

1. THE DESIGN OF TEACHER REFORMS

THE LAST DECADE witnessed a great deal of education reform, but also much confusion and ambiguity. Impatient with the incremental growth of standards in the early 1980s, some reformers called for a substantial restructuring of American education, but it was never clear what restructuring meant. As Kirst notes, “restructuring is a word that means everything and nothing simultaneously” (Olson 1988, 1). It includes, but is not limited to, the reform of teaching. Even in that area, the array of recommendations is bewildering and sometimes contradictory. Some want to micromanage teachers and enhance administrative control whereas others want to strengthen teachers’ expert judgment and give them more autonomy. What confuses things is that people use similar language to describe very different reforms (Popkewitz and Lind 1989).

Underlying the florid rhetoric is a poorly formulated debate about whether to make teaching more bureaucratic or more professional. This book attempts to clarify the debate, to illustrate some advantages of professionalization, and to describe some organizational changes that can help bring it about. At the same time it explores why some districts choose professional reforms and other select bureaucratic ones. The next section of this chapter describes the assumptions underlying both approaches. It is followed by an introduction to the concrete reforms attempting to implement those

approaches, and a brief discussion of teachers' sentiments that helps to anticipate how reforms are likely to change their behavior and motivation. Finally, we turn to local decision making to provide a framework for examining the local politics of teacher reform.

BUREAUCRATIC AND PROFESSIONAL DESIGNS

In the designing of organizations, there is a technical component that fits organizational structures to the work that must be done. There is also a normative part, however, because organizations systematically embody socially sanctioned purposes (Meyer and Rowan 1977). Organizational charts and regulations reflect values, expectations, and definitions of satisfactory performance; they make it easier to achieve some purposes and prohibit others (Ranson, Hining, and Hughes 1980). The normative element is especially strong in schools where task definition is more a social than an engineering problem. Hence, redesigning teaching is partly a technical problem but it also has a political side.

Consensus is growing that schools are "loosely coupled" (Bidwell 1965; Weick 1976). Loose coupling implies that educational goals are numerous, ambiguous, and difficult to prioritize and that knowledge as to what instructional approaches facilitate student learning is weak. In such circumstances schools are organized to look rational from the outside but avoid inspection of what happens inside: close inspection and strong lines of authority would show that people disagree about how to proceed, and cannot improve substantially on teachers' own performance.

Loose coupling papers over disagreements about what schools and teaching should entail. There are better ways to achieve educational goals. Two strategies have been suggested to help schools become more effective at achieving educational ends (Rowan 1990): schools can be organized as self-governing professions, or as centrally directed bureaucracies (Bacharach and Conley 1989; Weick and McDaniel 1989). The first relies on the commitments of professionals and the second on external control to assure coordination and effectiveness.

There is a substantial normative component to the decision between the bureaucratic and the professional option, and each has generated its own rhetoric. The dominant discourse of the last decade emphasizes professionalism. The Carnegie Forum (1986, 56) lists four characteristics of a "professional environment for teaching":

1. Teachers should be provided with the discretion and autonomy that are the hallmarks of professional work.

2. Districts should foster collegial styles of decision making and teaching in schools in which “Lead Teachers” play a central role.
3. Teachers should be provided the support staff they need to be more effective and productive.
4. School districts should consider a variety of approaches to school district leadership.

The bureaucratic view is less well articulated but has been pervasive. Around 1984 districts and states began tightening up school standards and practice. Monitoring and close inspection became a regular practice. Districts and state departments of education began emphasizing accountability. One manifestation of this concern was an interest in merit pay, an innovation popularized by the National Commission on Educational Excellence. The Southern Regional Education Board (1990) declared:

Results...performance...outcomes—call it what you will but for education it is now a more highly visible priority for the public, governors, legislators, and many educators.... Rewards for schools, teachers, and principals are being linked to performance.

It described the spread of merit-based programs to over twenty states. Because differences between these two theories are not well understood, attempts to professionalize can lead to unintended bureaucratization. Table 1–1 and the discussion following clarify some of the important differences between these theories.

Strictly speaking, professions—connoting the organization of an occupation—and bureaucracies—connoting structure—are not comparable. However, certain organizations—universities, law firms, research laboratories, and in some ways hospitals—are designed to house professionals and facilitate their work. What differentiates these organizations from bureaucracies most fundamentally is the technology they use (Perrow 1970). Some technologies entail a great deal of certainty. People can solve problems through established analysis strategies rather than inspired intuition. Moreover, the number of problems that need to be solved is relatively low. Most situations are familiar and the course of action is clear. Bureaucracies are well designed to handle such work. On the other hand, the work conducted by professional organizations entails great uncertainty. Each case has its own special problems and the strategies for solving those problems are not entirely clear. These technological differences lead to others in the kind of workers preferred by each type of organization, and the way the organiza-

tion should be structured. The professional needs to be an expert, so more is expected and the organization is designed to facilitate that person's work. In the bureaucracy, expertise rests in upper levels of the hierarchy, which is designed more to control than facilitate the worker. In these circumstances less is expected of the worker. The big question, then, is, How certain is the technology of teaching? Separate research traditions can be used to argue for both high and low certainty. The next step is to look at those research traditions. Then we can look at the implications for what teaching and schools should entail.

TABLE 1-1
Differences between Bureaucratic and Professional Designs for Teaching

	<i>Bureaucracy</i>	<i>Professional Organization</i>
Task Certainty	High—there are few problems; and means have been established to solve them	Low—situations have more unique elements and analysis strategies are not well codified
Research Justification	Process-product research supporting direct instruction	Research on teacher thinking as reflective practice
Expectations for Teachers		
Knowledge of teaching	Basic levels only are required	More complex knowledge is necessary
Importance of high commitment	Useful but not crucial	Crucial, as are specific values
Organizational Arrangements		
Strategic decisions	Made by managers alone	Made by managers and workers together
Operational decisions	Controlled through direct supervision (teacher evaluation), standardization of work process (curriculum and texts) and outputs (tests)	Managed through mutual adjustment (collegial interaction) and standardization of inputs (preparation and certification)
Incentives	Financial	Financial and intrinsic

Conceptions of Teaching

Two paradigms for studying teaching make different assumptions about the underlying technology. Process-product research, which leads to direct instruction, provides the intellectual underpinning for bureaucratic designs; research on teacher thinking, which highlights the need for reflective practice, supports professionalism.

The process-product paradigm (Gage 1978) uses correlational and experimental studies to link teaching behaviors (and attitudes) to student achievement. A substantial body of research links three classroom factors to the learning of basic skills: 1) Time. Students spend more time on some curricular areas than others, and more time is linked to increased achievement, especially when it is devoted to the skills tested (Brophy and Good 1986). 2) Teacher expectations. Teachers call on high-achieving students more often, praise them more, criticize them less, and give them more time to recover from failures. These differences in teacher responses exacerbate poor students' poor performance (Good 1983). 3) Teacher management. Teachers who manage instructional functions appropriately increase achievement (Rosenshine 1983). Appropriate management includes frequent review and checking of past work so errors will not go undetected; presentation of material in small steps with considerable modeling; frequent, guided practice to the point of "overteaching"; extensive monitoring; and designing problems or exercises so that students get most answers right. Reducing teaching to a small number of principles would go a long way toward adding confidence on how to proceed.

Although process-product research has been very powerful, it has recently come in for substantial criticism. According to Carter and Doyle (1989), this research showed only that experienced volunteers could use some of the principles involved to modify their classroom practices. It told teachers little about how to create the conditions for time-on-task and frequent questions. It provided minimal information on how the subject matter determined what teaching tasks were important, and did not suggest what knowledge teachers needed to interpret classroom events or to establish and maintain a positive learning environment.

Whereas process-product research viewed teaching from the outside, the reflective practice paradigm focused explicitly on the effective teacher, and embodied explicit theories about learners, curriculum, subject matter. The effective teacher has an approach to planning that is both subtle and spontaneous but also understands how to read cues in the situation and when to deviate from the plan.

He or she can analyze events and take corrective action (Clark and Peterson 1986). This new paradigm does not view teaching as a stable problem situation to which a small set of principles can be regularly applied. Instead, it assumes considerable uncertainty and attends to the internal process by which teachers solve problems created by that uncertainty. Researchers examine how teachers use a rich, specific understanding of their work settings to facilitate the efficient interpretation and disposition of new problems (Carter and Doyle 1989).

These two paradigms are linked to different educational outcomes. Direct instruction clearly promotes achievement of basic skills (Brophy and Good 1986), but may work against higher-order thinking. Its emphasis on fast pacing, student success, and modeling solutions can redefine the skills taught, from synthesis and creativity to mimicry. The tendency to break teaching into small steps reflects the emphasis on discrete basic skills. By contrast, the reflective practice of the professional teacher exemplifies higher-order thinking and draws on some of the same research on expert cognition. Thus, reflective teachers would probably model higher-order thinking.

Images of the Teacher

In sum, direct instruction and the process-product research provide an underpinning for the bureaucratic design of schools, whereas research on teachers' reflective practice supports the professional design. These two designs require employees that differ in the depth of both their knowledge and commitment. In education, much attention has been given to teacher knowledge. Typically, the most talented undergraduates do not major in education, and the best of those who do either never become teachers or leave the field early (Lanier and Little 1986). This talent gap is much less critical to the bureaucratic than the professional design. Bureaucratic organizations are based on the premise that they require less teacher knowledge because teachers' work will be guided more extensively by central administrators and staff experts. This is apparent in state teacher-certification policies. While forty-four states require teacher candidates to take some kind of test to become certified, these are typically paper-and-pencil tests of basic skills in communications, mathematics, and other areas (McCarthy 1990).

Professionalism requires a higher standard because it is based on the premise that teachers must be capable of exercising more discretion. Lanier and Sedlak (1989) argue that "teacher knowledge is at the core of teacher efficacy. It is central to teachers' ability to bring

about sustained student learning of the sort judged critical to quality schooling" (135). In their view, teachers must have a deep knowledge of their subject area, expertise in pedagogy, and the understanding to deal with the endemic uncertainties of classroom life. Shulman (1987) lists seven domains of professional knowledge for teachers, among them understanding of subject matter, knowledge of the principles of classroom management, knowledge of learners and their characteristics, and knowledge of educational purposes and values. Much more complex certification examinations are required to test such knowledge (Peterson and Commeaux 1989).

Whatever conception one has of an occupation, commitment is a useful quality. Committed workers give more effort to their employers and clients, are more inclined to follow directives, are absent less frequently, stay with their jobs longer, and generally reduce costs of training new workers and overseeing existing ones (Mowday, Porter, and Steers 1982). Nevertheless, commitment is not as crucial for bureaucratic as professional organizations. With routine technologies, bureaucratic schools can use supervisors to ensure that teachers are performing properly.

In the professional setting, however, workers not only carry out pre-programmed work routines but also decide what must be done and how. Outside experts cannot easily predict what teachers will have to do because they inevitably fail to understand the nuances of specific situations. While they may have more generalized scientific knowledge, that knowledge is hard to apply without a concrete understanding of the setting.

This is more than a technical problem; it also implies choices about the ends to be achieved. Professionals not only have a special field of knowledge, they are also elites responsible for the protection of social values (Selznick 1957). Moreover, the uncertain situations in which they work often make it difficult to understand what values are appropriate at a given time. Without general rules, professionals must decide what ends to meet as well as how to meet them. Therefore, it is especially important that a person be deeply committed to the organization and its purposes (Weick and McDaniel 1989).

Organizational Arrangements

The bureaucratic design uses a mechanistic strategy to control workers by monopolizing decision making and standardizing work activities. The professional design employs an organic strategy that develops networks among workers at different levels, incorporates more

people in decision making, and coordinates work through frequent interaction (Rowan 1990). These differences are apparent when one examines strategic and operational decisions separately. Strategic decisions affect the organization's overall work. They include questions of policy, work allocation, discipline, and staff development and evaluation. Operational decisions are directly related to the work at hand; they include what to teach and how to teach it (Bacharach and Conley 1989). The differences between bureaucracy and professionalism are also apparent in the use of incentives.

Strategic Decisions. In the bureaucratic organization, strategic decisions are centralized. The highest-level policy decisions may be made by an elected board or other entity, but top managers translate those broad policy directives into specific operational and allocation directives (Weber 1947). Workers' concerns are not solicited because managers are assumed to know them best. In the professional organization, strategic decisions are shared because managers and workers have different kinds of knowledge (Bacharach and Conley 1989). The workers better understand work processes, challenges, and complexities whereas the managers know more about the outside environment and have a broader overview of the organization. Moreover, as carriers of special values, professionals will advocate critical concerns that might otherwise be ignored (Weick and McDaniel 1989). Worker participation in decision making is said to build commitment to the decisions that result, making compliance easier to accomplish (Berman and McLaughlin 1975). Worker participation also promotes commitment to the organization more generally (Bacharach and Conley 1989; Newman, Rutter, and Smith 1988).

Operational Decisions. The same distinction between centralization in the bureaucracy and shared decision making in the professional organization applies to operational decisions, but with different means. Mintzberg (1983) lists five ways to coordinate operational activity. Two involve face-to-face interaction. Mutual adjustment is informal, direct discussion, often among equals. Two people can communicate a great deal of information; both contribute their judgment. Mutual adjustment can also build skills by providing situations where individuals are forced to examine what they are doing and to consider alternatives (Shulman 1987). It also facilitates building, the implementation of new practices and a greater sense of certainty in teachers' work (Little 1982; Rosenholtz 1989). However, the process is time-consuming and expensive. As information does not travel well, mutual adjustment can only coordinate the work of a few people. With

direct supervision one person oversees the work of others, issues orders to them, and monitors their progress. This process is faster, less expensive, and ensures greater comparability of practice. It can include a few more people, though that limits somewhat the information exchanged and the judgments contributed.

The other three mechanisms standardize or prespecify some aspect of the work. When one standardizes work processes, one specifies how tasks are done. Curriculum guides and textbooks standardize educational work processes. Standardizing outputs specifies what the results should be instead of how the work gets done. District and state testing programs, a form of output standardization, are even faster and cheaper than direct supervision and can be applied on a very broad scale. However, they further constrain the amount of information that is exchanged, and judgment is exercised primarily at the point of setting standards.

Finally, one can standardize skills and values by detailing the training workers should receive. Such training can include scientific knowledge and book learning, but it also features long hours of apprenticeship or supervised practice of the sort doctors receive in their internships and residencies. In addition to developing technical skills, standardization through extensive training effectively socializes trainees to significant values of the group. This approach can be time-consuming and expensive. In fact, skills and values are often standardized where they are especially complex. However, with standardized skills, a great deal of discretion is left to the worker.

Bureaucratic and professional organizations use different means to coordinate operational decisions. Bureaucratic organizations use direct supervision and standardization of work processes and outputs to control operational decisions. These techniques shift judgment from the worker to the supervisor or standard-setter. One indication that process-product research supports the bureaucratic perspective is that it has been used to justify narrow, behaviorist procedures for teacher evaluation (Peterson and Commeaux 1989). By contrast, professional organizations emphasize mutual adjustment and standardization of skills and values. These mechanisms channel the professional's discretion without removing it. They also require more complex certification tests that make explicit the mental process teachers use to make instructional decisions.

Incentives. Bureaucratic and professional organizations use different incentives and distribute them differently. The bureaucratic organization relies on extrinsic incentives—that is, those distributed by others

that do not come directly from the work itself (Staw 1980). Money is the ultimate extrinsic reward in work settings, but externally conferred honors and prestige are also incentives. Bureaucracies often use extrinsic incentives to reinforce standardization (Weber 1947); then rewards are conditional upon compliance with external standards. A complete system for distributing incentives will specify a standard, provide a means of observation, and link rewards to observed performance (Dornbusch and Scott 1975). Extrinsic reward systems can be very effective motivators; but if improperly designed, they can actually reduce motivation and also lead to unanticipated consequences—like concentrating on measured performance at the expense of other valued activities (Lawler 1973).

Professional organizations emphasize intrinsic incentives that take their value either from doing the task—the activity itself—or from what is accomplished (Staw 1980). Moreover, the incentives are not geared for shaping behavior to administrative ends so much as for building worker commitment (Porter, Lawler, and Hackman 1975). Intrinsic incentives include skill variety, or engagement in many different activities using a variety of talents; task identity, or the completion of an identifiable piece of work from start to finish; task significance, or importance to the overall work or to others; autonomy, or freedom in scheduling work and determining the procedures to use; opportunity to interact with peers or colleagues; and feedback, or clear information on the effectiveness of one's work (Oldham and Hackman 1980). Moreover, one can increase intrinsic incentives by removing barriers to task accomplishment (Staw 1980).

Since intrinsic incentives come from the work itself, administrators cannot link them to performance. However, opportunities for job enlargement or enrichment that increase intrinsic incentives may be distributed as rewards. In the professional organization, these should be distributed by peers because they have the contextual knowledge to make the most informed decisions and because, as champions of key values, they are best placed to determine who should be rewarded. Moreover, professionally oriented organizations are designed so that all professionals are adequately reimbursed.

REFORM OPTIONS

Job differentiation and modified governance were among the most often discussed reforms of teaching in the 1980s. The first varies the remuneration teachers receive to reflect either the amount or quality of their work. Rank distinctions may also be introduced. The sec-

and brings teachers to the decision-making process. Both changes can professionalize teaching, but job differentiation can also make it more bureaucratic.

Job Differentiation

States and districts have implemented many programs to differentiate teachers' jobs (SREB 1990). Two issues separate the various plans: whether the changes are based on merit or job enlargement and whether they are permanent or temporary (Darling-Hammond and Berry 1988; Malen, Murphy, and Hart 1988). The first issue is the most fundamental. The merit principle assumes that all teachers do the same work, but pay varies depending upon the quality of the work. Success using this strategy depends on finding means to measure teacher quality that are acceptable to teachers. Merit is a bureaucratic reform because it ties financial rewards to direct supervision. Its popularity stems from its link to efforts to increase external accountability and discipline of teachers. Moreover, it assumes that teachers can be effectively motivated by extrinsic incentives (Rosenholtz 1989); its primary effect is to increase such rewards. When they are in place, teachers who conform to externally defined standards of excellence¹ will benefit.

Job enlargement creates situations for some teachers to do more or different work from others. This work may include mentoring for beginning teachers, providing training to all teachers, or developing new curricula. Sorting good teachers from bad is secondary, although the question of which teachers should get enlarged positions still arises. The principle requires identifying tasks teachers can do, achieving agreement that such tasks are worth additional reimbursement, and clarifying the relationship between the added work and regular teaching responsibility.

Job enlargement has two professionalizing features. First, it expands intrinsic benefits as well as extrinsic ones. Those who perform special tasks get paid more for more varied work and opportunities to develop new skills. In addition, the results of their work should be available to others, who then benefit from enhanced training opportunities and enriched curricula. Second, teachers selected for enlarged positions have augmented opportunities for influence, which should increase the motivation of those involved and ensure that a teacher perspective is better reflected in instructional decisions.

The permanency issue pits the conceptions of reformers against current norms of teacher equity. The hierarchy of teaching is nearly flat, with teachers receiving their maximum salary increase within fif-

teen or twenty years of entry and with the top salaries not a great deal above those of beginners' when compared to other occupations. With salaries typically allocated on the basis of seniority and level of education, there is little incentive to maintain one's productivity. Many teachers reach their peak within five years of entering the field (Rosenholtz 1985). Reformers have argued that teachers would be more motivated to continue improving if they had a series of career milestones that involve some mix of increased remuneration and greater responsibilities to work toward (Carnegie Forum 1986). This strategy assumes that generally acceptable ways can be found to identify improved performance so that teachers can move to the next level when their work has progressed to a measurable extent. Considering that teachers' concerns about equity and vulnerability make judgments about progress difficult, rotating positions is preferable (Malen and Hart 1987). Although the concept of progressive increases in money, status, and responsibility is thereby lost, abuses can be avoided.

Taken together, these dimensions suggest four alternatives for job redesign (Table 1-2). Merit-pay plans give teachers temporary bonuses for good performance. Before the recent interest in redesigning teachers' work, they were tried in the 1920s and 1950s and then faded from view (Johnson 1984). In the 1980s they were much criticized by teachers. Florida initiated and later discontinued such a program. The only difference between merit-pay and master-teacher programs is that the latter reward good teachers with permanent salary increases. Tennessee modified its initial merit-pay program into one that emphasized master teachers. Generally, merit-based programs have been most popular with state legislatures (Malen et al. 1988).

Job enlargement programs are more rare, although informal project add-ons have been part of teaching for many years. Any time a teacher receives summer work to develop new curricula or teach summer school, it is a project add-on. State programs in Tennessee and South Carolina included this element (Malen et al. 1988). Professionally oriented reformers like the Carnegie Forum (1986) have been the biggest advocates of career ladders. The Holmes Group (1986) model includes three career steps:

- 1) *Instructors* are first and second year teachers who have not yet made a career commitment to teaching and who lack practical experience. They are not given full responsibility for a classroom on their own as are beginning teachers now, but are overseen by colleagues.
- 2) *Professional teachers* are in many ways like teachers found in most

schools today. They have demonstrated a commitment to teaching and knowledge of subject matter. Their responsibilities would not necessarily extend beyond the classroom, although their input would be solicited.

- 3) *Lead teachers* continue to teach but are interested in broader educational policy issues and want to work formally with other adults. They take on such instructional leadership responsibilities as supervising instructors, curriculum development, training and coaching all staff, developing testing and measurement systems, helping professional teachers who want it, or action research. They also supervise and evaluate instructors and professional teachers and collegially manage school buildings.

Whether a career ladder is a pure case of job enlargement or a mixed one with a strong merit component depends on how teachers are selected. Where there is a heavy emphasis on administrative selection using fixed performance criteria, the merit element is reintroduced.

While the term "career ladder" is very popular and was adopted by twelve states (Southern Regional Education Board 1989), few use this approach in its pure form. Utah's and Tennessee's programs are among those that include provision for it.

TABLE 1-2
Job Redesign Alternatives

	<i>Differentiation Principle</i>	
	<i>Merit</i>	<i>Job Enlargement</i>
<i>Stability</i>		
<i>Temporary</i>	Merit Pay	Project Add-Ons
<i>Permanent</i>	Master Teacher	Career Ladder

Governance

The most often discussed changes in governance professionalize schools by including teachers when making strategic decisions. The Carnegie Forum (1986), for instance, advocates "a profession of well-educated teachers prepared to assume new powers and responsibilities to redesign schools for the future" (2). How much power teachers should have over these decisions is not entirely clear. Some of the language of the Carnegie Forum suggests that schools should be totally run by lead teachers. Bacharach and Conley (1989) suggest that the critical question is how to increase teacher participation without sacrificing the ability of management to coordinate. Even though some decisions

are clearly in the realm of administrative authority, they argue, teachers should have formalized opportunities to influence them.

One popular means to engage teachers in strategic decisions is site-based management, which authorizes schools to make decisions previously controlled at the district level and to involve teachers in the process. In these programs, schools can make decisions about curriculum, personnel—especially hiring—and budgets (Clune and White 1989). Site-based management need not empower teachers; all these decisions could be made strictly by the principal. However, such changes usually include a school council or steering committee. Teachers typically dominate such committees, but parents and high school students can also be included. Teacher influence typically depends on the authority vested in the council and the proportion of teachers on it. In Santa Fe, New Mexico, teachers are authorized to select their own principals. In one case, when a principal left council members chose not to replace that person but to run the school themselves. Because of state laws, opportunities to change reading and mathematics curricula at the elementary level are limited, but in other areas councils have substantially modified the typical classroom format to use nongraded groups of various ages and team teaching. They have also added curricular goals like teaching all children to speak Spanish (Carnoy and McDonnell 1989).

Teacher influence need not be limited to the school level; it can also include district decisions. In the ABC District in Cerritos, California, the Curriculum Master Plan Council designs the curriculum. With a representative teacher from each school and overseen by the teachers' union, it is supported by a district-level "management facilitator," and detail work is done by ten district-wide subject-area committees also made up of teachers. The council has an annual budget of approximately \$170,000 for a variety of purposes including paying teachers for summer development work. Its curriculum guides are reviewed by all teachers in the district, and final decisions are subject to the approval only of the school board (Sickler 1988).

TEACHERS' SENTIMENTS ABOUT REFORM

While teachers' associations have participated in the debate about how to reform teaching (e.g., Shanker 1990), teachers' preferences and perceptions have not been consistently incorporated. Those preferences should be considered for two reasons. First, they illustrate that neither the bureaucratic nor the professional design really fit today's schools, and point to some of the changes that need

to be made to implement either one. Second, both redesign strategies require some teacher cooperation. Teacher support is essential for the professional redesign. Active opposition can end bureaucratic programs, as happened with Florida's merit-pay program (Firestone et al. 1989). For these reasons, we review what is known about teachers' beliefs as to the uncertainty surrounding their work, their commitment to teaching, control and coordination, incentives, and their views about popular reforms.

Uncertainty

Teachers, whose work is rife with uncertainty, have great difficulty assessing their work for three reasons. First, there is ambiguity about what their work should achieve. In addition to cognitive goals, teachers have moral ones like promoting good citizenship and developing an interest in learning for its own sake. Moreover, while they must maintain their own authority, they still want to be liked (Lortie 1975). Second, teachers have trouble assessing student progress (Kottkamp, Provenzo, and Cohn 1986). They are much less sanguine about the value of tests than are psychometricians, policy-makers, and the public. Since credible feedback from adults is relatively rare, teachers rely extensively on their own observations (Kasten 1984). Finally, it is difficult to know if success reflects one's own efforts, the child's, the parents', the work of other teachers, or even the materials provided. Efforts to reduce the uncertainties of teaching are erratic; over a fifth of teachers say that the staff development available to them is inadequate (Bacharach, Bauer, and Shedd, 1986).

While uncertainty is much more pervasive than fits the bureaucratic design, the kind of reflective practice that should be associated with professionalism is also atypical. The dominant mode of teacher presentation is a highly nonreflective use of teacher lecturing, passive students, and testing for basic skills with very little variation in instructional strategy to reflect contingencies created by students or material (Cuban 1990; McNeil 1986). Moreover, when cultural norms encourage teachers to exclude formal theory and outside experience from their thinking about the classroom, they discourage more reflective approaches (Hargreaves 1984). When considering innovations, teachers often accept the underlying principles of innovations uncritically and focus on the implications for day-to-day work (Berman and McLaughlin 1975). They sometimes acquiesce to curricula designed around behavioral objectives (Bullough, Gitlin, and Goldstein 1984) or teacher-evaluation systems geared to specific behaviors (Popke-

witz and Lind 1988) without questioning how those systems constrain what will be taught or how. They will also adopt the procedures that should lead to more reflective teaching without understanding or properly applying the underlying principles (Cohen 1990).

Commitment

Teaching rarely generates the commitment predicted by theories of professionalism. Historically, teaching was something men did for a while and women did because it fit with their family responsibilities. While it is becoming a more permanent occupational choice, part of its appeal is an annual schedule that permits travel, family activities, and other pursuits not related to work. (Kottkamp et al. 1986). This is not necessarily a sign of strong commitment to one's work.

Actual emotional commitment to teaching has declined in recent decades, but the great variation suggests that changes in working conditions could build stronger ties to the occupation in the future. The proportion of teachers who reported that they certainly or probably would become a teacher again peaked in 1966 at 78 percent, dropped to a low of 47 percent in 1981, then rose slightly over the decade (NEA 1987). Things may continue to improve. In 1984, 45 percent of teachers said they would advise a young person to pursue a career in teaching, but in 1989 67 percent said they would do so (Taylor et al. 1989). These data suggest a modest renewal of enthusiasm for teaching but also point to its frailty.

Control and Coordination

The pattern of coordination and control in schools is mixed. Mutual adjustment is atypical. Teaching is a lonely occupation where teachers may have only limited social contact with each other; interaction around educational issues is even more limited (Johnson 1990). However, supervision is equally rare. Teachers' interactions with principals rarely deal with instructional problems, course content, school goals, or general educational concepts (Bacharach et al. 1986). If anything, the pattern here is more one of loose coupling than either the bureaucratic or professional design.

The distribution of decision making varies with the issue, giving teachers substantially more influence over operational than strategic issues (Bacharach et al. 1986). The portion of teachers who occasionally, seldom, or never participate in decisions ranges from 25 percent for decisions about how to teach, to 44 percent for decisions about grade- or subject-level assignments, to 94 percent for staff hiring decisions.

The absence of control over strategic decisions reflects the bureaucratic model, but it is not clear how much influence teachers want. Lack of influence is experienced as a deprivation. When asked how opportunity to participate should change, more than half the teachers in one survey wanted more input in fifteen out of sixteen areas. Yet in the same survey, 82 percent were very or somewhat satisfied with their current authority (Bacharach et al. 1986). Interviews suggest that teachers do not want active involvement in making strategic decisions, but they do want to protect their instructional autonomy and to get more of available resources (Firestone and Rosenblum 1988; Johnson 1990). They particularly resent the artificial participation that occurs when committees of teachers are formed and asked to make recommendations that are subsequently ignored, as sometimes happens with site-based management (Sirotnik and Clark 1988).

A major constraint on greater influence is time. Many teachers already have trouble finding time to counsel students (59 percent), grade papers (55 percent), and plan for future lessons (48 percent) (Bacharach et al. 1986). They would rather take care of these routine, but difficult-to-schedule, tasks than meet on strategic issues—unless they believe decisions on those issues will be badly made otherwise. In sum, teachers will resent bureaucratic changes that limit their present influence. How enthusiastic they will be about programs to empower them will depend on the practical implications of those programs.

Incentives

Teachers are very sensitive to intrinsic rewards. Large majorities report that their biggest reward comes when their students learn more effectively (Kottkamp et al. 1986; Lortie 1975). Other studies by Bredeson and colleagues (1983), Johnson (1990), and Kasten (1984) confirm the importance of work-based rewards. At the same time, salary makes a difference. Teachers say it is a major reason for leaving teaching (Harris and Associates 1985; Kasten 1984), and those who are paid more actually stay in teaching longer (Murnane, Singer, and Willett 1989). In fact, some combination of salary and intrinsic incentives seems to be necessary to keep people from leaving teaching (Chapman and Hutcheson 1982), but *how* they combine to motivate teachers remains an unanswered question.

Views of Reforms

When asked about job differentiation reforms, teachers preferred those that stressed job enlargement. Merit pay does not appeal to

them (Kasten 1984). Given a choice they prefer career ladders. They fear that all forms of job differentiation will create “artificial and unfortunate distinctions among teachers” (Taylor et al. 1989, p. 49) and question the fairness of selection processes. Given the problems teachers have assessing their own performance, it is not surprising that these concerns were associated mostly with merit pay. Moreover, when they evaluate reforms, extrinsic rewards (income) are important but less significant than intrinsic ones related to peer interaction and task variety or opportunities to learn new things (Smylie and Smart 1990; Taylor et al. 1989).

Teachers also prefer governance changes to merit pay. In one study, two-thirds thought every school should establish a leadership committee with principals, teachers, and students to set and enforce rules, and four-fifths thought teachers and principals should share time after school to formally plan staff development, curriculum, and management (Taylor et al. 1989).

Teachers’ sentiments fit neither the bureaucratic nor the professional design. Their opposition to decision deprivation and merit pay suggest that efforts to increase bureaucracy will not be well received. They prefer professionalizing reforms, but there are few signs even in that direction that they are truly enthusiastic about major changes.

THE POLITICS OF REFORM

While our primary objective is to clarify the differences between bureaucratic and professional designs and understand their implications for teaching, we are also interested in understanding why districts choose the reforms they do. The ambiguity and controversy surrounding the reform of teaching is similar to what is found in many other settings. Beliefs about how to design jobs and organizations are often a source of conflict (Ranson et al. 1980). This conflict may result from ideological differences, like those between advocates of professionalism and bureaucracy in teaching; divergent training, which leads groups to see the same problem in different ways; or varying perceptions of personal advantage (Pfeffer 1978).

For any new design to be implemented, these disagreements must be resolved. Recent experiments with restructuring, including the redesign of teaching, have created new alliances—sometimes between historical adversaries, and often with groups outside the district (David 1989). Political theories help one understand how this alliance-building process works and where it breaks down. A well-developed research tradition treats the organization and its environ-

ment as a set of conflicting groups with divergent values, interests, and sources of power (Morgan 1986). It suggests that some groups have more access than others to decisions about organizational design. Yet it is rare that anyone can make such decisions alone. Instead, decisions result from periodic bargaining. Such bargaining will lead to coalitions of groups that determine the organization's structure for varying periods of time (Bacharach and Mitchell 1987). The resulting decisions will reflect the interests of some groups more than others. To understand this decision-making process, we first examine its dynamics and then the groups that participate.

The Dynamics of Organizational Politics

The politics of organizational reform are determined by the preexisting formal structure. School districts are sets of interacting parts, each a system in its own right. These primary systems include the state, the community, the school board, the administration, and teachers (Bacharach and Mitchell 1987). Each system has its own functions: the school board represents community interests, the administration turns statements of interest into action plans and resource allocations, and teachers convert plans and resources into actual teaching. These functions help specify each system's rights, responsibilities, and interests.

The formal organization also specifies the decision-making authority of each system. Authority is different from influence (Garnson 1968). The first refers to the formal right to make binding decisions over a range of issues. The second refers to the capacity to get others to respond to one's will. Those with authority may conspicuously lack influence as often happens with constitutional monarchs. Yet authority is a source of influence. American presidents cannot pass legislation, but they can set the agenda and use the veto to shape the bills that come before them.

Of the many sources of influence that have been identified in addition to authority, five are especially important. The first is *control over resources*, like money and labor (Pfeffer 1978). The federal government gives small special-purpose grants to gain considerable influence over local districts. Interest in this money allowed the government to attach special conditions to its use through the regulations guiding programs for poor and minority children in the Chapter 1 program, and the handicapped in Public Law 94-142. The labor of individuals is rarely in short supply, but that of groups can be. Unions gain influence by controlling access to whole categories of people, including teachers, bus drivers, and so forth.

A second source of influence is *knowledge and information* (Pfeffer 1978). To make decisions, people need to know what is happening and what alternatives are available. Superintendents gain considerable influence over board members by both flooding them with information and withholding it (Kerr 1964). Staff specialists derive influence from their expertise, which helps them suggest solutions and marshal evidence for their effectiveness.

Time is a third source (Cohen, March, and Olsen 1972). People who have time to participate in the whole process have more opportunities to ensure that decisions meet their interests than those who do not. Some individuals have more discretion in how to use that time than others. Most teachers spend too much time in classrooms to participate extensively in schoolwide decision making. Release time can increase their opportunity to participate. Principals have much more time to make decisions for their schools, but their time in the district office is limited.

A fourth source of influence is the *ability to apply decision criteria* (Pfeffer 1978). In spite of ongoing politics, organizational decisions are normally justified in terms of how they contribute to the greater good. However, because criteria are in conflict, that greater good is often difficult to define. Sometimes what is cheapest makes sense; sometimes what helps students does. One might rely on a combination of other sources of influence, not to gain votes directly for one's position, but to convince others of the importance of rulings that indirectly favor that position. Argument and persuasion can sometimes achieve the same effect.

A final source is the existence of a *coalition of like-minded individuals* (Bacharach and Mitchell 1987). As organizations grow larger, opportunities for individual influence grow smaller. Then individuals may band together in groups to have a greater voice. Though this is especially likely to affect electoral decisions where numbers count, the strategy works in other areas as well. Thus, a superintendent is less likely to adjust bus schedules for one family than for a school's Parent Teacher Organization. Coalitions take place at two levels. Members of the same subsystem—such as teachers or community members—may band together. Diverse subsystems may also come together to influence others, as when teachers ally with the school board to influence the superintendent.

The influence of various groups operates differently at various stages of the decision cycle. Two crucial stages are adoption, when the formal decision is made, and implementation, when it is put into practice (Fullan 1982). The adoption of a decision is usually made by a