

**PARTNERSHIPS IN SCHOOL GOVERNANCE: FOUNDATION FOR
REFORM AND RESTRUCTURING**

by

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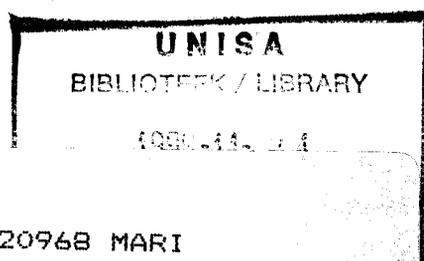
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MR RN MARISHANE

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SUMMARY

The aim of this study is to examine the role played by the state in developing partnerships in school governance, to establish how school governance reform and restructuring can enhance powers and functions of school governing bodies and to identify the needs and problems of partners in school governance.

A literature study was conducted to investigate the role of the state in partnerships in school governance and its implications for school governing bodies. Reference was made to studies conducted in countries experiencing educational reform.

An empirical survey was conducted to establish the views of the state and school governors. For this purpose, a questionnaire was sent to members of governing bodies, while an interview was held with an official in the Department of Education.

It was found that the implementation of reform influences relationships and functions of governing bodies and causes problems which the state should address.

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CHAPTER 1

GENERAL ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In its preamble the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (1996:2) states that the Republic of South Africa requires a new national system of schools which, among other things, "will uphold the rights of all learners, parents and educators, and promote their acceptance of responsibility for the organisation, governance and funding of schools in partnerships with the state". This statement presents a great challenge to political leaders and educational planners at national, provincial and local levels to ensure that education is properly managed, organised and governed to meet the demands of society. One such demand is for education to afford society the opportunity to contribute to their own development, including "the development of the individual and the community, and to strengthening respect for human rights and fundamental freedom (ANC 1994:60).

For this contribution to be possible, it should be acknowledged that education is a public service meant for public good and should therefore be open, just, democratic, respecting and involving the capacities of all citizens (Ranson & Tomlinson 1994:187). To assert that education is a public service is to suggest that leaders should support the idea of a strong public education system by playing an active role in the establishment and maintenance of reform in the existing school governance system (Danzberger 1992:16).

The South African education system is currently undergoing dramatic changes which clearly reflect the democratic nature of the new government and its intention to redress inequalities and imbalances created and perpetuated during the apartheid era. To redress these imbalances and satisfy the educational needs of all learners in an efficient and equitable manner, the entire fabric of the education system has to be reformed. According to Steyn and Squelch (1994:182), reforming education involves restructuring it in such a way that, among other things, school governance, organisation and

management are decentralised while at the same time empowering the people closest to the learners in the classroom. Decentralisation and empowerment together with transformation and restructuring of school governance are central to the reconstruction and development of education in this country.

1.1.1 Decentralisation and empowerment

Decentralisation in education may be defined as the devolution of adequate decision-making authority from a central authority to a lower or local level, such as the school (Gamage in Thody 1994:114). The devolution of authority to the school level can be either democratic or bureaucratic. In contrast to bureaucratic, democratic devolution means that authority is transferred to an elected body of stakeholders of a particular school community. Such devolution is purported to ensure effective decision making, flexibility, efficiency, responsibility and accountability.

In South Africa the idea of decentralising education by bringing governance closer to the school is rooted in the reconstruction and development programme (RDP) initiated by the state and propagated by the democratic forces prevailing within the country. According to the RDP Policy Framework (ANC 1994:61):

The education and training bureaucracy must be reorganised at national, sectoral and provincial levels through the establishment of structures of institutional governance which reflect the interests of all stakeholders and the broader community served by the institution. J

Statements like this illustrate the value the government attaches to public education. In addition to the publicly professed policy statements, the government has illustrated its commitment to educational reconstruction and reform in the area of school governance in two significant respects. First, two White Papers on Education and Training were drafted in 1995 and 1996, respectively (RSA 1995; RSA 1996). Secondly, these White Papers were followed by the Draft South African Schools Bill of 1996 which culminated in the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (cf 1.1). Like the

Bill which preceded it, the Act outlines the powers, functions and duties of school governing bodies. This represents a radical departure from the previous education dispensation in which school governing bodies had limited powers over control and governance of schools.

The impact of decentralised authority and control over education should not be underestimated. Education is no longer the private reserve of the state, but has become a public matter that is transparent, inviting, empowering and open to debate. ✓
 The Ministry of Education's publication of the Draft Policy Document for Consultation (RSA 1994) as a means of eliciting public response and inviting inputs and comments from various people expected to be partners in school governance shows the importance of this view. Raywind (1990:142) and Lindle and Shrock (1993:71-76) hold the same view and assert that all interested people should be given an opportunity to participate in the decision-making process and enjoy the right to shape the direction of the education of children. ✓ The notion of involving the broader community in decision making through school governance structures is of great importance and justifiable.

First, the broader community constitutes the clientele, ordinary citizens, customers and taxpayers who have the right to see and know what is actually happening in the school (Thody:1994:213). Secondly, the community decides on the quantity and quality of engineers, teachers, lawyers, plumbers and technicians it requires for its development. Lastly, the involvement of the broader community in decision making on the governance of their schools can be explained by the premise that "education is everyone's business" (*The Teacher*, October 1996:6). ✓ For the community to be involved actively in decision making, it needs support and power from the state. Several factors need to be considered when empowering school governing bodies. While the various partners in school governance need empowerment, the power cannot be unlimited otherwise it will be misused. ✓ To avoid this, it may be necessary through legislation, to take "some powers and functions from school governing bodies and hand them to (provincial) education authorities" (*The Star* October 1996:16:1).

In some countries empowerment of some of the partners such as pupils and parents,

who are involved in school governance, can be curtailed by legislation (Brigley 1992; Berend & King 1994; Radnofsky 1994). "In South Africa (Naptosa) is in favour of legislation that does not provide for disciplining of staff" (*The Teacher* October 1996:3).

Empowerment in school governance focuses on three main areas: teacher, principal and a collective focus (Sideris & Skau 1994:44). Empowerment of teachers entails the teachers' attainment of freedom to exercise power and authority in decision making on such matters as curriculum and teaching strategies, and their ability to share power, leadership and responsibility (Lambert 1989:78-83). According to Sideris and Skau (1994:45), the collective focus calls for a greater voice in the decision making process from individuals who have close ties with the school.

As shown above, empowerment and decentralisation manifest a significant shift in the balance of power from the central level to the school level. South Africa as a country in transformation to full democracy cannot isolate itself from this trend in which partnership in school governance is fast becoming a global process.

1.1.2 Transformation and restructuring of school governance

In order to adequately meet the demands for change in line with the democratic ideals of the new government, public education in South Africa is being transformed. Transformation relates to school improvement and reform through restructuring. Restructuring involves reorganisation and readjustment with a view to bringing about improvements, that is, redesigning the various components of a (school) system to produce better results (Gordon 1995:6). According to Moss (1994:44) the concept of "school restructuring" has different meanings for different people (educators, parents, the community, government and business). Moss's view of restructuring is improvement, reform and renewal. This view is closely related to the four themes outlined by Merchant (1995:23), namely, school governance and decision making; organisation of schools for teaching and learning; potential consequences of school change effort for participation (administrators, teachers, students and parents), and the role of the external environment in school change. Restructuring in education -

something which is relevant to the South African education system - involves what Lewis (Berends & King 1994:46) regards as

... a change in 'attitude', one that recognises that the current system of schooling does not work for a significant number of children and young people as they move toward leadership of society in the 21st century.

Restructuring as portrayed in this way, emerged as a response to the general dissatisfaction with the centralisation of school governance, management and organisation in which power lies beyond those closest to the school. Restructuring, therefore, is a reaction to the bureaucratic control of schools. As it has been found (Ingersoll 1994:152) that bureaucratic control of schools by bureaucratic governing structures leads to bureaucratic schools which disempower, deprofessionalise and demotivate teachers, it stands to reason that school governance in South Africa needs to be reshaped in pursuance of the ideals of democracy.

To understand why there is a call for restructuring school governance, one has to gain insight into the criticism levelled against the bureaucratic school governing structures in South Africa and the expressed need to change them. The struggle for alternative school governing bodies can be traced back to the mid-eighties when a National Consultative Conference on the Crisis in Education, held at the University of the Witwatersrand in December 1985 (Miller et al 1991:250), resolved the following, among other things:

Resolution 2: On statutory school committees

The conference notes that statutory parents' committees at schools are the agents of the state and carry out the work of the oppressive apartheid education system throughout South Africa.

Therefore we resolve that:

- (i) parents should not be members of statutory parents' committees at schools;*
- (ii) progressive parent-teacher-student structures be formed at all school so*

that:

- (a) *parents, teachers and students can come to understand each other's demands and problems;*
- (b) *interaction can take place between different schools to develop the education struggle to higher levels.*

These resolutions and statements can be condensed into one telling message: that in transforming education and restructuring it by debureaucratising it, the merits and values of partnerships need not be overlooked. The reason for this is that education is essentially about empowering people. As Swelakhe Sisulu, an executive member of the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC) suggested at the Second National Consultative Conference, "The struggle for people's education is no longer a struggle of the students alone," 'people's education for people's power' entails the formalisation of a network of parent, teacher and student bodies (PTSAs) (Muller in Miller et al 1991:323). No wonder that the response to appeals like these was overwhelming. By the end of 1985, the Western Cape alone already had twenty-six parent-teacher-student associations (PTSAs). This marked the beginning of the new era of partnerships in South African schools and serves to illustrate a change in focus in school governance from the apartheid position as shown below.

Under the apartheid education system, different ethnic groups in South Africa had different education departments with the consequence that 15 education departments were established. The establishment of so many education departments necessitated the creation of different types of schools which in turn necessitated the creation of different forms of school governance, ownership and funding structures (Hunter 1995:16). The example of school governance in community schools, farm schools and the Model C schools as explained by Hunter (1995:18-22) illustrates the extent to which the different types of schools were governed.

In community schools, governance was the responsibility of a statutory structure, known as a school committee, composed of parents whose role was limited mainly to mobilising the community of the school by way of providing funds for running and

maintaining the school. This structure had little power to influence school policy. In the case of farm schools, the farm owner or manager alone or with four elected parents had exclusive power over the management, control and professional matters of the school. Partnership with parents was solely at his discretion. In Model C schools, which represented the greater majority of white schools, the governing body was constituted by parents elected by other parents with the inclusion of the school principal as an ex officio member. This governing body, in contrast to those mentioned above, exercised a greater measure of control and power on behalf of the school. Besides, the governing body of a Model C school was vested with the power and authority to determine the school policy, among a wide range of duties. This arrangement has a number of shortcomings and appears to be lacking in the basic democratic principles of equality, quality and representation.

First, the fact that school committees in community schools were mainly concerned with the financial matters of the schools shows that there was no quality in their governance of schools. Secondly, in the case of farm schools, where the farm manager or owner exercised exclusive power over the school, there was inequality in school governance. Lastly, the arrangement does not present a correct picture of partnership in that it excluded other partners such as representatives of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), employer organisations and business, who have never had the opportunity to serve as school governors.

1.2 INCENTIVES FOR THE RESEARCH

As a school principal, the researcher has worked closely with parents as members of school committees in the southern region of the Northern Province for several years. He has observed that, on the one hand, many parent communities from which the school committee members are drawn, are poor and unemployed, and have inadequate or no basic educational background. On the other hand, teachers, pupils and other stakeholders have seldom been given the opportunity to serve on school committees. The changing face of school governance brought about by the new education dispensation in South Africa will have an influence on the various partners in school

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governance. The consideration of these factors prompted the research.

1.3 FORMULATION OF THE PROBLEM

This study approaches the problem of partnerships in school governance as viewed against the background of reform and restructuring by examining the following questions:

- (1) What is the role of the state in developing partnerships in school governance? This role will be investigated to determine whether it contributes positively or negatively to school governance.
- (2) Can reform and restructuring of school governance enhance the powers and functions of school governing bodies? Reform and restructuring are meant to bring about improvement. This study seeks to establish whether reform and restructuring of school governance by fostering partnerships can bring about improvement in the way schools are governed.
- (3) What are the needs and problems of partners in school governance? Since partnership in school governance is a concept associated with educational change, the various components constituting this partnership have specific needs and problems. This study intends to identify these needs and problems and the ways in which they can be satisfied and addressed, respectively.

1.4 FORMULATION OF THE HYPOTHESIS

The hypothesis of this study can be formulated as: Reform and restructuring have an influence on partnerships in school governance.

1.5 AIMS OF THE STUDY

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The study aims to:

- (1) study the role played by the state in developing partnerships in school governance since the state has the power and capacity to encourage or discourage change, including change in governing schools.
- (2) establish how school governance reform and restructuring can enhance the powers and functions of school governing bodies. Each of the various partners in school governance can be influenced by reform and restructuring in some way. The nature of this influence determines the success or failure of reform and restructuring initiatives.
- (3) identify the needs and problems of the partners in school governance because the various partners in school governance have needs and problems which should be addressed.

1.6 METHOD OF STUDY

The study used the following methods to achieve its aims: ✓

1.6.1 Literature study

In the study of literature, relevant data pertaining to the study problem were gathered from both primary and secondary sources, critically examined and evaluated, classified and objectively recorded. The researcher relied on the descriptive method of study in which he described the problem as it prevailed during the period of research. For this purpose, the researcher made a careful selection and study of newspapers, books, journals, papers delivered at public gatherings, departmental circulars and government publications as well as acknowledging the contributions of other researchers to the research problem. Relevant information gathered from the literature study was then interpreted.

1.6.2 Empirical study

In the field of study, the researcher applied both the qualitative and the quantitative research methods in response to the demands of the research problem.

1.6.2.1 *Qualitative research*

A departmental official such as the chief education specialist was interviewed to get their perspectives on and feelings on and experiences of the study problem. Information relevant to the study problem was gathered and interpreted. The result was that a multi perspective picture of the study problem was provided.

1.6.2.2 *Quantitative research*

Random sampling was employed to identify governors of primary and secondary schools in the study area. Empirical data were then gathered by means of questionnaires, which were sent out to the respondents. These questionnaires were later studied and classified appropriately before the information could be compiled statistically and computerised. This task was followed by the statistical analysis and interpretation of the gathered data. As a result, the researcher could give scientific answers to the study questions and draw conclusions.

1.7 DEMARCATI^{M12}ON AND LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

The study was conducted in the southern region of the Northern Province. This region is mostly rural and its geographical nature is such that many villages are so isolated that they are not easily accessible. Co-ordination of governance services and the flow of information in this regard, might be affected by the existing poor communication network which is typical of many parts of the region. Another aspect is that many people are dependent on subsistence agriculture or are unemployed and have low levels of literacy. This tended to influence parental participation in school governance and the desirable degree of participation in this research.

At the time of the research, many changes were being made in the various provinces in the time frame in which school governing bodies were to be established. For example, in the Northern Province, guidelines for the establishment of governing bodies only became law on 2 June 1997.

Lastly, this study concentrated on the governance of public primary and secondary schools since the governance of these schools differs from that of independent schools.

1.8 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS ^{NR}

The following concepts are frequently used in this study:

- (1) **governing body:** A governing body of a school is a democratically elected body composed of representatives of parents, educators, the community and learners in secondary schools, according to the White Paper on Education (RSA 1995:70). The concept "governing body" derives from the concept "school governance", which can be defined as a pattern emerging from the intervention of political, administrative and social actors in governing jointly (Kooiman in Raab 1994:17). When applied to public schools, governance is concerned with the organisation and control processes taking place within the school with the effect that they become partners in decision making.
- (2) **restructuring and reform:** Restructuring and reform are two closely related concepts, as already discussed (cf 1.1.2). "Restructuring" refers to the change in the structure of the school as an organisation as well as the change in the relationships between the various role players within the school. Squelch and Steyn (1994:182) state that restructuring the school encompasses the decentralisation of school governance and management and the empowerment of parents, teachers and principals as people closer to students, by providing a change in their roles and responsibilities. "Reform" refers to the change that is effected on the school as an organisation through restructuring. Merchant (1995:253) mentions the external environment as one example of the source of

such change. Such a source of change may be a government which, through legislation, alters the powers and composition of the existive governing bodies so that a new and completely different governing structure is put in place.

- (3) **partnership:** In the context of this study, partnership in school governance involves the forging of new relationships between the various role players such as parents, educators, learners, the community, the state, non-governmental organisations and business in such a way that roles and responsibilities are shared between them in the school.
- (4) **school-based management council:** School-based management is the decentralisation of school control through a school advisory council, established for the purpose of obtaining input from educators, parents, learners and the community (Sackney & Dibski 1994:10). In this council the various stakeholders work together as partners in matters affecting their school and also take decisions collectively. School-based management is a form of school governance currently being implemented in the United States of America as a form of reforming and restructuring school governance. This concept is also known as "site-based management council".
- (5) **southern region (Northern Province):** The southern region of the Northern Province is one of the seven regions of the Province. This region is divided into four main inspectoral offices known as inspection areas, namely, Bohlabela, Sekhukhune, Nebo and Dennilton. Each of these inspection areas is subdivided into inspection circuits.
- (6) **public school:** A public school is a school established by the Member of the Executive Council and is funded mainly by the provincial legislature. According to Section 12 of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, a public school may be an ordinary public school or a public school established for the purpose of providing education for learners with special educational needs.

- (7) **school management and governance:** School management refers to the organisation, planning and control of all daily activities of the school and this task is carried out by the school principal as a professional manager. School governance on the other hand, involves the formulation of policy on how management tasks should be performed as well as monitoring the process of policy implementation in the school. ✓

1.9 DIVISION INTO CHAPTERS

To answer questions emanating from the research problem and achieve the aim of the research, this study is divided into the following chapters:

Chapter 1 deals with introductory orientation and covers aspects such as incentives for research, formulation of the problem and hypothesis, aims of the study and study methods and definition of concepts.

Chapter 2 investigates the role of the state in the development of partnerships in school governance and its implications for school governing bodies. The state is an initiator of reform and restructuring of school governance. It ensures that schools are governed in accordance with educational reform initiatives and in this way determines the manner in which schools should run. The school governing bodies on the other hand, have a duty to implement change in their schools in line with the state's reform and restructuring initiatives. In this chapter reference is made to research conducted into the problem in South Africa, the United States of America and Britain.

Chapter 3 covers design and Methodology of an empirical research into partnerships in school governance in the Southern region of the Northern Province. Respondents were governors of public primary and secondary schools. These governors were issued with questionnaires after a representative sample had been taken of the population in the study area. The questionnaires were intended to identify the problems and needs of the partners in such governance. The responses from the questionnaires were used to determine the influence of reform and restructuring on partnerships in school

governance. In addition to the use of questionnaires, the Provincial Chief Education Specialist was interviewed.

Chapter 4 deals with the presentation and analysis of empirical survey data.

Chapter 5 deals with the overview of the research, research findings, recommendations and conclusion.

1.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter introduced the problem of partnerships in school governance in the context of reform and restructuring. The investigation shows that school governance is one of the most challenging aspects of the education system in South Africa, especially when viewed against the background of the reconstruction and development programme pursued by the new democratic government. The problem and the hypothesis were formulated, followed by the aims and methods of the study, demarcation and limitations of the study, definition of concepts and division of the programme into chapters.

Chapter 2 will study the role played by the state in partnerships in school governance and its implications for governing bodies. The state has the responsibility to initiate change in the way schools are governed and to intervene when change does not occur in line with government policy. As a major partner in school governance, the state should ensure that the necessary mechanisms are put in place for schools to be governed effectively and the process of change in this direction not to be stalled.

CHAPTER 2

THE ROLE OF THE STATE IN PARTNERSHIPS IN SCHOOL GOVERNANCE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR GOVERNING BODIES

2.1 THE ROLE OF THE STATE IN PARTNERSHIPS IN SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

2.1.1 Introduction

The school as an operational field of governance is a focal point of restructuring and reform. This restructuring represents the recognition of the need for establishing partnerships and networks as well as increasing and changing participation of parents and the community (Lieberman & Miller 1990:761), that is, role players active within the school as an organisation (cf 1.8.3). The result of restructuring efforts is the inclusion in school governance of previously excluded stakeholders, who make use of their democratic right to partake in decision making regarding their own schools.

2.1.1.1 *Democracy and decentralisation of governance*

The idea of democracy as envisaged in decision making entails at least two issues. The first issue is that democracy involves participation of members from different backgrounds who can generate a broad-based commitment to the decisions made (Robertson & Kwong 1994:45). The second issue is that democracy involves taking up responsibility for the manner in which control is exercised and that those responsible for control should and are expected to account for their actions. Viewed from this perspective, therefore, democratising school governance means that participants in school governance should first be given the power and the capacity to decide on matters affecting them before they can be held responsible for the consequences of the decisions made.

According to Hopkins, Ainscow and West (1994:15) empowerment will be ineffective in

a centralised decision making environment where ideas flow in a one-way top-down direction and where, as Hopkins, Ainscow and West (1994:15) observe, there is "increasing government control over policy and direction". In reforming and restructuring school governance, there is a need to change the decision making process from centralisation to decentralisation. According to Brown (1991:27), decentralisation means that the decision making authority devolves from the central office to the school. The reason behind such a move is to widen the scope of accountability to the public by giving both responsibility and accountability to those in close contact with the school. One of the views of OECD (Hopkins et al 1994:15) on this matter needs to be stressed here:

The decentralization of decision making as part of school improvement establishes new roles and responsibilities for education officials at the centre and for school leaders, teachers and parents at the school level

Shifts of responsibility to the school level raise the possibility that some functions formerly carried out at the centre, will not be effectively performed.

2.1.1.2 Partnerships in school governance

The gist of the views expressed above is that decentralisation involves the establishment of partnership between the state, the school and the community (cf figure 2.1). These major partners share common goals and equal power and control over school governance, in the context of an ideal partnership, despite their different roles and responsibilities. In the context of school governance, reform and restructuring (cf 1.1.2) refers to the creation of relationships between such stakeholders as parents, the community, learners, educators and head teachers for the purpose of organising and controlling processes taking place within the school through joint decision making. In more specific terms, partnership in school governance constitutes a tripartite relationship structure composed of the state (education department with its hierarchy of officials), the school (head teacher, educators, administrative staff and learners) and the community (parents, business, the church and other supportive structures). These

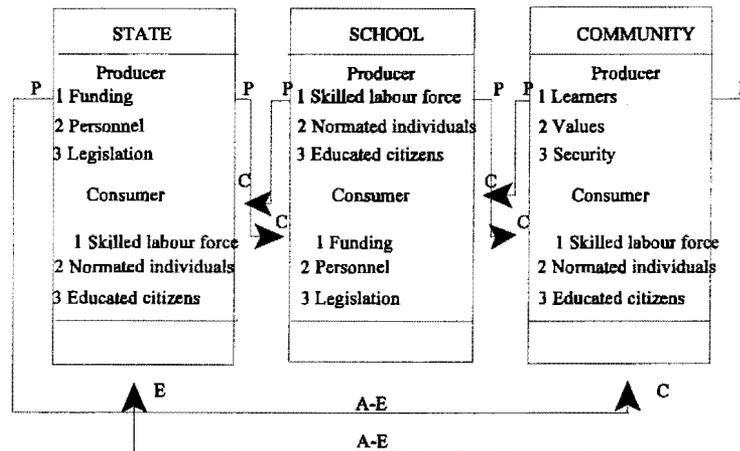
components stand in a consumer-producer relationship to each other, bound together by strong ties of accountability and efficiency (cf figure 2.1) to form a unified body. In terms of its structure, functions and purpose, this body is called a school governing body.

2.1.1.3 ***Accountability and school governance***

The relationship between the various partners or components mentioned above (cf 2.1.2), is strengthened by the extent to which accountability is operative within the structure. According to Hill and Bonan (1991:35), accountability describes a relationship existing between two parties (school-state, school-community, or state-community) in which four conditions are met. One party expects the other to provide a service or attain a goal, the party performing the activity accepts the legitimacy of the other's expectations and derives some benefits from the relationship, and the party for whom the activity is performed has a certain capacity to affect the other's benefits. Defined like this, accountability is an essential element in school governance. Without accountability, school governing bodies will remain a threat to the democratic control of schools (Deem et al. 1995:35).

Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between the partners in school governance and the part played by accountability in this respect. The importance of this relationship is to establish greater coordination of governance service through people from diverse backgrounds.

Figure 2.1 A tripartite school governance relationship structure



Note: A-E = accountability-efficiency /equity; C = consumption; P = production

People in government or education departments (minister, secretary, superintendent, directors and managers) are accountable to their constituency, that is, people who put them into office through either election or promotion. They are also accountable for the education service they provide through a relationship of mutual trust and dependence between them and the people in whose interests they serve, namely, the school community.

As reflected in figure 2.1, the state is an initiator, a facilitator and an evaluator of the school governance service provision which, among others, appears in the form of funding, legislation (based on the constitution) and personnel. The community (parents, business and other supportive structures) is a custodian and a manager. As custodian of the school entrusted to it, it is accountable to the state to provide security to the buildings, equipment and other resources allocated to it. As 'manager' of the home environment that prepares learners for the world of school, it is accountable to the school. The school (teachers, head teachers, administrative staff, caretaker) is

accountable to the state for the role it plays in ensuring that it operates in line with the broader educational goals in the best interests of the community in particular and the state in general. Among other things, the school provides the state with skilled, normated and educated citizens. To the parent community, the school is a professional guardian in whose care its children are placed for the fulfilment of its and its children's needs and expectations, and the professional preservation of their cultural values and beliefs.

Creese (1995:2) expresses the same view about accountability of the school as a producer to the parent community as its main customer or client:

Teachers are aware that they cannot hold themselves accountable only to themselves or to fellow professionals for what goes on in the school and that they have to be ready and able to justify what they are doing in the name of the community as represented by the governing body and parents.

The literature study concentrates further on the role of the state in partnerships in school governance. Consideration is given to such aspects as constitutional perspectives, approaches, reform strategies, devolution of governance, empowerment of stakeholders and inspection. These aspects have a bearing on the concept of partnerships, which, in turn, is influenced by the role of the state in a variety of ways.

2.1.2 Constitutional views on partnerships

The Constitution is the supreme law in a country and all other laws and values are subordinate to and enacted according to it. Partnerships in school governance is one of the values enshrined directly or indirectly in a democratic Constitution. Section 29 of the South African Constitution of 1996 (RSA 1996) recognises the right to education and the transformation of the education system as two of the important values in which the democratic state of the Republic of South Africa is based. While the transformation of education in the South African context involves changing education for the better,

democratisation of education encompasses the idea of partnership in which stakeholders such as parents, learners, educators and members drawn from the school community not only play an active role in school activities and functions, but also jointly constitute a body that represents these stakeholders and takes decisions on behalf of the school.

This governing body not only represents the stakeholders in decision making, but is also accountable to them (cf figure 2.1). In other words, it must report back to them on what it has done 'to serve the best interests of the learners at school' (Potgieter et al 1997:6). The importance attached to the partnership characterising the governing body as been shown by the passing of the South African Schools Act by the African National Congress (ANC) government (cf 2.1.4.1). This Act deals, to a large extent, with the manner in which schools should be governed. An interesting point to note about the South African Constitution is that it sees education at all levels, with the exclusion of tertiary education, as a shared responsibility of the National government and the Provincial government. This principle shows that the two major stakeholders are partners in school governance. This constitutional arrangement is not confined to South Africa only, but is also applied in the United States of America and Britain.

The British Constitution clearly emphasises the principle of separation of powers (Simon & Chitty 1993:81), in terms of which school governance is a matter of partnership between the central government and the local government through the services of local education authorities (LEAs) (cf 2.1.3.2), local management of schools (LMS) and school councils. The separation of powers expresses the value attached by the British Constitution to partnerships in governing schools, as indeed has been the case in Britain for the best part of the last century. To this day, most British parents still believe and understand education to be a matter of partnership between the government and the local councils (Sallis 1995:7). A common practice in this regard is for the local government to levy rates in the form of council tax while the central government augments this tax from general taxation. Another constitutionally motivated partnership becomes evident when the central government passes laws which govern and regulate the running of schools, while schools are allowed to be organised in different ways by

their councils. A notable example in this regard is the Conservative Party's passing of the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA), which enhanced the powers of school governors (Sallis 1995:8).

School governance does not feature in any way in the American Constitution - in fact, no mention at all is made of either education or public schools in the federal Constitution adopted in 1788, nor is Congress vested with any power over education. There are at least two reasons for this. The first is that at the time the Constitution was drawn, education was mainly the domain of private and parochial institutions and not considered "a substantial function of the government" (Riley 1994:298). Since at the time no state had already made any provisions for the establishment of genuine public school system in its constitution, there seemed to be no need to transfer education to the federal government. The second reason is that the Constitution reserved certain stipulated powers to the states with the effect that the federal government of the United States was left with limited powers (Campbell et al 1990:40). Article I, section 8, clause 1 of the Constitution gives Congress the authority to provide for the general welfare of the American citizens and Congress uses this provision to provide federal aid to education though this is not intended to be construed as "a means of exercising federal control over education" (Riley 1994:299). Notwithstanding the limitations imposed by the Constitution on the federal government, two aspects made up for this shortcoming. First, today most states have specific provisions on their constitutions which make education a legal responsibility of states with the result that the statutes of most states stipulate in detail how schools are to be governed and controlled by district boards of education and other bodies to whom control is delegated (Campbell et al 1990:76). Secondly, a trend is emerging in which the federal government tends to forge closer partnerships with the states in supporting school programmes within the realm of "federal aid" and controlling the use of funds provided (Campbell et al 1990:43). This trend is shown by the passing by Congress of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act of 1994 (Miller 1995:2). The Act is intended to provide systemic reform under the partnership of the state and the local education agencies (LEAs) (cf 2.1.4.1(b)(i)).

From the picture above, it follows logically that a country's constitution has an important

role to play in laying the foundation for partnerships in school governance. This foundation is concretised by legislation, which provides the framework for the manner in which such partnership should be implemented.

2.1.3 Approaches to school governance

The state's approach to school governance can be either centralised or decentralised or a mixture of the two. In a centralised approach, great power and control over schools are vested in the Secretary, the Minister or State Governor, while in a decentralised approach such power and control are given to the local school community and people working within the school. Where a mixed approach is followed, both the state and the school community have equal share of power over the governance of schools. There is, however, a tendency for a state to shift its approach from a centralised to a decentralised approach and vice versa, as indicated below. In all these instances, the approach followed influences the form of partnerships developed and the nature of the relationships existing in these partnerships.

2.1.3.1 *A shift from centralisation to decentralisation*

As explained above, school governance in the United States of America falls under the jurisdiction of the state and the local education agencies (LEAs) (cf 2.1.2). At state level, governance is constituted by partnership between the governor (head of state), the chief state school officer, the state board of education and the state education department composed mainly of professionals in education (Campbell et al 1990:89). The state has plenary power of the control of schools since, in terms of constitutional and statutory provisions, it is held that education is a state rather than a local function. Because of this, the state is obliged to provide funds and demand accountability in exchange (cf figure 2). The local education agencies, such as school boards who exercise local control of schools, have only delegated power over schools. In essence, they are agents of the state who derive their authority from the state. Since decision making on school governance descends bureaucratically from the central office of the state governor to the schools via the school boards, partnership in school governance

is virtually non-existent. This is how centralised school governance is practised in the United States of America.

There is currently growing dissatisfaction with the centralised decision making prevalent in most American state education systems. This dissatisfaction is coupled with demands for reform and devolution of power to schools and local people. Two examples illustrate this. The first involves the establishment of the legislation for the so-called Charter Schools through former President Bush's America 2000 Education Strategy, which provides for a group of teachers, parents or others who share similar educational views and interests to operate a school" (Wohlstetter & Anderson 1994). A charter is "an agreement between the school and the granting authority setting out the goals, objectives and responsibilities of both parties" (Deem 1994:28). The charters can be granted to the local communities by the federal government, the state or the local school district. California, Colorado, Georgia, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Mexico and Wisconsin are among the states presently enacting charter school programmes in the USA (Odden 1994:107). In these states, schools are permitted by the granting authority to establish their own governing bodies consisting of such stakeholders as parents, educators, administrators and community representatives who act as trustees. In other words, schools are financed through charter programmes rather than districts and their personnel are given total discretion over the use of funds and selection of staff. The money used for funding these schools is derived from the granting authority and deducted from the budget of the local district. Should charter schools fail to attract enough learners, they close - similar to businesses that fail to attract enough customers (cf 2.1.3.2). The second form of decentralisation is the devolution of school governance responsibilities from the district level to the elected school councils composed of parents, educators, school principals, community representatives and learner representatives in high schools (Deem 1994:29). In these instances, the school principal is directly accountable to the school council rather than to school district offices.

From the above examples, two points can be noted about school governance in the USA. First, there is a significant change in the attitude of the state towards the

appreciation of the importance of developing partnerships in governance at school level. Secondly, the education system is changing from centralised to decentralised school governance service.

2.1.3.2 *A shift from decentralisation to centralisation*

Until recently, school governance in Britain was decentralised to the local government level where the control of schools in many respects was the responsibility of local education authorities (LEAs). As indicated below (cf 2.1.4.2(a)), the relationship between the state and the local education authorities was one of mutual support and co-operation. The devolution of school governance to these local authorities was perceived by the state as being in the best interests of the country's schools. While the government is still at pains to express the importance it attaches to the decentralised control of schools, the actual practice points to the opposite. The following are instances of the extent to which school governance in England and Wales is becoming increasingly centralised with great power vested in the Secretary of State for Education.

First, in England and Wales the Secretary of State for Education has the authority and power to open and close schools. An example of this is the statutory treatment of the "failing schools" (cf 2.1.4.6). Secondly, the Secretary for Education bypasses the local education authorities (LEAs) and delegates control of school budgets directly to school governors and principals while he or she has considerable discretion about the level and amount of grants awarded to schools (Carr & Hartnett 1996:66). This tendency applies also to the physical structural alterations of schools where modifications to buildings are subject to the Secretary's approval, despite the school governing body being the legal owner of the buildings, land and chattels it uses in its provision of education service (Marsh in Green 1993:28). Thirdly, though the school governing bodies are "empowered" to implement the curriculum at schools, the National Curriculum is determined by the central government through the Secretary of State (Carr & Hartnett 1996:167). Fourthly, the devolution of governance and control through the market mechanism of coupling "choice" of school with funding - as applied in the so-called grant-maintained schools (GSM) - has the hallmark of centralisation in that the

government encourages and regulates the market forces by legally allowing governing bodies to reject children from their oversubscribed and thus well-funded schools (Ball in Cashdan & Harris 1993:103). Lastly, the Secretary of State can veto decisions made by the school governing body. In Britain, for instance, the Secretary of State on receiving parents' complaint that a governing body is acting unreasonably in using its powers or is failing to carry out its duties properly, is empowered to direct the governing body to "take whatever action it seems to him to be appropriate" (Davis & Anderson 1992:111).

In addition to the great power given to the Secretary of State for Education, a certain measure of power over school governance is given to the market forces. In this case, policy planning and social welfare in education are replaced with the dynamics of supply and demand in which "demand" is represented by parental choice while "supply" is represented by the education market, that is, the schools (Ball in Cashdan & Harris 1993:103). These forces have an influence on how the various partners in school governance relate and operate. For instance, school governing bodies ensure that their schools compete for the best students, the best budget allocations and popularity through high output to avoid bankruptcy and going out of business. The result is that the partnership between the school and the Department assumes a consumer-producer relationship - the relationship of supply and demand. An important point to note is that even in this case, the Secretary of State still has the power to regulate the market forces. For instance, the Secretary of State has statutory power to close a "failing school" (cf 2.1.4.6).

From the picture given above it emerges that, unlike in the United States of America, the British Government's approach to school governance is a centralised approach. The literature research into this issue indicates also that the approach is currently gaining momentum.

2.1.3.3 ***A centralisation-decentralisation approach***

The state's approach to school governance in South Africa has elements of both centralisation and decentralisation. This stems from the fact that, in terms of the Constitution, the provision of education in South Africa is a matter of partnership between the National Education Ministry and the Provincial Member of the Executive Council (MEC) (cf 2.1.2). Since the Constitution provides for the establishment of an education department in each of the nine provinces, each province has its own Department of Education with the Head of Department (HOD) playing an active role in matters relating to school governance. While the Head of Department is responsible for the provision of education at the provincial level, the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) is responsible for determining policy at that level.

Unlike in the United States of America and Britain, where power over school governance lies in the hands of the school councils and the Secretary for Education, respectively (cf 2.1.3.1, 2.1.3.2), in South Africa there is co-operation and interdependence over the governance of schools between the national, the provincial and the local levels (cf 2.1.2). Such co-operation is based on mutual trust and support with the effect that all stakeholders in school governance share the understanding that they have equal responsibility as partners in governing the school. The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (RSA 1996) creates a basis on which there is a balanced approach to school governance in that it contains aspects of both centralisation and decentralisation as indicated below (cf 2.1.3.3(a), 2.1.3.3(b)).

(a) **Aspects of centralisation present in the South African school governance service**

In terms of Sections 20, 21 and 22 of the South African Schools Act, the following are the powers of the Head of Department and the MEC.

- The Head of Department has the power to appoint educators at schools.

- The Head of Department has the power to approve conditionally or unconditionally any application by the governing body for the improvement or maintenance of school property, grounds and buildings.
- The Head of Department is empowered to withdraw on reasonable grounds a function of a governing body.
- The Member of the Executive Council may close a public school.

(b) Aspects of decentralisation in the South African school governance service

In terms of the sections of the Act mentioned above (cf 2.1.3.3(a)), the governing body has the following powers:

- A governing body has the power to recommend to the Head of Department for the appointment of educators at a school.
- A governing body has the power to decide on how to improve and maintain school property, grounds and buildings.
- A governing body has the power to make presentations and appeals to the Member of the Executive Council to review the decision of the Head of Department should the governing body feel aggrieved by it.

Considering the above aspects, it can be concluded that the state's approach to the manner in which schools could be governed is marked by the combination of centralisation and decentralisation. This is evidently in compliance with the state's democratic Constitution referred to earlier (cf 2.1.2).

2.1.4 Reforming and restructuring school governance

The existence of different state approaches to school governance in different countries

(cf 2.3) carries two logical implications. First, there are different mechanisms by which school governance reform and restructuring are carried out. Secondly, the conception of what is regarded as reform and restructuring varies from country to country. Despite the differences in approaches, conceptions and mechanisms, there are common elements reflected in different countries when change is brought into school governance. These elements include provision of legislation, changing relationships and reform strategies.

2.1.4.1 **Legislation**

(a) **Provision of a legislative framework**

School governance in South African public schools has been the focus of the state-initiated reform ever since the African National Congress came to power in 1994. This reform came about in response to the various public protests against the National Party education system and appeals for change made prior to the 1994 elections (cf 2.1.4.2(c)). To effect the change, a number of statutory steps were taken by the new democratic government after consultation with the various prospective partners in the governance of schools. The first step was the publication by the Ministry of Education of a Draft Policy Document for Consultation (RSA 1994) in which the various stakeholders were consulted and requested to give their comments and inputs in matters relating to the issue of governance. The Draft Policy Document was followed by two White Papers on Education in 1995 and 1996, respectively (RSA 1995; RSA 1996). The two White Papers preceded the Draft South African Schools Bill, which was introduced in Parliament and published on 22 August 1996 for public information. One of the main aims of the Bill was "to provide the organisation, governance and funding of schools" (RSA 1996). In other words, the organisation, governance and funding of schools were to be restructured to satisfy the educational needs of the democratic South African society. This represented a departure from the apartheid education system in which the governance of schools, among many other issues, was differentiated according to race. The outcome of the White Papers and the Bills was the passing of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, published on 15 November 1996.

A situation similar to South Africa occurred in Britain where the Conservative Party government passed legislation to pave the way for reform in school governance. This legislation includes the 1986 Education Act, the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA); the 1992 White Paper (Choice and Diversity), the 1992 Education Bill and the 1993 Education (Schools) Act (cf 2.1.4.1(b)(ii)). The sequence and frequency of these laws is evidence of the remarkable pace of change in the British education system and the British Government's commitment to bring about reform in school governance, in particular.

The trend of change is not confined to South Africa and Britain, it has also manifested itself in the United States of America where use is made of legislation to bring about reform in school governance at both federal and state level. Examples of these reform-directed laws include the Goals 2000: Educate America Act of 1994 passed by Congress in March 1994 (Miller 1995:2), the Chicago School Reform Act of 1988 (Pink & Borman in Borman & Green 1994:207), the Education Consolidation and Involvement Act (ECIA) of 1980 (St John 1995:82) and the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) of 1990 (cf 2.1.4.3(a)(ii)).

Considering the geographical separation between the three countries and the number of reform laws passed in these countries, it is evident that reform in school governance has reached global magnitude. When the various laws are put into practice, school governance and the stakeholders in this service are bound to be affected.

(b) The impact of legislation on partnerships

In order to gain insight into how legislation can impact on partnerships in school governance, let us refer briefly to what the state does in the United States of America, Britain and South Africa.

(i) *The American legislation on partnerships in school governance*• *The Goals 2000 (Educate America) Act of 1994*

The hallmark of statutory reform on school governance in the United States has been the Goals 2000 Act (Educate America Act) of 1994 (cf 2.1.4.1). The Act aims at providing a framework for stimulating systemic education reform under the auspices of the leadership of both the state and local agencies (Riley 1994:296). Through the Act, education reform is recognised as a bottom-up rather than top-down participatory decision-making process involving parents, educators and local community leaders in every step of the way. The role of the federal government in this process is that of encouraging instead of mandating reform. Sub-section 301 (C1) of the Act (Riley 1994:317) clearly states:

Simultaneous top-down and bottom-up education reform is necessary to spur educative and innovative approaches by individual schools to help all students achieve internationally competitive standards.

This manifests a move towards a situation in which stakeholders on both ends of the governance spectrum merge through partnership. It also points out the purposefulness of the approach: to enhance student achievement. In his own words, the USA Secretary for Education, Richard W. Riley (1994:5) stated:

With the help of education, parent and business groups, we intend to engage families, school people and community members in active partnerships to improve student performance.

• *The Chicago School Reform Act of 1988*

The second example of legislation having an impact on partnerships, is the Chicago School Reform Act of 1988 which created several key partnerships (Pink & Borman in Borman & Green 1994:207-208): Partnerships among members of the local school

council (LSC) in which context six parents, two teachers, two community representatives, and the principal are charged to make policy for the school - thus shifting power from the principal to the council; partnership between the LSC and the principal in which the principal administers the school while he or she works for a council that has the authority to hire and fire; partnership between the LSC and the District Superintendent's Office (DS) and the central office, now renamed the Central Service System, in which decision making has shifted from the central and subdistrict offices to the school level.

- *Motivation for reform legislation*

Reform in American education has been prompted and stimulated by the general drive towards the attainment of "excellence and equity" pursued by the Goals 2000 Act. Central to this drive is the desire to improve American student achievement to meet the challenges facing America in the next century (Milito in Miller 1995:100). To succeed in this venture, it is proposed that the following matters should be given adequate attention. First, it is proposed that, since the academic purpose of education is to ensure that all students are given the opportunity to achieve higher standards, federal, state and local policies should be driven into the same direction and be encouraged to generate "bottom-up reforms" (Ravitch 1995:14). Secondly, it is proposed that a substantial change be made in the structure, management and leadership of schools at the local level, which includes the definition and approval of new local authorities in the place of the current local school districts, local school boards and local superintendents (Cunningham 1993:234). Thirdly, since in its pursuance of higher standards the Goals 2000 Act may directly regulate what is taught and how what is taught is tested, it is feared that federal control might increase and thus shift power away from the local people. It has, therefore, been suggested that restraint should be exercised by the federal government in this regard, for the following reason (Ravitch 1995:37):

Schools work best when they are managed by the people who are closest to them, not by Congress and interest groups in Washington, D.C., and

not by state legislation and bureaucratic overseers.

Lastly, it is hard to envisage a systematic change where participants in the process work independently of each other in closed compartments with no collaboration and coordination. All stakeholders should work as partners in school governance in order to meet the challenges facing American education. For this reason the Goals 2000 Act makes provision for "federal financial assistance to state and local agencies to engage in coherent systemic education reform and in building partnerships to improve the quality of education in all participating schools" (Riley 1994:297).

(ii) *British legislation on partnerships in school governance*

Since 1980 the British government has passed the following education acts with impacts on partnerships in school governance, (Sallis 1995:8-9):

- The 1986 Education Act made provision for various stakeholders, including parent and community representatives, to be involved in school governance in LEA schools which were predominantly under the control of local council representatives. Partnership in important decision-making processes between the local councils and governors developed.
- The 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) enhanced the powers of governors by giving schools a greater measure of independence, especially in matters such as managing their own budgets, hiring their own staff and exercising choice of whether or not to opt out of the local education authority system in favour of receiving grants from the central government. This Act also stimulated competition between schools by introducing "open enrolment" according to which schools were required by law to fill up to their maximum capacity for two reasons, namely, that local authorities could not protect schools which could not compete strongly in the marketplace and that children could be evenly spread among local schools.
- The 1992 Education (Schools) Act brought about a new system for schools to be

regularly inspected, with school governors given the responsibility of drawing up an action plan based on the findings of the inspectors' report.

- The 1992 Education Act introduced systems to deal with school agencies or quasi-autonomous non-governmental organisations (*quangoes*) which were appointed by the central government to share or, in some cases, take over the powers and functions of the local authorities in matters such as planning for school places in areas where a certain percentage of schools have "opted out" of the local education control system. Through the Act "opting out" was made easier and had to be considered by each school once a year.

(iii) South African legislation on partnership in school governance *

In South Africa the foundation for partnerships between all stakeholders with an interest in education lies in the South African Schools Act (SASA) 84 of 1996, which came into effect on 1 January 1997. The main thrust of the Act is the idea that since the state has no financial and organisational muscle to do everything for schools, all stakeholders, that is parents, educators, learners and local community members should be actively involved in the organisation, governance and funding of schools. The idea stems from, the strong belief that schools run well when governed by the local people since these people are well placed when it comes to identifying the problems and needs of their schools - provided they are prepared to accept the responsibility for their governance. It is against this background that the Act provides for the establishment and functions of governing bodies composed of parents, educators, learners (in secondary schools) and community members who are empowered to take decisions on behalf of their school (MacGregor et al 1997:4-5).

As mentioned earlier (cf 2.1.3.3), the provincial Members of the Executive Council (MECs) and their Heads of Department have the authority, in terms of the Act, to establish governing bodies and develop mission statements and policies suitable for their provinces. In other words, each of the nine South African provinces has the power to establish through an Act of Parliament, the statutory governing bodies (MacGregor

et al 1997:4-5). In the Northern Province, the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for Education, Dr PA Moswaledi, gave notice in terms of Section 11(2) of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 in the *Provincial Gazette* (Notice 242 of 1997) of determining the guidelines for the establishment, elections and functions of a representative council of learners. In terms of the Notice and the directives sent subsequently to schools, all public schools in the Province were expected to democratically elect governing bodies.

The election process was due to be completed by the end of August 1997. The Member of the Executive Council stressed the importance of the South African Schools Act and its impact on partnerships at the official launch of the Northern Province Culture of Learning, Teaching and Service (COLTS) in Pietersburg on 30 May 1997. Addressing learners, educators, parents and community members, he said:

We call on all parents and the community as a whole to play a meaningful role in school governance. Once we get school governance right, more than half of our problems will be solved. We specifically appeal to the professionals in our communities to participate in school governance. These bodies must discharge their responsibilities in terms of the South African Schools Act (84 of 1996) and other relevant regulations.

It emerges from the study of legislation mentioned above that the South African government sees the governance of schools as a shared responsibility of all stakeholders, that is the state, parents, learners, educators and community members. The same view is echoed by the American legislation, notably, the Goals 2000 Act (cf 2.1.4.1), which perceived partnership as being so essential to governance that the federal government is mandated to make funds available to support it (cf 2.1.4.1(b)(i)). The situation is slightly different in Britain in that though the state views governance as a matter of partnership between the central government, the non-governmental organisations and governing bodies composed of parents, educators and the community, the partners do not enjoy an equal share of power. For instance, the Secretary for Education has the greatest measure of power in this partnership venture -

including the power to veto the decisions of the school governing body (cf 2.1.3.2).

2.1.4.2 ***Changing relationships between partners in school governance***

Research indicates that partnerships in school governance deals with relationships between stakeholders (cf 2.1.4.4). Once established, these relationships may be sustained depending on whether there is trust and respect between stakeholders. Where positive relationships exist between partners or stakeholders, strong bonds of partnerships develop. The nature of partnerships may change, however, when the relationships are such that one partner no longer sees the other as trustworthy, pursuing the same goals or promoting the same interests, particularly in the face of change or reform. This scenario is presently developing in the United States and Britain where attempt to bring about reform in school governance affects the relationships between the state and other parties. In the process, the state reevaluates its relationship with its long-standing partners and prefers to start new relationships with those partners who will adjust to the reform environment (cf 2.1.4.2(a); 2.1.4.2(b); 2.1.4.2(c)).

(a) *Relationship between the Department for Education (DFE) and local education authorities (LEAs) in England and Wales*

Before the introduction of the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA), the local education authorities (LEAs) had been acting as an extended arm of the Department for Education (DFE), formally known as the Department for Education and Science (DES) and serving as an important bridge between the Department and schools. An LEA was both a spokesman and servant of the Department in that it had a state-mandated and delegated authority over the entire task of governing schools and its duties included the provision of such services as funding, training, support, information, security, control and inspection (Rogers 1992:136-137). It was seen by the central government as a better way of decentralising educational control and bringing education closer to the local people so that the government's objectives of equity and justice for all local children could be achieved. Central to the operation of LEAs was the belief that there were a variety of services which were so valuable to schools that they could be provided

by an organisation larger than an individual school. These services included the provision of in-service training (INSET) for teachers, resource centres and adventure schools (Simon & Chitty 1993:56). In simple terms, the relationship was so close that when five more schools were needed in a country, the DFE would be notified of the need and then allocate the necessary funds to LEA which, in return for such a grant, would give a proper account of how the funds had been used. This relationship between the DFE and LEA as partners in school governance is now changing.

For the first time, the continued existence of LEAs and their role in the local governance of schools were questioned when the government started to perceive them as being "bureaucratic, unnecessarily expensive, out of touch with the local people, restrictive of educational freedom, and sometimes devious in their allocation of funds" (Holt & Hinds 1994:43). These allegations against LEAs prompted the government-sanctioned reduction in their school governance powers and, with the passing of the 1988 Education Reform Act, it became evident that the government was bent on weakening the powers of LEAs over schools. The following are examples of how the government used legislation to curb LEAs powers (Simon & Chitty 1993:30-31):

- In the Spring of 1991, the government suddenly announced that Colleges of Further Education, tertiary institutions and sixth form colleges were to be summarily removed from the control of LEAs and that their future financial control and development would be handed over to a government-appointed quasi-autonomous non-governmental organisation (*quango*).
- The government established independent City Technology Colleges (CTCs) right in the heart of LEA-centralised areas without prior consultation and thus destabilized LEA's school supply and planning.
- The government enforced the axing of LEA inspectors and introduced independent inspectors (cf 2.1.4.6).
- The government launched a massive drive through various generous incentives

to encourage mass “opting out” of schools from LEAs’ control.

These changes indicate the weakening of relationship between the central government and the local education authorities and the former’s reevaluation of the partnership between them. This audibly echoes the central government’s commitment to the formation of new partnerships and relations as well as the parting of the way with the shared past, in order to bring about restructuring in school governance as part of its national education reform strategy (cf 2.1.4.3).

(b) *Relationship between the state and school boards in the USA*

In the United States of America, the governance of schools was a matter of partnership between the state and school boards. Like the local education authorities in Britain, the school boards were agents of the state who were elected locally according to constitutional and statutory provisions and derived their authority from the state. They were an important link between the state and the public. According to Campbell, Cunningham, Nystrand and Usdan (1990:88), the school boards had delegated authority and power over such matters as the establishment of schools and school buildings; the employment of superintendents; the establishment of the essential rules to govern and manage schools; and the raising and expending of funds for schools.

Relationships between the state and the school boards were strained in recent years when the school boards’ capacity to meet political and policy challenges as well as the lack of improvement in learners’ school experiences and achievable outcomes after many years of reform were questionable. Wagner (1992:228-229) reports that vigorous criticism has been levelled against the statutory school boards for impeding progress towards decentralisation and building school-based management, thus stalling the progress of educational transformation, their questionable legitimacy, their lack of co-ordination with supporting structures and their concentration on routine school administration. Summing up this criticism, Danzberger (1994:366) states, “Like most other groups, school boards are good at doing more of what they have always done”.

Criticisms like these, affected the existing relationships between the state and the school boards and necessitated a reevaluation of the way schools were governed. The result was the introduction of reform laws in different states (cf 2.1.4.1(b)(i)). The main focus of these laws is to encourage the decentralisation of school governance through the formation of school councils (cf 2.1.4.3(a)(i)). These councils consist of representatives of educators, learners, parents and the community. In this way partnerships between stakeholders is concentrated on local rather than district, state or federal level.

(c) *Relationship between the state and the management or governing councils in South Africa*

Prior to the establishment of the democratic government in South Africa, school governance was the responsibility of the state, which acted in partnership with the statutory parent bodies called management councils or governing councils. These bodies were established in terms of subsection 70(1) of the Education and Training Act 90 of 1979 and served as a bridge between the school and the Department of Education through the office of the circuit inspector. They also served as a medium through which parents had a say in such matters as staff appointment and school financial management (Monareng 1995:48). Some of the powers and functions of these statutory bodies, according to R828 as reflected in Chapter 31 of the former Department of Education and Training's publication entitled Manual for Secondary School Organisation: A guide for principals of schools (RSA 1991), include:

- advising the Director General on the efficient functioning of the school
- making recommendations to the Director General on appointment, promotion and discharge of staff of the school
- promoting and protecting the interests of the school and advising the principal on such matters as the drafting of school policy

- seeing to the proper use of school buildings and grounds
- controlling the use of school funds

As stated in chapter 1, these statutory parent bodies did not escape the wrath and criticism directed on the then apartheid South African government. Just as the government was seen as undemocratic and oppressive, so were these statutory bodies. Speaking on “people’s education for people’s power” at the Second National Consultative Conference of the National Educator Crisis Committee (NECC) held in Durban in March 1986, Zwelakhe Sisulu expressed the feelings of the progressive organisations as follows (Millar et al 1991:265):

Another area where we are demonstrating the possibilities of people’s power is through the school committees. The December Conference took a resolution to replace statutory parents’ committees with progressive parent, teacher, student structures Our democratic people’s committees have been established and are preparing to take more and more control over the running of the schools. They are the ones who are putting forward the pupils’ demands and negotiating with school principals. The government committees are now being ignored. In effect they are falling away. In some areas their members have abandoned them and joined the people’s committees.

The attack on statutory bodies and the call for their abdication illustrate the conflicting interests and bitter relationships between the progressive organisations and the state, whose goals the statutory bodies were understood to pursue. In fact, these bodies were seen as agents of the state which facilitated the perpetuation of oppression. In spite of the vehement attack and stern criticism that rendered the statutory parent bodies virtually ineffective, the partnership between the Department of Education and these bodies continued until the National Party government was replaced by the ANC government in 1994.

The establishment of the ANC government signalled the end of school committees, management councils and governing councils and the beginning of a new era in which schools are governed by the more representative and democratic school governing bodies. The South African Schools Act (SASA) mentioned earlier (cf 2.1.4.1(b)(iii)) provided a firm foundation for a change in which the partnership between the Department of Education and the parent-dominated management or governing council is replaced by the partnership between the Department of Education and the governing body representative of all stakeholders. In this partnership, there is a direct relationship between the state and the school (cf figure 2.8). This new partnership structure is similar to those structures used in the USA and Britain in that the state relates to and communicates directly with the school and that all people with an interest in education are invited to participate in school governance (cf 2.1.4.2(a); 2.1.4.2(b)).

2.1.4.3 ***Reform strategies applied by the state in school governance***

In pursuance of the ideals of reform and restructuring of school governance, various strategies are presently being applied in different countries. Close inspection of these strategies reveals that the strategies applied are, to a certain extent, compatible with what the state regards as an appropriate way of reforming and restructuring governance. They also reflect the close connection between the legislation as well as the change in relations between stakeholders as a result of implementing the legislation (cf figure 2.3). The following are examples of reform strategies applied in United States of America, Britain and South Africa.

(a) *Devolution of governance through school-based management (SBM) in the USA*

As stated above (cf 2.1.3.1), public concern about centralised, bureaucratic control of schools has generated vigorous debate on educational reform and restructuring in the USA. The debate has focussed on three main themes: empowerment, academic learning and accountability (Elmoro 1990:1-29). The proponents of school reform and restructuring believe that the manner in which schools are governed and the way decisions are made should change, and they propose and advocate school-based

management (SBM) as a viable mechanism of advancing that change (Guthrie 1984:305-309). School-based management involves the decentralisation and debureaucratisation of school control through a school advisory council, established for the purpose of obtaining input from educators, learners, parents and community members when decisions are made about the school (Sackney & Dibski 1994:105). In other words, school-based management is a school-based community-driven governance structure - where school community refers to all stakeholders with an interest in the school.

(i) *Features of school-based management (SBM)*

The first remarkable feature of SBM, as implemented in the USA now, is that a school becomes a basic unit of educational decision making in which decisions regarding aspects such as expenditure, curriculum and personnel are made jointly by the principal, educators, learners and community members through a mechanism called a school-based council (Sackney & Dibski 1994:106). In this council, the various stakeholders work together in partnership in matters which affect their own school and also take decisions collectively. For example, while principals can serve as the chairpersons of the council, they cannot veto council decisions. The motivation behind the establishment of SBM in American schools derives from the recognition of the assumption that when decisions are made closer to the people who have to implement them, better decisions will be made and greater satisfaction will ensue (cf 2.1.4.1(b)(i)).

The second feature of SBM is that, while it calls for the involvement of all stakeholders in the school, namely, the principal, educators, school board members, district level staff, learners and non-governmental organisations, the central office has been advised to appreciate the uniqueness of each school's culture and to strike a proper balance between autonomy and accountability when decisions are made in the school (DiNatale 1994:79). Though each school has its own SBM, partnership in SBM does not operate in isolation from the broader education governance system, but extends beyond the individual school's boundaries. Links are formed between the school, the district and the central office. The latter two provide the SBM council with assistance, support,

training, resources and information (DiNatale 1994:78-80).

The third feature of SBM is that, since SBM represents a form of devolution in which control is transferred from the district offices to individual schools, it entails major changes of roles for district offices, principals and educators. Districts no longer send unilateral instructions to principals on how to manage the affairs of their schools. Instead, they try to assist schools to accomplish what they decide to do independently. Decision making is no longer confined to principals and staff, but has become a shared responsibility of the school's various constituents, that is, the decision-making authority is vested in the SBM council whose members are elected by their own constituencies. The principals' common role as a primary decision maker in their exclusive professional capacity as the head of the school, has given way to the SBM council consisting of both professionals and non-professionals, that is, educators, parents and ordinary members of the community (Wholstetter & Briggs 1994:14).

(ii) *The spread of school-based management across the USA*

School-based management has come to dominate the school governance scene in the United States of America. Wohlstetter and Briggs (op cit) report that more than a third of school districts surveyed in some states operate under some form of school-based management, while other surveys conducted by the Council of Great City Schools report that 85 percent of the member districts have already implemented some form of SBM. One notable example is an approach to local school governance called shared decision making (SDB) adopted by the Nanuet Union Free School District in Nanuet, New York (McNeill & Mc Neill 1994:257). The approach was adopted when Nanuet was confronted with the implementation of New York State's restructuring policy, A New Compact for Learning (1991), which required a procedure to develop a school-based, shared decision-making plan. According to McNeill and McNeill (1994:258), the Compact called for the establishment of a district-wide committee, comprised of parents, educators and administrators.

Another example in the United States is Kentucky, which has been hailed as a leader

in the establishment of SBM promoted by the 1990 Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) (Lindle & Shrock 1993:71). Among other things, the Kentucky Education Reform Act has for the first time empowered the school council to participate in the process of hiring educators. The nature and extent of partnership and teamwork can be understood from the section of legislation quoted here by Lindle and Shrock (1993:72):

From a list of applicants recommended by the local superintendent, the principal at the participating school shall select personnel to fill vacancies, after consultation with the School Council.... A Screening committee made up of the principal, a Council parent, a Council teacher, and a teacher from the candidate's field, or their designated representatives, shall be invited to review applications, interviews and select three finalists

....

The decentralisation of school governance through the creation of partnerships which are operative at the school site is enjoying much publicity in American schools. Rigney (1995:40) sums up the importance of this matter as follows:

The need for bureaucracy, authoritarianism, and hierarchy in the educational process and the management of education institutions is no longer justified, since cooperative/collaborative performance has become predominant in our society.

(b) *The policy of "choice and diversity" as a reform strategy applied in Britain*

The market forces mentioned earlier (cf 2.1.3.2) are central to the Education Reform Act of 1988. This is clearly echoed by the emergence of the concepts of "choice" and "diversity" along with such related factors as competition, per capita funding and organisation, which directly impact on how school governors should operate in schools. While "choice" is made through "open enrolment", "diversity" occurs when the current choice of school is extended so that competition may occur when parents have an

opportunity to choose from the available schools “thus moving control of education away from the producers (teachers) and towards the consumers (parents, pupils, the local community and employers)” (Bowe et al 1992:65). In line with this policy of “choice and diversity”, the government established various types of schools to cater for parental choice. The “diversified” school types have diverse governing bodies with the effect that partnerships have become diverse too. For the purpose of this research, only two systems of local school governance will be discussed namely, the local management of schools and grant maintained schools.

(i) *Devolution of governance through local management of schools (LMS)*

The Local Management of Schools (LMS) is a new governing system under which LEA schools operate in England and Wales. This system was introduced in the process of transformation of the local education authorities (LEAs) and the way they governed schools, subsequent to the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA). LMS refers to the delegation of responsibilities and resource management directly to schools, under the supervision of an LEA, which is statutorily required to assist schools by setting objectives, allocating resources and monitoring their use and reporting on the schools' account of their utilisation (Emerson 1991:18). These resources are derived from taxes, such as council tax, and are allocated to school governing bodies which are empowered and charged with the responsibility of budget and management (Simon & Chitty 1993:28). The rationale behind the establishment of the LMS is the central belief that if schools themselves can determine what resources to employ in order to meet the children's needs, then they will make better choices than remote LEA officers.

Two developments are implied in the establishment of LMS:

- (i) the shift in governance and control of schools from the local school area, that is, LEA-controlled area, to an individual school site and a shift from local administration to local management (This is similar to the shift in governance from the district level to the school site developing in the USA (cf 2.1.4.3(a)(i))

- (2) the addition of a new partner in the partnership equation (the school) and the relinquishing of another (LEA) (In other words, the more the new partners (parents, educators and the community members) move into the school governance arena, the further the LEAs recede into oblivion. LEAs would, therefore, mainly serve as an interim capacity builder while schools are still getting their act together in preparation for a school-based governance service constituted by more representative and participatory structures, namely, the school governing bodies.

In the face of the disappearance of LEAs as partners from the governance scene, school governors in the LMS are faced with enormous challenges. According to Emerson (1991:142), these challenges include:

- the threats and opportunities created by competition (envisaged) by “open enrolment”
- the need for better and more effective management to cope with the new management changing roles
- opportunities to extend delegation
- the need for new skills
- the need for better, and more immediate, management information
- the benefits, or otherwise, of remaining within LEA, as opposed to seeking grant-maintained status
- greater accountability

Given the withdrawal of active involvement of the local education authorities from school governance and the subsequent handing over of powers to LMS, and that governors are

expected to be more accountable to their customers than their predecessors, these challenges will be immense. The forfeit of expertise and specialist skills of LEA by the school will mean that intensive school-based management training programmes have to be implemented to assist these governors in dealing with matters such as finance, planning, personnel management and appraisal, information technology and other issues previously dealt with by LEA, as indicated above (cf 2.1.4.2(a)).

(ii) *Creation of grant-maintained schools (GMS)*

One way in which the central government is advancing its aim of reforming education by bringing governance a step closer to the local people is through the establishment of grant-maintained schools (GMS) in Britain. A grant-maintained school is a new type of school that has been created from an existing LEA-maintained school in terms of the provision of the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) (cf 2.1.4.1(b)(ii)). In other words, a GMS is a product of transformation of an LEA county or comprehensive school into a quasi-independent school. Before a school can obtain grant-maintained status, it should first make application to the Secretary of State for Education and as soon as the application is approved, it is then run entirely by the Department of Education (DFE) (Rogers 1992:2). What is remarkable about this school is that, in line with the principle of "choice", parents are allowed to decide through a ballot whether or not their school should opt out of the LEA system and become grant-maintained. If the majority of parents vote in favour of opting out of the LEA control, the school governing body is obliged to prepare, establish and submit the application to the Secretary for Education, who will decide on whether to give the school a grant-maintained status. The result of the process is a school with a governing body consisting of 15 to 17 members drawn from a wide range of fields who come to work together as partners in the place of LEA.

Numerous educational implications and challenges face schools that decide to opt out of an LEA system in favour of GMS status. Two examples can be cited in this regard. First, it is evident that the British government has appreciated that for a school to be properly and effectively governed, a wide range of people with varying expertise, that is, parents and other professionals such as lawyers, architects, accountants and other

stakeholders drawn from the school's surrounding, should be brought into the school as partners in decision making. This poses a challenge for these experts in that though they might be professionals in their own fields, they might lack time and experience to perform school administrative duties. On the other hand, "not many communities consist of a high proportion of such professionals" (Rogers 1992:75). Secondly, by implementing opting out through GMS, the government has to free education from the allegedly bureaucratic local authorities (cf 2.1.4.2(a)) and establish independent governing bodies in order to effectively enhance educational standards in these schools. Parents, teachers, businessmen and other partners in the governing body compete with their counterparts in other schools for the best service provision. This means that the governing body of a GMS face the challenge of marketing their product (school) to consumers (parents, pupils and the community) with the effect that, should they fail in meeting the demands of the latter, market conditions might expose the weakness of their 'failing' school and thus subject it to eventual closure by the Secretary who approved its establishment in the first place (Simon & Chitty 1993:53). This implies that partnership in governing a school in Britain is weakened when certain conditions that sustain effective relationship between partners are no longer met. —

(c) *Establishment of school governing bodies in South Africa*

As pointed out, the management councils and governing councils in South African public schools have been replaced by alternative governance structures called governing bodies (cf 2.1.4.2(c)). These governing bodies have been established in terms of section 16(1) of the South African Schools Act (SASA) of 1996 (cf 2.1.4.1(b)(iii)). The rationale behind the establishment of these bodies is the creation of partnership between all stakeholders with an interest in public school education. It is believed that South African schools will run properly only if there is partnership between parents, educators, learners, community members and the education department (state) (Macgragor et al. 1997:4). The fact that community members and parents are closer to the school than the Department of Education implies that they are so well positioned as to identify with the needs and problems of the school (cf 2.1.4.1(b)(iii)). Their proximity to the school as well as their active participation in its activities will ensure

efficient delivery of service in terms of management and governance of the school.

A governing body acts in a position of trust to the school and, as a representative of the school community, works jointly with the school principal in performing the organisational and managerial functions of the school in an effective way. This calls for an effective partnership between all members of the governing body. According to Potgieter, Visser, Van der Bank, Mothata and Squelch (1997:8), effective partnerships are generally characterised by:

- mutual trust and respect
- shared goals and values
- shared decision making
- common vision
- open communication
- good teamwork
- promotion of the interest of the partnership rather than those of the individual
- respect for the roles of different partners

(i) *Composition of the governing body*

Reflecting the democratic principles of equality and collaborative governance, the governing body of an ordinary public school is composed of such democratically elected members as the following:

- the principal of the school

- educators at the school
- members of the staff at the school who are not educators
- learners attending the eighth grade and higher
- co-opted members of the community served by the school
- the co-opted owner or a representative of the owner of the property on which the school is situated

Unlike the traditional statutory bodies (cf 2.1.4.2(c)), the new governing body structure displays a balanced representation of all stakeholders in the school. This stems from the constitutional principle of “the right to education for all”.

(ii) *Powers and functions of governing bodies*

In addition to the powers already mentioned above (cf 2.1.3.3(b)), and subject to section 20(1) of the South African Schools Act, the public school governing body must

- promote the best interest of the school and strive to ensure its development through the provision of quality education for all learners at the school
- adopt a constitution
- develop the mission statement of the school
- adopt a code of conduct for learners at the school
- support the principal, educators and other staff of the school in the performance of their professional functions.

A certain degree of partnership and collaboration is implied by the nature of powers and functions allocated to the governing body. The purpose and implication of allocating these duties is that rather than have an individual exerting influence on the governance of the school, all members work together as equal partners in decision making, organisation and management of school activities.

2.1.4.4 *Implementation of partnerships in school governance*

When school governance is restructured within the broader picture of educational reform, consideration should be given to the direction in which change moves. The trend in most countries today is for change to move from the traditional bureaucratic structure of governance to a more participatory structure (cf figures 2.2 and 2.3). The success of the implementation of reform strategies in the area of school governance depends on the restructuring of relationships between the various stakeholders in the school because it is noted (Leithwood 1992:8) that the failure of many educational reforms is linked to the nature of the power relationships operative in school settings. (HSA) These relationships include the relationships among teachers and administrators, parents and teachers, students and teachers, and community members and parents or teachers. These participants have roles to play in the governance of schools as indicated below. The importance of these roles depends on the extent to which collaboration and partnership are operational between people who are responsible and accountable in their relations (cf figure 2.1). These roles are also affected by the models of management and governance applied by the state Department of Education.

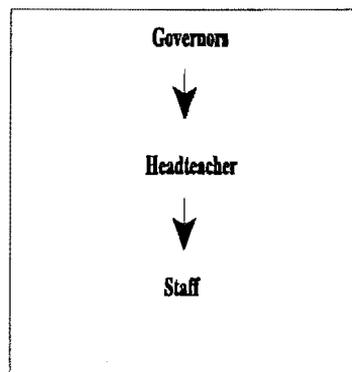
(a) Management models applied in school governance

In the management and governance of schools in many countries including South Africa, the USA and to a less extent, England and Wales, there is a significant shift in approach from the traditional management model (cf figure 2.2) to a modern collegial model (cf figure 2.3 and 2.1) through which all partners in the school contribute to its effective management and governance.

(i) *Traditional linear management model*

In the traditional linear management model, as can be deduced from figure 2.2, there is no clear role definition for the various role players nor can there be talk of partnership and teamwork where matters and decisions on matters descend hierarchically from top to bottom, with no reciprocation from below. This traditional approach is being reformed by the introduction of the collegial model of management (cf figure 2.3).

Figure 2.2 Traditional linear management model



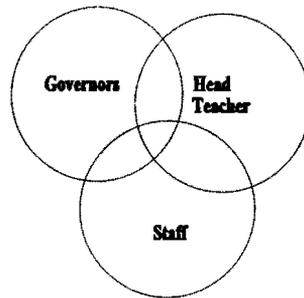
Source: Davis and Anderson (1992:125)

(ii) *Collegial management model*

In the collegial management model, the various role players or partners share their roles though each partner enjoys a certain measure of speciality in his or her specific role. For example, teachers as members of the staff play an important role in managing the curriculum and thus exercise control over it; the head teacher manages the school, including the staff, the pupils and governors and controls all the school programmes; the governing body manages funds, employs staff and the head teacher (who paradoxically comes to manage it) and acts on behalf of the local school community. The three partners work together co-operatively with each partner adopting an appropriate and relevant role with the effect that, as Davis and Anderson (1992:125) put

it, “the overall result can be considerably more than the sum of the individual parts each person contributes”.

Figure 2.3 Collegial management model

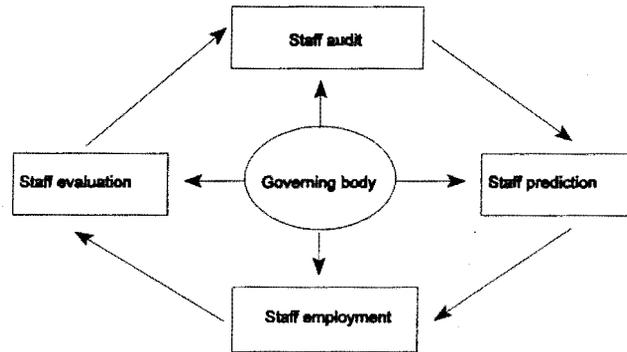


Source: Davis and Anderson (1992:126)

This approach entails the “flattening out” of the traditional hierarchical structure so that everyone in the school can bring his or her own experiences to the central table to share with others on an equal footing.

An example of how the collegial management model operates in practice can be illustrated when a decision is made on the employment of additional educators in a school. In deciding whether or not to employ additional educators to boost the staff complement, the governing body might first consider the legal provisions to which the school is subject (judicial governance) and then plan (management) (cf 2.1.4.4(b)). The steps illustrated in figure 2.4 below are taken.

Figure 2.4 Planning for staff employment



Source: Adopted from figure 2.7

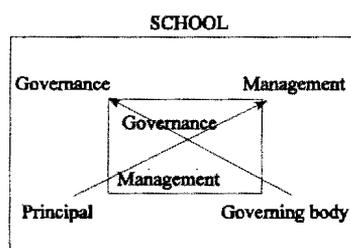
Figure 2.4 shows that when additional teachers are to be employed, the personal feelings and interests of the partners in the governing body are either drastically narrowed (shown by the sharp ends of the sectors) or completely shelved to pursue the common interests of the governing body as a unified body (cf 2.4.4.2). First, the governing body critically examines the present position of the school in terms of staff members or composition, considering the curriculum needs, the school's financial position and so on. Secondly, predictions are made on the basis of the available resources as to the number of teachers the school can afford to employ. Thirdly, the governing body decides whether or not to employ the additional teachers. Lastly, the governing body sits down to evaluate its decisions. In all these steps co-operation, communication and collaboration are pursued in the interest of the school.

(b) *The governing body as a unified body*

As partners with the school's instructional staff and the management staff represented by the principal (head teacher), school governors are involved in sharing power over both management and governance. Although in South Africa research indicates the

difference between management and governance (cf Potgieter et al 1997:14), the two functions find unity in the governing body. In the first instance, governors serve the school as managers in the sense that they constitute a body that performs such managerial tasks as preparing budgets, determining curriculum policy and appointing staff (Sallis in Esp & Saron 1995:15). The principal, by virtue of being an ex-officio member of the governing body, is active in the governance of the school and shares in the performance of all its functions. This shows that the school is a point where management tasks and governance tasks converge. This is shown in the following figure.

Figure 2.5 The interaction between the management and governance in the school



The same idea of unity in the school governing body is expressed by Levačić(1995:29) who, in referring to the official model of local management brought in by the 1988 Education Reform Act in Britain, sees the school governing body as a board of directors with the head teacher as the chief executive. In the second place, school governors are involved in school governance per se, which has three dimensions according to Bruce Reed (quoted in Esp & Saron 1995:154):

- Sovereign governance, which entails full public accountability for the work of the school as a whole to all interested parties, rendered in various forms, including the presentation of the annual report to parents
- Judicial governance, which entails accountability for meeting all the legal

requirements to which the school is subject, including the law relating to finance, employment, the curriculum and health safety. (These aspects can be delegated by the governing bodies to committees constituted by the school staff, governors and specialists, such as bursars.)

- Performative governance, which entails accountability for carrying out the activities of the school through which the vision for the school and providing a service to pupils are put into practice. (This governance is delegated to the head teacher who, in turn, is accountable to the governing body through the execution of day-to-day management of resources put at his or her disposal by the governors.)

The picture drawn above is that of a body unified by partnerships of ideas, visions and actions. This implies that a governing body as a unified body has components who act as partners to provide essential inputs into the governance of the school. These inputs are aimed at fulfilling the best interest of the school.

(i) *The learner component of the governing body*

There is a strong belief in the USA and South Africa that students should actively take part in school restructuring by way of involvement in school governance. The reason for this is that no-one can gain control over a school unless all the participants in the school co-operate (Newman 1992:19). For instance, educators cannot successfully exercise control in the classroom, unless the learners allow them to exercise that control, nor can administrators control a school unless educators and learners give them their full co-operation. Control requires an effective leadership, which is positive towards communicative and participatory interpersonal relationship. Such leadership is transformational in nature in the sense that leaders and their followers are united in pursuing goals common to them (Sergiovanni 1990:23).

Apart from school governance *per se*, learners can be involved in other aspects of the school, such as extracurricular activities, technical management of the school,

interpersonal relationships, and curriculum and instruction (Newman 1992:21). The inclusion or exclusion of pupils from being members of the governing body is determined to a large extent by the state's approach to school governance. In the American State of Illinois, for example, the Chicago School Reform Act, P.A. 85-1418 (Radnofsky 1994:161) mandated that Chicago high school learners be given one seat (non-voting) on the established Local School Council in order to empower learners in contributing to academic achievement, improved school attendance, a sense of involvement in the school and decreasing dropout rates. This is in line with the American approach to governance in which centralisation is dropped in favour of decentralisation. From this, it follows logically from the American perspective, that if schools are for learners then learners, as members of the public, have a right to decision making on the governance of the school as a public institution. A similar view is held in South Africa where learners attending the eight grade or higher are elected to positions in the governing body (cf 2.1.4.3(c)(i)). A slightly different arrangement is the one in which the learners are legally forbidden to attend meetings where sensitive issues like the dismissal of an educator, are discussed. In line with democratic principles, South Africans feel that the interests of the learners of the school should be represented in the governing body (Potgieter et al 1997:18). In Britain a different view is held, namely, that learners (children) cannot be partners in school governance. In fact, no person under the age of 18 may be a governor, even though governors are allowed to pass a resolution admitting learners as observers who do not take part in the meeting or vote. This condition is in line with the British Government's point of view that the school is for children and not theirs (Holt & Hinds 1994:75). For this reason, learners as children are not expected to be governors in partnership with parents or adults.

(ii) *The educator component of the governing body*

Educators are professional leaders who are capable of educating and leading children whose education is the focus of governance. However, it has been found that their leadership potential and capabilities in solving problems in schools have been ignored by the bureaucratic traditional governance structures (Reitzug 1992:133). These

structures are characterised by rule-governed, top-down decision making, restricted creativity, ingenuity and problem-solving capabilities of educators. The assumption is that these qualities are embodied in the authority of a designated leader of the school, namely, the principal (Bush 1986:42). Nonetheless, the nature of the principal's work as both an instructional leader and a manager provided little room for principal-teacher interaction (Reitzug 1992:134). Since all aspects of the school are tightly controlled through rules, regulations and policies, the principal-teacher relationship becomes a top-down relationship.

With the emergence of reforms in school governance which brought about such concepts as empowerment, restructuring, decentralisation and school-based management, the traditional structure is currently undergoing transformation. This transformation has already assumed radical proportions in some American states, such as New Jersey, Minnesota and Texas, where the judicial, legislative and executive branches of state governments have instigated changes that have raised stakes high by obliterating "old structures and pushing school governance into the public arena" (Pipho 1995:6). Similar measures are taken at national and provincial levels in South Africa just as they are taken in England and Wales (cf 2.1.4.3(b)(ii); 2.1.4.3(c)). The roles of principals and educators are now changing. Principals and educators are given total responsibility in such matters as preparing budgets, determining curriculum, employing staff and selecting study materials (cf 2.1.4.4(a)(ii)).

The principal is changing from being an autocratic leader to being a facilitator and participatory leader (Lange 1993:99). This implies that the principal no longer dictates the terms to educators on how the school should run, but seeks consensus from them before taking action. At the same time, the relationship between the principal and the educators has become that of partners in decision making. A sense of teamwork and staff cohesiveness is developing and this is made possible by the fact that the principal actively seeks staff input prior to making decisions (Lange 1993:98). Unity and teamwork make it possible for teachers and principals to rally around in defence of any central office decision that might threaten the autonomy of their school.

The inclusion of educators in school governance is apt to be a challenging experience in their professional lives since they have received more training in didactic matters than in school governance. For the first time they find themselves sitting side by side with parents, lawyers, nurses, dog handlers and mechanics discussing educational matters in their own ground - the school.

(iii) *The parent component of the governing body*

As the primary educators of children, parents should be involved in the education of their children just as they are in their welfare, health and emotional upbringing. In partnership with other stakeholders, such as educators, fellow community members and the state, they have a democratic right to decide on the manner and circumstances of their children's education. Although the state quite often mandated parent involvement in the education of children through such bodies as school boards and management councils mentioned earlier (cf 2.1.4.2(b); 2.1.4.2(c)), parent involvement in decision making was seldom fully realized (St John 1995:82). An example in this regard is a study conducted in South Africa (Monareng 1995:127) that found that parents are very uncertain about their role in the school as well as in the daily functioning of the school. This is attributed to the emphasis placed on the bureaucratic approach to governance. One can argue in favour of the government's changed role from that of control to that of facilitation by encouraging a bottom-up approach. This implies that parent involvement as well as community involvement should be initiated by the school instead of being mandated by the government.

This situation is changing. The idea that parents should be given an open room for participation in school governance is becoming increasingly popular with parents and education reformers (Snider 1991:12). Programmes have been developed to enhance meaningful parent involvement in schools in many countries, including the USA. In that country a programme called Accelerated Schools Project was established in the mid-1980s and involved 500 schools in more than 30 states. Accelerated schools in a systematic, locally-based school-restructuring methodology which involves parents as partners in the change process (Hopfenberg et al in St John 1995:83). The project

found that when principals and teachers initiate a welcoming attitude to parents as partners in the school restructuring process, the school becomes successful (St John 1995:95). The idea is supported by Stone (1995:800) who in his study of 11 schools, in the Crawford Cluster Connection (CCC), San Diego, California, found that effective change initiated by 'frontline professionals' in collaboration with parents and children is a bottom-up effort which contributes to community development by treating parents as a source of planning and improving conditions at school. The Americans have learnt that successful restructuring efforts depend on a carefully planned partnership which involves schools, the business sector and the parent community "whose members should be given the necessary training to empower them to carry out the restructuring task" (Rosado 1994:252).

(iv) *The community component of the governing body*

Since a school is situated in a community from which the children attending school (learners) and their parents come, the community should be represented on the governing body. Rosado (1994:242) says that the schools of the future must be reshaped with the assistance of the broader community and the business sector. He suggests that, for the school to succeed in attaining its educational aims, it should endeavour to promote school-community partnership. The idea of involving the community in school governance is justified by the fact that school community members bring a wealth of experience, talents, ideas and resources into the school because they spend their daily lives working as lawyers, doctors, farmers, engineers, teachers, housekeepers, accountants and so on. This wealth is invaluable to the governing body in dealing with such aspects as interpretation of educational law, health programmes and preparing budgets. The community representatives in the governing body will apply these experiences in the school setting.

2.1.4.5 ***Capacity building for governing bodies***

In order to perform their duties and carry out their responsibilities in an effective and efficient manner, school governing bodies should have the necessary capabilities to do

so. It is the responsibility of the state in partnership with other stakeholders to build and develop capacity for governing bodies. Capacity building includes training, financing and inspection among other things.

(a) *Training school governors*

Governors have diverse backgrounds and for this reason have little or no experience in managing an organisation such as a school. They therefore need support from the state in management, information, guidance, finance and other matters.

The state cannot effectively provide this support, just as it cannot govern schools alone (cf 2.1.4.1(b)(iii)). According to Steffy (1993:78-80), various training and support programmes have been put into operation in the American state of Kentucky to assist school governors, including the following:

First, the Kentucky Department of Education in partnership with private consultants and associations like the School Board Association and the State School Association are engaged in training governors in aspects such as the roles and responsibilities of the school council. They also inform teachers of the legal implications of their new powers and use a regional network of field officers to conduct the training. Likewise, the Kentucky Teacher Association provides a videotape and training materials for teachers to assist them in school council formation. Secondly, the State Department in partnership with Gheens Academy (the professional development centre) provide guidelines and awareness sessions for local boards on the Education Bill and assist them in designing local district policy and developing a training programme for council members. The State Department provides council members with skills training in consensus decision making, team planning, drawing up an agenda and running effective meetings.

In Britain local education authorities, business enterprises, non-governmental organisations and the state are engaged in training governors. According to Wragg and Partington (1995:70), local authorities run workshops on courses for school governors

of a region or specifically for one or two governing bodies. These workshops last for anything from a morning to a series of sessions spread over a long period. Some foresighted businesses have taken the initiative to give "extra annual leave to school governors" (Sallis in Esp & Saron 1995:21). The idea that some legislation be passed to enable workers to have paid time-off for days in the year and that those not in paid work to have expenses paid to fulfil their role as school governors is strongly recommended.

In South Africa the National Department of Education in partnership with the Interuniversity Centre for Education Law and Education Policy (CELP), the Human Science Research Council (HSRC) and other bodies publishes manuals for school governors. In addition to these publications, workshops are held throughout the nine provinces on holding meetings of governing bodies, the South African Schools Act and other legislation, and other matters (cf 2.1.4.1(b)(iii)).

(b) *Delegating funding to school governors*

In line with the general perception prevailing in the USA and Britain that the school is a key organisational unit (cf 2.1.4.3(a)(i)), there is a feeling that power over the school budget and personnel needs to shift to the school. Devolution of governance to school governing bodies as advocated in these countries implies that most of the functions - including funding - which were initially carried out by the state, will have to be decentralized and handed over to the governing bodies. It is the responsibility of the state, therefore, to empower governors to control the financial management of their schools as indicated below.

(c) *State financial support for governing bodies in the USA*

One of the challenges confronting American public school governors today is to bring about "equity and excellence" in their schools (cf 2.1.4.1(b)(i)). This principle of equity and excellence is applied by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) which, among other things, involves the promotion of parent involvement in education,

expansion of professional development opportunities for teachers, facilitation of systemic school-based reform, and budgeting education resources where needs arise (Robinson 1994:33). These fundamental changes will hardly succeed if school finance is divorced from the reform agenda. Such reform, as indicated, entails decentralization of management, which involves the devolution of authority to those closest to the point of action: teachers, parents and principals. It is difficult to imagine this devolution of authority in the absence of the consideration of school-based funding.

Reporting on the ideas of the co-director of the Finance Centre of the Consortium for Policy Research in Education, Robinson (1994:34) states that school-based financing would help to enhance both fiscal equity and the capacity of individual schools to meet the unique needs of their clients. This is in stark contrast to the current practice in which the state-to-district funding system ignores the fact that high-level student achievement is essentially a school and not a district function. What is encouraging, however, is the USA President's appreciation of the importance of partnership in school-based financing shown by his request to Congress to invest \$700 million in the Goals 2000 programme, which was managed by various partners in school governance (Riley 1994:5). Numerous suggestions have been put forward in support of school-based financing (Odden 1994:110). The first entails budgeting the bulk of revenue in lump sum to schools - where possible, allowing states or districts to fund schools directly - and giving school governors the powers to hire and recruit personnel. Secondly, to provide an on-line computerised database with revenues, expenditure, achievement and other data.

Allocation of funds to the school demands strict accountability on the part of governing bodies or councils as well as rigorous control by the state. The funds used in running public schools come mostly from taxes and the public has a justifiable interest in how the money is used. Robinson (1994:35) reports that Kentucky, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Kansas, South Carolina, Indiana, Nebraska, Tennessee, Texas and Vermont increased both sales tax and income tax to boost school restructuring with great public support for the endeavour.

To maintain this public support and enhance public morale, bold and creative

management of the school budgets by the governing bodies is essential. This can be achieved by establishing and maintaining effective partnerships between the school governors themselves, the governing body and the district and state officials, that is, all the stakeholders in school governance.

(d) State financial support for governing bodies in Britain

In England and Wales, funding a school is a process of partnership between the central government, the government-appointed quasi-autonomous non-governmental organisations and the school governing body on the one hand, and between the central government and the local education authority (LEA) on the other hand. In the face of the declining LEA services, the Department of Education (DFE) is now employing the services of such non-governmental organisations as the Funding Agency for Schools (FAS), especially for those schools which opt for grant-maintained status. Depending on the circumstances of each school, the funding is determined by a formula which is based on the number and of ages of pupils (Davis & Anderson 1992:8). In other words, the greater the number of pupils and the older the pupils, the greater the budget allocation to the school. The effect is that pupil allowances varies from school to school, encouraging competition in keeping pupil numbers high (Sallis 1995:29). In line with the government policy of "open enrolment", the governing body at a school should admit as many pupils as possible to receive maximum funding because, as it is, money follows the children as they move from school to school. More children in the school implies more teachers, more equipment, more textbooks and so on. To keep the school running at a maximum financial viability, the governing body should forge strong partnerships with parents and other community members.

The shift in control and management of schools from the local education authorities mentioned earlier (cf 2.1.4.2(a)) means that the governing body is now responsible for and has control over spending, including paying staff salaries and wages, purchasing books and equipment, and bearing the costs of daily running of the school under its control. This is similar to the situation envisaged in the United States of America.

2.1.4.6 *Inspection of school governing bodies and their schools*

In order to ensure that school governing bodies perform their duties properly, they need to be appraised or inspected from time to time. It is the duty of the state legislature that funds education programmes to demand (from schools) an account for the funds it provides (Gavin & Bogotch 1994:403). For this reason, inspection is regularly conducted to ensure that school governing bodies operate in accordance with the law, not only in meeting their financial obligations, but also in performing all their duties. For inspection to achieve the desired effect, it should involve all stakeholders in the school, namely educators, parents, the community members, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the state (through the Department of Education). As to how partnership in the inspection of schools can be developed, reference can be made to the British example.

School inspection in England and Wales is conducted by OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education), whose members are appointed by the Secretary for Education, and is headed by HMCI (Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools), who reports to the Secretary for Education annually (Sallis 1995:10). HMCI is assisted by HMIs (Her Majesty's Inspectors) whose powers have been trimmed so that in terms of the Education Schools Act of 1992 (cf 2.1.4.1(b)(ii)) schools are inspected every four to five years by a team of independent private inspectors led by a registered inspector (Rgl or 'reggie' as they are known colloquially). These inspectors are selected, trained and licensed by OFSTED, which does not employ them, but contracts them by tender (Davis in Ouston et al 1996:4). It is assumed that if inspectors are independent of the school they inspect, they are apt to be impartial in their judgements and for this reason, contracts for inspection on any school are open to all Rgl's who wish to bid under conditions of competitive tendering (Wilcox & Gray 1996:38).

There are four main areas on which inspectors contracted by OFSTED are required to pass judgement (Davis in Ouston et al 1996:4) namely:

- the quality of education provided;

- the quality of standards achieved;
- the efficient management of the school's financial arrangements; and
- the spiritual, moral and cultural development of pupils.

Holt and Hinds (1994:18-19) say that HMCI's assessment of the governing body's contributions will include such evidence as agendas and minutes of governors' meetings; discussion with governors and a statement about how governors strive to effectively fulfil their statutory functions such as curriculum, staffing, finance, appropriate aims of the school, sex and religious education and so on. Given this list of the governing body's contribution, it is essential that before inspectors descend on the school for inspection, school governors should have a thorough knowledge of what is expected of them. They should, therefore, ask themselves questions similar to those listed in figure 2.6 below.

After the inspection of the school has been completed and a final judgement reached on the basis of the consideration of the four areas mentioned above, the Rgl draws up a report on the governing body's discharge of its accountabilities - its successes and failures. This is communicated to the principal and then to OFSTED, which submits its report to the HMC (Wilcox & Gray 1996:100-101). Should the Chief Inspector judge that a school is "failing" and is at risk of collapse, the problem is handed over to the local authority, which will consider the action plan drawn up by school governors (cf figure 2.7) before taking direct financial control of the school and appointing new governors. If the local education authority fails, the Department for Education will intervene and place the school under the management of the centrally financed Education Association (EA) for a period of 24 months and if the school fails to improve, the Secretary has the power to close it (Simon & Chitty 1993:68).

Figure 2.6 Questions for governors to ask about their own functions

<p>Are we fulfilling our statutory functions?</p> <p>Do we have policies which are up to date on the curriculum? staffing? health and safety? admissions and appeals? resource management?</p> <p>How do we know?</p> <p>Do we create/approve a budget to maximise the achievement of our educational aims? Ho do we know?</p> <p>Do we operate, as a governing body, as effectively as we might?</p> <p>Do we have an appropriate relationship with the school?</p> <p>How do we communicate with the community?</p>

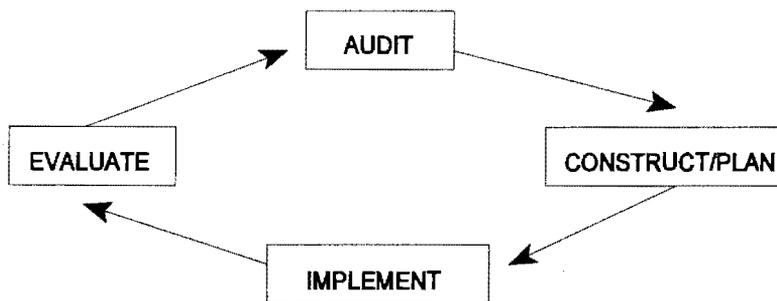
Source: Ormston and Shaw (1993:38).

To avoid possible closure and rescue their "blacklisted" school, the governing body in partnership with the school's staff, should draw up an action plan. Such a plan is essential, especially for locally managed schools. According to Emerson (1991:28), a typical example of such a plan may have the following steps:

- (i) Audit: reviewing the school's strengths and weaknesses
- (ii) Planning: deciding on priorities and targets
- (iii) Implementation: putting into effect the planned priorities and targets

- (iv) Evaluation: checking on the success of the implementation

Figure 2.7 School planning cycle



Sources: Ormston and Shaw (1993:41); Emerson (1991:28); Earley et al (1996:160).

According to Circular 7/93 (DFE 1993), a report to the school governing body together with a summary for parents has to be produced within a period of 25 working days of the end of the inspection. The governing body is then required to produce an action plan within a period of 40 days, setting out the procedure to be followed in implementing the key inspection findings. A copy of the action plan is to be sent to all parents within a further period of five days.

The involvement of the DFE, the school's staff and its principal, school's governing body and parents in the inspection of schools shows that partnership is vitally important even in the domain of inspection. Holt and Hinds (1994:101) justify the above-mentioned inspection on the ground that it would not be reasonable for the state to delegate so much power to the school governing body, without watching how it operates its business. The state should know whether or not the statutory provisions are strictly adhered to by the governing body - without proper control, power and authority, as funds might be misused.

2.1.5 Overview of the state's role in partnerships in school governance

Here the following points are worthy of consideration. First, the reform and restructuring process in school governance has to be marked by a shift in partnership structure from the traditional state-board-school, State-LEA-school or state-management council-school structures to the new state-school structure as indicated in the figure below. The state sets policies on various aspects of school governance; passes legislation to ensure that policies are carried out legally; provides support through funding, training and other mechanisms for efficient governance, institutes inspection of schools as a mechanism for deriving accountability on the part of the schools and their governing bodies for the manner in which they function. Secondly, in the transformation process, there has to be an increase in accountability from the school level to the state level (represented by a, on figure 2.8). On the part of the school, accountability may occur in either of two ways:

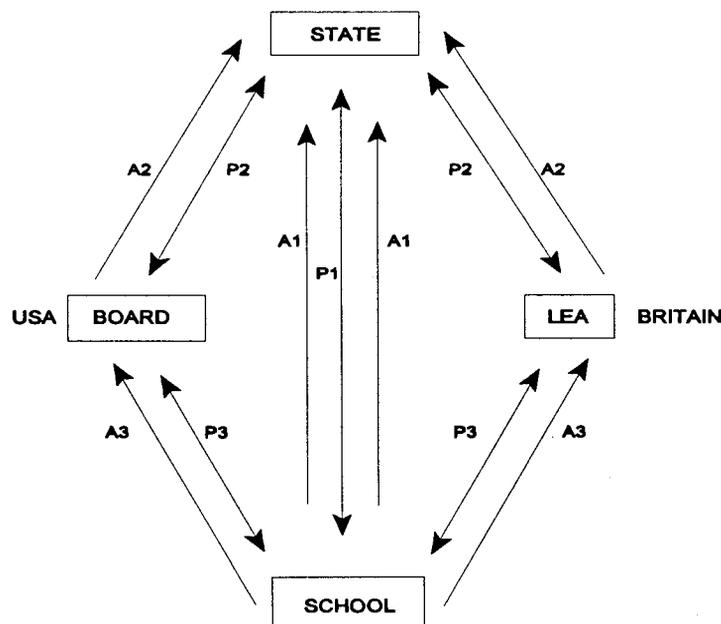
- (1) the school governing body is directly answerable to the state, and
- (2) the governing body is answerable to the state indirectly through government-appointed bodies ($a, P,$ and $a_3, P_3,$ respectively). The transformed relationship, namely, state-school partnership (a_1, P_1) is intended to enhance the speed of delivery (information, finance, and so on) from the Education Department to the school on the one hand, and the school's accountability to the Department for the way in which the delivered goods and services are handled by the school and its governing body, on the other. However, this is practically difficult to implement and Rogers (1992:142-143) expresses the same problem as follows:

It is clear that a range of organisations, or even individuals, may be capable of performing a service, but responsibility for providing public services must rest with either central or local government if accountability lies closest to the point of delivery - which is after all, the principle underlying devolution of responsibility to institutions.

An important consideration is that in transforming the relationship, some partners, such

as school boards, management councils and local education authorities, are dropped and their services to schools dispensed with accordingly. To compensate for the loss of services, the central government finds itself confronted with the mammoth task of providing the essential services to schools on its own. This alternative becomes non-viable, given the difference existing in reality between the Education Department and the individual schools in terms of the time delivery takes and the distance to overcome. The remaining option is for the government to appoint an agency or consultant to provide services to an individual school rather than to a group or cluster of schools as it did before. An example of these agencies is OFSTED mentioned above (cs 2.1.4.6).

Figure 2.8 Transformation of school governance partnership structure in the USA and Britain



- NB: P₁: Partnership between the State and the school
 P₂: Partnership between the School Board/LEA and the State
 P₃: Partnership between the School Board/LEA and the school
 A₁: Accountability of the school to the State
 A₂: Accountability of the School Board/LEA to the State
 A₃: Accountability of the school to the School Board/LEA

2.1.6 Conclusion

It has emerged from what has been said above that the state plays a central role in bringing about reform in the way schools are governed. This reform is based on the principles entrenched in the Constitution and expressed through relevant approaches and legislations. Since reform is concerned with change, reforming school governance brings about changes in interpersonal relationships and strategies required in the process of implementing change. All these changes have to be monitored and evaluated by the very same state which initiated them to ensure that they are in line with the aim and objectives it has set.

2.2 IMPLICATIONS OF THE STATE'S REFORM AND RESTRUCTURING INITIATIVES ON GOVERNING BODIES

2.2.1 Introduction

From what has been stated above, it emerges that the state plays a key role in the process of initiating and promoting reform in school governance. This process is characterised by a significant change in the locus of control from one level to another (cf 2.3), a change in relationships and attitudes between various stakeholders (cf 2.1.4.2), and the adoption of mechanisms to effect and stimulate change (4.2.1.4.3). The main idea behind these initiatives is to devolve control in governance to the school community level so that most of the decisions traditionally made by the region, the province or the state can now be made by the school staff, parents, educators and ordinary members of the community (Murphy 1993:46). This devolution of control to the school community level has several implications for the school. First, bringing control to the school community level calls for the empowerment of the stakeholders who are to be in control or charge of the school. Giving people power, responsibility and authority, in turn, implies that people should be accountable for the manner in which they discharge their responsibilities and exercise their authority and power over the school. In other words, the recipients of power should be accountable to those who have given them power and accept full responsibility for their actions in exercising their

authority. To become accountable, the stakeholders should be exposed to the necessary capacity-building infrastructure that will ensure real empowerment and efficiency and effectiveness. As Rideout and Urah (1993:iv-v) discovered from experience, it is illogical to try to devolve educational functions to the lower levels if these levels do not have the institutional capacity to execute their responsibilities. Secondly, ideas about reform and restructuring of school governance should lead to implementation - the various partners in governance should be active in bringing about change in the way schools are governed. This implies that actions should be planned, guided and monitored along a specific theoretical framework to achieve the goals set jointly by the partners involved. Lastly, since reform is about change in the way people think and act, the various partners or stakeholders are liable to encounter challenges and problems in the course of implementing reform initiatives and strategies. One of these challenges and problems is the emergence of interaction between governance and management of schools (cf figure 2.5).

Depending on the state's approach to school governance and the extent to which it values partnership, two basic management models can be applied in school governance, namely, the traditional bureaucratic model (cf figure 2.9), which leads to the unconditional implementation in the school of centrally designed school governance programmes, structures and policies and the co-operative (democratic) model (cf figure 2.3), which leads to co-operative governance in which all parties with a stake in the school are empowered to participate and share in the process of designing programmes, creating structures and formulating policies which the parties are expected to implement in the process of governing a school. In both cases, the state is motivated to bring about change in the way schools are run by what it regards as the goal of education (cf figure 2.10). It strives to achieve this by adopting one of these models. This, in turn, affects the partnerships and determines whether the school is governed bureaucratically or democratically.

2.2.2 Centralisation as the official government policy and its impacts on school governance

In simple, practical terms, centralised school governance is manifested when, through its education department, the state shows that by its policy, it is determined to acquire maximum control and authority over schools to the exclusion of people who the schools are supposed to serve. This leaves the community with a limited or no decision-making power base. Consequently, its members become alienated from the schools, which they perceive as belonging entirely to the “professionals” and the “bureaucrats”, that is, educators and administrators. A brief look at how schools were governed in South Africa during the National Party government will provide a typical example of centralised school governance. During this period, centralised control over education in general and schools in particular, was the official policy. Hofmeyr and Buckland point out that, despite this, the structural and political forces at play inside the country prevented the implementation of a single national education policy (McGregor & McGregor 1992:26).

Politically, strong and well-orchestrated resistance emerged in the 1970s from the black liberation movements, such as the Black Consciousness of the Azanian Peoples' Organisation (AZAPO) and the African National Congress (ANC), through the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC) referred to in section 1.1.2. In a paper to the Central Committee on 19 October 1984, the AZAPO's Education Secretariat stated (Miller et al 1991:222):

We are conscious of the fact that the means of communication and education are owned and controlled by the ruling class in order to promote, perpetuate, sustain and maintain its self-interest.... The self-delegated monopoly of the professionals and the intelligentsia in the structuring and orientation of education must be replaced by a form of education which involves the entire community.

This criticism of centralisation was given more impetus by the emergence of the NECC's concept of “people's education for people's power”. This concept includes the concept

of “popular education”, which implies that education will be popular if it is made available to everyone (McKay & Romm 1992:1).

Structurally, the education system was divided into nineteen education departments which were fragmented along racial and ethnic lines. According to Hofmeyr and Buckland (McGregor & McGregor 1992:27), such fragmentation degenerated into extensive white and black bureaucracies in education. Confrontation developed when the above-mentioned political movements stimulated black participation and control over their own educational destiny while the government showed itself strongly determined to maintain control over the schools. This confrontation led to boycotts, riots, strikes, repressions, detentions, banning, deaths and widespread violence, which were the order of the day in the 1970s and early 1980s. The result of this confrontation was the breaking down of authority in many black areas as schools were forced to be “ungovernable” (cf 1.1.2). One example of such authority used by the National Party government to implement its centralist policies at the school level in a given black residential area was the school committee.

The structure and functions of the school committee bore the hallmarks of strong central control and reflected vividly the government’s policy on school governance. An example of this is the then Lebowa Homeland Government Notice No 19 of 1978 (RSA 1978), which outlined the membership and functions of the school committees in black schools. Chapter II of this publication indicates the following important points. Firstly, only parents were nominated by the education department through the circuit inspector to be members of the school committee. Among other things, a person would not be allowed to be a school committee member if he or she was under 25 years of age (implying that learners would not be members) or was a serving educator or his or her spouse was. Secondly, section 48(1) of this notice laid down the following duties, powers and functions of a school committee:

- to bring any matter which in its opinion affects the welfare and efficiency of the community school to the Department (These included educators’ inefficiency, misconduct and incompetence.)

- to expel learners from the community school on the grounds of immorality, continued misconduct, lack of cleanliness or for whatever reason the school committee might regard as of sufficient importance to the school
- to advise the Department through the inspector and make recommendations on the appointment of educators
- to establish, control and administer school funds.

From the above structure and functions of the school committee, it follows that the governance of schools was entirely under the control of the state. This had serious implications for schools. firstly, school committee members were appointed directly by the Education Department rather than democratically by the school community members. This provided sufficient grounds for their total rejection and unpopularity (cf 1.1.2). Secondly, educators and learners were not given any representation on the committee and this implied that people who were directly involved in the school and its programmes were deprived of any decision-making powers over the way the school was to be governed. Lastly, the nature of the school committee's functions clearly indicates that the committee acted like a "watchdog" which kept "strangers" away from government "property", namely, the school. For this reason, it was not uncommon for a visitor to a school to be met with a signboard with the words: "Unauthorised persons not allowed on these premises" instead of "Welcome to our school".

2.2.2.1 *The bureaucratic management model as foundation for a centralised school governance*

The rejection by popular democratic forces of such centralised educational structures as school committees and the concomitant quest for education transformation echoed by such concepts as "alternative education," "Community education" (Hartshorne in Millar et al. 1991:129) and "people's education" (cf 2.2.2) in South Africa, constituted a shift in focus from the traditional linear or bureaucratic management model to the co-operative or democratic management model (cf 2.1.4.4(a). This shift affects the way

school governors function in the school as shown by the characteristics and impact of each of the two models outlined below.

In line with Davis and Anderson's model (cf figure 2.2), the bureaucratic management model has the following characteristics derived from Weber (Verdugo et al.1997:40).

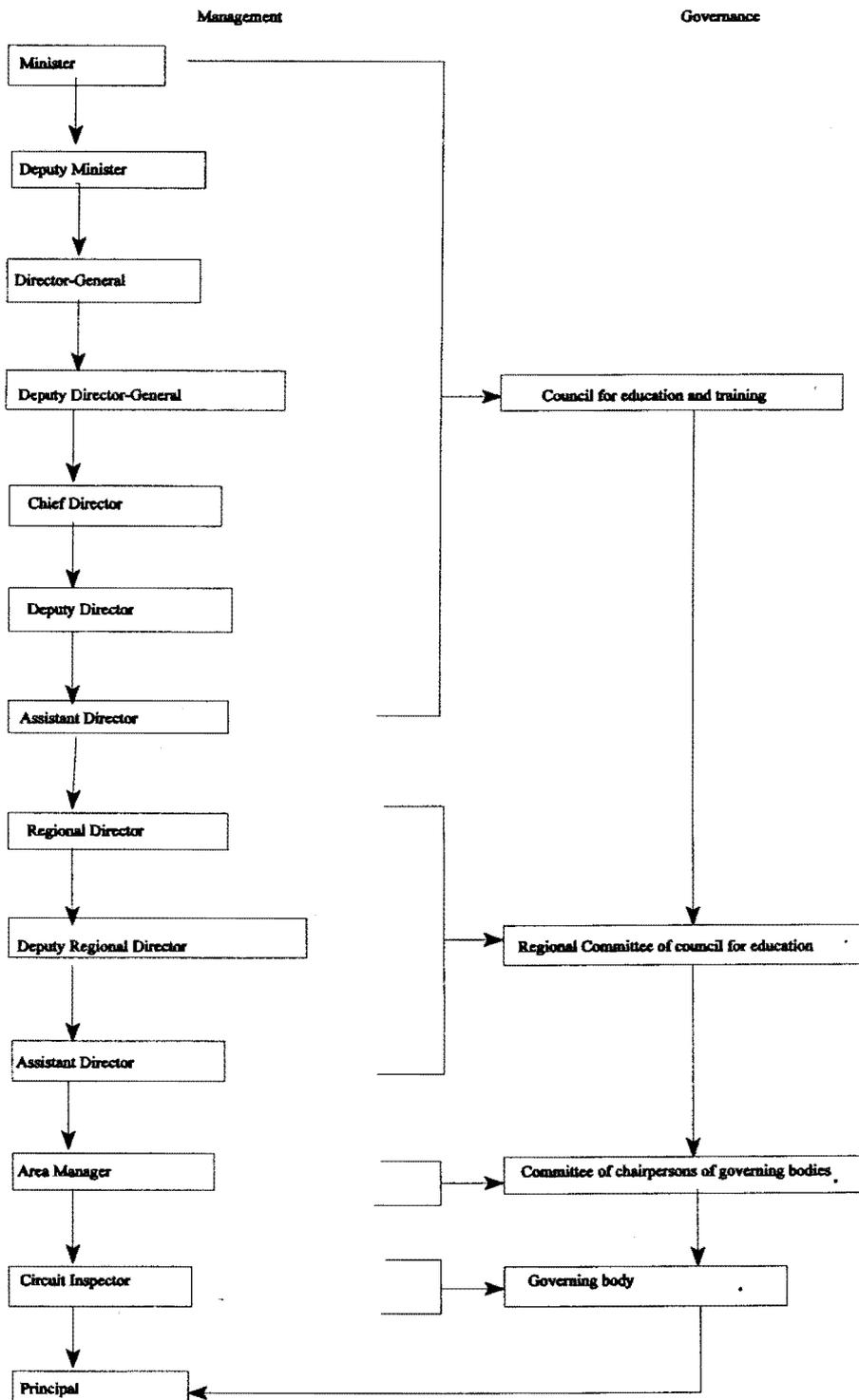
- School governance is a hierarchical system in which the authority to discharge official duties is governed by rules and regulations.
- Participants in the management of bureaucracies are subdivided into categories of superiors and subordinates with the effect that those in higher offices supervise those in lower offices.
- The management of bureaucracies is based on codified rules and regulations.
- Whoever is in charge of management activities should be thoroughly trained in the field of specialisation.
- The activities of those involved in management go beyond the working day.
- The management of activities follows general rules.

2.2.2.2 *The implications of the bureaucratic management model for the school*

The implications of the hierarchical system of the bureaucratic management model for the school can be drawn from figure 2. Firstly, the specialisation of functions signifies the existence of a well-defined boundary between management and governance and between the activities of various stakeholders at different levels of management and governance in the hierarchy. Secondly, the application of rules and regulation leaves little scope for creativity on the part of governors and other stakeholders at the lower levels of the hierarchy. This implies that since power and authority reside at the top of

the hierarchy and decrease down the line, policy making becomes the responsibility of superiors while its implementation in the school becomes the responsibility of juniors. The result is that policy implementers become accountable to policy makers, and not vice versa or reciprocally. Thirdly, in a typical public school, the emphasis is more on supervision of juniors by superiors than on interaction, communication and exchange of views and ideas about the school. In practice, the governing body supervises the principal and the principal supervises the staff who, in turn, supervise the learners. Fourthly, information is usually passed on to juniors by superiors in the form of instructions which are seldom questioned since questioning one's superiors is regarded as a form of insubordination. Lastly, in this model power and authority lie in an individual leader such as the chair of the governing body, who has to report on and monitor the professional activities of the principal, the staff and the learners and hold them to account. As a result of this arrangement, the school's management team led by the principal and the governing team led by the chairperson function independently of each other.

Figure 2.9 Traditional public school management and governance structure in the South African education system



Sources: Van Schalkwyk 1991:84; DET: 1991, chapter 31

2.2.3 Decentralisation as an alternative government policy and its implications for school governance

The concept of decentralisation as stated above (cf 2.1.1.1) derives from the belief propagated in many countries that the state alone cannot control schools, but has to share its power with other stakeholders, particularly those closer to the school, on a partnership basis (cf 2.1.4.1(a)(i)). It also involves a radical transformation in thinking from what the state alone can do for the schools or about the schools, to what the state can do with the school and its community. Proponents of this view are strongly opposed to centralisation as a form of governance in favour of its alternative namely, democratic participation by everyone in governance with its manifest elements of equality and non-discrimination. This view is rested in the theory of participatory democracy which postulates the existence of an intimate link between democracy and education. Central to this theory is the belief that it is only by taking part in decision making that an individual becomes educated for participatory democracy (Morrow in Millar et al 1991:332). In other words, the only way for a person to learn to engage in democratic decision making is by participating in the decision making debate (Morrow in Millar et al 1991:337). For schools this implies that where the ideals of democracy are pursued, all people involved in governing the school should participate in matters affecting it, including shaping the policy and implementing it.

The South African education system serves as a good example of how participatory democracy can be applied through the decentralisation of school governance. Two scenarios emerged in this process. The first scenario involved policy making while the second involved policy implementation.

The first scenario came about when the new African National Congress (ANC) government published the *White Paper on Education and Training in a democratic South Africa: first steps to develop a new system* (RSA 1995). Comments were invited from all prospective role players in school governance. These comments were essential for shaping the policy in line with the participatory democratic ideals of the government expressed in chapter 12 of the White Paper:

Change must now be managed by the new authorities in a systematic, inclusive and fully participatory way. Education departments must lead but not dictate. If radical change is imposed on schools by top-down direction in the absence of participation by those whose interests and identities are at stake, the result will be predictably disastrous.

This scenario demonstrates the rejection of the previous centralist approach characterised by top-down decision-making where interests, aspirations and values of parties other than the government are compromised and shows full recognition of the merits of partnership. It also indicates that for a policy to be implemented effectively, those expected to implement it should participate in its formulation. It is this participation which enabled the government to set out the policy on the organisation and governance of schools in South Africa in the *White Paper on the Organisation, Governance and Funding of Schools* (RSA 1996). In the same way, stakeholders were invited to comment on the draft South African Schools Bill of 1996, which culminated in the South African Schools Act no 84 of 1996 (cf 2.1.4.1(b)(iii)).

The second scenario developed when the broad spectrum of stakeholders, namely, parents, educators, learners and ordinary people, participated in the implementation of the policy in the school. In line with the democratic principles of equality and non-discrimination, people who were initially excluded, such as educators, learners and community members, are recognised as “stakeholders” in the “business” of running a school. These people participate democratically in governing their school as they are given more responsibilities and decision-making powers. For example, they are empowered as a body of partners to take joint decisions on how to implement policy in their school in accordance with local conditions and independently of the central government’s influence. The role of the government as a major partner in this regard is to provide guidance and incentives, build capacities (cf 2.2.1) and protect the interests of the various partners in the process by establishing laws such as the South African Schools Act and other provincial proclamations in which the duties, powers and functions of the various partners in school governance are outlined (cf 2.1.4.1(b)(iii)). The scenario proves the validity of Armstrong’s claim (1984:465) that when decision

making over issues of policy implementation is effectively decentralised, this can give rise to decentralisation of the policy process. It also illustrates a departure from a centralist approach, in which the government would run the school on behalf of and to the exclusion of the community, to the new approach, in which the community actively participates in governing its own school, will encourage co-operative governance.

2.2.3.1 *The co-operative (democratic) management model as a foundation for a decentralised school governance*

The democratic management model has emerged as a model applied mostly in countries which are reforming their education systems, including South Africa (cf 2.1.3). According to Bush (1986:48-50), the model has the following characteristics:

- Power and decision making are shared among members of the organisation and decisions are reached through consensus or compromise rather than division or conflict.
- The authority of members of the organisation is derived from their knowledge and skills.
- Organisational members share common values which lead to co-operation and deep commitment to the organisation and its goals and priorities.
- Each member's democratic participation in the organisation rests on the allegiance he or she owes to his or her constituency.

2.2.3.2 *Implications of the democratic management model for the school*

Figure 2.3 shows the implications of the co-operative model for the school, as it may be deduced from above (cf 2.1.4.4(a)(ii)) represents a transformed perspective marked by a move from power exclusivity to power sharing, from individualism to partnerships and from authoritarianism to collective, participatory decision making. This has a number

of implications for the school. Firstly, the fact that power and decision making are shared among organisational members, implies that power is not restricted to an individual leader such as a school principal or a chair of the governing body but is a commodity shared by parents, community members, educators (including the principal) and learners (in secondary schools). These people act in partnerships in determining school policy (cf 2.2.4.2(a)(i)). Secondly, participants in school governance need not have acquired academic qualification to become governors - they learn as they participate in the process (cf 2.2.3). In fact, though their professional backgrounds and experiences may enhance the quality of their contributions to the school, these are not the necessary conditions. This is justifiable, given the fact that learners need not have professionally trained mothers, fathers or guardians as a requirement for admission to the school. The school belongs to the public and the public consists of everyone, including learners and their parents. Lastly, since each governing body member has an allegiance to a specific constituency, a governor is not a delegate, but a full representative of a constituency and echoes its best interests, wishes and aspirations. He or she is, therefore, accountable to those he or she represents on the governing body (cf 2.1.1.3).

2.2.4 Involvement of school governors in school management

Neild (Simkins et al 1992:45) states the state's reform initiatives in creating the decentralised form of school governance have provided schools with the opportunity of striving for "their effectiveness in ways which do not necessarily have to follow any prescribed rubric". The emergence of this form of school has raised some important questions, including how the governing body will participate in the management process and by what procedures and structures and through what relationships with principals and management teams. Since these questions revolve around the issue of the involvement of school governors in the management of the school, it is important to study the relationship between the governing body and the principal as expressed by their distinct roles, before outlining the role of the governing body as expressed by state legislation and how the role impinges on the management of the school (cf figure 2.10). The above questions could create a false impression that the governing body manages

the school. It should be noted that, strictly speaking, governing bodies do not manage schools, but influence how they are managed (Deem et al 1995:69).

2.2.4.1 *The relationship between the governing body and the principal*

The relationship between the governing body and the principal, who is a professional manager, as the main partners in governance constitutes a point of departure in the success or failure of reform initiatives laid down by the state legislative and constitutional or frameworks. This relationship is manifested in the new state-mandated school management models implemented in such forms as local management of schools (LMS) and school-based management (SBM) mentioned in 2.1.4.3(a) and 2.1.4.3(b). In this model, the governing body acts as a board of directors with the principal as the chief executive. While the model may be applied differently in countries such as the United States of America, Britain and South Africa, there are similarities in the roles of both the governing body and the principal. According to the model, "the governing body sets goals and objectives, determines policy, allocates resources, monitors school performance and holds the professional managers to account" (Levačić 1995:129). In practical terms this means that the school governing body determines the policy and rules by which the school is managed by the principal who is employed in the school as the head of the school's management team. In other words, while the principal's role is to carry out the management tasks on a day-to-day basis (Potgieter et al 1997:14), the governing body monitors these tasks on behalf of and in the best interests of all stakeholders.

Since the roles of the principal and the governing body are different, the existence of a state-mandated partnership between the governors in the governing body and between the governing body and the principal makes it imperative for the partners to share management information on their strict roles. According to Nield (Simkins et al. 1992:45), this requires the elements of partnership of consultation, mutual influence, persuasion and group responsibility. In the absence of partnership characterised by these elements, the definition of the roles of these partners may be unclear, which may make it hard to define the boundaries between management and governance. This may

be exacerbated by involving governors in such complex management functions as monitoring school curricula and controlling budgets (cf 2.2.4.2(b)). Research in grant-maintained schools (GMS) in England and Wales found that the functions of governors and professional staff become blurred as a result of the involvement of governors in these functions (Deem & Wilkinson in Simkins et al 1992:69).

2.2.4.2 *Aspects of management involving governors*

To understand the management aspects in which governors are involved as major partners in the school, it is necessary to distinguish between duties and responsibilities. Official documents, such as circulars and government gazettes, often refer to duties and responsibilities in a way that could give the impression that they are synonymous. According to Lea (1993:vi), governors have duties placed upon them as a collectivity of a governing body rather than people with the effect that authority rests with the entire body and not individual members. Each member is given personal responsibilities to meet quite apart from what the law demands. For example, while the school principal as a member of the governing body's finance committee may be given the responsibility of preparing a school budget, it is the duty of the governing body to decide whether or not to approve the budget. In the spirit of partnership, this implies that even though governors are elected, they are not just delegates or representatives, but members of the governing body. Their authority is not personal or individual (Lea 1993:3).

In accordance with the concept of local management of schools applied in South Africa, USA and Britain the involvement of governors in the management of schools may be discussed in terms of their roles in and influence on the management of schools and their resources.

(a) Roles of the governing body in the school

The study of educational reform legislation passed in South Africa, USA and Britain presents the role of governing bodies as having common elements. These elements include determining school policy, developing rules, setting objectives and goals,

monitoring and control, acting in partnership and acting within the law. Because of relationship between the principal and the governing body the governing body's role influences the professional management aspects of the school. Thus there is a transformed school governance setting in which the governing body, acting as "a board of directors", has a collaborative decision-making power and authority over the school's management of its resources, including educators, parents, learners (human resources), finance, premises (buildings and grounds) and curriculum. The role of the governing body in the management of the school and its resources (cf figure 2.10) finds expression in the various functions delegated to it by state legislation (cf 2.1.4.1).

(i) Determining school policy

In general organisational management terms, a policy is a predetermined basic decision which guides the manager of an organisation in making day-to-day decisions and taking actions aimed at achieving goals set by an organisation (Massic & Douglas 1992:28). When applied to the school, policy refers to "the official choice of a school board (governing body) or local school to achieve a purpose systematically and consistently" (Gallagher 1992:28). This policy is stated through the mission statement which clearly sets out the goals of the school which are based on the shared values and beliefs of all the partners in the governing body.

It is the duty of the governing body to determine the school policy and to explain it to all the people affected by it. It is also the responsibility of governors to ensure that the policy is so clear, consistent and reasonable that it can be implemented and that all the staff comply with it in the performance of their duties. The policy should not be divorced from the aims of the central education policy on such matters as curriculum, admissions, financial management and language. In South Africa, the South African Schools Act of

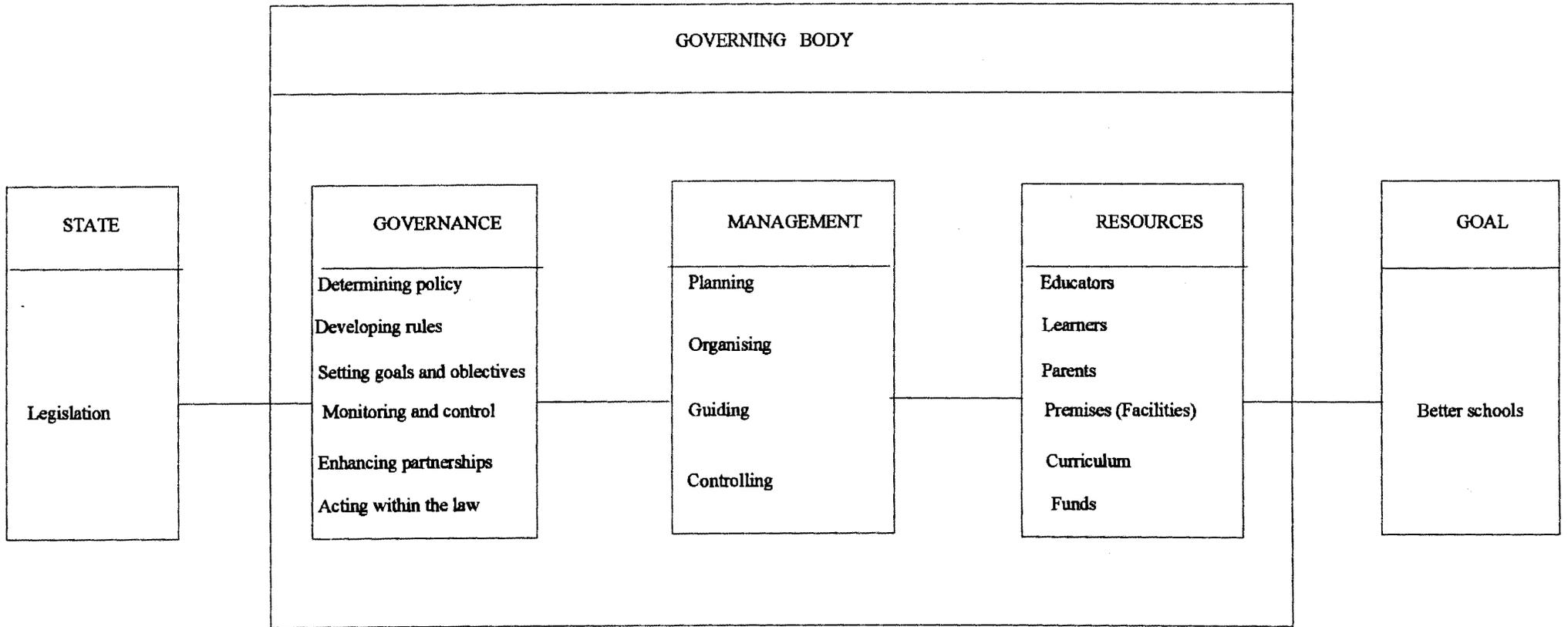


Figure 2.10

THE ROLE AND INFLUENCE OF THE GOVERNING BODY IN THE MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES

1996 and the National Education Policy Act of 1996 empower governing bodies to make decision on and announce the language or languages of learning and educating to be used in their schools, considering the following factors influencing the central government's "Language-in-Education Policy" (Department of Education 1996):

- the language preference of the majority of learners and parents of a school
- the number of learners who ask for instruction in another language
- other schools in the vicinity and their language of learning and teaching
- the available space at school
- the ability of the educators to teach in a particular language
- the cost involved

These factors imply that all people in the school, namely, learners, parents and educators, should be actively involved in formulating a school language policy and that people in the school, particularly learners, should not be discriminated against by the language policy. This means that for the school policy to be effective, all the governors should come together in partnership to formulate the policy that will govern all people in the school on equal footing.

(ii) Developing rules

The state's devolution of the decision-making authority and power to the school has created an opportunity for the governing body as a unified structure composed of educators, learners, parents and community members, to formulate rules and regulations for their own school. The main purpose of these rules and regulations is to set out acceptable behaviour of the role players in the everyday life of the school (Harding 1987:141). Since the governing body has a delegated authority in the school

and is expected to act in the best interests of everyone, it is expected to formulate clear school rules that provide a code of conduct and discipline for learners and educators, respectively. These rules should also clearly spell out whatever sanctions the governing body and the management team may apply.

When the governing body formulates school rules, it ensures that the rules are clear, simple, fair and consistent and that cooperation is gained from all people affected by their application. The governing body also ensures that the rules are seen in a positive light since they may, for example, help transform an educator who has shortcomings into someone who is an asset to the school (Thomas 1990:144). In the final analysis, all the partners taking part in the establishment of the school rules should satisfy themselves with the extent to which the rules comply with the Constitution and state regulations, on discipline and conduct of educators and learners and the utilisation of various resources in the school.

(iii) Setting goals and objectives

One of the main roles of the governing body, apart from determining school policy and rules, is to set goals and objectives for the school. Aims are concerned with the type of educational experiences the school desires to give its learners. There are general aims, which are fixed by law and common to all schools, and specific aims which are applied to the individual schools and give each school a distinct character (Thomas 1990:29). Specific aims fall within the jurisdiction of the school governing body which, in turn, is duty bound to ensure that the school policy complies with the broader national goals set by the central government.

Aims are meant to bring about a sense of purpose and direction in the school's activities and for this reason should be clearly understood and shared by all members of the school community. The governing body is well placed to canvass and campaign for maximum participation in and commitment to school aims by all stakeholders. Participation and commitment can be enhanced when the goals set by the governing body are broken up into specific, concrete and realistic objectives which stakeholders

do not find hard to achieve. The delegation of authority to the governing body in accordance with the reform legislation implies that representatives of a wide range of stakeholders in the governing body have a joint responsibility to ensure that all the management activities, such as guidance, organisation, planning and control, comply with the goals and objectives set by the governing body.

(iv) Monitoring and control

As partners in school governance, governors have virtually become the eyes and ears of the community, learners, educators, parents and the Education Department who have elected them in their respective constituencies. They have to exercise surveillance and oversee all the activities of the school. These include establishing whether the objectives and goals set for the school are being pursued, whether policy is being implemented and whether the resources allocated to the school are effectively and efficiently utilised. Deem, Brehony and Heath (1995:27) summarise this by saying that governing bodies are regarded as guardians of efficiency and effectiveness. In monitoring the above activities, the governing body need to be in possession of information on such matters as finance, performance and discipline so that governors can exercise proper control and be able to report to their respective constituencies.

(v) Enhancing partnerships

Even though the governing body has been empowered by the state to exercise greater authority over the school, neither the Constitution nor the legislation provides it with the right to monopolise power. Instead, it makes provision for the governing body as well as the professional management team to share power by delegating some responsibilities to sub-committees (Potgieter et al 1997:27). These subcommittees include committees for finance, curriculum, discipline and sports and culminate in the formation of various partnerships within the school, including between the governing body and the professional management team, the governing body and its subcommittees to which specialised tasks have been delegated, these subcommittees and such subcommittees as sports and subject committees formed by the professional

management team of the school; the governing body or its subcommittees with such friends of the school as the parent-teacher associations (PTAs), and finally, the governing body and the Education Department through the office of the superintendent or the Secretary for Education. The role of the governing body in the formation of these subcommittees is to co-ordinate their activities and to leave the channels of communication and teamwork open in order to meet the goals and objectives of the school.

(vi) Acting within the law

In terms of the legislation such as the British Education Reform Act of 1988 and the South African Schools Act of 1999 (cf 2.1.4.1(b)(ii) & (iii)) the governing body has delegated authority and power over the school. This power and authority are not meant to be applied *malafide*, unreasonably or arbitrarily (Cave & Wilkinson 1990:88). It is the role of the governing body to be subject to the law and to comply with the legal requirements pertaining to such areas as health and safety of learners, employment and dismissal of educators, punishment and care of learners and discipline and control within the school. The governing body's contravention of the legal requirements laid down by the state legislature may bring about its direct liability to legal proceedings and this may damage the image of the school. Apart from facing possible legal proceedings through the courts, the governing body may also face industrial actions by the organised educator unions in the event of a dispute being declared between the governing body and the educators over such matters as discipline (Thomas 1990:125). Labour legislation such as the South African Educators Employment Act No. 138 of 1994 contain provisions that allow educator unions to organise industrial action against the governing body with impunity from civil action, provided the action is lawful. It is therefore essential for the governing body, the state Department of Education and its agencies and the educator unions to join hands when education legislation is interpreted and applied in the school.

(h) The influence of the governing body in the management of the school

As indicated in figure 2.10 the governing body influences the way resources in the school are managed. This influence is brought about ^{by} the decentralisation of governance to the school level and the concomitant encouragement of such development by the state.

Management refers to a set of activities which are directed at the efficient and effective use of resources in the pursuit of one or more resources (Van Fleet 1991:8). According to Robbins (1993:3), management is divided into the following functions:

- **Planning and decision making:** Planning and decision making involve setting goals and objectives of the organisation and making decisions on how best to achieve them.
- **Organising:** Organising involves grouping the various activities and resources in order to facilitate the achievement of the goals already set.
- **Leading:** Leading involves guiding organisational members towards the goals.
- **Controlling:** Controlling involves monitoring and adjusting the activities of the organisation towards the goals.

Although the governing body does not manage the school, it is empowered to exercise its influence over the management of all the resources in the school, including the curriculum; human resources such as learners, educators, parents and non-educating staff; physical resources such as buildings and grounds; and financial resources which are indispensable to effective teaching and learning (cf figure 2.10). Since the governing body is accountable to the Education Department, parents, learners, staff and the community, it acts in partnership when decisions are taken on the management of these resources. In other words, it has to collaborate and consult with all the stakeholders in the school, since the school does not belong to the governing body but

to all the people represented in it.

(i) **Governing body and human resources**

The decentralisation of authority to the schools brought about by educational reform has brought with it the situation in the school where the governing body plays an active role in determining the human resource needs of the school and overseeing the professional management of these resources in such a way that the goals of the school can be reached through the collective support of the people whose needs are to be satisfied.

■ ***Governing body and educators***

The governing body exercises its powers in areas affecting the discipline, grievances, appraisal, promotion, recruitment, selection, appointment and dismissal of educators. In the process of exercising these powers, consideration is given to the legal requirements pertaining to the handling of personnel issues by the governing body (cf 2.2.4.2(a)(vi)). This necessitates the governing body being familiar with legislation and government notices affecting personnel and labour relations since their knowledge of these issues is vital when dealing with matters related to the management of staff at a school. Consideration is also given to ensuring that a spirit of partnership prevails when decisions affecting personnel are made. This implies that all the stakeholders except learners (cf 2.1.4.4(b)), should come together and jointly discuss staff problems and related issues with the ultimate intention of achieving consensus and taking decisions that will enjoy the respect and support of everyone in the school.

The following are examples of areas affecting personnel in which the governing body exercises its authority and power to influence management.

- *Employment of personnel*

In the United States of America the Chicago local school council, among others, is empowered to make final decisions about who will be employed to administer the school

(Murphy 1993:47-80). The governing body or council is able to perform this task because it works in partnership with the school's management team, which is quipped with the professional expertise and is quite familiar with the needs of the school. The governing body can also decide to employ an additional staff member after considering whether or not such employment will help the school to achieve its objectives. Since professional staff members are supposed to work with other staff members, learners, parents, the community and the school's management team, their appointment is expected to be transparent and fully accepted by all the members of the governing body who decide to employ them. This transparent and democratic decision making process of employing staff can be shown in the following South African example. In terms of Resolution No. 2 of 1997 of the Education Labour Relations Council Chamber of the Northern Province, which is based on the provisions of Section 12 of the Education Labour Relations Act of 1993, the appointment of staff is a matter of partnership between the governing body's interviewing subcommittee and representatives of the employee organisations who serve as observers in the interviewing process. The participation of these parties in the interviewing process is aimed at affirming both the transparency and democratisation of the interviewing process and ensuring that the applicants for the post are accorded fair, just and equitable treatment. In the final analysis, it is the task of the governing body to make recommendations on the appointment of staff to the Department.

- *Disciplining personnel*

The education reform legislation has made it possible for governing bodies to become actively involved in assisting the professional management teams of schools in handling cases of discipline and dismissal of educators. When dealing with these cases, the governing body should comply with the school rules and procedures and the education Acts on which these rules and procedures are founded. In Britain, for example, the Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) has drawn up the Code of Practice which is used by the governing body when preparing and operating disciplinary procedures (Thomas 1992:144). Similarly, in South Africa, cases of misconduct and discipline may be referred to the South African Council for Educators (SACE), which

may institute disciplinary procedure on behalf of the affected parties. This body was established in terms of *Government Gazette* No 16037 of 17 October 1994 in the belief that educators should recognise learners, parents, the community and the Education Department as partners in education. Since cases of discipline and misconduct are complex and may cause problems of industrial relations in the school, it is important for the governing body to act cautiously and exhaust all problem-solving avenues before resorting to formal disciplinary procedures. When deciding whether or not a member of staff should be suspended or dismissed, the governing body should consider and follow the process of suspension and dismissal as laid down by law. The South African Educators' Employment Act (No 138 of 1994) is a good example in this regard, since it clearly spells out the procedure to be followed when an educator is charged with misconduct.

It is significant that in disciplinary matters, the governing body works in partnership with the professional management team of the school and the educator labour unions. While the professional management team is better placed to identify disciplinary problems as they arise in the course of its day-to-day management of the school and has the duty to present them to the governing body, the educator labour unions come in to represent the feelings and opinions of their members. It is the duty of the governing body in this regard to ensure that the interests of the school are placed before those of the management team or the educators' unions and that its decisions are not divorced from the goals of the school.

- *Personnel support and development*

The law not only provides the governing body with the power to "hire and fire" personnel but also with the power to support and develop them professionally. In South African, Section 20(1) of the South African Schools Act (SASA) (No 84 of 1996) states clearly that it is the duty of the governing body to "support principal, educators and other staff in the performance of their professional duties". Supporting the staff includes staff development, which involves the identification and satisfaction of the professional needs of individual staff members for pursuing their careers. According to Evans (Simkins et

al 1992:100), staff development includes exposing educators to in-service training and professional and career development experiences, and should be incorporated within the broader school development plan. The governing body and the management team play a leading role in planning the staff development programme and organising the various activities directed at enhancing the staff's capacity to perform their duties effectively and efficiently. The governing body and the professional management team are expected to consult and invite all stakeholders to participate in debates about the staff development objectives, aims, policies and programmes which form a foundation for a broader staff development programme and not to act unilaterally in the planning and organising. Such a programme forms part of the school development plan and should be in line with the overall aims of the school (cf figure 2.10).

■ ***Governing body and learners***

- *Discipline and conduct*

Even though discipline and conduct in the school form the basis of day-to-day management of learners by the principal with the assistance of staff the final responsibility rests with the governing body. In fact, it is the governing body who is legally empowered to adopt a code of conduct for learners and has the responsibility to ensure that learners abide by it. When disciplinary problems emerge in the school, the partnership principle enshrined in the Constitution is once more applied and it is the nature and seriousness of the offence committed which determine the level and intensity of involvement by such interested parties as educators, principal, parents and governors (Harding 1987:135). Disciplining learners may range from imposing detention or giving extra work to suspension and expulsion. While the former may be applied by the principal or delegated by him to staff members, the latter may be applied by the governing body with full compliance with the law, which stipulates the conditions under which learners can be suspended or expelled from school.

Disciplinary problems are quite often delegated by the governing body to a subcommittee. To avoid possible legal action being taken against it, the disciplinary

committee may consider the following points:

- the nature of the offence
- previous conviction of the offender
- the offender's feelings about the offence
- the offender's previous record of behaviour
- specialist advice from psychologists or welfare officers
- the community, parents and learners' familiarity with the school policy in respect of conduct and discipline

In addition, the disciplinary subcommittee should consider the Constitutional principle of human dignity as enshrined in the Bill of Rights, which protects the fundamental human rights of everyone, including learners. Section 10 of chapter 2 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996 states that everyone has dignity which has to be respected and protected. Apart from this constitutional principle, Section 10(1) of the South African Schools Act (No 84 of 1999) forbids any person, including the school governing body, to administer corporal punishment to learners at school.

- *Admissions*

From their professional management perspective of the school, school principals are directly responsible for the admission of learners to the school. Principals are enabled to do this by their knowledge of the school's capacity to accommodate learners and other requirements related to admission. Despite this, principals do not act alone or have a final say in decisions on admissions, because the school is a public organisation of which they are just designated leaders who work in collaboration with the governing

body. The admission requirements are embodied in the school's admission policy, which is determined by the governing body in partnership with parents, teachers, the Education Department (through relevant legislation) and community members with interests in the school. In line with the decentralisation and democratic principles reflected in the education Acts and the Constitutions of the United States of America, Britain and South Africa, the governing bodies are expected to assist the principals and their professional management team with admissions to ensure that the admission of learners complies with the school policy which, in turn, must comply with such principles as fairness, equal access and non-discrimination which characterise a democratic Constitution. The failure of the governing body to comply with the Constitution and the law or to lay down an admission policy may lead to court proceedings being instituted against it. Take, for example, what happened recently in the Mpumalanga and the Northern Provinces in South Africa where the white-dominated governing bodies or councils of two schools used a racially discriminatory practice in their admission policies and refused entry to Black learners (*The Citizen* 27.03.1996:9; *Beeld* 23.02.1996:2). In the case of the Northern Province, the Supreme Court interdict forced the governing body to admit Black learners. The Supreme Court order led to the disbanding of the school governing body and the school's takeover by the province (*The Citizen* 22.03.1996:6). In the case of Mpumalanga, the governing body lost its case after it challenged the Constitutionality of the Province's Education Act by claiming that the Constitution guaranteed its right to retain the minority language (Afrikaans) as the sole language of instruction (*Business Day* 08.03.1996:2).

■ **Governing body and parents**

Monareng (1995:60) stresses the importance of parental involvement in the school as one of the areas in which the school principal executes his or her professional management tasks. In the United States of America, St John (1995:95), found that parent involvement in education is made possible by transforming a school from being an unwelcoming environment to a place where parents are treated as partners in school reform. St John suggests that it is essential that educators gain experience and confidence in initiating change before they can welcome parents into a meaningful

partnership. For parents to be involved in the school as partners, they need information on education in general and on their school in particular. According to Dekker (Dekker & Lemmer 1993:171-172), this information includes information on decision making, educational policy, control and financing, their roles, duties, responsibilities and privileges in education, educational legislation and school rules and regulations. The governing body plays an important role in the issue of parent involvement in the following ways. Firstly, as representatives of all stakeholders (including parents) in the school, the governing body can close the traditional gap existing between the parents and the school which made parents "unwelcome strangers" at school by expressing their feelings and aspirations, creating positive relationships between parents and educators and encouraging direct parent involvement in their children's learning process. Hiatt (1994:37) states that tension often exists between professionals, that is, educators and principals who espouse the idea that they alone are qualified to make complex decisions affecting children's education and parents who believe that they should have a say in their children's education. The governing body has a duty to bring parents closer to the school and its learning process and this is made possible by the partnership between the governing body and the principal. Pojak and McAfee (1992:28) support this view by saying that the principal's influence is determined by the way the school is governed. Secondly, the governing body can team up with the principal by planning and organising parents' meeting at least once a year and making sure that the school principal sends parents regular reports on the progress of their children at school. Lastly, the governing body may assist the school principal by encouraging parents to become actively engaged in marketing the school and playing a part in such supporting activities as fund-raising. From this it follows that parent involvement in the school is a matter of partnership between the professional manager and the governing body.

■ ***Governing body and funds***

The governing body has an important role to play in overseeing the financial management of the school. This role involves planning, reviewing, controlling and approving the school budget in accordance with the school's needs as presented by the

principal. The governing body also ensures that the budget complies with the Education Department's guidelines and regulations. Control of the budget by the governing body is important for two main reasons. Firstly, the control of the budget determines the control of the curriculum and personnel (Lindelow in Smith et al. 1981:123). The purchasing of books and other learning materials and the payment of personnel, especially in countries like Britain, where the decentralisation of financial control to schools has entrusted governing bodies with financial control (cf 2.1.4.3(b), depends on the extent to which the governing body can control the school budget. Secondly, the governing body has to control the budget because ultimately, it has to account to the providers of the funds, namely, parents, private donors, the Education Department and the business sector for how the funds have been spent (cf 2.1.4.6). For this reason, the governing body has to monitor the school's use of funds vigilantly and ensure that the school's financial resources are managed by the principal as effectively and efficiently as possible in order to achieve the school's objectives and goals.

Where the parent community is expected to assist the Education Department in funding schools, as is the case in South Africa, the governing body is empowered to charge school fees, to audit and examine financial records and statements and to help with fund-raising. The principles of partnership and the importance of information apply here since parents and other community members should be consulted at parents' meetings and be given adequate information on the financial position of the school by the governing body. Avery (Warner & Kelly 1994:18) stresses the importance of adequate information, saying that "a decision made on the basis of inadequate information is at best ill-founded, and at worst likely to be wrong". Since financial matters are so complex that many governors may find them difficult to understand, the governing body has to organise a subcommittee with co-opted community members with sound knowledge of finance and budgeting to be actively involved in these matters.

■ ***Governing body and curriculum***

The state-sponsored devolution of governance to schools and the accompanying delegation of authority to the governing body have paved the way for a situation in which

decisions about curriculum are no longer made by directors at district or national level, but by principals and educators with governors being responsible for overseeing the curriculum. As a partner in decision making, the governing body represents the interests of ordinary community members, parents, educators and learners in monitoring and overseeing the implementation of the curriculum in the school and ensuring that it is not divorced from the aims of the school. This does not mean that governors are empowered to dictate to educators or principals how they should educate, but to show "an interest in the nature of the curriculum and the standards achieved" (Harding 1987:154). In other words, the governing body and the principal need to work in partnership in curriculum matters according to their distinct roles. The role of the governing body in the domain of curriculum is to monitor standards, to support plans to meet staff development needs pertaining to the curriculum and to cater for and meet parents' needs and expectations of how the school should educate their children. The principal as a professional leader in the school is there to express the professional demands on the curriculum from a management perspective and to merge these with the community needs as expressed by the governors, most of whom are parents. Principals are a source of advice and guidance to governors since they have the capacity to shape the governing body into a proper decision-making forum (Thomas 1992:331-332).

Since the curriculum falls within the field of experts and professionals, governors cannot be expected to have a thorough knowledge of curriculum matters. Shearn, Broadbent, Laughlin and Wellig-Atherton (1995:176) find that even though governors are not educationists with expertise in curriculum matters and for this reason would like to see principals and educators retain their autonomy in this regard, they want to be informed about the curriculum. For this reason governors would like to work in collaboration and partnership with the principal and educators who may supply them with schemes of work or year plans, show them curriculum activities and explain these issues and documents to them. In addition, governors need the assistance of the principal in the provision of information on the national curriculum and all the danger and innovations affecting the curriculum at the national level. This information will afford the governing body an opportunity to acquire knowledge and awareness that can guide them in

monitoring curricular matters in their school. In South Africa, the National Department of Education has embarked on a new national curriculum called Curriculum 2005, which is based on the ideal of lifelong learning for all South Africans and aims at equipping all learners with knowledge, skills and competencies needed outside the world of schools. The rationale behind the design of this curriculum is that education and training should meet community needs. To achieve this, parents, educators, the community, the state and the private sector are to take major responsibility in "helping to determine how learners should be prepared for adult life, including the world of work" (RSA 1997:13). The partnership envisaged in this regard calls for a closer cooperation between the governing body and the principal.

■ ***Governing body and premises***

School buildings are important resources reacquired for effective teaching and learning and form an environment in which learners, educators, parents and the broader community interact in pursuing the goals of the school. According to Sepedding (Warner & Kelly 1994:59), school buildings are assets which have to be maintained to ensure that their value is not reduced and that the services they provide are continuously maintained so that the safety and health of the people around them are protected. It is the duty of the governing body to ensure that school buildings and grounds as well as school property are properly looked after and managed by the school principal and management team, so that the objectives and goals of the school will be met. Governors have a responsibility to see to it that the school buildings and grounds are inviting to people and because of this create a pleasant atmosphere. According to Warner and Kelly (1994:5), "Educational property which is well designed for its purpose, well maintained and pleasant to be in, will be a considerable asset in recruiting staff and students".

2.2.5 The effects of inspection and support programmes on the governing body

2.2.5.1 *The inspection and the governing body*

The state as an initiator of school governance reform has the duty to determine that this reform is implemented in the school and this is commonly done through inspection. Often, the approach to inspection reflects government policy, whether such policy aims at attaining “excellence and equity” as in the United States of America or at raising educational standards through “choice and diversity” as in Britain. According to Clegg and Billinton (1994:2), the main purpose of inspection in the context of reform is not to support or advise, but to collect evidence which is matched against statutory criteria and to come to judgements and make these judgements known to the public. In other words, inspections are designed mainly for the purpose of coming to judge the quality of education provided by a school. This has serious implications for school governors. Firstly, governors have to face the challenge of devising a plan which indicates how they intend to make improvements in their schools (cf 2.1.4.6). This means that they should have a thorough knowledge of planning for their school and form partnerships with other stakeholders in this regard. The foundation for their knowledge in this regard is the establishment of closer interaction with the school management which should be a primary source of information for them. Secondly, governors must know that they are accountable to the state and other stakeholders every step of the way and should avoid failure. This demands commitment on their part to the goals of their schools in particular, and those of education in general.

2.2.5.2 *Support programmes and the governing body*

This chapter pointed out that, as an initiator of school governance reform, the state plays a leading role in providing support and training to governors in governance, management of resources and the law. This initiative is taken in partnership with a wide range of organisations and bodies with vested interests in the school (cf 2.1.4.5(b)). Two important points emerge from this initiative. First, the governing body starts facing the challenge of acquiring the necessary information on almost every aspect of the

school in order to be accountable to those in whose interests it serves in the school and this implies that governors become learners in their field of school governance. Secondly, governors come to realise that for the school to be properly governed, they have to accept to work in partnership with stakeholders and establish and maintain positive relationships with them. For example, strong bonds of partnership are required between the governing body and the management team in communicating and exchanging information on such matters as curriculum and finance, more so since governors have little experience or professional training in these issues.

2.2.6 Problems faced by governors

The restructuring of school governance as a result of the state's reform initiative aimed at decentralising control by devolving governance to the school level has resulted in problems for partners in the school governing body. According to Thomson (1995:6) the problems emerge as a result of cultural, professional and political differences which quite often create barriers between educators, parents and other stakeholders. These problems include educational background, empowerment of children and educator organisations.

2.2.6.1 *Educational background*

Parents need not have educational qualifications to participate in school governance. Experience has shown, however, that, in practice, parents' educational background may discourage their participation in school governance. Studies among Hispanic parents in the United States of America found that parents with a poor educational background did not participate in school activities (Rosado 1994:249). Iannaccone and Lutz (1994:40) found that in most American public schools there was low participation and turnout at school board elections and that the incumbents often ran for the school board unchallenged. In addition to this, there is a problem of unwelcoming attitudes on the part of educators and principals, also see parents as lay people who are encroaching on their professional domain. It is merely through the recognition of the merits of partnership by all stakeholders that these problems can be addressed.

2.2.6.2 ***Empowerment of children***

In terms of the ideals of participatory democracy and the partnership principle implied in the process (cf 2.2.3), children, that is learners in secondary schools, are allowed to take part on an equal footing with educators and parents in school governance as school governors. As a result of this development, children are empowered to negotiate with parents and educators about their learning and to share decision-making responsibility with them as partners. This brings about a situation in the school in which educators and parents feel uncomfortable and threatened by the prospect of sharing responsibility with children while they regard it as their duty to speak on behalf of children as adults and to make a choice of curriculum, learning materials and evaluation for them (Anise et al 1993:269).

2.2.6.3 ***Involvement of employee (educator) organisations***

In a school, the governors interact with educators and other non-educating staff members who belong to and are registered members of employee organisations and unions. This may pose problems for the governing body when decisions affecting employees are taken, since the interests of these employees as expressed by their respective organisations should be considered. The governing body, therefore, finds itself operating between two strong forces, namely, the Education Department and the employee organisation or union. This may weaken the decision-making strength of the governing body, especially, where governors lack sufficient knowledge and information of labour relations matters such as those reflected in legislation like the Education Labour Relations Act (No 146 of 1993).

2.2.7 **Conclusion**

This chapter portrays school governance as occupying a central place in educational reform and restructuring, particularly in developed countries. Restructuring and reforming school governance are made possible by the change of approach from centralisation (state control) to decentralisation (school community control),

empowerment of stakeholders and the democratisation of decision-making processes in which stakeholders are actively engaged. A change in approach necessitates a change in the relationship structure between the various partners and this relationship is concretised by the partners' preparedness to account for their decisions and actions (cf 2.1.4.6). It has also been shown that the state carries out its statutory duty and responsibility of initiating, encouraging and supporting school governance reform by drawing up a legislative framework to safeguard the smooth running of the process and demanding continued feedback through inspection to evaluate its success or otherwise in pursuing the goals it sets for the country's learner population (cf 2.1.4.6). It has further been indicated that schools present enormous challenges to those democratically elected to manage and govern them (cf 2.2.1) since they are now involved in the domains from which they were previously excluded (cf 2.2.4). ✖

CHAPTER 3

DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY OF AN EMPIRICAL SURVEY INTO PARTNERSHIPS IN SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter dealt with a literature study into the role played by the state in school governance. The study concentrated on the reform and restructuring strategies applied by the state and the impacts that these strategies made on school governance. Against the background of the literature study, this empirical enquiry aims at studying the relationship between the role played by the state on the one hand and the needs and problems experienced by school governors in the performance of their duties on the other hand. For the purpose of attaining this aim, a questionnaire survey was conducted. The questionnaire was used to gain information from school governors and it was selected as a data gathering instrument in the study since it was found that it could engage the interests of people, encourage their co-operation and elicit responses which were as close to the truth as possible (Davidson in Cohen and Manion 1989:106).

The use of an interview in this study was felt to be essential for the purpose of validating the questionnaire data and thus arriving at a balanced response to the research questions. The interview was used to obtain information from a well-informed source in the Provincial Education Department.

3.2 SAMPLING

3.2.1 Rationale for sampling

According to McMillan and Schumacher (1993:159) a sample is constituted by subjects or individuals who are selected from the population for the study purpose. The selection of subjects from the population is done in such a manner that each individual stands an

equal chance of being selected and the probability of selecting the individual is known. The results obtained from the sample are regarded as representative of the population from which the sample is drawn. In order to avoid bias and to attain representativity, subjects constituting a sample are randomly selected from the entire population. Since it is usually costly and cumbersome to study each subject or individual in the population, particularly where a large population is involved, a sample is used to generalize the results and still present them as valid.

3.2.2 Constituents of the sample

The following sampling constituents were regarded as appropriate for the purposes of the survey:

Inspection area:	Nebo, Dennilton, Sekhukhune and Bohlabela.
Category of school:	Primary or secondary.
Position on the governing body:	Principal, parent, educator or learner.
Occupation:	Employer/self-employed, employee, unemployed (looking for work) or unemployed (not looking for work).
Educational qualification:	From none to post-school education or training.
School's voters' roll:	From fewer than 50 to more than 250 parents.

3.2.3 Sampling procedure

In this survey the research population comprised all the primary and secondary schools in the Southern Region of the Northern Province. The region is divided into four main inspection areas each of which is in turn divided into a number of inspection circuits. Lists of schools falling into this region were obtained from the inspection area offices and from these lists, a simple random sampling procedure was followed to select both primary and secondary schools to be included in the study. Questionnaires were posted to the selected schools in the region through the assistance of inspection area managers and their staff members. This was done after a pilot study had been

conducted.

The respondents in this survey were to be all components of the governing body in all the selected primary and secondary schools. In each primary school three (3) components were to be selected namely, the principal, one (1) educator representative and one (1) parent representative. In each secondary school four (4) components were selected, namely, the principal, one (1) educator representative, one (1) learner representative and one (1) parent representative or one (1) co-opted member. This selection was done on the basis of Section 23 of the South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996 (RSA: 1996) which makes provision for representation by parents, learners, educators and non-educators on the governing body.

The study sample was made up of 108 schools. This included 68 primary schools and 40 secondary schools with a total number of 364 respondents. These respondents comprised 108 principals, 108 parents, 108 educators and 40 learners. The consideration of two factors led to this large sample. Firstly, the geographical area to be covered by this sample was itself large and for the sake of a fair representativeness this large sample was necessary. Secondly, the total number of school governing bodies involved was such that many subjects were to respond to the questionnaire. This derives from the fact that while each primary school governing body has three components (principal, educator, parent), each secondary school governing body has four components (principal, educator, parent, learner). The researcher found the sample size of 108 schools appropriate for this study, considering the fact that many researchers regard a sample size of 30 as the minimum number of cases suitable for the statistical analysis of data (Cohen & Manion 1989:104).

3.3 DATA COLLECTION DEVICES

3.3.1 Questionnaire

3.3.1.1 *Rationale*

A questionnaire can become an important data-collecting instrument depending on the nature of the research problems. Its importance also depends on the researcher's perception of it as a valid and reliable instrument for his or her research. In this study the questionnaire was selected as an appropriate instrument on the following grounds:

- It is economical. Because of the great number of schools and respondents involved as well as the vastness of the geographical area under the study, the postal questionnaire was found to be the most cost-effective instrument available to the researcher.
- It ensures anonymity. Respondents can honestly and freely respond to the items on the questionnaire and express their feelings, including their needs and aspirations, because the questionnaire views the confidentiality of the information provided as a top priority in enhancing the response rate.

The items listed on the questionnaire should convey the objectives of the research problem. In this study, the items were designed in such a manner that the information provided by the respondents would constitute answers to the research questions.

3.3.1.2 *Design*

When the questionnaire was designed the researcher relied on the information obtained from the following main sources:

- * Personal experiences of the researcher as a school principal in regular contact with school governors.

- * Regular meetings with Education Department officers responsible for school governance matters.
- * Literature research into school governance in both local and international context.

The questionnaire format should be such that it can invite response and co-operation from the respondents. In designing the questionnaire, care was taken to follow the following guidelines as given by McMillan and Schumacher (1993:242):

- Make instructions brief and easy to understand.
- Keep the questionnaire as short as possible.
- Provide adequate space for answering open-ended questions.
- Use logical sequence and group related questions together.
- Print response seals on each page.

The questionnaire comprised both open-ended and closed-ended items. Items 3, 8-22, 24-32 and 34 had open-ended questions requiring optional responses, while items 1, 2, 4-7, 23 and 33 were close-ended.

The questions were grouped in the following manner:

- | | | |
|--|---|--------------------|
| • Demographic information | - | items 1-6 |
| • Familiarity with important documents | - | item 7 |
| • Responsibilities and duties | - | items 8-10 |
| • Partnerships | - | items 11-12 and 14 |
| • Inspection | - | items 15-17 and 22 |
| • Powers | - | items 13 and 19-21 |
| • Meetings | - | items 18, 23-26 |
| • Training | - | items 27-32 |
| • Election | - | item 33 |

3.3.1.3 *Pretesting*

Before the questionnaire was sent to the selected schools in the Southern Region, the researcher had conducted a pilot study in which the questionnaire was pretested. Two (2) primary schools and two (2) secondary schools with a total number of fourteen (14) respondents formed part of the pilot study. The aim of this pretesting was to determine the difficulty of the items as well as the effort taken by the respondents when responding to the items. The respondents expressed their satisfaction with regard to the way questions were formulated. The response rate was 100 percent.

3.3.1.4 *Administration procedure*

The researcher employed the services of inspection area office personnel after consultation with area managers in the region to distribute the questionnaire to the selected schools. Each school received an envelope containing a batch of three questionnaires and four questionnaires for each primary school and secondary school respectively. Each batch was accompanied by a self-addressed envelope and a letter of introduction which gave details of how the respondents were to respond to the questionnaires. The four area offices served as the main distribution points. From the area offices the questionnaires were dispatched to schools via the circuit offices.

The distribution of the questionnaires was done after permission was granted by both the Province's Sub-Directorate on Governance and the Regional Directorate. A letter of introduction was sent to all the area managers in the region.

After the first batch of questionnaires was returned and was found to be unsatisfactory, the researcher sent out a follow-up letter to the area offices and requested the area office personnel to help in collecting the remaining questionnaires. This led to the improvement in the response rate (cf 3.3.1.5).

3.3.1.5 Response rate

Of the total number of questionnaires sent to the randomly selected schools in the region, 223 questionnaires from 73 primary and secondary schools were returned (cf Table 3.1).

TABLE 3.1 RESPONSE RATE FROM SCHOOLS IN THE SOUTHERN REGION

Category of school	Questionnaire posted/returned % returned	Respondents					Total
		Prin- cipal	Parent	Edu- cator	Lear- ner	Other	
Primary	Posted	68	68	68	0		204
	Returned	39	28	41	0	3	111
	% returned	57,4	41,2	60,3	0,0		54,4
Secun- dary	Posted	40	40	40	40		160
	Returned	34	27	25	25	1	125
	% returned	85,0	67,5	62,5	62,5		78,1
TOTAL	Posted	108	108	108	40		364
	Returned	73	55	66	25	4	223
	% returned	67,6	50,9	61,1	62,5		61,3

As indicated in Table 3.1, questionnaires were received from 73 principals, 55 parents, 66 educators, 25 learners and four co-optees. Two batches of questionnaires were returned. The first batch yielded a total number of 117 questionnaires from 37 primary and secondary schools. With follow-up visits and reminders, the second batch was returned and this yielded 111 questionnaires from 36 secondary and primary schools.

The original response rate from this postal survey constituted 62,6 percent of the initial number of respondents (cf 3.2.3). Five questionnaires returned did not identify the respondents and thus led to a drop in the response rate to 61,3 percent. The response

rate per component was as follows: principals (67,6%), educators (61,1%), parents (50,9%) and learners (62,5%). It is evident that the response rate of parents was relatively lower. However, it appears that the parents and the learners could independently respond to the questionnaire to a satisfying degree. The response rate of this nature is not unusual, particularly after follow-up visits were made. Cohen and Manion (1989:114) state that a well-planned postal survey should obtain at least 40 percent response rate that could rise to 70 percent and 80 percent response levels with the judicious use of reminders.

3.3.2 Interview MB

Three important advantages of interviews can be mentioned. Firstly, an interview has a high response rate, particularly since a few respondents are involved. Secondly, because of the face to face nature of the communication between the interviewer and the informant, both verbal and non-verbal behaviour can be observed. Lastly, the informant's responses can be probed in order to achieve accurate responses.

An interview can be used in conjunction with a questionnaire to collect data that the researcher cannot collect by means of a questionnaire. Used in this manner, it can enhance the quality of information the researcher has already collected by means of a questionnaire. Depending on the purpose of the study, the researcher may choose an interview strategy.

In this study, the researcher followed an interview guide approach. This is an approach in which the researcher decides the sequence and wording of the interview questions and selects the topics in advance (McMillan & Schumacher 1993:426). The key-informant was an education specialist responsible for the school governance section in the Northern Province's Department of Education. Through this interview, the researcher wanted to achieve the following:

MB

- to obtain information from a well-informed source in the Provincial Education Department on the role played by the state in school governance and the state's

future plans in this regard;

- to verify the information derived from the literature research as given in chapter two;
- to extend the information obtained by means of the questionnaire sent out to the school governing bodies.

3.4 PROCESSING THE DATA

Processing of the survey data is commonly known as data reduction. This process involves the editing and coding of survey data in preparation for analysis. The returned questionnaires were edited manually to check errors that might have been committed by the respondents. It emerged during editing that some parents, educators and learners responded to two items which were meant for the principal. The error was discovered and corrected before a computer analysis of the questionnaire data was made.

3.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the design and the methodology of an empirical survey into partnerships in school governance were presented. A sample obtained from a population of school governing bodies in the study area was drawn and the data obtained from the sample were collected by means of a questionnaire and an interview. While the questionnaire was used to collect data on the problems and needs of school governing bodies, the interview was used to collect data on the role of the state into partnerships in school governance. Considering the advantages of the two data collection devices, the researcher found the use of both the questionnaire and the interview appropriate for the investigation of the study problem. This chapter therefore served as a link between the literature study in chapter two, and the presentation and analysis of empirical findings in chapter four.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF EMPIRICAL SURVEY DATA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

While the previous chapter dealt with the design and methodology of an empirical survey into partnerships in school governance, this chapter deals with the presentation and analysis of data collected by means of a questionnaire and an interview. To facilitate data analysis on the questionnaire, statements and questions dealing with related items have been grouped together in the first part of the chapter. Included in the analysis are comments derived from the respondents' responses on questions requiring optional answers. Apart from this, tables have been drawn to present data in figures.

In the second part of the chapter, a transcript of an interview together with an analysis thereof will be presented. This is followed by a brief comparison between the data presented by means of an interview and the data presented by means of a questionnaire. In this way, the views of the state and the school governors on the issue of partnerships in school governance will be compared.

4.2 PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF QUESTIONNAIRE DATA

4.2.1 Items providing demographic data

TABLE 4.1 CATEGORY OF SCHOOL PER INSPECTION AREA (QUESTION 1 BY QUESTION 2)

Inspection area	Category of school		TOTAL
	Primary	Secondary	
Nebo	26	15	41
Dennilton	12	6	18
Sekhukune	9	8	17
Bohlabela	21	11	32
TOTAL	68	40	108

TABLE 4.2 POSITION ON THE GOVERNING BODY PER CATEGORY OF SCHOOL (QUESTION 3 BY QUESTION 2)

Position on the governing body	Category of school		TOTAL
	Primary	Secondary	
Principal	39	34	73
Parentton	28	27	55
Educator	41	25	66
Learner	0	25	25
Other	3	1	4
TOTAL	111	112	223

**TABLE 4.3 CURRENT EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF PARENT GOVERNORS
(QUESTION 4)**

Employment status	Frequency	Percentage
Employer	8	14,8
Employee	5	9,2
Unemployed (looking for work)	28	51,9
Unemployed (not looking for work)	13	24,1
TOTAL	54	100,0

Out of the total number of 54 parents, 24,0% were employed while 76,0% were unemployed. The fact that 51,9% of parent governors were unemployed and looking for work implies that should these governors succeed in their search for employment, only 24,1% of parent governors will remain to govern schools. This will have serious implications for the involvement and representation of parents as partners in school governance, since most of the parent governors might not be able to attend governor meetings owing to work commitments.

**TABLE 4.4 EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS OF PARENT GOVERNORS
(QUESTION 5)**

Educational level	Frequency	Percentage
Never attended school	2	3,7
Lower than Std 3	5	9,3
Between Std 3 and Std 6	19	35,2
Between Std 6 and Std 10	17	31,5
Std 10 and 1 or 2 years; further training	8	14,8
Std 10 and 3 or 4 years' further training, e.g. BA, HED	0	0
Std 10 and 5 or more years, e.g. MA, LLB	2	3,7
Other	1	1,8
TOTAL	54	100,0

Of the total number of respondents 66,7% had educational qualifications of between Std 3 and Std 10. This implies that the majority of parent governors are able to read and write and can therefore, communicate with other stakeholders.

**TABLE 4.5 PARENT NUMBERS ACCORDING TO SCHOOL VOTERS' ROLLS
(QUESTION 6)**

Voters' roll	Frequency	Percentage
50-100	10	13.7
101-150	26	35.6
>150	37	50.7
TOTAL	73	100

According to the data supplied by 73 school principals in the region, 13,7% of the schools had a voters' roll of between 50 and 100, 35,6% had a voters' roll of between

101 and 150 and 50,7% had a voters' roll of between 150 and 250. It emerges from the figures that since most schools have a voters' roll of over 150, the majority of schools in the region have sufficient numbers of parents represented in their governing bodies.

4.2.2 Items dealing with familiarity with important documents

TABLE 4.6 FAMILIARITY WITH SCHOOL DOCUMENTS (QUESTION 7)

Respon- dents	Code of conduct		Policy on disci- pline		Development plan		Mission statement	
	Familiar	Un- known	Familiar	Un- known	Familiar	Un- known	Familiar	Un- known
Principal	84,5	15,5	86,3	13,7	61,6	38,4	71,8	28,2
Parent	48,1	51,9	55,6	44,4	42,6	57,4	33,3	66,7
Educator	81,8	18,2	80,3	19,7	56,0	44,0	57,6	42,4
Learner	56,0	44,0	44,0	56,0	28,0	72,0	35,0	64,0
Other	25,0	75,0	75,0	25,0	75,0	25,0	75,0	25,0

With the exception of a school's code of conduct, principals, educators and co-optees respectively, maintain the same level of familiarity with school documents as compared to parents and learners. In the case of a code of conduct, the percentage of the respondents' familiarity rises from 25,0% (co-optees), 48,1% (parents), 56,0% (learners), 81,8% (educators) to 84,5% (principals). This implies that principals and educators are more familiar with the school's code of conduct than do parents and other components of the governing body. There are two points to explain this. Firstly, principals and educators have access to information on school documents. They obtain this information from their professional or academic training and from official guidelines sent directly to school and apparently this information is seldom communicated to other components. Secondly, the fact that a high percentage (56,0%) is familiar with the code of conduct, shows that principals, educators and parents regard good conduct as so essential an issue to the school that all components of the governing body, including learners, should collaborate as partners in drawing it up.

TABLE 4.7 FAMILIARITY WITH OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS (QUESTION 7)

Respon- dents	Education Acts		Education Labour Acts		Public Service Acts		Constitution Act	
	Familiar	Unfa- miliar	Familiar	Unfa- miliar	Familiar	Unfa- miliar	Familiar	Unfa- miliar
Principal	65,8	34,2	64,4	35,6	43,8	56,2	57,8	42,2
Parent	33,3	66,7	27,8	72,2	18,5	81,5	33,4	66,6
Educator	68,2	31,8	65,2	34,8	42,4	57,6	63,6	36,4
Learner	28,0	72,0	4,0	96,0	4,0	96,0	24,0	76,0
Other	25,0	75,0	25,0	75,0	75,0	25,0	75,0	25,0

According to the response pattern emerging from the tables a far greater percentage of principals and educators display more familiarity with official documents than do parents, learners and co-optees. The percentages for principals' familiarity with the documents were as follows: 65,8% (Education Acts), 64,4% (Education Labour Acts), 43,8% (Public Service Acts) and 57,8% (Constitution Act). On the other hand, the percentages of educators' familiarity with the documents were as follows: 68,2% (Education Acts), 65,2% (Education Labour Acts), 42,4% (Public Service Acts) and 63,6% (Constitution Act). It however, appears that a great percentage of educators are more familiar with Education Labour Acts and the Constitution Act than principals', that is 65,2% (educators) compared to 64,4% (principals) and 63,6% (educators) compared to 57,8% (principals). This difference may derive from the fact that while the majority of educators belong to educators' unions which workshop their members on these documents, the unionised educator members of the governing body seldom share the information obtained from the workshop with their partners in the governing body. Similarly, it appears that principals seldom pass the information obtained from the official documents supplied by the Education Department to their partners on the governing body. This results in parents, learners and co-opted members recording extremely low percentages of familiarity with most of the official documents. It is remarkable to note that despite their low percentage of familiarity with other official documents, the co-opted members recorded a high percentage of familiarity with Public Service Acts and the Constitution Act (75,0% in both cases). This is due to the fact that

those members have been co-opted into school governance service on the basis of their work experience which includes their knowledge of Public Service Acts and the Constitution Act which affect them in their daily work life.

4.2.3 Statements and questions on responsibilities and duties of school governors

TABLE 4.8 FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES SUCH AS PLANNING, BUDGETING AND SPENDING SHOULD BE DEVOLVED TO THE GOVERNING BODY (STATEMENT 8)

	Principal	Parent	Educator	Learner	Other	Total
Yes	22	17.9	22.4	6.8	1.8	70.9
No	9.4	2.2	3.2	1.8	0	16.6
Not sure	1.3	4.5	4.0	2.7	0	12.5
Total	32.7	24.6	29.6	11.3	1.8	100

70,9% of the respondents agreed with the statement; 16,6% disagreed; while 12,5% were not sure. Some of those who agreed, argued that since the governing body is well placed to know the day-to-day financial needs and problems of the school better than the Education Department, it should be given full responsibility of planning, budgeting and spending. Others argued in favour of the devolution of financial responsibilities to the governing body by stating that since all stakeholders, including tax payers were represented in the governing body, the financial management of the school would become a transparent process and that common complaints about the principals' mismanagement of school funds would come to an end. Those who disagreed exposed the fear that conflicts on how to spend money granted to the school by the Education Department might emerge and destroy the very unity and collaboration intended in the establishment of the new governing body structure. Those who were not sure acknowledged that they doubted the capability of the governing body in dealing efficiency with financial matters. From these responses it appears that although the majority of governors agree with the devolution of financial responsibilities to the school

governing body, there are those who suggest that the governing body should be trained to deal with financial matters before responsibilities for these matters could be given to the governing bodies.

TABLE 4.9 SCHOOL GOVERNORS SHOULD DECIDE ON THE CURRICULUM OF THEIR SCHOOL (STATEMENT 9)

	Principal	Parent	Educator	Learner	Other	Total
Yes	18	14	18.5	6.3	0.9	57.7
No	11.7	6.3	8.1	2.7	0.9	29.7
Not sure	2.7	4.5	3.2	2.2	0	12.6
Total	32.4	24.8	29.8	11.2	1.8	100

57,7% of the respondents agreed with the statement, 29,7% disagreed and 12,6% were not sure. Principals and educators constituted greatest percentage of those who agreed, that is 32,4% and 29,8% respectively. Both principals and educators argued that it was the governing body's constitutional right to decide on what children should learn and that, for this reason, the Education Department should not impose curriculum on the schools. Some of the educators who disagreed stated that most parents did not have the professional background or training on curriculum and did not know what curriculum entailed and since educators were equipped with such knowledge, they had the capacity to decide on the school curriculum. The same educators rejected the involvement of learners in decision making on curriculum. The educators' view was echoed by 35,7% of parents who stated that they were not sure whether or not to be involved in curriculum decision making. Analysing these arguments and responses, it appears that partnership in curriculum is not clearly defined to enable all components in school governance to accept one another as partners in decision making.

**TABLE 4.10 INVOLVEMENT OF GOVERNORS IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES
(QUESTION 10)**

	Principal	Parent	Educator	Learner	Other
Developing budgets	48,0	21,0	23,0	4,0	4,0
Resolving school-related conflicts	42,0	22,0	26,5	8,0	2,5
Fund raising	47,3	15,5	25,5	8,2	3,6
Interviewing personnel	46,5	24,0	26,8	0,7	2,1
Disciplining personnel	45,0	20,8	25,0	5,8	3,3
Dismissing personnel	50,0	35,0	10,0	5,0	0,0

**TABLE 4.11 HAVE YOU EVER BEEN INVOLVED IN DEVELOPING BUDGET?
(QUESTION 10.1)**

	Principal	Parent	Educator	Learner	Other	Total
Yes	48	21	23	4	4	100
No	19.8	27.3	35.5	17.4	0	100

In establishing the extent of the governing body components' experience in developing budgets, the following percentages were recorded: 48,0% (principals), 21,0% (parents), 23,0% (educators), 4,0% (learners) and 4,0% (co-optees). It appears that principals constitute the highest percentage of the respondents experienced in developing budgets. The high percentage may be attributed to the fact that in the past the principal and the school's management team were the only people responsible for drawing up school budgets while most of the governing body components did not have that opportunity.

TABLE 4.12 HAVE YOU EVER BEEN INVOLVED IN RESOLVING SCHOOL-RELATED CONFLICTS? (QUESTION 10.2)

	Principal	Parent	Educator	Learner	Other	Total
Yes	42	22	25.5	8	2.5	100
No	8.3	33.3	38.3	20.1	0	100

The following percentages were obtained from the respondents who admitted to having played a role in resolving school-related conflicts: 42,0% (principals), 22,0% (parents), 26,5% (educators), 8,0% (learners) and 2,5% (co-optees).

There is a feeling among most components of the governing body that the school principal, rather than the entire governing body, is well positioned to handle and manage conflicts in the school. The feeling is rooted within the belief that since part of the principal's management training includes conflict resolution, resolving conflicts falls within the principal's sphere of operation.

TABLE 4.13 HAVE YOU EVER BEEN INVOLVED IN FUND RAISING? (QUESTION 10.3)

	Principal	Parent	Educator	Learner	Other	Total
Yes	47.3	15.5	25.5	8.1	3.6	100
No	18.9	33.3	33.3	14.4	14.5	100

47,3% (principals), 15,5% (parents), 25,5% (educators), 8,2% (learners) and 3,6% (co-optees) responded affirmatively to the question. Principals constituted the majority among those who had once been involved in the activity of raising funds. There seems to be a belief among many school governors that the responsibility of raising funds for the school lies with the school principal who should only report to the governing body on the success or failure of his or her endeavours in this regard.

**TABLE 4.14 HAVE YOU EVER BEEN INVOLVED IN INTERVIEWING PERSONNEL?
(QUESTION 10.4)**

	Principal	Parent	Educator	Learner	Other	Total
Yes	46.5	24	26.7	0.6	2.1	100
No	8.7	25	35	30	1.2	100

46,5% (principals), 24,0% (parents), 26,8% (educators), 0,7% (learners) and 2,1% (co-optees) admitted that they had once been involved in interviewing personnel. The high percentage of adults (64,0%) shows that most of the governors have at one stage or another been members of interview panels appointed to interview personnel in the school. The question of participation in interviewing personnel might have been misunderstood by learners (0,7%), because legally learners are not permitted to be part of the interview panel in the school.

**TABLE 4.15 HAVE YOU EVER BEEN INVOLVED IN DISCIPLINING PERSONNEL?
(QUESTION 10.5)**

	Principal	Parent	Educator	Learner	Other	Total
Yes	45	20.8	25.1	5.8	3.3	100
No	18.6	28.4	35.3	17.7	0	100

On the involvement of governors in disciplining personnel, 45,0% (principals), 20,8% (parents), 25,1% (educators), 5,8% (learners) and 3,3% (co-optees) agreed. Principals constituted the majority of those who agreed. The involvement of only a few parents and co-optees in disciplining personnel carries the implication that many educators and parents regard the principal as the only person in the school with the authority to effect discipline on the staff. Among those who agreed, there was 5,8% constituted by learners. These might be learners from schools with disciplinary problems, where learners are often involved in alterations and squabbles with educators. This is corroborated by the views of some learner components who complained that parents in their governing bodies were denying them the opportunity to take part in decision

making regarding the discipline of educators.

**TABLE 4.16 HAVE YOU EVER BEEN INVOLVED IN DISMISSING PERSONNEL?
(QUESTION 10.6)**

	Principal	Parent	Educator	Learner	Other	Total
Yes	50	35	10	5	0	100
No	31.2	23.2	31.7	11.9	1.9	100

Low percentages of governors who had once been involved in the dismissal of personnel were recorded, that is, 35,0% (parents), 10,0% (educators), 5,0% (learners) and 0,0% (co-optees). Principals with 50,0% constituted the higher percentage. The fact that the majority of the respondents had never been involved in dismissing personnel implies that the dismissal of personnel is not common and when problems leading to dismissal are experienced, parents lack the knowledge of Education Labour Acts recorded earlier (cf Table 4.6) makes it difficult for the governing body to institute dismissal procedures.

4.2.4 Statements and questions on the formation of partnerships

**TABLE 4.17 SCHOOL GOVERNORS SHOULD WORK IN PARTNERSHIPS WITH
LABOUR UNIONS (STATEMENT 11)**

	Principal	Parent	Educator	Learner	Other	Total
Yes	23,9	13,1	18,9	5,8	1,8	63,5
No	4,9	6,3	3,6	3,2	0,0	18,0
Not sure	4,1	4,9	7,2	2,3	0,0	18,5
TOTAL	32,9	24,3	29,7	11,3	1,8	100,0

63,5% of the respondents accepted partnership with labour unions, 18,0% rejected, while 18,5% were not sure. The majority of the respondents supporting partnership with

labour unions stated that such partnership would present conflicts and confrontations within the school. These respondents argued that since most personnel in the school belong to labour unions or organisations, such unions and organisations are part of the community and of the school. The majority of those who rejected partnership with labour unions were parents who argued what since most union members had a tendency of disrupting schools, partnership with the unions would lead to chaos. It may be concluded that although the majority of school governors accept partnership with labour unions, there are still those who are sceptical about the issue and those who are not sure of the merits or demerits of partnership with labour unions.

TABLE 4.18 SCHOOL GOVERNORS SHOULD WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CIVIC ORGANISATIONS (STATEMENT 12)

	Principal	Parent	Educator	Learner	Other	Total
Yes	21,6	18,0	22,1	5,9	1,8	69,4
No	7,2	2,2	4,1	2,7	0,0	16,2
Not sure	4,1	4,1	3,5	2,7	0,0	14,4
TOTAL	32,9	24,3	29,7	11,3	1,8	100,0

69,4% of the respondents accepted partnership with civic organisations, 16,2% rejected and 14,4% were not sure. Those who accepted argued that since the school is part of the community and both the governing body and civic organisations aim to the development of the community, the two parties should work together. Those who rejected this form of partnership stated that most civic organisations were more concerned with political aspects of the community than with school governance and that their involvement in the school often led to disorder and disruption which impinged upon the proper running of the school.

One may conclude by saying that while the majority of school governors want to work together with civic organisations, there are still those who see these organisations in a negative light.

TABLE 4.19 DO YOU THINK THAT SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES SHOULD FORM AN ASSOCIATION? (QUESTION 14)

	Principal	Parent	Educator	Learner	Other	Total
Yes	24,8	16,6	19,8	7,6	0,5	69,3
No	6,3	5,4	8,1	1,8	1,4	23,0
Not sure	1,8	2,3	1,8	1,8	0,0	7,7
TOTAL	32,9	24,3	29,7	11,2	1,9	100,0

69,3% of the respondents agreed, 23,0% disagreed and 7,7% were not sure. The majority of those who agreed, stated that the formation of governor association would enable governing bodies to share common problems and experiences, promote uniformity and co-operation in school governance and develop unified educational objectives and standards. The majority of those who disagreed, argued that since schools differ in values and what is good for one school might not necessarily be good for another, the formation of an association should be discouraged. It follows that despite objections by some governors to the formation of governing body associations, the majority of governors support the idea.

4.2.5 Statements on school inspection

TABLE 4.20 WHEN THE SCHOOL IS INSPECTED ALL STAKEHOLDERS HAVE REPRESENTATIVE OBSERVERS (STATEMENT 15)

	Principal	Parent	Educator	Learner	Other	Total
Essential	22,6	16,3	25,3	9,1	1,4	74,6
Not advisable	10,4	8,1	4,1	2,2	0,5	25,3
TOTAL	33,0	24,4	29,4	11,3	11,3	100,0

74,6% of the respondents regarded partnership in school inspection as essential while 25,3% regarded it as not advisable. Those who encouraged the participation of all

stakeholders in school inspection stated that participation is necessary for fairness and transparency, for establishment of teamwork, for avoiding unnecessary complaints and conflicts. Those who discouraged it, argued that since most stakeholders do not have knowledge of inspection, inspection should be left to the Department officials. It follows from these responses that the majority of school governors are of the opinion that the principles of partnership in school governance should cover school inspection.

TABLE 4.21 WHEN THE INSPECTION REPORT IS RELEASED, PARTIES WHICH TOOK PART IN THE INSPECTION ARE ALLOWED TO GIVE THEIR RESPONSE (STATEMENT 16)

	Principal	Parent	Educator	Learner	Other	Total
Essential	27,5	20,5	27,8	9,6	1,8	87,2
Not advisable	5,9	4,1	1,4	1,4	0,0	12,8
TOTAL	33,4	24,6	29,2	11,0	1,8	100,0

87,2% of the respondents regarded as essential feedback on inspection from parties which took part in the process and 12,8% did not see such feedback as advisable. The majority of those who regarded feedback as essential stated that such feedback would afford the inspected party the opportunity to establish whether fair judgement has been passed; to their weaknesses and successes and collectively preempt the repetition of the same problems in the future. One may say that the majority of school governors support the idea of having a say on the inspection report.

TABLE 4.22 THE MEC FOR EDUCATION HAS A FINAL SAY IN THE MATTERS PERTAINING TO SCHOOL INSPECTION (STATEMENT 17)

	Principal	Parent	Educator	Learner	Other	Total
Essential	17,3	12,3	14,6	4,0	0,9	49,1
Not advisable	15,9	12,3	15,0	6,8	0,9	50,9
TOTAL	33,2	24,6	29,6	10,8	1,8	100,0

49,1% of the respondents stated that the MEC's final say in school inspection was essential, while 50,9% did not see this as being advisable. Those who rejected the idea argued that this would encourage a unilateral decision making at the expense of collaborative decision making. They therefore believed that inspection of schools was the domain of administrators and the governing body and not politicians. Those who supported the idea argued that since the MEC is the highest official in the Provincial Education Department, he or she has the authority to take final decisions on inspection. From this, it follows that the majority of governors see school inspection as a matter of partnership between administrators and the school governing bodies.

TABLE 4.23 SCHOOL GOVERNORS REGULARLY INVITE COMMENTS FROM THEIR CONSTITUENCIES TO ASSESS THEIR PROGRESS AS GOVERNORS (STATEMENT 22)

	Principal	Parent	Educator	Learner	Other	Total
Essential	32,3	24,5	29,1	10,9	1,8	98,6
Not advisable	0,9	0,0	0,5	0,0	0,0	1,4
TOTAL	33,2	24,5	29,6	10,9	1,8	100,0

On the question of inviting comments from their constituencies, 98,6% of the respondents regarded the move as essential, while 1,4% saw this as not important. Those in favour of inviting comments from their constituencies said that this step was essential in order to maintain positive relations with the constituencies, to enjoy

legitimacy and recognition from the community, to ensure efficiency, to be accountable and to strengthen partnership. It appears from these responses that the majority of school governors want to be assessed to determine whether they make positive contribution to their school and meet the expectations of their communities.

4.2.6 Statements on powers of the governing body

TABLE 4.24 A COMMITTEE COMPOSED OF REPRESENTATIVES OF EDUCATOR AND LABOUR UNIONS, LEARNER AND PARENT ASSOCIATIONS AND CIVIC ORGANISATIONS DEALS WITH DISCIPLINARY MATTERS IN THE SCHOOL (STATEMENT 19)

	Principal	Parent	Educator	Learner	Other	Total
Essential	20,8	15,4	20,3	5,9	1,8	64,2
Not advisable	12,2	9,1	9,1	5,4	0,0	35,8
TOTAL	33,0	24,5	29,4	11,3	1,8	100,0

64,2% of the respondents saw partnership in disciplinary matter as essential, while 35,8% saw such partnership as not advisable. The majority of those who saw the representatives of unions, organisations and associations as partners in dealing with disciplinary matters in as essential, believed that such partnership would encourage the participation of all stakeholders to avoid conflicts. However, some of them expressed some reservations on the inclusion of civic organisations and labour unions on the following grounds. Firstly, they stated that civic organisations had a bad track record since they were associated with the disruption of schools. Secondly, they saw labour unions as being only interested in protecting their members' rights and not those of the learners. The majority of those who rejected the formation of this partnership, did so on the grounds that some of these participants did not have knowledge of educational matters. In conclusion, it may be stated that the majority of governors accept partnership with other stakeholders in dealing with disciplinary matters in the school.

TABLE 4.25 A COMMITTEE SIMILAR TO THE ONE ABOVE IS EMPOWERED TO APPOINT PERSONNEL IN THE SCHOOL (STATEMENT 20)

	Principal	Parent	Educator	Learner	Other	Total
Essential	11,8	13,6	20,0	6,3	1,8	53,5
Not advisable	21,4	10,9	9,6	4,6	0,0	46,5
TOTAL	33,2	24,5	29,6	10,9	1,8	100,0

On the broadening of membership of the governing body to appoint personnel in the school, 53,5% of the respondents accepted the idea, while 46,5% rejected it. 21,4% of principals and 20,0% of educators formed part of those who rejected. Educators feel that all parties including labour union representatives, should be involved in the appointment of personnel in the school. They argue that such a step would lead to fairness and transparency. Principals reject this by arguing that since the governing body knows the personnel needs of the school and since civic organisations and labour unions might practice nepotism, only the governing body should be responsible for appointing personnel. The conclusion is that even though the principal and the educator components of the governing body differ on the inclusion of other parties in appointing personnel, the majority of governors believe that only the governing body should be empowered to appoint personnel in the school.

TABLE 4.26 THE GOVERNING BODY HAS A CHOICE TO DETERMINE WHAT RESOURCES THE STATE ALLOCATES TO THE SCHOOL (STATEMENT 21)

	Principal	Parent	Educator	Learner	Other	Total
Essential	27,7	22,3	25,4	10,0	1,8	87,2
Not advisable	5,5	2,3	4,1	0,9	0,0	12,8
TOTAL	33,2	24,6	29,5	10,9	1,8	100,0

87,2% believed that it was essential for the governing body to choose what resources the state should allocate to the school, while 12,8% did not regard such a step as advisable. Those who accepted the idea argued that since the governing body is close to the school and knows the resource needs of the school, it should determine what the state should provide. Those who were against the idea, rejected it on the grounds that some school governing bodies could not exactly identify the needed resources and thus, the choice of resources should be the state's responsibility. It appears that the majority of school governors would like to be given the power to choose what resources should be allocated to the school.

4.2.7 Statements and questions on meetings

TABLE 4.27 SCHOOL GOVERNORS REPORT BACK TO THEIR CONSTITUENCIES AFTER EVERY GOVERNING BODY MEETING (QUESTION 18)

	Principal	Parent	Educator	Learner	Other	Total
Essential	29,4	20,4	25,8	10,4	1,8	87,8
Not advisable	3,6	4,1	3,6	0,9	0,0	12,2
TOTAL	33,0	24,5	29,4	11,3	1,8	100,0

87,8% of the respondents supported the report back, while 12,2% did not regard it as important. Those who supported the statement, argued that since the governing body

is a mouthpiece of the community, it should give feedback to the community and inform it on new developments in the school. Those who did not see reporting back as important said that reporting back was time-wasting and not cost-effective since two meetings might for example, take place in one week at some schools, making report back difficult. It appears that the majority of governors believe that the community should be informed on what is discussed at governing body meetings after every meeting.

TABLE 4.28 INDICATE HOW DECISIONS ARE MOSTLY TAKEN AT YOUR GOVERNING BODY MEETINGS (STATEMENT 23)

	Principal	Parent	Educator	Learner	Other	Total
Consensus	23.5	12.7	13.1	2.7	1.4	53.4
Compromise	0.4	1.3	1.4	1.8	0	4.9
Voting	2.3	5.4	7.7	4.5	0.5	20.4
>one of the above	5.9	3.6	5.4	1.8	0	16.7
Seldom decide	0.9	0.9	2.3	0.5	0	4.6
Total	33	23.9	29.9	11.3	1.9	100

On how decisions are taken at governing body meetings, the majority of respondents (53,4%) mentioned consensus.

TABLE 4.29 INDICATE THE CONSTRAINT WHICH MOSTLY PREVENTS YOU FROM ATTENDING GOVERNING BODY MEETINGS (QUESTION 24)

	Principal	Parent	Educator	Learner	Other	Total
Family commitments	4	12.6	6.3	2.7	1.4	27
Employment	2.3	4	6.8	0.4	0.5	14
Length of meetings	1.4	0	3.1	1.4	0	5.9
Lack of incentives	2.3	2.3	0.9	0.4	0	5.9
Disagreements	1.8	0.9	0.9	1.8	0	5.4
No constraints	16.2	4.1	10.8	3.6	0	34.7
Other	4.9	0.4	0.9	0.9	0	7.1
Total	32.9	24.3	29.7	11.2	1.9	100

On what constraints mostly prevent governors from attending meetings, 27,0% of the respondents cited family commitments, 14,0% cited employment, 5,9% cited length of meetings, 5,9% cited lack of incentives, 5,4% cited disagreements, 34,7% had no constraints and 7,1% cited other reasons such as those given by some learners who complain that other governors do not consider their views, but regard them as children. The parent component mentioned family commitments, employment and lack of incentives as major constraints. Educators mentioned employment and length of meetings as major constraints. This shows that in some schools governing body meetings are held during teaching periods. Principals constituted the majority of those respondents who had no constraints. It appears that the different components of the governing body have various constraints that make it difficult for them to attend governing body meetings. The majority of those who cannot attend the meetings are parents who have family commitments and this is explained by the fact that most of them are not working and those who are not working often go out in search of work (cf Table 4.3).

TABLE 4.30 WHAT MODE OF COMMUNICATION DOES YOUR GOVERNING BODY MOSTLY USE TO REPORT TO YOUR CONSTITUENCY ON YOUR ACTIVITIES? (QUESTION 25)

	Principal	Parent	Educator	Learner	Other	Total
Written reports	5.9	3.2	5.9	4.1	0	19.1
Meetings	24.6	19	21.8	6.4	1.8	73.6
All of the above	2.3	1.3	2.3	0.9	0	6.8
Other	0	0.5	0	0	0	0.5
Total	32.8	24	30	11.4	1.8	100

On what mode of communication the governing body uses to report to its constituency, 73,6% of the respondents mentioned meetings; 19,1% mentioned written reports; 6,8% mentioned a combination of meetings and written reports and 0,5% mentioned the use of other modes. It appears from these responses that the common mode of communication used by governors to report to their constituency is meetings. Parents constitute 100% of components who use such modes of communication as face-to-face. This is attributed to the fact that parents have the opportunity to meet other parents in the community than do educators and principals.

TABLE 4.31 INDICATE AT WHAT STAGE YOUR GOVERNING BODY USUALLY REPORTS TO ITS CONSTITUENCY (QUESTION 26)

	Principal	Parent	Educator	Learner	Other	Total
When there is a problem	3.6	2.7	3.6	1.4	0	11.3
On request	5.4	3.6	5	2.2	0	16.2
Once a quarter	14.9	13.1	13	2.7	0.9	44.6
Once a month	5.4	2.7	4.5	3.6	0.9	17.1
Other	3.6	2.2	3.6	1.4	0	10.8
Total	32.9	24.3	29.7	11.3	1.8	100

According to the responses given to the question 44,6% of governors report to their constituencies once a quarter; 17,0% report once a month; 16,2% report on request; 11,3% report when there is a problem and 10,8% report on other occasions such as when the principal and the educators have a staff meeting. One may conclude by saying that most governors report back to their constituencies once a quarter. This must be necessitated by the fact that governing bodies must meet at least once a quarter in terms of the law.

4.2.8 Questions on governor training

TABLE 4.32 IN YOUR OPINION IS THERE A NEED FOR SCHOOL GOVERNOR TRAINING? (QUESTION 27)

	Principal	Parent	Educator	Learner	Other	Total
Yes	30.5	23.6	29.1	10.9	1.8	95.9
No	1.8	0.9	0.9	0.5	0	4.1
Total	32.3	24.5	30	11.4	1.8	100

95,9% of governors responded by stating that they needed training, while 4,09%

rejected it. It is however, surprising to note from the responses that 44,4% of those who did not see the need for training was constituted by principals. These might be those principals who are not happy with the reform in school governance and think that if governors are trained the control of schools will shift from them to the governing bodies. It may be concluded that the overwhelming majority of school governors are in need of training.

TABLE 4.33 WHO SHOULD BE MAINLY RESPONSIBLE FOR SCHOOL GOVERNOR TRAINING? (QUESTION 28)

	Principal	Parent	Educator	Learner	Other	Total
Principal	0.9	4.2	0	1.8	0	6.9
Private consultant	1.4	1.8	4.7	1.4	0	9.3
Government agency	29.8	18.1	24.7	7.4	1.9	81.9
Other	0.5	0	0.9	0.5	0	1.9
Total	32.6	24.1	30.3	11.1	1.9	100

With regard to who should be responsible for training governors, 81,9% of the respondents indicated that they wanted to be trained by a government agency; 9,3% by a private consultant; 6,9% by the school principal and 1,9% wanted to be trained by other parties such as fellow school governors. It emerges from these responses that the great majority of governors would like to be trained by government agencies.

TABLE 4.34 AT WHICH CENTRE SHOULD SCHOOL GOVERNOR TRAINING MOSTLY TAKE PLACE? (QUESTION 29)

	Principal	Parent	Educator	Learner	Other	Total
Own school	10.8	11.7	8.4	4.2	0.5	35.6
Adult centre	4.7	4.2	3.7	0.9	0	13.5
Community centre	14	8.4	15.4	6.1	1.4	45.3
Other	2.8	0	2.8	0	0	5.6
Total	32.3	24.3	30.3	11.2	1.9	100

45,3% of the respondents wanted to be trained at community centres; 35,6% chose their own schools; 13,5% chose adult centres and 5,6% chose other centres not mentioned. It appears that the majority of governors would like to be trained at community centres.

TABLE 4.35 WHO SHOULD UNDERGO GOVERNOR TRAINING? (QUESTION 30)

	Principal	Parent	Educator	Learner	Other	Total
Interested governors	0.9	0.5	0.5	0.5	0	2.4
Selected governors	8.4	7.9	6.1	5.1	0.5	28
Whole body	22.9	15.9	23.8	5.6	1.4	69.6
Total	32.2	24.3	30.4	11.2	1.9	100

In response to the above question, 69,6% of the respondents stated that the whole governing body should be trained; 28,0% thought that selected governors should be trained and 2,4% stated that only interested governors should be trained. It is interesting to note that the majority of those who stated that only interested governors

should be trained, were principals and these are the same governors who discouraged governor training. It follows from these responses that even though some school principals think that only interested governors should be trained, the majority of governors would like to see the whole governing body trained.

TABLE 4.36 INDICATE HOW FREQUENTLY YOU WOULD PREFER TO BE TRAINED FOR SCHOOL GOVERNANCE (QUESTION 31)

	Principa l	Parent	Educato r	Leame r	Othe r	Total
Once a serving term	7	7	9.9	5.6	0.5	30
Twice a serving term	12.2	6.6	8.5	3.3	0	30.6
Thrice a serving term	12.7	10.8	12.2	2.3	1.4	39.4
Total	31.9	24.4	30.6	11.2	1.9	100

39,4% of the respondents indicated that they wanted to be trained thrice a serving term; 30,6% twice a serving term and 30,0% once a serving term. The great majority of governors would like to be trained thrice a serving term.

TABLE 4.37 INDICATE HOW THE GOVERNING BODY MEMBERS SHOULD BE TRAINED (QUESTION 32)

	Principal	Parent	Educator	Learner	Other	Total
As a unit	27.2	20.2	24.9	7	2	81.3
Separately	4.7	4.2	5.6	4.2	0	18.7
Total	31.9	24.4	30.5	11.2	2	100

18,7% wanted to be trained separately. Those who wanted to be trained as a unit stated that this would encourage unity among governors and save time and costs. They

also stated that this would enable governors to see themselves as partners. This implies that most governors want to be trained as a unit.

4.2.9 Question on governing body election

TABLE 4.38 HOW MANY PARENTS TURNED UP FOR THE ELECTION OF THE PRESENT GOVERNING BODY? (QUESTION 33)

	Principal	Parent	Educator	Learner	Other	Total
<100	15.3	5.7	7.6	1.9	0	30.5
101-150	14	6.4	4.5	0.6	0	25.5
151-200	5.7	2.6	7	1.6	1.2	18.1
>200	11.5	7	6.4	1.3	0.6	26.8
Total	46.5	21.7	25.5	5.4	1.8	100

In response to the question establishing the number of parents who turned up for the election of the current governing body, 30,5% of the respondents recorded a figure of between 0 and 100 parents; 43,6% recorded a figure of between 100 and 200 parents and 26,8% recorded a figure of over 200 parents. This implies that 70,4% of the schools in the region had a voter turn out of over 100 parents. This voter turn out compares favourably with the voters' roll in which case 86,3% of the school in the region had a voters' roll of over 100 parents. The situation is not the same in the region and this is illustrated by the above figure of 30,5% of the respondents. It appears that even though in many schools many parents turn out for governor elections, in a few schools parents do not turn up. This might be caused by the failure to invite parents to governor election meetings in time or parents' family commitments and employment constraints.

4.2.10 Concluding remarks

From the presentation and analysis of the data obtained by the questionnaire (cf Appendix 1), it appears that the various partners within the school governing body have particular needs and problems which emerged in response to the reform and

restructuring initiatives of the state (cf 2.2). These needs and problems revolve around the issue of partnership and are manifested in the following processes:

- Dissemination of information
- Performance of duties and execution of responsibilities
- Formation of partnerships
- Empowerment of school governors
- Meetings of governing bodies
- Training of school governors
- Elections of governing bodies

These processes have brought immense challenges to school governing bodies.

4.2.10.1

Personal information of governors on their work (Question 34)

Most of the respondents who answered this optional question expressed the need for training of school governors. Some of them expressed an open appreciation for this study and hoped that the authorities would satisfy their needs as governors. Others complained that most of the decisions taken by the governing bodies are seldom binding. It must however be acknowledged that only a few governors responded to this question.

4.3 PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEW DATA

4.3.1 Introduction

Against the background of the literature research which focussed on the reform and restructuring strategies applied by the state and their subsequent impacts on school governance, this part of the study seeks to establish empirically the state's role in developing partnerships in school governance. An interview was selected as an appropriate data collecting instrument to achieve this. As pointed out above (cf 3.3.2.1), the interview would assist the researcher in his attempt to verify the data obtained from the literature research and to corroborate data collected by means of a questionnaire. Two issues are dealt with in this part of the study. The first issue entails the presentation of the interview participant and the interview methodology. This is followed by the analysis of the interview data.

4.3.2 Presentation of the interview participant

From two education specialists attached to the Northern Province Department of Education's Sub-Directorate on Governance, the researcher selected one education specialist as a key informant in this interview. It was on the basis of the informant's position as an education specialist in the Governance Section of the Department and the responsibilities attached to the position that the informant was selected. The key informant's position as an education specialist carries such responsibilities as school governance policy development, implementation and evaluation; formation of partnerships with non-governmental organisations and other directorates of the Department; capacity building; monitoring and supporting of school governance service provision programmes in the Northern Province and representing the Department at provincial and national forums dealing with matters pertaining to educational management and governance. Since the interview focussed on the state's role in developing partnerships in school governance with a view to corroborating the data collected from school governing bodies by means of a questionnaire, the researcher regarded the key informant as a possible source of valuable data in this regard.

4.3.3 Presentation of interview methodology

The interview was conducted on 25 June 1998 in the office of the Northern Province's Department of Education's Sub-Directorate on Governance, Ghani House, Pietersburg. Before the interview, the informant's anonymity and the protection of identity were assured and the importance as well as the purpose of the interview was explained. This explanation succeeded in establishing a rapport between the interviewer and the informant and encouraged the informant to show all the willingness to engage in the interview. With permission sought from the informant, the interview was tape recorded to get a complete verbatim account of what transpired during the interview. Soon after the interview, the data was translated and edited before it could be analysed.

4.3.4 Presentation of interview data

This interview was held with an education specialist attached to the Northern Province's Department of Education. The interview was focussed on the role played by the state in developing partnerships in school governance.

INTERVIEW WITH A PROVINCIAL EDUCATION SPECIALIST

The interview was held with an education specialist attached to the Northern Province's Education Department. The interview was focussed on the role played by the state in school governance.

The participants were: INT = Interviewer
 PES = Provincial Education Specialist

- 1 INT What role does the state play to encourage and improve parent and community participation in school governance?
- PES The state has already done something in the form of legalising and covering the status of governing bodies through the South African Schools Act that dictates

6 that governing bodies have to be democratically elected and also outlining the
functions and powers of governing bodies and specific responsibilities, and also
through the South African Schools Act provinces had to develop regulations
guiding the elections of the whole governing body, including learner
representation. That, we have done. We developed regulations and they were
used in terms of the establishment of governing bodies throughout the province.
11 Yes, it is true! The turn-up of parents, especially the parent component, in the
meetings was not what we had expected but, of course, there is a history behind
why parents are not coming up or participating fully. I think you are aware of the
past, that parents were not seen as equal partners or as people who can play an
important role in the education of their children. I mean they were just told what
16 to do and that is why they were consulted only with relation to the improvement
of the school and also to a very limited extent, so the new government has seen
to it that parents play a meaningful role in the education of their children. Now,
realising that parents were not coming up as one would have expected, we had
to embark on publicity campaign where we made use of the radio, our local
21 authorities, you know, our community-based organisation - we used virtually all
avenues that we could make use of to send a message to parents around
participating in the education of their children and because we realised that it was
difficult for parents to come in large numbers, in our regulations we didn't give a
particular percentage or whatever would satisfy the quorum for the meeting to be
26 held, because, we could see that it was not going to be a problem, but we made
it in such a way that the few parents who went there would enable elections to
go on as long as the representation of parents within the governing body is in line
with the regulations. Yes, we are saying that it is not only the few parents who
31 are in the governing body who should participate meaningfully in the education
of their children, but parents in general. We are supposed to constantly
conscientise and sensitise them around their involvement in the children's
education and through committees such as COLTS (Culture of Learning,
Teaching and Service) committee. You know these are the various initiatives
that are going together with governing bodies. We hope to reach the parents
36 and really make them participate, but we also realise that there are questions of

attitude. In the past, attitudes of educationists like teachers and principals towards parents contributed to how parents see themselves today. So, much as we are saying we are trying to call them in, we also need to change our attitudes towards them. There are all sorts of frustrations such as "most of our parents are illiterate. How can they positively participate in the education of their children?" Isn't the role that they play in governing bodies something that has still to be defined, because most people are saying, "They are illiterate, what can they do?" We need to build in capacity; we need to train them; we need to do all sorts of things but, it is not the Department only that can decide. We need also principals like you and the teachers who have those skills to assist in terms of building capacity in training them to be literate. You can't just leave it on the side of the Government. We must do some of these things.

INT What is the Department's feeling towards the view held by some parent and educator governors that curriculum matters fall exclusively within the domain of professionals and that parents and ordinary community members should not involve themselves in these matters?

PES I have just indicated that there are all sorts of things that parents are supposed to be doing. The South African Schools Act also states that the governing body also has a say in the curriculum of a particular school as well as the language policy of the school. That fully points out that throughout the years these were aspects wherein parents were not seen as people who could make inputs. Even today people still say, "they are illiterate; what can they do?" "How do they relate to the curriculum issues?" But, as a Department, we see the involvement of parents in this aspect of the school as very vital. I mean if you have to make parents to make meaningful contributions, you have to involve them in all aspects. As such, we have developed a manual on Curriculum 2005 - which is targeting the parents, the governing bodies, the learners and the educators in outlining basic aspects of Curriculum 2005. That is a way of building capacity also within the parent component of the governing body, so that they can play a meaningful role in the education of their children and in deciding what their

71 children should be able to learn and for what purpose. That is why that manual
was developed and taken to most of our schools. That is the way in which the
Department is contributing. Apart from that, we are emphasising in all the forums
we are holding - be it in COLTS, in the radio or in the meetings - the question of
76 parents being involved in determining what is good for their children rather than
having somebody deciding what they think is good for their children. That is why
I talked of attitude - that we are still battling with attitudes of people who still
believe that the parent is only there to be told what to do or just to improve the
school's surroundings. That is what most people believe is the role of the parent
and the role of the governing body. We are saying that it goes far beyond just
improving the school facilities. I think we are getting there. We are
workshopping parents around Curriculum 2005. Unfortunately, due to financial
constraints - and I hate saying this - and to the fact that we did not have
81 permanent officials dealing with governance in the regions, we were unable to
embark on our capacity - building programmes, but we hope and are confident
that soon we shall begin with all the aspects of building capacity of governing
bodies, because we truly succeeded in establishing them. Up until now, there
is confusion around the role and functions of governing bodies and how they
relate to the school's management teams that are busy focussing on the
86 professional management of the schools. You should remember that the South
African Schools Act says the governing body should support the principal, the
staff and the learners of the school in what they are doing, but at the same time,
the principal should work hand in hand with the teachers and others within the
governing body. These partners should work together to see that effective
91 learning and teaching is effected in the school and this includes all the needs of
the school.

96 INT You have just touched an important aspect of the relationship between the
governing body and the school's management team. How does the Department
intend to form partnerships with the governing bodies or other supportive
structures in curriculum management at schools to bring about improvement in
learners' school experiences and achievement outcomes?

PES I have indicated that the role that the governing body is supposed to play in the curriculum matters is to give an input in subjects taught in the schools, even the methodology and things like that but we are saying we take note of the fact that most of our parents may not be competent to do that. They need training around curriculum issues, and how to influence policy around curriculum issues. They should also assist in matters like school hours and the school timetable as well as extra - curriculum issues like whatever sports they should assist in. Definitely that means getting into partnership with the school management team, that is, the principal, the deputy, the head of department and everybody that is engaging in the everyday running of the school. At the same time, you need to involve the community in terms of making inputs in what the school should be accomplishing - something that was not there in the past, as we have already agreed that in the past the community was not involved. It was just like a top-down kind of thing. We were told what to teach. At times you did not know why I was supposed to teach if I was to teach. Now we are saying that parents should get involved, because here we are dealing with the future of their children. They may know what is good for their children. The learners too, should be consulted in terms of what they think about the curriculum. We say that parents should get into partnership with the community, the school management team, the teachers and everybody in the school to determine the curriculum of their particular school and this includes determining the language policy of the school - what it should look like. If we say that the first years of the child at school, the child should be taught in its own language, what are the benefits or advantages? You should also remember that we are saying we should uplift the standard of our languages so that they should reach a stage where we could use them anywhere. We should elevate them to that economic status like English, where you can express yourself in your mother tongue and you could also do certain things using your own language to advance yourself. It is very important. We know the phobia around the home language that "I can teach my child in this language, but what is going to happen?" The market out there is not using this language, so if you say that I must teach my child this language, what do you mean? Are you saying that I should kill my child? This is the debate going on and this forms part of

131 curriculum issues. As a Department we say that we are building capacity in
governing bodies to understand basic curriculum issues like Curriculum 2005.
How does this curriculum relate to you as a parent? As a parent you are
supposed to be constantly giving support to your child and giving him or her
feedback. These are the ways in which the learners are supposed to be taught.
36 It is no longer a teacher-centred kind of learning and teaching. It is a learner-
centred one, where learners will have to initiate things, to be creative and really
get involved. This new culture that we are preaching, will also have to stretch to
the home. If we say at school, that we are now coping up, children should be
able to ask questions at home and not be stifled by parents who do not allow
them to ask certain questions. When they ask questions, they should not be
41 seen in a different way by parents. this, of course, contradicts with our cultural
values regarding how we bring up our children. So, we need to make parents
aware that there are these changes; that there are new approaches to learning
and we would like them to embrace these new changes. We know that it is
going to be difficult, but you see what I am trying to say? Those are the basic
46 ways in which we are trying to address parents and make them understand and
assist the school - assist in terms of creating an environment in which our
children could learn effectively both at home and at school, because you know
that what children learn at school is also transferred to their home and what they
learn at home is transferred to the school.

51 INT What is the Department's view regarding the establishment of a school-based
management training for school governors?

PES Well, I do believe that it is one aspect we shall consider in the long run, that there
should be a school-based capacity-building as you say, not around management
only, but also around curriculum, capacitating teachers and so on. It will also
56 have elements like school-based in-service training for everybody. You will be
capacitating but, at the same time, in-servicing and doing all those things for
particular programmes or specific areas and one would see it as a long-term
thing. You would see it in the future. For now, I think you will agree that due to

161 financial constraints the focus will be on building capacity through groupings of
governing bodies. We have to cluster schools to be able to build capacity and
as we envisage, governors of these clustered schools should go down to their
various schools and build capacity within themselves and transfer the skills that
have been developed by either ourselves or whatever service provider we would
166 have contacted to assist us in terms of building capacity. I think that it is a very
important thing, but for now there are some constraints in effecting that kind of
approach in building capacity in our schools.

INT What scope will be covered by the training programme for school governors,
given the novelty of the democratic school governance to most of our
communities?

171 PES There has been an analysis made in relation to the training programmes for
governing bodies and in the Northern Province we have had a pilot project for
governing bodies that was conducted and training in that programme has been
catered for. As I have already said, schools will be clustered and this clustering
is aimed at addressing the problems that we have highlighted such as distance,
176 language and so on. The co-ordinators working with the Department have been,
appointed on the basis of their knowledge of the peculiarities within the regions
in the Northern Province such as the language issue, whether or not they are
conversant with the languages spoken in those areas and I think one of the
requirements is that when people were applying, they had to have knowledge of
181 working with the community, since we want people who are aware of a number
of things around the community in which they would be working. I think we were
able to address that point. We know there would be problems, but I think we
catered for a number of things. Apart from that the trainers that will be training,
have been trained themselves; they have also been trained around training
186 adults as opposed to training young people. They do have all these things. They
are rich in things like team building, conflict management - quite a number of
things that may enrich the training of these governing bodies.

INT What is the Department's feeling towards the view that legal issues and documents should be at the top of the governor training programme?

91 PES Sure! I mean those are the guiding matters in terms of whatever policy issues
the governing bodies will be developing - be it a code of conduct for learners, be
it a school policy documents, whatever is in their line of operation. They have to
ensure that they do not violate what is in the Constitution; the rights of learners,
the rights of individuals within the governing body and within the school and so
96 on. They have to check that whatever they do in their admission policies is in
line with the Constitution, is in line with the regulations within the Province and
is in line with the South African Schools Act. When there is to be punishment,
they should ensure that that punishment is in line with the applicable regulations.
You are right that those will be the documents that they will have to master. In
01 our capacity-building programmes, we will be taking the governing body through
them. We acknowledge the fact that even among ourselves there may not be
that expertise in translating legal documents but, we are beginning to address
that. We have a legal section though it is not well manned but we can make use
of such people in the National Department. We also ask from the National
06 Department for people to come and assist in terms of translating these legal
documents. They would also help governing bodies understand how to interpret
some of these things in our documents. You will agree with me that these
documents are not easy documents, but our present government has tried to
make them user-friendly. I mean these legal documents, I think, are much more
11 simplified than the legal documents of the past and I think those are the things
that have been considered even though there are some aspects that still make
an exception. Yes, I think you are right. These documents are very important
because that is what the governing bodies should be concentrating on just as the
South African Schools Act, among others for example, outlines their powers,
16 their functions and what have you.

INT What relationships should exist between civic organisations, governing bodies and educator unions and what should be the limits of such relationships, given

that some governors are sceptical about the involvement in school governance of educators who are members of educator unions or parents who are members of community organisations such as civic organisations?

PES That is a difficult question because, all of us in one way or another belong to civic organisations. As parents, we are members of community-based organisations and as educators organ, we belong to the labour movements like SADTU (South African Democratic Teachers Union), NAPTOSA (National Professional Teachers Organisation of South Africa), whatever. If I am elected by my fellow teachers, and I belong to a particular organisation, that is an unfortunate situation but, I want to believe that once I am identified as a teacher to serve in the governing body, I must serve in the interests of all the teachers, not a particular teacher organisation. That is the first point. If I am a parent and belong to a particular civic organisation, once I sit on the governing body, I shall represent the interests and beliefs of all parents in promoting that particular community. That is my understanding of the relationship - that one should not just be there to serve the interests of a particular organisation, because it may work against the common vision of that school and that governing body, therefore, you are there solely to represent the stakeholders that is in there. If it is a parent, he or she is a stakeholder, if it is a teacher, he or she is a stakeholder and with learners we can say the same thing about their involvement as representatives of other learners rather than members of COSAS (Congress of South African Students). The question is, "How do you reconcile between being a member of an organisation and being a member of the governing body?" I think people were made to understand that when they enter into the governing body, as much as they represent certain stakeholders, the most important thing for the success of the school and the success of the learners, other interests should be done away with, because the most important thing is the interests of the school and its learners, so that ultimately the education system can benefit the community in general and not just a particular organisation. I think the governing body should seek support from the community as a whole, including civic organisations, but as you said, there is a danger that if you leave this kind of thing - that anybody

51 can just be involved in the governing body - political organisations can come into
the school and there is a danger that this can lead to some conflicts and
contradictions that may not benefit the school. I would say there should be a
limit in how much the governing body should involve political organisations and
labour movements in the issues of the school. I think that is why we talk of the
governing body that represents everybody, not just a particular section, even
56 though we know that these people are drawn from different backgrounds like
teacher and civic organisations and may be even those who are non-aligned and
do not belong anywhere, but have the interests of the education of their children
at heart and for this reason, are placed in those positions. Governing bodies can
also co-opt other members of the community with particular skills that the
31 governing body may need. It can be traditional leaders or any member of the
royal kraal, but as long as those people have the expertise that is going to
advance the interests of the school, so be it. That is how we see it as a
government. There should not be any contradictions if the people who are in the
governing body are having a common vision and mission around why they have
36 been put there. They are there to uplift the level of education of the learner, to
uplift the school in all aspects, to support the school management team, to
support the principal, to support the teachers and to support the learners. That
is why they are there. They are not there to take the responsibilities of the
teachers and the parents or to create conflicts.

71 INT Which parties are involved in decision making regarding such labour matters as
hiring, discipline and firing of personnel in the school?

PES I think that you know that governing bodies are involved in these matters and that
they should form part of stakeholders that decide. At the moment it is stated that
governing bodies can also recommend the firing of an educator if he or she is not
76 performing to the expectations of the community and the learners. I would not
therefore, say that any other party, except the governing body (as is in
accordance with the Labour Relations Act which states that the employer party
and the employee party should be there if the educator belongs to the educator

281 movement like SADTU) should be involved. Basically it is the governing body
 that recommends either the hiring or firing of an educator and in most cases
 there has been contests around this issue as to, "Are the governing body
 members, especially competent for example, to recommend the hiring of the
 principal?" "Who are they?" "What do they know?" "Can they form part of the
 interview panel if they do not know English?" But I am saying that it is not the
 86 question of language here; it is the question of what you know of a good or bad
 teacher. You could articulate that in any language that you command. It is not
 about language here; it is about understanding issues in education so that if I
 say, "This is a good school," this is what I mean. Perhaps there is punctuality,
 there is observance of teaching and learning hours, there is discipline - you can
 91 name them and our parents are able to understand that irrespective of whether
 or not they are illiterate. They are able to say, "I think that is a good principal
 because of one, two, three and four." I am not saying that all of them are able
 to do that. The majority are able to know what is good and what is bad.
 Basically that is why we say that they should form part of the governing body
 96 structure.

INT What capacity-building programmes does the Department intend to implement
 to assist the governing body in effecting discipline of learners whose
 representatives are essentially partners in the governing body?

01 PES Let me put it this way: We are thankful that finally the document on the code of
 conduct for learners has come up. We were still awaiting in the provinces the
 document for consideration by the governing bodies, which was gazetted in May
 this year (1998). It is now being circulated in all the provinces and I think all the
 provinces have it by now. The Minister of Education had to come up with these
 guidelines. Now that they are here, the governing bodies are expected to adopt
 06 a code of conduct for their schools. There are guidelines in relation to what
 constitutes teachers' misconduct, for example, in the school. You know, some
 people will say pregnancy constitutes a serious misconduct and therefore, if a
 learner is pregnant, she should be expelled from school. Now, the document

11 clearly states that pregnancy is not one of those that constitute a serious
 misconduct. You cannot deny a learner who is pregnant a right to go to school,
 but then there are other measures that you can take. You can look for
 alternatives. You can make alternative arrangements for that learner to get
 education while she is pregnant. There are quite a number of measures and
 16 procedures that should be followed in addressing some of these issues in the
 school; the processes that the governing body should engage itself in in terms
 of making learners aware of this code of conduct. Once the governing body has
 developed a code of conduct, it should be known in all corners of the school so
 that learners are aware of it and it should ensure that all the stakeholders in the
 school, including the school management team, understand it. They should
 21 engage, finally, in the adoption of this code of conduct. It is good that now we
 have this. Governing bodies will now be empowered to make informed decisions
 around their code of conduct. We should not be having problems now that they
 have this guiding document. According to the South African Schools Act, the
 governing body is given the task of disciplining learners, but in the case of
 26 teachers, the governing body does not discipline, but it can only recommend
 disciplinary measures for the Department to take if they are not happy with a
 teacher's conduct. Of course, the code of conduct of teachers should also be
 known by the governing body as well as other regulations that the Department
 has developed in addressing issues of misconduct by the teachers because, the
 31 focus now is only on learners and is excluding the teachers. You know that
 teachers at times also misbehave and the appropriate course of action should
 also be taken.

336 INT What is the government's view regarding the devolution of financial
 responsibilities including planning, budgeting and spending to the governing
 body?

PES We have done that to the governing bodies already, because we are saying that
 in the past the powers were concentrated only on one person - the principal. In
 most cases that led to quite a number of problems! Funds were not handled in

41 the manner they were supposed to be handled, because that responsibility was
 just in the hands of one individual who was not properly monitored. Now the duty
 has been given to the governing body, because you need to account. These are
 public funds. There are taxpayers involved. There are parents who are paying.
 You need to account to them as to what is happening to their money and I think
 accounting is a correct way. You have in that way, given the power back to
 46 where it rightfully belongs - to the parents, but at the same time, we are saying
 the parents should work hand in hand with the principal, because the principal
 is the accounting officer and at the end if the money has not been used in the
 manner it was supposed to, we are not going to the governing body. We are
 going to the principal and ask, "What has happened?" Even though we say there
 51 should be a treasurer, that treasurer should work hand in hand with the principal
 so that once the school has identified its needs, the principal could be contacted
 before the money could be used for anything. So it is not like taking completely
 that responsibility away from the principal and handing it over to another person.
 the principal still accounts and still monitors to see whether things are done in the
 56 correct way in the school. There are debates around the issue of allocating
 funds directly to school governing bodies. There are big donor companies and
 donor countries that would like to offer money directly to the schools, because
 they feel that if money is given to the Department and not directly to the schools,
 problems may arise.

61 INT Does the Department consider employing the services of non-governmental
 organisations in partnership with the Department in the inspection of schools and
 their governing bodies?

PES We have appointed people in the regions who will be basically monitoring and
 supporting the governing bodies in the schools. These people will conduct visits
 66 to the schools just to check progress that the schools and their governing bodies
 are making and also identify their needs in terms of training and whatever needs
 these governing bodies will be having. Yes, we are setting that control measure
 to check on what the governing bodies will be doing. At the same time, there will

371 be reports by these co-ordinators that will be made on whatever programme the governing bodies will be having. I think that it is another way of monitoring and making sure that the governing bodies are doing what they are expected to do and that the Department is giving support and building capacity for the governing bodies. There will also be an evaluation whereby people have to go and evaluate what the governing bodies are doing. They may have to ask for their own external sources to evaluate, but we shall also be going there to evaluate and to check on the impacts of these external sources in terms of building capacity for the governing bodies.

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4.3.5 Analysis of interview data

In this analysis the "Department" and the "state" are used interchangeably to refer to the Department of Education in South Africa - amyluria, the "education specialist" and the "participant" or "informant" are used to refer to the key informant who is the Provincial Education Specialist - Reference is also made to some responses to the questionnaire to validate some points made in the interview.

The findings are analysed according to the focus areas in the interview, namely

- * Establishment of partnership in school governance.
- * Parent and community involvement in curriculum matters.
- * Partnerships between the governing body and other structures in curriculum development.
- * Establishment of school-based management training for school governors
- * The scope caused by the governor training programme.
- * Priorisation of legal issues and documents in the training programme for school governors.
- * Formation of partnerships between governing bodies, civic organisations and educator unions.
- * Parties involved in hiring, disciplining and dismissing personnel in the school.
- * Capacity building programmes for effecting discipline of learners.

- * Devolution of financial responsibilities to the governing body.
- * Partnership between the Department of Education and non-governmental organisations in the inspection of schools and governing bodies.

(a) Establishment of partnerships in school governance

According to the Education Specialist, the state recognises the role played by parents and the community as partners in school governance. This is manifested by the passing of legislation and regulations which lay down the foundation for active participation of parents and the community in school governance. The South African Schools Act No 84 of 1996 and provincial regulations are cited as examples of public manifests of the extent to which the state is committed to the idea of partnerships in school governance. "We developed regulations and they were used in terms of the establishment of governing bodies throughout the Province" (line 9). Despite these regulations and the Act, the Department acknowledges that it encountered a problem in the form of an unexpected poor turn-out of parent voters at school governing body election meetings. The Provincial Education Department attributed the poor turn-out to two factors as possible causes. The first one, was the legacy of the past education system which emphasised inequality which made it hard for parents to acknowledge their status as equal partners who could "play an important role in the education of their children" (line 14). Parents "were just told what to do and that is why they were consulted only with relation to the improvement of the school and to a very limited extent" (line 15). The second factor, was the question of attitudes. In the past education system, the "attitudes of educationists like teachers and principals towards parents contributed to how parents see themselves today" (line 37).

In an attempt to address the abovementioned problems, the Provincial Education Department took the following steps. Firstly, it launched a publicity campaign to encourage parents to take part in the governing body elections. This campaign included the use of mass media, local authorities and community-based organisations. It appears from these efforts that the Department realised that in order to reach out to parents, it had to take a concerted action in partnerships with the media, the local

authorities and other stakeholders. This shows that the Department recognises the broader community as the important role player in the school. It however appears that despite the publicity campaign, few parents turned up. This might possibly imply that in the course of the campaign interests of the various local authorities and community organisations were promoted with the effect that many parents and community members become sceptical and consequently did not respond as expected. Another explanation for poor turn-out might be that for the first time the Department employed the services of local authorities and organisations to invite parents to the election meetings. This illustrated a departure from the past practice when the school principal alone was instrumental in calling parents to the school committee election meetings. Again, the inclusion of all parents in the invitations to governor election meetings might possibly have sent a wrong message to some parents since they were not used to that. The informant justified this step by saying that “it is not only the few parents who are in the governing body who should participate meaningfully in the education of their children, but parents in general” (line 29).

The second step the Department took was to establish the committees' task as COLTS (Culture of Learning, Teaching and Service) which accommodated all parents and were intended to engage them in their children's education. It however, appears that many parents were not aware of these committees and those who were familiar with them did not pass this information to others, especially parents in remote areas of the Northern Province. The same can be said about the parents' lack of knowledge and understanding of the same Education Act and regulations that provide for their participation in school governance. This point was illustrated by parent governors' response to the questionnaire item on their knowledge of Education Acts.

The third point is that, since the attitudes of such professionals as educators and principals were found to be contributing to the poor parent turn-out at governor election meetings, the Provincial Education Department found it appropriate to invite educators and principals with skills to come up with strategies to build capacity in parents to participate in education. The reason given for this was that “You can't leave that on the side of the government. We must do some of these things” (line 47). While it may be

admitted that even the question of changing attitudes, partnership between the Department and the professionals is needed, it may be argued that change in attitudes may not take place in the short term as did the change in school governance, but that it requires a much and sustained educational effort aimed not only at school governors, but also at the professional bodies to which principals and educators belong. This is because these professionals were educated in the very same education system that created these attitudes in the first place and discouraged parents from full participation in school governance.

(b) Parent and community involvement in curriculum matters

The involvement of parents in curriculum is prescribed by the South African Schools Act No 84 of 1996 and the Northern Province Education Department is fully behind this, especially since for many years parents have been excluded from having a say in this issue. "But, as a Department, we see the involvement of parents in this aspect of the school as very vital" (line 59). The Act spells out parents' right to being involved in decision making and goes further to encourage the establishment of partnership between the school governing body and the principal in curriculum. The main problem the Department is still battling with is the negative attitudes some people have towards the involvement of parents in this issue. The Education Specialist asserts that there are "people who still believe that the parent is only there to be told what to do or just to improve the school's surroundings" (line 73). Compounding this problem, is the "confusion around the role and functions of the governing bodies and how they relate to the school management teams that are busy focussing on the professional management of the schools" (line 84). This includes curriculum management. This sentiment was also expressed by some school governors who had responded to the questionnaire on the same issue by stating their confusion as to the exact role and functions of the governing body in curriculum. The Department rejects the view that parents in the school governing body should rather concern themselves with the improvement of the school's surroundings than with curriculum issues and says "that it goes far beyond just improving the school facilities" (line 76).

To eliminate these attitudes and simultaneously develop partnerships which include parents in curriculum, the Department took several capacity-building measures. Firstly, the Department developed a manual on Curriculum 2005 targeting parents, learners, educators and the school governing body. Secondly, information on parent involvement in curriculum was disseminated through the media, meetings and committees such as COLTS. Thirdly, the Department is reported to be engaged in "workshopping parents on Curriculum 2005" (line 78). Despite these efforts the Provincial Education Department acknowledges that it faces financial constraints which constitute a major obstacle to the success of these programmes. This implies that partnership in curriculum matters will continue to be a problem as long as the necessary financial resources are not available to the Provincial Education Department.

(c) Partnership between the governing body and other structures in curriculum development

It appears from the Education Specialist's response that new changes and approaches to curriculum have given inputs to the establishment of partnerships between the various stakeholders in the school. These changes and approaches include the following:

- A change from a top-down approach to curriculum management to a collaborative engagement. "We were told what to teach" (line 111). This marks a change from a bureaucratic governance to a democratic governance of school curriculum which implies that all stakeholders including parents who were previously excluded should be consulted, because "they may know what is good for their children" (line 113).
- A change from educator-centred approach to learning and teaching to a learner-centred approach. "The learners too, should be consulted in terms of what they think about the curriculum" (line 114).
- A change in emphasis on traditional cultural values to emphasis on democratic

values which are characterised by the extension of teaching and learning to the home, which affects the way children are educated and brought up. Parents at home like educators at school, are encouraged to allow their children to ask questions freely (line 138).

- The encroachment of constitutional issues on the curriculum. This includes the freedom of choice in which case learners are free to choose what they should learn while parents are free to choose what their children should be taught and the freedom of expression in which case children are free to ask parents and educators what they should learn.

The abovementioned changes and approaches require getting the school management team, parents, educators and other community members into partnerships (line 105). The input that these changes and approaches make on partnerships between the parties are felt in the following areas of the curriculum: subjects taught, methodology, school hours, language policy, extra-curriculum activities, timetables, mission and visions of the school. Since these changes and approaches provide enormous challenges to the various partners in school governance, the Department, according to the informant, intends to implement them by taking the following steps:

- training the various partners on how partnerships operate,
- building capacity aimed at the partners' understanding of curriculum issues and
- making parents in particular aware of the new changes and approaches.

It is not clear how the Department is going to succeed in implementing the abovementioned steps without getting financial support it appears to lack at the moment. This sends a fear that the development of partnership in curriculum may be delayed and may affect school governors' decision-making abilities in school curriculum negatively.

(d) Establishment of a school-based management training for school governors

Two options to planning for school governors training are envisaged in the Province. The first option is a long-term planning which involves the establishment of a school-based capacity building into which school-based management training for governors is incorporated. This capacity building includes curriculum, management, in-service training for all stakeholders, which in turn encompasses various programmes and cover specific target areas. The second option is a short-term planning which involves capacity building focussing on the "groupings of school governing bodies" (line 160). This capacity building involves training governing bodies of clustered schools by either a government agency or any service provider with the hope that the trained governors would transfer the acquired skills to their schools. This view is supported by the majority of school governors who believe strongly on the formation of governing body associations. Once again, it appears the current financial problems mentioned by the informant (line 160) will make it difficult for the Department to implement the training programme even in the supposedly cheaper way of clustering school governing bodies.

(e) The scope covered by the governor training programme

According to the informant the Northern Province made preparations for the training of school governors by first making an analysis for the training programmes before a pilot study on the training programmes was conducted (line 171). Apparently, consideration was given to the idea of clustering schools so that problems such as the language used by governors and the distance governors would cover to the training centres could be addressed. Co-ordinators were then appointed on the basis of their knowledge of regional peculiarities such as language and their knowledge of working with communities. These co-ordinators were then trained in such aspects as training adults, team building and conflict management, among others (line 187). The informant states that in spite of anticipating problems in the course of establishing the training programme, it could manage to cater for a number of things. It appears that even though the Department has trained co-ordinators and has demarcated the geographical

area in which they will operate, it would still be difficult to engage the co-ordinators in the effective performance of their services without the necessary financial resources.

(f) Priorisation of legal issues and documents in the training programme for school governors

The Provincial Education Department regards legal issues and documents as important guides for any policy development in school - "be it a code of conduct for learners, be it a school policy document, whatever is in their line of operation" (line 192). Since the governing bodies are expected to be operating within the law, they are to ensure that their school policies on admissions, rights of individuals in the school, punishment and behaviour are in line with the Provincial regulations, the South African Schools Act and the Constitution. Since school governors should have an in-depth knowledge of the legal issues and documents in so far as they guide policy formulation in schools, the Department is aware of their need for training in these matters. It is for this reason that the Education specialist asserts, "In our capacity building programmes, we will be taking the governing body through them" (line 200). In view of the complexity of the language used in legal documents as well as the shortage of staff in the legal section of the Provincial Education Department, this Department intends to form partnership with the legal section of the National Education Department to help translate and interpret the documents for the school governing bodies. The purpose here is to make the documents user-friendly (line 210). It may be stated here that the Provincial Education Department takes the training of school governors on legal issues as a priority. This also goes to show that the Department is aware that operating without knowledge of the law, school governors run the risk of litigation which may lead to the destruction of the unity and partnership on which school governance is founded.

(g) Formation of partnerships between governing bodies, civic organisations and educator unions

According to the Education Specialist, the question of the formation of partnership between governing bodies, educator unions and civic organisations should be

approached with caution. The reason given for this is that “all of us in one way or another belong to civic organisations” (line 222). “As parents, we are members of community-based organisations and as educator organ, we belong to the labour movement like SADTU (South African Democratic Teachers Union), NAPTOSA (National Professional Teachers Organisation of South Africa), whatever” (line 223). The Department believes that although different partners in the school governing body belong to different organisations and unions, they should represent the beliefs, aspirations and interests of the parties they represent (parents, educators and learners) rather than promote the interests of particular union or organisation. This implies that when governors come into the school, they should promote the interests of the school and its learners while all other interests are shelved. Whereas the school governing body may seek support from the community as a whole, such support is welcome only if it is limited to furthering the best interests of the school. Such support may include particular skills and expertise brought in by the co-opted members of the governing body and aimed at uplifting the learner’s educational level, supporting the school management team, supporting the principal, the teachers and the learners. The views of the Department expressed here will hopefully allay the fears expressed by some school governors regarding the establishment of relationships with civic organisations and educator unions. It will also redirect the goals of those governors who were elected into school governance with the intention of furthering the interests of their organisations or unions.

(h) Parties involved in hiring, disciplining and dismissing personnel in the school

It appears from the interview that two parties, namely, the Education Department and the governing body, are involved in hiring, disciplining and firing personnel in the school. In some cases a labour union may be involved as a third party to represent the interests of its members. Though the Education Department and the school governing body are understood to be equal partners in school governance, they do not share equal decision-making powers over issues of hiring, disciplining and firing of personnel. In these matters, the governing body has only the power to recommend the action it deems

appropriate to take, while the Education Department has the final decision-making powers to dismiss, discipline or employ an individual in the school. One may argue that the limitations imposed on the powers of governing bodies to be merely involved in making recommendations to the Department on labour issues gives credence to the doubts expressed by a wide range of people as to the governing body members' credentials, knowledge and capabilities to perform their allocated duties. Added to this problem is an acknowledgement by many school governors in their response to the questionnaire, of their limited familiarity with the Labour Relations Act mentioned by the Education Specialist in this interview.

While one may agree with the informant that the governors' competence in dealing with labour-related issues such as hiring, discipline and firing is not necessarily dependent on the governors' command of English, but on understanding issues in Education, understanding issues in education goes far beyond understanding what a good teacher is as the informant intimated (line 288). Governors have to understand the law which provides the basis for understanding educational issues - something the informant has admitted earlier on that it is still a problem. Their personal understanding of issues like punctuality, observation of teaching and learning hours and effecting discipline should be founded on what the law prescribes.

It appears that the legal limitations imposed on the powers of the governing body with regard to handling labour matters, the school governors' limited understanding of labour laws and their concomitant reliance personal experience as the basis for understanding of such complex educational issues as hiring, disciplining and firing of personnel may affect partnership between the school governing bodies and the Education Department.

(i) Capacity building programmes for effecting discipline of learners

It emerged from the interview that discipline had been a problem faced by many schools in the Northern Province and the Provincial Education Department was relieved when the National Ministry of Education came up with guidelines on the development of a code of conduct for schools to be adopted by school governing bodies. The informant

stated that all acts constituting misconduct as well as measures and procedures to be followed in addressing these issues are reflected in this code of conduct. "There are guidelines in relation to what constitutes teachers' misconduct, for example, in the school" (line 305). This code of conduct seems to be dealing with a variety of issues including how to deal with a pregnant learner in the school in which case one "can look for alternatives" (line 312). The Provincial Education Department expect all school governing bodies to use the national guidelines to develop and adopt a code of conduct for their schools in partnerships with educators, learners and the management teams and to make everybody in the schools to be aware of the code. The code is seen as an important capacity-building document. "Governing bodies will now be empowered to make informed decisions around their code of conduct" (line 322). According to the informant, while learners have a code of conduct, educators too have their own code of conduct which addresses issues of misconduct by educators (line 330). In addition to the two codes, the school governing body should familiarise itself with the South African Schools Act and the Departmental regulations developed for the purpose of addressing issues of misconduct. The reason why educators and learners have different codes of conduct is because in terms of the law, while the governing body is empowered to discipline learners, it is not empowered to discipline educators but to "recommend disciplinary measures for the Department to take if they are not happy with a teacher's conduct" (line 326). It however, emerged from the responses of training school governors that they were not familiar with the codes of conduct mentioned here and as long as they are not familiar with these codes, it may be difficult for the governing bodies to take appropriate actions when disciplinary problems emerge in the school.

(j) Devolution of financial responsibilities to the governing body

The Department is said to have shifted financial responsibilities in the school from the principal to the whole governing body in order that these could be an accountability for the public funds contributed to the school. This illustrate a departure from the past where the powers to handle school funds were concentrated on the principal "who was not properly monitored" (line 341). The principal is however, singled out by the

Department as an accounting officer responsible for the financial management of the school. The irony is that while the Department expects the entire governing body to take collective decision on how funds should be managed, the principal as an individual and not the school governing body is to account for any action taken. It is also not clear whether it is the school principal or the entire school governing body which should identify the needs of the school, expend the funds in terms of the needs and monitor how the funds are expended or it is the responsibility of the entire governing body of which the principal is a member. On the question of allocating money directly to school governing bodies, the informant stated that this was till a debatable issue. It is said that there are some big donor companies and donor countries which would like to offer money directly to the schools for fear that if money is given to the Department problems may arise. The situation in South Africa today is for the Education Department to allocate money for itself to pay personnel in schools, buy equipment and run educational programmes and to a limited extend, erect school buildings while the governing body is delegated to raise funds from parents for the purpose of everyday running of the school. This stands in stark contrast with international bends where the state allocated funds directly to the governing bodies to manage and account for and thus have the decision-making powers over the employment and dismissal of personnel and exercise a proper control over the school (cf 2.1.4.3 (b) (i)).

(k) Partnership between the Department of Education and non-governmental organisations in the inspection of schools and governing bodies

The Department of Education in the Northern Province is said to have appointed people delegated to monitor and support school governing bodies in the Province. Their responsibilities include checking the progress made by school governing bodies in the performance of their duties, identifying the needs of school governors including their needs for training and sending report to the Department. In addition to these co-ordinators, it is said that "There will also be an evaluation whereby people have to go and evaluate what the governing bodies are doing: (line 374). While it is not clear who these people are, one may hope that their evaluation will also cover the work of co-ordinators. It appears that the Provincial Education Department does not have plans

to engage the services of independent non-government organisations (NGOs) in the inspection of schools and their governing bodies, but relies on its own agencies for the performance of this task. This may be ascribed to financial constraints the Department alludes to time and again. Governing bodies are nevertheless, allowed to seek their own external sources to evaluate them in which case the Department will still have to evaluate and check on the inputs made by these external sources (line 375).

4.3.6 Concluding remarks

From the interview the researcher held with the Provincial Education Specialist, it appears that the Department of Education in the Northern Province plays an active role in the development and promotion of partnerships in school governance. To show its commitment in this matter, it took a number of measures and engaged itself actively. These measures include the formation of committees, employment of co-ordinators responsible for facilitating numerous programmes aimed at assisting school governing bodies, provision of legal framework and other supportive documents. These programmes encompass capacity building in the form of training, guidance and dissemination of information. Despite the Department's commitment shown by the various measures the Provincial Education Department has taken so far, these are still problems both the Department and school governing bodies encounter. The main problem the Department faces is the lack of funds needed in the process of developing partnerships, while the school governing bodies have problems revolving around the satisfaction of their training needs, empowerment and the development of relations with other stakeholders.

4.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter dealt with the presentation and analysis of empirical data obtained by means of questionnaire (cf Appendix 1) and an interview (cf 4.3.4). The questionnaire data showed that school governors have a wide range of problems and needs which emerge in the course of their performance of duties within the realm of partnership. It emerged from the interview data that the state is actively involved in the process of

development and promotion of partnerships in school governance. To show its commitment to the process, the state has put into place various programmes and initiatives aimed at assisting and supporting school governing bodies by addressing their problems and satisfying their needs. the state's active role in this process is justifiable since it is the state itself that has brought about change in the way schools were governed by introducing reform and restructuring in school governance.

CHAPTER 5

OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH, RESEARCH FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

It was stated in Chapter one that the aim of the research was to study the role played by the state in partnerships in school governance and how school governance reform and restructuring can enhance the powers and functions of school governing bodies. This chapter deals with the overview of the research into this problem, research findings, recommendations and conclusion.

5.2 OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH

This study was divided into five chapters which dealt with the following issues:

Chapter One dealt with an introductory orientation to the research problem and covered aspects such as incentives for the research, formulation of the research problem and hypothesis, aims of the study, method of study and definition of concepts.

Chapter Two dealt with the role played by the state in partnerships in school governance and its implications for school governing bodies. In the course of the investigation of the problem, reference was made to studies conducted into the problem in South Africa, the United States of America and Britain. Literature research in this chapter indicated that the state is an initiation of school governance reform and restructuring and has the power to determine the manner in which schools should run. Various state reform and restructuring initiatives were outlined and the impacts that these initiatives made on governing bodies were investigated.

Chapter Three dealt with the design and the methodology of an empirical survey into

partnerships in school governance. The population sample and the procedure followed in drawing up the sample were explained. The design of the data collecting devices used and how they were administered were also explained. Because of the nature of the research problem, a questionnaire and an interview were used in the collection of data. The chapter ended with a brief explanation of how the collected data were processed.

Chapter Four dealt with the presentation and analysis of the empirical data on the research problem. A questionnaire sent out to schools to investigate the needs and problems experienced by school governors was analysed and interpreted and tables were used to assist in the analysis. An interview held with an education specialist in the area of school governance aimed at the role played by the state in partnerships in school governance, was also analysed and interpreted.

In this chapter findings of the study, recommendations and conclusion are presented.

5.3 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Findings derived from both the literature research and the empirical research into partnerships in school governance are outlined as follows:

- **Governing bodies are in need of training.** Empirical research findings indicated that school governors would like
 - to be trained by a government agency
 - to be trained at a community centre
 - to be trained thrice a serving term
 - the entire governing body to be trained as a unit
 - training to concentrate on labour relations, curriculum, legal issues, finance and school management

- **School governors would like to form partnership with the state in decision making**

regarding allocation of resources to schools. These resources include finance, personnel, equipment and learning-teaching materials.

- One of the findings of the literature study is that reform in school governance is accompanied by the decentralization of financial control to the school. Empirical research corroborated this literature finding by indicating that school governors would like to see financial responsibilities devolved to the governing body.
- Empirical research findings indicated both the state and the governing bodies support the establishment of partnership with civic organisations and labour unions, but school governors are uncertain about the nature of this partnership (cf Tables 4.8 & 4.9). This is supported by the literature research which found that local authorities and non-governmental organisations play an active part in school governance (cf 2.1.4.5(d) & 2.1.4.8).
- School governors want to see transparency and partnership in the inspection of schools and their governing bodies. For this reason, empirical research revealed that school governors would like to
 - see inspection conducted by administrators and governors
 - be assessed regularly by their constituencies
 - have their say in the inspection reports
- There is uncertainty as to which party should be accountable in the school between the school governing body and the school principal. The empirical study revealed that the state expects the principal to account (cf 4.3.5(j)), while the literature study revealed that whoever makes decisions in the school must account for those decisions (cf 2.1.1.1). This implies that while the school governing body makes decisions on how funds should be managed, the principal and not the entire governing body is expected to account.
- It emerged from the empirical study that school governors would like to share

equal decision-making powers with the state over the appointment, discipline and dismissal of personnel in the school (cf Table 4.15). Powers of school governing bodies are restricted to recommending the actions the state should take with regard to the appointment, discipline and dismissal of personnel.

- The empirical research found that work and family commitments prevent governors from attending governing body meeting.
- The hypothesis formulated from this study was that reform and restructuring have influence on partnerships in school governance (cf 1.4). Literature research indicated that a change in approach to school governance as a result of restructuring and reform necessitates a change in relationship structure between the various partners (cf 2.2.7).
- The study aimed at establishing how school governance reform and restructuring can enhance powers and functions of school governing bodies (cf 1.2). The literature study revealed that the reformed and restructured school governance presents enormous challenges to the school governing bodies since they are now involved in domains from which they were previously excluded (cf 2.2.4).
- The study also aimed at examining the role played by the state in developing partnerships in school governance (cf 1.2). It emerged from both the literature study and the empirical study that the state has a statutory duty and responsibility to initiate, develop and support partnerships in school governance by passing legislation to secure the smooth running of school governance and demanding feedback through inspection to evaluate it.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

- This study revealed the existence of a role confusion on the issue of accountability between the governing body and the school management team. A study need to be conducted to investigate how accountable management and

governance can influence relationships between the school governing body led by the chairperson and the school management team led by the principal.

- School governors would like to see the devolution of financial responsibilities to the schools. There is a need to conduct a study into how school-based financial control can affect resource management in the school.
- Empirical research findings indicated that school governors believe they should determine what resources the state allocates to their schools. There is a need to develop a model for resource management for use by school governors.
- It was revealed that school inspection can be effective if school governing bodies have representative observers in the inspection teams. A possibility of developing an assessment model for school governors and their schools need to be explored.
- One of the findings of this study was the need for school governing body training. School governors can perform their duties efficiently if they are well trained. Intensive research need to be conducted in this area.
- There is a prevailing support among school governors for the establishment of partnerships with civic organisations, labour unions and non-governmental organisations. The role that these unions and organisations can play in South African school governance setting could be researched.

5.5 CONCLUSION

A conclusion may be drawn from this study that the development and promotion of partnerships in school governance in response to the state-initiated reform and restructuring measures, is the duty and responsibility of the state. The implementation of reform and restructuring initiatives of the state, influences the manner in which partners in school governance perform their functions and relate to one another. In the

course of performing their functions, these partners encounter problems which need to be addressed by satisfying particular needs. This requires state intervention to guide programmes towards satisfying needs of governors and simultaneously ensure that the formulated government policy is applied in the process.

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ANNEXURE A

QUESTIONNAIRE TO MEMBERS OF PUBLIC SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES
Survey on partnerships in school governance

The purpose of this survey is to identify needs and problems experienced by school governors in the performance of their duties. It is hoped that the information provided in this survey will enhance the quality of governance in our schools and thus contribute to educational practice. The success of this survey depends on your participation and all information provided in this questionnaire is strictly confidential.

Please, respond to each of the following questions as honestly and completely as possible by **encircling the number** corresponding to your response. Questions 6 and 33 should be answered by the school principal.

SECTION A

1. In which inspection area is your school situated?

Nebo	1
Dennilton	2
Sekhukhune	3
Bohlabela	4

For office use

Record no

 (1-3)

(4)

2. Category of school

Primary	1
Secondary	2

(5)

3. Your position on the governing body

Principal	1
Parent	2
Educator	3
Learner	4
Other	5

If other, please specify _____

(6)

4. Occupation

Employer/self-employed	1
Employee	2
Unemployed (looking for work)	3
Unemployed (not looking for work)	4

(7)

If employed, what is your current occupation?

Agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing	01
Mining and quarrying	02
Manufacturing	03
Electricity, gas and water	04
Construction	05
Wholesale, retail trade, catering and accommodation services	06
Transport, storage and communication	07
Financing, insurance, real estate and business services	08
Community, social and personal services	09
Other: (Specify)	10

(8-9)

5. Highest educational qualification

Never attended school	1
Lower than Std 3	2
Between Std 3 and Std 6	3
Between Std 6 and Std 10	4
Std 10 and 1 or 2 years' further training	5
Std 10 and 3 or 4 years' further training, eg. BA, HED	6
Std 10 and 5 or more years eg MA, LLB	7
Other: (Specify)	8

(10)

This question to be answered by the principal only:

6. Parent numbers according to your school's voters' roll

Fewer than 50	1
Between 50 and 100	2
Between 101 and 150	3
Between 151 and 200	4
Between 201 and 250	5
More than 250	6

(11)

SECTION 2

Please complete this section by choosing the option that best describes your position in terms of the items listed below.

7. To what extent are you familiar with the following documents?

7.1 School's code of conduct	Familiar	1	Not very familiar	2	Unknown	3
7.2 School's policy on discipline	Familiar	1	Not very familiar	2	Unknown	3
7.3 School's development plan	Familiar	1	Not very familiar	2	Unknown	3
7.4 School's mission statement	Familiar	1	Not very familiar	2	Unknown	3
7.5 Education Acts	Familiar	1	Not very familiar	2	Unknown	3
7.6 Education Labour Acts	Familiar	1	Not very familiar	2	Unknown	3
7.7 Public Service Acts	Familiar	1	Not very familiar	2	Unknown	3
7.8 Constitution Act	Familiar	1	Not very familiar	2	Unknown	3

(12-19)

8. Financial responsibilities such as planning, budgeting and spending should be devolved to the governing body.

Yes	1	No	2	Not sure	3
-----	---	----	---	----------	---

Please, give reason(s) for your answer (optional) _____ (20)

9. School governors should decide on the curriculum of their school.

Yes	1	No	2	Not sure	3
-----	---	----	---	----------	---

Please, give reason(s) for your answer (optional) _____ (21)

10. Have you ever been involved in the following activities?

10.1 Developing budgets	Yes	1	No	2
10.2 Resolving school-related conflicts	Yes	1	No	2
10.3 Fund raising	Yes	1	No	2
10.4 Interviewing personnel	Yes	1	No	2
10.5 Disciplining personnel	Yes	1	No	2
10.6 Dismissing personnel	Yes	1	No	2

(22-27)

11. School governors should work in partnership with labour unions.

Yes	1	No	2	Not sure	3
-----	---	----	---	----------	---

Please, give reason(s) for your answer (optional) _____ (28)

12. School governors should work in partnership with civic organisations.

Yes	1	No	2	Not sure	3
-----	---	----	---	----------	---

Please, give reason(s) for your answer (optional) _____ (29)

13. Only people who support the school financially should be invited to school governing body meetings.

Yes	1	No	2	Not sure	3
-----	---	----	---	----------	---

Please, give reason(s) for your answer (optional) _____

(30)

14. In your opinion, do you think that school governing bodies should form an association?

Yes	1	No	2	Not sure	3
-----	---	----	---	----------	---

Please, give reason(s) for your answer (optional) _____

(31)

Please give your opinion on the following statements:

15. When the school is inspected all stakeholders have representative observers.

Essential	1	Valuable	2	Not advisable	3
-----------	---	----------	---	---------------	---

Please, give reason(s) for your answer (optional) _____

(32)

16. When the inspection report is released, parties which took part in the inspection are allowed to give their response.

Essential	1	Valuable	2	Not advisable	3
-----------	---	----------	---	---------------	---

Please, give reason(s) for your answer (optional) _____

(33)

17. The MEC for Education has a final say in the matters pertaining to school inspection.

Essential	1	Not advisable	2
-----------	---	---------------	---

Please, give reason(s) for your answer (optional) _____

(34)

18. School governors report back to their constituencies after **every** governing body meeting

Essential	1	Important	2	Not important	3
-----------	---	-----------	---	---------------	---

Please, give reason(s) for your answer (optional) _____

(35)

19. A committee composed of representatives of educator and labour unions, learner and parent associations and civic organisations deals with disciplinary matters in the school.

Essential	1	Valuable	2	Not advisable	3
-----------	---	----------	---	---------------	---

Please, give reason(s) for your answer (optional) _____

(36)

20. A committee similar to the one in 19 above is empowered to appoint personnel in the school.

Essential	1	Valuable	2	Not advisable	3
-----------	---	----------	---	---------------	---

Please, give reason(s) for your answer (optional) _____

(37)

21. The governing body has a choice to determine what resources the State allocates to the school.

Essential	1	Not advisable	2
-----------	---	---------------	---

Please, give reason(s) for your answer (optional) _____

(38)

22. School governors **regularly** invite comments from their constituencies to assess their progress as governors

Essential	1	Important	2	Not important	3
-----------	---	-----------	---	---------------	---

Please, give reason(s) for your answer (optional) _____

(39)

SECTION 3

Please, complete this section by choosing from the options which are given.

23. Indicate how decisions are **mostly** taken at your governing body meetings. (Please indicate only ONE of the given options.)

By consensus	1
By compromise	2
By voting	3
More than one of the above	4
Seldom reach decision	5

(40)

24. Indicate the constraint which **mostly** prevents you from attending governing body meetings. (Please indicate only ONE of the given options.)

Family commitments	1
Employment	2
Length of meetings	3
Lack of incentives	4
Disagreements	5
No constraints	6
Other	7

If other, please specify _____

(41)

25. What mode of communication does your governing body **mostly** use to report to your constituency on your activities? (Please indicate only ONE of the options given.)

Written reports	1
Telephone reports	2

Meetings	3
All of the above	4
Other	5

If other, please specify _____

(42)

26. Indicate at what stage your governing body **usually** reports to its constituency. (Please indicate only **ONE** of the options given.)

When there is a problem	1
On request	2
Once a quarter	3
Once a month	4
Other	5

If other, please specify _____

(43)

27. In your opinion, is there a need for school governor training?

Yes	1	No	2
-----	---	----	---

If yes, please respond to the following items by choosing from the options given.

(44)

28. Who should be **mainly responsible** for school governor training? (Please indicate only **ONE** of the options given.)

Principal	1
Private consultant	2
Government agency	3
Other	4

If other, please specify _____

(45)

29. At which centre should school governor training **mostly** take place? (Please indicate only ONE of the options given.)

Own school (school-based)	1
Centre for adult learners	2
Community centre	3
Other	4

If other, please specify _____

(46)

30. Who should undergo governor training?

Interested governors	1
Selected governors	2
Whole governing body	3

(47)

31. Indicate how frequently you would prefer to be trained for school governance.

Once a serving term	1
Twice a serving term	2
Thrice a serving term	3

(48)

32. Indicate how the governing body members (parents, educators, learners and community members) should be trained.

As a unit	1	Separately	2
-----------	---	------------	---

Please give reason(s) for your answer (optional) _____

(49)

This question to be answered by the principal only:

33. How many parents turned up for the election of the present governing body?

Fewer than 50	1
Between 50 and 100	2
Between 101 and 150	3
Between 151 and 200	4
Between 201 and 250	5
More than 250	6

(50)

34. Please, provide any information or opinions you might have regarding your work as a school governor (optional).

**THANK YOU FOR ALL THE TIME AND EFFORT YOU HAVE
TAKEN TO COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE**

Return address: PO Box 62, MARISHANE 1064

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ANNEXURE B

PO Box 62
MARISHANE
1064
25 June 1998

The Director
Northern Province Department of Education
Private Bag X9489
PIETERSBURG
0700

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN REGION 6 SOUTHERN REGION

I am the Principal of Moteane Senior Secondary School in the Nebo Area. I am presently studying for the MEd degree (Educational Management) at the University of South Africa. As part of my Masters dissertation, I am conducting research into Partnerships in School Governance.

I wish to be given permission to distribute questionnaires to governing bodies of both Primary and Secondary Schools in Region 6 (Nebo, Dennilton, Sekhukhune, Apel, Magakala and Bohlabela).

In addition to the distribution of questionnaires, an interview with an Education Specialist responsible for School Governance will be conducted.

I promise to present the result of this study together with recommendations to your Department.

The questionnaires will be distributed from the 21 July 1998.

It will be my pleasure to get your positive response as soon as possible.

Yours faithfully

RAMODIKOE N MARISHANE

202

ANNEXURE C

PO Box 62
MARISHANE
1064

Area Manager

Sir

RE: REQUEST TO COLLECT RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRES FROM SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

I have been given permission to conduct research in your Area by the Regional Directorate. The topic of my research is **PARTNERSHIP IN SCHOOL GOVERNANCE: FOUNDATION FOR REFORM AND RESTRUCTURING**. Questionnaires have been distributed to selected primary and secondary schools in the Area at the end of July 1998, unfortunately many schools have so far not responded.

As a result of this unsatisfactory response, I have decided to visit the selected schools to make a follow-up, given that without this response from school principals, the research will not succeed.

I therefore appeal to your office for any possible assistance in this regard. In addition to this appeal, I wish to promise to submit to you the full results of this survey in the form of a dissertation copy.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully

RN Marishane

ANNEXURE D

PO Box 62
MARISHANE
1064
1998/07/21

PRINCIPALS AND GOVERNING BODIES OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS

I am studying for a Masters Degree in Educational Management with the University of South Africa (UNISA).

I am conducting research into partnerships in school governance and as part of my study, I have to send you a questionnaire which should be completed by school governors and principals. The questionnaire should be returned to the Area Office on or before 31 July 1998.

The Northern Province Department of Education, Arts, Culture and Sports has given me permission to conduct this research in your Area.

The questionnaire should be completed by all components of the governing body namely, one educator, one parent, one learner (in secondary schools) and the principal. Apel and Magakala areas are included in Sekhukhune and Bohlabela respectively.

Your assistance in completing this questionnaire is highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

MARISHANE RN