

WHOLE-STAFF STUDY GROUPS

Creating Professional Learning Communities
That Target Student Learning
3rd Edition

Carlene U. Murphy Dale W. Lick

Foreword by Shirley M. Hord

HAWKER BROWNLOW
EDUCATION

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Foreword

It just keeps getting better! And better!

For anyone who missed the first edition (1998), Carlene Murphy and Dale Lick gave us the definition, descriptions and applications of Whole-Staff Study Groups (WSSGs). The second edition (2001) brought additional information, understanding and insights about the processes and outcomes of WSSGs in schools. Now, more time and experience of the authors and the model in the field have produced highly credible results – staff and student learning outcomes.

In this third edition, Murphy and Lick express WSSGs as professional learning communities. They point out how groups of teachers come together to

use reliable assessments to identify strong areas and weak spots in their curriculum and instruction that do not result in desired gains for students;

specify what they should modify or change in their teaching to gain increased student results;

determine what and how they need to learn to become more effective with students;

deliver their new strategies or program and monitor implementation; and

check consistently on student results to track how teachers' work is benefiting students.

These steps are those employed by professional learning communities whose undeviating focus is on student gains and on how what teachers and administrators do supports those gains. Thus, this is the connection of WSSGs to professional learning communities.

In this era of highly promoted collaboration and democratic participation, WSSGs show us a way to express and demonstrate collaboration and democracy in professional teachers' work. These groups provide the opportunity for those closest to the work of students to use their expertise to guide that work. Furthermore, WSSGs provide the possibility for those who have learned their art and craft through training and experience to share their knowledge and skills with those who are in their early professional years. Together, experts and novices learn with and from each other and they make important decisions about how they will design and deliver a high-quality, intellectually stimulating instructional program for students.

This way of working is particularly significant because the profession, particularly those members who research and write about it, has widely proclaimed the importance and value of functioning professional learning communities in schools. Sadly, there has been limited experience and study of how to create professional learning communities

and Murphy and Lick have gone a long way to filling this gap with their specific and concrete directions about constructing WSSGs. To them, we are indebted.

We know that when professionals have the power and authority to make decisions about their work, they are more stimulated and challenged to do their best work and to take the risks that are part of that work. In the company of like-minded professionals, they assume the responsibility and accountability that have been placed on them and through the creation of collaboratively created tasks for students, they enhance their students' chances for successful high-quality learning.

It is not only teachers who play an important role in the creation and operationalisation of WSSGs. The principal is a major player and Murphy and Lick describe this role carefully and in detail so that administrators can take guidance from their writing. For years, principals were not considered in the instructional process, but effective schools have shown that administrators have a significant role to play in the nurture and development of staff. Administrators do this not only by making the resources of time and material available but also by providing human resources and their own personal attention. Making time for teachers to meet in WSSGs is a critical factor that principals and other administrators can support with creative scheduling and other arrangements. The authors give suggestions for how this can be done. This volume has abundant suggestions and ideas for how logistical and managerial issues may be handled as well as how the content and substantive work of WSSGs may be supported successfully.

This third edition from Murphy and Lick is a superb resource and a must read for all educators involved in the improvement of education. It should be in the hands of individuals from the state department of education to the classroom teacher because it speaks to all layers of the system and to the role that each person must play to ensure successful learning for all students.

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Preface

THE NEW EDITION

Whole-Staff Study Groups: Creating Professional Learning Communities That Target Student Learning is a new edition of our earlier books. The titles of the first edition, *Whole-Faculty Study Groups: A Powerful Way to Change Schools and Enhance Learning* (1998) and the second edition, *Whole-Faculty Study Groups: Creating Student-Based Professional Development* (2001), reflect the shift in focus. In the first edition, we were not as clear as we are now in how Whole-Staff Study Groups (WSSGs) change schools and what types of learning are enhanced for students. In the second edition, we presented a much more coherent picture of how WSSGs are implemented and maintained. In this new edition, four more years of experiences in many very different schools bring more clarity to all three phases of the change process: initiation, implementation and institutionalisation. On the basis of practice, in this edition, there is more focus on assessment of student results and the action-research cycle that WSSGs experience is described in more detail. A major change from the earlier editions is that this edition views WSSGs as a system rather than simply as a model or a design for professional development. We are taking the view, as seen in Figure 2.1, that when implemented as described in this book, WSSGs represent a systemic change system. The theory that supports professional learning communities has remained constantly supportive; however, we have tried to more directly connect theory and research to the WSSG practice. In the first two editions, we did not use the term *professional learning communities*, assuming that readers would connect the term to what we were describing. We realised that we may not have made the connection, however, when principals asked, 'Now that we have Whole-Staff Study Groups in place, when do we begin implementing professional learning communities?' This new edition also uses the National Staff Development Council's staff development standards to illustrate how the WSSG system continues to use the context-process-content framework for its basic design. Although the three books are similar, many important modifications and significant additions have been included in this new edition.

The WSSG system has spread to school systems across the country and the implementation and work of study groups has become a daily occurrence in many schools, local areas and school systems. Because such work is continuous in these schools, the process and its refinement are constantly evolving. What one study group does has the potential to affect others, not only in that school but also in other schools that use the WSSG system.

In addition, as Murphy and other consultants travel from school to school throughout the country in their consulting role and Lick continues to research the theoretical basis for study groups, new ideas are generated that help strengthen the WSSG system. These changes accumulate over time and lead to major adjustments that make the process even more effective.

In the six years since the first edition was written, several hundred schools have implemented the WSSG system, which translates to more than 2000 individual study groups. From these and continuing groups, new insights into the WSSG approach have created a wealth of new and helpful material.

If the study group model were a 'paper-and-pencil' design, it might remain in a fixed or rigid state. Because the model continually evolves from how teachers actually work together in schools, it is fluid, flowing and readjusting itself. As leaders in schools chronicle the movement of study groups, we examine why some are high-performing groups and others struggle. What we learn is shared with continuing schools and those that are considering or just beginning the process. This edition of our book is how we keep schools up to date with our findings on what is working best.

Included in this edition of the book are the following major changes we have made during the past four years:

- An updating of every chapter
- The addition of three new chapters to make the book more effective and usable
- A reorganisation of chapters to allow the book to flow more useably for the reader
- An expansion of the discussion of practical approaches and processes that will help the user and reflect 'what works most effectively' in difficult situations
- New materials on key and timely topics, such as 'learning communities' and 'learning teams'
- Fourteen new and important 'lessons learned'
- Completely revised and updated sets of practical and concrete resources
- Illustrations in the appendix.

NEED AND PURPOSE

Staff development, school reform and the improvement of schools are not as simple as the general and educational rhetoric of the past decade would imply. Well-intentioned societal leaders and school personnel have talked about the necessity to change and improve and schools and their personnel have attempted a wide variety of what appeared to be logical and progressive solutions. Unfortunately, most of these have failed or, at best, been only partially successful. This failure or limited success happened because change, even positively perceived change, is difficult to bring about in long-standing, well-established organisations. Like other organisations, schools are not naturally open or amenable to major change.

To successfully reform, improve and transition schools to meet tomorrow's needs will require approaches and processes that are different than most attempted during the past decade. We must not only decide what changes or reforms are required but also put in place meaningful staff development and significant transition processes to help negotiate the societal, organisational, cultural and people barriers in and affecting schools.

One of the most successful and exciting new approaches to staff development, reform and change in education today is that involving professional WSSGs, as discussed in detail in this book. A key element in these efforts and unique to this book is ‘whole-staff’ involvement, not just study groups but WSSGs, in which all members of the staff are committed to the effort, actively involved in it and responsible for an important part of the total effort. Where WSSGs have been properly implemented, they have been unusually successful. The WSSG system is a holistic, practical process for facilitating major staff development and schoolwide change and for enhancing student learning and school improvement. This book presents a detailed discussion of WSSGs, their step-by-step application and the underlying change principles necessary for such study groups to be successful in the school environment.

A second key element is that WSSGs are a student-based approach to professional development and they rest on the basic question, ‘What do students need for us, the teachers, to do?’ Using this focus radically changes the tone and dynamics of professional development for teachers and brings it right to the heart of the matter. Based on our work in leading and managing major change and our experiences in hundreds of schools and more than 2000 WSSGs in those schools, this book provides the practical knowledge required to implement and successfully use the WSSG approach in schools and the theoretical foundation to understand the key change elements involved and how these can be applied to facilitate staff development and schoolwide change, enhance student learning and improve schools. Furthermore, the book contains a generous collection of relevant and illustrative examples of real-world situations and a detailed, step-by-step practical methodology for the development of successful professional WSSGs in schools.

In particular, this book grew out of a wide array of real-world, Whole-Staff Study Group efforts and experiences, it encompasses the existing relevant literature on study groups and it significantly expands this knowledge base through new up-to-date information and refinements of processes, procedures and approaches; new experiences and applications from user schools throughout the country and a unique integration and use of practical and theoretical change-knowledge concepts and change-management approaches.

WHO SHOULD READ AND USE THIS BOOK?

This book should be read and used by anyone who is interested in facilitating important staff development and change in schools and increasing student learning. A primary audience for the book should be the personnel in K–12 schools – all teachers, administrators and staff.

For schools that choose to introduce the WSSG approach, all school personnel will be involved in their schoolwide effort. Consequently, in such schools, each administrator and staff member should have a copy or many copies should be shared with school personnel, allowing full and convenient access across the school.

In addition, the book holds special potential for individual teachers and administrators and groups of teachers and administrators who are considering new options for seriously improving their schools. Other important audiences for this book include the following:

- Central office personnel in school systems, especially for consideration and possible implementation of study groups in their school system
- College of education staff in colleges and universities for understanding this new and successful process for schoolwide change and enhanced student learn-

ing, as well as for possible use as a textbook or reference book in classes relating to teacher training and school enhancement

- Community college staff and administrators for consideration of study groups and their application in their institutions for collegewide change and improving student learning
- School, community college, college, and university libraries
- Individuals and groups in national and international workshops on study groups and their application in education, from small seminars to large groups
- Individuals and groups in corporate, community and governmental organisations involved with schools, education and training.

ORGANISATION AND CONTENTS

The book is organised so that its chapter contents logically build on each other, with each laying a foundation for those that follow. The contents include the key elements in the WSSG and change processes and their implementation along with a large number of real-world examples and illustrative cases. The book is written so that it can serve as a textbook, a detailed reference book or a stand-alone guide for the effective initiation, comprehensive implementation and successful completion of the WSSG approach to staff development and major improvements in schools.

Chapter one discusses the school reform environment and the potential of the WSSG approach, serving as a major change process to improve schools, enhance student learning and move schools toward becoming learning organisations.

The concept and nature of study groups, their strengths and perceived weaknesses, their purposes and their ability to serve as vehicles for staff development and change and the creation of collaborative work cultures are described in chapter two.

Chapter three provides an overview discussion of relevant research findings relating to school change and improvement, including professional learning communities, staff development and training, the change process, school cultures and leadership.

Chapter four sets the framework for the three components of the WSSG approach: context, process and content. Key among the context-related topics discussed are roles and responsibilities of school personnel, local school influence, importance of leadership, power of a shared vision, time and resource requirements, school data and student needs, organisational structure and capacity building.

Critically important issues of school culture are discussed in chapter five, including the change concepts of building commitment, effective leadership and sponsorship, human change and resistance, roles of change, assimilation capacity, modification of school-related cultures and the overarching universal change principle.

The process for the WSSG system, including the fifteen study group process guidelines for success, is unfolded in chapter six, helping educators acquire and develop the knowledge and skills necessary to increase student performance and improve schools.

Chapter seven introduces the seven steps of the WSSG decision-making cycle, which provide the mechanisms for decision making involving data collection and analysis; critical student needs; study group organisation around student needs; and plans of action, implementation and evaluation.

The heart of the study group process, the content, detailed in chapter eight, is what teachers study; investigate; add to their strategies, repertoires and resource bank; do to become more skillful in the classroom with students; and use when study groups meet.

Chapter nine describes how to use the study group process to build synergistic groups, which are 'authentic teams' and how to turn such teams into highly productive and successful learning teams and learning communities in schools.

Chapter ten reviews, in the WSSG process, the stages of change, concerns and practices related to change, questions that leaders must answer for study groups and sets of practical, concrete approaches to help study groups become fully successful.

Chapter eleven discusses 'learning experiences' from the 'educational field of practice', including key local school, regional, state and national WSSG initiatives.

Chapter twelve presents fourteen reflective 'lessons learned' from the authors' extensive work and study of WSSGs, which should be helpful to readers of this book.

Finally, the appendixes contain a plethora of helpful nuts-and-bolts information, forms, guides and illustrations for the effective application of the WSSG approach, including study group action plans, study group journals and artefacts from WSSG schools.

We hope that the material in this book will inspire and help you understand and use WSSGs in your work to produce especially meaningful staff development, create more effective schools and generate learning environments that significantly enhance student learning and improve schools in the twenty-first century.

Changes have been made to this book in order to improve readability for an Australian audience. *Whole-Staff Study Groups* is the Australian version of *Whole-Faculty Study Groups*. As The WFSG National Center is a place name, its original spelling has been kept.

What the research tells us

Education in the United States is greatly enriched by the work of individuals in universities, school districts, government agencies and private practice who collect, analyse and report data about all aspects of education. These individuals, most often called researchers, bring clarity, meaning and direction to educators at all levels and the general public on the 'state of education' in U.S. schools. In this chapter, we highlight the studies that seem to have the greatest impact on the purpose for having and the functioning of Whole-Staff Study Groups (WSSGs). These studies are in the areas of professional learning communities, staff development and training, the change process, school culture and leadership.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES

The University of Chicago's Center for School Improvement worked with a number of Chicago primary schools during a three-year period. Bryk, Rollow and Pinnell (1996) reported that there is a need to restructure and renorm teachers' work so that a professional learning community emerges to sustain school improvement.

Professional learning communities are also identified as important in a summary report titled *Successful School Restructuring* (Newmann & Wehlage, 1995). More than 1500 schools throughout the United States were part of four large-scale studies: the School Restructuring Study, the National Educational Longitudinal Study of 1988, the Study of Chicago School Reform and the Longitudinal Study of School Restructuring. Results of these studies were combined into summary findings. Newmann and Wehlage reported that the creation of a 'professional community not only boosted student achievement gains, it also helped to make the gains more equitable among socioeconomic groups' (p. 37).

Louis, Marks and Kruse (1996) reported on research from more than 900 teachers in twenty-four nationally selected restructuring primary, middle and high schools. The research hypothesised that how teachers interact when they are not in their classrooms may be critical to the future of school restructuring and its effects on students. Louis et al. found that a strong school-based professional community for teachers is associated with increased engagement and achievement for students. They also found the following five core characteristics of professional school communities:

- Teachers and administrators share basic norms and values about children, learning and teaching.
- Reflective dialogue, rich and recurring talk about teaching practice and student learning, enlarges the teachers' world and helps them view teaching from one another's perspectives.
- Deprivatisation of practice occurs when teachers practice their craft openly and problem-solve together.
- A collective focus on student learning drives decisions.
- Collaboration exists across year-level groups.

The value of the WSSG approach and other designs that build collaborative cultures is well documented. Lucas (2000) found that the WSSG process had a positive impact on teachers' professional growth and on student learning in the schools.

Sebring and Bryk (2000) reported that schools that are improving are characterised by co-operative work relations among all adults. They state that in schools in which trust and co-operative adult efforts are strong, students report that they feel safe, sense that teachers care about them and experience greater academic challenge. In contrast, in schools with flat or declining test scores, teachers are more likely to state that they do not trust one another and both teachers and students report less satisfaction with their experiences.

Rosenholtz (1989) investigated social organisational features in seventy-eight primary schools in eight school districts in Tennessee. Her investigation included school and classroom observation; interviews with teachers, principals, superintendents, board members and parents; data collection from 1213 teachers; and an analysis of student achievement. Rosenholtz concluded that schools could be categorised as moving (i.e., learning-enriched environments) or stuck (i.e., learning-impooverished environments). Table 3.1 summarises the characteristics of the two categories.

Studies by the federally funded Centre for Research on the Context of Secondary School Teaching at Stanford University revealed that teachers' participation in a 'professional community' had a powerful effect on how successfully they were able to adapt their instructional strategies to meet students' needs (Bradley, 1993). One such study, by McLaughlin and Talbert (2001), conducted in-depth research in sixteen high schools in seven school districts in California and Michigan. One of the cases cited (that of Rothman) was of two high schools in the same California district. Both served approximately the same student population and functioned under the same rules and regulations. The study found, however, that one school had high student failure and dropout rates, whereas the other had test scores among the highest in the state and eighty per cent of its students went to college. The difference was reflected in the professional characteristics of the schools. Table 3.2 provides a summary of the factors associated with student achievement from the work of McLaughlin and Talbert.

<i>Moving</i>	<i>Stuck</i>
Learning was enriched for students and teachers	Learning was impoverished for students and teachers.
Higher levels of student achievement were the norm.	Lower levels of student achievement were the norm.
Teachers worked together.	Teachers worked alone, rarely asking for help.
Teachers shared beliefs about on-the-job learning.	Isolation, self-reliance and turf issues predominated.
High consensus was shared on the definition of teaching.	Low consensus was shared on the definition of teaching.
Shared instructional goals occupied a place of high significance.	Inertia seemed to overcome teachers' adventurous impulses.
Teachers had a marked spirit of continuous improvement in which no teacher ever stops learning how to teach.	Teachers were less likely to trust, value, and legitimise sharing expertise, seeking advice and giving help.
80% of the teachers responded that their learning is cumulative and that learning to teach is a lifelong pursuit.	17% of the teachers expressed a sustained view of learning for themselves.

Table 3.1 Characteristics of the moving and stuck schools

Louis et al. (1996) supported the work of Rosenholtz (1989) and McLaughlin and Talbert (as cited in Bradley, 1993), concluding that there are three benefits from promoting structural conditions and social and human resources that support school-based professional communities:

1. Teachers are empowered to work to improve student learning. Their 'sense of affiliation with each other and with the school and their sense of mutual support and individual responsibility for the effectiveness of instruction, is increased by collaborative work with peers' (Louis, Kruse, & Marks, 1996, p. 24).
2. Teachers' sense of personal dignity in their profession is increased. This sense of dignity relates directly to their sense of efficacy, their empowerment to affect student learning.
3. Teachers' collective responsibility increases. Their concern goes beyond the learning of children in their own classes and includes the progress made by students in the entire school. Whole-school improvement becomes the focus.

Linda Darling-Hammond (as cited in Lewis, 1997) of Teachers College, Columbia University, has worked extensively with professional development in schools. In a September 1996 report to the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, she and her colleagues recommended that new policies be required to accomplish the following:

<i>High student achievement</i>	<i>Low student achievement</i>
High levels of collegiality	Low levels of collegiality
High levels of innovation	High norms of privacy (no sharing of resources or materials)
High levels of opportunity for adult learning	No support or opportunity for adult learning
Subject matter seen as dynamic	Subject matter seen as static (canons were not to be challenged)
Commitment to success for all students, publicly declared	Large number of students fail
High standards for all students	Low standards for students
High degree of commitment to the school as a whole	Low commitment to the school workplace
More positive views of students	More negative views of students

Table 3.2 McLaughlin and Talbert's (2001) Comparisons

- Redesign school structures to support teacher learning and collaboration, giving serious attention to practice
- Rethink schedules and staffing patterns to create blocks of time for teachers to plan and work together
- Make it possible for teachers to think in terms of shared problems, not 'my classroom' or 'my subject'
- Organise the school into small, collaborative groups

Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1995) identified six characteristics of effective professional development that involves teachers as both teachers and learners. We believe that all six characteristics, as follows, are embedded in the WSSG system:

1. It must engage teachers in concrete tasks of teaching, assessment, observation and reflection.
2. It must be grounded in inquiry, reflection and experimentation that are participant driven.
3. It must be collaborative, involving a sharing of knowledge among educators and focus on teachers' communities of practice rather than on individual teachers.
4. It must be connected to and derived from teachers' work with their students.
5. It must be sustained, ongoing, intensive and supported by modelling, coaching and the collective solving of specific problems of practice.
6. It must be connected to other aspects of school change.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

From the inception of the process that became the WSSG system, the work of Bruce Joyce and Beverly Showers was at the heart of the system. Joyce and Showers (1982, 1995) described five important components of staff development:

1. Presentation of theory or the description of a new skill or behaviour
2. Demonstration or modelling of the new strategy or skill by a trainer with no audience action
3. Initial practice in a protected or simulated setting
4. Practice with an audience, providing structured, open-ended feedback
5. Coaching and follow-up help as a skill is being applied and tried in the classroom

In a study of 100 individuals in training, Joyce and Showers (1983) examined the effect (in percentages) that various components contributed toward the transfer of skills or new behaviours in the classroom. The results were as follows:

• Presentation only	10%
• Demonstration	added 2%–3% more
• Protected practice	added 2%–3% more
• Practice with feedback	added 2%–3% more
• With coaching	95% of the participants transferred the skill to the classroom

In the WSSG system, the components continuously interact in a seamless way. WSSG members are learning about new skills through their own investigations, demonstrating the skills to each other and practicing the skills together when the study group meets, examining student work from the lessons that are taught, coaching each other through all aspects of lesson development and implementation of the new practices in the classrooms, observing each other's students as the skills are being used in the classroom and collaboratively reflecting on the observations. In the WSSG approach, coaching occurs, for example, when teachers examine student work, when teachers demonstrate and practice lessons in study group meetings and when teachers observe each other's students in classrooms. Imagine the following situation: During several study group meetings, study group members develop concept attainment lessons. In the study group meetings, they practice the lessons. They then inform each other as to when they will be teaching the lessons during the following week. The teachers pair up and work out a schedule for observing in each other's classrooms. During the next study group meeting, teachers debrief the observed lessons and share how students responded. Data are used in the next round of lesson development. As a result, all the Joyce and Showers components discussed previously are integrated into the WSSG approach.

THE CHANGE PROCESS

In groundbreaking work on the change process in schools, Huberman and Miles (1984), in their book *Innovation Up Close: How School Improvement Works*, established three distinct phases or stages of the change process. Fullan (2001a) has further developed our understanding of the three phases. The stages are initiation, implementation and institutionalisation or continuation. The initiation/implementation/ institutionalisation schema is how WSSG activities are organised and scheduled. Leaders begin WSSGs with the assumption that the system will be institutionalised or will become a

routine practice of the school – that is, that the process will become ‘how we do business at this school’. We believe continuation has to be an assumption in the beginning and into implementation; it is frequently not realised, however.

The initiation phase is called initiation, mobilisation or adoption and consists of the process that leads up to and includes a decision to adopt or proceed with a change (Fullan, 2001a). We usually consider the initiation phase as being from the time leaders begin to consider the innovation through getting started. It includes gathering information, contacting and contracting with consultants, purchasing materials, meeting with teachers, getting approval from district leaders, budgeting funds, gathering pertinent data, articulating intended results and deciding to begin. It also includes training that is needed to begin. With WSSGs, the initiation stage includes having staff experience the decision-making cycle and the forming of study groups. This phase includes the first two or three study group meetings during which members are adjusting to the logistics of WSSGs. The primary source of support during this phase is the principal and an expert source within or outside of the school.

The implementation phase involves the first experiences of attempting to put an idea or reform into practice (Fullan, 2001a). Implementation of WSSGs actually begins after the study groups are formed and the early work of getting started is complete. By the end of the third study group meeting, the study groups are ready to begin researching and testing ideas.

The institutionalisation phase – also called continuation, incorporation and routinisation – refers to whether the change gets built in as an ongoing part of the system or disappears by way of a decision to discard or through attrition (Fullan, 2001a). Institutionalisation occurs when practices that were once new are integrated into and become an important part of the fabric of school and teacher structures and routines. Successful institutionalisation requires continued support, encouragement, strong sponsorship and recognition. How long institutionalisation takes is unclear. Contextual factors are most often what determine whether a practice is continued and maintained.

Another framework incorporated into the WSSG system is the Concerns Based Adoption Model (Hord, Rutherford, Huling-Austin, & Hall, 1987). Its stages of concern (Figure 3.1) and levels of use (Figure 3.2) provide guidance to leaders in addressing the concerns that individuals express and in making decisions about how to provide technical assistance.

The concerns-based adoption model (CBAM) is a framework and set of tools for understanding and managing change in people. CBAM is about the natural and developmental process that each of us goes through whenever we engage in something new or different. The research was conducted by Shirley Hord, William Rutherford, Leslie Huling-Austin, Gene Hall, Susan Loucks-Horsley and their colleagues at the Research and Development Centre for Teacher Education at the University of Texas at Austin (Hall, George, & Rutherford, 1979; Hall, Loucks, Rutherford, & Newlove, 1975).

The team reached the following conclusions:

- Change is a process, not an event.
- Change is accomplished by individuals.
- Change is a highly personal experience.
- Change involves developmental growth.
- Change is best understood in operational terms.
- The focus on facilitation should be on individuals, innovation and the context.

STAGES of CONCERN About an Innovation

	STAGES OF CONCERN	EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN
I M P A C T	VI REFOCUSING	I have some ideas for how we can get more benefits from it.
	V COLLABORATION	How can I relate what I am doing to what others are doing?
	IV CONSEQUENCE	How is my use affecting students? How can I refine it to have more impact?
T A S K	III MANAGEMENT	I seem to be spending all my time getting materials ready.
S E L F	II PERSONAL	How will using it affect me?
	I INFORMATIONAL	I would like to know more about it.
	O AWARENESS	I am not concerned about it.

Adapted from: Shirley M. Hord, William L. Rutherford, Leslie Huling-Austin and Gene E. Hall. The **Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM)** Project. Research and Development Centre for Teacher Education, the University of Texas at Austin.

Figure 3.1 Stages of concern

LEVELS of USE of the Innovation

	LEVELS OF USE	TYPICAL BEHAVIOURS
U S E R	VI RENEWAL	Reevaluates the quality of use of the innovation.
	V INTEGRATION	Makes deliberate efforts to coordinate with others in using the innovation.
	IVB REFINEMENT	Assesses impact and makes changes to increase it.
	IVA ROUTINE	Has established a pattern of use and is making few, if any, changes.
N O N U S E R	III MECHANICAL	Is poorly coordinated, making changes to fit user. Use is disjointed and superficial.
	II PREPARATION	Prepares to use the innovation.
	I ORIENTATION	Seeks information about the innovation.
	O NO USE	Takes no action with respect to the innovation.

Adapted from: Shirley M. Hord, William L. Rutherford, Leslie Huling-Austin and Gene E. Hall. The **Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM)** Project. Research and Development Centre for Teacher Education, the University of Texas at Austin.

Figure 3.2 Levels of use

CBAM DEFINITIONS

Concerns-based adoption model (CBAM): A framework and set of tools for understanding and managing change in people. CBAM is about the natural and developmental process that each of us goes through whenever we engage in something new or different.

Innovation or change: Materials, behaviours, practices, beliefs, understandings, products, structures or processes that are NEW to an individual.

Concerns: Feelings, reactions and attitudes that an individual has about something new or different. Concerns are not necessarily anxieties, worries or fears.

Use: Actions taken in relation to an innovation; the behavioural dimensions of change.

Intervention: An action or event that influences the use of an innovation.

Components: The major elements of an innovation. Critical components are those elements that must be used, the components that define the innovation. Related components are those elements that are not required, the components that enhance or strengthen the innovation.

Variations: The different ways in which the components can be used or operationalised.

Configuration: The patterns that result from different combinations of innovation components and their different variations.

Facilitator: Anyone who has some responsibility for helping people change and for creating a context to support change.

Adapted from: Shirley M. Hord, William L. Rutherford, Leslie Huling-Austin and Gene E. Hall. The **Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM)** Project. Research and Development Centre for Teacher Education, the University of Texas at Austin.

Figure 3.3 Concerns-based adoption model definitions

The previous conclusions support the WSSG process and have been the guideposts of the WSSG system. CBAM defines an *innovation* or *change* as materials, behaviours, practices, beliefs, understandings, products, structures or processes that are new to an individual (see Figure 3.3). The complexity of the WSSG system is that WSSGs are a bundle of innovations, including all those listed previously. Confronting only one, such as new materials, can be daunting. With WSSGs, however, the confrontation is with a collection of new things, such as picking up a bushel basket of fruit instead of reaching for one apple. The WSSG bushel basket has the following in it:

- Having the whole staff participate
- Adhering to the fifteen procedural guidelines
- Learning new content
- Implementing new strategies in the classroom
- Reflecting on teaching practices with colleagues
- Monitoring student effects
- Examining student work in a group setting
- Adjusting to new time requirements or different uses of time
- Understanding and accepting cultural shifts
- Being part of synergistic groups

WSSGs search for and identify interventions that will influence the use of or the adaptability to the innovations. What makes the WSSG system so complex (and powerful) is that each innovation has major elements or components. For example, 'implementing new strategies in the classroom' is preceded by identifying one strategy, developing lessons or using that strategy, demonstrating the strategy to each other, using the strategy in the classroom and reflecting on the outcomes of using the strategy. Each of the components that precede and follow implementing the strategy may be new to one or more members of a study group. When leaders and schools consider adopting the WSSG system, they usually only consider the structure – that is, the fifteen guidelines. What is hidden from view is the bundle of innovations. It is not long into the implementation phase that the bundle begins to unravel and leaders need to be supported in their efforts to support individuals.

The stages of concern (Figure 3.1) and the levels of use (Figure 3.2) charts are in the WSSG training materials, but, as leaders of change efforts know, 'it is not real until it is real' – that is, little attention is paid to the concepts until implementation problems happen. The stages of concern are apparent in WSSG schools as external consultants meet with study groups. It is like individuals have the word 'management' imprinted on their foreheads, telling us that management and logistical details are the focus of concern. The setting of norms, rotation of leaders, using the action plan and completing a journal are new procedures that cause members concern. Principals need to be advised that as long as the concerns are focused on personal and management issues, the work is not going to impact students. Principals need to address the concerns in such a way that the study groups can become more concerned about the consequence of the work so that students will benefit from the work. With the strong and constant message of student needs and student impact, the consequence and collaboration stages are obtainable in the first year. In chapter six, the developmental stages of groups are described. The developmental stages and the stages of concern correspond. In both, consequence is the stage in which student impact is greatest.

The levels of use have dual implications for WSSGs. First, the levels of use apply to the WSSG process as the innovation. Meeting in a small group with colleagues to work collaboratively on teaching and learning is new. WSSGs begin at the mechanical level. If groups remain at the mechanical level, the work will seem disjointed and superficial to members. At the routine level, the work is smoother; the group continues to do what is comfortable, however and members do not engage in actions that require them to change how they work with colleagues. For example, the group does much verbal sharing without routinely examining student work using protocols. Second, if the content of a study group is new materials and teaching strategies, the content consists of multiple innovations. If, for example, the content is learning or teaching strategies, each member of the study group may be at a different level of use of a single strategy. If the group is developing skill at using several learning strategies, each member may be on a different level of use of each strategy. When we overlay an individual's stage of concern regarding a specific innovation with the individual's level of use of the innovation, we get some notion of the complexity of innovation. Although it is not realistic to diagnose every staff member's stage of concern and level of use with a particular innovation, it is helpful for leaders to be aware of the CBAM and the implications it has for providing appropriate and timely technical assistance.

SCHOOL CULTURES

Fullan (2001b) believes that transforming the culture – changing the way we do things around here – is the point in achieving successful change. The point of WSSGs is to change the culture of schools from one of isolation to collaboration; from individual knowledge to group knowledge; from individual work to joint work; from individual responsibility to joint and collective responsibility; and from the teacher as follower to all teachers as leaders. In this book, we discuss in depth the structure of WSSGs. The structure is only a set of tools for reculturing, as Fullan (2001b) calls the work of change. Fullan states,

It is a particular kind of reculturing for which we strive: one that activates and deepens moral purpose through collaborative work cultures that respect differences and constantly build and test knowledge against measurable results – a culture within which one realises that sometimes being off balance is a learning moment. (p. 45)

The image of successful change and of reculturing that Fullan (2001a, 2001b) describes is a daunting mission. Such work is not for the fainthearted. Long-standing practices of isolation, traditions of territorial protection, feelings of mistrust and histories of disillusionment are cultural fortresses. Creating new relationships forged through WSSGs that are built on trust, high expectations, new knowledge and skills and more coherent instructional programs establish a culture of mutual respect. Saphier and King (1985) identified twelve norms of school culture that should be in place and strong to create a healthy school culture: collegiality; experimentation; high expectations; trust and confidence; tangible support; reaching out to the knowledge base; appreciation and recognition; caring, celebration and humour; involvement in decision making; protection of what is important; traditions; and honest, open communications. If these norms are in place and strong, then improvements in instruction will be significant, continuous and widespread, according to Saphier and King. If these norms are weak, however, then improvements will be infrequent, random and slow. Of the twelve norms, Saphier (as cited in Richardson, 1996) points to three norms – collegiality, experimentation and reaching out to a knowledge base – that have the highest correlation with changing the school environment and improving student achievement. Saphier (as cited in Richardson, 1996) stated that current data continue to support the 1985 Saphier and King study.

Saphier and Gower (1997) devoted a chapter to the conditions that build a professional development culture that incorporates optimal conditions for teacher learning. One of the conditions that opens wide the gates for improving schools through professional development is for schools to have within them collegial structures and personal support for reflection and study of the knowledge base on teaching. We believe that WSSGs provide this cultural condition of Saphier and Gower as well as the twelve cultural norms presented by Saphier and King (1985).

LEADERSHIP

Michael Fullan lights the torch and leads the way for us to follow. He reminds us that it is the moral purpose of leaders that will enable schools to do the seemingly

undoable. As leaders, we must be deeply passionate about improving the quality of life in schools for adults and for students. Fullan (2001b) asserts there are five components to leadership:

1. Moral purpose
2. Understanding the change process
3. Strong relationships
4. Knowledge building
5. Coherence making among multiple priorities

Throughout this book, we assert what we believe to be the moral purpose of the WSSG system and of the leaders who strive to implement and institutionalise the system:

To determine what students need for us to do and for leaders to do what students need leaders to do is the bedrock of WSSGs.

The system is dedicated to changing the cultures of schools so that all individuals work as one for the betterment of students. The student voice is the voice that gives the system its purpose and its direction. Leaders of schools that implement the WSSG system, if successful over time in establishing and maintaining student-centred professional adult learning communities, are grounded in their commitments, reliability and steadfast convictions. Fullan (2001b) and Sergiovanni (1999) agree that authentic leaders display character and moral purpose.

The research is clear on the importance of leadership in school reform. According to Spillane, Halverson and Diamond (1999), who summarise the literature on leadership, leadership is critical to innovation in schools. They wrote,

We know that schools with shared visions and norms about instruction, norms of collaboration and a sense of collective responsibility for students' academic success create incentives and opportunities for teachers to improve their practice (Bryk & Driscoll, 1985; Newmann & Wehlage, 1995). Moreover, we know that principal leadership is important in promoting these conditions (Lieberman et al., 1994; Louis & Kruse, 1995; Rosenholtz, 1989). (p. 3)

Spillane et al. also developed a distributed theory of leadership: school leadership is constituted in the dynamic interaction of multiple leaders (and followers) and their situation around particular leadership tasks. They stated that 'leaders' practice is 'stretched over' the social and situational contexts of the school; it is not simply a function of what a school principal knows and does' (p. 7). This theory of distributed leadership is embedded in the WSSG system. A team, including the principal, receives instruction in how to 'roll-out' WSSGs at the school. The team selects data that staff will review. The data determine what staff will do in study groups. The leadership of

each study group is rotated among members. The school's instructional council is composed of representatives from each study group using a rotation system. Study groups make recommendations for inclusion in the school's improvement plan. The principal may distribute the responsibility among other leaders in the school, such as assistant principals, for providing feedback to the study groups. We acknowledge that the theory of distributive leadership is deeper and more extensive than we are able to describe here. One of the statements that Spillane et al. made, however, that 'leadership is 'stretched over' the practice of actors within an organisation' (p. 15), relates directly to one of the guiding principles of WSSGs: leadership is shared.

SUMMARY

We believe that the establishment of professional learning communities resulting in higher levels of student success is one of the most important outcomes of the authentic application of the WSSG system. Murphy's research (Murphy & Lick, 1998) validates the positive impact that high norms of collegiality have on student learning. The research cited in this chapter confirms our belief that when WSSGs are implemented properly and are sustained over time, the context of the school will reflect strong professional learning communities that contribute importantly to student learning. The previously discussed research leaves little doubt that effective schoolwide change and enhanced student learning require a structure or a process for greater collaboration among teachers. Furthermore, it is unlikely that the desired cultural norms described previously will happen without a deliberate strategy. Knowing general educational research and acknowledging the validity of the research will not by itself change anything. Staff must be given a framework and process for change that is flexible enough to give them the latitude necessary to transform the research into practice. The WSSG process is such a framework. It provides a structure that creates forward-moving, learning-enriched schools.

Consistent with the previously discussed research, the purpose of this book is to give schools, school leaders and teachers a practical, proven-in-practice strategy and a step-by-step procedure for doing what researchers conclude that schools should do to improve. The researchers cited and many not cited, clearly state that collaborative school cultures and effective school leadership enhance student performance. What most researchers do not do is tell schools how to do what they say should be done. Chapters six and seven in this book, however, specifically tell schools how to implement a schoolwide structure that, if sustained over time, provides a process for school improvement and enhanced student learning as well as a process for the school to become a 'university' for teachers, in which teachers are committed not only to student success but also to each other's professional growth and success.