not go unnoticed to school officials. The Grade 9 students were vehemently opposed to the new timetable due to the feeling that the new system would be somewhat like jail when compared to the traditional timetable. The Grade 8 students were also opposed to the creative noon hour for the same reasons, while the Grade 7 students were unaware of either system and therefore, did not appear to be for or against either system.

To say the student body was not completely opposed to the system initially would be an understatement. The first month at the sample school saw numerous student initiated petitions aimed at the modification or the total removal of the closed campus noon hour. The response given to the students was that it was a trial year and that decisions should not be based on the brief amount of time the students had experienced with the new noon hour.

In analyzing the initial two months of the noon hour, there were only a few differences from the year prior. The students were pleased with the lack of overcrowding in the cafeteria. The staggered lunch hour allowed for the cafeteria to only have one hundred and eighty students maximum in it at any time. Considering that the year prior to implementation, the students were jostling with four hundred or more students in the cafeteria, the new system was seen as an improvement over the old. The activity portion of the noon hour was another thing altogether. Students perceived the restrictions placed upon them during the activity period as a form of school based totalitarianism. Restrictions were placed on where the students could go and what they could do. The adolescent student saw this as a sign of mistrust and another indication they were being treated in a mode reserved for the elementary setting. The students often complained that they were being treated as children. They often voiced their opinion that there were old enough to control themselves regardless of where they were allowed to go.

The Grade 7 activity period went rather smoothly and appeared to be very similar to that of an elementary school recess. The Grade 8 and 9 activity periods were seen initially by the participants as being negative in nature.

Students were used to the normal posturing and role modeling associated with adolescent life. The new noon hour activity period called for a supervised session made up of only one grade at a time. As a result the Grade 9 students felt in some way, that they were being cheated out of the things they had witnessed Grade 9 students in the past doing to the younger children. They did not get an opportunity to intimidate the younger kids, as they had been intimidated in previous years. The above facts considered, the first two months of closed campus scheduling went relatively without problem. After the first two months, the program had worked out the kinks and the students were familiar with the expectations of the supervisors. It wasn't until the period of the year prior to Christmas that the researcher first started hearing more good things from the students than bad with regards to the noon hour. Students began to embrace the new system and its positives rather than hold onto fond memories of a time gone by. Students began to appreciate the fact that they did not fall prey to negative role modeling, extortion, intimidation, physical threats of violence and vandalism. Instead they began to feel safe and they truly started to appreciate the system they had learned of late.

After the Christmas break, this researcher began to actively enter into conversations with students from all three grade levels at the school. The topic of these conversations was whether or not the closed campus noon hour should be continued or discarded. Although the dissenting voice was still apparent, it could be estimated that the majority of students would like to see the closed campus model of scheduling continue. Those students that wanted to see the old system returned would often change their mind when they were reminded

that the old system would delay their afternoon dismissal by 30 to 40 minutes. It began to become apparent that the students were enjoying having twenty minutes of complete freedom after school rather than spend twenty minutes in the old noon hour environment at the sample school. By the end of the year students had voted in a formal survey 81% in favor of continuing a program that the year prior garnered only 20% of their favor. It is safe to say that this kind of swing in adolescent public opinion of what is seen as a very visible issue is staggering. The adolescent student is not easily swayed to what the parent and the teachers think is best.

The metamorphosis of student feelings towards the closed campus model of scheduling went from being virtually unapproved to being supported by 80% of the students in the space of eight months. This itself speaks highly to the success of the trial year of the closed campus in the eyes of the students.

Teaching Staff Reaction to the Closed Campus Approach

The methods used to gather qualitative data regarding teacher reaction to the closed campus approach included informal discussions on an individual or small group level with teachers of all grade levels in both core subject and option assignments. Field notes were maintained in regards to teacher reaction and the pertinent minutes of school staff meetings were consulted.

The feelings of the teaching staff were initially very personal in nature. The teachers, although in favor of what they perceived would be an improvement in school climate, were not entirely happy with the way the closed campus would affect them on a personal level. The new system would allow teachers only 44 minutes for lunch while the old system allowed them 60

minutes. The new system resulted in teachers only being able to associate with teachers of the same grade level over the lunch hour since the Grade 7 teachers were free when the Grade 7 students were free and so on. On the positive side of the ledger, daily dismissal was moved up by thirty minutes and the responsibility of the teachers to supervise over the lunch hour had been eliminated. The elimination of teacher supervision was made possible by the commitment of school administration to assume all of the daily supervision both at noon hour and after school. As the year progressed, teachers seemed to further realize the educational benefits to the new noon hour. Afternoon late arrivals were non-existent where as the prior system had led to over 4500 late arrivals in the afternoon alone. Students seemed less distracted in the classrooms and the learning environment was noticeably enhanced. Once the teachers began to become accustomed to the new system it seemed that they, like the students, were becoming increasingly opposed to reverting back to the traditional timetable.

The issue of teacher absenteeism has drawn a great deal of attention in educational policy. Besides the obvious financial implications, research discussed in Chapter 3 of this study suggested teacher absenteeism may have a direct impact on other educational areas as well. System records of teaching staff absenteeism are presented in Table 1. Although it would be entirely inappropriate to suggest causality, the data collected regarding staff absenteeism is of interest and worthy of future consideration.

In April of 1997 the teachers voiced their approval of continuing the closed campus noon hour by voting 88% in favor of its continuation.

Table 1
Teaching Staff Absences
Due to Illness

School Year Total Days
Absent

1994 - 1995	104
1995 - 1996	161
1996 - 1997	73

School Administrator Reaction to the Closed Campus Approach

The methods used to gather qualitative data regarding administrator reaction to the closed campus approach included many discussions on an individual or small group basis in the context of the weekly administration meetings attended by all administrators of the sample school. Field notes were maintained in regards to administrator reaction throughout the 1996-1997 school year.

The administration at the sample school was in complete favor of the closed campus from its inception and the reality of the closed campus proved no different from their perceptions. The afternoons were simply a continuation of the morning whereas in the past the afternoons were merely a series of attempts by administration to clean up the fall out from negative noon hour student activities. The school was receiving calls of support from the community where before none had been received. Neighbors viewed the school as one that was cleaning up its act. School administrators found their new supervision duties to be positively proactive in their role as disciplinarians. The opportunity to supervise the students in a social setting provided the administrators with a

forum to informally discuss issues and get to know students. The administrators would come in daily contact with each student who stayed over the lunch hour and they made a point to try to talk to as many students as they could about all kinds of things. They felt that this ongoing dialogue improved their rapport with the students at the school.

School Support Staff Reaction to the Closed Campus Approach

The methods used to gather qualitative data regarding school support staff reaction to the closed campus approach included many discussions on an individual or small group basis. Field notes were maintained in regards to support staff reaction throughout the 1996-1997 school year.

The support staff of the sample school also had their personalized views of the closed campus. This group was the one group who seemed to feel that the idea was a good one from the start. Secretarial staff often spoke of the calmness of the school. The attendance procedure conducted by the secretarial staff was undertaken only once a day as opposed to the twice-daily ritual it was prior to the implementation of the closed campus. Secretaries also felt that their work time became more productive with the earlier dismissal of students. The new dismissal time of 2:38 p.m. allowed secretaries an hour and twenty minutes following the dismissal of students before their day was complete. They expressed that, in the absence of students, they were faced with fewer interruptions.

The caretaking staff was also in favor of the new system from the beginning. They felt that allowing 200 students to act in a supervised situation in a restricted part of the school would lead to far less clean up than 600

students travelling about the school and its fields at will. Caretakers were also able to begin their afternoon clean up earlier than they had in the past and this allowed their day to end earlier than it had before the new system was implemented. The sample school is also the site of special needs students of the middle school level and therefore was home to a number of teacher aides. teacher aides felt they were used in a more efficient manner since they received less time for lunch. As is the case with all staff members, teacher aides saw their workday dismissal time reduced by 30 minutes.

After examining the year in which the closed campus was implemented and comparing it with the previous one, it is obvious that all partners have come to recognize the benefits of the new model. In some cases the commitment to continue with the program is indicative of the positive results that have arisen in the school while in other cases partners wish to stay the closed campus course in order to avoid going back to the way it used to be.

Quantitative Findings of the Study

Within the stated limitations of the study, the quantitative portion of the study discovered the following raw data (see Table 2).

Table 2

Total Incidence Score
Comparison by Group

<u>Group</u>	A	B	C	D
	<u>#students=626</u>	<u>#students=629</u>	<u>#students=500</u>	<u>#students=102</u>
Late Arrivals	9833	7365	5015	1935
Absences	7268	6032	4595	1228
Suspensions	98	105	72	29
Total Behavior Problems	722	636	432	116
Physical Altercations	103	111	85	5
Verbal Student/Student	183	94	56	25
Verbal Staff/Staff	120	36	41	13
Student/Behavior Problems	396	394	302	31

- Group A = all students of the sample school for the 1995-1996 school year
- Group B = all students of the sample school for the 1996-1997 school year
- Group C = all students of the sample school for the 1996-1997 school year that participated in the closed campus timetable
- Group D = all students of the sample school for the 1996-1997 school year that opted out of the closed campus timetable

For comparative purposes, the data shown in Table 2 is converted into a yearly rate of incidence per student in Table 3.

Table 3
Incidence Rate / Student /
Year Comparison by Group

Group	A	B	C	D
	<u>#students=626</u>	<u>#students=629</u>	<u>#students=500</u>	<u>#students=102</u>
Late Arrivals	15.71	11.71	10.03	18.98
Absences	11.61	9.59	9.19	12.04
Suspensions	0.16	0.17	0.14	0.28
Total Behaviour Incidents	1.35	1.1	0.87	1.35
Physical Altercations	0.17	0.37	0.07	5.75
Verbal Student/Student	1.01	0.45	0.11	0.25
Verbal Student/Staff	0.13	0.11	0.08	0.15
Subject Related Comments	0.04	0.07	0.60	0.33

Group A = all students of the sample school for the 1995-1996 school year
 Group B = all students of the sample school for the 1996-1997 school year
 Group C = all students of the sample school for the 1996-1997 school year that participated in the closed campus timetable
 Group D = all students of the sample school for the 1996-1997 school year that opted out of the closed campus timetable

In reference to this study's fifth study question, within the stated limitations of the study, the following findings were discovered in regards to the four comparative groups identified for the quantitative portion of this study.

1. Middle school students following a traditional timetable over the course of an entire school year had higher rates of incidence in regards to most of the dependent variables when compared to rates following year when the same school followed a closed campus schedule. The second year of the study revealed clear decreases in the rates of student tardiness, student absences, total behavior problems, verbal abuse of students by other students, physical altercation between students, and verbal abuse of staff by students. The second year of the study also showed a slight increase in the rate of student suspensions and an increase in documented incidences regarding subject related concerns teachers identified about students but these differences are miniscule and probably occurred by chance alone (See Table 4 below).

Table 4
Student Incidence Rate
Comparison by Group A-B

	Group A	Group B
Late Arrivals	15.71	11.71
Absences	11.61	9.59
Suspensions	0.16	0.17
Total Behavior Problems	1.26	1.1
Physical Altercations	0.17	0.07
Verbal Abuse of Students	0.71	0.15
Verbal Abuse of Staff	0.19	0.11
Subject Related Concerns	0.50	0.5

Group A = all students of the sample school for the 1995-1996 school year
 Group B = all students of the sample school for the 1996-1997 school year

2. Middle school students following a traditional timetable over the course of an entire school year had higher rates of incidence in regards to all but one of the dependent variables when compared to rates of students the following year who opted in to the closed campus schedule. The only area where students recorded a higher rate of incidence in the second year of the study was the area pertaining to documented incidences regarding subject related concerns teachers identified about students. This difference (.01) was miniscule and probably occurred by chance alone (See Table 5 below).

Table 5
Student Incidence Rate
Comparison by Group A-C

	Group A	Group C
Late Arrivals	15.71	10.03
Absences	11.61	9.19
Suspensions	0.16	0.14
TOTAL Behavioral Problems	1.15	0.87
Physical Altercations	0.17	0.07
Verbal Abuse/Slurs	0.21	0.11
Verbal Intimidation	0.43	0.08
SUBJECT Related Concerns	0.58	0.60

Group A = all students of the sample school for the 1995-1996 school year

Group C = all students of the sample school for the 1996-1997 school year that participated in the closed campus timetable

3. Middle school students following a traditional timetable over the course of an entire school year had lower rates of incidence in regards to all but two of the dependent variables when compared to rates of students the following year whose parents have opted them out of the closed campus schedule. Students who opted out of the closed campus schedule in the second year of the study had lower rates of incidence in the areas of physical altercations and verbal abuse of staff when compared to those who followed a traditional timetable over the course of the previous school year (see Table 6 below).

Table 6
Student Incidence Rate
Comparison by Group A-D

	Group A	Group D
Late Arrivals	15.71	18.98
Absences	11.61	12.04
Suspensions	0.16	0.28
Total Behavioral Problems	1.15	1.63
Physical Altercations	0.17	0.06
Verbal Student/Student	0.24	0.23
Verbal Student/Staff	0.09	0.03
Subject Related Comments	0.59	0.33

Group A = all students of the sample school for the 1995-1996 school year
 Group D = all students of the sample school for the 1996-1997 school year that opted out of the closed campus timetable

4. Middle school students who opted out of the closed campus schedule had higher rates of incidence in regards to all but one of the dependent variables when compared to rates of students the same year who opted in to the closed campus schedule. The only area where students who opted out of the closed campus had a lower rate of incidence than those who participated in the closed campus was in the area of physical altercations between students but these differences are miniscule and could probably have occurred by chance alone (see Table 7 below).

Table 7
Student Incidence Rate
Comparison by Group C-D

	Group C	Group D
Late Arrivals	10.03	18.98
Absences	9.19	12.04
Suspensions	0.14	0.28
Total Behavior Problems	0.87	1.88
Physical Altercations	0.07	0.08
Verbal Abuse/Intimidation	0.11	0.26
Verbal Bullying/Teasing	0.03	0.16
Subject Related Problems	0.60	0.89

Group C = all students of the sample school for the 1996-1997 school year that participated in the closed campus timetable

Group D = all students of the sample school for the 1996-1997 school year that opted out of the closed campus timetable

Speculation in Regards to Quantitative Findings

The purpose of this section is to speculate on the findings of the quantitative data. The aim is not to explain or justify but rather to merely suggest reasons for the occurrences discovered.

When examining the data it seems apparent that the closed campus was a successful means of creating a safer and more orderly environment in the sample school. The trends all suggested that the variables were being reduced and the comparative groups all showed directionality of trends to be positive in nature. The subject of speculation here will focus on subject related concerns and on Group D, students who opted out of the closed campus timetable.

Upon first glance the behavior problem section of the quantitative study seemed to show a uniform pattern of reduction in Groups A, B and C. This was the case for total behavior problems, physical altercations, verbal abuse of students by students, and verbal abuse of staff by students. Interestingly enough, there was an increase in subject related concerns identified by staff in regards to students mainly due to students in Group D. Examples included not wearing gym strip, not completing homework, or failing to bring in supplies. An increase in these types of student offenses by the students in Group D may initially suggest that these students are not completing their duties as well as they had in the past. In speculating about these findings it could be suggested that instead of a decrease in student performance an increase in subject related concerns may be the result of teachers having more opportunity to focus on subject related concerns for students in Group D. These concerns about student performance, in the past may have taken a back seat to the more overt disciplinary concerns found in the classroom. An increase in documented subject related concerns, can therefore, be seen as a positive trend for the students in Group D.

It could also be speculated that the increase in subject related behavioral concerns for students in Group D is due to the fact that these students are now at school more than they have been in the past. The increase in attendance may be the reason why teachers are increasingly noting subject related behavioral concerns for students in Group D. After all, students who do not attend are not often noted for how they are behaving academically.

Upon examination of the findings in regards to those students who opted out of the closed campus timetable it becomes apparent that the needs of this group must be addressed. This group had markedly higher rates in all of the identified variables except for physical altercations where the difference was miniscule and could probably have occurred by chance alone.

The subject of speculation regarding Group D is the make up of the group itself. Are the differences shown in this study the result of opting out of the closed campus or are they the result of a difference in the type of student contained within the group or both? When analyzing the list of students found in Group D it can be said that the students range from high achieving to low achieving and from perfect attendees to those with questionable attendance records. Twenty-five percent of the students in Group D achieved academic Honor Roll status as compared to 27% for the entire school. It could be suggested that some of the students involved in Group D were children who had displayed behavior problems in the past at the school and that this characteristic of poor behavior was not improved by opting out of the closed campus. The question to be debated is why parents of students with poor behavior records would opt their children out of a program aimed at improving the safe and

orderly environment of the school? Did these parents opt their children out in the best interest of the child or were the children opted out for other reasons? The integrity of these parents is not being questioned as it is accepted that all parents want the best for their children. It is the opinion of this researcher that some students who in the past had had trouble with authority and rules were able to convince their parents that the closed campus was not going to be successful for them. It is speculated that opting these types of children out of the closed campus was not beneficial for them and it could be further speculated that their success might have been enhanced had they become part of the closed campus approach.

Recommendations for Changes in Practice

Although the implementation of the closed campus approach was successful, the following changes in practice are recommended:

1. Students opting out of the closed campus need to be included in the advisor portion of the noon hour. This would mean a shorter noon hour for those students on contract but it is felt that the advisor program at the sample school is one in which children should take part.

2. Participation in the closed campus should be a requirement, not an option. The findings of this study suggest that the group of students who opted out of the program had consistently higher rates of incidence in all of the attendance and behavioral variables identified except for physical altercations. This researcher recognizes the political need for an option to opt out to be in place but would rather see the contractual opportunity to leave the school during the lunch hour offered only to those students who

have demonstrated characteristics which are representative of proper student conduct. Perhaps the school could introduce a one month trial period at the beginning of the school year where students would have to demonstrate proper behavior in order to be allowed the opportunity to leave the school at noon hour.

3. Students opting out of the closed campus should be closely monitored in regards to their behavior and attendance and those students who are identified as being problems in either area should be recommended for contract termination. In other words, only students in good standing should be allowed to opt out of the closed campus. The findings of this study form a foundation from which it could be suggested to parents that it would be in the best interest of the student in question to remain part of the closed campus. In no circumstances should students be allowed to continue on contract if they are exhibiting the negative behaviors shown by the research to impinge upon both student success and the learning environment of the school.
4. Efforts should be made to increase the number of activity options available to students during the activity portion of the lunch hour. Although students did not suggest this to be a problem, it is felt that a wider variety of activities would allow the students increased enjoyment and satisfaction with the program.

Recommendations for Further Research

Further research, which seems necessary, is summarized below.

1. Further study of the effects the closed campus model of scheduling has on a variety of middle schools is required. A thorough review of available literature has been unsuccessful in locating a study that this project replicates and this will suggest difficulties in generalizing the findings of this study.
2. The impact of the closed campus model of scheduling at the sample school needs to be monitored on an ongoing basis. As with any project, time will continue to reveal more and more about the initiative being examined, and the termination of this line of research at this point would be short-sighted.
3. Further study of students opting out of the closed campus approach should be studied in regard to the motivation for opting out as well as a number of other factors concerning the type of student involved.

Summary

Critics of the closed campus approach may argue that the sample school has simply created a “better prison” without considering what is best in either a social, or educational sense for the early adolescent. This study has shown that the implementation of the closed campus at the sample school has been successful in dealing with the variables identified in the literature as being associated with effective schools. This alone does not suggest that the sample school is a better place to be for those who are there on a daily basis. The

answer to whether or not the school is indeed a better place for its inhabitants today than it was prior to the implementation of the closed campus lies in the fostering and development of relationships and attitudes revealed in the qualitative findings of this study.

The introduction of the closed campus environment has meant more to the sample school than simply a change in structure, organization and differentiated scheduling. The closed campus has brought with it a noticeable change in the way people interact with each other at the school. It has enhanced the relationship between the students and the administration to the point where the administrators enjoy their daily supervision and have come to view it as an integral opportunity to get to know students in a more informal setting. Instead of discussing student indiscretions in the office or the hallway, noon hour supervision has provided a forum where the administrators can talk to students in a student centered, activity oriented environment, that is far less threatening.

The closed campus approach has created a social place for young people where they feel comfortable interacting in youth-oriented ways. The knowledge that "This place is safe" serves to make it even more comfortable for the students. The activity period is one where students are participating with their peers in a manner that had not been common prior to the second year of the study. The activity period has become a chance to have some fun with other students in the same grade without fear of being exposed to negative influences that previously were inherent in the noon hour experience.

The closed campus was implemented at the sample school with an air of reciprocity. Staff were relieved of their supervisory duties and those that were

given the responsibility of supervision were not expected to teach a homeroom advisory period. Perhaps most importantly, it was the administration of the school that accepted the role of noon hour supervisors. This decision was interpreted by the staff as an example of the administration doing something for the staff and this interpretation has led to a marked improvement of the respectful relationship between staff and school administrators.

It would seem that the move toward the closed campus model of scheduling was a positive step for the sample school and each of its educational partners. The qualitative data discovered in the course of this study suggests that each group in the school has expressed that the closed campus approach has facilitated improvements in their personal worlds. Parents are pleased with the change, as are custodians, teacher aides, secretaries, teachers, and administrators. Staff approval increased from 70% in the first year of the study to 88% in the second year. Parent approval rose from 60% in the first year to 89% in the second year while student approval of the closed campus grew from 20% to 81% after experiencing a year of following the new model.

It is difficult to imagine that this level of support could arise from so many diverse groups if all the school had accomplished was a “better kind of prison”.

The extent to which the results discovered in this study can be generalized is, however, questionable. This researcher has attempted to present the findings of this study in a way that leaves the generalization of the findings to the reader. Situations and circumstances in education today are incredibly varied and it is hoped that the reader will be able to draw pertinent information

from this study and apply it, in whole or in part, to another situation where it is felt it could lead to a positive result.

References

Agnew, N. M. & Pyke, S. W. (1990). The science game: An introduction to research in the behavioral sciences (5th ed.). Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Barrow, R. (1981). The philosophy of schooling. New York: Halsted Press

Best, J. W., & Kahn, J. V. (1989). Research in education (6th ed.). Englewood Cliffs: New Jersey Prentice Hall.

Bracht, G. H., & Glass, G. V. (1968). The external validity of experiments. American Educational Research Journal, 5, 437-474.

Brigham, F. J. (1992). Teacher enthusiasm in learner disabilities classrooms: Effects on learning and behavior. Learning Disabilities Research and Practice, v.7, no.4, 68-73.

Campbell, D. (1966). Quasi-experimental design. In D.L. Sills (Ed.), International encyclopedia of the social sciences. New York: The Mac Millan Company.

Campbell, D. T., & Stanley, J. S. (1963). Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for research on teaching. In Gage, W. L. (Ed.), Handbook of research on teaching. Chicago: Rand McNally. Pages 171-246.

Carr, W. (1995). For education: Towards critical educational inquiry. Philadelphia: Open University Press.

Chadwick, B. A., Bahr H. M., & Albrecht S. L. (1984). Social science research methods. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey; Prentice Hall..

Cook, T. D., & Campbell, D. T. (1979). Quasi-experimentation: Design and analysis issues for field settings. Boston, Massachusetts: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Crawford, J., Kimball, G., & Watson, P. (1985, April). Causal modelling of school effects on achievement. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, Illinois.

Dearden, R. F. (1984). Theory and practice in education. London: Routledge and Keegan Paul Limited.

Egbert, R. L., & Kluender, M. M. (1984). Using research to improve teacher education: The nebraska consortium. Nebraska: Teacher Education Monograph.

Ehrenberg, R. G., Ehrenberg, R. A., Ehrenberg, E. L. & Rees, D. (1991). School district leave policies, teacher absenteeism, and student achievement. Journal of Human Resources, v.5, no.1, Winter, 72-105.

Ellis, T. I. (1984). Extending the school year and day. Oregon: (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED259450).

Elmore, R. F. (1995). Structural reform and educational practice. Educational Researcher, v.24, no.9, December, 23-46.

Enger, J. M. (1995). Violence prevention in the middle level curriculum: Student characteristics and acquisition of knowledge about violence. Arkansas: (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED384987).

Estcourt, C., Finch, P., Jepsen, C., Kramer, L., Kraushaar, B., Sawtelle, D., Chiodo, B., Hake, T., Hall, L., Lund, D., Thoms, N., & Tolonen, B. (1986). Chronic absentee committee report at centennial high school. Gresham, Oregon: (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED289092).

Evaluation of project inspire: Title III evaluation project. Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Education, Washington D.C., 1975.

First things first: What americans expect from their public schools. Public Agenda, New York, New York. 1994. [On-line]. Available: <http://www.calyx.net/~schaffer/GOVPUBS/gao/gao15.html>

Florida State Department of Education, (1994). Chapter 1 successful schools: Pilot project report. Florida: (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED383816).

Gay, L. R. (1996). Educational research: Competencies for analysis and application. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Merrill, Prentice Hall.

Gipe, L. (1992). School improvement network directory. Portland, Oregon: (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. Ed353650).

Goodlad, J. I. (1984). A place called school. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company.

Grice, M. (1986). Positive alternatives to school suspension (P.A.S.S.), 1985-1986. Portland, Oregon: (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED276794).

Griffiths, D. E. (1959). Administrative theory. New York: Appleton- Century -Crofts, inc.

Guba, E. G. (1981). Criteria for assessing the trustworthiness of naturalistic inquiries. ERIC/ECTJ Annual Review Paper. Reprinted in, Educational Communications and Technological Journal, v.29, no.2.

Gutek, G. L. (1991). Cultural foundations of education: A biographical introduction. New York: Macmillan.

Harnischfeger, A., & Wiley, D. E. (1974). Explosion of a myth: Quantity of schooling and exposure to instruction, major educational vehicles. Educational Researcher, v3, no.4, 7-12.

Hartnett, A., & Naish, M. (1976). Theory and practice of education. London: Heinemann Press.

Hess, F. (1987, April). A comprehensive analysis of the dropout phenomenon in an urban school system. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Washington, D.C.

Kaplan, L. H. (1996). Reducing violence in middle level schools. Schools in the Middle, v5, February-March, 43-44.

Kendall, L. (1995). Contextualization of school examination results 1992. Educational Research, v37, Summer, 123-139.

Koepke, M. (1990). Rebirth. Teacher, v2, October, 50-55.

Lang, G., Heiss, G. (1984). A practical guide to research methods. New York: University Press of America.

Lucking, R., & Manning, M. L. (1996). Instruction for low achieving young adolescents: Addressing the challenge of a generation imperiled. Preventing School Failure, v40, Winter, 82-87.

Lutz, J. P. (1983). Attitude's the key to school success. Executive Educator, v.5, no. 11, November, 26-30.

Madden, H. L., Flanagan, J. L., & Richardson, M. D. (1991). Teacher absences: Are there implications for educational restructuring. South Carolina: (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED343199).

Malcolm, H., Thorpe, G., & Lowden, K. (1996). Understanding truancy: Links between attendance, truancy and performance. United Kingdom, Scotland: (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED393184).

Manlove, D. C., & Elliot, P. (1979). Absent teachers: Another handicap for students? The Practitioner, v. 5, No. 4, 19-26.

McCutcheon, G. (1981). On the interpretation of classroom observations. Educational Researcher, 10 (5), 5-10.

Mc Donald, I. M., & da Costa, J. L. (1996, April). Reframing the meaning of school violence: Perceptions of alberta high school students. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York: New York.

McNamara, T. (1978). Follow through pupil achievement characteristics in philadelphia quasi-longitudinal data 1975-1976 and 1976-1977. Pennsylvania: (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED164564).

Merriam, G., & Merriam, C. (1974). The merriam webster dictionary. New York, New York: Simon and Schuster Inc.

Mervilde, J. (1981). Student absenteeism: Causes, effects, and possible solutions. Indiana: (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED207157).

Miller, R. C., Torres, M., Simmel, A., Frummerman, A., & Mulkey, L. (1987). Attendance improvement dropout prevention and dropout prevention: Special education program 1985-1986, end of year report. New York, New York: (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED284411).

Miron, L. F. (1995). Pushing the boundaries of urban school reform. Journal for a Just and Caring Education, v1, January, 98-114.

Moore, J. E. (1987, April). Middle school folklore: It may be true!. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Washington. D.C.

National School Boards Association. (1993). Violence in the schools: How america's school boards are safeguarding your children. Alexandria, Virginia: (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED367481).

Neukam, B., & Gilman, D. A. (1996). Language arts instruction time. Indiana: (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED396306).

Newberg, N. A., Glatthorn, A. A. (1982). Instructional leadership: Four ethnographic studies on junior high school principals. Pennsylvania: (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED236809).

New Haven Unified School District. (1994). Board policy #S-5112.5: Closed campus [On-line]. Available: http://www.nhusd.k12.ca.us/Policies_Regulations/Student_Policies/bp5112_5.htm

Nielson, A., & Gerber, D. (1979). Psychosocial aspects of truancy in early adolescence. Adolescence, v.14, no.54, Summer, 313-326.

Osborne, D. L. (1977). Race, sex, achievement and suspension. Urban Education, v.12, no.3, 345-347.

Owings, M., Hennes, J., Lachat, M. A., Neiman, K., & Facchina, C. (1990). An evaluation of special education student outcomes and program quality indicators. Colorado: (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED331193).

Pechman, E.M., & King, J.A. (1990). Obstacles to restructuring: Experiences of six middle grade schools. Columbia University, New York, New York: (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED362985).

Pittman, R., Cox, R., & Burchfiel G. (1986) The extended school year: Implications for student achievement. Journal of Experimental Education, v. 54, no.4, Summer, 211-215.

Porterville Union High School District. (1993). Closed campus 9-12 [Online]. Available: <http://www.kings.k12.ca.us/cvrpdc/promhead/other/closcamp/close.htm>

Robinson, J.V., Jacobsen, B., & Conway, T. (1979). Project probe: A student conducted study of truancy. Iowa: (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED180110).

Roethlisberger, F. S., & Dickson, W. J. (1939). Management and the worker. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Rossi, P. H., Freeman, H. W., & Wright, S. R. (1979). Evaluation: A systematic approach. Beverly Hills, California: Sage.

Rossmiller, R.A. (1983). Time on task: A look at what erodes time for instruction. NASSP Bulletin 67, October, 45-49.

Ryle, G. (1949) The concept of the mind. London: Hutchinson's University Library

Safer, D. J. (1986). Nonpromotion correlates and outcomes at different grade levels. Journal of Learning Disabilities, v.19, no.8, October, 500-508.

Safe Schools Project. (1992). Urban schools become safer, more effective. Schools in the Middle, v2, Fall, 45-46.

Sanford, J. P. (1983). Management and organization in science classrooms. Texas: (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED233881).

Seifert, E. H., & Beck, J. J. Jr. (1983). Time/learning relationships in secondary school. Texas: (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED229853).

Skillem, P. A., Richardson, M. D., Wallman, D. G., Prickett, R. L., & Marion, R. A. (1990). Stress factors of middle school teachers. Kentucky: (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED344297).

Sowell, E. J., & Casey R. J. (1982). Analyzing educational research. Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Sweeney, J. (1982). Research synthesis on effective school leadership. Educational Leadership, v39, February, 346-352.

Taylor, M. C. and Saarinen, E. (1994). Imagologies: Media philosophy. New York: Routledge.

Thompson, J. B. (1981). Critical hermeneutics: A study in thought of Paul Ricour and Jurgen Habermas. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Wentzel, K. R. (1993). Does being good make the grade? Social behavior and academic competence in middle school. Journal of Educational Psychology, v85, June, 357-364.

Wentzel, K. R., & Asher, S. R. (1995). The academic lives of neglected, rejected, popular, and controversial children. Child Development, v66, June, 754-763.

Wilson, B., & Corbett, D., (1991). Middle grade school state policy initiative: First steps to restructuring. Report on the projects first year. Research for Better Schools Inc. Philadelphia, P.A.: (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED342129).

Wilson, J. (1979). Preface to the philosophy of education. London: Routledge and Keegan Paul Limited.

Wise, W. H. (1994). Who benefits: Mandatory attendance and its relationship to learning. Ohio: (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED381905).

Wynne, E. (1990). Discipline in a good school. Society, v27, May-June, 98-101.

Van Zandt, L.M., Totten, S. (1995). The current status of middle level education research: A critical review. Research in Middle Level Education Quarterly, v.18, no.3, Summer, 1-26.

Yin, R.K. (1981). Case study research: Design and methods. Beverly Hills: Sage.

Zafirau, S. J. (1982). A study of attendance issues in a desegregating school district. Ohio: (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED220559).

Appendix A

Transcript of Interview with the Principal of the Sample School

Interview Blueprint

1. What do you think of the closed campus schedule?
2. What impact do you feel the closed campus has had on your school?
(in the areas of:)
 - a) student achievement
 - b) use of time
 - c) use of facilities
 - d) use of school time and resources
 - e) school climate
 - f) supervision of students
 - g) The environment for students (safety)
 - h) Addressing the needs of parents and the community
3. How has the closed campus affected the school? (in the areas of:)
 - a) student lates
 - b) unexcused absences of students (truancies)
 - c) behavior problems
 - d) incidences of negative school and local business contact
 - e) incidences of school/community contact
 - f) positive school/local business contact
 - g) positive school/community contact
4. Is there anything you would like to add?

Interview Legend

I: - {comments made by the interviewer}

R: - {comments made by the respondent}

[italics] - {observations of respondent behavior}

... - {a point in the interview where either the interviewer or the respondent has interjected a comment while the other was speaking}

Interview Transcript

I: This is an interview between Clark Bosch, the interviewer, and Mel, the respondent. The date is March the 25th, 1997, it is 3:18 p.m. and we are in the Principal's office. I have prepared questions but I hope you will feel free to correct me or go beyond what I have asked you at any time.

R: No problem

I: Could you tell me what you think of the closed campus schedule.

R: Well I guess I like to refer to it as a creative noon hour, *[gestures with both hands in a forward motion]* to when we say closed campus sometimes that has a meaning that we are trying to keep all of the kids in here. I believe more it's a creative solution to maybe some issues and problems that we've been having around the school for timetabling our scheduling of our noon hours so I like to refer to it as a creative noon hour. And that it does mean part of it there's a closed part to it where kids are basically here at noon hours instead of being out at different places around the community. My overall thoughts on it: I really like change as a person, I think it's

good to look for creative and new ways of addressing solutions. And that's why I celebrate that at our school. Middle schools are always trying to diagnose and prescribe better things for kids and better ways of doing it instead of saying, Oh, too bad, we had a problem for years or it's never going to get resolved or solved. I think it's a wonderful thing to be trying different things, and maybe this isn't perfect right now, and maybe some better things will come from it, adaptations or even totally different things to address the problem. So I'm excited about trying new initiatives and so far, for what we've done for this, three quarters of the year so far I think has been very successful, it surprised me in some ways how successful it's been, I thought we'd have more problems than we've had up to date, I don't know.

I: You mentioned using this as a form of diagnosis, or response to a situation. Could you tell me more about the condition of what caused the diagno...

R: Sure.

I: ...sis of a closed campus?

R: A little bit of the background? I've been in, schools for 20 years and a lot of junior high middle schools as well and we've seen all sorts of problems at noon hours and problems with cafeterias in Canada. We don't seem to build large enough schools to feed kids at lunch. Traditionally our community was smaller and kids didn't live very far away from the school and they would be able to go home for lunch so, when they built the schools in Lethbridge in particular and the communities surrounding Lethbridge and the whole idea was lets build a school very few kids are going to stay here and eat at noon hour so we don't need to build a big elaborate cafeteria. But things have changed. The size of the north side has grown, the size of most of the

boundary areas have really expanded and also the nature of work has changed so that people no longer there at home cooking soup for the kids noon hour. A lot of our community are either single parent or both parents working. Very few of our people actually have a parent home during the noon hour, and of course the noon hours from school to school are all different with decentralization. We have elementary schools, senior high schools and junior high schools all different noon hours, so it's making it very difficult for the parents to take care of the kids at noon hour. So, at our school in particular we are quite concerned that we have hundreds of kids here at noon hour, we have too small of a cafeteria, kids wanted to stay here, they had nowhere to go, a lot of schools lock the doors and said no we're not going to do anything it's not our responsibility it's the parent's responsibility at noon hour. So I didn't think that was a very good solution. I wasn't happy, the teachers weren't happy with having the noon hour supervision the being outside and we had to have either more people outside offering more things or we had to do something very different. So, we got the idea from visiting some schools. We did some tours all over Alberta and some into the States, looking at Middle schools and effective schools for ideas and one of the things that we saw at some of the schools was a closed campus noon hour and so that's where our idea started from some of our tours and about three years ago at one of our feedback days some of the teachers wrote that down and said they would at least like to look into and try so we surveyed the whole community, we had big discussions and the first year we didn't feel we were ready to do that and then the next year after that we studied again and actually did a trial noon hour or two for practice to see what it would be like, talked to kids and to parents and surveyed them again and we decided

to take this on as , an a initiative try to see if we could do something to make noon hours better. We would have some of the days at our school, especially in Canada we have some much cold weather here that, from October through April, there is miserable weather and people don't really want to walk home or go outside at noon hours and we had to do something creative and different. So, there are some other issues as well, some of the community people of course, these kids having nothing to do and little supervision they would be terrorizing the neighborhood [*gestures with hands in a downward pointing, circling motion*] going to the malls, doing things around the school property, the back yards, and we had a lot of problems with kids coming in late in the afternoons so we wanted to see if this creative noon hour could solve this problem in some way. After surveying the community and getting approval from the School Board we decided to operate a creative noon hour where the Grade 7's would have a different noon hour from the Grade 8's and Grade 9's and so that's where we're at this year where we have kids eating at different times. There are people that are allowed to go home that have a noon hour contract. If a parent is at home and really wants their kid to come home at noon we weren't going to restrict that so parents come into our school and sign a contract and they're allowed to go there. But of course, if [*shifts in chair*] they don't follow the tenants of the contract the contract will be taken away and we would require them to stay here at noon hour. So that's kind of the background and that's why I don't like the word closed as much because we want to say we want to offer anyone that has the desire to be here at noon hour, at least be able to offer that to them so that we when we have maybe 200 kids instead of five hundred trying to eat all at the same time in a small little cafeteria that

only holds 180 people by the fire codes. So we think it's very positive that, people that want to go home can actually sign a contract, want to stay here we can actually accommodate them. Our teachers are quite pleased with this, one of the things that they've always wished they didn't have was the noon hour patrol, it's being like a policeman instead of a school teacher. A lot of us got into the profession to teach math or french or carpentry and we end up that one of our major duties and things that we hated most about our stint in school was to be a noon hour supervisor outside, you know, supervising the kids. So it has been a very positive thing for the staff that they don't have a lot of those duties. We timetable kids right through the day creatively and it frees them up with that, that duty. Our community seems to be very uh, happy with it we've had zero *[holds thumb and fore finger together to form a zero]* complaints from parents saying we think this is the most awful thing you've ever done, I thought we'd have a lot more. And I've never had one phone call or a letter from anyone this year saying this is the most vicious thing you've ever done to kids, we think this is awful and you should get rid of it, I haven't had one *[holds up forefinger]* letter or one phone call. I've had a lot of people saying hey we think this is great, it's the best thing that ever happened , keep it up, and I suppose if we took away their contracts some people might be very upset , because there are some kids that do need to maybe go home or a parent that really wants them at home so as long as there's that choice I think that we won't have a lot of complaints because it's a very creative solution to some of our issues and this modern day with the job situation and also the lack of facilities and the bad weather and the large catchment area that we have.

I: Going back to what you said about the cafeteria, how many kids were staying before this year when you instituted the creative...

R: Yeah.

I: ... noon hour?

R: I've been here six years and the first three years when I was here from October until April we would have probably 400 of the kids, that, be staying, or I would be lucky if, especially on a cold weather sometimes we'd have 500, and some days almost all of them here, because of inclement weather. When the bell would ring they would just try to jam pack [*puts hands together in a praying like motion to symbolize jamming together*] into the cafeteria or try to, some of the teachers would try to host them in rooms. When we had intramural programs sometimes we'd have maybe 25 kids playing badminton in the gymnasium, and the rest of the kids would have to sit in the hallways of the school just visiting. So the supervisors would have to just have them sit down cause there weren't enough supervisors, wasn't any place to, to have them. And in go, good weather days they would lock the doors and kids would be just left outside. To fend for them...

I: Right

R: ...selves with only some of the times supervisors inside but even at this level the teachers don't expect to be like elementary being outside doing the playground supervision, it's unheard of at this level but we have 300 to 400 kids out on our fields and no one was out there so it became quite an issue.

I: How has the creative noon hour impacted the school and what areas do you expect it to have impact on?

R: O.K. I mentioned already the impact on staff that we have our administrators take care of the outside supervision and our teachers that aren't advisors are option teachers and they take care of a 15-20 supervision of the cafeteria by grade level, but most of the teachers, you know that's one of the things they don't have any noon hour supervision or outside duties at noon hours any more so that's been a positive thing. Our lates in the afternoon are virtually non-existent. Once in a while we'll have a kid uh, late but then we warn them and we can take away their noon hour contract so we find the kids are here in the afternoon on time whereas the last 20-30 years [laughs] that the school's been in existence we'd have 25 to 30 kids late every afternoon. It has to affect their academic and also the disruption of the kids that are already in class and these kids are walking in late. So we feel that's a very positive thing. We believe that the kids use their time more wisely. Instead of having nothing to do at noon hour for half an hour they get that time at the end of the day that they can go home and do their homework or go to their lessons and get more done before supper or their evening chores, so we feel that's a very positive thing for kids that they're using their time more wisely instead of just having unorganized nothing at noon hour now they uh, we can serve time and get them going through the day. We believe that we've saved the school system a lot of money. A lot time is spent by administrators just dealing with the noon hour issues, the things that have gone on at noon hour, all afternoon. Plus, the students themselves a lot of them would have gotten into trouble at noon hour now have just gone through the day nicely, and they're not [laughs]

suspended from school or picked up by the police or have the other issues are able to settle down. A lot of times at noon hours at middle schools and junior high schools things go on at noon hour and they spend the whole afternoon gossiping [*lowers voice as if to demonstrate gossip*] about that event at noon hour that happened outside there, three blocks away in the playground. We've had very little of that this year whereas every week three or four issues would happen every week at the school here. So that definitely has to effect the amount of learning and thinking and concentrating and focusing what's going on. Of course we haven't finished this school year yet to compare statistics and it's always difficult to go year to year because they are different kids. But we hope to be able to document that there are some academic improvements and I hope to document that our results on provincial achievement tests and things like that the measures that we use will be improved; our honor roll with the number of kids on the honor roll with the fewer kids hopefully on our failure lists. But there again we have to use caution because they are different .but we hope to see some, you know, growths in those area areas...

I: Right

R : ...I think the whole community perception of our school has been enhanced this year. We have people thanking us for they're wondering where the kids are at noon hour. In the past, a lot of the neighborhood and community people would think down on kids at this age group and it's really helped our school image that they're not seeing some of the good things, and it's always a small percentage of kids mind you, when we have 640 kids and we have 25 that may be causing problems in the neighborhood, but it sure enhances the image of our school and we don't have some of those things

going on and it really helps us develop that positive image. So the kids are prouder of being Wilson students and we're prouder as well.

I: Do you feel there has been a definite impact on student behavior in the school?

You mentioned some things about less gossiping and things, but what is actually going on in the classroom? Do you think there is an improvement in behavior?

R: Definitely. We used to receive constant complaints about kids harassing, threatening, bugging them, all from their noon hour activities. The smoking, we noticed a big difference with Grade 7's uh, they weren't hanging around the wrong groups. We've had fewer incidents of the younger kids smoking whereas at noon hours they would go with their groups of the older kids the Grade 9's and Grade 8's and they would be more influenced, by keeping them separate and doing their own things we seeing a big difference in some of those behaviors. Also, the whole idea of going through the day without those distracts definitely in the classroom we feel things are more calm and settled down. In the office, the secretaries have commented how much quieter it is this year and in the past, at the end of the noon hour we would have kids lined up here from snowballs, from bumper shining, problems at the Laundromat, from harassing and bugging each other, to and from the school at noon hour...

I: Uh, huh.

R: ...and definitely [*leans forward*] has an impact right into the classroom where the kids are settled down, all those things haven't happened to them, they've had a very structured, you know, quick, efficient noon hour and you know, are on task again.

So, even though we are not prepared at this point to document academic improvement, definitely behaviorally and academically things are much smoother.

I: You mentioned before, that students ate separately in the school, in the cafeteria? Can you clarify that a little bit more for me?

R: The structure this year? Uh, how it's organized this year is that we have uh, Grade 7's eat first, and while the Grade 7's are eating the bell rings at approximately 11:16 and the Grade 8's go to an advisor class and the Grade 9's continue with a fifth period. So, the Grade 7's and 8's have four periods in the morning and three in the afternoon, and Grade 9's have five in the morning and two in the afternoon. So the noon hour's divided into three 20 minute periods, so the Grade 7's for their first 20 minute period would eat in the cafeteria and if kids don't want to eat in the cafeteria they also there is another area they can also eat in case they don't like crowds, and the Grade 8's go to their advisor class, and the Grade 9's as I mentioned, continue with the first part of their fifth period. When the bell rings after the first 20 minute period the Grade 7's leave the cafeteria and go either outside or into a recreational gym area for, it's like a recess, a 20 minute recreational period. The Grade 8's then proceed to the cafeteria, and the Grade 9's finish off that fifth period. The next 20 minute period, the Grade 7's are now finished their noon hour and they go to an advisor class back with the Grade 7 teachers, the Grade 8's go to their recreational period and the Grade 9's now go to the cafeteria, and it continues like that till the Grade 9's have finished and the whole school is back on the same schedule at 1:06 for period seven and eight. So, the contract students have an hour right now, they can leave and go home and come back so they don't miss any class. So that's kind of how the, it's

organized. One of the benefits is that we used to have Grade 7 kids who would be at the end of the line and kind of pushed and bullied *[leans back in chair and smiles]* by the Grade 9's in the cafeteria they would be the last ones to get their hamburgers and things, but now it's more of a fair basis the Grade 7's fend for themselves with Grade 7's *[laughs]* instead of some of the...

I: Right.

R: ...so that's a benefit to the younger kids to have a chance at the cafeteria without having older students that have been at the school for three years saying "this is my table and this is my place."

I: Do you think that the school will carry on with the creative noon hour in years to come?

R: Well as far as I can tell at this point our school council is still 100% *[nods head side to side]* I shouldn't say a 100% but, a great majority behind this. The school staff seems to be at least 80% or more still in favor of continuing it for next year, the administration at the school seems to feel that it would be a good thing to continue. Our community, I've heard nothing but good things about it, I think it would be harder if we decided not to run it again. Once you offer a service like this to the community that seems to be working pretty well, to take it away at this point I think we'd have more problems than if we decided to discontinue it ourselves. We're still in the process of, surveying and making those decisions, but I would be very surprised if this community didn't want us to continue that. I do worry about long-term when the present administration is not part of the school whether the next administration would want to do some of the tasks that I'm requiring my administration to do at this point.

Right now I ask my assistant principals and myself to do a recess period and nobody else in the school does that. We go outside with the kids and we have...

I: Right.

R: ...footballs and basketballs and soccer balls and it takes a special kind of person to be out there with those people, sometimes we have two at once, and sometimes, depending on the size of the group and what type of group it is we have one supervisor with them and it's not an easy task, but the present administration decided that we want to give our teachers a break and not have that supervision and I'm not sure if I can say it will last forever at this school, but at least for the next few years while we're still here and the same group of people making the decisions I think we'll see it as a viable scheduling process that's used. Some of the other schools are interested right now. We've been invited to school council and staff meeting to explain and I'm sure there may be pressure from some other parents at other schools for schools, especially at this age group, to follow our suit and to do that kind of thing, which I think would be very positive, especially if you're a school that has a lot of bussing and nowhere for the kids to go at noon hour and is a very important thing.

I: Is there anything else you would like to add?

R: Well, I think that the thing I like about it the most is that we're always thinking of finding creative ways to solve some of the problems and I think that's what I'm proudest of the most and we're not done yet there are a lot of things we can do to improve *[makes a rolling gesture with hands]* schools just because there's a problem and sometimes we think that, oh, we just have to keep operating the way we've always operated schools, need to be exactly the same, and I think we just have to step

forward and say no, things are going to be different just because parents are comfortable that was the way they had it when they went to school, things have changed and we need to change our whole school year, let alone just our day, I'm looking forward to the time when we uh, have year-round schooling and we devise our schedule so it isn't like the farmer days in Alberta when we did our schedule because most of the students, in July and August, went to go to work on the farms. We're a highly urban school system at this point and we need to have our hours and our schedules should be very flexible and very creative to reflect the world of work, our students and the way life is right now for our parents, and I'm excited about the future and we're going to see lots of changes not just in the way the school day or noon hours are organized, but the way schools operate and I think we're going to find some very exciting changes with some of the creative schools that we're seeing right now. Some of the Cyberhigh schools and the kids working through their day a little bit differently. I can see in the future where kids spend part of their day at clubs and activities and part of the day working on their school work from their computers and from their technology and having teachers as markers and advisors and things over networks and webs and that's *[makes fists, subtly shakes them]* scary to some people but that's kind of the way things are happening in the world of work and schools must reflect the world of work as well. We're not a factory system any more with kids in little rows in little desks. Kids are not going have those kinds of a job in the future and why should we be training them right now to be factory workers when that is not going to be the reality of their world of work...

I: Right.

R: ...so we have to be looking for ways of making things better for kids and for people that are working here at the school.

I: One last chance, is there anything else you'd like to add to what we've discussed this afternoon?

R: Well, I think that our kids are safer. In think our kids uh, we're seeing them behave more like kids still, they don't have to grow up and do all the profiling they did at noon hours. We're seeing them revert back to some of the recess type playing of elementary school, especially for the Grade 7's, I think that's very positive, I don't think there's any rush for them to grow up and I think that kids are very adaptable and getting used to it and it's just a matter of course for them it's nothing different or new they look at you strange if you said "what do you think of this, is this kind of a difficult thing?" Our Grade 7's know nothing different and they're very adaptable and I think they like it and they enjoy it so I think it was a very positive thing for kids.

[leans back in chair]

I: All right. Thank you. This interview is concluding at 3:42 p.m. on March the 25th at the offices of Wilson Middle School and thank you very much for your time, sir.

Interview Summary

Through the course of the interview the respondent provided the following information on the closed campus (which he prefers to call a Creative Noon Hour) and how he felt it has impacted his school. His responses have categorized into three categories. The first category, The Condition, refers to the respondent's perception of how things were before the closed campus was implemented at the school. The second category, The Process and the Treatment, deals with the implementation of the closed campus and the process the school went through in order to arrive at where they are today. The third category entitled Impacts, relates the respondent's view on how the closed campus has affected the school.

The Condition

- The size of the school's drawing area has increased, students now live further away
- Many parents are not at home for lunch
- Teacher's did not like supervising students over the noon hour
- There was a need for increased supervision if changes were not made
- Cold weather seemed to cause many students to stay at the school for the lunch break
- Some of the students were "terrorizing the neighborhood" at noon time
- Large numbers (25-30) of students were coming back late from lunch hour
- Intramural programs were poorly attended
- Cafeteria seated only 180 students by the Fire Code
- Anywhere from 200 to 600 students were staying at school for lunch
- There weren't enough supervisors for the number of students staying

- Students would constantly complain of threats, harassment and students bugging others
- On good weather days, the doors would be locked, kids outside to fend for themselves
- Younger students were hanging around with the wrong groups
- Younger students were being negatively influenced by the older students
- Younger kids were being pushed and bullied in the cafeteria
- Students were growing up too fast and were always "profiling" at noon hours
- With decentralization, all schools have different times for their noon hour breaks

The Process and the Treatment

- Visitations were made to schools in Alberta and the United States
- The closed campus concept was seen during visitations
- Teacher's suggested the idea during one of the school's feedback days
- The whole school community was surveyed in regards to the notion
- Many discussions were held but the school did not feel it was ready to proceed
- Trial noon hours were conducted at the school to see what it would be like
- Community was surveyed again
- School went to the School Board for approval
- School Board approval was granted
- Parents were given the option of opting their children out of the program
- Administrators are responsible for all supervision during the break/recess periods
- Option teachers, have no homerooms so they do all cafeteria period supervision

Impacts

- So far, it has been very successful
- Teachers are quite pleased
- Community seems to be very happy with it
- They have had zero complaints from parents about the new program
- A lot of people are saying "this is great, keep it up, best thing you've ever done"
- Afternoon lates are virtually non-existent
- There are fewer disruptions in the classrooms
- Students use time more wisely (now do not have 30 minutes at lunch to do nothing)
- Little time is now spent by administrators dealing with noon hour issues and incidents
- Student themselves are not getting into trouble at noon hour
- Fewer distractions will hopefully lead to better learning environments in classrooms
- Academic improvements are expected in time
- The whole community perception of the school has been enhanced
- Improved school image
- Students are prouder of being students at the school
- Fewer incidents of younger students smoking
- Secretaries have commented on how much quieter it is this year
- Definitely, things are much smoother behaviorally and academically
- Separation and staggering of grades during lunch has made cafeteria service smoother
- School council is now almost 100% in favor of continuing program

- School staff seem to be at least 80% in favor of continuing program
- Administration at the school want to see the program continue
- Other schools have expressed an interest in the program
- Presentations on the closed campus have been made to other schools/parent councils
- Students are now safer
- Students don't have to grow up so fast now, less profiling

Appendix B

Pertinent Minutes of Staff Meetings and Parent Advisory Council

School Staff Meeting, February 2, 1996

Creative Noon Hour Discussion

The biggest problem we have with the noon hour is that we have too many kids staying for lunch because fewer kids have a place to go at lunchtime.

Parents must be educated as to the pressures the school is under at noon hour

- Something has to change
- Supervision, as it is now must also change because of legal ramifications
- Some of the pros of the experimental noon hour were that the students seemed more settled after lunch, fewer lates, less administrative time was spent on noon hour behaviors, less secretarial time spent on lates, replaces co-curricular time, reduced supervision expectations.
- Some of the cons were that the students did not seem to have enough time to eat, students perceived it as a loss of time, students felt herded, students felt they were being treated in an "elementary" fashion, Grade 7 students did not seem to have enough action over the noon hour, students were unable to be with friends in other grades, staff did not feel they had the time to be with their friends for lunch.

School Staff Meeting, March 1, 1996

Creative Noon Hour Discussion

- Staff survey results were presented
 - There were 27 responses
 - 5 wanted to keep the present situation and increase supervision
 - 4 wanted to create a policy that would allow only bus students to stay at lunch

- 18 wanted to have the grades take turns eating lunch, have all students stay on campus
- It was announced that the Parent Advisory Council would be discussing the issue of the creative noon hour at their meeting on March 12th.
- Teachers were invited to attend the meeting.

Parent Advisory Council Meeting, March 12, 1996

There were 54 people in attendance at the beginning of this meeting. The majority of these parents were Grade 6 children's parents who had been invited in order to get some input on the closed campus lunch program.

- It is felt that this issue will affect them should their children attend Wilson Middle School.
- Middle School Philosophy different from Junior High School in that it encourages a lot of parental involvement.
- Parents are encouraged to get involved on committees – co-curricular, P.E., Budget and Annual Planning

There was lengthy discussion on the closed campus lunch hour. The Principal brought out the following concerns:

- The noon hours have become quite enticing for the children and they now have more children staying than ever before. They are actually in violation of the fire code, which allows for 150 students to stay. We now have about 300 children staying. He does not want to tell children they cannot stay. He feels that it says something good that the children want to stay at the school.

- There are many ways of incorporating the closed caption lunch hour. Some alternatives brought to our attention were:

1) Keep same noon hour; increase supervision.

Downside – Not fair to the teachers who stay.

2) Encourage clubs to get involved.

Downside – Children are losing interest in clubs. Poor turnouts.

3) Each grade could eat in their advisor rooms.

Downside – Problems with clean-up afterwards.

No Break for Teachers.

4) Only allow bus pass students to stay.

Downside – Feels very uncomfortable doing this to students. There are many students who live a good 20 minute walk away. many who are going home to no one at lunch and still others who wander their lunch hour away in the community. This is how you get trouble with this age group.

5) Keep same lunch hour but keep grades separated for lunch hours.

6) Have different lunch times for each Grade and have this a closed campus lunch program.

- Last year a survey was sent home to parents about the closed campus lunch hour. 60% said yes. 40% were questionable.

- Staff was also surveyed. 20 said yes this was a good idea, but increase the clubs and activities. The balance felt that they should only accommodate the 70 bus pass students.

Parental Concerns, Questions And Responses.

Question: What about a paid lunch program similar to that in elementary school.

Encourage parents to supervise the lunch hour?

Answer: Not feasible. It violates insurance policies. Would not feel comfortable asking parents to come in and supervise children at this age level. Very different from elementary level.

A teacher added input to this suggestion as some parents felt that parents could easily handle this responsibility. He invited parents to come out to a dance and help supervise. It is very different dealing with children in a non-structured environment. The Assistant Principal also confirmed the fact that they don't want to turn any children away at lunch hour.

Concern: Kids should not have to stay. They should be entitled to a break from the school. Many children want to go home and this should not be taken from them.

Answer: The lunch hours could be very creative. Kids can go home if desired. This would be arranged at the office and would be fine. No children have to stay if parents want them home for sure at lunch.

Concern: How can staff handle the day and be patient and creative with the students without a break. Unfair to the staff?

Response: Teachers felt that there were actually fewer issues to deal with when a closed lunch hour was held. Better concentration and results from students. They are more focused and not pre-occupied with what went on at lunch hour. This is much less tiring for them as teachers also. Teachers are still getting a break whether it be 15 minutes or ½ hours, a break is given to them.

Suggestion from Parent: Utilize the students from the college and University for the lunch hour supervision and activities.

Downside: Only for about 6 week intervals could this be used. That is not good for the students at this age. They need constants. Remember what goes on with substitute teachers as opposed to regular teacher.

Suggestion from Parent: How about involving the community by getting people in to teach different skills for those who maybe can't afford it. E.g. leather working

Response: Good idea. Very difficult to get people to teach such things over a lunch hour. People are very willing to do such things after school though.

Suggestion: Listen to the kids.

Teacher: Closed lunch hour not for everyone. Maybe try it for the Grade 7 first.

Have ½ hour break; staying in classes for this and as a class can decide what to do for this break. We need to be most concerned with 1) Safety, 2) Comfort Break, 3) Happiness.

Right now there are just too many children staying with the amount of supervision available.

The Principal closed the discussion by letting parents know that this would be brought back to them by means of a survey. What do you, as parents want? Some questions, which might be included on this survey, are: Should grades be separated?

Intermingling is important also. How many parents are actually home at lunch?

Staggered lunch hours and dismissal times. Different start and end times for school days.

It was also noted that majority does not necessarily rule. This is not a democratic process but rather a collaborative process involving the staff, community and administrative team. This can be very creative and suggestions will be appreciated and considered in any final decisions.

The next step is to develop and distribute surveys. Make Annual Plans. Make sure all is educationally sound.

Closing:

President: Thanks to all those who came out to support our school. Hope to see you all here next year, support is wonderful. The Principal listens to people and explains to parents. It is not just his way at this school.

From here the regular school council meeting was held.

Principal's Report:

The Principal said the survey will be given to everyone and we will listen and try to do what is best for students of this school.

School Staff Meeting, March 22, 1996

Creative Noon Hour Discussion

- Parent Advisory Council meeting was held on March 12
 - Over Sixty parents attended the meeting
 - Following a lengthy discussion, 80% of the parents indicated that they were in favor of the closed campus noon hour.
- A proposed draft of the bell schedule for 1996-1997 is now in the teachers' mailboxes
- Decision to implement the closed campus is not final yet.

- Annual plans group will look at the draft
- Surveys will be sent out to the community, staff, school council and students in the near future

Parent Advisory Council Meeting, May 14, 1996

Creative Noon Hour Discussion

- Results of survey regarding the closed campus were presented
- Grade 9 responses were very poor, it was suggested this was the result of the fact that next year had very little to do with them
- The surveys suggested that 60% of the parents were in favour of implementing the closed campus timetable
- Anyone wanting more information regarding the survey should contact the school office

Parent Advisory Council Meeting, September 10, 1996

Creative Noon Hour Discussion

- The creative noon hour is on for a trial of one year
- We have been talking with the kids a lot about the new system
- There will be a survey in April or May once we have been through all of the seasons working with the different events
- So far things seem to be working
- Only 10% of students have opted out so far

Parent Advisory Council Meeting, April 8, 1997

Creative Noon Hour Discussion

- Feedback from parents was discussed regarding the creative noon hour

- A straw vote was taken of the parents attending the meeting: 21 were for continuing with the closed campus, 1 was opposed
- The staff and community will be surveyed regarding the noon hour among other things in the near future

Parent Advisory Council Meeting, May 13, 1997

Creative Noon Hour Discussion

- Results of school survey were presented
- 81% of the students wanted the noon hour to remain as it was this year
- 88% of the parents said we should continue with the creative noon hour
- 89% of staff said we should continue with the creative noon hour

Appendix C
Correspondence



Wilson Middle School

2003 - 9 Avenue North, Lethbridge, Alberta T1H 1J3
Telephone 329 - 3144 • Fax 329 - 3611

April 20, 1997

Dear Clark,

I am pleased to grant you permission to conduct research regarding the impact of our Creative Noon Hour on our school.

I look forward to the results.

Yours truly,

Mel Fletcher
Principal
Wilson Middle School

mf



Lethbridge School District No. 51

Division of Instructional Services

433 - 15 Street South
Lethbridge, Alberta T1J 2Z5
Phone: (403) 380-5302
Fax: (403) 327-4387

May 1, 1997

Clark Bosch
Wilson Middle School

Dear Clark:

I am glad to grant you permission to conduct research on the impact of the closed campus on Wilson Middle School.

I would appreciate receiving a copy of the study upon its completion.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mal Clewes', is written over a horizontal line.

Mal Clewes
Deputy Superintendent

cg

April 15, 1997

Mr. Mel Fletcher
Wilson Middle School
2003 – 9th Avenue North
Lethbridge, Alberta

Dear Sir:

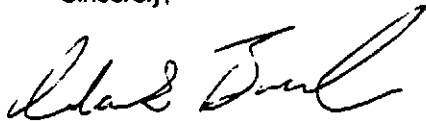
I am writing in order to acquire permission to conduct research which would allow me to complete my Master of Education degree at the University of Lethbridge. Some time ago, I spoke with you concerning a proposed topic for my thesis. Although the scope of my research has narrowed somewhat of late, my topic of study remains unchanged. It is my intention to complete a longitudinal case study on the impact of the "closed campus" involving the comparative analysis of a number of dependent variables. I hope to gather data on both the 1995-96 school year and the 1996-97 school year at Wilson Middle School. All data gathered would involve variables that are internal to the operations of the school. Variables involved in my inquiry include:

- unexcused absences of students
- student behavior problems
- student suspensions
- late arrival of students
- staff absences due to illness
- truancy

All of the data obtained will be presented in an anonymous fashion with frequencies noted by student and staff groupings. There will be no attempt to compare the results discovered with any other schools. A copy of the completed study will be distributed to both Wilson Middle School and Lethbridge School District # 51.

Should you require additional information, please call me at 329 3144. I would appreciate a response in writing at your convenience. Thanking you in advance for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Clark Bosch

April 15, 1997

Mr. Mal Clewes
Division of Instructional Services
Lethbridge School District #51
433 15th Street South
Lethbridge, Alberta

Dear Sir:

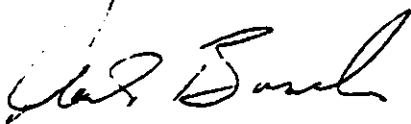
I am writing in order to acquire permission to conduct research which would allow me to complete my Master of Education degree at the University of Lethbridge. Some time ago, I spoke with you concerning a proposed topic for my thesis. Although the scope of my research has narrowed somewhat of late, my topic of study remains unchanged. It is my intention to complete a longitudinal case study on the impact of the "closed campus" involving the comparative analysis of a number of dependent variables. I hope to gather data on both the 1995-96 school year and the 1996-97 school year at Wilson Middle School. All data gathered would involve variables that are internal to the operations of the school. Variables involved in my inquiry include:

- unexcused absences of students
- student behavior problems
- student suspensions
- late arrival of students
- staff absences due to illness
- truancy

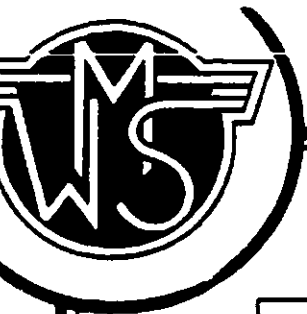
All of the data obtained will be presented in an anonymous fashion with frequencies noted by student and staff groupings. There will be no attempt to compare the results discovered with any other schools. A copy of the completed study will be distributed to both Wilson Middle School and Lethbridge School District # 51.

Should you require additional information, please call me at 329 3144. I would appreciate a response in writing at your convenience. Thanking you in advance for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Clark Bosch



WILSON MIDDLE SCHOOL

June, 1996

Principal's Message

It is hard to believe that this is our last newsletter of the year! I want to thank all of our staff, students and parents for a very successful and rewarding year. We have seen great improvement in many areas of our school. We are very pleased with our new school council and the relationships which are being built between the staff and the community. I encourage all parents and guardians to participate in school council meetings. We wish to thank the school council members who have served on committees this year. A special thank-you to those parents who helped with our "Fun in the Sun" day.

Final exams are fast approaching and we encourage all students to start reviewing for their examinations and to put forth their best efforts. Grade nine students are writing Provincial Achievement Tests which will be part of their permanent record.

We have included a copy of the examination schedule in this newsletter as well as a copy of next year's bell schedule. I officially announce that we will be instituting a creative noon hour project on a one year trial basis for the 1996-97 school year. We will again be reviewing the pros and cons of this project as well as surveying staff, students and parents after the experiment is completed. Further details of the plan are included in this newsletter.

Have a great summer with your children and remember to take care of yourselves as well!

Yours sincerely,

Mel Fletcher

Home of the *Wolverines*

CREATIVE NOON HOUR

Bell Schedule

Mondays-Thursdays

8:05 - Warning Bell
 8:07 - Late Bell (Announcements)
 8:12 - Go Bell Period 1
 8:14 - Period 1 start
 8:58 - Period 2 Go Bell
 9:00 - Period 2 start
 9:44 - Period 3 Go Bell
 9:46 - Period 3 start
 10:30 - Period 4 Go Bell
 10:32 - Period 4 start
 11:16 - Period 5 Go Bell
 11:38 - 7-8 bell (silent)
 12:02 - 7,8,9 bell
 12:22 - Period 6 Go Bell (9 break)
 1:06 - Period 7 Go Bell
 1:08 - Period 7 start
 1:52 - Period 8 Go Bell
 1:54 - Period 8 start
 2:38 - Period 8 ends

Fridays

8:05 - Warning Bell
 8:07 - Late Bell (Announcements)
 8:12 - Go Bell Period 1
 8:14 - Period 1 start
 8:58 - Period 2 Go Bell
 9:00 - Period 2 start
 9:44 - Period 3 Go Bell
 9:46 - Period 3 start
 10:30 - Period 4 Go Bell
 10:32 - Period 4 start
 11:16 - Period 5 Go Bell
 11:18 - Period 5 starts
 12:02 - Period 5 ends

Grade 7

11:16-11:38 Lunch
 11:38-12:02 Break
 12:02-12:22 Advisor
 12:22-1:06 Period 6

Grade 8

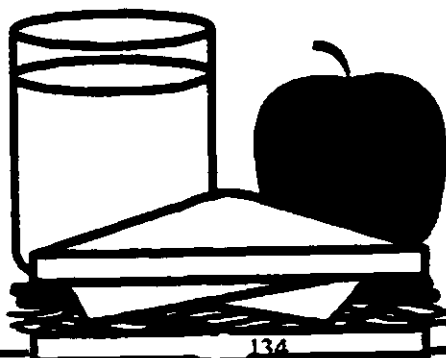
Advisor
 Lunch
 Break
 Period 6

Grade 9

Period 5
 Period 5
 Lunch
 12:22 Break
 12:42 Advisor (silent)
 1:06 Period 7

Contract Noonhours

Grade 7 11:16-12:16
 Grade 8 11:16-12:16
 Grade 9 12:02-1:02



CREATIVE NOON HOUR

We have been studying ways in which to improve our school day and noon hours for the past two years. Our surveys have shown that there is enough support and interest to try a creative schedule on a one year trial basis. We hope to accomplish the following goals:

1. Increase student achievement
2. More efficient use of time
3. More efficient use of facilities
4. Address the needs of parents and the community
5. Use school time and resources more efficiently
6. Improve the school climate
7. Improve the supervision of students
8. Provide a safer and more pleasant environment for students

The Plan

I will attempt to explain some of the major differences between the 1995-96 schedule and the 1996-97 schedule. A copy of the actual bell schedule is included in this newsletter.

1995-1996

- 8:10 start time
- Advisor periods in a.m.
- All three grades in lunchroom
- Four periods in a.m.
- Three periods in p.m.
- 59 minute noon hour

- Friday four periods

1996-1997

- 8:05 start time
- Advisor periods at noon
- Grades eat in shifts in lunchroom
- Grade 7-8 four periods a.m. 3 in p.m.
- Grade 9 five periods in a.m. 2 in p.m.
- 20 minute lunch
- 20 minute outside or inside break
- 20 minute advisor class
- *60 minute noonhour for contracts*
- Friday five periods

The plan is designed in order to make more efficient use of time. Since we have condensed the noonhour portion students will not have time to leave the school grounds. Students will be given an outside break or free time in good weather. On bad weather days the students will be provided with free time but indoors in the gym etc.

Contracts

We appeal to all in our community to cooperate with the project and give us a chance to find out if this type of schedule will improve our school. We ask parents, guardians and students to have an open mind and avoid opting out of the plan unless it is absolutely necessary.

We do recognize that there may be some students who are needed at home in the middle of the day. Parents or guardians will be allowed to sign a contract with the school in order to opt out of the project. Contracts will be available in the fall and parents are asked to make appointments with an administrator if they choose to opt out.

Students who have contracts will not miss any core or option classes. They will possibly miss the advisor class but they will have all of the hours and course requirements of Alberta Education.

Contract students may choose to stay at school any day but once they have chosen to be part of the creative noonhour they must stay for the whole noonhour. Parents who wish to have a student go home at noon once in a while may do so by phoning the school or sending a note. There will be some days during the year when we have whole school noonhours for special events such as sock hops, advisor challenges etc. We will all use a grade eight noon schedule on those days.



WILSON MIDDLE SCHOOL

September, 1996

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the 1996-97 school year and for new students, welcome to Wilson! I hope that everyone had a restful and exciting summer vacation. Please read this newsletter carefully as there are some very important bits of information for you. I encourage all parents/guardians to be a part of our school council this year as we are in the process of looking at many areas of our school that need improvement and we need your input and feedback. Once again, we have a terrific staff in place and we look forward to serving you and your student(s). Please have patience with us as we start the new school year and we invite you to give your student's advisor a call if you need help with anything! I am convinced that it will be another successful year if we work together as a community and a school to help our children be all that they can be.

Sincerely,

Mel Fletcher
Principal

Noon Hours

This is just a reminder to parents and students that this year we are implementing a creative noonhour. Students need to bring a lunch or money to buy a lunch. Students will be given an outside break during good weather and an inside break during poor weather. The advisor period will also be at noon this year. Parents who would prefer that their student not be part of this noonhour schedule need to contact an administrator as soon as possible. If you need your child to come home for the odd noonhour, a simple phone call or note from the guardian/parent will suffice.

Class/Option Changes

We have a philosophy at Wilson that honors parental requests. Our school has 630 students and we are not always able to fulfil every request, but will try our best. The teachers have been an important part of organizing the class lists. We have tried to balance male/female, ability etc. Many parents were a part of that process in June and we encourage you to cooperate with us as we have very thoughtfully balanced the classes and we have checked every option sheet personally in order to minimize problems. Please encourage your child to try the class in which they have been placed for a couple of days. Often students are pleasantly surprised with the classes if they just try them.

If you feel that a change is still necessary, we have established the following procedure and deadlines.

Important Dates...

Wednesday, September 4
Parent Orientation
7:00 p.m. - Gym

Tuesday, September 10
School Council Meeting
7:00 p.m. Library
Everyone Welcome!

Appendix D
School Based Forms

Name: _____

Advisor: _____

Date: _____

Wilson Middle School Noon Hour Contract Form

I hereby grant permission for my child to opt out of the noon hour period at Wilson Middle School. I understand that my child must leave the school vicinity during this period of time and that my child must return punctually for afternoon classes. I also recognize that my child will not be attending advisor classes during the noon hour period. My child will be allowed to stay at school during the noon hour period if he/she chooses to do so. If my child chooses to stay they must stay for the whole creative period. I realize that this option can be taken away if my child does not follow the contract.

Name(s) of Legal Guardians/Parents:

Signature

Signature

Administrator

PUPIL PLAN OF ACTION FORM

NAME: _____ DATE: _____ ADVISOR: _____

Student Comments:

What I did that caused me to be here now? (Be Specific)

Changes that I will make to improve the situation. (Focus on what you "will" do and not on what you "won't" do).

Signature

Student

Teacher Comments:

Teacher Action to Date:

Discussion with student _____

Other: _____

Detention _____

Parent Contacted _____

Advisor Action To Date:

Discussion with student _____

Other: _____

Detention _____

Advisor Signature

Administrator Action:

- Parent Contacted
- Out-Of-School Suspension
- Service Time/Detention
- S.A.I.C.
- Reinforced Teacher and/or Advisor Expectations
- Refer to "C" Team

Other: _____

Administrator Signature