A STUDY OF LOSS AND GRIEF AS PRODUCED BY MANDATED
EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

A Field Report
Presented to
The Graduate School of Education
Drake University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Specialist in Education

by
Ann Trousdale Clapper
August 1988
A STUDY OF LOSS AND GRIEF AS PRODUCED BY MANDATED EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

by

Ann Trousdale Clapper

Approved by Committee:

Dr. Barry Steim, Chair

Dr. James Veale

Dr. James Romig
Dean of the Graduate School of Education
A STUDY OF LOSS AND GRIEF AS PRODUCED BY MANDATED EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

An abstract of a Field Report by
Ann Trousdale Clapper
Drake University
August 1988
Advisor: Dr. Barry Steim

The Problem. This research explored the proposition that subjective feelings of loss and a subsequent behavioral complex of grief are produced in response to mandated educational change. Two primary questions related to the change-loss-grief construct were posed: (1) Do organizational members report professional loss in response to mandated educational change? (2) Are selected behaviors, associated with symptoms of grief, reported by organizational members in response to the mandated educational change?

Procedures. A study-specific survey was developed and distributed to seventy-five schools. Data were gathered from 208 participants consisting of superintendents, secondary principals, elementary principals, secondary teachers, and elementary teachers. Respondents were grouped by those reporting loss or no loss and by the number of adjectives indicated per grief stage.

Findings. Of the 208 participants, 44 (21 percent) indicated no feeling of professional loss and 164 (79 percent) indicated a feeling of professional loss. The findings further indicated statistically significant relationships between loss and the grief stages of anger, bargaining and depression.

Conclusion. A feeling of loss was reported by organizational members in response to the mandated educational change and symptoms of grief, especially anger, bargaining and depression, were evident in response to the mandated change.

Recommendations. This exploratory study provided some insight into the phenomena of loss and grief in response to organizational change. Further studies must be conducted, however, in order to determine if the loss and subsequent grieving process, normally associated with life's more traumatic events, can be applied to school organizational members' responses to educational change.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DESIGN OF THE STUDY</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANALYSIS OF DATA</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX A</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX B</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX C</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

"To be American, after all, is to embrace change" (Corbett et al., 1985, p. ix), states Terrence Deal in the foreword to School Context and School Improvement and the body of educational change literature that supports his statement is extensive. Yet with such an apparent commitment to improvement, past educational change efforts have tended to be unsuccessful. For example, one study found that innovations or program revisions in education have had only a 20 percent success rate. Although other similar studies have yielded somewhat different statistics, the overall conclusion is that past change efforts in schools have failed more often than not. While there is little agreement on the exact process of change or the reasons for its failure, the critical analysis of the change process has produced an awareness concerning the importance of paying homage to the complex matrix of factors that impact upon the change process.

One such factor, that of loss, thoroughly examined in the fields of psychology, medicine, sociology and psychiatry by Bowlby (1980), Kubler-Ross (1969), Marris (1974), indicates that feelings of loss are evident in response to a traumatic change such as death. Schneider (1984) expands the definition of a significant loss beyond death and divorce to include the loss brought about by success, growth
and development.

The loss factor has also been explored in the field of business, with Bridges (1985) noting in his article "How to Manage Organizational Transition" that employees suffer many losses during the change process including: (1) loss of identity, (2) loss of control, (3) loss of meaning, (4) loss of belonging, and (5) loss of a future. Levinson (1973) and Hirschowitz (1974) support this by asserting that organizational change provokes feelings of loss among the members of the organization in response to change.

The paradigm that change produces loss and that loss produces grief is best documented in the psychological arena with Kubler-Ross (1969), known for her study of the grieving process as it relates to the losses associated with death and dying. Parkes (1974) and Marris (1974) further suggest that a behavioral complex, grief, which usually occurs as a result of the feelings of loss created by a death, may occur as a result of other types of events. In the preface to Stress, Loss and Grief, Schneider (1984) suggests that "the grieving process for many losses, even relatively minor ones can be similar to the grieving process that occurs with death" (p. x). Parkes (1974), in describing an individual's reaction to change, notes that,

if he identifies the change as a "gain" acceptance may not be hard, but when it is a "loss" or a "mixed blessing" he will do his best to resist the change. Resistance to change, the reluctance to give up possessions, people, status, expectations--this, I believe, is the basis of grief (p. 11).
Although Willmer and O'Conner (1979) discuss loss as a result of educational changes on a college campus and Langston (1977) found similar loss responses to changes in administration at the University of Texas School of Nursing, most educational change literature fails to address the change-loss-grief paradigm.

Based upon a synthesis of this literature, an appropriate question would be: Is the grieving process, normally associated with the response to life's more traumatic losses, a possible conceptual model for studying school organizational members' responses to educational change?
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The review of literature for this study focuses primarily on the psychological phenomenon of loss and the behavioral complex of grief. While these two phenomena are expected in response to the loss of a significant person or valued object, this review of the literature demonstrates the applicability of these phenomena as concepts related to other types of change.

Loss

Most notable among the authors in the sociological and psychology areas who have treated the loss issue are Bowlby (1969) in his study of children after prolonged separation from their mothers; Parkes (1972) in his study of the feelings of loss among widows; Garza-Guerrero (1974) in loss experienced by people moving from one culture to another; and Herman (1974) in his studies of divorce as a loss-producing event. Marris (1974) reports loss experience by people being moved in groups from one location to another in urban renewal programs, and points out that any loss has many dimensions with the type of loss making a difference in the nature of the grief.

Schneider (1984) notes that the significance of the loss depends on the extent to which the daily routine or habits are disrupted and adds that losses vary in terms of how significant they are and no one can determine the
significance of a particular loss to someone else.

Within business and industry, Levinson (1973) believes that the experience of loss is a part of employee resistance to change. He believes that management is unaware of this, and therefore, acts in such a way that the loss is maximized and their organizational aims are hindered. Nalbandian (1985) in "Human Relations and Organizational Change: Responding to Loss," suggests that change does not only represent opportunity. He further offers that "in the real life experience of people in organizations, change frequently signifies loss rather than opportunity" (p. 29).

Deal (1984) discusses the major educational reforms of recent decades, the alternative schools of the 1960s, the reform initiatives of the 1970s and the effective schools and educational excellence of the 1980s and wonders "with all this activity to make education different, why does the fundamental reality of the classroom or the school remain so constant across time" (p. 125)? He points up the need to think about the complex interplay among different aspects of an organization before, during and after implementation of new policies and programs. He reminds the reader that "individuals become attached to values, heroes, and heroines, rituals and ceremonies, stories and key cultural players. When change breaks the attachment, individuals experience loss akin to that if a close friend or relative dies" (p. 129).
Grief

The phenomenon of grief is most fully explored in relation to traumatic life events. The five stages of grieving relative to death and dying described by Kubler-Ross (1969), consist of denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. Kubler-Ross indicates that stages may be skipped, and there is often vacillation among stages. She also states that these stages present a chance to grow, to learn in issues central to the person.

Garza-Guerrero (1974) explores stages of adaptation to a new culture. He describes the first stage as one of exploring similarities and differences, resulting in puzzlement with anxiety, sadness, hostility, desperation, and yearning for the old. His second stage, reorganization, is a gradual acceptance of the new, with depression, discouragement and dejection intermingled with acceptance and encouragement. His third stage, new identity, is an integration of the old and the new into a feeling of belonging in the new culture.

Parkes (1972) suggests numbness, a partial disregarding of the loss, as a first stage, moving into a stage of yearning and searching for the lost. He describes the third stage as disorganization and despair in which the loss is accepted, allowing success in the fourth stage.

Bowlby (1969) also describes three stages, with the first focusing on the lost object, and characterized by
crying, anger, and extreme efforts to recover the loss. When hope fades, the second stage, disorganization, begins, with despair, restlessness, apathy, anxiety, and depression. The third stage which occurs is reorganization of the personality.

Engel (1964) describes three stages of grief in relation to the chronically ill. The first, shock and disbelief, is replaced by the second, loss awareness. Anger, crying and feeling of emptiness in the chest area reflect this deep grief. The third stage, restitution and recovery, involves participation in the funeral, reminiscing, changes in relationship and even adapting characteristics of the deceased, until new relationships allow these to subside.

Schneider (1984) takes a holistic approach, showing how grief affects the biological, emotional, behavioral, intellectual, spiritual, and attitudinal aspects of the individual. Schneider's six stages of grief are: (1) initial awareness; (2) strategies to overcome loss, adaptive defenses used in threatened loss, anticipatory grief or ambiguous loss; (3) awareness of loss, the extensive and intensive exploration of the extent of the loss and its immediate implications; (4) completion, which has three separate functions of healing, acceptance, and resolution, in freeing the bereaved from continuing to invest energy in the loss; (5) empowering of self, the enhancement of
personal power and other concerns in areas out of balance before the loss; and (6) transcending the loss, by moving past the loss and concern for vulnerability, to new commitments, balance and wholeness.

Marris (1974) indicates that two factors account for the principal variations in grieving: (1) the nature of the attachment, and (2) the habitual patterns that are disrupted. He concludes by saying that changing any habitual pattern can lead to a grief response.

Malbandian (1985) offers a look at the grief response as a result of organizational change by suggesting that adaptation to such change is "necessarily a process rather than an event, conceptually analogous to the grieving process" (p. 33). Rubin and Levine (1982) adopt this view when they describe responses to personnel cutbacks, comparing them with the stages of Kubler-Ross. Rubin and Levine suggest that initially people deny both the validity and seriousness of the fiscal situation. Then they become angry that someone has allowed the shortfall to occur. Next they bargain for time and money to finish one last project. Depression sets in with resigned despair or apathy followed finally by an acceptance of the situation.

Within education, Smith (1984) makes a direct application of the Kubler-Ross model in his article dealing with the closure of an elementary school entitled "Don't Deny These Five Distinct Stages of a School's Demise."
Willmer and O'Conner (1979) applied a loss and grief model to educational change by observing that the emotional responses of those impacted by the closing of a college campus resembled those experienced by people grieving the death of a loved one. Langston (1977), in her study of the perceived effects of administrative changes at the University of Texas School of Nursing, found similar loss and grief responses.

Summary

The foregoing review of literature can be summarized into the following construct. Change precipitates feelings of loss. The loss results in grief. Based upon this premise, a study of Loss and Grief Produced by Mandated Educational Change was conducted.
CHAPTER III
DESIGN OF THE STUDY

This study was designed to investigate the applicability of the response to loss as a model for studying organizational members' reactions to change. The study explored the psychological concept of loss and the behavioral concept of grief as components of participants' reactions to mandated school change.

Research Questions

Two questions, related to the change-loss-grief construct, were formulated. Those questions were:

1. Do organizational members report professional loss as a reaction to mandated educational change?
2. Are behaviors normally associated with grief characteristic of those organizational members reporting a feeling of loss in response to the mandated educational change?

Definition of Terms

Change: Any significant alteration in the status quo, which for this study was limited to the following change statements:

The 1987 Legislature significantly revised Minnesota's PER legislation (M.S. 126.65). Two changes in the legislation will require districts to:

1. Develop learner outcomes for each subject area at each grade level that include the essential learner
outcomes adopted by the state board of education.

2. Administer state developed learner outcome tests and compare the performance of their students to norms for the state as a whole and for districts of comparable size. Districts will have to publish the results and comparisons locally.

Loss: Loss was defined as an undesirable deprivation as a result of the change and was determined by the participant's response to certain questions on the survey instrument.

Grief: Grief was defined as the emotional responses to loss and specifically referred to the following stages of the Kubler-Ross (1969) model: (a) denial, (b) anger, (c) bargaining, (d) depression, and (e) acceptance.

Instruments

The instruments used in this study were based on those designed by Langston in her 1977 study of faculty reaction to impending organizational changes within the University of Texas system of nursing schools, and further refined by Michael in 1984. Langston measured individual perceptions of loss through a series of structured questions about a change which the individual's organization was experiencing. Individual responses to the change were collected through a self-assessed adjective checklist of emotions felt during the change process. Attention was paid to the responses which described emotional reactions
generally experienced in the grieving process as outlined by Kubler-Ross and others. By Langston's own admission, a limitation to the 1977 study was that because the data gathering instrument was developed specifically for the study, validity and reliability studies were not conducted.

Michael (1984) in his social psychological approach to the study of change revised and field tested Langston's adjective checklist. Michael categorized the adjectives according to the Kubler-Ross grief stages and established a review panel consisting of the Graduate Studies chairperson of the Department of Psychology at Georgia State University along with ten other professors and thirteen graduate students nominated by the chairperson on the basis of their knowledge of the grief process and their ability to complete the adjective checklist review process. The reviewers were instructed to place each adjective in the grief stage or stages in which the emotional reaction could be found. In addition, the reviewers were to add words not on the list but which they believed belonged in one or more of the grief categories. Once this review process was completed, a pilot test of the adjective checklist was conducted which resulted in minor modification of terms. This refined adjective checklist was used in the study discussed herein.

Based on the two previously discussed studies, a survey instrument was designed for use with this study. The first part, the loss questionnaire, included statements that asked
participants to consider the legislative changes and respond as to the amount of loss felt relative to those changes. Responses to the questions were given by circling a number on a continuum with a zero meaning no loss and eight meaning considerable loss. Following each question, respondents were given the opportunity to specify any further professional loss by writing in the spaces provided.

The second part, the adjective checklist, consisted of sixty-nine adjectives used to assess the participant's emotional response to the legislation. Respondents were asked to check the adjectives that best reflected their feelings at the time they first became aware of the changes in the legislation.

A change statement summarizing the key components was placed at the top of every page of the survey. In addition, a cover sheet was included that provided participants with a rather general discussion of how change can produce feelings of loss and gain in individuals.

**Subjects and Sample**

The study was conducted in seventy-five public schools in an eighteen-county area of southwestern Minnesota. The schools, ranging in K-12 enrollment from 69 to 4,096 were all members of the SW/WC Educational Cooperative Service Unit—the intermediate service agency serving the region. Individuals participating in the study included superintendents, secondary principals, elementary
principals, secondary teachers and elementary teachers. Of the 208 participants surveyed, forty-three were superintendents, thirty-eight were secondary principals, thirty-nine were elementary principals, forty-five were secondary teachers, and forty-three were elementary teachers.

Data Collection Procedures

Superintendents of seventy-five schools were sent the survey packets in the fall of 1987. The cover letter directed the superintendent to distribute the survey packets to the other building administrators and a selected elementary and secondary teacher. Two follow-up reminders were sent to the superintendent in seven-day intervals. The superintendent was responsible for collecting the completed data from within the district and returning it to the researcher.

Limitations of the Study

Limitations of the study were:

1. This study related to only one situation of educational change.

2. Data were not available on the occurrence of behaviors associated with grief as behaviors of the groups prior to the change.

3. Limited reliability and validity studies have been conducted on the instruments.
Assumptions of the Study

Assumptions of this study were:

1. Individuals can accurately reflect reactions to a specific event.

2. Individuals can accurately reflect emotions in response to a specific event.

3. The responses are precipitated by the change event under study.
CHAPTER IV
ANALYSIS OF DATA

Of the seventy-five packets distributed to school districts, sixty-four were returned to the researcher. Two hundred eight participants out of a possible 304 responded to the survey resulting in a return rate of 68 percent.

The data from the surveys was compiled and placed in 2 x 3 contingency tables and then processed by the SPSSX statistical analysis system.

Occurrence of Loss (Research Question Number One)

The data for determining the occurrence of loss was in the form of a tally of the number of all participants who:
(a) reported a score of zero relative to professional loss;
(b) reported a score of one or greater relative to professional loss. Of those subjects who responded to the item related to professional loss (n = 208), 44 (21 percent) indicated no feeling of professional loss and 164 (79 percent) indicated a feeling of professional loss (see Table 1).
Table 1
Number of Respondents Reporting Professional Loss

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Response</th>
<th>Frequency (N=208)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Loss</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Loss and Grief (Research Question Number Two)

The data for determining if behaviors associated with identified symptoms of grief were characteristic of organizational members reporting a feeling of "no loss," "low loss" or "high loss" in response to the mandated school change, was gathered by the loss questionnaire and the adjective checklist.

Respondents were grouped in three categories: those indicating "no loss," (on the loss questionnaire), "low loss" (1-3 on the continuum) and "high" loss (4-8 on the continuum).

Respondents were then grouped based on the frequency of adjectives in the corresponding grief stage (denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance). Contingency tables were constructed for the data with the rows indicating the level of loss (no, low 1-3, high 4-8) and the columns indicating the level of frequency of adjectives checked for that stage. The first column included respondents with zero...
adjectives checked for that grief phase with the right column indicating respondents with one or more adjectives checked relating to the stage of grief.

Table 2 shows an example of the contingency table used to describe the data for all participants relative to anger.

Table 2
Anger (All Respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loss</th>
<th>Low (0)</th>
<th>Some (1 or More)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (1-3)</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (4-8)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contingency tables for all groups and stages of grief are contained in Appendices A, B and C.

Respondents were then categorized by position within the school organization, with superintendents, secondary principals and elementary principals in one group and elementary and secondary teachers in another. Contingency tables were again constructed for each group for each stage of grief. See Table 3 for the statistical summary.
Table 3
Statistical Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Chi-Square</th>
<th>Phi Coefficient</th>
<th>Lambda</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>All Respondents:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denial</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anger</td>
<td>30.44***</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bargaining</td>
<td>17.25***</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>33.33***</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance</td>
<td>6.33*</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Administrators:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denial</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anger</td>
<td>13.43**</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bargaining</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>21.57***</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teachers:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denial</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anger</td>
<td>20.57***</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bargaining</td>
<td>20.46***</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>13.28**</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance</td>
<td>4.66</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05
** p < .01
*** p < .001

The chi-square test of statistical significance was performed for all contingency tables. The phi coefficients and lambda values were also computed to provide measures of association. These results are also included in Table 3.

For all respondents, the grief symptom of denial was not a significant reaction of organizational members to the
mandated educational change. The grief symptom of acceptance was significant at the .05 level with the symptoms of anger, bargaining and depression very highly statistically significant at the .001 level.

Teachers as a group responded in much the same way the group did as a whole, with the symptoms of grief associated with anger, bargaining and depression significant at the .01 (or greater) level. Again, denial does not appear to be a significant response and with this group, acceptance was not significant.

Administrators were in accord with most of the teachers' responses except for bargaining--this proved highly significant for teachers and nonsignificant for administrators.

Summary

The feeling of loss was a psychological phenomenon reported by members of an organization in response to mandated educational change.

The grief symptoms of anger, bargaining and depression were present in those respondents reporting loss in response to the mandated educational change.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was designed to investigate the phenomena of loss and grief as responses to mandated educational change. The study was conducted with public school district employees who were required to respond to a state mandate for change. The conclusions of the study and recommendations follow.

Conclusions

The conclusions of this study were:

1. A feeling of loss was reported by organizational members in response to mandated educational change.

2. Of the group of organizational members who experienced loss, symptoms of grief were evident.

Seventy-nine percent of the respondents of the study reported a feeling of professional loss. Of the five symptoms of grief included in this study, four symptoms were statistically significant with three of the four very highly significant in the responses of all participants.

Although the study was limited in ways defined previously, enough evidence was provided to show that behaviors, indicative of the grief associated with the loss of a significant person through death or other trauma, were reported by persons in response to an externally imposed, mandated change.
These results then have implications for the school's change agent. If, indeed, schools grieve mandated change, in much the same way individuals respond to personal loss or trauma, then the role of the change agent should in many ways resemble that of those involved in the counseling professions. Schneider, in his 1984 publication entitled Stress, Loss and Grief, provides a list of grief facilitating factors beginning with acceptance. Schneider points out that the most significant, and often most frustrating aspect of facilitating grief is the absence of doing something active other than creating an atmosphere of safety and protection. He illustrates this point with the following anecdote:

A farmer was out plowing his field one spring morning. The spring thaw had just occurred, and there were many muddy valleys in the field. Eventually, his tractor became stuck in the mud. Finally, he went over to a neighbor to ask for help. The neighbor farmer came over and looked over the situation. He shook his head, then said: "It doesn't look good. I tell you what. I'll give it a try--pulling you out. But if we can't get it out, I'll come sit in the mud with ya." (Schneider, 1984, p. 174)

The listening phase follows with Schneider pointing out that those in helping roles give most during this phase by (1) being present and available, and (2) by being willing to listen without distorting, diminishing or judging (Schneider, 1984, p. 174).

Activity in Schneider's text refers to encouraging people in grief to do things for themselves and others.
From a change agent's perspective, this could be the stage for the introduction of the information and materials necessary to move the school forward into the dialogue, decision-making and action modes of a problem-solving model. Schneider's next phase of the grieving process can be used by the change agent to assist schools in gaining perspective; the discovering of a balance between the positive (the gains) and the negative aspects of the loss.

The anticipation phase can be used by the change agent to forewarn district members what emotions they are likely to experience while grieving. Marris (1975) summarizes these points well:

(The bereaved) needs a sense of practical and impersonal support—that their friends understand the nature of the crisis, are ready to offer companionship and useful help when they can, and respect the ultimate privacy of grief without obtruding into a struggle of conflicting emotions which their advice can do little to resolve...A stranger, who understands grief in general and stands in an acknowledged therapeutic role, can probably give more support to the working out of grief itself. Because this support is, in a sense, impersonal, it does not threaten to preempt the personal resolutions of the crisis; for the most part, it simply offers reassurance that the crisis is natural, that it will find resolution in time. (p. 153)

The change agent can smooth out the grieving process for schools forced into changing a curriculum, a classroom, a department or a building. An understanding that such change situations can precipitate a wide range of emotional responses (as evidenced by the adjective checklist which captures these perceptions and emotions), enables a more
skillful management of the change process. Because change agents are not grieving at the same time, in the same way as schools, they can assist the school by abstracting the gain from the loss, grieving the loss through to resolution and bringing with them understanding, optimism, and images of school life beyond the current grief situation.

Recommendations

The results of this study indicate that while there is evidence of the loss-grief paradigm, further study is warranted. If, according to Kubler-Ross, the bereaved move through the stages of grief to ultimately reach acceptance, it would seem reasonable that the respondents involved in this study would do the same. Therefore, a re-surveying of participants in the future would be appropriate to determine if less loss is indicated along with a higher level of acceptance.

In summary, this exploratory study has provided some insight into the phenomena of loss and grief in response to organizational change. However, further studies must be conducted in order to determine if the loss and subsequent grieving process, normally associated with life's more traumatic events, can be applied to school organizational members' responses to educational change.
REFERENCES


# APPENDIX A

Contingency Tables - All Respondents

## Denial

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loss</th>
<th>Low (0)</th>
<th>Some (1 or More)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (1-3)</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (4-8)</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Anger

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loss</th>
<th>Low (0)</th>
<th>Some (1 or More)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (1-3)</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (4-8)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Bargaining

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loss</th>
<th>Low (0)</th>
<th>Some (1 or More)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (1-3)</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (4-8)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Depression

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loss</th>
<th>Low (0)</th>
<th>Some (1 or More)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (1-3)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (4-8)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Acceptance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loss</th>
<th>Low (0)</th>
<th>Some (1 or More)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (1-3)</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (4-8)</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B

Contingency Tables - Administrators

Denial

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loss</th>
<th>Low (0)</th>
<th>Some (1 or More)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (1-3)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (4-8)</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Anger

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loss</th>
<th>Low (0)</th>
<th>Some (1 or More)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (1-3)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (4-8)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Bargaining

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loss</th>
<th>Low (0)</th>
<th>Some (1 or More)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (1-3)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (4-8)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Depression

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loss</th>
<th>Low (0)</th>
<th>Some (1 or More)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (1-3)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (4-8)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Acceptance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loss</th>
<th>Low (0)</th>
<th>Some (1 or More)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (1-3)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (4-8)</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### APPENDIX C

Contingency Tables - Teachers

#### Denial

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loss</th>
<th>Low (0)</th>
<th>Some (1 or More)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (1-3)</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (4-8)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Anger

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loss</th>
<th>Low (0)</th>
<th>Some (1 or More)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (1-3)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (4-8)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss</td>
<td>Bargaining</td>
<td>Depression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low (0)</td>
<td>Some (1 or More)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (1-3)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (4-8)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low (0)</td>
<td>Some (1 or More)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (1-3)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (4-8)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ADJECTIVE CHECKLIST 1

INTRODUCTION: A change situation may cause people to have any number of responses. Please think about your feelings at the time you first became aware of the changes in the PER legislation as outlined in the change statement given below.

CHANGE STATEMENT: The 1987 Legislature significantly revised Minnesota’s PER legislation (M.S. 126.65). Two changes in the legislation will require districts to:

1. DEVELOP LEARNER OUTCOMES FOR EACH SUBJECT AREA AT EACH GRADE LEVEL THAT INCLUDE THE ESSENTIAL LEARNER OUTCOMES ADOPTED BY THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

2. STATE ASSESSMENT TESTS WILL BE DEVELOPED TO MEASURE STUDENT PROGRESS ON THESE OUTCOMES. DISTRICTS WILL BE REQUIRED TO USE THESE TESTS, AND COMPARE THE PERFORMANCE OF THEIR STUDENTS TO NORMS FOR THE STATE AS A WHOLE AND FOR DISTRICTS OF COMPARABLE SIZE. DISTRICTS WILL HAVE TO PUBLISH THE RESULTS AND COMPARISONS LOCALLY.

DIRECTIONS: Please read the list below and check all those words which describe your feelings at the time you first became aware of the changes in the PER legislation as outlined in the change statement.

1. __Afraid
2. __Agitated
3. __Angry
4. __Anxious
5. __Apathetic
6. __Bitter
7. __Calm
8. __Cheerful
9. __Complaining
10. __Concerned
11. __Contented
12. __Contrary
13. __Cool
14. __Cross
15. __Depressed
16. __Desperate
17. __Disbelieving
18. __Discouraged
19. __Easy-going
20. __Fearful
21. __Fearless
22. __Fretful
23. __Friendly
24. __Frightened
25. __Furious
26. __Glad
27. __Gloomy
28. __Grim
29. __Guilty
30. __Happy
31. __Helpless
32. __Hopeless
33. __Hostile
34. __Indifferent
35. __Insecure
36. __Jealous
37. __Joyful
38. __Kindly
39. __Light-hearted
40. __Lonely
41. __Mad
42. __Mean
43. __Miserable
44. __Nervous
45. __Numb
46. __Overconcerned
47. __Overwhelmed
48. __Panicky
49. __Peaceful
50. __Pleasant
51. __Rattled
52. __Restless
53. __Sad
54. __Secure
55. __Sentimental
56. __Serious
57. __Shaky
58. __Shocked
59. __Solemn
60. __Steady
61. __Tense
62. __Terrified
63. __Threatened
64. __Thoughtful
65. __Unconcerned
66. __Uneasy
67. __Upset
68. __Warm
69. __Worrying
CHANGE STATEMENT: The 1987 Legislature significantly revised Minnesota's PER legislation (M.S. 126.65). Two changes in the legislation will require districts to:

1. DEVELOP LEARNER OUTCOMES FOR EACH SUBJECT AREA AT EACH GRADE LEVEL THAT INCLUDE THE ESSENTIAL LEARNER OUTCOMES ADOPTED BY THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

2. STATE ASSESSMENT TESTS WILL BE DEVELOPED TO MEASURE STUDENT PROGRESS ON THESE OUTCOMES. DISTRICTS WILL BE REQUIRED TO USE THESE TESTS, AND COMPARE THE PERFORMANCE OF THEIR STUDENTS TO NORMS FOR THE STATE AS A WHOLE AND FOR DISTRICTS OF COMPARABLE SIZE. DISTRICTS WILL HAVE TO PUBLISH THE RESULTS AND COMPARISONS LOCALLY.

PERSONAL GAIN - PAST
At the time you first became aware of the changes in the PER legislation, did you have a feeling of personal gain? Please rate this past feeling of personal gain using the scale below:

PAST PERSONAL GAIN
Circle your response (use only one whole number)

0........1........2........3........4........5........6........7........8
No Minor Moderate Considerable
Gain Gain Gain

What did you feel you were gaining when you first became aware of the mandated PER changes?
Past personal gain:

PROFESSIONAL GAIN - PAST
At the time you first became aware of the changes in the PER legislation, did you have a feeling of professional gain? Please rate this past feeling of professional gain using the scale below:

PAST PROFESSIONAL GAIN
Circle your response (use only one whole number)

0........1........2........3........4........5........6........7........8
No Minor Moderate Considerable
Gain Gain Gain

What did you feel you were gaining when you first became aware of the mandated PER changes?
Past professional gain:
CHANGE STATEMENT: The 1987 Legislature significantly revised Minnesota's PER legislation (M.S. 126.65). Two changes in the legislation will require districts to:

1. DEVELOP LEARNER OUTCOMES FOR EACH SUBJECT AREA AT EACH GRADE LEVEL THAT INCLUDE THE ESSENTIAL LEARNER OUTCOMES ADOPTED BY THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

2. STATE ASSESSMENT TESTS WILL BE DEVELOPED TO MEASURE STUDENT PROGRESS ON THESE OUTCOMES. DISTRICTS WILL BE REQUIRED TO USE THESE TESTS, AND COMPARE THE PERFORMANCE OF THEIR STUDENTS TO NORMS FOR THE STATE AS A WHOLE AND FOR DISTRICTS OF COMPARABLE SIZE. DISTRICTS WILL HAVE TO PUBLISH THE RESULTS AND COMPARISONS LOCALLY.

PERSONAL LOSS - PAST

At the time you first became aware of the changes in the PER legislation, did you have a feeling of personal loss? Please rate this feeling of past personal loss using the scale below:

PAST PERSONAL LOSS

Circle your response (use only one whole number)

0 ........ 1 ........ 2 ........ 3 ........ 4 ........ 5 ........ 6 ........ 7 ........ 8

Loss Loss Minor Moderate Considerable Loss

What did you feel you were losing when you first became aware of the mandated PER changes?
Past personal loss:


PROFESSIONAL LOSS - PAST

At the time you first became aware of the changes in the PER legislation, did you have a feeling of professional loss? Please rate this feeling of past professional loss using the scale below:

PAST PROFESSIONAL LOSS

Circle your response (use only one whole number)

0 ........ 1 ........ 2 ........ 3 ........ 4 ........ 5 ........ 6 ........ 7 ........ 8

Loss Loss Minor Moderate Considerable Loss

What did you feel you were losing when you first became aware of the mandated PER changes?
Past professional loss: