SCHOOL/COMMUNITY-BASED MANAGEMENT:
DISCURSIVE POLITICS IN PRACTICE

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE DIVISION OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

IN

POLITICAL SCIENCE

DECEMBER 2003

By
Kristen M. Erbes

Dissertation Committee:
Neal Milner, Chairperson
James A. Dator
Manfred Henningsen
Jon Goldberg-Hiller
Kem Lowry
This dissertation is dedicated to the students, staff, community members, parents, teachers, and administrators who participated in SCBM.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is with sincere gratitude and appreciation that I acknowledge the following people for their contributions in helping me complete this project.

Thank you to my dissertation committee members. In particular I would like to thank my chair, Dr. Neal Milner, who through his unique sense of humor, provided the right mix of encouragement and herding. Without your help, this duck would still be running in circles.

Thank you to my friends on both sides of the Pacific. You’ve provided endless support, safe places to test theory, mentorship, and the extra push to finish. Thank you to the best cheerleader and coach, Lani O’Callaghan.

Thank you my parents and to Barry. You were (and are) my safety nets. I could not have finished without your love and belief in me.

Thank you to April Brenden-Locke for her expertise and copy-editing assistance.

Finally, thank you to the SCBM participants for sharing your stories and passion for making a difference.
ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines an educational reform movement, School/Community-Based Management (SCBM) in Hawai‘i’s public schools. Advocates insisted that changing the bureaucratic structure of governance, moving from top-down decision-making to a shared decision-making at the local level, would revolutionize schools resulting in higher student achievement.

Through in-depth case studies at two schools I examine three foci of contemporary theory: democratic structures, the educative value of participation, and consensus-based decision-making. First, while the SCBM literature asserts open participation, most schools developed formal representative structures to reflect constituent groups mandated by the Hawai‘i Department of Education (DOE). This tension between representative and nonrepresentative structures is found in democratic theory, especially in comparing liberal and republican principles. Proponents conceived of SCBM not only as an administrative decision-making structure but also as a forum for communities to identify shared values and agree on a common good.

Second, pragmatists as well as proponents of participatory democracy agree that individuals are educated about democratic values through participation in democratic processes. Similarly, SCBM supporters claimed that individuals would be educated in civic virtues through participation in the SCBM process. The case studies demonstrate that participants engaged in deliberation, negotiation, and decision-making. However, in one example the SCBM participants felt that stakeholders in the bureaucracy blocked their ability to make the most important decision at the school, selecting the principal.
Third, deliberative democrats contend that bureaucracy breaks down communicative possibilities. By instituting deliberative forums and opportunities, citizens are able to reach understanding and make binding agreements. The relationship of deliberation and consensus-based decision-making processes is also explored. Striving for unified agreement, SCBM councils typically deliberate in face-to-face forums and use consensus rather than majority vote decision-making procedures. A case study when consensus could not be reached is used to highlight the frustration and feelings of failure by participants.

SCBM is not only an example of educational reform but it is political reform as well. It is by looking at how communities participated in SCBM that we can see democracy practiced at the local school level.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments......................................................................................................................... iv  
Abstract........................................................................................................................................ v  
List of Figures .................................................................................................................................. ix  
Chapter 1: Introduction .....................................................................................................................1  
  Historical Context of SCBM ........................................................................................................... 3  
  The Emergence of SCBM ............................................................................................................... 12  
    Chicago School Reform Act ........................................................................................................ 14  
    Dade County ............................................................................................................................... 17  
    Hawai’i’s Story ............................................................................................................................ 19  
SCBM’s Underlying Philosophy ........................................................................................................ 23  
  Structure, Participation, and Consensus-Based Decision Making .................................................. 25  
Chapter 2: Representative and Participatory Structures in SCBM .................................................... 29  
  Democratic Ideals and Structures ................................................................................................... 30  
    Liberal democracy ....................................................................................................................... 31  
    Republican democracy ............................................................................................................... 34  
    Communitarian reading of republicanism .................................................................................. 36  
  Representation and participation under SCBM ............................................................................... 38  
    Jasmine Middle School .............................................................................................................. 43  
    Hibiscus High School ................................................................................................................ 47  
    Differences between the schools .................................................................................................. 50  
  Modified school year issue at Jasmine Middle School .................................................................... 54  
  Impact of structure on Jasmine’s MSY decision .............................................................................. 61  
  Wanting the best of both representative and communal democracy ............................................. 63  
Chapter 3: The Educative Value of Participation .............................................................................. 68  
  The Nature of Participation ........................................................................................................... 69  
    Pragmatism ................................................................................................................................. 70  
    Strong Democracy .................................................................................................................... 73  
    Participatory Democracy .......................................................................................................... 76  
  Participation in Principal Selection Processes ................................................................................. 77  
    Jasmine Middle School .............................................................................................................. 78  
    Hibiscus High School – Part I .................................................................................................... 81  
    Differences between the Jasmine Middle School and Hibiscus High School ............................... 85  
    Hibiscus High School – Part II .................................................................................................. 86  
  The Nature of Participation in SCBM ............................................................................................. 96  
Chapter 4: Deliberation and Consensus-Based Decision-Making ..................................................... 99  
  Deliberation .................................................................................................................................. 100  
  Decision Making ........................................................................................................................... 105  
    Unitary Democracy and Consensus-Based Decision Making ....................................................... 107  
    Helpline Example ....................................................................................................................... 108  
    SCBM and Consensus-Based Decision Making ........................................................................... 112  
    Hibiscus High School’s Dress Code ........................................................................................... 115  
  The Decision ................................................................................................................................ 123
Revisiting the Decision ........................................................................................................... 125
The implications of consensus decision making regarding the dress code .................. 131
The Role of Conflict and Deliberation in Democracy ....................................................... 132
Chapter 5: Conclusion ......................................................................................................... 137
Central Themes of the Dissertation .................................................................................. 137
Evaluations of Hawai‘i’s SCBM Efforts ............................................................................. 144
PREL Evaluation ............................................................................................................... 145
Far West Evaluation .......................................................................................................... 148
Board of Education Questionnaire .................................................................................. 151
Stealth Democracy ........................................................................................................... 153
Stealth Democracy and SCBM .......................................................................................... 156
Deliberative Process Criteria .............................................................................................. 158
Additional Research Needed ............................................................................................ 161
Participant interest and ability ......................................................................................... 161
Culture, gender, class, and education .............................................................................. 163
Types of issues discussed .................................................................................................. 166
Bibliography ...................................................................................................................... 169
## LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Hibiscus High School Proposed Dress Code</td>
<td>4-8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

It seemed simple enough. The group wanted to increase parent and family attendance at the upcoming open house. Someone proposed a pizza party for the grade level that had the most participation. In other words, if there were more family members of seventh graders compared to eighth or sixth graders, six names would be drawn from the names of the seventh graders that had family attend and awarded a pizza party. This seemingly harmless proposal caused quite a lot of controversy. Was that really a fair incentive for students? Was there a better way to increase family involvement in their child’s education? Was it fair to only award the students that had family attend? What if a family member had to work and could not attend a school function during the day? Instead of the principal making the decision or the group taking a vote, they broke into constituent groups and discussed the issues. After reaching consensus in constituent groups, they came back to the whole group and reported the conversations that took place in the constituent groups until the whole group could reach consensus on whether to entice families to participate by offering a pizza party to a few students.

Countless debates over matters such as the pizza party incentive occur at schools every day. Increasingly, educators have included voices beyond the school in their discussions. Now instead of the school administrator or principal making the decisions, teachers, parents, staff, and students often have a say in what happens. This transformation to a shared decision making process is important beyond educational theory because it exemplifies significant aspects of democracy.

In this dissertation, I use case studies from Hawai‘i’s School/Community-Based Management (SCBM) to examine three components of democratic theory—variations between representative and communal structures, the educative nature of participation, and consensus based decision-making. I draw from various sub-fields of democratic
theory, including communitarian theory, discourse theory, participatory democracy, critiques of bureaucracy and decentralization, and the conflict resolution field. While proponents made many claims regarding the educational outcomes of SCBM, the focus of this dissertation is instead on both the explicit and implicit beliefs about decentralized governance of schools. Descriptive accounts of participants’ practices and discourse are weaved in throughout this study to illustrate how SCBM was not only a school reform movement but an exercise in democracy as well.

Schools mean many things to Americans. They represent the vehicle for realization of prosperity and advancement as well as a tool for addressing social problems. “For over a century and a half, Americans have translated their cultural anxieties and hopes into dramatic demands for educational reform.”¹ Citizens discuss and debate what is happening at the schools in their communities. In many communities, schools become not only a central focus of extracurricular events and celebrations, but also a hotbed of political debate over such issues as funding, taxation, and educational achievement.

SCBM, or Site-Based Management (SCBM) as it is often referred to, was a school reform movement of the 1980s and 1990s that asserted that schools should have autonomy at the local level. Through decentralization, SCBM attempted to dissolve bureaucratic decision-making authority by establishing school site-based councils. The idea of local decision-making is not new to schools. Educational reform movements that favor some form of decentralization occur when the system is perceived as too centralized. Educational historians David Tyack and Larry Cuban write that “policy talk”, or “diagnoses of problems and advocacy of solutions”, is cyclical.² In other words, even though this particular reform movement, SCBM, may have been new in the early 1990s,

---

2. Ibid., p. 40.
the ideas and philosophies underlying it are not. Because the focus is on decentralization of the schools, I focus on the structural variations, the nature of participation, and the use of consensus based decision-making. While SCBM promised community based participation that is open to everyone, most schools instituted representative councils that structured, and to some extent limited, participation. Additionally, SCBM asked communities to participate in shared decision-making, but the DOE, BOE, and unions did not fully relinquish control. Further, participants were supposed to use consensus-based processes without having a common understanding of what consensus is or the necessary time to truly reach consensus.

**Historical Context of SCBM**

In order to understand SCBM, it is important to examine the historical and political contexts in which it arose. A review of the major centralization and decentralization movements in public education shows that SCBM was not the first attempt at decentralization. The SCBM school model has roots tracing back to the “common school” of the nineteenth century. The common school was governed by local citizens and is often referred to as a decentralized governance model.\(^3\) Based on a Protestant-republican ideology, members of the community determined the components of a proper education.\(^4\) The aim of Horace Mann and other common school proponents was to produce standardized, upstanding citizens. Without an educated public, Mann believed that democracy would fail. Mann insisted that an educated citizenry was the basis of good citizenship, democratic participation, and political and social stability.\(^5\)

The early twentieth century brought a centralizing trend to education in the United States. Often referred to as the Progressive Era, reformers saw the common school

---

5. Ibid., p. 16.
structure as outdated. "In urging centralization of control, educational reformers of the Progressive Era argued that concentrating authority in experts would bring a kind of accountability that was absent in a more fragmented and dispersed system."\(^6\) The decentralized model was subject to community standards. Through centralization, professional educators could make better decisions – decisions based on scientific research, not community politics. Progressives created administrative structures that are still widespread in much of the country today: "locally elected boards, central administrative staffs, and building-level administrators, all overseeing teachers who work, for the most part, in isolated classrooms."\(^7\) By following the centralized corporate archetype that was also appearing at this time, progressives wanted more uniform and systematized schools where students were tested and teachers were held to approved methods of instruction.\(^8\) Proponents believed this standardization would produce students better suited to the demands of modern society.

Richard Weise and Joseph Murphy write that John Dewey’s 1903 essay “Democracy in Education” was the first major critique of the centralized educational system that had developed in America.\(^9\) Dewey felt that democracy was both the means and ends for the educational system and wanted to see more participation to counter what he saw as an autocratic system. He believed that through participation, the individual is enriched.\(^10\) Moreover, for Dewey, it is through these face-to-face participatory associations that democracy is experienced, practiced, and learned. Henry A. Giroux writes,

\(^6\) Ibid., p. 3.
For Dewey, the central purpose of schooling was to develop in students a critical intelligence and disposition that would be consistent with their actions as socially responsible citizens. In this view, public schooling would derive its ethical criteria from a critically reconstructed ideal of democracy as a moral and political tradition.\(^\text{11}\)

Following Dewey's efforts, teacher councils emerged from 1909-1929. Teacher councils emphasized teacher participation in "formulating and directing the educational policies of the school."\(^\text{12}\) However, teacher councils did not include students, parents, or community members.

According to Weise and Murphy, a “Democratic Administration Movement” began in 1930 and lasted through 1950, although there was a change in the philosophy after World War II. Prior to WWII, the movement was “intellectual, antifascist, and driven by the idea of social change.”\(^\text{13}\) During the post-war era, the movement was focused on preserving the social stability and prosperity resulting from the Allies’ victory.\(^\text{14}\) Although Weise and Murphy write that a precise definition of democratic administration never emerged, proponents held several assumptions about democracy, society, and education. Proponents believed that democratic participation, exemplified by community members working toward achieving common goals together, was desirable. Movement leaders felt that society was comprised of two distinct classes, the elites and everyone else. Those in favor of increased democracy wanted to limit the elites’ selfish interests and control of schools. Supporters also believed that the school was charged with broad social responsibilities and that it could be “an effective teacher for democracy


\(^{14}\) Ibid.
only to the extent that it recognizes for each member of the school community his right to share in determining school purposes."\textsuperscript{15} Student participation, such as student councils, began during this era.

Just as advocates for democratic education felt that elites were controlling the schools, civil rights activists argued that schools were unequal because of segregation. \textit{Brown v. Board of Education} (1954) was a landmark decision to desegregate schools and equalize educational resources. Seeking social change through a revitalized pluralism, disenfranchised groups turned to the courts because they did not have enough power to affect change at the local level.\textsuperscript{16} However, despite the judicial remedies available to social reform groups, they were faced with bureaucratic hostility at the local level.

Implementation of desegregation required behavior changes in hundreds of school boards, bus companies, park districts, municipal services, and so forth, throughout the South. The bureaucracies were decentralized. Implementation required field-level penetration to monitor and regulate discretionary decisions extending over long periods of time. It required enormous staying power on the part of the social-reform groups.\textsuperscript{17}

Because these organizers saw schools as an essential part of their communities, they pushed for community involvement and "increased participation in the making of school policy, 'especially by the poor and those not previously involved."

Because many community activists were frustrated with failed desegregation efforts, new calls for decentralization emerged. This period saw unprecedented involvement by the courts and federal government in both setting and enforcing

\textsuperscript{15} W.G. Carr, "Efficiency Through Democratic Administration" \textit{Journal of the National Education Association} (1942) cited in ibid., pp.105-106.
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., p. 111.
education policy. While decentralization via federal command seems paradoxical, supporters saw it as the only way to truly achieve change. These calls for participation and equity came from racial, gender, and special needs advocates.

School decentralization was a reorganization of relations between an urban bureaucracy and its clients, where the legitimacy of the schools was affirmed by democratizing the administration of the bureaucracy. Such reorganization supported minority demands for power without redistributing educational benefits between whites and blacks. The institutional critique, coupled with inclusion, legitimated the unequal distribution of resources and the continued separation of the races in the name of transforming the bureaucracy. (Original italicized.)

According to Weise and Murphy, the community control movements of the 1960s and 1970s were the primary source of the participation ethos underlying public education in the 1990s.

The 1980s were marked by a dramatic shift in citizens' sentiments about government. The distrust in federal government, coupled with an antigovernment and antibureaucratic mood, affected local government as well. Many people believed that government was inefficient, corrupt, and bureaucratic. Besides wanting a decrease in the sheer numbers of civil servants and in spending levels, many argued for devolution of authority from the federal level to the state and local levels. Additionally, many felt that government services also would benefit at minimum from private sector involvement, or

at best, from the privatization of many government services.\textsuperscript{24} In \textit{Down From Bureaucracy: The Ambiguity of Privatization and Empowerment}, Joel Handler emphasizes that this was not just a “Left versus Right” or “State versus Market” debate. He acutely points out that the “citizen empowerment” proponents came from broad constituencies.\textsuperscript{25} Although the constituencies may have had different political agendas, they shared similar fundamental values. Speaking about the contemporary debates over decentralization, deregulation, and privatization, Handler argues that “While often cast in terms of costs and benefits, efficiency, and budget management, it is really a debate about governance, the allocation of power in society, and the management of public problems.”\textsuperscript{26}

At the same time, however, this crisis in confidence resulted in an “excellence” movement in education.\textsuperscript{27} School districts introduced “clearer standards for teachers and students” as well as “greater consistency among schools in curriculum and teaching.”\textsuperscript{28} Business and civic leaders complained that schools were not accountable to the larger community. Because schools were not performing at their expectations, these leaders called for reform. Three types of reform emerged in the mid-1980s: administrative decentralization (site-based management), parental choice (market-driven solution), and the focus on excellence (standardized curricula, teacher training, and student assessment).\textsuperscript{29}

\begin{flushleft}
\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{24} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{25} Ibid., p. 5.
\textsuperscript{26} Ibid., p. 8.
\textsuperscript{28} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{29} Ibid.
\end{flushleft}
In 1983, a presidential commission charged with the task of formulating recommendations on America's education system released a report entitled *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform* (*Nation at Risk*). In this report, the National Commission on Excellence in Education stressed that American students were falling behind international educational standards and that the nation's prosperity and future depended on reform.\(^{30}\) No longer was educational reform solely about greater efficiency; it was about responding to a national crisis. *Nation at Risk* was the symbol that politicians, policymakers, business leaders, and community leaders could use to support the sentiment that public education was in grave trouble.\(^{31}\) Leaders in both parties were critical of public education and generally united on solutions to address this social problem. In 1989, President George H. Bush and fifty governors agreed that national standards and decentralized decision making would turn schools around.\(^{32}\)

Educational historian David Tyack writes that three assumptions underlie this policy talk about school governance: “that ineffective schools are to blame for the perceived lack of competitiveness of the U.S. economy; that faulty governance produces faulty education; that there is ‘one best way’ to govern schools, and it can be learned from business.”\(^{33}\) Simultaneous to the shifts in education, corporate America was undergoing reform efforts as well. Proponents of Total Quality Management (TQM), a private sector management model, insisted that all staff and partners needed to be involved in decision making, that it was the customer that determined quality, and that a

\(^{32}\) Ibid., p. 45 (also see p. 81).  
healthy organization would institute a continuous improvement model. TQM was not limited to the private sector; it infused the public sector as well. Joel Handler discusses the "reinventing government" fad: "The overarching theme involves rethinking of top-down management in favor of various strategies of decentralization in which lower units, even at the field level, have greater autonomy in making and implementing decisions."  

Throughout these centralization and decentralization cycles, the question is not whether there should be school governance. Rather, the questions revolve around who governs. While on the surface it would be easy to say that the centralization trends favor educated professionals, or the experts, and decentralization movements, complaining of bureaucracy, demand more community control. But Dan Lewis and Kathryn Nakagawa see it somewhat differently. Studying the impacts of school decentralization on African Americans, they see both communities and professionals vying for control of schools. Instead of centralization and decentralization, they use the terms of empowerment and enablement to distinguish between community and professional control. Increasing participation of traditionally marginalized groups, particularly the poor, in the schools is a function of empowerment. "The democratization of the governance process and the representation of parent and community interests would be both a cause and consequence of 'empowerment.'"  

Parents and community members are the agents of change demanding access and control over the schools and through participation, parents and community members will gain self-esteem, thereby improving the lives of children.

36. Ibid., p. 11.
Conversely, parents are not the impetus of reform in the enablement model. Instead, educational professionals call for reform because the societal changes have made their jobs harder. "In the enablement approach, school professionals are urged to change themselves so they can better accomplish the ends of schooling, and these same professionals are given resources to reach out to the community and draw it into the schooling enterprise,"37 Educators are dedicated and committed professionals who want to do a good job. While they are critical of the school bureaucracy, they believe the bureaucracy can fix itself.38 The parental and community involvement they seek is for educational ends "[r]ather than being for political ends."39 An example of this might be something like a "Read to Achieve" program where parents are encouraged, and in some cases attend skill-building workshops, to read with their children to increase reading skills.

But it is the never-ending cycle of community versus professional control that plagues school reform. Furthermore, these trends are not produced in a vacuum. While communities are calling for more control of the schools, they are also demanding control of other vital services: health care, policing, reform of the criminal justice system, and so on. At the same time, professional educators want more centralized control, similar to their colleagues in corresponding arenas. Because of the extensive education, training, experience, and expertise needed to make and implement policy decisions, many feel that schools (and other services) are better left to experts so that they are not run amuck by meddling amateurs.

37. Ibid., p. 13.
38. Ibid., p. 13.
39. Ibid., p. 15.
The Emergence of SCBM

SCBM emerged from the convergence of reform efforts in education, government, and business. Although SCBM changed form since its inception, the implicit political principles and assumptions that existed at the beginning are still relevant. Educational scholars recognized some potential problems with SCBM, namely assurances of equity and acceptance of shared decision-making, especially by administrators and teachers. Nevertheless, many felt that the potential benefits outweighed any problems that might arise. Noting that site-based management is “a process, not a project,” Carl Marburger and Barbara Hansen write that it is founded on a number of beliefs. 40 Many of the beliefs seem to be based on human behavior, including:

— People are likely to change when they have a voice in what those changes will be.

— Those who are closest to where implementation will occur are in the best position to decide how implementation should take place.

— Without bureaucratic interference, decisions are made more swiftly at the local level, and involving those affected brings more rapid and complete implementation solutions.

— It is easier to change people’s behavior than to alter their beliefs. If the structure of an organization is changed so that risk-taking and innovation are encouraged, people will behave accordingly.

— When people work together on common concerns, they lose the sense of being in separate camps.

— Involving students in decision-making gives them an opportunity to become responsible members of a democratic society. 41

41. Ibid., p. 2.
Running through this list are explicit and implicit assumptions not only about SCBM, but also democracy, decentralized governance, participation, decision-making, deliberation, conflict resolution, and community spirit.

Marburger and Hansen also write that the research supports that teachers who are involved in decision making are "more innovative and more likely to share their ideas"; parents who are involved in decision making are more satisfied and have a direct impact on student achievement; and students whose parents are involved have "higher self esteem and more positive attitudes toward school." Marburger and Hansen state that "when we empower others, we become empowered."

Because public, business, and civic leaders perceived public education to be in crisis, schools needed to be restructured and improved. "Schools can easily shift from panacea to scapegoat. If the schools are supposed to solve social problems, and do not, then they present a ready target." Various SCBM models have emerged, but the commonality is that decision-making is decentralized to the local level. In some jurisdictions, the focus is on increased teacher participation, and in other areas, on parents and community members. Before focusing on Hawaiʻi's model, two other national SCBM leaders, the Chicago School Reform Act and Dade County site based management efforts, will be explored with regard to the impetus for reform as well as some distinguishing characteristics of each. This will provide a context to look at SCBM in Hawaiʻi.

42. Ibid., p. 2.
43. Ibid., p. 2.
Beginning in the late 1980s, school districts across America began introducing SCBM. Although it took on different titles and slight variations, the basic intentions were to give “greater decision-making authority to individual schools—and shared or collaborative decision-making—dispersing it more widely within schools ...”45 SCBM was endorsed by the National Governors Association, the Business Roundtable, the National Education Association, and the American Federation of Teachers and was instituted in both urban and rural districts. Districts and states including Chicago, Dade County, and Kentucky were at the forefront of site-based management. Although hundreds of SCBM reforms appeared across the country, the degree to which parents and community members were involved varied greatly.

**Chicago School Reform Act**

Chicago has had a long history of empowerment based school reform. Pointing to the school desegregation and civil rights struggles of the 1960s, Lewis and Nakagawa argue that the inclusionary ideal informs recent school reform in Chicago.46 Community activists were concerned with low achievement scores and high drop out rates and had little faith in the system to change itself. Because the poor, and primarily African American community, gained political capital in those earlier struggles, they were able to mobilize broad-based coalitions with unified demands for school reform.47 The Chicago School Reform Act (CSRA), put parents, community members, and business leaders at the forefront of reform efforts. In *School Restructuring, Chicago Style*, Hess writes

47. Ibid., p.56.
an important aspect of mobilization of the business community behind the school reform effort was the correspondence between the decentralization implicit in school-based management and business postulates of decentralization of authority, lean central office staffs, and worker participation theories.\textsuperscript{48}

On December 2, 1988, the Illinois General Assembly passed the CSRA, and the governor signed it into law ten days later.\textsuperscript{49} The CSRA contained three major components: first, a set of 10 goals to serve as a measure of school improvement over a five-year period; second, a requirement to reallocate funding toward the school level; and third, the creation of a local school council (LSC) at every school.\textsuperscript{50} The goals, which required students to perform at national levels in achievement, attendance, and graduation, were to be met by every school in the district.\textsuperscript{51} The reallocation of funding provision required a cap on administrative costs and a change in procedures relating to the allocation of state Chapter I aid.\textsuperscript{52}

However, the most radical aspect of the CSRA was the formation of the LSC at each Chicago school. The LSC included six elected parents, two elected community members, two teachers (who were elected by school staff), and the principal. The LSC members were elected for two-year terms. The LSC had the responsibility of appointing the principal to a four-year contract, and the contract renewal was dependent on LSC approval. In addition to the LSCs, district councils were formed with similar powers to retain, terminate, or select district superintendents.\textsuperscript{53} The district superintendent was

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{50} Ibid., pp. 106–107.
\item \textsuperscript{51} Ibid., p. 107.
\item \textsuperscript{52} Ibid., p. 108.
\item \textsuperscript{53} Ibid., p. 110.
\end{itemize}
charged with monitoring the establishment and implementation of each LSC’s school improvement plan. If there was no improvement, the district superintendent could recommend to the district council a remediation plan. After one year, if there was still no improvement, the district council could place the school on probation and the Board of Education could opt to 1) order new LSC elections, 2) remove and replace the principal, 3) replace the faculty, or 4) close the school.\textsuperscript{54}

According to Joel Handler, Chicago’s “democratic localism” is a system whereby “the parents and community members are incorporated into a formally recognized governance system. The idea is that the locally based, democratic governance system will reorganize the school to harmonize local needs with overall goals of student achievement.”\textsuperscript{55} Critics feared that the LSCs would not be effective in improving overall student achievement levels. G. Alfred Hess Jr. and other supporters of the CSRA respond that, “The act was never intended to solve student achievement problems itself.” Hess further adds, “The philosophy was to create the opportunity for local actors to solve the different problems encountered in different locales within the city.”\textsuperscript{56}

Lewis and Nakagawa argue that this type of empowerment based reform determines success on the process, not the outcome. “[T]he ideology of inclusion as a way of reforming education has also been used to give the appearance of change without much resource redistribution [emphasis in original].”\textsuperscript{57} Because of a fiscal crisis and growing disputes with the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU), Chicago Mayor Richard

\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., p. 111.
Daley and key Republican Illinois legislators amended the CSRA in 1995, giving the mayor power to appoint a new school board and chief executive officer. The new law also gave the mayor's appointees broad new powers that the previous act lacked.\textsuperscript{58}

**Dade County**

The Dade County, Florida, schools had early attempts at implementing school based management. In 1972, the state legislature and governor advocated for reallocating money to each school to use as it saw fit. With the passage of the Florida Educational Finance Program (FEFP), schools needed to create advisory councils to assist in decision-making and authority over curriculum decisions was given to local school officials.\textsuperscript{59} However, this effort did not have the support of school administrators, educators, or their unions and ultimately failed.

The good news, according to Lewis and Nakagawa, was that this legislation brought administrators and teachers together and increased cooperation between the two groups. At the same time a national coalition was formed to study the perceived crisis in American education, the Dade County superintendent and the unions formed a local "Joint Task Force on the Professionalization of Teaching."\textsuperscript{60} Frustrated by low achievement rates, high drop out rates, and increasingly disappointed public sentiment, the task force recognized it could no longer tolerate a "business-as-usual" approach to

\textsuperscript{58} Michael Klonsky, "GOP Clears Field, Daley Runs with the Ball," in *Catalyst: Voices of Chicago School Reform* (September, 1995).
\textsuperscript{60} Ibid., p. 65.
improving the schools. Fearful of voucher and tuition-credit proponents, the experts "used the decentralization critique to reform themselves." 61

The result, SCBM, was instituted in 1986. In the Dade County model, schools had control over some budget items, curriculum, and personnel. However, the local school councils were comprised mainly of teachers and administrators with little, if any, parental or community involvement. 62 The unions, school board, and Department of Education all pledged to work with one another to obtain the necessary waivers to collective bargaining agreements, policies, procedures, and regulations. 63 In order for a school to institute SCBM, it had to obtain approval from a special task force comprised of teachers, administrators, and union representatives. The school’s application had to demonstrate that at least two-thirds of the faculty supported the plan, define how shared decision making would take place, and show how SCBM would have a positive affect on the school. During the first year, the task force accepted 33 of the 53 proposals submitted. 64

One key component of the success was that, "the union had realized that concentrating on bread-and-butter issues alone would not improve the teaching profession." 65 Because there was willingness among the educational professionals to reform themselves, the community did not become engaged with school reform issues. Instead, they were concerned with overcrowding, run-down facilities, and shortages of

61. Ibid., p. 65.
64. Ibid., p. 65.
65. Ibid., p. 66.
materials and teachers due to an increase of “fifty thousand students over a three-year period.” In Dade County’s enablement reform model, governance “is less an issue than is the creation of incentives to get the bureaucracy to mend its ways by reaching out to and including parents in the educational endeavor.”

**Hawai‘i’s Story**

As Chicago’s schools were receiving national attention and educators were instituting reforms in Dade County, sentiments and public perception of Hawai‘i’s public schools in the mid- to late-1980s was similarly dissatisfied and also focused on student performance. Hawai‘i, like the mainland, was experiencing a comparable anti-bureaucratic mood, and low standardized test scores combined with a seemingly entrenched bureaucracy concerned educators and community members alike. In 1988, the Hawaii Business Roundtable contracted with a California-based policy-research-and-analysis firm with extensive experience in the educational field, Berman, Weiler Associates, “to conduct a study of Hawaii’s public school system and develop recommendations for changes.” As in Chicago, the idea of restructuring Hawai‘i’s schools resonated with the local business community.

Berman, Weiler Associates consulted with business, education, and community leaders regarding their concerns over public education and formulated a plan for reform. Although the recommendations in *The Hawaii Plan: Educational Excellence for the Pacific Era (Hawaii Plan)* were not fully implemented, they were an important impetus

---

66. Ibid., p. 70.
67. Ibid., pp. 13-14.
for SCBM reforms following their release. The *Hawaii Plan* contains the following goal statement:

Hawaii public schools must enable all students, without exception, to learn to their potential and to master the knowledge, skills and values needed for social and economic success in the 21st century.69

Six recommendations were developed to address this goal: Institute Universal Early Childhood Education, Reorganize Governance and Management, Modernize Curriculum and Instruction, Strengthen the Teaching and Administrative Professions, Renew Secondary Schools, and Renovate Public School Facilities.70 It is the second recommendation, Reorganize Governance and Management, that is the focus of this dissertation.

The *Hawaii Plan* notes many strengths in Hawai‘i’s public schools, but identifies three flaws in the then-existing governance and management system:

- Overlapping authorities and diffuse accountability. The BOE [Board of Education], DOE [Department of Education], Governor, Legislature, districts, and schools all have authority, but their responsibilities overlap and are ambiguous. The distinction between policy and operations too often becomes blurred. This role confusion makes it hard to hold anyone accountable and makes the exercise of statewide leadership extremely difficult.

- Over-centralization and management by mandate. As stewards of a centralized school system, the BOE and DOE feel they must maintain uniformity of programs and services. But Hawaii’s diverse schools and communities have different needs. Moreover, programs are generally initiated by mandate, even though this top-down approach often does not elicit ownership by the people who have to make the programs work—principals and teachers.

- Limited teacher, parent, and community involvement. Lacking authority and influence over decisions, many teachers and parents do not feel competent to be creative and exercise independent judgment.

70. Ibid., pp. 8–9.
However, effective schools require participation of principals, faculty, and communities in shaping a common vision for their schools.71 These flaws make reorganizing governance and management central to all other proposals for improvement. The recommendation reads:

The public school system should be gradually shifted to a community-centered school system within a statewide structure that insures equity, quality, accountability, and support for local efforts. Under this proposal, local schools and community boards would have the authority to control their educational programs and to be accountable for results. Principals and teachers would be empowered to tailor their school to local conditions, and parents would have a choice of schools and small schools-within-schools. Authority in the system would be clarified so that statewide leadership could set high standards to guide the new system to the future.72

Reflecting what was taking place nationally, governance was to be decentralized to local communities, while statewide standards were expected to be simultaneously developed and maintained.

To achieve this community-centered governance structure, The Hawaii Plan recommended retaining the statewide funding structure and establishing new Community School Boards (CSBs). Each CSB would be locally elected and would oversee a complex of a high school and its feeder schools.73 The Hawaii Plan reports that the Hawaii Board of Education (BOE) established School Community Councils (SCCs) in 1978 but that within ten years they were largely abandoned or ineffective. Without a detailed explanation of what happened to the 1978 SCCs, the Hawaii Plan implies that these new CSBs would somehow escape a similar fate. Additionally, the recommendation called for collective bargaining agreements to continue at the state level. Similar to Chicago’s LSC, the Hawaii Plan’s CSB would be responsible for hiring and re-appointing the principal, subject to Department of Education (DOE) procedural review.74

71. Ibid., p. 7.
72. Ibid., p. 8.
73. Ibid., p. 20.
74. Ibid., pp. 20–21.
Accordingly, the schools were to be held responsible for the instruction to meet and maintain the statewide goals and standards established. Under this proposed system, the centralized DOE would be responsible for research and development, establishing statewide standardized tests, conducting planning and evaluation, and continuing to negotiate collective bargaining agreements. The final parts of the recommendation included changing the BOE from a fully elected body to a part-elected, part-appointed board and placing the superintendent on a multi-year contract. The *Hawaii Plan* urged that these recommendations be phased in to minimize disturbances in the education system.

In December 1988, one month after the release of the *Hawaii Plan*, DOE Superintendent Charles Toguchi and DOE staff conducted a site visit to the Dade County Florida schools. At the opening of the 1989 Legislative session in January, then-Governor John Waihee urged the Legislature to pass legislation allowing SCBM schools. With the support of business and community leaders, the Legislature passed Senate Bill 1870 in April 1989, and in June 1989 Governor Waihee signed SB 1870 into law, making SCBM a reality in Hawai‘i. The following month, the Hawaii State Teachers Association signed a “Memorandum of Understanding” with the BOE supporting SCBM. In November 1989 the BOE adopted SCBM policy and implementation guidelines, and in January 1990 Wai‘alae Elementary submitted a “Letter of Intent” to become the first SCBM school.

75. Ibid., p. 23.
77. Ibid.
SCBM's Underlying Philosophy

While the Hawaii State Legislature was considering testimony to SB 1870, a SCBM Task Force (Task Force) was formed to recommend implementation plans and procedures for Hawai‘i’s schools. The Task Force was comprised of administrators, teachers, parents, a student, BOE and DOE representatives, union representatives, business persons, and various community members, some representing organizations concerned with education. Between March 22 and June 21, 1989, the Task Force met eleven times for seven to eight hours at a time. They submitted their recommendations in the form of a Final Report to the BOE on July 6, 1989. The Task Force developed a statement regarding the purpose of SCBM:

The purpose of the School/Community-Based Management concept is to improve the quality of education by: 1) providing schools with administrative flexibility, and 2) empowering each school’s community to make and implement decisions that will directly affect its members, especially students.

This purpose statement reflects the national literature on SCBM. The Task Force goes on to define SCBM as:

a democratic system that enables a school’s community—defined as its principal, teachers, staff, parents, students, and other interested citizens—to actively and directly shape the quality of education offered to its students.

...both an organizational structure that shifts authority from a centralized agency or department to local schools as well as an ongoing process that actually changes traditional roles and relationships within a school.

79. Ibid., Introductory letter.
80. Ibid., p. 2.
... also a *strategy* for shared decision-making and an *environment* for creative teaching and learning. Its hallmark traits are *flexibility* and *accountability*.\(^1\) (Original italicized and bolded.)

Similar to Marburger and Hansen's list of beliefs, a list of expected benefits and basic assumptions that mirror much of the hortatory SCBM literature was developed by the Task Force. A few of the basic assumptions listed are:

- Persons directly affected by important decisions perform best when they share fully in making those decisions.

- Educational reform is most effective when implemented by persons who feel a sense of ownership and responsibility for changes.

- Members of a school's community possess the expertise, competence and goodwill to make decisions in their school's best interest.\(^2\)

These types of claims about shared decision making and educational reform mirror much of the national literature. Although I was not privy to Task Force meeting discussions, the report does not seem to question any of the claims made in the SCBM literature.

Based largely on the Task Force report, the BOE developed an SCBM policy that the board then approved on November 30, 1989. Statements in the policy also reiterate the democratic linkages to site-based school management. Referring specifically to Hawai'i's SCBM efforts, an excerpt from the policy states:

SCBM is a democratic system of school management which allows greater school level flexibility and the increased involvement of those directly affected by decisions. The concept is based on the belief that the most effective decisions are those made closest to the point of its implementation. It acknowledges that a school's community has a right and an obligation to participate actively in open dialogue where issues are presented, defined, discussed and resolved. SCBM empowers people through shared decision-making and requires collaborative involvement of the principal, teachers, support staff, parents, students and other community members.\(^3\)

---

81. Ibid., p. 2.
82. Ibid., pp. 3-4.
83. School/Community-Based Management (SCBM) Policy, approved by Hawaii Board of Education, November 30, 1989.
Reflecting the contradiction between decentralized decision making and standardized goals seen in other parts of the country, the policy statement continues:

The members of a school’s community are expected to accept greater accountability for the decisions they make as they are given flexibility and responsibility for decision-making. Accountability will be focused more at the school level.

The Board of Education shall establish educational goals and standards for public schools which shall serve as the bases for measuring the efforts of each participating school.\(^{84}\)

Local communities were given permission to embark on shared decision-making and community governance, but they would be held accountable for meeting and maintaining the goals established by the BOE. What was apparent in all SCBM reform efforts both in Hawai‘i and nationally was the belief that democratic control was the best way to manage schools and that through restructuring the school’s governance, student achievement would improve. Proponents of SCBM believed that what was needed was more, not less, local democratic control and parental and community involvement in education.

**Structure, Participation, and Consensus-Based Decision Making**

Lewis and Nakagawa describe two types of reform that call for decentralization: empowerment and enablement. They argue that Chicago’s reform efforts are an example of the empowerment approach whereas the Dade County reform is the enablement model. If that is accurate, then in some ways, Hawai‘i’s model is a hybrid of both the empowerment and enablement models. While parents, business leaders, and parents called for reform through decentralization, so too did the BOE and DOE. People on the

\(^{85}\) Ibid.
outside had little faith in the educational professionals and the educational professionals responded by saying they could lead the reform effort.

It is this pattern of duality that exists throughout Hawai‘i’s implementation of SCBM. Proponents of SCBM have, “built their reforms on an ideology combining democratic principles of inclusion with institutional critiques of bureaucracy.” Critics argue that it is the bureaucratic nature of the school system that is to be blamed for what is wrong with the schools. School systems rely on multiple rules and procedures as a way of ensuring educational decisions and practices are free of bias. These multiple layers and series of checks and balances are said to promote objective and fair treatment of all students. Regardless of who the student is, the system is set up to treat all equally. But just as this bureaucratic structure attempts to protect students, faculty, and administration from favoritism and partiality, others feel that it hampers creativity, flexibility, and innovativeness.

Max Weber wrote that, “[w]hen those subject to bureaucratic control seek to escape the influence of the existing bureaucratic apparatus, this is normally possible only by creating an organization of their own which is equally subject to the process of bureaucratization.” Whether SCBM is able to infuse local decision-making councils with enough democratic principals to prevent them from becoming part of the institutional bureaucracy is an important question. Because many feel democracy is incompatible with bureaucracy, I examine three foci of contemporary democratic theory: representation, participation, and decision making within the context of SCBM. While

some scholars have labeled SCBM as an example of representative democracy, many call it participatory. It is argued that constituents give up their power when they defer to a representative. Others feel that representative structures do not limit participation but merely streamline it for efficiency. Chapter Two is an in-depth look at how participation is structured in SCBM and whether the structures limit participation or whether they are incompatible with democratic principles.

Chapter Three examines the educative value of participation. Some claim that participation in SCBM affords citizens the type of experience that is at the heart democracy. But critics counter that the type of participation SCBM actors experience is merely pseudo participation. Through case examples regarding principal selection processes the nature of participation is considered closely. Even though the case examples have two different outcomes, the democratic processes both engage in are similar. This raises the question of whether it is the process or outcome that is important to democratic politics.

SCBM proponents contend that citizens will be empowered through shared decision-making. Detractors fear the suppression of individual interests in favor of the community good. Chapter Four explores whether the deliberative nature and decision-making by consensus in SCBM promotes or undermines democracy. A case example regarding the proposal of a student dress code is used to illustrate the tension between consensus and democratic decision-making.

Chapter Five concluded with an overall examination of SCBM. John Hibbing’s and Elizabeth Theiss-Morse’s theory of “stealth democracy” is explored and compared to SCBM. Hibbing and Morse contend that citizens do not want to be involved in politics.
Whether their arguments apply to SCBM is an important question. In addition, three evaluations of Hawai‘i’s SCBM efforts are looked at to determine whether the studies found similar or different data than I did. Finally, areas that remain unexplored by this dissertation are discussed in an effort to think about what additional research is needed.

Overlaps between these foci are often frequent especially when discussing them within the local school level context. The stories and examples in this dissertation were drawn from observations at public schools in Hawai‘i that were all practicing or considering SCBM. I spent approximately three years in field research, attending SCBM council and role group meetings, as well as Hawaii DOE and BOE meetings; studying school documents and meeting minutes; and conducting numerous interviews with DOE personnel and SCBM participants. Pseudonyms are used for the schools as well as all proper names associated with the stories. Other details, such as the fact that the schools are located in Hawai‘i and were participants in SCBM and the BOE and DOE policies and procedures governing SCBM, are all factual.
CHAPTER 2

REPRESENTATIVE AND PARTICIPATORY STRUCTURES IN SCBM

When I was an elementary school student, my mother was involved in the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA). I knew at some level, that, in addition to both my mother and father attending band and choir concerts, school plays, and open houses, my mother’s participation was an act of fulfilling her responsibilities of parental involvement. However, I never considered participation in PTA meetings to be a political exercise or even potentially linked to democracy. To be involved in politics was to be a member of a political party, voting, or working in local, state, or national government.

Throughout my elementary and secondary education, my involvement in student government reinforced this philosophy through a representative, majority-vote system. There were even important procedures such as Robert’s Rules of Order to be mastered. It seemed that I was learning not only what democracy was about but also what it was to be a young model citizen.

When I was attending college, I became exposed to groups that were political but did not follow the rules I learned growing up. These groups had no elected representatives or officers and held no votes on issues; parliamentary procedures were definitely not followed. As my studies and experiences grew, I discovered that this citizen-driven form of politics was equally legitimate to the structure I first practiced. But it also seemed from my studies and experiences that governance structures manifested as either representative or participatory, not both.

In the three years I attended meetings at schools implementing School/Community-Based Management (SCBM), I became fascinated with the structural
issues. While much of the SCBM literature described a participatory, communal process, the Hawai‘i Board of Education (BOE) and Hawai‘i Department of Education (DOE) policies simultaneously called for the establishment of representative councils at the school level. Was it possible for school councils to combine both participatory and representative democracy? What did I observe at the schools that pointed to the respective differences in the structure and implementation of SCBM? How did structural differences impact the extent and quality of participation? Before analyzing the specific SCBM case examples, I will examine the differing ideals and philosophies that underlie both democratic governance structures.

I begin with the underlying philosophies of liberalism and republicanism to highlight the different beliefs about representation. I then discuss a critique of republicanism that claims it often is transformed into communitarianism. Next, I review how participation is structured in SCBM through case studies at two schools. After that, the issue of a modified school calendar deliberated at one of the schools is considered to see how structural issues impact the substantive discussion.

**Democratic ideals and structures**

Although my early experiences and studies emphasized differences between democracy and other forms of political philosophy such as socialism and communism, I was not taught about nuances and differences among forms of democratic governance. Later, I became familiar with debates regarding issues such as the extent of citizen involvement, how to ensure fair and equal representation, and the balance of individual rights compared to the common good. In both my academic and work experience I began
to witness governmental and public institutions struggling with these same questions in attempts to balance democratic principles and efficient administration of public services.

Considerable variation in structure exists within the realm of democratic governance. These variations, according to John Stuart Mill, are merely the result of preferences from those involved with the political system or institution.

Let us remember, then, in the first place, that political institutions (however the proposition may be at times ignored) are the work of men; owe their origin and their whole existence to human will. Men did not wake on a summer morning and find them sprung up. Neither do they resemble trees, which, once planted, “are ... growing” while men “are sleeping.” In every stage of their existence they are made what they are by human voluntary agency. 87

**Liberal democracy**

Liberal and republican forms of democratic governance differ regarding the role of government in society. According to Jürgen Habermas, under the liberal model, government is an intermediary between the public, which is comprised of private citizens, and the market. Here, the government’s role is to serve as an administrator. Habermas argues that the liberal model is a rights-based model in which citizens are both afforded protection by the government as well as protected from government interventions. 88

Under the liberal democratic process, competing interests vie for power, and it is through voting that the public’s preferences are determined. 89

Jane Mansbridge calls this form of democracy “adversary democracy” and describes it in a straightforward way.

---

89. Ibid., p. 23.
Every American schoolchild knows that when you set up a democracy you elect representatives—in school, the student council; later senators, representatives, councilmen, assemblymen, and aldermen. When you do not agree, you take a vote, and the majority rules. This combination of electoral representation, majority rule, and one-citizen / one vote is democracy.  

Mansbridge argues that underlying this type of democracy is an assumption of conflicting interests among participants, but at the same time, an ideal of equal protection of interests.

Proponents of liberal democracy often favor representative structures over mass participation because they allow for ordered citizen involvement. The original debate over representative government in America considered the rights of the individual compared to the citizenry as a whole. James Madison, for instance, was fearful that political factions would infringe on the rights of others. In Federalist Number 10 he asserts, “A zeal for different opinions...divided mankind into parties, inflamed them with mutual animosity, and rendered them much more disposed to vex and oppress each other than co-operate for their common good.” Therefore American liberalism, emphasizing individualism and rights, required an elected, representative republic. Madison continues, “A Republic, by which I mean a Government in which the scheme of representation takes place, opens a different prospect, and promises the cure of which we are seeking.”

According to this view, elected representation ensures the public good because factions

---

92. Ibid., p. 62.
are prohibited from unduly influencing decisions and adversely affecting the larger community.

Viewpoints vary regarding the reasons why representative structures are needed. In an argument opposing representative structures, Austin Ranney contends that, "the essence of democracy lies in ensuring that ultimate power to make political decisions belongs to all the citizens rather than to one citizen or a small privileged elite."93 But, Joseph Schumpeter argues that given the size and complexity of modern democracies, decision making by large numbers of citizens is unrealistic. He maintains that by voting for elected representatives, citizens are not denied from participating in the political process. Through the competition for leadership, the citizenry still has a voice. The role of the people, then, is to "produce a government, or else an intermediate body which in turn will produce a national executive or government."94 Democracy, for Schumpeter, is a type of institutional arrangement for decision making. And through frequent elections to choose representatives who will in turn represent their constituents, democracy is maintained.

Giovanni Sartori also favors a representative structure. Because mass society is "an amorphous aggregate, for a highly diffuse, atomized, and eventually anomic society," communal democracy is not possible.95 Pointing to size, the acceleration of history, and the uprooting of community, he argues that the concept of "the people" has become a "mass society," and political structures must account for this shift. For Sartori, apathy is a

natural part of mass society, and instead of working to reduce it, it must be accepted.

Sartori therefore concludes that modern democracies "hinge on (a) limited majority rule; (b) elective procedures; and (c) the representational transmission of power." 96 Whether because of the size of the polity or the fact that citizens in modern democracy have limited capacity to participate due to their work, family life, or interest, advocates for representative structures do not see a diminished democracy.

**Republican democracy**

Habermas describes the republican model as encompassing the state and market (as in the liberal model) as well as a third element, an orientation to the common good. This emphasis on the common good becomes a priority for republicans. Habermas writes that politics under this model

> is conceived as the reflective form of substantial ethical life, namely as the medium in which the members of somehow solitary communities become aware of their dependence on one another and, acting with full deliberation as citizens, further shape and develop existing relations of reciprocal recognition into an association of free and equal consociates under law. 97

It is through the exercise of political participation that citizens are formed. As citizens deliberate and participate in self-legislation, thereby defining their common goals and interests, the democratic community emerges. 98 Habermas points out that under the republican model, deliberation is oriented toward values, as opposed to preferences, which are expressed in the liberal model. 99

---

96. Ibid., p. 30.
97. Ibid., p. 21.
98. Ibid., p. 22.
99. Ibid., p. 23.
Mansbridge, calls this form of democracy "unitary democracy" and states that in this model, "people who disagree do not vote; they reason together until they agree on the best answer. Nor do they elect representatives to reason for them. They come together with their friends to find agreement. This democracy is consensual, based on common interest and equal respect. It is the democracy of face-to-face relations."\textsuperscript{100} Whereas adversary democracy assumes conflicting interests with an ideal of equal protection (of interests), Mansbridge contends that the unitary model assumes the opposite: that the citizenry has common interests and shares a central egalitarian ideal.

Those who favor a participatory structure critique representative democracy on two bases. First, they claim citizens relinquish their power when they delegate it to a representative. Not only do they lose the ability to influence decisions, but "the further ordinary citizens are removed from policymaking, the greater is the probability that public policies will not accurately reflect the true wishes of popular majorities."\textsuperscript{101} Second, they believe that participation itself has an inherent value that is not dependent on any particular outcome. "The higher end that democracy should serve is the full development of each and every citizen's human potential; and citizens' civic potentials can be realized only by their direct and full participation in discussing public issues and making public decisions."\textsuperscript{102} When citizens do not have a chance to participate, they lose this possibility. This educative value of democratic participation is explored in depth in the next chapter.

\textsuperscript{100} Jane J. Mansbridge, \textit{Beyond Adversary Democracy} (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983), p.3.
\textsuperscript{102} Ibid.
The republican reading of the citizen is very different from the liberal conception. Some scholars of the republican philosophy conceive of the citizen as more than just a legal status and see citizenship “as a set of practices as well...practices that involve public action as much as private rights.”103 Citizens are not only granted the right to participate in politics, but are expected to do so. It is through their political participation that citizens create a vibrant democratic community. This view of “citizen-as-actor” can be seen throughout much of the American democratic experience. As Thomas Jefferson argued, “...the people themselves are the safest deposit of power, and...none therefore should be trusted to others which they can competently exercise themselves.”104

**Communitarian reading of republicanism**

In addition to the differences between liberal and republican democracy, some argue that modern day interpretations of republicanism go beyond the original philosophy and are instead communitarian in nature. Communitarians subscribe to the republican philosophy of an active and participatory citizenry creating a community with shared values. But communitarians have a belief in the common good that surpasses the republican conception.

Often accused of calling for the erosion of individual rights, communitarians instead insist that constitutional rights be protected. However, they argue that with these rights comes responsibility:

Communitarians are in the business of defining and promoting societal balances. They recognize that most individual rights have a social

---

responsibility which is their corollary. For these rights it makes little sense and it is morally indefensible to posit them without attending to the other side of the coin: the responsibilities that ensure respect for them.\textsuperscript{105}

According to the communitarian viewpoint, the definition of the common good is more than the identification of common interests. Individuals must accept responsibility and first work to ensure that the community’s interests are met even if that means an individual’s interests suffer.

Furthermore, communitarians see a moral obligation to citizenship. Not only is the common good defined by the suppression of individual interests, but it is also dependent on the moral character of the citizenry creating the common good. Instead of focusing on the utility of government,

\textit{It seeks instead to cultivate in citizens the qualities of character necessary to the common good of self-government. Insofar as certain dispositions, attachments, and commitments are essential to the realization of self-government, republican politics regards moral character as a public, not merely private, concern. In this sense, it attends to the identity, not just the interests, of its citizens.}\textsuperscript{106}

Because citizens share responsibility in determining the public good, whether their voices are constrained by moral norms or are free to express their interests and participate in determining the common good is critical to the differences among liberalism, republicanism, and communitarianism.

Political theorists and scholars see clear distinctions between liberal and republican forms of democracy and representative and participatory structures. The next section considers whether SCBM is able to successfully integrate representative and participatory structures of participation.

\textsuperscript{105} Ibid., p. 20.
Representation and participation under SCBM

Examining the structure of SCBM participation at two different schools raises questions regarding whether the differences and distinctions between representative and participatory structures impact participants, issues, and decisions. The varying democratic structures have obvious impacts on a societal level. But are the same differences seen at the local school level? Again, pseudonyms are used for the schools as well as all proper names associated with the case examples.

As discussed in Chapter 1, consultants Berman, Weiler Associates, at the request of the Hawaii Business Roundtable, proposed several recommendations to improve Hawai‘i’s schools in The Hawaii Plan: Educational Excellence for the Pacific Era (Hawaii Plan). The Hawaii Plan declared that Hawai‘i’s public education system had three inherent flaws: overlapping authorities and diffuse accountability; over-centralization and management by mandate; and limited teacher, parent, and community involvement.107 The Hawaii Plan claimed that

Local creative energies are not being tapped. Parents and community members often find it difficult to influence their schools, creating a lack of involvement, identification, and trust. Many principals and teachers work in an environment where they do not feel responsible for taking initiative and, in too many cases, wish to work elsewhere.108

It was assumed that local schools were not effective because school personnel did not have autonomy from the central administration and parents and community members were not included in decision making.

108. Ibid., p. 18.
Chapter 1 recounts the history of implementing SCBM in Hawaiʻi, including the support that BOE and DOE gave to SCBM. Although the nature of community-based governance implied that each school would define its community and develop decision-making processes to address the needs of its unique community, the BOE and DOE paradoxically created standardized procedures to shape similar SCBM efforts at local schools throughout the state. Each school was required to address the same specific elements in implementing SCBM. The Task Force report asserted that schools need to understand how shared decision-making works, how traditional roles will be redefined, what kind of organizational structure will best suit their particular needs, what parameters may define or limit their decisions, how rules and regulations will be waived or set aside, and how each school will be held accountable under SCBM. 109

Despite the passage above stating that each school would define its own parameters, later statements in the Task Force report contradict the decentralization philosophy. “Each school participating in SCBM will be required to establish a clear decision-making structure that will systematically involve all segments of the school’s community.” 110 The Task Force report further declared that “Schools will not be able to participate unless members from all six elements of the school’s community agree and commit themselves to the process.” 111

Those six elements defined by the Task Force and later adopted by the BOE and DOE were the school’s administration, teachers, staff, parents, students, and community. A school could not define its participants in other ways because the BOE and DOE had

109. Ibid., p. 4.
110. Ibid., p. 6.
111. Ibid., p. 13.
authority to determine which schools could adopt SCBM policies. In order to participate, a school needed to submit a Letter of Intent. The BOE’s SCBM Policy stated,

The Letter of Intent is an expression of support from all segments of the school’s community for its involvement in SCBM and a request to participate. It is a public declaration of commitment by a school’s community to collaboration and shared decision-making.¹¹²

The SCBM Policy also mandated that the Letter of Intent include:

A. Evidence of meetings held by each segment of the school’s community;
B. Numbers of people present;
C. Summaries of discussions;
D. How consensus for SCBM status was reached by each segment; and
E. An expenditure plan indicating how the planning/implementation grant, if needed, will be spent.¹¹³

In addition to the Letter of Intent, schools were required to address how shared decision making would be implemented.

Each school’s community will design its own organization for shared decision-making that best reflects the way the school’s community wishes to conduct its business. The resulting design must include the six segments of the school’s community. Representatives of each segment shall be selected by the constituency they represent.¹¹⁴

Even if school communities wanted to form participatory structures where, based on republican philosophy, citizens are formed through participation, they could not. Not only were schools required to have involvement from six predefined constituent groups (termed “role groups”), but they also were required to select representatives from these role groups for the school’s SCBM group (termed a “council” by many schools to reflect that it was a decision-making body of elected or appointed representatives) and provide

¹¹³. Ibid.
evidence that they had followed BOE and DOE policy. The statewide direction did not stop at representation. Schools were also asked to provide evidence regarding how they would structure shared decision-making and how consensus was reached regarding the SCBM decision. Similar to liberal democratic philosophy the BOE and DOE assumed that competing interests existed and documentation was necessary to ensure fair process and equal protection of interests.

These policies are contradictory in nature. Because bureaucracy is incompatible with democracy, the bureaucracy would have to be dismantled. Under SCBM, decision making would be decentralized to the school level. Schools would gain autonomy and control, and through increased parental and community involvement, decisions would reflect local sentiments. Ultimately this new energy and enthusiasm would translate to better education for students. But in Hawai‘i, a school could be permitted to adopt SCBM only if the BOE and DOE approved of their SCBM implementation plan. And that plan had to prove that the six groups defined by the BOE and DOE had selected representatives for the school’s SCBM council, agreed to shared decision making, and reached consensus.

Where the republican conception would argue that the democratic community emerges through participation, the six role groups defined by the BOE and DOE—administration, teachers, staff, parents, students, and community—were meant to encompass the school’s community. For five of the six role groups, participants were defined by their employment at, enrollment in, or familial relationship to the school. A person in the parent group was asked to participate as a parent, not as a community member. The community role group was often treated as a catch-all constituency.
Interested neighbors, local businesspersons, or others not easily fitting into one of the other five groups were identified as community participants.

But the predefined, required role groups were not the only participants in the decision-making process. Other segments of the education community, namely the teachers’ union, the Hawaii State Teachers Association (HSTA); the principals’ union, the Hawaii Government Employees Association (HGEA); the BOE; and the DOE were absent from this representative structure. In some cases, one or more of these entities had the power to block a decision made by the local SCBM council. This structure, which was meant to disassemble the bureaucracy, left an important piece in tact. While communities were left to grapple with conflicts and competing interests at the local school level, the unions, BOE, and DOE remained untouched and retained veto power.

Furthermore, the structure of participation also influenced decision making (to be examined in Chapter 4). In some cases, everyone in attendance could reach an informal consensus easily so representatives were not officially asked to identify which role group they were from during decision making. When there was little conflict, representatives were generally not asked to check with their constituent groups before weighing in on an issue. But when unanimity was not apparent, or when the council was deliberating a high conflict issue, the designated representatives were asked to discuss the issue with their respective role group members and constituencies and then report back to the full council. Representatives from all six role groups would then deliberate until the entire council reached consensus. In this structure, individual members were expected to support their role group’s decision even if they personally disagreed. In the next section, examples
from both case studies will be discussed to illustrate how the structural issues impacted and reflected the liberal and republican nature of democracy.

**Jasmine Middle School**

Jasmine Middle School (JMS) submitted its SCBM Proposal to Implement in fall 1994. An alumnus and his wife largely drove the SCBM efforts at JMS. As community members, they worked with administration, faculty, staff, parents, students, and other community members to form the JMS SCBM Council. At the time the BOE approved the Proposal to Implement on July 28, 1994, approximately 400 students in grades six, seven, and eight attended this urban Honolulu school. Of the 400 students, approximately 30 percent were Hawaiian or part-Hawaiian. Japanese and Southeast Asian students were the other two large ethnic populations, with all three combined comprising approximately 50 percent of the student population. Sixty-six percent of students were receiving free/reduced lunches, 41 percent were in federally assisted families, 28 percent were receiving public assistance, and 26 percent were in single-parent homes (1994).115

The proponents of SCBM at JMS saw this new structure as a way to serve its special student population. SCBM promised “greater school level flexibility and the increased involvement of those directly affected by decisions,” and proponents certainly saw SCBM as a way toward school improvement.116

High expectations, achievement-oriented leadership, and staff development to maximize effectiveness are all important components [at Jasmine]. The use of participatory strategies is encouraged in decision-making. The school community is viewed as a family, an “ohana” where students interact with certified and classified staff. The effect of this is

116. Hawaii Board of Education, School/Community-Based Management (SCBM) Policy, BOE Approved 11/30/89 (Revised 4/6/91).
obvious as one strolls the campus. Students are known by their first name, they smile a lot; they know they are cared about. Teachers do not want to transfer. All members of the Jasmine community value the “specialness” that has come to be associated with this little school nestled in the valley of rainbows. Jasmine has become a vital place in which to learn, in which to teach, in which to be involved and in which to grow."117

Community role group member Gail Chang chaired the SCBM council from the beginning. The purpose of the council was included in the Proposal to Implement and was straightforward: “to make the school the best that it can be.”118 The council listed four ways in which it would achieve this purpose:

1. Find out the needs and wants of the school.
2. Decide the direction for the school and set up goals and objectives to achieve the identified needs and wants.
3. Consider all suggestions for improvement.
4. Assist the school in doing what is necessary to accomplish its goals and objectives.119

The composition of the JMS SCBM Council was similar to other SCBM councils and followed the BOE SCBM policy. Early SCBM supporters at JMS decided that their SCBM council would include at least one member from each of the administration, classified staff, and community role groups. In addition, at least three members from each of the student, teacher, and parent role groups would be included. JMS also included another teacher who would serve as an HSTA liaison representative but would not be allowed to vote on SCBM council decisions.120 Each role group would select its representatives, who would serve a term of one year.121

117. Ibid., p. 2.
118. Ibid., p. 5.
119. Ibid., p. 5.
120. Ibid., p. 6.
121. Ibid., p. 6.
Despite the formal composition of the council, meetings were open to everyone, and all who attended were not only allowed to participate, but in many cases, expected to participate in both deliberation and decision-making. For example, at the September 1994 meeting, the school's Open House was on the agenda. The details for the Open House were discussed and input on the schedule was solicited. The council sought volunteers for various duties at the Open House such as helping with publicity, door prizes, and child care. Everyone at the council meeting could participate in the discussion and volunteer for any of the duties. No formal decision making took place at this meeting, and it was not possible to distinguish role group representatives from general meeting participants.

This type of discussion and open participation was typical at the JMS SCBM Council meetings, which used a facilitative model most of the time. Under a facilitative model, one person acts as the discussion facilitator. The facilitator is to remain neutral on the substance of what is being discussed and instead focus on the process, ensuring that all participants are given an equal opportunity to participate, ensuring that discussion is orderly, points are clarified when necessary, and conflicts are addressed when they arise. Often, when a facilitator wants to make a substantive comment regarding the discussion, she will declare to the rest of the group that she is stepping out of her facilitative role into a participant role. The JMS council chair was also the meeting facilitator, and although this role did not rotate to other council members, various volunteer recorders assisted by writing the meeting notes on newsprint in front of the group. The recorder role rotated among different members of the role groups and included meeting attendees who were not role group representatives. In addition to involving attendees through recording, the chair would also use small breakout groups for discussions during the council meetings.
For example, a proposal was made to install a soda and snack vending machine at the school. The chair asked each role group to gather together and discuss the issue for a few minutes. The large group re-assembled and developed a list of questions for the student role group to research and on which to report back at a later meeting. This technique also generated participation from attendees who were not role group representatives.

SCBM provided a forum for different segments of the school community to come together and discuss issues affecting the school, and it served as the coordinating unit for planning and reviewing school priorities and functions. For example, the SCBM council assisted in planning and coordinating an event in which parents and community members were invited to come to the campus to visit classrooms and interact with students. Other discussions included whether JMS should participate in a community gathering at an adjacent city park and considerations regarding Jasmine Foundation fund-raisers.

The JMS SCBM Council also addressed school issues that were pertinent to administrative decisions and improvement plans. At the March 1996 SCBM council meeting, Principal Anderson announced that the school had a surplus of $10,000 in unencumbered funds. Those present brainstormed a list of ways to use the surplus, identifying 13 items. After discussion about each of the items, the principal proposed three items from the list totaling approximately $10,000: a library security system, band instruments, and walkie-talkies for security staff. The principal then suggested that funding for four other items on the list could be found or taken from other school funds. There was much discussion about these items but no formal decision making. After asking if there were any objections and not receiving any, the council approved the principal’s recommendations.
At the June 1996 SCBM council meeting, the chair asked the large group to break into small groups to brainstorm a “Review of the Year.” Groups were asked to break projects into SCBM-initiated and SCBM-supported project categories. Groups were reporting back their lists when the council secretary commented on how blurry the categories seemed. She said that it was difficult to distinguish between which projects the SCBM council had initiated and which the council had supported. “We’re involved in everything...there is a melding/meshing. It is hard to say if it is SCBM or the school.”

Principal Anderson responded, “If this is blurry, it should be more blurry! I don’t see it as blurry; I see it as more clear. SCBM and the school are coming together!” He then added, “Everything should overlap. I want to stand up and cheer! It should be like this!” Then the chair added, “We need to look at what we’ve accomplished. Hats keep switching back and forth. We create things, then the school decides to carry them on whether we are here or not. The ultimate goal is the betterment of the school for the kids!”122 The atmosphere at JMS was generally a sense of ‘ohana—welcoming, relaxed, fluid, and open to anyone who wanted to join in this community-based endeavor.

Hibiscus High School

Hibiscus High School (HHS) held a community forum that included more than 900 members of the school community signing the SCBM Letter of Intent in November 1992, approximately one year after parents had initiated SCBM efforts. Over the next two and a half years, the HHS SCBM Council worked on developing their Proposal to Implement.123 Located on the Windward side of O‘ahu, the school had nearly 1,200

---

students in grades 9 through 12. Approximately 42 percent of students were Caucasian, 17.5 percent were Hawaiian or part-Hawaiian, and 6 percent belonged to each of the following ethnicities: African-American, Filipino, and Japanese. The 1990 Census reported higher median income levels for this area compared to the statewide median; only 14 percent of students received free/reduced lunches. The number of students reporting special learning needs was also low. Only 8 percent of the student body was enrolled in special education classes, and fewer than 2 percent reported limited English capacity. The other unique characteristic about HHS was that it was near a military base, and a sizable number of students were military dependents.

Those involved with HHS’s SCBM efforts saw this new structure as a way to improve communication and school morale, which would lead to better educational outcomes. Those involved with SCBM vowed to create a community that would facilitate optimum student learning by communicating effectively among all participating role groups, which in turn would foster a positive school climate of shared decision-making and allow the school to shape a vision and mission to guide HHS in the 21st century.

In order to demonstrate involvement from all six segments of the school’s community, the HHS SCBM supporters engaged in massive outreach efforts.

Between Council Meetings the role groups meet monthly to consider parallel issues. We have used surveys, coupons in newsletters, and utilized natural events like Open Houses, class nights, and community gatherings to hand out SCBM information packets, gather input, and make presentations. We used newspaper, invitations, automated phone, massive personal calling, had an SCBM education and reporting page in every Hibiscus newsletter for the past two years.

126. Ibid.
In addition to the extensive outreach, SCBM proponents worked collaboratively to
develop the council’s operating procedures and eight goals, each with multiple objectives
and activities.

Council membership consisted of four role group members from each of the six
segments. Role groups were responsible for determining eligibility requirements,
deciding on the length of the term, and electing the representatives. Two liaison
representatives were added for the Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) and the
Parent-Community Networking Center (PCNC). While meetings were open to all, the
operating procedures defined non-representative attendees as observers. Additionally, the
operating procedures set a quorum requirement (at least one member from each role
group) for conducting council business. If a quorum was not reached, business could be
conducted but the absent role group would have three working days to concur with or
comment on the decision. The council chairperson would determine whether the
comments required further discussion at the full council before implementation.127 Like
JMS, HHS also used a facilitative model to conduct meetings, but the facilitation was
rotated among council members.

Discussions and communications were much more formalized at HHS than at
JMS. As SCBM developed, some members called for better communication among role
groups and the school community. A “Communications Packet” was developed, which
included a roster of role group chairs and other key persons and their contact information,
a “Communications Form” that was to be used to route routine information to all role

127. Ibid.
groups and community members, and a bright fuchsia “Urgent Communications Form” that included a deadline for providing comments and feedback.

Any member of the HHS community could submit items for the council agenda but had to do so at least one week in advance of the meeting. Similarly to JMS, council meetings included planning and coordinating discussions about school events, fundraisers, and initiatives. But the HHS council meetings also included policy discussions on items such as discipline, budget, personnel, and grades. Frequently the council would not have enough time to fully discuss all of the items. Facilitators would do their best to ensure people were able to give input while also moving the discussions along as quickly as possible. Sometimes breaks were needed to let role groups confer with one another during the meeting; it was also common for decisions to be postponed so that role groups could have further discussion or do research before the next council meeting.

In addition to the full agendas and difficult policy discussions, relationships were strained among some council members. Whether the differences were personality, style, or cultural, communication was sometimes tense. The atmosphere was usually not relaxed, and meetings tended to focus on the agenda items without much camaraderie.

**Differences between the schools**

While both schools had committed community members interested in implementing SCBM, the approaches and styles varied significantly. Using the same BOE and DOE policy guidelines, each school formed councils with representatives from the six designated role groups, but each school created different liaison representatives. Both schools also tried to reach out to their various community members. Because the community demographics differed dramatically, outreach efforts looked and felt
different. At Jasmine, community members were invited in slowly through personal contact, food was provided at all of the meetings, and special outreach efforts were made for parents and community members who spoke English as a second language. Most of the outreach occurred in-person and verbally, with some limited outreach through print mediums. Hibiscus, on the other hand, utilized print outreach strategies to a much larger extent. Newsletters, newspapers, and flyers were distributed throughout the community. Automated and personal phone calls were also largely used.

The styles of the principals at JMS and HHS differed dramatically. Principal Anderson invited and encouraged SCBM participation. He recognized that SCBM worked best if collaborative relationships and trust was built with all participants and strived to build both. It was not uncommon to see Principal Anderson having lunch or playing basketball with students or canvassing parents and community members at community events. In an interview about his observations of SCBM, Anderson referred to leadership and educational reform material such as Peter Senge’s concept of a learning organization and Henry Levin’s Accelerated Schools Model. He advocated for building a shared vision of the school and involving as many participants as possible. Anderson acknowledged that many educators were, “doing SCBM before SCBM.” In other words, they were working to increase parental and community involvement and empowerment before the BOE and DOE implemented this particular school reform.

Principal Mau lead HHS for most of the time these case studies took place. Having achieved success at an intermediate school, HHS was the first high school

128. Personal interview, Jasmine Middle School Principal [pseud.], February 1, 1996.
129. Ibid.
130. Ibid.
principal position for Ms. Mau. But Mau's style was different than Anderson's. Principal Mau initially worked with the SCBM council to continue their reform progress at HHS. However, as conflicts arose, Mau began to act as if the SCBM council was pitted against her. After many discussions regarding whether certain items were the purview of the council or the administration and discussions over the "guidelines for processing issues brought to the Council," the council developed a six question "Procedural Operations Evaluation." As a result, the council held a retreat a few months later to discuss the differences between policy and operational control. There was lengthy discussion over the definitions of policy and operation as well as discussion over different case examples. Principal Mau was not comfortable with the extent of policy authority some SCBM council members wanted. She suggested a model that involved the SCBM council to gather feedback and provide input to the administration whereas a parent representative advocated for a model in which the principal was an equal member of the council in council-based decision making. No clear consensus was reached regarding this discussion.

Meetings at Jasmine were run more informally than at Hibiscus. While both councils had operating procedures and quorum requirements, Jasmine hardly ever referred to them. Rarely was a role group absent from a JMS council meeting, but when one was, members committed to inform the role group and get agreement. On the other hand, Hibiscus had a three-day window to get the role group's agreement, and it always

seemed more likely that agreement would not be reached without all role groups in the same room. The most significant difference between Jasmine and Hibiscus was that non-representatives attending council meetings were allowed to participate at Jasmine but were considered observers at Hibiscus. Therefore, one could argue that the representative structure did impact participation at Hibiscus.

These differences illustrate that variations in how SCBM councils operate are due to more than just the formal structure. The individuals involved bring their personalities, style differences, and culture into the group. Additionally, there were other exceptions to normal operating style. For example, if a non-representative attended a Hibiscus council meeting with an urgent or important matter, he or she was generally worked into the agenda. And role group representatives at HHS worked hard to check in with non-representative members of their role group at appropriate times during the meetings.

There was even an exception to the open participation norm at Jasmine. Forces from outside the council impacted the form and substance of deliberations and decisions. The next section examines an issue at JMS that required participation to be formal and documented. This is important to illustrate because it demonstrates that there is fluidity to how groups operate. Even though I characterize JMS as an open, communal group despite the formal representative structure, the SCBM council used a very formal representative process to discuss the school calendar. However, the council did not make this shift simply because they thought it was the right thing to do. Outside forces, namely the DOE, encouraged documentation of deliberations and decisions in an effort to prevent future conflicts or questions regarding the outcome.
Modified school year issue at Jasmine Middle School

JMS had discussed modifying their school year to shorten the summer break. The concept was touted as a way to improve learning because retention was greater when the breaks were smaller and more frequent. The SCBM council invited a DOE representative, Mr. Murphy, to present the concept of a modified school year (MSY) at the April 1996 council meeting. At that meeting Mr. Murphy presented various calendars used by Hawai‘i public schools, national research findings supporting MSY, and issues that had arisen at schools considering implementation of MSY. The participants at the meeting brainstormed questions they wanted DOE to answer regarding MSY. Some of the questions included:

When are the breaks and how long are they? What about funding for intersessions? How is decision made whether to go year round? How do we get our meals if the other schools are on a different schedule? Budget implications?135

Mr. Murphy responded to the questions he could answer and then promised to respond to the remaining questions in the coming weeks.

With momentum building to support MSY, the SCBM council decided to devote much of their May 1996 meeting to discussing this issue. In an explicit shift from their informal nature of participation, the SCBM council and other attendees at the May meeting decided that they needed to develop a more formal participation process. The principal and council chairwoman had been told in conversations with Mr. Murphy that it was important to carefully document deliberations and decisions regarding this issue. The council developed an “awareness process” to educate the school’s community on MSY that included who the stakeholders were, what information should be shared, how

135. Jasmine Middle School [pseud.] SCBM Council Meeting Minutes, April 9, 1996.
and when the information was to be shared, and what resources were to be developed and
used. Participants identified stakeholders including students, teachers, administration,
parents/families, staff, feeder schools (elementary schools with students who might attend
JMS), other schools in the complex, after-school care programs, and various community
organizations.\footnote{136}

The Council decided that they would share the following information with
stakeholders: "Research; definition of what MSY is; description of different models; pros
and cons shared by people who have personal experience with MSY; and the purpose and
goals in Jasmine possibly pursuing MSY.\footnote{137} Outreach and increased participation were
crucial to any plans to discuss MSY. Meeting participants developed a list of potential
strategies to generate involvement including hosting a large group audience in the
cafeteria or library, encouraging small discussion groups, mailing a newsletter to parents,
holding joint meetings with feeder schools, translating meetings and literature for non-
English speaking students and families, holding student discussions in the homeroom
classes, scheduling meetings with faculty, and providing presentations community
organizations and articles for their respective newsletters.\footnote{138} At that time the council
agreed to form a subcommittee to work through the summer developing the MSY
proposal.

When the council reconvened in August 1996, MSY was at the top of the agenda.
The subcommittee had developed a list of considerations that framed the council’s
discussions. The considerations included:

\footnote{136. Jasmine Middle School [pseud.] SCBM Council Meeting Minutes, May 14, 1996.}
\footnote{137. Ibid.}
\footnote{138. Ibid.}
A proposed modified school year calendar...must be conducive to student learning and effective teaching, no interference with the regular summer school session, maintain same ending date as the regular school calendar, equalize student days per quarters as much as possible, end quarters on a Friday.\textsuperscript{139}

At the meeting, the subcommittee presented a proposed calendar for the 1997–98 school year. The SCBM council discussed the proposed calendar and the subcommittee explained that "The proposed MSY calendar has 177 student days, as we think that will be the number of required student days for SY 1997–98. DOE has not firmed up their regular calendar yet. We can adjust as needed."\textsuperscript{140} A motion was made to disseminate the calendar among all the role groups. The facilitator/chair stated that the motion "does not mean that a decision to modify the school calendar has been made. All role groups will have a chance to input into that final decision."\textsuperscript{141} The motion passed.

The SCBM council and the MSY subcommittee wanted full participation in any deliberation and decision making regarding MSY. They discussed how to gain the best involvement from all role groups and from stakeholders who were not identified as role groups. They involved many volunteers in publicizing the fact that JMS was considering MSY and invited anyone interested in participating in the deliberation and decision making to become involved.

At the September 1996 SCBM council meeting, the council had a preliminary discussion about a decision-making process. The council realized that the process would need to be very clear and formal, as other schools had experienced objections to MSY calendars from some school segments (particularly teachers, parents, and parents of

\textsuperscript{139} Jasmine Middle School [pseud.] SCBM Council Meeting Minutes, August 6, 1996.  
\textsuperscript{140} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{141} Ibid.
incoming students or “feeder school” parents). Those present at the meeting also supported the idea of an open forum for anyone who wanted to attend. The open forum was scheduled for October 8, 1996; volunteers were sought for publicity and various duties the night of the event. The principal also committed to having information translated into a few different languages to inform parents who did not speak English. Clearly, the council and proponents of MSY were working to obtain input and encourage participation from all who would be affected by the decision.

At the October 8, 1996, SCBM council meeting held before the forum, the council discussed a decision-making process so that it could be shared with everyone at the forum. The council chair had solicited input from the DOE and shared that with the meeting attendees.\textsuperscript{142} DOE representative Mr. Murphy recommended two levels of decision making. First, he suggested, each respective role group should discuss MSY and decide whether they support it. Then the full council should deliberate and try to reach agreement among all of the role groups. Mr. Murphy reported that some schools used 80 percent approval for the individual role group decision and five out of six role groups agreeing as the criteria to pass MSY when consensus could not be reached. Someone asked if the JMS council’s by-laws would need to be changed because they mandated total agreement for council decisions. Others commented that even if the council decided to go with a lower agreement threshold, not reaching full agreement might dramatically impact school morale. Some responded that they did not think it was fair for one person to be able to block a decision on which many people worked hard to reach agreement.

This discussion was atypical for JMS because normally anybody that showed up

\textsuperscript{142} Jasmine Middle School [pseud.] SCBM Council Meeting Minutes, October 8, 1996.
participated in the decision. But for the MSY decision, participants would need to identify which role group they were constituents of and whether they were Council (voting) members.

The forum included short presentations on the history of the MSY proposal at JSM, the rationale, the proposed calendar, and the decision-making process. The forum generated an additional set of questions and issues that parents and community members wanted addressed. Some of those issues included:

What students would do during breaks (would the school or other agencies offer programs?), the fact that other schools in the complex have different calendars making it difficult for families with students at multiple schools, questions over the rationale ("If this is so good, why isn't it DOE mandated?") and issues affecting students in special education programs.

Members of the subcommittee and SCBM council committed to follow up on any items to which they could not respond immediately. Over the next month, volunteers worked to address lingering concerns and questions regarding the proposed MSY calendar. At the November 1996 SCBM council meeting, the remaining questions and issues from the October open forum were addressed and shared with all meeting attendees. Additionally, the council published this information in a newsletter to parents and community members.

Poised for a final decision on the MSY issue, the SCBM council gathered on December 10, 1996. Much work had been done between the meetings to educate and persuade faculty, staff, students, parents, and community members. Many volunteers were excited about this proposal as a way to address student learning and improvement at

143. Jasmine Middle School [pseud.] Open Forum on MSY Minutes, October 8, 1996.
144. Ibid.
JMS. The facilitator asked each of the role groups to announce their decision and the criteria they used to reach their decision regarding MSY. The principal reported that the administration role group was 100 percent in support of the MSY proposal. The community role group represented that they used a majority (50 percent plus one) criterion. They discussed the issue with all the role group representatives and reached a unanimous position in support of MSY. The staff and student role groups also used the majority criterion. Staff reported that although the decision was not unanimous, they had a majority and therefore would support the proposal. The student role group surveyed all students and 264 out of 366 students were in favor of the new calendar. Because 72 percent were in favor, they also would support the MSY. Parents reported that they also sent surveys to all parents. They decided that 75 percent of the returned surveys would need to say yes in order for them to support the decision. They had 250 surveys returned and 214, or 86 percent, were in favor of the new school calendar. The teachers reported that they needed 100 percent agreement in order to support the change. They were able to get 100 percent and so they were also in favor of MSY. All six role groups gave support to implement the MSY calendar.

DOE representative Mr. Murphy was present for the decision making and commented that “Jasmine will be the first middle school to have a modified school year calendar in Hawaii.” He then added that JMS needed to formally turn in a waiver-exception request to the DOE/BOE Committee for approval. The minutes reflected the requirements: “Attached to the request we need to turn in our proposed MSY calendar, document how parents were informed and how our SCBM process worked, and have all

145. Ibid.
10-month employees (teachers and appropriate staff) sign off." There was excitement and a celebratory atmosphere at the close of the meeting, and all felt that they had done an extraordinary job of outreach and communication to make this decision possible. The council chair brought sparkling cider so that all present could celebrate with a toast. The role groups then met to discuss ways to facilitate a smooth transition and to assign follow-up duties. Some of the follow-up included notice to parents, community, and feeder schools; presentations at feeder schools; announcements in community publications; and follow-up with local retailers and community centers to notify them of the calendar changes for back-to-school sales and planning for the availability of activities during the new breaks. 

In January 1997, the principal announced at the SCBM council meeting that the proposed calendar was short one instruction day. Instead of trying to decide how to amend the calendar, the attendees at the meeting deferred any decision making to the faculty. At the same time, the Hawaii State Teachers Association (HSTA) was in the midst of collective bargaining talks with the DOE. It was clear to those closely involved that no further action on MSY could occur until the teachers' contract was settled. 

The DOE and HSTA had agreed on adding seven days to the school calendar during collective bargaining talks. At this time the JMS teacher and staff role groups met to revisit the MSY decision given the changes in the HSTA contract. At the April 1997 meeting it was announced that there had been disagreement in the teacher and staff role groups regarding implementing the earlier decision after the contract changed. Because there were new questions regarding funding and pay for other union employees who were

146. Ibid.
not covered under the HSTA talks, the teacher and staff role groups requested that those questions be answered prior to finalizing the MSY decision. The council realized it could not resolve the unanswered questions immediately, and given that the 1996–97 school year was nearing an end, most thought it would be impossible to implement a new calendar for the 1997–98 school year. The council chair summed up the discussion by stating,

As our Council did not reach consensus, Jasmine will NOT be on an MSY calendar next school year. However, next school year we will revisit the issue again, looking towards a possible MSY calendar for school year 1998–99. By that time we will have more information on the funding of the teacher contract with respect to the seven additional instructional days in SY 1998–99, and we will have more time to explore concerns and draft an MSY calendar that best addresses those concerns.¹⁴⁸

Those involved with the MSY efforts were disappointed, but nobody seemed bitter about not reaching agreement because the collective bargaining talks were beyond the school community’s control. At the June 1997 SCBM council meeting, members were asked to reflect on the year, and it was apparent that they felt good about the process and what they had accomplished.

**Impact of structure on Jasmine’s MSY decision**

Participation at JMS became less fluid with the MSY decision. Because other schools that had chosen to modify their calendar had trouble after the decision had been made, the DOE representative urged the JMS council to document how parents were informed, how the SCBM process worked, and that the teachers and staff supported the decision. The move from an informal process accessible by anyone who attended the meetings to a formal process requiring extensive documentation and decision justification

had little to do with the SCBM council's preferences. It instead resulted from the DOE's suggestion that this type of formality and documentation was necessary so that JMS and DOE could respond to any future questions or conflicts that could arise from the decision. Although it did not seem as though participants lost enthusiasm for SCBM, participants were more cautious. Instead of the typical "give and take" conversational nature of SCBM meetings, participants were quieter, raised hands to speak, and appeared more serious.

As discussed earlier, proponents of a representative structure argue that it is necessary in modern societies because of size and the breakdown of community. However JMS did not have to combat those two factors. There was a strong community atmosphere and school officials and volunteers worked diligently to build support and encourage involvement from many parents, teachers, and community members. The community was small and there were other community action and social service agencies that engaged in community building. Others argue that a representative structure prevents political factions from disproportionately influencing decision making. However, the JMS SCBM Council did not experience excessive pressure, control, or factionalism by any of the six role groups.

The shift at JMS to formalize and document their representative structure and decision making was influenced by parties not involved at the local level—the BOE, DOE, and unions involved in collective bargaining negotiations. These outside groups viewed and participated in SCBM in liberal democratic manner. They assumed that there were conflicting and competing interests at the school level and that JMS needed to "protect" itself from future potential conflicts from people dissatisfied with the outcome.
They were concerned with procedural questions more than with the substantive discussions. What was not recognized is that those outside groups were also interested parties and instead of influencing discussions and decisions from the outside, they needed to be participants.

The JMS SCBM council tended to emulate republican democratic ideals, with the exception of this decision. Similar to republicans that believe that citizens are formed through participation, that there was an orientation to the common good, and that the democratic community would emerge from this organic process, the SCBM participants worked hard to include everyone who wanted to participate and included everyone in the deliberation and decision-making process. But they had no way of effectively involving those not present. Ultimately it was the entities not at the table that prevented the MSY decision. Further, the collective bargaining talks prevented participation and input from the JMS SCBM participants. They were stuck in a bureaucratic procedural headlock.

**Wanting the best of both representative and communal democracy**

SCBM is not alone in its struggle of attempting to combine a liberal-based representative structure with republican-based communal democracy. Most American governmental institutions have had to grapple with these issues. In *The Democratic Wish: Popular Participation and Limits of American Government*, James Morone writes that a simultaneous dread and yearning is at the heart of American politics. Morone argues, “Americans fear public power as a threat to liberty. Their government is weak and fragmented, designed to prevent action more easily than to produce it. The yearning is an
alternative faith in direct, communal democracy." Morone asserts that the yearning of communal democracy has a central "democratic wish," which is, "the direct participation of a united people pursuing a shared communal interest." He contends that the key to this ideology is an image of the people as the ones who know best. "The people are wiser than their governors; they will solve the troubles that plague the nation." He adds that in this image, "The people would be governors as well as constituents, political agents as well as principals." This yearning is more than merely building more representative institutions and political structures. It is locating the power and authority for decision making with the people themselves.

Morone goes on to explain the supposed method to achieving this democratic wish, the assumption underlying this wish, and the setting in which it should be possible. Accordingly, the method is direct citizen participation. "Direct democracy will foster better citizens and frame better politics." Here, politics becomes a transformative process for those involved, and referencing Jefferson, Morone paints the picture of the people controlling their own political destinies. The assumption of this democratic wish is that the democratic ideal is founded on consensus. "The people form a homogeneous body with a shared, discernible, public interest that transcends narrow individual concerns." Despite the fact that many Americans feel that politics has become contentious, communitarians claim their wish is for some truly shared notion of the common good. Finally, Morone argues that the setting for this wish is the community.

150. Ibid., p. 5.
151. Ibid.
152. Ibid.
153. Ibid.
154. Ibid., p. 6.
Realizing that community serves as a symbol for some romanticized past ideal life, he suggests that "Calling for community is the acceptable form in which to cast collectivist sentiment in a society of state bashers."\textsuperscript{155}

Morone agrees that all of this taken together is a utopian ideal that cannot be achieved. However, reformers throughout American politics have proposed this ideal as the basis on which to structure more accessible, democratic institutions. What reformers fail to recognize, according to Morone, is that each attempt at reform leaves a legacy of "an administrative apparatus and the legitimation of new groups."\textsuperscript{156} "Democratic dreams yield new governing institutions, new political rules, and newly legitimated groups."\textsuperscript{157} Morone argues that ultimately, these added layers of administration and constituent groups simply amount to an increased bureaucracy.

One could argue that SCBM literature mirrors the method, assumption, and setting Morone discusses in reference to the democratic wish. Morone states that the method of the democratic wish is direct citizen participation. Again, SCBM literature also supports direct citizen participation to both reform and improve the schools. The assumption of the democratic wish is that the democratic ideal is founded on consensus. Not only was it assumed that school communities could find consensus around issues important to them, but they were encouraged to use a consensus-based decision-making process instead of a voting, majority rule process. And finally, just as the community is the setting for the Morone's democratic wish, it is also the setting for this specific type of school-based reform. Those in favor of SCBM believed that community-based

\textsuperscript{155} Ibid., p. 7.
\textsuperscript{156} Ibid., p. 9.
\textsuperscript{157} Ibid., p. 323.
institutions would be better suited to making and implementing decisions than the bureaucratic, centralized DOE.

But just as SCBM mirrors the yearning of the democratic wish, so does it mirror the dread of threats to liberty. Instead of truly breaking free from the institutional structure of the DOE, SCBM reforms take place within the belly of the monster. Personnel policies and collective bargaining contracts are not erased, so school councils must constantly negotiate in the shadow of other entities. While common interests may be identified at the local level, they may be in direct contradiction with other interests in the bureaucracy. Surely some schools appreciated the ability to have more decision-making input without having to be completely autonomous. There is some comfort in knowing that the bureaucracy has the ability to provide for the administrative details that do not warrant community input, such as orders for toilet paper or garbage pick up. More importantly, the bureaucratic structure gives the appearance of being able to better protect individual rights (of students and school personnel) than the community-based school structure.

SCBM schools are both liberal and republican in structure and style. While Jasmine Middle School may operate communally regarding most issues, it transforms to a formal, representative process for the discussion of the school calendar. While the DOE was concerned and suggested clear documentation about this discussion, they did not on other issues considered by the SCBM such as how to spend the budget surplus of $10,000 in unencumbered funds. Was the formalism required because the school calendar affected more people or because it was more visible in the community? Maybe. But the school calendar also had implications for collective bargaining agreements with
the unions. Other schools not only had parents complain about changes in the school calendar, but they also had teacher baulk and challenge the implementation. Because DOE needed to be concerned with procedural, rights-based decisions closely watched by other groups it was oriented to liberal philosophy. However, local school communities were concerned with building community buy-in and support for their decisions similar to republican philosophy.

SCBM asks communities to participate knowing that they do not have complete control. It encourages communities to participate but requires representatives. It expects communities to deliberate and find consensus on tough issues but also suggests that they have a fallback decision-making process to use when consensus cannot be reached. In the end, it is impossible for schools to be labeled either liberal/representative or republican/participatory when they are required to be both. So while communities are charged with improving the schools and educational outcomes through SCBM, the educational bureaucracy retains authority on matters its sees as important, all while shifting the burden of responsibility to the community. What SCBM fails to address is the incompatibility of democracy with bureaucracy. SCBM builds another layer of a communal decision-making process at the local level. But it raises expectations without being able to fulfill its promise of truly dismantling the bureaucracy.
CHAPTER 3

THE EDUCATIVE VALUE OF PARTICIPATION

There is little doubt that one of the most important positions at a school is the principal. The principal is the chief leader and administrator of the school and works with the faculty, staff, parents, and students to achieve the school’s mandates. Hawai‘i’s principals are unionized under the Hawaii Government Employees Association (HGEA), and through collective bargaining agreements with the Board of Education (BOE) and the Department of Education (DOE), a formal process for hiring principals is defined. However, the SCBM Implementation Guidelines simultaneously promised school SCBM councils that they would have the ability to make personnel decisions, as long as those decisions complied with the law and collective bargaining agreements:

Decisions can be made by the school’s community in areas critical to school improvement efforts. Decisions, however, must be made within the parameters of Federal and State laws, the BOE’s constituted authority to govern the school system, and to collective bargaining agreements. Decisions may involve the areas of personnel, curriculum, instruction, budget and facilities.158

Because of these SCBM guidelines, most SCBM participants assumed that if needed, participation in the selection of the school’s principal would be included in their responsibilities. As SCBM schools discovered, however, they would have to submit waiver and exception requests to participate in the principal selection process. Waivers relate to rules, policies, and procedures, whereas exceptions relate to collective bargaining agreements. The BOE SCBM guidelines state,

The school’s community will be able to request waivers from rules, administrative rules, policies, regulations and procedures of the BOE,

DOE, and other state agencies as well as request exceptions to current collective bargaining agreements. Requests must reflect a consensus by the school's community. They are encouraged to explore alternative solutions before seeking waivers and/or exceptions to collective bargaining agreements. 

In order for a school to change any part of the formal principal selection process, the school’s community would need to meet, deliberate, and decide for which areas of the process they would request waivers or exceptions. The SCBM council would have to formally apply for these waivers and or exceptions.

In this chapter, I will use principal selection processes at both Jasmine Middle School (JMS) and Hibiscus High School (HHS) to explore the educative value of participation for SCBM participants. I will begin with a review of literature that considers the nature of participation including theories of pragmatism, strong democracy, and participatory democracy. I will then look at three case examples paying particular attention to how participants were involved in the selection process. Many SCBM participants had the expectation that participation included personnel decisions such as selecting a new principal. But that expectation was not met, or was not met to the extent some participants expected, in some cases. Ultimately I look at whether not having full decision-making authority for the principal selection negated any educative value of participating in deliberations and involvement in the process.

The Nature of Participation

Certainly one critical issue that arises regarding the principal selection case examples is the nature of participation for SCBM participants. While the literature on SCBM promises the opportunity to participate in making decisions affecting the school,
the examples illustrate that barriers exist to participating in certain decisions, namely principal personnel decisions. While both schools were able to have some input, the Hibiscus council wanted more modifications to the process. But since the district superintendent had the final decision making authority, the Hibiscus council's expectations for shared decision making were not met. Because proponents of participation make clear distinctions between involvement, influence, and decision-making authority, it is important to look at the function and nature of participation before discussing the case examples.

Pragmatism

While the earliest democrats argued that democracy had an educative function, John Dewey takes center stage in the American project. Through the practice of self-governance, citizens learn the skills necessary to deliberate, bargain, and decide issues of interest to their communities. Dewey's philosophy stems from his involvement in the American pragmatist movement. Historically located in the post-Civil War era, philosophers were witnessing the shift in American society from an agrarian to an urban, industrialized society and the expansion of capitalism with a corresponding onset of monopolistic control. These changes, together with a rise in the importance of science, stimulated scholars like Charles Peirce, William James, and John Dewey to develop the pragmatic method. The method "is but the application of the experimental method of the natural sciences to traditional philosophical problems."

161. Ibid. p. 50.
Pragmatism also believes in the ability of human agency to achieve "a certain kind of vision and the preference for a specific way of life."\textsuperscript{162} Influenced by his involvement in education and humanitarian efforts, particularly Jane Addams' Hull House in Chicago, Dewey focused his scholarship on reforming education. Because of the enormous increase in the number of teachers and the impact of schooling on both communities and industry, Dewey recognized that "schools by themselves could not bear the weight of a full-fledged reform of society" but that schools "themselves were ideologically contested terrain, always worth fighting for and over."\textsuperscript{163} This reform was about encouraging democratic agency of citizens, particularly the poor, and reconstructing social relations in the industrialization of America.\textsuperscript{164} Although Dewey saw the schools as the site to begin this transformation, he argued "The conception of education as a social process and function has no definite meaning until we define the kind of society we have in mind."\textsuperscript{165}

Because both the eradication of class differences and the promotion of the civic virtues of citizenship were interrelated, Dewey advocated for a curriculum in which students worked collectively, were taught to consider common goals, and developed intellectual skills through practical application in cooperative activities such as working on a community garden.\textsuperscript{166} This laboratory-type, experimentation-focused learning was in line with pragmatism. He believed that

\textsuperscript{162} Ibid. p. 55.
\textsuperscript{163} Ibid. 85.
If the living, experiencing being is an intimate participant in the activities of the world to which it belongs, then knowledge is a mode of participation, valuable in the degree in which it is effective. It cannot be the idle view of an unconcerned spectator.\textsuperscript{167}

In addition to this experiential learning for students, Dewey was also concerned with the role of the teacher.

The dramatic increase in the number of teachers also brought a movement to professionalize teaching. While teachers fought for better teaching conditions, increased pay, and benefits, bureaucrats fought for centralization and administrative control over pedagogy and management issues in the schools.\textsuperscript{168} Dewey proposed teacher councils at the school level to give teachers a voice in the school and more autonomy. Instead of a bureaucratic administrator making decisions about the curriculum and instructional methods, teachers would have the capability to control what happened in their classroom. Through the teachers' firsthand experience of democracy, schools and students would also benefit. Ultimately, this infusion of democracy in education would result in a greater democratic society. Dewey urged educators to train students in leadership, self-direction, and adaptability so that they could learn to shape and direct their own lives.\textsuperscript{169} In defining the conditions that would allow a great democracy to flourish, he asserted,

\begin{quote}
From the standpoint of the individual, it consists in having a responsible share according to capacity in forming and directing the activities of the groups to which one belongs and in participating according to need in the values which the groups sustain.\textsuperscript{170}
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{169} Ibid. p.142.

For Dewey, then, democracy could only be realized through full and active participation in public life. In this conception, individuals need to have the ability to, "judge men and measures wisely and to take a determining part" in crafting laws and formulating democratic communities.\footnote{John Dewey, \textit{Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education} (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1916), p. 140.} Dewey realized that democracy depended on individuals developing, practicing, and utilizing skills of citizenship. Other theorists have built upon this same philosophy. I want to next focus on Benjamin Barber's concept of strong democracy because it takes Dewey's assertions one step further: that democratic participation is a never-ending process.

\textbf{Strong Democracy}

Acknowledging the influence of American pragmatists Peirce, James, and Dewey on his thinking, Benjamin Barber identifies five ideal types of democratic regimes: Authoritative, Juridical, Pluralist, Unitary, and Strong in \textit{Strong Democracy: Participatory Politics for a New Age}.\footnote{Benjamin R. Barber, \textit{Strong Democracy: Participatory Politics for a New Age} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), p. 141.} Like Dewey, Barber sees value in individuals taking part in deliberations and decision-making on issues that impact their lives. Individuals must participate actively so that democracy has meaning. It is through this participation that individuals are transformed into citizens. According to Barber, democratic systems that do not allow for citizen participation and instead are representative in nature are not compatible with freedom, equality, and social justice because they delegate authority and therefore political will, destroy community and equality, and take away autonomy. "Citizens become subject to laws they did not truly participate in making; they become the passive constituents of representatives who, far
from reconstituting the citizens' aims and interests, usurp their civic functions and deflect their civic energies." For Barber, citizens also collectively determine the values and standards of their community through the democratic political process. I want to focus on the distinctions Barber makes between two types of direct democracy, unitary and strong, because they are important when considering the nature of participation in SCBM.

By direct, Barber means that citizens do not abdicate their duties to representatives, and therefore "all of the people govern themselves in at least some public matters at least some of the time." He states that unitary democracy is "defined by politics in the consensual mode and seems at first glance to eschew representation (if not politics itself) in pursuit of its central norm, unity." Instead of relinquishing their duties to representatives, citizens in unitary democracies practice "self-abandonment" by merging their self-interests with the collective interests. "In subordinating participation in a greater whole to identification with that whole and autonomy and self legislation to unity and group self realization, unitary democracy becomes conformist, collectivist, and often even coercive." Barber claims that unitary democracy is in danger of becoming representative because unitary democracy actually undermines self-government. "For the identification of individual with collectivity—which permits a government in the unitary mode to speak not only for but as 'The People'—conceals and obscures the representative relationship that actually obtains between citizens and governing organs

173. Ibid., p. 147.
174. Ibid., p. 147.
175. Ibid., p. xiv.
176. Ibid., p. 148.
177. Ibid., p. 148.
The extent to which this impacts freedom, citizenship, and democracy depends on the scale of the group involved. On a small scale, this might be defined as peer pressure, social conformism, or a willing acceptance of group norms.\footnote{179}

Like unitary democracy, strong democracy is also direct democracy. "Strong democracy is self-government by citizens rather than representative government in the name of citizens."\footnote{180} What is essential for Barber's concept of strong democracy is participation. Critics have argued that participatory politics risks out of control masses. Yet Barber responds to that criticism by distinguishing between masses and citizens. "At the moment when 'masses' start deliberating, acting, sharing, and contributing, they cease to be masses and become citizens."\footnote{181} For Barber, strong democracy is the "politics of amateurs, where every man is compelled to encounter every other man without the intermediary of expertise."\footnote{182}

The distinction between unitary and strong democracy is that strong democracy never becomes collective or conformist. Instead of attempting to achieve consensus, strong democracy will continue to subject a conflict to "a never-ending process of deliberation, decision, and action."\footnote{183} This process, therefore, transforms conflict instead of using other grounds (such as the juridical's "higher law" or "natural right") to resolve conflict. Further, "to be a citizen \textit{is} to participate," and "to participate \textit{is} to create a community that governs itself, and to create a governing community \textit{is} to participate

\footnotesize

\begin{itemize}
  \item 178. Ibid., p. 150.
  \item 179. Ibid., p. 149.
  \item 180. Ibid., p. 151.
  \item 181. Ibid., p. 155.
  \item 182. Ibid., p. 152.
  \item 183. Ibid., p. 151.
\end{itemize}
For Barber, "participation has as its primary function the education of judgment. The citizen is the individual who has learned how to make civic judgments and who can evaluate goods in public terms." Both Dewey and Barber agree that individuals are transformed into citizens through active participation. Participation allows citizens to develop democratic skills and ultimately, then, a democratic society. The next theorist, Carole Pateman, specifies that participation must include decision making in order for it to be meaningful.

**Participatory democracy**

Pateman also believes that representative institutions at the national level are not sufficient to build a democratic polity. She insists that maximum participation must take place at the local level and that through participation, citizenry will become educated to better govern themselves. "The major function of participation in the theory of participatory democracy is therefore an educative one, educative in the very widest sense, including both the psychological aspect and the gaining of practice in democratic skills and procedures." According to Pateman, in order for a democratic polity to exist, a participatory society must first exist. A participatory society would include democratized political systems as well as participation in other important institutions—for Pateman, the most important is industry, as most individuals spend much of their time at work. When Pateman looked at participation in the workplace, she wrote, "The whole point about industrial participation is that it involves a modification, to a greater or lesser
degree, of the orthodox authority structure.” With this expectation it is clear that in Pateman’s view, participation “must be participation in something in this case participation in decision making [emphasis in original].”

Pateman is careful to distinguish between degrees of participation. For example, some managers may ask their employees to comment on proposed ideas while retaining the final decision-making authority. Pateman terms this “partial participation,” because the worker can influence a decision but cannot participate in making that decision. Often, managers use this type of partial participation (sometimes also referred to as “pseudo” participation) as a strategy to improve workers’ feelings and attitudes. Full participation, however, is actual decision making by each member of the decision-making body. Further, Pateman states that to take part in decision making, the participants (employees for Pateman) must have the information necessary for them to base their decision.

**Participation in Principal Selection Processes**

Dewey, Barber, and Pateman all argue that there is an educative value in participation. Dewey believed citizens developed democratic skills through taking in part in deliberations and decisions that impacted their lives. Barber also believes that individuals are transformed into citizens through democratic practice. However Barber believes the goal is not about achieving consensus but to participate in a never-ending democratic process. Pateman also agrees that there is an educative value in participation.
But Pateman stresses that participation without decision-making authority is only pseudo participation. How SCBM participants experienced participation, where they were allowed to or prevented from making decisions, and whether they reached consensus in the decision-making process is explored in the following case studies.

Jasmine Middle School

In the fall of 1994, the JMS principal announced his retirement. The SCBM council formed a principal selection committee to study the issue, and some selection committee members met with both the DOE district superintendent and the DOE’s SCBM program director to discuss the waiver process. DOE District Superintendent Mr. Mafera explained that the SCBM council did not have to go through the waiver/exceptions process and furthermore, it might not be feasible because of the lack of time. He offered to go directly to HGEA to negotiate changes to the process that would meet JMS’s needs. In addition to meeting with Mr. Mafera, some committee members met with Mr. Horikami, the DOE SCBM program director. Mr. Horikami told the group that as long as he received the SCBM waivers by the end of October, he would be able to submit them for HGEA and BOE approval.

After researching waiver requests, talking to DOE personnel, and contacting other schools that had previously submitted waivers, the committee presented their recommendations on waivers and exceptions to the full JMS SCBM Council in October 1994. They brought five waivers to the council for deliberation and decision making. The first waiver was to allow the school to substitute the standard DOE principal profile with one developed by the Jasmine teacher role group. The full council agreed that this

was an important waiver for which to apply because they felt that JMS had unique attributes and wanted to find a leader whom fit with their special school. A second waiver, regarding composition of the selection committee, was not strongly supported. Most participants thought that the DOE allowed for adequate representation from the school on the selection committee. Instead of submitting a waiver, the council decided that the parent, staff, teacher, and community role groups would each recommend one person for the subcommittee. The SCBM council chair and the current principal would review the recommendations. Because of concerns regarding gender and ethnicity balance, the SCBM chair and principal could ask a role group to make an alternate recommendation if better balance was needed. In addition to the school representatives, the DOE district superintendent would also select three representatives. The district superintendent committed to further improving the balance of the selection committee if the school representatives were not particularly balanced.

The third proposed waiver involved the School Administrator Recruitment, Selection and Appointment Program (SARSAP). The SARSAP contained required, standardized interview questions. The JMS SCBM Council decided to apply for a waiver that would allow them to substitute their own interview questions for the SARSAP questions.

The fourth waiver the SCBM council considered was to revise the rating sheet used to score candidates. Because the council agreed to submit a waiver requesting a new profile, they thought that it was also appropriate to submit a waiver requesting a new rating sheet based on the proposed profile. One participant at the meeting questioned how references would be factored into the scoring process. Members from the principal
selection committee agreed to research this issue. The fifth waiver would challenge the priority system utilized in principal selections. The council decided not to submit a waiver and instead abide the current priority system.

The discussion regarding the waivers was collaborative and productive. Participants wanted to have input in the process, but they also realized that time was short and that fellow council members would have to work hard to write waiver requests. They selected waiver requests that seemed reasonable, did not challenge the HGEA authority, and addressed issues they had previously discussed with District Superintendent Mafera. Because of time constraints, the council decided to pursue both options—requesting waivers and accepting the superintendent’s offer to negotiate directly with the HGEA. The council agreed to submit waivers for a new profile entitled “The Transformational Leader,” entirely new interview questions, and a new rating sheet that matched the profile. Simultaneously, the council would submit the new profile, rating sheet, and a set of modified SARSAP (rather than new) questions to District Superintendent Mafera. The council would inform both Mr. Mafera and Mr. Horikami of this dual approach. The waiver requests were denied by the review committee (two BOE members and two HGEA representatives, typically called the “2x2 committee”) and never heard by the full BOE, but District Superintendent Mafera was able to negotiate some of the council’s requests with HEGA. Three candidates were interviewed for the principal position and the selected candidate, Mr. Anderson, agreed to start at the beginning of the 1995 school year. Even though the Jasmine council’s waivers were never heard, they were able to give input to the process and recommend members to the interview committee because of
their collegial relationship with the district superintendent. Having input, and not sole
decision making authority, was not perceived negatively by council members.

Hibiscus High School – Part I

In June 1994, approximately one and a half years after HHS SCBM proponents
had submitted their SCBM Letter of Intent but prior to finalizing their SCBM Proposal to
Implement, the HHS principal announced he would seek early retirement. After the
announcement, some HHS council members met with SCBM members of other schools
to find out how the principal selection process worked. This was not unusual; SCBM
participants from various schools frequently contacted one another to share information
including the text of successful waiver and exception requests. A community member
from a nearby elementary school SCBM council recommended that HHS first become an
official SCBM school—which meant submitting the Proposal to Implement and receiving
BOE acceptance—prior to submitting waiver and exception requests for the principal
selection. The SCBM program director also suggested that the council establish a
subcommittee for the principal selection process and said the subcommittee should obtain
a copy of the SARSAP, review it, and start highlighting areas for which they were
interested in seeking waivers and exceptions.194

In September 1994, HHS SCBM Council met to discuss the principal selection
process and established a task force with representatives from the school's community.
The meeting representatives also suggested duties for the task force, such as drafting a
list of attributes in an effective leader, talking to other successful principals in the state,
rewriting the profile for the principal, drafting a statement defining HHS's uniqueness,

and keeping all of the role groups informed of the progress.\textsuperscript{195} The task force met and discussed HHS’s uniqueness, composition of the interview committee, the desired leadership qualities, and the next steps for the task force. It was decided that two members would try to meet with the district superintendent as soon as possible to clarify any questions about the principal selection process.

Two members of the council met with the district superintendent and deputy superintendent in October 1994. The HHS representatives wanted to express HHS’s desire to be involved in selecting the next principal. The district superintendent explained the traditional process for principal selection and some of the waivers that had been requested by other schools in the district that also had gone through the principal selection process. A few days after the meeting, the district superintendent called to inform HHS that the principal vacancy would be advertised November 1–10, 1994, and DOE would accept applications only during that time.

At the same time the task force was meeting, the school’s faculty and staff were meeting to discuss what they wanted in the new principal. Some of the qualities they identified included:

strong and vigorous leader/manager...not a delegator of responsibility...must have a backbone strong enough to withstand community criticism and not avoid confrontation; effective public relations salesperson; committed to a long-term association with the school; visible, decisive, communicative; committed to excellence; consistent; able to motivate; honest, fair, respectful of all diversities; promote fellowship among faculty/staff; fundraiser; advocate of the students; someone who knows teachers’ names; support “zero tolerance” of certain action including drugs, alcohol, foul-language, disrespect, etc.; keep up with the professional literature and be able to articulate

educational trends to the faculty and staff; and someone with a “take charge” attitude.\footnote{196}

The task force met on November 1, 1994, to formulate the waivers and exceptions the HHS SCBM Council would request from the district superintendent. In a letter on behalf of the council, an SCBM parent representative wrote that council was seeking several areas of involvement. The letter included the following points:

- …the SCBM committee would like to include follow-up questions and responses to guidelines. These questions and guidelines would be based on HHS’s unique needs and methods, styles, and qualities of leadership we seek.

- We request that a student be involved in the interview process …the student channels questions through another interviewer and does not vote.

- As we prepare for the interviews, we feel it will be helpful to review the résumés of the candidates. We are certainly willing to sign the confidentiality agreement in order to do so.

- Because of the many administrative facets in high school leadership/principalship and the time involved for the interviewing of all areas, the council requests that interviews be scheduled for no less than one hour time period.

- The HHS SCBM Council also requests that the interview committee be able to submit to you a rank-ordered list of preferred candidates.

- The Council requests additional clarification on the role (advisory or decision-making) of the HHS retiring principal in these interviews. How is the determination made for a sitting principal to be on the panel?\footnote{197}

On November 15, 1994 a district DOE personnel officer called the HHS parent representative to respond to the letter. The personnel officer explained the following:

- The follow-up questions must be woven into the context of the DOE preset SARSAP questions and the same follow-up questions must be asked of all

\footnote{196. Personal notes, Hibiscus High School [pseud.] Parent member, Feedback from Faculty and Staff, October 18, 1994.}

\footnote{197. Hibiscus High School [pseud.] Parent member letter to District Superintendent, November 4, 1994.}
applicants. It was suggested that interview committee meet with the personnel officer the day before the interview to clarify the questions.

- The personnel officer was waiting to hear from HGEA regarding whether a student would be allowed to sit in during the interview.
- Résumés were highly confidential; only the interviewers could see them the day before the interview and could not share them with anyone outside the interview committee.
- The request for one-hour interviews was granted.
- The rating scale contained room for an average score, so a rank order would not be necessary.
- The district superintendent had invited the retiring principal to participate in the interview process, which was within her purview to do so.
- The personnel officer informed the parent representative that the interviews would take place within two weeks, before the end of the month.198

HHS was able to nominate a teacher, parent, support staff, community member, and student (who could not ask questions of the candidate or vote) to the interview committee. The district superintendent nominated three additional members. At the last minute, the district informed the council that the student could not participate at all. An intermediate school principal was selected from three candidates to be the new HHS principal and began in January 1995. The council was disappointed that they were not able to participate more fully in the interview and selection process. The council, and in

particular the student role group, was upset the student representative was not allowed to participate. Even though their SCBM Proposal to Implement had not been submitted, the council felt that they had demonstrated their commitment to both the school and the SCBM process.

**Differences between the Jasmine Middle School and Hibiscus High School**

From the case studies above, it seemed as though the participants were asked to give input, and even sit on interview committees, but were not given authority over the important principal personnel decision. While SCBM promised participants that they would make decisions regarding personnel, the DOE never relinquished its authority. In both cases the respective district superintendents made the decision with input from the interview committee.

While the Jasmine SCBM Council seemed satisfied with the amount of input and involvement they had in the selection process, the Hibiscus council wanted more authority and felt that the DOE district superintendent had blocked their participation. DOE administrators might contend that because SCBM was fairly new when the Hibiscus council asked to participate they felt more comfortable with some involvement, but not full decision authority. In fact, the DOE had not yet approved the Hibiscus council’s SCBM Proposal to Implement. But Hibiscus council members felt that there were other motivations for blocking the council’s participation such as the selection was already predetermined.

Dewey advocated for the average citizen to take a responsible share, a determining part in the democratic decision making of the community. Barber argues that it is only through active participation that the individual becomes the citizen. He
strongly maintains that politics is for every citizen—amateurs—not experts. Because DOE only allowed input instead of allowing participants to engage in the decision-making process, Pateman would consider this type of involvement pseudo participation.

Even though the procedural outcomes were similar, that both SCBM councils had input into the process and had representatives on the selection committee, the degree to which the DOE allowed for participation differed. In the case of Jasmine, the DOE district superintendent asked for input and even tried to negotiate with the union informally on behalf of the council. In the case of Hibiscus, the DOE district superintendent restricted the amount of participation the council requested. Pateman says that participation is educative in the widest sense including the psychological impact on those involved. Because the councils perceived the outcomes differently the educative effects also differed. Jasmine was satisfied with their level of involvement whereas Hibiscus was highly dissatisfied. In spite of the fact that the experts (DOE) made the decision in the Hibiscus example, the SCBM council would have another opportunity to test their ability to participate in another principal selection process in less than two years later.

**Hibiscus High School – Part II**

Principal Mau’s reign at HHS was not an easy one. After approximately 20 months, she decided to leave and return to the intermediate school from which she came. Despite the many disagreements with the SCBM council, her resignation announcement on September 18, 1996, came as a surprise. A “special” council meeting to discuss the principal selection process was held on Saturday, September 21, 1996. All role groups, except the administration, were invited to the meeting. It was clarified that Principal
Mau's last day at HHS was September 30, 1996 and that she would return to her previous position on October 1, 1996. It was also assumed that the vacancy would be announced on Monday, September 23, 1996, and be open for 10 days. During that meeting, many participants expressed concern about going through a selection process so soon after the school year had started. Because principals often feel committed to remain at their school through the school year, the SCBM council worried that the field of applicants would be very small. Some meeting attendees suggested that the council contact the district superintendent to request that DOE stop the process of selecting a new principal so that they could participate fully in the process. Although the five role groups present at the meeting had reached general agreement regarding this proposal, one participant suggested that such a letter should not be sent without first getting the absent administration role group's permission. Other suggestions for the principal selection process included hosting a coffee hour for interested candidates and examining other successful waiver/exception requests to allow more SCBM involvement in the principal selection process. Minutes from this meeting concluded, "The procedures described above are meant to assure an open and fair process for all parties concerned and to prevent any perception of 'preselection' or 'back door deals.' All procedures and statements above to [be] reviewed by the administration [emphasis in original]." 

On September 23, 1996, the minutes of the September 21 meeting and a proposed letter to the district superintendent were submitted to the administration. The letter proposed hiring an acting administrator to complete the year and engage in a full

199. Principal Selection Meeting minutes taken by HHS Co-chair and personal observation, September 21, 1996.
200. Ibid.
selection process in the spring semester. The administration role group responded with a memo that read, “The administrators met on 9/23/96 at app. 4:30 pm to discuss the minutes.” The memo was not dated or signed, nor did it list participants. The memo went on to enumerate the following concerns:

1. As principal and one co-chair of the HHS, I felt it was extremely inappropriate for the other co-chair to call a meeting to discuss the selection process of the next principal without informing or inviting anyone from the administration....Does this exemplify the way HHS views the role of administrators—insignificant?...

2. As a role group, we do not agree with the request to have an acting principal for an entire year. Some concerns may be 1) the lack of commitment on the part of the acting principal; 2) concern by some applicants that the acting principal may have an advantage; 3) contractual concerns.

3. The administrative group felt that Hibiscus High School should follow the current procedures and should meet with District to discuss the process and parameters and find ways to work it/stretch it. Not rewrite it entirely.

4. In addition, each role group should have time to discuss the issue and give input....Adequate discussions about issues on the role group level have been a concern in the past.

5. Another concern we had was that the role of the principal at Hibiscus with SCBM has not been clearly defined yet. Will SCBM scare away some desirable applicants?

6. We felt the coffee hour concept was good....

...We believe the principal’s role is important therefore, the selection a priority. We don’t believe that prolonging the selection will necessarily yield a better applicant. Perhaps the time could be better spent on current prioritized goals.202

It was clear that the administration role group, and the outgoing principal in particular, felt that the SCBM council was trying to design a process without full

201. Administrative Role Group Response to Interest Group Meeting September 21, 1996. No Date Given.
202. Ibid.
involvement from the administration role group. Even though the council was angry about being excluded from the principal selection process by DOE, most council members felt that it was appropriate to exclude the administration role group from their conversations because they thought that the outgoing principal was in cahoots with the district superintendent. Another meeting was held on September 23, 1996, to discuss the proposed letter to the district superintendent. All role groups had at least one representative at this meeting. Consensus on sending the letter could not be reached because the administration role group’s representative, the vice principal, disagreed.

There were some whispers about the vice principal’s position because it was assumed that he was to be appointed the acting principal (and would be eligible to apply for the permanent principal position). A vote was taken; the vote was 12 votes in favor of sending the letter and 4 votes opposed. Although there were not four representatives from every role group in attendance, because some of the people present at the meeting were non-voting alternates and non-voting observers, the administration representative, the vice principal, elected to cast all four of his role group votes as a “no.”

Nevertheless, the vote passed.

A letter was sent to the district superintendent requesting that the process of selecting a new principal be delayed so that the council could better participate in the selection process. An HHS SCBM Council meeting was held on September 30, 1996, to discuss the district superintendent’s response to the council’s letter. The district superintendent responded in a letter dated September 30, 1996, and determined the following:

203. “Talking Points” of the HHS SCBM Council meeting held on September 23, 1996. (In personal notes, Hibiscus High School [pseud.] Parent Member)
1. The Hibiscus High School Principal vacancy will be advertised on December 2, 1996 for a period of 10 days. Prior to this advertisement, your Council may proceed to develop waivers and exceptions which need to be acted upon by the Board of Education....

2. In the interest of providing Hibiscus High School faculty and students with continuous administrative support, I as the District Superintendent will assign an educational officer to serve, on a temporary assignment, as the Principal for Hibiscus H.S.

3. I am familiar with the process used by the Honolulu District. I believe that the process that you are developing for the Principal selection will incorporate many steps of the selection process used by both Windward and Honolulu District schools.

I ask that you continue to work with all of your SCBM groups and to be sure to adhere to the operating procedures of the H.H.S. SCBM Council.204

On October 1, 1996 the DOE SCBM program director sent the council a memo clarifying the principal selection process.205 He advised them that Article 11 of the BU 06 Collective Bargaining Agreement and the May 1988 SARSAP governed the principal interview and appointment process. He also clarified that a July 20, 1992, memo from a former DOE superintendent amended this document to allow for four school representatives (a parent, a community member, a classified support staff, and a teacher) instead of only one parent representative, but it did not allow a student representative. He also explained items such as how applicants are categorized by priority, interview questions, the scope of the “Profile of an Effective School Administrator,” and coffee hours with potential candidates. His letter explained many of the issues council members expected to address through the waiver/exception process.

204. Letter from district superintendent to Hibiscus [pseud.] Community Council Co-Chairperson, September 30, 1996.
205. Memo from SCBM program director to Hibiscus High School’s [pseud.] SCBM Council, October 1, 1996.
Many people in the school community began working on various aspects of preparing for the principal selection search. During the next few weeks, the council hosted an informal coffee hour that did not violate collective bargaining agreements and worked to develop waiver/exception requests, information on HHS including its unique characteristics and the type of leader the school community desired, and interview strategy and questions.

Because the HHS was now officially recognized as an SCBM school, it was eligible to apply for the waiver/exception requests. In the introduction to their waiver/exception requests submitted in October 1996, the council pleaded, "When an important decision like the leadership of a school is being made, the older rules and processes outside the school need to align with the decentralized, flexible, responsible, and accountable principles of site-based management."\(^{206}\) The council concluded its introduction to the requests by declaring, "Granting these waiver/exception requests would be a sign that all parties at the school level, the Union, the Department of Education, and the Board of Education are committed to open, fair and inclusive processes that has the best interest of students' learning at its heart."\(^{207}\)

On December 5, 1996, two members of the council, a teacher representative and a parent representative, appeared before the BOE regarding the exceptions the council had requested. Although the BOE had not officially acted on the exceptions, the council heard rumors that the BOE was going to deny the Hibiscus requests at the previous BOE meeting. Because that meeting was held on another island, the council was able to

\(^{206}\) Hibiscus High School's [pseud.] SCBM Council introduction to Waiver/Exception requests, October 1996.
\(^{207}\) Ibid.
persuade the BOE to wait until their meeting on O‘ahu to make their decision. The teacher representative began by explaining that the council had researched the “success and/or failure of site based managed schools” and concluded, “the principal with particular attributes/characteristics is THE decisive factor for success [emphasis in original].” He continued:

SCBM principles have been nurtured and are deeply held at Hibiscus…. It became very clear that we do want a transformational leader who embraces the concept of SHARED LEADERSHIP AND DECISION-MAKING involving ALL school community role groups equally [emphasis in original].

The parent representative then addressed the BOE:

School community based management, shared decision making, and empowerment of those closest to implementing a decision may be working at the individual school level. However, above the school level, the old concepts of AUTOCRATIC DECISION MAKING continue to pervade and impede the progress of SCBM in the state. Hibiscus high school’s current experience is illustrative…. 

First, the 1989 Board of Education policy acknowledges that the school community has a right and an obligation to participate actively in open dialogue where issues are presented, defined, discussed and resolved. Apparently, this meant on the school level only. Hibiscus Community Council was not allowed to defend our exception requests to the 2x2 committee [exception review committee] or this board before a decision was rendered.

Second, the 1989 policy states that “waivers and exceptions are designed to enhance flexibility in order to facilitate school improvement. All efforts shall be made to approve requests.” The Hibiscus community asks for an explanation about the efforts made to approve our exception requests that were not approved or were modified…. In essence, if one member of the 2x2 committee doesn‘t support an exception… it has been vetoed by one participant. This is far from the spirit of SCBM. Hibiscus’s School community consensus about what was best for the school in the selection of our next principal was apparently given little weight….

208. Statement to the Board of Education from the Hibiscus High School [pseud.] Community Council, Teacher representative and Parent representative, December 5, 1996. 209. Ibid.
The March 1994 brochure entitled "School-Community Based Management" issued by the Office of the Superintendent addresses what is needed to move education reform forward in Hawaii. I would like to quote a few significant paragraphs from this brochure to remind us of where we were in 1994, and still seem to be STUCK.

QUOTE "The system (i.e., Hawaii’s school system) is not flexible enough. Rules and regulations seem to take precedence over the needs and challenges of student learning." ...

"...The structure is designed for decisions to be made from the top, without involvement of those affected by the decisions."

"While SCBM is a catalyst for change at the school level, system-wide changes will be needed to make it work; among them, changes in the way the state and district education offices, the Board of Education, state agencies and unions, and the legislature all relate to our public schools. Importantly, Governor John Waihee has expressed his support for ‘putting schools in charge of their own affairs.’" UNQUOTE

Hibiscus High School is attempting to take charge of its own affairs. However, the appearance is that others having power in the decision making process are more concerned with what’s best for tenured education officers than what is best for the school. Until this attitude and constraint is changed, this state will continue to stagnate in public education.......

In closing, we would like to draw from some of our research on site based management. “An unstable school leadership can be a barrier to site based management.” Hibiscus has experienced that instability.

“Under functioning site based management, decision making moves from top-down to a bottom-up approach.” In Hibiscus’s case, the bottom made a decision, the union vetoed it. The SCBM model is based on consensus decision making; not all the stakeholders were involved in these decisions....

“Unless stakeholders are empowered with authority, site based management will be restricted to the realm of theory, not practice.” This appears to be the case in Hawaii. This is an opportunity for this new Board of Education to increase the viability and effectiveness of the SCBM process for the educational benefit to our children. [emphasis in original].210

---

210. Ibid.
Following the statements of the teacher and parent representatives, the BOE considered motions to allow a student to sit on the principal interview committee and to allow all members of the principal interview committee to equally assess all areas covered in the interview. With regard to the first exception request, the BOE approved the student to “ask questions but...not be allowed to participate in the assessment/rating of applicants. She will not participate in the discussions and the final recommendations of the committee.”211 The exception request regarding the principal interview committee to equally assess all areas covered in the interview was approved with two stipulations: 1) “That the school’s representatives to the principal interview committee will be inserviced as a committee by the department with regards to full scope of a principal’s responsibilities and the department will notify the union who specifically will do the inservicing”212; and 2) again, that the student representative would not participate in the rating or recommendation.213

The principal interview committee interviewed and selected a new principal in accordance with the BOE and DOE procedures and stipulations. However, the HHS SCBM Council continued to feel frustrated with the process. Many of the members felt that the waiver/exception process did not support their understanding of the intent of SCBM. In March 1997, the council sent a letter to the BOE that acknowledged their frustration and pointed out “some of the policies and practices in that principal selection process that run contrary to the principles of school/community-based management.”214

211. Hawaii Board of Education General Business Meeting Minutes, December 5, 1996.
212. Ibid.
213. Ibid.
There were several instances when the outcome of the 2x2 [review] committee was unknown on all the exceptions Hibiscus sent in, yet the principal selection timetable kept rolling....

The School has no direct voice at the table when the 2x2 committee negotiates....

Consensus is the decision-making mode for SCBM schools, but at the Union and Board veto power is operable....

...there is no public forum for the school to air its interests or the Board members to make their stand public.

...When Hibiscus was given time to speak to the Board about our exceptions, we posed a number of questions. We received absolute silence. There seems to be no room for reasoned dialogue with the stakeholders and those “closest to implementation.”

...The Exceptions Hibiscus asked for were in line with standard search and selection processes in the world of work (i.e., having adequate time to review resumés, having access to all qualified candidates, controlling timing of the selection process to insure the best pool of candidates, and having school decisionmakers part of the assessment process in the interview process, tailoring interview questions to the school’s leadership goals etc.) The standard approach of most citizens would be to have these elements as part of a hiring process. Hawaii Education needs to move its processes more in line with hiring practices of business and organizations.215

In a May 28, 1997, response, the BOE chair responded:

The Board finds it most unfortunate that your experience with the principal selection process was not a happy one. However, the Board’s willingness to respond to the needs and concerns of schools and their communities must be differentiated from its ability to do so. The Board’s power is limited by law to formulating statewide educational policy, adopting student performance standards and assessment models, monitoring school success, and appointing the Superintendent of Education. Additional limits are placed on the Board’s authority by the notice requirements of the sunshine law, collective bargaining agreements, and budgetary and scheduling considerations.

215. Ibid.
To the extent possible, the Board will take your comments and recommendations under consideration for appropriate action.216

The Nature of Participation in SCBM

At first glance all of the principal selection case examples, and especially the second principal selection process at Hibiscus, illustrate the limits to full participation and decision making in SCBM. Whether it was a clash of personalities, the desire to implement favoritism in the hiring process, or different understandings about the intent and extent of participation and decision making in SCBM, the result was a decision made by a committee that involved both school level and administration appointees. Some SCBM participants claimed that this blocked their meaningful participation and that SCBM did not allow citizens to enact democratic self-governance. In fact if this experience was educative, some at Hibiscus might say that it taught them that the citizenry has no authority to make decisions, but rather only an insignificant ability to give input into the process.

But it is important to look at these examples with a critical lens. Participants at both Jasmine and Hibiscus both experienced the rejection of waivers, but participants at each school perceived those rejections very differently. Through meetings and deliberations, five out of six role groups at Hibiscus were able to agree on many parts of the principal selection process. They agreed on the characteristics of the type of leader they wanted, they valued students' voices and agreed that they wanted a student involved, and they agreed on suggested changes to the process to better meet their common interests. For the most part, the parents, teachers, staff, students, and community

members were able to identify a common good and negotiate options that met their needs. Because the administration role did not agree with the other five role groups, their stance was interpreted as blocking the rest of the groups’ interests instead of seeing the administration as not giving way to unitary pressures. These pressures, including peer pressure, social conformism, and the willingness to accept group norms, actually erode strong democracy according to Barber.217 The five other role groups also perceived the DOE, BOE, and HGEA as blocking their self-determination.

Yet, for the participants at Jasmine Middle School, the ability to have input into the process was welcomed. The fact that they were able to nominate representatives to the selection committee and suggest some alternative questions to the SARSAP was acceptable. The Jasmine participants did not perceive the fact that they did not make the final principal selection by themselves as a barrier to their participation in SCBM. Critics might say that this type of participation is the pseudo participation articulated by Pateman. Participants were asked for input, and their feelings and attitudes about SCBM, the DOE, BOE, and HGEA improved without having to be given full authority for decision making.

Though the role of a consensus decision-making process will be examined more closely in the next chapter, these case examples raise an important question. Does there have to be agreement or a winning outcome for the process to be educative? Politics is often a tough, hard, nasty business where feelings are bound to get hurt. Liberals believe that conflict is a given in politics.218 One could argue that it is through the process of

218. Ibid. p. 128.
trying to resolve conflict that citizens are educated. Because both councils worked
collectively, considered common goals, and developed intellectual skills through their
practice of democratic participation, Dewey might argue that SCBM was a democratic
educative process. Certainly, there were problems with policies, procedures, and
interpretations of how much authority was to be given to participants. But, regardless of
the outcome, I would argue that these participants were participating in democratic
politics.
CHAPTER 4

DELIBERATION AND CONSENSUS-BASED DECISION-MAKING

In *Strong Democracy: Participatory Politics for a New Age*, Benjamin Barber argues that the distinguishing characteristic of each of the five forms of democracy is how it resolves conflict in the absence of an independent ground.\(^{219}\) For example, Barber argues that authoritative democracy defers authority to an executive representative who uses authority (power plus wisdom) to resolve conflict. Deferring authority to a judicial representative who arbitrates or adjudicates conflict defines juridical democracy. Barber writes that the pluralist model resolves conflict “through bargaining and exchange among free and equal individuals and groups, which pursue their private interests in a market setting governed by social contract.”\(^{220}\)

But unitary democracy, according to Barber, resolves conflict in the absence of an independent ground by deferring to the general will of the collective. The central norm in unitary democracy is unity, and consensus is the ultimate goal. Barber says that unitary democracy becomes “conformist, collectivist, and often even coercive” because the means by which the individual citizen achieves civic identity is through self-abandonment.\(^{221}\) The individual must merge himself or herself with the collectivity. In small communities, unitary democracy is “relatively benign” but it can be “ruinous to democracy” on the large scale.\(^{222}\)

\(^{220}\) Ibid., p. 143.
\(^{221}\) Ibid., p. 148.
\(^{222}\) Ibid., p. 148–149.
Barber’s strong democracy, however, is not collectivistic or conformist. Instead of deferring authority to another, strong democracy transforms conflict. “Participatory politics deals with public disputes and conflicts of interest by subjecting them to a never-ending process of deliberation, decision, and action.” Through strong democracy, citizens engage in agenda setting, deliberation, legislation, and policy implementation. This chapter demonstrates how deliberation and consensus-based decision-making is used in unitary democracies, including SCBM, to make decisions and resolve conflicts that arise. The motivation for implementing SCBM was a desire to shift decision-making from Hawai‘i’s centralized, bureaucratic DOE to small, local communities at each school. The next section looks at Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson’s arguments regarding deliberation. Gutmann and Thompson contend that deliberation is a fundamental part of democracy, especially the process of resolving disagreement, and they point to four sources of disagreement. After their arguments regarding deliberation are considered, I turn to the use of consensus-based decision-making processes within democratic communities. A case example regarding a proposed student dress code at Hibiscus High School is used to explore deliberation and consensus-based decision-making within the SCBM context.

Deliberation

According to Jürgen Habermas bureaucracy breaks the web of communicative actions. From a system perspective, bureaucratic organizations may give some appearance of efficiency. However when looked at from the perspective of an individual, bureaucratic organizations are depersonalizing. “With these new organizations, system

---

223. Ibid., p. 151.
224. Ibid., p. 151.
perspectives arise from which the lifeworld is distantiated and perceived as an element of system environments. Organizations gain autonomy through a neutralizing demarcation from the symbolic structures of the lifeworld; they become peculiary indifferent to culture, society, and personality." Habermas argues that understanding is reached through dialogue and that this understanding can result in a rationally motivated agreement that is binding. Humans use language as a mechanism of coordination and it is this web of communicative action that "binds sociated individuals to one another and secures the integration of society." 

Gutmann and Thompson argue that deliberative democracy is the best model to consider moral conflict. They compare deliberative democracy to two other models: procedural democracy and constitutional democracy. Accordingly, procedural democracy concerns itself with the process. Constituents or representatives have equal standing in procedural democracy. Rules and laws that govern procedural democracy ensure a balanced and fair process. It is often said that procedural democracy is more about the means than the ends. Conversely, constitutional democracy is less concerned with the process than with the outcome. Outcomes in a constitutional democracy should be fair and balanced. The outcomes often address and rebalance injustices. Therefore even if the process is not equal, the outcomes will be.

226. Ibid., p. 148.
228. Ibid., p. 34.
Although deliberative democracy is an outcome-oriented process, it does not assume that the results of the actual deliberations are just.\textsuperscript{229} "Deliberation is not only a means to an end, but also a means for deciding what means are morally required to pursue our common ends."\textsuperscript{230} Gutmann and Thompson write that other discourse theorists build equal liberty and opportunity into their ideal of deliberation. However, they feel that this ideal cannot be realized. In their opinion, discourse theory does not adequately protect basic rights.\textsuperscript{231} Nor can it be proved that deliberation produces the morally best decisions and policies.\textsuperscript{232} This does not mean that deliberation is meaningless. In fact, Gutmann and Thompson believe that without lively deliberation, democracy is incomplete.

Gutmann and Thompson outline four sources of moral disagreement: self-interest, human condition (including scarcity and limited generosity), incompatible values, and incomplete understanding.\textsuperscript{233} Many point to self-interest as a source of political disputes. This refers to both personal self-interest and the self-interest of constituent groups.\textsuperscript{234} Take, for example, a ballot measure to increase taxes to fund local schools. A teacher may be in favor of the ballot measure because increased teacher salaries could be one of the results of more funding for education. But Gutmann and Thompson argue that it is not always that obvious. An individual may or may not have the same interests as his or her constituent group. Another teacher may be opposed to the same ballot measure because she sees it as hurting small business, despite her potential personal gain.

\textsuperscript{229} Ibid., p. 17.
\textsuperscript{230} Ibid., p. 4.
\textsuperscript{231} Ibid, p. 17.
\textsuperscript{232} Ibid., p. 6.
\textsuperscript{233} Ibid, p. 18.
\textsuperscript{234} Ibid., p. 19.
In addition, even though a person or group takes a position based on self-interest, they may be able to justify the position based on moral principals. Further, individuals may not have a direct self-interest when it comes to some issues, such as same-sex marriage, and yet may have very strongly held moral positions which lead to disagreement with others that subscribe to different moral principals.

Both conditions of extreme scarcity and abundance (with limited generosity) also lead to moral disagreement. Building on David Hume's work, Gutmann and Thompson write that many feel that if there was an extreme shortage of resources moral conflict would cease because people would be too busy trying to survive. Conversely, in conditions of extreme abundance there would be no disagreement because resources would be plentiful. Complicating the debate over resources, according to Hume, is the limited generosity of humans.

But Gutmann and Thompson go beyond both self-interest and human condition to describe two other important sources of moral conflict: incompatible values and incomplete understanding. They argue moral disagreement may be due to incompatible values. "The problem of moral conflict originates not only between persons but also between the moral values themselves." (Original emphasis.) Added to incompatible values, individuals looking at the same issue may weigh both the moral and empirical factors differently. This leads to a complex myriad of positions regarding the same issue, and therefore conflict, because of incomplete understanding that cannot be overcome.

Because we cannot surmount the four sources, Gutmann and Thompson contend that we

235. Ibid., p. 20.
236. Ibid., p. 22.
237. Ibid., p. 23.
238. Ibid., p. 24.
must learn to live with moral disagreement. It is deliberation that allows citizens to not only live with moral disagreement, but it allows the best possibility for responding to that conflict. They give four reasons to favor deliberative democracy. 239

First, Gutmann and Thompson argue that deliberation contributes to the legitimacy of decisions made under the conditions of scarcity. 240 When conflicts are subject to considerable deliberation, the decision usually has more legitimacy than if it had been made without deliberation. Even in the face of disagreement, deliberation allows full consideration of the issue and various viewpoints of others.

Second, that there is value in creating forums in which citizens are encouraged to take broader perspectives. 241 Regardless of what the conflict is, deliberative forums help participants understand the issue more fully, which may enable them to see the issue from another's point of view. Participants are able to share concerns, see the issue from other perspectives, and broaden their understanding and willingness to negotiate.

Third, deliberation helps clarify the nature of the conflict because participants have the opportunity to distil between compatible and incompatible values. 242 When participants in a conflict talk to each other, they have the opportunity to identify underlying issues and develop an understanding of the nature of the dispute. Not talking prevents the possibility of clarification and understanding.

Fourth, deliberation contains its own correcting processes. 243 As long as no time limits or other constraints are placed on deliberation, it does have the ability to provide a

239. Ibid., p. 41.
240. Ibid.
241. Ibid., p. 42.
242. Ibid., p. 43.
243. Ibid.
forum to self-correct. Instead of forcing the decision, more deliberation—not less—might generate a workable solution. When conflict seems intractable, deliberation can engender possibility. Gutmann and Thompson explain that deliberation and moral argument is not reserved solely for policy makers or academics. They argue that the land of everyday politics, or what they term “middle democracy,” is where “much of the moral life of a democracy, for good or ill, is to be found.” They go on,

Middle democracy is also the land of interest groups, civic associations, and schools, in which adults and children develop political understandings, sometimes arguing among themselves and listening to people with differing points of view and other times not.

Because democracy is located in the local community, moral argument, and deliberation, is fundamental to everyday politics.

After deliberating, participants in democratic communities make decisions regarding issues they have considered. The next section explores decision-making, and in particular decision-making by consensus. Jane Mansbridge’s work on unitary democracies is used to lay the groundwork for looking at consensus-based decision making in SCBM.

**Decision-making**

As the earlier chapters have demonstrated, SCBM encouraged deliberation and shared decision making among the school community and particularly among the six role groups. SCBM proponents believed that decision-making procedures that took into account community concerns and involved those responsible for implementing the decisions would produce better and longer lasting decisions, and ultimately, better
education for students. Although some SCBM councils used traditional voting as a back-up procedure, proponents of SCBM did not encourage it. Whether using a majority, super-majority, or unanimous vote procedure, opponents of voting maintain that it leaves the numerically more powerful majority with more decision-making power.  

With respect to voting, Giovanni Sartori asserts:

whoever votes with the majority (i.e., as most other voters do) is on the winning side. Conversely, whoever votes with the minority (thus failing to join a plurality) is on the losing side: His vote counts for nothing. In voting, then, the “minority” simply denotes those who must submit to the will of the majority (even if a simple plurality).

Sartori is specific regarding the rights of the minority: “The point therefore is that, in voting, the minority has no rights: It consists of those whose vote was lost—period.” Characterizing it as a “winner-take-all” process, critics maintain that voting does not allow for the preferences of the minority to be reflected in decisions unless the majority willingly agrees to compromise.

Furthermore, critics argue that adversarial politics and procedures assume that individuals in a community have competing interests. In the adversarial viewpoint, not only do individuals have different interests, but they are also self-interested. In other words, when faced with a decision, people will make their choice based on what would benefit them the most individually without caring about how their choice will affect others in their community. Lani Guinier writes “in a heterogeneous community, the majority may not represent all competing interests. The majority is likely to be self-

248. Ibid.
interested and ignorant or indifferent to the concerns of the minority\textsuperscript{249}\textemdash an assumption made in conventional pluralist constructions of democracy. Another assumption in these constructions is that those with more money, power, and influence will get what they want more often than other citizens.

Because of these types of concerns about voting, many community-oriented groups use decision-making procedures that do not create a majority and a minority so that the community is not divided. This philosophy is not unique to SCBM. Through community-building, shared experience, and the identification of the common good, some advocates of shared decision making contend that voting is not necessary. At the heart of this philosophy is the belief that the community can work to identify and reach consensus on a common good. Before examining a case example from SCBM, I want to highlight Mansbridge’s research on a participatory workplace, Helpline, to identify some key issues that appeared when the group used consensus-based decision making.

**Unitary Democracy and Consensus-Based Decision Making**

To illustrate the ideals of two conceptions of democracy—unitary democracy and adversary democracy—Jane Mansbridge compares unitary democracy to friendship and adversary democracy to large-scale politics where members do not know each other.\textsuperscript{250} Mansbridge says that unitary democracies also assume a high degree of common interest and that “they are distinguished by consensus, face-to-face assembly, and an emphasis on a rough equality of respect among the members.”\textsuperscript{251} Adversary democracies, on the other hand, “assume conflicting interests” and are “distinguished by majority rule, the secret


\textsuperscript{251} Ibid.
ballot, an emphasis on the equal protection for the members’ interests rather than on equal respect.”

Mansbridge claims that unitary democracies are distinguished by consensus, defined in her view as “a form of decision making in which, after discussion, one or more members of the assembly sum up prevailing sentiment, and if no objections are voiced, this becomes the agreed-on policy.” Although she claims that consensus is a distinguishing ideal of unitary democracy, Mansbridge argues that it is not automatic, because members of unitary democracies may initially have conflicting preferences. However, consensus can emerge from discourse and deliberation. Discourse and deliberation are important to sharing viewpoints and ideas, creating empathy and understanding, and persuading others to consider or adopt one’s view. Therefore, Mansbridge argues that three general paths lead to group consensus: “overlapping private interests, individuals adopting the good of others as their own, and individuals making the good of the whole their own.” Yet, achieving consensus by any one of these paths is difficult. Mansbridge’s case study illustrates the problems that arise when a group undertakes consensus decision making.

**Helpline Example**

Because unitary democracies assume face-to-face contact, consensus decision making serves as more than merely a decision making process. Through the face-to-face discourse and deliberation inherent in the consensus process, it also serves a community-building function. Mansbridge found that “face-to-face meetings were better at

252. Ibid.
253. Ibid., p. 32.
254. Ibid., p. 25.
255. Ibid., p. 72.
developing community than at dealing with conflict."\textsuperscript{256} Many people are averse to conflict, so it is not surprising that she found when in the face of conflict, "emotions can turn sour."\textsuperscript{257}

Mansbridge looked at democratic decision making in a case study involving a small non-profit participatory workplace, Helpline. This organization was a crisis intervention, counseling, and referral center for people with emotional, legal, medical, drug, or life-support problems. In one example, the Community Planning Council (CPC) called a meeting of the entire staff to discuss funding problems and budget cuts.\textsuperscript{258} The CPC was made up of a representative from each of the six service groups and each of those groups had been asked to cut their staff by one-third.\textsuperscript{259} Because small groups met before the larger meeting, positions and factions appeared to be solidified prior to the group discussion, and tensions were high. In planning the meeting, managers had used formal procedures such as circulating written reports to share information. Facilitators were used to manage the meeting discussion and any conflict that might break out. The facilitators organized the agenda so that after each service group’s presentation on their proposed cuts, small groups would meet to record any questions they had for the particular service group.\textsuperscript{260} The small groups were organized to include one representative from each service group. Mansbridge noted that members often "held back anger until they were ready to explode."\textsuperscript{261} For much of the meeting, attendees did not speak because they were afraid of being ridiculed, having others take what they said.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{256} Ibid., p. 149.
\item \textsuperscript{257} Ibid., p. 34.
\item \textsuperscript{258} Ibid., p. 144.
\item \textsuperscript{259} Ibid., p. 149.
\item \textsuperscript{260} Ibid., p. 151.
\item \textsuperscript{261} Ibid., p. 149.
\end{itemize}
personally, and making enemies. When conflict did erupt, others would “jump in” and “soothe over the conflict.”262 Because people were afraid of hurting other co-workers’ feelings, people did not feel comfortable sharing their views completely.

In addition to conflict aversion, another problem Mansbridge raises with consensus is “false consensus,” or a situation in which a member’s feelings are manipulated “in such a way that some members’ conscious preferences do not coincide with their true interests.”263 Members who are less powerful or who fear reprisal or rejection from the community may be more likely to agree with the group’s wishes despite their personal feelings. Opposite of false consensus is the veto power of the individual in consensus decision making. If a person wishes to, he or she can block a decision from being accepted even if every other member of the group agrees to it. It was this power that Helpline tried to avoid by making clear that members were expected not to veto, except when the issue became too important to let pass.264 During one discussion a Helpline participant acutely pointed out the quandary between false consensus and the veto power. If the group used majority vote the decision would pass, but if they stuck to a consensus process either a watered-down compromise would have to be proposed that all sides could agree to or nothing would pass.265 Because reaching consensus means ultimately expunging the minority opinion, groups are forced to “go along” or agree to a compromise if a decision is to be made.

Mansbridge also acknowledges that consensus decision making takes considerable time. In Helpline’s case some argued that the amount of time spent in

262. Ibid., p. 161.
263. Ibid., p. 25.
264. Ibid., p. 142.
265. Ibid., p. 171.
decision making took away from providing crucial services. Mansbridge observed how some members manipulated the issue of time by proposing issues close to when the decision needed to be made. In an attempt to avoid lengthy discussions or the proposal being amended, these maneuvers caused considerable bitterness.\textsuperscript{266} Additionally, some staff at Helpline complained of repetition in the consensus process. Issues and decisions that were made were often revisited if personnel changed or somebody proposed a policy change.\textsuperscript{267}

Groups are often not able to switch between consensus decision making and other forms of decision making. Mansbridge writes that “the failures of unitary democracies often derive from their refusal either to recognize when interests conflict or to deal with those conflicts by adversary procedures.”\textsuperscript{268} She urges that groups learn to shift back and forth between unitary and adversary modes of decision making but realizes there are distinct problems when groups try to make that shift. First, their fear of argument and desire to remain friends make them try to avoid conflict in the meeting itself. Second, although groups easily shift from consensual decision making to majority-vote decision making, it is harder to make the shift from unitary to adversary assumptions. Unitary democracy “assumes that citizens have a single common interest,” whereas adversary democracy “assumes that citizens’ interests are in constant conflict.”\textsuperscript{269} While she is not asking that groups adopt these assumptions, she does argue that groups have to realize when members have conflicting interests in order to make appropriate choices about the decision-making procedures they use. The third problem is that most people find

\textsuperscript{266} Ibid., p. 166.  
\textsuperscript{267} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{268} Ibid., p. 4.  
\textsuperscript{269} Ibid., p. 3.
imposing adversary ideals (equal protection of interests) a problem, because of the relationships they have with others in their community on a personal level.270 The central egalitarian ideal of unitary democracy is equal respect of participants.271

Although groups have difficulty switching between the two modes, they often do use a mix of formal and informal procedures within the decision-making context. This difficulty may represent underlying tensions between unitary and adversary modes: one, a fear of "failure" when not being able to reach consensus, and two, that groups often do not have skills to resolve an impasse other than reverting back to majority vote procedures. While consensus allows participants a sense of unity and minimizes dividing the group into factions of "us" versus "them," it can also prevent decisions from being made. If a group cannot reach consensus on an issue but refuses to switch to majority vote, the issues is at a stalemate. Mansbridge writes, "If a group cannot reach even an ambiguous consensus, a consensus rule will produce either deadlock or social coercion."272 Mansbridge's insights help frame important issues in studying consensus-based decision making processes in SCBM. In the next section I look at how the SCBM literature advocated for consensus and how one school, Hibiscus High School, struggled with consensus decision making over the issue of implementing a student dress code.

SCBM and Consensus-Based Decision Making

Similar to the case of Helpline, the Hibiscus High School atmosphere was one in which parents, students, and school staff generally knew one another or were able to get to know one another fairly quickly. Most participants were drawn to SCBM because they

270. Ibid., p. 75–76.
271. Ibid., p. 4.
272. Ibid., p. 169.
wanted to help students—either their own or students in general—and the school. And like the system used at Helpline, SCBM promoted the concept of shared decision making as a way to improve the organization.

Shared decision-making will develop strong feelings of ownership, responsibility, trust, cohesion, and commitment among all who are important to a school—it's [sic] principal, teachers, staff, parents, students, and other community members—resulting in high levels of productivity and satisfaction.

Shared decision-making within each school promises to produce better results than have been achieved through previous improvement efforts based on systemwide control. By providing a means for shared decision-making to occur deliberately within each school, SCBM will accelerate "bottom up" reform. 273

In order to achieve the results promised by shared decision making, schools were required to develop a decision-making structure and procedures. The SCBM Task Force recommended that each school's decision-making system "be democratic in nature and widely communicated to the school’s community." 274 Not only was decision making to be shared, but so was accountability:

Shared decision-making requires personal accountability for decisions made and personal responsibility for implementing them. Although role responsibilities will vary and perhaps overlap, everyone who makes a decision as part of a school's community becomes individually as well as collectively accountable for his or her decisions and their execution. 275

But how this shared decision making would take place was a concern to some. One factor to consider was time. Like Mansbridge, the SCBM Task Force admitted that shared decision making would take more time, but they suggested that

Once a decision has been made...its implementation time may be shortened because of the commitment and ownership felt by those who

274. Ibid., p. 6.
275. Ibid., p. 9.
made the decision. Decisions made without such commitment may face opposition, indifference and even sabotage.276

So while it may take longer to arrive at consensus-based decisions, they could be implemented more quickly and with less resistance than decisions made by traditional means.

Schools had little policy directive regarding consensus. The guidelines read:

Consensus is an accord or general agreement and exists when participants whose support is needed to implement any decision agree and express a commitment to support its implementation. Everyone should have an opportunity to be heard and to have their points of view considered.

Because no other definition of consensus was offered, the DOE frequently distributed a tool to assist SCBM councils when using consensus practices. The tool, commonly known as the “Fist of Five,” allows participants to register five levels of support for decisions: from a complete block or veto of the decision to unanimous support for the decision. While some may consider this a form of voting, others think it is only a tool to gauge whether consensus has been reached or whether more deliberation is needed. Some Helpline decisions involved a straw poll during discussions in order to gauge how close the group was to consensus. At least one Helpline participant knew her opposition group was less eloquent in the deliberations and the straw poll she requested revealed that nearly a third of the group was not in favor of the proposed consensus decision.277 Mansbridge notes that, “[f]or some people, registering their contrary opinion as “loyal opposition” is crucial to their integrity.”278

276. Ibid., p. 16.
278. Ibid.
But for SCBM supporters, shared decision making was to be more than just a new way of making decisions; it also would increase "involvement by everyone" and would "eliminate bureaucracy through a process of trust and cooperation."279 Through school-based decision making, proponents argued that decisions would be better: schools would be more flexible, empowered, and accountable, and the school would see more involvement from the entire school community. As Mansbridge pointed out, unitary democracies have a central assumption that "while its members may initially have conflicting preferences about a given issue, goodwill, mutual understanding, and rational discussion can lead to the emergence of a common enlightened preference that is good for everyone."280 The example of consensus decision-making on the proposed Hibiscus student dress code highlights the difficulty in reaching consensus on a controversial issue.

**Hibiscus High School's Dress Code**

Sarah was an SCBM representative in elementary school and again during high school. In order for her to serve as a representative at Hibiscus High School (HHS), she said that she had to submit an application that stated why she wanted to be an SCBM representative, and the student body voted. She explained that by the time she graduated in June 1998, "pretty much anyone who applies gets to participate."281 During her four years as an HHS student representative, she worked to represent the student voice on issues that were of particular concern to them including designated smoking areas, vegetarian lunch choices, sanitation and up-keep of the bathrooms, and the dress code.

280. Ibid., p. 25.
Originally the dress code was not a student issue, but it became a matter of concern for all students. In April 1997 the HHS Discipline Committee, comprised mostly of teachers, presented their proposal for a dress code to the HHS SCBM Council. (The discipline committee often referred to itself as the “Disc Hui.”) According to Sarah, the committee representatives likely expected the council to make a decision regarding the dress code immediately. Instead, the council asked for more background information and decided to present the dress code issue at the council's community forum in May 1997 to notify parents and other community members of the issue.

A handout with a diagram illustrating “suitable” and “improper” attire was distributed at the community forum. (The handout appears as Figure 1 on the next page.) The handout stated that no indiscreet clothing including short shorts, halter tops, or tube tops were allowed. In addition, clothing that was considered gang related, promoted drugs, or was considered vulgar was also considered improper. Although there was some discussion, a decision could not be made at this meeting.

At the July 1997 council meeting, student representatives expressed that before any decision could be made, they needed to take this issue back to their constituents and solicit input. The meeting minutes reported that the council reached consensus about how to proceed. “The Teacher and Student role groups will form an ad hoc committee to address this issue and present their option(s) to the Discipline Committee, which will present recommendations to Council.”282 In addition to the teachers and students, all role group representatives agreed to take the information back to their respective role groups.

What is the RECOGNIZED dress code?

**No indiscreet clothing**

- No skin showing (midriff, cleavage, buttocks)
- No short shorts
- No underwear or swimwear showing
- No halter, strapless, or tube tops
- No lacy, net, or "see through" clothing

**No clothing or accessories which are related to or promote:**

- gangs (rags or bandanas)
- vulgar language
- illicit substances
- sexual activity
Following the start of the fall semester, the committee reported to the council that they were seeking more student input on this policy and that they were working to clarify some of the language in the proposed dress code.\textsuperscript{283} The committee decided to research dress code policies at other Hawai`i schools. A student leadership camp took place shortly after the council meeting, and SCBM student role group representatives were able to discuss the dress code issue with other camp participants. The participants developed a list of 15 recommendations that were subsequently submitted to the committee. The committee “reviewed a list of 15 recommendations, discussed each one, and amended as needed.”\textsuperscript{284}

The discipline committee proposed their revised dress code guidelines:

1. Clothes that promote drugs, sex, profanity, pornography, and gangs, whether explicit or implicit, are prohibited.
2. Footwear must be worn.
3. Hats, caps, visors (any headgear), and sunglasses are not to be worn in the classroom.
4. Shirts must be worn at all times.
5. Buttocks are not to be showing when wearing shorts.
6. Cleavage (females), chests (males), and midriffs (both genders) must be completely covered.
7. The minimum hemlines for shorts must reach the end of thumb when standing with hands at side. Minimum hemlines for skirts, dresses, culottes, skorts, etc., must reach the end of one’s longest finger when standing with hands at side.
8. Clothes must cover underwear or swimwear.
9. Spaghetti straps are not allowed.
10. Tank tops must be worn to cover lingerie when wearing “see through” clothing. Tank tops are allowed if all of the above are followed.\textsuperscript{285}

\textsuperscript{283} Hibiscus High School [pseud.] SCBM Council Meeting Minutes, September 15, 1997.
\textsuperscript{285} Ibid.
At the October 1997 council meeting, the amended, proposed dress code was distributed to all role groups. The parent role group stated that their group is supportive of the work being done, though there is some concern with the amended version that was done after recommendations from the student leadership camp. The group suggests that the next stage be a survey of all teachers, students, parents and a forum for parents and community. The group also suggests implementing the revised code at the start of the next school year so that it does not create a financial burden on parents.  

The council postponed further discussion and asked all role groups to review the proposed dress code prior to the November 17, 1997, council meeting. In addition, the council scheduled another community forum for November 19, 1997, to discuss the dress code issue as well as the designated non-smoking areas of the school’s campus.

At the November 17, 1997, council meeting, the discipline committee distributed their revisions to the proposed dress code:

1. Articles of clothing, jewelry, and accessories that contain any reference to drugs, sex, profanity, pornography and gangs, whether explicit or implicit, are prohibited.
2. Footwear must be worn.
3. Hats, caps, visors (any headgear), and sunglasses are not to be worn in the classroom.
4. Shirts must be worn at all times.
5. Buttocks are not to be showing at any time.
6. (a.) Cleavage (females), chests (males), and midriffs (both genders) must be completely covered.
   (b.) Two inches of exposed midriff are allowed.
7. Clothes must cover underwear. Swim wear is an acceptable alternative for underwear if covered by a shirt that conforms to the dress code.
8. Tank tops must be worn to cover lingerie/underwear when wearing “see through” clothing.
9. Tank tops are allowed if #1, 6, and 7 are followed.

Since this has rotated between the 2 groups, it is being sent to council to come to a resolution.\textsuperscript{287}

The discipline committee explained that 6(a) was the committee’s recommendation to the council. Because the students strongly disagreed with the recommendation, they proposed 6(b). The student role group reported that they had received input from about 75 students who attended a leadership camp, but because the participants were mostly seniors, they wanted more time to get input from the entire student body. Students pointed out that the parent and community role groups would be collecting input from their constituencies during the community forum. The students explained that they would use a television presentation and a more extensive survey to collect input from its constituency.

Some council members expressed concerns that the survey would not collect accurate data because some students would give “foolish statements” and that further postponing the decision would jeopardize the committee’s intention to implement the dress code at the beginning of the spring semester.\textsuperscript{288} Others felt strongly that the entire dress code decision-making process should be seen as a positive learning experience and that it needed to be done thoroughly. If that meant a delay, it was worth it.\textsuperscript{289} In the end, the council reached consensus.

The SRG (Student Role Group) received support of the Council in conducting a school-wide survey to collect data prior to its December meeting. Consensus was reached that the student role group has the right, along with all other role groups, to address their constituency as it sees fit, functioning within the parameters of the Council by-laws. The student group needs to communicate its intent to the other role groups as a courtesy.

The SRG plans to present the pros/cons of the dress code through the closed circuit TV system prior to distributing its survey through the

\textsuperscript{287} Handout, Hibiscus High School [pseud.] SCBM Council Meeting, November 17, 1997.
\textsuperscript{288} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{289} Ibid.
homerooms. If a discussion of the dress code ensues, teachers need to act as neutral facilitators. 290

According to Sarah, the student survey was meant to get a sense of how students felt about each rule and to look for "common ground." She said the student role group believed that the administration and teacher role groups were opposed to surveying the student body, so the student role group approached the Social Studies Department and asked for help. The department head allowed the student role group to proceed with the survey although some teachers were opposed to it because, as they argued, it would take time away from instruction. The students prepared a video presentation and surveys for the students. 291

Meanwhile at the November 19, 1997, community forum, the proposed dress code was presented and participants were asked to break out into small groups to discuss their responses to it. Fifty-six people attended the community forum, including 32 parents, nine teachers, eight students, four community persons, the principal, one classified staff, and one person who did not designate a role group. Most of the small groups reported favorable responses to having a dress code. Recorded responses included "Need to have dress code to prepare students for jobs" and "Standardized dress code—promotes self respect." 292 When the groups were asked to list their concerns, many of the groups responded to the student proposed midriff option with questions regarding how the two inches would be measured. Therefore, many thought that it would be easier to say "no midriffs exposed" rather than allowing two inches and "opening (the) door for

problems." Some groups asked for a definition of "see-through" and "cleavage." Other groups were concerned about the confusion of allowing swimwear as an alternative for underwear. One participant asked, "Is underwear required?" Several groups raised the issue of timing of the dress code implementation. One parent stated, "I've already bought my daughter her school clothes!" Finally, some of the groups wanted to know what the consequences were for students who were not in compliance with the dress code.

The next SCBM council meeting was scheduled for December 15, 1997. No action on the dress code was taken at this meeting. The students reported that their student survey would take place Thursday and Friday, January 8 and 9, 1998. The meeting minutes reflected that

Teachers will receive informational packets re: the survey and their role as facilitators in discussions following a TV presentation, which will occur during social studies classes. Survey data will be tallied over the weekend with the assistance from the Parent role group.

The next meeting of Council will be on January 12. Role groups will meet at the workroom from 6:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. to discuss survey data. Council will meet from 7:00 p.m. to finalize the dress code and fix an implementation date. This will be the first item to be addressed under "old business." Instead of being tallied the weekend before, the student survey information was tallied just a few hours before the January 1998 council meeting. The students had concerns regarding how to interpret some of the data and because there was not enough time, they

---

293. Ibid.
294. Ibid.
295. Ibid.
296. Ibid.
did not come up with a unified position prior to the council meeting.\(^{298}\) Four student representatives attended the council meeting.

**The Decision**

The students presented their survey information but stated that possible confusion regarding the survey might have caused inaccuracies in the data. Regardless, the students proposed allowing each classroom teacher to determine whether hats and sunglasses could be worn, allowing two inches of midriff, and implementing the rest of the proposed dress code at the beginning of the next school year, August 1998. The parents presented the results from the "forum night." They reported that hats and sunglasses were negotiable, but that the implementation of the dress code (with the exception of midriffs) should begin in just less than two weeks, at the beginning of the second semester. The parent role group was in favor of the "no midriff" rule beginning the following school year. Teachers were opposed to the student proposal of implementing the dress code in August 1998. They wanted the complete dress code (including no hats and sunglasses in the classroom and no midriffs) to be fully implemented quickly, during the second semester. The community role group shared the parent role group's view, except they were not in favor of hats and sunglasses in the classroom. The administration role group was not in favor of any midriff and favored the implementation of one complete dress code in August 1998. The classified staff role group was not represented at this meeting.\(^{299}\)

Students argued that many parts of the policy remained undecided, including consequences for breaking the dress code, and implementing it during the 1998–1999

\(^{298}\) Personal interview, June 1998.
school year would allow time for the details to be worked out before implementation began. Discussion and deliberation continued as the groups tried to come to consensus regarding the dress code. At several points during deliberation, the principal (who was the meeting facilitator) surveyed the representatives through straw poll voting using the “fist-of-five” tool in an attempt to determine whether there was consensus among the groups. 300

Because this issue had been with the council for several months, the time involved and repetition of the arguments both in favor of and against the dress code led to frustrated participants who were tired of discussing it. The discipline committee clearly wanted implementation to begin during the second semester. One of the teacher role group members was supporting the discipline committee and would not compromise on the implementation date. The principal was pushing for a consensus decision to be reached by the end of the meeting, or by 9:00 p.m.

Three of the four students finally agreed with the proposal. Sarah, the fourth and final student, later said that she felt pressured by everyone in the room. In fact, the principal verbally pointed out that she was the only student “holding out.” Because she did not want to be the only one to hold up consensus, she said she felt forced into agreeing with the rest of the council. 301 The council meeting minutes report that at approximately 9:00 p.m.,

consensus was reached: Implementation of the dress code will begin at the second semester, January 1998, with the following exceptions: hats and a two inch midriff will be allowed; the wearing of sunglasses is left to teacher discretion per existing dress code. Beginning August 1998, the

300. Personal interviews with parent representative and student representative, June 1998.
entire dress code will be implemented—no hats, sunglasses or midriffs will be allowed in classrooms, including the library.\[302\]

Because the staff role group had not attended the meeting, the group would have three days to concur or comment.

After the meeting, Sarah said she felt horrible; she believed she had let the students down. She said that she sat and cried for a long time. Another student representative came to her and said that the pressure was too much. The second student also felt the same way Sarah did and acknowledged that they (the three other students) had made the wrong decision. Sarah and the second student brainstormed whether there was anything they could do about it now that the meeting had ended.\[303\]

Several elements of the consensus process used for the dress code issue were similar to those observed at Helpline. Straw polling, the considerable time involved, the repetition of issues, a stalemate leading to deadlock or social coercion, and participants feeling that their personal integrity had been compromised. Participants were tired and frustrated at various points in the process. Ultimately, the consensus reached masked the actual split among the participants. If an outsider only saw that the decision regarding the dress code passed by consensus without witnessing any of the discussions, she would not know that there was considerable opposition and high emotion.

**Revisiting the Decision**

Sarah discussed how she felt with her mother, a parent role group representative.

In addition, the student representatives reviewed the council’s operating procedures to see
if there was any way they could rescind their support. The HHS SCBM Council

Operating Procedures define membership and organization. The “Quorum” section states:

The majority of all active Council members and at least one member from each of the role groups shall constitute a quorum to conduct business. In the absence of one or more role groups business may still be conducted, but decisions made must be reviewed by the absent role group(s) who will have three working days to concur or provide comments on the decision(s) to the HHS Council Chairperson(s).... The Chairperson(s) will decide whether the comments received warrant further HHS Council review prior to implementing the decision(s).\(^{304}\)

The four student representatives then met with their advisor and with the principal. They also approached a classified staff representative, because under the “Quorum” operating procedures, the classified staff representatives could offer comments on the decision. The staff representative said he would support the students.\(^{305}\) The four student representatives then sent a letter to all role groups rescinding support of their decision.

The letter read:

The students rescind our support of the dress code decision made at the January 12 Council meeting. Looking back, we believe that the decision was unfair. We felt pressured by many adults to reach consensus and agree quickly. Important issues such as this one should not have had a time limit to the negotiating that was obvious at Monday’s meeting. We don’t feel in any way confident in supporting the final decision of the Council.

Results of our survey clearly showed that timing is the biggest issue for the students. It is unfair to implement a new dress code in the middle of the school year. It is especially confusing to implement the dress code in pieces. We cannot agree with the decision. Our position is that the entire dress code proposal (including no hats, shades, or midriffs) should be implemented at the beginning of the next school year.

Since the decision was to implement part of the new dress code prior to the next scheduled Council Meeting, we request that a special meeting of the Council be called, according to Council operating procedures, to address this issue.

\(^{304}\) Hibiscus High School [pseud.] School/Community-Based Management Operating Procedures.

\(^{305}\) Personal interview, June 1998.
We appreciate all the time and effort that was put into this issue. With a little more, we hope that we can reach a decision that truly satisfies all.\textsuperscript{306}

The council co-chairs (a community representative and the principal) called for a special meeting January 20, 1998, to consider the student role group letter.

Many representatives, especially teacher representatives, were very upset that a special meeting was being called, because they felt that the decision had been made and that it was a “done deal.” Some parent, teacher, and community representatives questioned the ethicality of using the absent role group as an “ally” to request the special meeting as well as rescinding support after the group had reached consensus. Other representatives worried that allowing the students to rescind their support would set a precedent in which any group at any time could rescind support. Despite the objections, the special meeting took place.\textsuperscript{307}

Every role group was represented at the special meeting. It was clarified that the purpose of the meeting was to revisit the dress code because the student role group had rescinded their support and the classified staff role group had “expressed their disagreement with the proposal within the three-day response period specified in the Council Operating Procedures.”\textsuperscript{308} The students proposed that the full dress code (including no headgear, midriffs, or sunglasses in the classroom) be implemented in August 1998. Students added that they would work proactively to provide students with accurate information on the dress code and to garner student support for it.\textsuperscript{309} All participants broke up into their respective role groups to discuss this proposal. After

\textsuperscript{306} E-mail letter from Student Role Group to Hibiscus High School [pseud.] SCBM Council, January 14, 1998.
\textsuperscript{307} Personal interviews.
\textsuperscript{308} Hibiscus High School [pseud.] SCBM Council Special Meeting Minutes, January 20, 1998.
\textsuperscript{309} Ibid.
coming back together, each role group was polled via the “fist-of-five” technique to determine if consensus could be reached on the student proposal. The classified staff and community role groups both agreed with the student proposal. The administration role group reported that it was flexible about the implementation date. The parent role group also stated they were flexible about the implementation date and added that they wanted an “enforceable code.” The teachers stated that they felt consensus had been reached at the January 12 meeting and that they would “hold to that.”

Still trying to reach consensus, groups continued to discuss the proposal as a large group. The group agreed that if consensus could not be reached by 7:30 p.m., a vote would be taken. The HHS SCBM Council Operating Procedures read:

In those few cases where a decision needs to be made and a consensus cannot be reached a vote of the voting members of the KC Council would be made, and a 51 percent majority would be necessary to carry the decision. Each voting member present has one vote with the exception of the Administration. Regardless of the number of members present, their votes will count for four votes in the decision-making process.

Therefore each of the role groups had four votes total, and each representative could vote as an individual (there could be disagreement within a role group), or agree to a unified role group position. As 7:30 p.m. neared, one visibly frustrated teacher stormed out of the meeting. But before leaving the meeting, the group heard her tell another teacher representative to “vote no for me.” Even though the teacher had left the meeting, the remaining teachers wanted to honor her request and therefore would not unanimously agree to the decision. Therefore, because consensus could not be reached, the issue went to a vote. The results were 23 in favor of the proposal and one opposed (the teacher who

310. Ibid.
311. Hibiscus High School [pseud.] School/Community-Based Management Operating Procedures.
312. Personal interview.
left the meeting). The finalized dress code, to be implemented at the beginning of the 1998-1999 academic year (August 1998), read:

1. Students will come to school clean and well-groomed in clothes which are appropriate for the high school learning environment.
2. Articles of clothing, jewelry, and accessories that contain any reference to drugs, sex, profanity, pornography and gangs, whether explicit or implicit, are prohibited.
3. Footwear must be worn.
4. Hats, caps, and visors, or any other headgear, and sunglasses are not to be worn in the classroom or library.
5. Shirts must be worn at all times.
6. Buttocks are not to be showing at any time.
7. Cleavage (females), chests (males), and midriffs (both genders) must be completely covered.
8. Clothes must cover underwear/lingerie. Swimwear is an acceptable alternative for underwear if covered by clothing that conforms to the dress code.
9. Tank tops must be worn to cover underwear/lingerie when wearing “see through” clothing. Tank tops are allowed if all of the dress code guidelines are followed.  

Participants began volunteering to work on promotional efforts to publicize the dress code. Additionally, several participants asked that the issues of rescinding support and calling special meetings be added to future council meeting agendas so that, if desired by the group, the HHS SCBM Council Operating Procedures could be amended to clarify their intent.

Following the special meeting, two teachers resigned from the discipline committee explaining,

A. When the Disc Hui requested clarification of the decision-making process used at the Council we received a flow chart and explanation. It

was clear to us that the procedure described was not being followed and we were unable to work with an ever-changing “process.”

B. Efforts to establish a process for the student role group to poll the student body failed. Students still have no clear guidelines.

C. The professional work of the Disc Hui was not trusted by the Council.

D. The time and energy expended on the Dress Code twice (last spring and again this year) was wasted.314

At the February 17, 1998 council meeting, many participants commented that they were ready for healing to take place regarding the dress code issue. The group’s recommendations for future critical issues were to:

a. Schedule a conference involving all relevant role groups and involved committees to lay out expectations, resources, and time line.

b. Consider changing Operating Procedures part II item six (6), second sentence to read, “In the absence of one or more role groups, business may still be conducted, but decisions made can only be reviewed by the absent role group(s) who will have three working days after receipt of the minutes to concur or provide comments on the decision(s) to the Council chairperson(s).”315

Some members wanted only absent role groups to have the opportunity to review a decision, not role groups who participated in the decision and then changed their mind after the meeting. Although the council did not make a decision at this meeting regarding these recommendations, it was clear that the participants felt that the decision-making process needed to be improved so that what happened over the dress code would not be repeated.

Several elements of the consensus process used to revisit the dress code decision were similar to the elements in the first consensus process and those observed at Helpline. Straw polling was used during the special meeting to gauge how close participants were to reaching consensus. Participants were frustrated with revisiting the

issue, feeling that they had already spent considerable time discussing the issues again and again (repetition). When consensus could not be reached by 7:30 p.m., there was a stalemate that would either have to remain deadlocked or if consensus was going to be achieved, somebody would have to be convinced to change her opinion (social coercion). One teacher felt that she had to continue to block consensus so that her personal integrity was not compromised.

The implications of consensus decision making regarding the dress code

The consensus process had several elements Mansbridge points out as disadvantages of consensus including the time involved, repetition of issues and decisions, deadlock, social coercion, and participants who felt their integrity had been compromised. In the meeting on January 12, Sarah was clearly upset with the outcome. Enough, in fact, that she worked with other students and role groups to find a way to have the council revisit the decision. The students presented their case to the council co-chairs, requested a special meeting, and were able to get the dress code policy changed to meet their interests. At the special meeting on January 20, a teacher was so upset she walked out of the meeting before the final decision was made. After hearing about the meeting and the change in policy, two other teachers who had not been council representatives resigned from the discipline committee. This type of conflict is not unique to SCBM. As Mansbridge observed at Helpline, face-to-face conflict is hard for small groups, especially when the members know and work with each other frequently. Mansbridge found that participants at Helpline had a general fear of argument. There was an underlying assumption that participants shared common interests and they were accustomed to making decisions by consensus. When conflict arose, they had difficulty
switching to adversarial decision-making procedures. Even though a majority vote process was ultimately used, some teachers were perturbed the decision was revisited at all.

In addition, people felt a sense of failure. Hibiscus SCBM Council also operated primarily under consensus-based decision making. Only as a last resort would the council consider a majority vote procedure. At the first meeting, January 12, the council members pushed Sarah and arrived at what Mansbridge calls "false consensus." The decision clearly was not in line with what Sarah personally wanted, but she felt pressured by the group and went along with the other members. At the January 20 special meeting, the teacher continually threatened to use her veto power so that consensus could not be reached. Because the council decided to put a time limit on the discussion, they stopped deliberating and took a majority vote. This time it was the teacher, instead of the student, who walked away unsatisfied and upset. Ironically, if the council had used a majority vote procedure at the January 12 meeting, the student would probably not have been able to ask for the policy decision to be revisited. It was only because the consensus decision had been made, and one of the role groups had not been there, that the students were able to ask for the special meeting.

**The Role of Conflict and Deliberation in Democracy**

Setting a limit on how much deliberation would take place regarding the dress code issue at Hibiscus set the council up for failure. If deliberation and dialogue are limited, then democratic participation itself is limited. Certainly it is frustrating to be a participant in a dialogue that does not get resolved. But the alternative, which eventually took place, was to force a resolution in which an upset minority was created. While
Mansbridge argues that groups need to learn better how to switch between unitary and adversarial decision-making procedures, hortatory SCBM literature and participants made explicit value judgments about the preference of consensus-based decision making.

The reasons identified by Gutmann and Thompson regarding why deliberation is important are applicable to SCBM schools. First, when conflicts are subject to considerable deliberation, the decision usually has more legitimacy than if it had been made without deliberation. If the discipline committee had proposed the dress code to the faculty and administration and it had been adopted without the council’s input, there would have been tremendous fallout. Not only would students have been upset, but parents and community members would have also been angry that they were not involved in discussing and deciding the issue.

Second, regardless of whether the conflict is a moral conflict, deliberative forums help participants understand the issue more fully, which may enable them to see the issue from another’s point of view. While some teachers favored the adoption of the dress code when it was initially proposed in the fall of 1997, the community forum highlighted for some of them that some parents might not have been financially capable of purchasing new “dress-code appropriate” clothes just after purchasing new school clothes for the year. Participants were able to share concerns, see the issue from other perspectives, and broaden their understanding and willingness to negotiate.

Third, when participants in a conflict talk to each other, they have the opportunity to identify underlying issues and develop an understanding of the nature of the dispute. Not talking prevents the possibility of clarification and understanding. Because of the community forum and council deliberations, parents were able to understand that teachers
favored a dress code because some student dress was disrupting the classroom environment. When students wore revealing clothing, catcalls were rampant, and it was difficult for some students to pay attention. Instead of a productive learning environment, teachers argued that the classroom turned into “a sea of out of control hormones.”

Before understanding the impetus for a dress code, some parents may have seen this as a bureaucratic and nit-picky attempt to control individualism. After deliberations, some parents were able to support certain parts of the dress code that would allow the underlying interests to be met.

Fourth, as long as no time limits or other constraints are placed on deliberation, it does have the ability to provide a forum to self-correct. As long as the council was willing to keep talking, it was possible that consensus could have been reached. It was only after the council stated that a decision had to be reached by a certain point that consensus failed. Continuing to talk, even if the decision had to be postponed, would have allowed participants to continue to explore options. A break from the discussion at the first meeting would have allowed the students to confer and get clarity from their role group about what their interest were. Instead of forcing the decision, more deliberation—not less—might have generated a workable solution. When conflict seems intractable, deliberation can engender possibility.

However, Mansbridge argued that groups needed to be able to switch between adversarial and unitary procedures, in other words move from consensus to majority vote, more easily than the Hibiscus council did. This could ultimately limit deliberation because the council might switch before all participants have had their full say or before

participants have had enough time to better understand the positions and arguments of others. How does a group know when to switch from consensus-based decision-making and majority vote? Clearly some participants would have been willing to take a vote early on (even before the January 12 meeting) if they felt that using majority vote was a normal and acceptable way to make council decisions.

Conversely, some may argue that by spending months discussing the proposed student dress code, the council did not have the ability to discuss other pressing issues at the school. For example during the months in which the dress code was the biggest issue, the council did not have deliberations regarding the science curriculum. True, the issue was never raised so the council could make a decision regarding which topics took priority. But the fact remains that in groups with limited amount of time and participation, one contentious issue could dominate all of the group’s deliberations.

If a group decides to switch from a consensus-based procedure to a majority vote procedure like Mansbridge argues groups should be able to do—despite Barber’s argument to conceive of democracy as and endless cycle of deliberation, decision and action, or Gutmann’s and Thompson’s reasons to continue deliberation to resolve conflict—then the group must be explicit about that decision and the reasons why the change in procedures is necessary. It is not enough to switch procedures without understanding the underlying assumptions or feelings that a group associates with the decision-making process.

SCBM participants worked hard to achieve consensus and when they could not, they often felt as if they had failed. As the previous chapter illustrates, democracy is about participating fully in the deliberation and decision-making process, regardless of the outcome. Deliberation has the ability to not only resolve conflict, but to transform it.
When participants are able communicatively share information, bargain, and grapple with decisions, new perspectives and agreements are possible. When deliberation is limited, or does not exist, then democracy is reduced to merely indicating preferences on a particular issue through voting.
CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION

At its basic assertion, SCBM claims that school decentralization will improve educational outcomes. Governance issues dominated Hawai‘i’s SCBM design and implementation. This chapter begins with a summary of the central themes of this dissertation. I expanded the governance focus to include three central tenets of democracy: representation, participation, and decision-making. After summarizing the chapter themes, I look at three evaluations of Hawai‘i’s SCBM efforts. Two evaluations were conducted by educational organizations, and one was a Hawai‘i Board of Education (BOE) survey. Because all of the surveys, as well as my own research, examine citizen participation, I turn to the theory of “Stealth Democracy” advanced by John Hibbing and Elizabeth Theiss-Morse. Hibbing and Theiss-Morse argue that citizens do not want to be involved with politics. Instead they want officials that are not self-interested. I explore whether this theory discounts my research and the arguments of participationists. Finally, I explore areas of additional research that are needed beyond this dissertation.

Central Themes of the Dissertation

I began this dissertation by setting the historical context for the emergence of SCBM. Educational reform, particularly the oscillations between centralization and decentralization, is not new to schools. Similar to reform movements in government and business, proponents of SCBM pointed to the bureaucratic structure as the reason why schools, and students, were not performing well. Advocates insisted that changing the bureaucratic structure of governance, moving from top-down decision-making to shared
decision-making at the local level would revolutionize schools resulting in higher student achievement.

As discussed in chapter one, President George H. Bush formed a presidential commission in 1983 as a response to the claim that American students were falling behind international educational standards. The commission formulated recommendations on America’s education system in their report, A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform (Nation at Risk). Recommendations included shifting educational governance from bureaucratic structures to local control and simultaneously calling for the development of national curriculum standards.

President Clinton also issued broad educational reform initiatives in his Goals 2000: Educate America Act. Like his predecessor and successor, Clinton’s desire was to see students in the United States rank first internationally in math and science. In addition, schools were charged with preparing students for citizenship and productive employment. The Educate America Act established a National Education Standards and Improvement Council to examine and certify national and state content, student performance, and assessment systems voluntarily submitted by states. The Educate America Act also promoted school-to-work programs so students could transition into occupations with acquired skills.

Like his father, President George W. Bush “saw an educational system in crisis, unprepared to meet this nation’s 21st century needs” and proposed the No Child Left Behind Education Improvement Act of 2001.

---

Behind Act on his fourth day in office. 319 The Act does not mandate national standards but instead mandates that states establish their own standards for reading, math, and science. Further, states must report annually on school and student progress and are not allowed to use average scores. If scores fall below state standards, then schools must provide additional services to ensure each student performs to the state’s expectations. Students and parents are given more choices to attend schools outside their geographic area if the local school does not meet the standards and is a Title I school. Additionally, if a Title I school fails to meet the standards after five years the school must be restructured. 320

All of the language at the national level about school reform has a common theme: crisis. The rhetoric of crisis—a crisis in test scores, a crisis in safety at schools, a crisis in parental involvement, a crisis in mismanaged schools—is used to describe the state of the nation’s educational system. And all of these add up to one thing: America’s prosperity and status as world superpower is at stake. Schools are to blame and drastic measures need to be taken to ensure national interests were maintained.

Likewise, Hawai‘i’s SCBM reform efforts emerged as these same themes were discussed by politicians, business leaders, community members, and even professional educators and administrators within Hawai‘i’s Department of Education (DOE). By decentralizing the control of schools to the local level, the underlying assumption was that stakeholders and communities would be empowered and schools would improve. But Joel Handler points out that this devolution of authority to the community can also be

seen as a way for the bureaucratic structure to manage conflict.\textsuperscript{321} Instead of addressing the student achievement concerns directly, the DOE responded to the concerns that the system was bureaucratic and inefficient. So the DOE appeared to be responsive while delegating accountability to the local level.

Driven by substantive concerns, SCBM became a reform that focused on process issues, struggles over authority and power, and in limited circumstances substantive educational concerns.

Organizations, whether public or private, struggle for survival by gaining allies, acquiring resources, seeking legitimacy, and fending off rivals. Decentralization, deregulation, and privatization are aspects of these processes. The allocation and reallocation of authority, either between units of government or between government and the market, is a principal method of managing conflict.\textsuperscript{322}

The bureaucracy was to blame for the failure of schools and because bureaucracy was incompatible with democratic principals, school governance would be decentralized and democratized.

Three foci of contemporary democratic theory became the themes of chapters two, three, and four. Chapter two focuses on how participation is structured in SCBM and whether the structural factors impact participation. Because the DOE mandated that six role groups be included in each school’s SCBM structure, the SCBM schools I studied spent considerable time on structural concerns. Not only were the identification of, outreach to, and participation of members in each role group time consuming, but each school needed to submit a “Proposal to Implement” that described the participation and decision-making structure. For most of the schools, the development of bylaws,

\begin{flushright}
322. Ibid., p. 219.
\end{flushright}
policies, and procedures took a substantial amount of energy and were not produced quickly.

While the hortatory SCBM literature talked about open participation, most schools developed formal representative structures to reflect the six role groups identified by DOE. This tension between representative and nonrepresentative structures is found in democratic theory, especially in comparing liberal and republican principles. Proponents conceived of SCBM as more than just an administrative decision-making structure. They also conceptualized it as a forum for communities to identify shared values and agree on a common good. SCBM aspired to republican ideals, but resembled liberal structures.

Despite the fact that the DOE issued the same policies and guidelines for all schools and the similar representative structures created, the schools I looked at in-depth had different participation cultures. Jasmine Middle School (Jasmine) was characterized by a communal culture that operated informally on most occasions whereas Hibiscus High School (Hibiscus) operated formally most of the time. Yet, even on the school calendar issue, Jasmine consciously switched to a formal style because of encouragement from DOE administrators. Worried that the DOE would receive complaints about Jasmine’s decision to implement a modified school calendar, the administrators urged the SCBM council to document participation and decision-making carefully. They also cautioned the council that it was important to get buy in from the teachers since they were contractually bound by collective bargaining agreements. Whether this was procedural diligence or an example of experts managing the agenda, the council heeded the advice and operated formally.
Building on the theme of structures and cultures of participation, chapter three explored the educative value of participation by looking at both theory and case examples. Pragmatists as well as proponents of participatory democracy all agree that individuals are educated about democratic values through participation in democratic processes. It is through this hands-on experience that the individual becomes a citizen. However, now, many believe that schools have lost this focus. Henry Giroux writes, “In effect, the ideological shift at work here points to a restricted definition of schooling, one that almost completely strips public education of a democratic vision where citizenship and the politics of possibility are given serious consideration.”

He continues, “I mean that primacy is given to education as economic investment, that is, to pedagogical practices designed to created a school-business partnership and make the American economic system more competitive in world markets.”

But, similar to pragmatists’ beliefs, SCBM supporters claimed that individuals would be educated in civic virtues through participation in the SCBM process. However, the definition of participation is important. Participatory democrats define participation as more than involvement or influence in a process. They maintain that participants must be decision makers in order to realize the full educative value.

SCBM councils at both Jasmine and Hibiscus were involved in principal selection processes. Seemingly common interests, low conflict, and consensual agreement characterized the Jasmine process. Hibiscus actually engaged in two separate principal selection processes during the case study. During the first selection, the SCBM council

324. Ibid.
reached common interests and agreement. However the district superintendent limited
the amount of influence the council had and caused considerable disappointment and hard
feelings. Council members felt that self-interested DOE bureaucrats blocked their
efforts.

During the second process, all of the role groups except the administration
reached agreement. After submitting required waivers and exception applications to the
traditional process, the council was again not allowed to participate to the extent they
requested. With the exception of the Hibiscus administration representatives, the council
felt that the district superintendent, the BOE, and the unions thwarted their attempts and
SCBM responsibilities of participation. Even though the Hibiscus council members did
not achieve their desired outcome, they did participate actively and democratically in the
principal selection process. Up until the point where their requests were rejected by the
BOE, DOE, and unions, they had engaged in extensive deliberation, negotiation, and
decision-making amongst themselves.

Chapter four explores the efficacy of deliberation and consensus-based decision-
making within the SCBM context. Deliberative democrats contend that bureaucracy
breaks down communicative possibilities. By instituting deliberative forums and
opportunities, citizens are able to reach understanding and make binding agreements.
Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson assert that there are four reasons why deliberation
is the best model to consider moral conflict. It increases legitimacy, participants are able
to take broader perspectives, it clarifies the nature of the conflict, and it contains its own self-correcting processes. 

Because deliberative participants strive to identify and reach consensus, the fourth chapter also looked at consensus-based decision-making processes. Unitary democracies, like SCBM, often use consensus rule instead of majority rule because the later creates a loser, or “minority.” Striving for unified agreement, these groups typically deliberate in face-to-face forums and are frequently conflict avoidant. A case study, the proposed Hibiscus student dress code, was looked at in-depth to determine the factors in reaching consensus. Elements of the process included straw polling, factors of time and issue repetition, stalemate, deadlock, and social coercion. Because one participant could not ultimately support the decision, the Hibiscus council had to revert to majority vote. That unsuccessful attempt at consensus resulted in frustration and feelings of failure by participants.

My research was not alone at looking at the implementation of SCBM in Hawai‘i. While the research is not extensive, I think that it highlights problems with determining outcome measures for this educational reform effort as well as raises questions with regard to overall satisfaction with SCBM reform.

Evaluations of Hawai‘i’s SCBM Efforts

Limited evaluations were done to determine whether Hawai‘i’s SCBM efforts were effective in achieving the goals it set out to. Of the three formal evaluations conducted, two were preformed by outside research organizations, the Pacific Region Educational Laboratory (PREL) and the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research.

and Development (Far West) from San Francisco, California. The PREL evaluation looked at two schools approximately one year after they both implemented SCBM. The Far West evaluation evaluated SCBM efforts at the first nine SCBM schools. The third evaluation was a BOE questionnaire. While the research is not comprehensive, it does begin to show some trends regarding SCBM, schools, and participants.

**PREL Evaluation**

PREL and the Hawaii Business Roundtable (in cooperation with the Evaluation Section of the Planning and Evaluation Branch of the Hawaii State Department of Education) conducted an evaluation of two SCBM schools in 1992. The Hawaii Business Roundtable provided the funding for the evaluation. The two schools, Wai'alae Elementary and Ma'ili Elementary were selected because they were two of the first schools to implement SCBM. The evaluations focused on four areas: school/community connections, governance/organizational systems, teaching/learning situations, and student learning.\(^{326}\)

Through interviews with fifty-two individuals at Wai'alae Elementary and twenty-eight individuals at Ma'ili Elementary, the PREL evaluation concluded that SCBM was a success at both schools. However, reading some of the responses to interview questions illustrates a more complicated picture. For example, participant responses at Wai'alae Elementary included feeling that there was a “perception of an 'in' group 'running the show,'” “unilateral decisions made by independent role groups,” and “talk but no action.”\(^{327}\) A particular issue over bylaws erupted when a new group of


\(^{327}\) Ibid., p. 14.
parents became involved in SCBM. The original SCBM participants never developed bylaws or organizational guidelines because they felt they were too restrictive and “indicated a lack of trust.” They felt that the concept of SCBM “promotes collaboration, consensus, shared responsibility, and trust.” But the new parents were insistent that the SCBM council adopt bylaws and with the assistance of the DOE SCBM program director, the council eventually drafted and formally adopted bylaws.

Further, the PREL evaluation reported that Waiʻalae Elementary did not have the involvement of classified staff. Because they operated under a “town meeting format” the council did not require participation from every role group. But the lack of participation by some role groups indicated a larger problem.

A classified staff member was initially curious and attended meetings, but since has withdrawn and no longer participates. She felt that her input was not being heard. A few parents have stopped participating for the same reason. Feedback from the parent interviews indicates that some parents do not participate in SCBM for three reasons: 1) frustration because they feel disregarded. 2) lack of information, and 3) lack of interest or time.

Participant feelings of disregard seemed high at Waiʻalae Elementary despite the claims that the original SCBM participants worked to include a large segment of the school community. However despite the findings, SCBM was considered successful at Hawaii’s first SCBM School, Waiʻalae Elementary.

In 1989, Maʻili Elementary was identified as a “special needs” school by the Hawaii State Legislature and given an additional $362,000 to address their special needs.

---

328. Ibid., p. 17.
329. Ibid.
330. Ibid.
331. Ibid., p. 14.
(e.g., student absenteeism, drop-outs, high teacher turnover, etc.). This effort required Ma'ili to develop a planning group with the same six role groups that were mandated by SCBM. In less than a year after the planning group had started, Ma'ili had implemented SCBM. The principal said that the planning effort around special needs laid the groundwork for SCBM.

The evaluation found that all six role groups were actively involved with the SCBM efforts. The SCBM council only met quarterly and would conduct special meetings if needed. SCBM participants actively engaged community input by recruiting long-standing, visible community members to serve on the council and by going door-to-door for community and parent input when needed. The council found that printed flyer and bulletins were not effective in their community. The council also worked hard to include the involvement of other social service and health agencies working in the area including Catholic Charities, a nearby homeless shelter, the Girl Scouts, and the Wai'anae Mental Health Center.

The evaluation reported that it was too early to evaluate learning outcomes at Wai'alae Elementary and Ma'ili Elementary. However, there were activities documented at Ma'ili that addressed some of the special needs identified including:

- A whole language/balanced curriculum
- Heterogeneous grouping of students
- Self-contained classrooms
- Intervention/integration model for Chapter 1 students
- Cooperative learning strategies

332. Ibid., p. 22.
333. Ibid., p. 23.
334. Ibid., p. 30.
335. Ibid., p. 27.
336. Ibid., p. 32.
Other than mentioning those specific efforts, there was no correlation built between SCBM and student learning or teaching/learning situations. The evaluators cited the inability to evaluate learning outcomes only one year after implementation of SCBM. This initial evaluation was important in providing early indications that there might be a problem between linking SCBM to student learning outcomes.

**Far West Evaluation**

Because the PREL evaluation noted the difficulty in evaluating student learning outcomes close to the time of SCBM's initial implementation, it was several years before another formal evaluation was conducted. In 1995, Far West conducted a second evaluation of Hawai'i's SCBM efforts. Through a contract from the DOE, Far West evaluated nine of the first SCBM schools in their fifth or sixth year of implementation. Through two-day visits at each school, focus group and individual interviews, surveys, and review of primary documents, the Far West study evaluated SCBM impacts on four areas: school decision-making and management, school-community connections, school improvement and the impact on three distinct groups—parents, teachers, and students.

Regarding the first area of focus, school decision-making and management, respondents reported that they were moving toward some form of shared decision making prior to implementing SCBM. While most groups felt empowered at their schools, some schools reported that they wanted greater decision-making authority because they

---

337. Ibid., p. 32.
339. Ibid. p. 16-71.
340. Ibid., p. 16.
felt either "limited or constrained" by they state. Personnel decisions were cited as an example of why some participants felt this way. However, respondents were mixed regarding how much authority they thought SCBM councils should have regarding personnel decisions. "In general, respondents in all groups...felt that SCBM councils should have authority in these areas. The exception is teachers, who are about evenly split on the idea of SCBM councils having the authority to hire teachers."\(^{342}\)

The second area of focus, school-community connections, was very favorable with regard to SCBM's impact. The evaluation stated that schools reported both increased school-community and school-home connections.\(^{343}\) Through the outreach efforts implemented as a result of SCBM, schools saw more parental and community involvement. Respondents saw a strong correlation between SCBM efforts and impact on participation by the members of the school's six role groups.

The third area of focus, school improvement, the results were not as clear. The evaluation reported that, "implementation of SCBM goals, particularly those involving curriculum and instruction, is uneven within and across schools."\(^{344}\) While some schools reported success, it generally was within one grade or topic area and not across the entire school curriculum. The evaluators found that schools were engaged in a variety of improvement efforts, but did not always tie them to SCBM, so the respondents did not see a direct link. Among school improvement efforts, improving school climate was the one cited most often as relating to SCBM.\(^{345}\)

---

341. Ibid., p. 24.
342. Ibid., p. 22.
343. Ibid., p. 36.
344. Ibid., p. 42.
345. Ibid., p. 43.
The fourth area of focus, the impact on parents, teachers, and students, also found mixed results. The evaluation focused on parental involvement, and similar to the positive results seen regarding school-community connections, parents who were surveyed responded favorably to SCBM initiatives.346 Not only were parents more involved, but the ones that were involved also reported knowing more about what was happening at the school and a higher confidence in their child’s school.347 Impacts on the teachers were not quite as high. While teachers reported an increased sense of decision-making power, some reported “concern that individuals use the consensus format to press personal agendas and hinder progress.”348 The evaluation did not report if the teachers who responded associated their concerns with a particular role group (e.g., concern regarding the parents or administration). Finally, although the evaluation looked at a mix of quantitative and qualitative data to determine the impact of SCBM on students, the overall sense was that, “the results are fairly mixed.”349

Evaluators attributed their difficulty with clearly determining the impacts on SCBM to the fact that the schools were all engaged in a variety of reform and improvement efforts simultaneously. Between 1989 (when SCBM was legalized) and 1995 (when the evaluation took place) additional reform efforts included modifications to the original SCBM policy, reorganization of DOE district offices, policies to encourage charter schools, literacy initiatives, and revisions to statewide performance standards.350 In addition, they cited the fact that SCBM was a conceptual framework that allowed each

346. Ibid., p. 51.
347. Ibid., p. 52.
348. Ibid., p. 58.
349. Ibid., p. 64.
350. Ibid., p. 4.
local school to design its own governance and shared decision-making structure. Finally, they noted that the original SCBM policies and guidelines suggested student learning outcomes would improve as a result of implementing SCBM, but the policies and guidelines did not specify how that would occur. After the Far West evaluation was released, the BOE decided to conduct its own survey of SCBM participants.

**Board of Education Questionnaire**

The Evaluation Section of the Planning and Evaluation Group in the DOE’s Office of Accountability and School Instructional Support distributed a four-question survey regarding perceptions of SCBM on behalf of the BOE. 240 participants, from 96 SCBM schools, responded to the questionnaire. The respondents included 66 teachers, 58 administrators, 42 parents, 26 community members, 22 classified staff, 15 students, and 11 with no or multiple role group designations.351

The first question asked respondents how well they thought consensus-based decision-making was working at their school. Eighty percent of respondents responded that consensus-based decision-making was “good,” “very good,” or “excellent.” Some respondents noted that using consensus took “time, skill, and practice” while others noted that they felt it should be used for some, but not all, school decisions.352

The second question asked whether respondents felt the SCBM council members at their school adequately consulted with their role groups. Twenty-six percent of the respondents reported they felt there was not adequate consultation and another twenty-three percent of the respondents said they “Don’t Know.” Respondents indicated that

352. Ibid., p. 3.
they tried, but recognized that they could improve. They reported that time was a factor as well as being able to identify successful outreach strategies for community members.\textsuperscript{353}

The third question asked whether the respondent had adequate access to sufficient information about the SCBM council’s activities. Eighty-seven percent of respondents indicated they received meeting announcements, eighty-two percent received meeting minutes, and seventy-nine percent received meeting agendas. In addition, respondents indicated that they received information about SCBM from additional forums including the press, notices at the public library, PTSA newsletters, and school bulletins.\textsuperscript{354}

The fourth question asked whether SCBM should have authority over all areas of the school or whether some areas should be treated as “off limits.” Because the question was not clearly defined, over one quarter of the responses were left blank or indicated “Don’t Know.” Of the surveys that did indicate other responses, personnel, was the issue listed most frequently as the area that should be “off limits.” The responses are only general indicators. Because they were not correlated to role group membership, it is hard to gauge some of the responses. For example does the fact that over 60 percent of the respondents were teachers, administrators, and staff impact the fact that more respondents wanted “personnel” to be “off limits” more than any other issue?

The PREL and Far West evaluations attempted to determine whether SCBM achieved the goals it set out to at the schools studied. The BOE Questionnaire tried to elicit views about what was working well and what was not working well regarding SCBM. There were varied results regarding the extent to which participants felt SCBM

\textsuperscript{353} Ibid., p. 4.
\textsuperscript{354} Ibid.
had and should have authority over school issues. Some respondents felt that SCBM needed more authority while others felt that certain areas, such as personnel decisions, should not be part of SCBM's authority. There were not any quantitative results that pointed to any impact SCBM had on school improvement or learning outcomes in the evaluations. However the limited case studies all pointed to the success of SCBM in one area, increasing parental and community involvement.

Both chapter two and chapter three looked at issues of participation. Chapter two considered whether the structure of SCBM councils impacted participation and chapter three explored the distinctions between involvement and participation including the extent to which the SCBM council had decision-making authority. An underlying assumption in both of those chapters was that people wanted to be involved in SCBM. Next, I want to explore the idea of whether people actually do want to be involved in politics. The following section looks at the arguments made by John Hibbing and Elizabeth Theiss-Morse in *Stealth Democracy: Americans' Beliefs about How Government Should Work* as a basis for considering the issue of citizen involvement.

**Stealth Democracy**

Hibbing and Theiss-Morse surveyed Americans' interest in politics through a national survey and eight focus groups across the country. They reported that the people they talked to did not want to have input into politics let alone become actively involved. Before considering how this assertion applies to SCBM, I want to look at the underlying reasons people gave that lead Hibbing and Theiss-Morse to their conclusion.

Hibbing and Theiss-Morse reported that there are two primary reasons citizens do not want to get involved in democratic politics. First, people have other non-political interests that occupy their time and attention. They want to see certain ends, but do not want to personally be involved in achieving them.\textsuperscript{356} With limited amount of time and many demands on individuals, many do not make political involvement a priority. Instead, they work, spend time with family and friends, and turn their attention to other activities they find pleasure in. They are not forced out of politics, rather they choose not to participate.

The second reason Hibbing and Theiss-Morse give is that citizens are conflict avoidant. People do not like to engage in politics, and disputes, at the local level and they do not care for political disputes from at state or national levels either.\textsuperscript{357} Citizens surveyed and participants in the focus groups reported displeasure with public debate, including Congressional debate, that was particularly controversial. Furthermore, the displeasure increases the closer it gets to involving the respondents in open debate.\textsuperscript{358}

Yet despite the fact that citizens do not want to actively engage in politics, Hibbing and Theiss-Morse argue that the people still care deeply about the process. They have a high disdain for special interests and realize that their own lack of involvement has permitted special interests to become a large part of the political process.\textsuperscript{359} While respondents reported the more they know about politics the less they liked it, Hibbing and Theiss-Morse contend that "[p]rocess is not complicated to the American people, and

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{356} Ibid., p. 13.
\item \textsuperscript{357} Ibid., p. 3.
\item \textsuperscript{358} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{359} Ibid., p. 127.
\end{itemize}
they believe they understand it.\textsuperscript{360} It is the special interests, political parties, and elections that people commented on most in the study, whereas respondents had little to say about substantive policy.\textsuperscript{361}

Related to the process concerns, Hibbing and Theiss-Morse argue that citizens are disgusted with political favoritism and special privilege. Even though some say they go hand-in-hand with politics, the authors say the abhorrence is so high respondents would rather see the process blocked so that nobody benefits instead of seeing political insiders use the process to their own benefit.\textsuperscript{362} Respondents also reported that they felt the people with the most ability to do something about the political process, the elected officials, were the ones who benefit from it.\textsuperscript{363}

Hibbing and Theiss-Morse claim that what citizens really want are leaders that are not self-interested and if they could be assured that their elected officials were disinterested there would be little need for public involvement.\textsuperscript{364} Survey participants thought that there was much more consensus on the policy issues than actually exists.\textsuperscript{365} Therefore it is not surprising that their wish for “stealth democracy” as Hibbing and Theiss-Morse refer to it, also calls for the decisions made by government to reflect the preferences of the people.

Hibbing and Theiss-Morse contend that citizens prefer minimal debate and compromise and would prefer to see government run like a business.\textsuperscript{366} They argue that

\textsuperscript{360} Ibid., p. 37.
\textsuperscript{361} Ibid., p. 38.
\textsuperscript{362} Ibid., p. 55.
\textsuperscript{363} Ibid., p. 59.
\textsuperscript{364} Ibid., p. 141.
\textsuperscript{365} Ibid., p. 132.
\textsuperscript{366} Ibid., p. 139.
deliberation is inefficient, and it favors the powerful, eloquent, and well-educated.\textsuperscript{367} Therefore, citizens that are not comfortable with conflict or debating publicly cannot participate fully in a deliberative forum. Hibbing and Theiss-Morse maintain that participation advocates assume people feel better when they get to give input regardless of the outcome but that there is no evidence to prove that assumption.\textsuperscript{368}

**Stealth Democracy and SCBM**

While Hibbing and Theiss-Morse highlight important issues deliberative democrats need to consider, I do not believe they necessarily point to participation problems in SCBM. First, the definition of politics needs to be challenged. Hibbing and Theiss-Morse asked citizens about their views on government, elected officials, and political decisions.\textsuperscript{369} While I see SCBM in a political context, I do not think that everybody does. Because the questions did not specifically reference education or schools, it cannot be assumed that respondents feel the same way about participating in school-based groups.

Part of what determines an individual's willingness to become involved in political activities has to do with how much a person feels that she can impact a process. Many citizens feel disempowered by national and even state politics because they cannot see how their participation (e.g., voting) impacts the process. People, especially parents, feel that they can have an immediate and direct impact on their local school. Generally because the school is easily accessible, offers occasions to easily network and meet other

\textsuperscript{367} Ibid., p. 203.
\textsuperscript{368} Ibid., p. 200.
\textsuperscript{369} Ibid., p. 252.
stakeholders, and provides opportunities to get involved, schools offer many chances to participate.

Furthermore because schools and educational literature claim that parental involvement is linked to student achievement, there is an expectation of participation. Conversely, this belief might be exaggerated into the assumption that if you do not participate in your child's schooling you are not a good parent. Armed with parental guilt, people will go to great lengths to become involved if they think it will make a difference in their child's learning.

Parents, students, teachers, staff, and administrators all have direct ties to school involvement. While not every member of those role groups wanted to participate, there were some who were very involved. It was harder to define the members of the community role group and, for the most part, it was difficult to engage them actively in SCBM. Often, the community member might be a close geographic neighbor of the school, a retired teacher, a school alumnus, or a parent of an alumnus. But while there were some participants actively engaged, the overall number of participants was relatively small. It is not known whether the small numbers of participants indicate that there was not interest or willingness or merely that people could not participate due to extraneous reasons such as work schedule or other family commitments.

Despite the fact that it cannot be determined if citizens would respond the same way if asked specifically about school participation as they did to the questions Hibbing and Theiss-Morse asked, I do agree that the issues that Hibbing and Theiss-Morse raise important points about the themes of this dissertation, in particular the extent to which citizens participate and the issue of determining whether deliberative processes such as
SCBM are successful. In the next section criteria regarding successful deliberative processes are discussed. Following that section, I discuss areas within deliberative politics and SCBM that need more study.

**Deliberative Process Criteria**

The authors of *Stealth Democracy* as well as other scholars cited throughout this dissertation assert that deliberative processes are or are not critical to furthering democratic politics. Hibbing and Theiss-Morse do not believe that increasing deliberative processes is realistic given the views of citizens. They instead claim that what is needed is making representative democracy more enticing by convincing people that their participation will help eliminate the self-interested politicians they do not like.\(^{370}\) They also believe that instituting campaign finance reform and smaller salaries for officials, as well as teaching citizens to better tolerate political conflict will increase the likelihood the people will participate.\(^{371}\)

But only the last idea, teaching people to better tolerate political conflict, speaks directly to deliberative processes. Hibbing and Theiss-Morse do not distinguish the subtleties of deliberative processes. Whether it is the citizenry or the elected officials engaged in deliberation, there are important criteria to think about regarding deliberative processes. Jürgen Habermas maintains that deliberation is about speech acts. Speech acts have two purposes: to produce the possibility of reaching understanding and to coordinate action.\(^{372}\) While Habermas recognizes that communicative action is dependent on situational contexts, he contends that participants may adopt one of two

---

370. Ibid., p. 215-216.
371. Ibid., p. 221.
approaches, strategic or communicative. A strategic approach is one that is oriented toward success whereas a communicative approach is oriented toward understanding. Habermas further claims that these approaches are identifiable based on the intuitive knowledge of the participants. It is important to distinguish between these two approaches when participating and evaluating deliberative processes.

Additionally, deliberative processes are not a “one-size-fits-all” solution. Even proponents of deliberative processes realize that there are advantages and disadvantages. Ian Shapiro writes, “Asking the question whether deliberation is a good thing is a bit like asking the question whether a saw is a good tool. If you are making shelving it is, but not if you are trying to repair a watch.” Knowing what types of conflicts and situations deliberation is most useful for ensures that it is used appropriately. Shapiro argues that it is an interactive process conducted between two or more persons. Further, he claims that it is a cooperative activity because it is about “getting the right answer” not about winning the argument. Additionally, Shapiro contends that deliberation’s focus “is less on giving reasons for one’s own views, and more on soliciting reasons from others for theirs” and that this focus can legitimate collective action. Because of these reasons, deliberation is best used in situations that call for choosing among alternative courses of action instead of under zero-sum bargaining conditions. He calls these “circumstances of conflict”. However, Shapiro warns that deliberation in these situations is subject to the possibility of domination. Some participants may be able to

373. Ibid., p. 119.
374. Ibid.
376. Ibid., p. 122.
377. Ibid., p. 123.
378. Ibid., p. 125.
control the deliberative agenda or manipulate the system in order to achieve their desired outcome.  

As discussed in the previous chapter, Gutmann and Thompson also believe deliberation is best used in situations of conflict, and in particular, moral conflicts. Like Shapiro, Gutmann and Thompson are concerned with the cooptation of deliberative processes. They contend that deliberative processes need to be both procedurally and substantively just. Gutmann and Thompson discuss several examples and point out that decisions that meet only one of these two criteria can be objected to. A law can be unjust substantively even though a flawless deliberative process was used. Conversely, a seemingly just law can be opposed if it was enacted through a faulty process. Finally, a decision might be objectionable on both principals: if a small group of citizens deliberates and reaches a decision that discriminates against a minority, it does not meet either substantive or procedural criteria.

To meet both substantive and procedural principals, Gutmann and Thompson argue that decisions must be subject to revision and reconsideration. This unique feature of deliberative democracy, provisionality, ensures that decisions are just and decision makers are held accountable. “Political provisionality means that deliberative principles and the laws they justify must not only be subject to actual deliberation at some time, but also that they be open to actual reconsideration and revision at a future time.”

379. Ibid., p. 128.
381. Ibid., p. 39.
382. Ibid., p. 46.
Gutmann and Thompson state that this criteria is not about continual deliberation, but about processes that encourage revision over time.\textsuperscript{383}

Because I believe that deliberative processes similar to SCBM will continue to be used, the above criteria is important when designing, implementing, and evaluating them. Hibbing and Theiss-Morse argue that citizens do not want to be engaged in politics. Yet, public institutions are continuously creating opportunities and structures for citizen participation and involvement. Having an understanding of both substantive and process oriented criteria that will be used to determine whether the deliberation is successful is necessary. In addition to these criteria, the next section explores additional research that is needed with regard to further studying the SCBM process.

**Additional Research Needed**

This dissertation used case studies to examine questions of governance, including structural variations, issues of participation, and decision-making. The in-depth research at two schools highlighted unique and significant differences between them. Additionally, the qualitative methodology included participant observation, participant interviews, and review of primary documents. However it did not include broad-based survey quantitative surveys. The research and results of this study illuminate three areas where additional qualitative and quantitative research is needed.

**Participant interest and ability**

While the focus of this dissertation was on governance issues including participation, Hibbing’s and Theiss-Morse’s contentions that American’s want “stealth democracy” suggests that more research is needed on participant involvement including

\textsuperscript{383}. Ibid., p. 47.
whether there is actual desire to participate in school-based decision-making. The school reform literature asserts that parental involvement increases student achievement and implies parents want to be involved with their child’s education. I argue that this literature has the potential of creating societal pressures that guilt parents into participating in order to either appear or feel like a “good” parent. Some parents, no matter what you ask them to do, will participate because they feel obliged.

Yet I recognize that moral pressure only compels some parents. Even though the SCBM literature included those same assumptions, not every parent was involved or even attended an SCBM meeting. Similarly, not all staff members or teachers were participants in SCBM. Given the fact that SCBM often impacted their jobs, some participants were surprised to find that there was low involvement by staff and teachers. Students were also not highly involved except on issues of great importance to them like dress codes, lunch choices, smoking policies, or bathroom facility discussions. Both Jasmine and Hibiscus had student participants on the SCBM councils that attended and contributed to meetings. But three or four students compared to the full student body are not enough to argue considerable involvement. I also acknowledged the great difficulty in getting community members to participate unless they had a direct connection to the school or were personally invited to serve as a council representative.

There are several reasons to suggest why involvement is low including factors of awareness, time, interest, and ability. A parent may want to be involved but works when the meetings are held. A community member is interested in local school issues but cannot physically get to the school by himself. Further, there might be other motivations for not participating. A teacher might not participate in SCBM because he feels that this
is an additional job responsibility or expectation for which he is not being compensated. He performs the duties in his contract: nothing more, nothing less. Some suggested that the union governing the classified staff urged their members to take this approach to SCBM. Whether this was a bargaining strategy or an attempt to undermine SCBM is not known. All of these reasons, and the research of Hibbing and Theiss-Morse, suggest more study of the factors of why people do or do not get involved is needed.

**Culture, gender, class, and education**

Related to the topic of involvement are the impacts of culture, gender, class, and education on participation. Hibbing and Theiss-Morse contend that deliberation favors the eloquent and educated. This claim combined with their assertion that many people are conflict avoidant, keeps many citizens from participating in deliberative forums. Other critics of deliberation argue that deliberation favors those whom feel comfortable speaking and negotiating in public. Nancy Fraser critiques Habermas on this very point.

> As Habermas understands it, the citizen is centrally a participant in political debate and public opinion formation. This means that citizenship, in his view, depends crucially on the capacities for consent and speech, the ability to participate on a par with others in dialogue. But these are capacities that are connected with masculinity in male-dominated, classical capitalism; they are capacities that are in a myriad ways denied to women and deemed at odds with femininity.\(^{384}\)

Fraser's critique could be expanded beyond gender to include race, culture, and class (including level of education). One could argue that the deliberative model is a western model and that members of cultures that do not support the individual debating or deciding in public might not feel comfortable participating.

\(^{384}\) Nancy Fraser, *Unruly Practices: Power, Discourse and Gender in Contemporary Theory*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press), 1989, p. 126
The cultural, economic, and social representation at Jasmine and Hibiscus differed. As chapter two described, the ethnic make-up of the Jasmine student body included approximately 50% Hawaiian, part-Hawaiian, Southeast Asian, and Japanese students. Two-thirds of the student body received free or reduced lunches, 41 percent were in federally assisted families, and 28 percent were receiving public assistance. Comparatively, the Hibiscus student body was comprised of approximately 42 percent Caucasian and 17.5 percent Hawaiian or part-Hawaiian students. No other ethnicity was larger than 10 percent. Only 14 percent of students received free/reduced lunches.

The case examples demonstrate that there were very different cultures of participation at Jasmine and Hibiscus. Jasmine was much less contentious than Hibiscus in most discussions. Participation was informal, fluid, and flexible. Hibiscus operated formally and rarely deviated from their style. In some ways Jasmine had a culture of “going along” where Hibiscus had a culture of struggle. Part of this might have been due to race or ethnic differences. But there was also a large class distinction. Two-thirds of Jasmine’s students received some public aid. For participants at Jasmine, who were largely defined as clients in other settings, this might have been the first time that they were asked to give input into issues affecting them and their community. When the district superintendent offered to negotiate with the union on their behalf regarding principal selection waivers, they were relieved and grateful. However, it is hard to know exactly what impact class played here because I did not determine if the SCBM participants received public assistance or were from the gentrified section of the neighborhood.

164
It is also hard to know exactly how much race played with regard to participation at Hibiscus. Certainly there were more Caucasians there than at Jasmine. In particular, there was that a sizable number of students were military dependents. Hibiscus participants might be much more comfortable with open debate, conflict, and even challenging the system. The SCBM council struggled with the power differentials between them and the DOE. In addition, the district superintendent, her assistant, the principal, and vice principal they struggled with between the signing of the letter of intent and Mrs. Mau’s tenure were all not Caucasian. Whether there were racial associations of the DOE by Hibiscus participants would be an interesting question to ask. Hibiscus struggled with issues of race in other areas of the school.

As just mentioned, the Hibiscus principal, Mrs. Mau, struggled considerably with the SCBM council was not Caucasian. The Jasmine principal, Mr. Anderson, reached out and embraced the community was. Whether their styles were influence by race or their personal philosophies, their style differences greatly impacted their success. Participants did not suspect Mr. Anderson of hiding information or acting out of personal interest. Yet, when Mrs. Mau wrestled with the SCBM council over how much authority they had, they assumed she was withholding something. The opposite was also true. After Mrs. Mau announced her resignation and the SCBM council met without a representative from the administration role group, Mrs. Mau assumed they were trying to subvert the SCBM process and make a decision without the administration’s interest. How race impacts community politics is important, especially in Hawai‘i where it is often more complicated than is suggested here.
Types of issues discussed

The final piece of research that is needed is an analysis of the types of issues discussed. Handler writes that critics of community participation in school governance argue that it can be justified on other grounds including, "increasing attendance, discipline, graduation rates, democratic rights of parents, promoting desegregation, political legitimacy, shifting blame, consumer sovereignty," but they contend that "the only governance changes that are likely to improve student achievement are those that focus substantial attention on a high-quality curriculum that is actually delivered in the classroom."385 Even though proponents claimed that SCBM would have authority over all decisions impacting the school, SCBM council discussions I observed did not generally discuss matters important to achievement such as curriculum or pedagogy.

Instead, issues regarding process or matters such as the dress code or school calendar get discussed. Given the fact that SCBM was explicit about its purpose (to impact achievement) I expected to hear more discussion on achievement related topics. Handler found the same pattern in Chicago. He writes that as long as there is something important at stake, there will be conflict.386 "In Chicago, some of the most dramatic aspects of struggle involved the mundane ones of municipal politics—money, jobs, patronage, central control, unions, compensation."387 He suggests that this may be a strategy to keep reformers at bay.

If that is true, then SCBM is as much about the management of conflict between experts and amateurs than anything else. An analysis of what issues get raised and by

385. Ibid., p. 223-224.
387. Ibid.
whom may point to whether the experts are consciously controlling the agenda. Do teachers not bring issues of curriculum to SCBM meetings because they do not want parent input or do they not consider it an appropriate forum to discuss educational methodology? Even though the BOE policy explicitly gives SCBM authority over curriculum do the DOE or unions ignore the SCBM council’s authority? Non-expert parents and community members may not know enough to even raise questions regarding topics like curriculum. Recognizing the amount of power experts have in an organization, Max Weber wrote that “The primary source of the superiority of bureaucratic administration lies in the role of technical knowledge.”\textsuperscript{388} Experts have an advantage over non-experts because they understand both the substantive content of a discussion as well as process decisions that have to be made to implement changes. Therefore, it is easier for non-experts to participate on the issues that they can relate to and which may impact them. School calendars, dress codes, vegetarian lunch offerings, or a school’s smoking policy are all issues that participants can discuss, form opinions, and make decisions on whether or not they have significant educational background on the issues.

Why does SCBM matter? Many see SCBM only as a school reform. It is about changing how schools are structured and managed. But I think SCBM can also be seen as political reform. SCBM is about issues of democratic structure, participation, and decision-making within an educational context. It is by looking at how communities participated in SCBM that we can see democracy practiced at the local school level. Regardless of whether reform advocates demanded access or the bureaucracy

decentralized to manage community criticism and conflict, participants are asked to give of themselves. Their energy and time cannot be discounted. Furthermore, the same problems and issues that occurred with SCBM are applicable to other decentralization movements. What is at stake in the devolution of authority from public agencies to communities is great. Knowing how communities respond, what lessons can be learned, and what is needed in order for communities to be successful with SCBM is critical for educators, political scientists, public officials, and activists.
Bibliography


169


Hawaii Board of Education General Business Meeting Minutes, December 5, 1996.

School/Community-Based Management (SCBM) Policy. Approved by the Hawaii Board of Education, November 30, 1989.


School/Community-Based Management Operating Procedures. (n.d.)


Hibiscus High School [pseud.] Community Council teacher representative and parent representative to the Board of Education. Personal testimony, December 5, 1996.
Hibiscus High School [pseud.] Discipline Committee Meeting Minutes, February 2, 1998.


Hibiscus High School [pseud.] parent member. "Feedback from Faculty and Staff." Personal notes, October 18, 1994.


Hibiscus High School [pseud.] parent representative and student representative. Interview by author, June 1998.

Hibiscus High School [pseud.] Principal Selection Meeting minutes taken by HHS co-chair, September 21, 1996.

Hibiscus High School [pseud.] SCBM Council Meeting Agenda, October 20, 1997.

Hibiscus High School [pseud.] SCBM Council Meeting Minutes, February 12, 1996.


Hibiscus High School [pseud.] SCBM Council Retreat Minutes, June 8, 1996.


Hibiscus High School [pseud.] Student Role Group to SCBM Council. E-mail letter, January 14, 1998.

Hibiscus High School's [pseud.] SCBM Council introduction to Waiver/Exception requests, October 1996.

Jasmine Middle School [pseud.]. *Proposal to Implement School Community Based Management*. 1994.

Jasmine Middle School [pseud.] Open Forum on MSY Minutes, October 8, 1996.

Jasmine Middle School [pseud.] principal. Interview by author, February 1, 1996.

Jasmine Middle School [pseud.] SCBM Council Meeting Minutes, October 27, 1994.

Jasmine Middle School [pseud.] SCBM Council Meeting Minutes, April 9, 1996.


SCBM program director to Hibiscus High School's [pseud.] SCBM Council. Memo, October 1, 1996.


