

Organization System Analysis Report

Submitted by

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Abstract

This analytical review presents interesting perspectives on organizational behavior in the context of education administration. It highlights the conceptual relationship between theory, science, reality, research and practice, specifically with respect to the discipline of systems analysis. At the corpus of the discussion is the analysis of crisis management systems in the context of the nation's most publicized tragedies at Columbine and Virginia Tech. From a systems analysis perspective, the rational system (machine model) is structural and rigid in nature and is buttressed on the scientific management movement advocated by Frederick Taylor. The natural system (organic model) is human relations orientated, consequently placing emphasis on social groups, human capital, and related elements of motivation and job satisfaction. The third system, referred to as an open system, integrates and incorporates elements of structure and process, whilst being cognizant of myriad social systems within the internal and external environments (Hoy & Miskel, 2008).

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Analysis Plan

The Durham public schools demographic analysis has been tabulated for the 2010-2011 academic school year based on day 20 enrollment numbers. The district consist of 53 schools with a total enrollment of 32, 566 students. This enrollment distribution ranges from PK to K 12 with the following constituent profile, PK 324, KI 2766, K1 2383, K2 2705, K3 2702, K4 2551, K5 2596, K6 2323, K7 2177, K8 2241, K9 2871, K10 2390, K11 2445, and K12 2092. The 2010-2011 ethnic profile can best be analyzed through segmentation of charter and non-charter schools. The ethnic split for charter schools is 957 White or 31.3%, 1,744 Black or 57.0%, 250 Hispanic or 8.2%, 37 Asian or 1.8%, and 70 other or 2.3% of the student population. In the non-charter schools the ethnicity split is 6,796 White or 21.2%, 16,672 Black or 52.2%, 6,778 Hispanic or 21.1%, 736 Asian or 2.3%, and 1,050 other or 3.3% (National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, n.d, para. 2)

The district's overall goal is to ensure employees are offered meaningful benefits. These benefits include but are not limited to: employee engagement, retention, increased productivity, future leadership opportunities within the organization, and ultimately, a culture of excellence through extraordinary leadership for all employees. Within the cultural context of excellence, the Durham Public School district envisions becoming a district of high-achieving students as a direct result of the efforts of highly-motivated staff who have a genuinely vested interest in student success and the sustainable growth of the district. Figure 1 displays the organizational flow chart of the Durham Public School district. Some key features of the chart include the implementation and allocation of one teacher per school from the Advisory Council and School

Improvement Teams. Strategically, primary focus is given to Middle and High Schools. From this writer’s perspective, this leverages the long term educational vision of the school district.

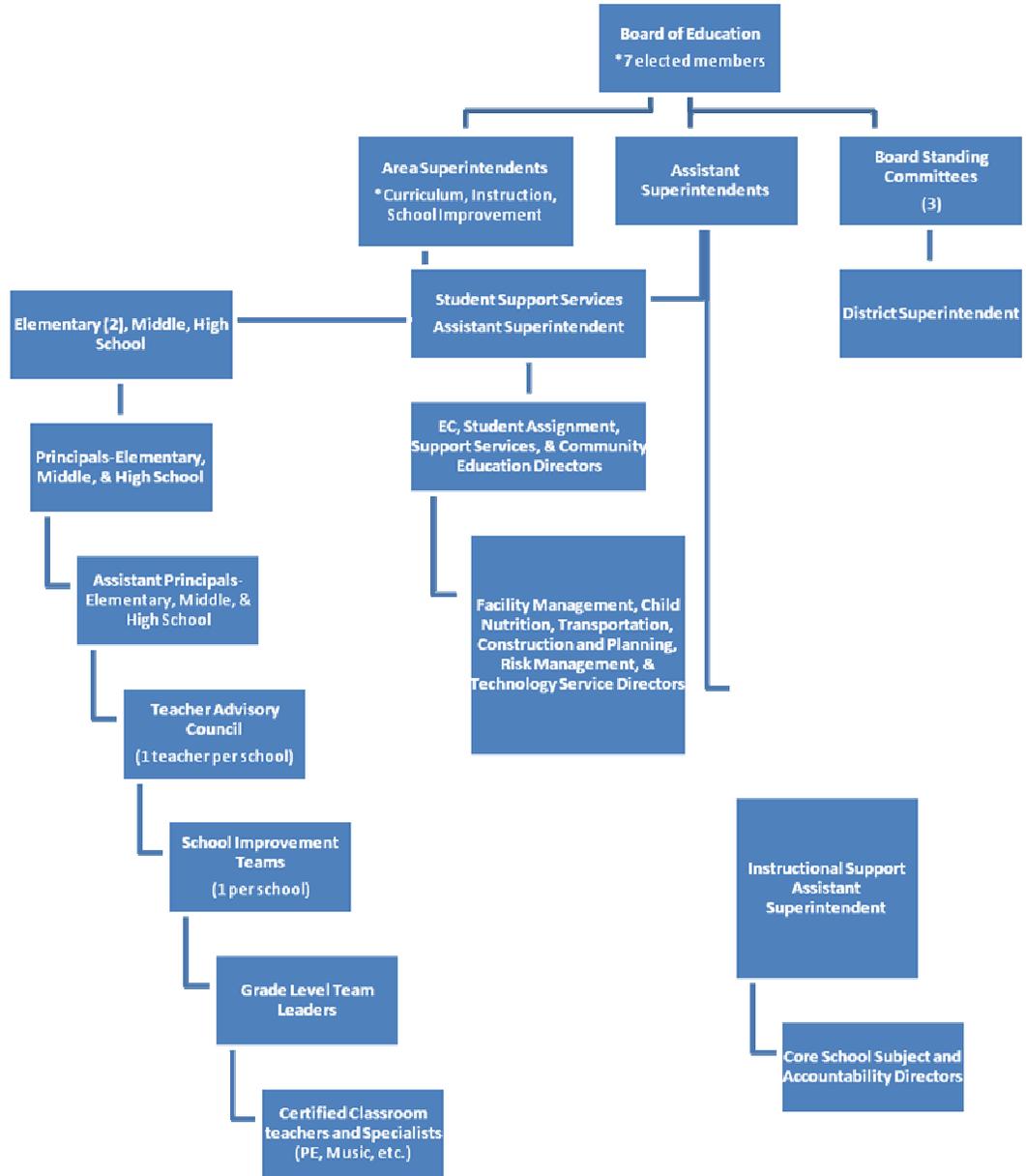


Figure 1

In terms of student support, the scope of developmental responsibilities is quite impressive. Facilities management, child nutrition, transportation, construction and planning, risk management, technology services, and community education are all integral components of a

focused and strategic educational reform plan. Hoy & Miskel (2008) describe three waves of school reform culminating with what has been coined "systematic reform" (p. 296). At the corpus of these initiatives is the call for higher levels of school effectiveness particularly in terms of student achievement and accountability.

As it relates to the specific unit or system under review, crisis management is the focal point of this study. "Crisis" is often defined in a broad sense because of its contextual complexity. For this reason, it is difficult to find a standard definition of crisis. Therefore, it is important to narrow the focus and concentrate on the uniqueness of how crisis is defined, particularly in an educational context. In this paper the term "crisis" will align specifically with the definition provided by Harper, Patterson, and Zdziarski, "A campus crisis is an event, often sudden or unexpected, that disrupts the normal operations of the institution or its educational mission and threatens the well-being of personnel, property, financial resources, and/or reputation of the institution" (Zdziarski, 2006, p. 5).

From natural disasters to the financial debacle, it is clear to the educational community that crises know no boundaries. Far from a passing fad, crisis planning must be an integrated part of effective school district leadership (Gainey, 2009). In further defining the role of the educational community, Gainey adds, "Part of the public sphere, school-district leaders must observe crisis trends and ensure that their school systems are crisis-ready for both traditional school crises (e.g., inclement weather, discipline issues) and crises that originate elsewhere (e.g., economic issues, health scares)" (Gainey, 2009, p. 267). Some school administrators have diligently instituted crisis management plans which seek to address disparate events like adverse weather or hostage situations. Public school crisis management response has been especially impacted by the infiltration of for-profit sector external relations, relying on business practices to

update, pre-crisis, crisis, and post-crisis measures (Collins, 2007, p. 47). Inferentially, prudent practices of organizational behavior are pivotal to effective crisis management.

The following are the list of contacts and administrative personnel who have agreed to facilitate this writer's system analysis study in crisis management of the Durham Public Schools district.

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Analysis Project Part 1: Description of Organizational Behavior

Any meaningful analysis of crisis management behavior needs to be conducted, not only in the context of the Durham Public Schools environment, but also in the context of relevant and applicable frames of reference. Although there have been numerous studies and commentaries conducted on crisis management, most have been based on reactive management as opposed to proactive management strategies. In a study that examined the decision-making processes of community college presidents, Murray and Kishur identified a number of best practices, which support the crisis prevention modality. The best practices for decision-making during a major challenge included, fact gathering, notification of the institution's governing body, notification of the administrative team, advise affected faculty and staff, seek advice from other stakeholders, conduct follow up meeting with the administrative team, advise administrative team and other stakeholders of final decision to avert potential crisis, and implement plan of action to confront the major challenge (Murray & Kishur, 2008).

Contextually, hazard recognition, prevention, preparation, response and recovery are the four areas that summarize Durham Public Schools' safety and security efforts. The United States Department of Education, Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools, awarded a \$250,000 grant to Durham Public Schools to strengthen emergency response and crisis management plans. Moreover, Durham Public Schools is one of seven school districts in North Carolina, and one of 100 districts nationwide, to receive funding. Proactively speaking, Durham Public Schools was the first public school system in the state to offer Campus Emergency Response Team (CERT) Training. This FEMA based training helps schools organize their resources until external help

arrives. Strategically, First Aid and Cardiopulmonary Respiratory (CPR) classes are also offered to identified school CERT Team members and other identified employee groups.

There is compelling empirical evidenced-based data in support of the need to develop and implement proactive crisis management systems in the American school unit. In a 1990 survey involving urban high school students, half of them reported they knew someone who had been murdered, 37% had witnessed a shooting incident, and 31% an assault with a weapon. In addition to this 20% of the inner city students reported having been threatened with a gun, and 12% had been shooting targets (Schonfeld & Kline, 1994). According to Paulauskas (2009), "Despite the fact that from 1994 to 2005 the number of murder cases on school grounds has decreased from 42 to 13, and the number of juvenile arrest for murder from 3102 to 996, juvenile violence continues to worry educators, criminologist, and mental health specialists" (p. 134). Collectively, data collection, "inductive reasoning," (p.117) and "shifting from the concept of science to the concept of craft" (p.117) has enabled this writer to discover "new and useful ways of knowing about organizational behavior in education" (Owens & Valesky, 2011, p. 117).

As it relates to this systems analysis study, the Durham Public Schools unit has undertaken initiatives which seek to optimize efficiency in communication, teamwork, and collaborative decision-making processes. "DPS has an emergency communication system that can reach all schools within minutes of any local, state, or national alert. A DPS Emergency Management Committee was organized in October 2004 to encourage ongoing planning and collaboration with community partners that helps schools to identify hazards and respond to crisis" (National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, n.d, para. 6). In terms of managerial roles and span of control, DPS has implemented the Gang Resistance Education Awareness and Training (GREAT) program, through which all principals and security resource officers have

received gang identification and prevention training. Annual health and safety assessments are also completed at all schools (National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, n.d).

Analysis Project Part 2: Analysis of Behavior in Terms of the Whole System

Paulauskas (2009), in categorizing the dysfunctional behavioral characteristics asserts, "Antisocial behavior is usually a matter of choice, whereas deviancy may be determined by physiological and psychological developmental disorders" (p. 137). If antisocial conduct is a matter of law enforcement and prosecution and deviancy remains an area of mental health, the combination of the two of them constitutes high risks area behaviors and is a prerogative of all educational establishments. Paulauskas suggest that "behavioral crises be managed by utilizing different nonviolent crisis prevention techniques, post intervention strategies that may result in significant therapeutic value and successful socialization of the child" (Paulauskas, 2009, pp. 134-135). In other words, the ultimate goal of prevention is to collect the necessary information in order to reduce or eliminate the risks of unwelcome events and situations.

Consequently, a conceptual perspective is required if one is to fully appreciate and understand the intricacies of the wholistic organizational structure and function. Simply stated, organizations must seek to keep abreast of the socio-technical and environmental factors which have the propensity to influence work groups both within outside the organization. Essentially, this objective is achieved by building human capital. Owens and Valesky argue persuasively that the concept of human capital is not only that of people's knowledge (their skills, attitudes, and social skills) but also assets to any human enterprise (Owens & Valesky, 2011). Durham Public Schools have embraced this paradigm of human capital development through the attraction, retention, motivation, and development of talented people. Moreover, to accomplish this vision, talent management processes are being implemented on a strategic level. These processes

include talent identification, recruitment and assessment, performance management, career development, learning management, compensation, and succession planning.

According to the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools (n.d.), “The overall goal is to ensure that employees are offered meaningful benefits. These benefits include but are not limited to: employee engagement, retention, increased productivity, future leadership opportunities within the organization, and ultimately, a culture of excellence through extraordinary leadership for all employees” (National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, n.d, para. 2). Durham Public Schools district believes that they are on the path to become a district of high-achieving students as a direct result of the efforts of highly-motivated staff who have a genuinely vested interest in student success and the sustainable growth of the district. At the corpus, this is a leadership issue. Inferentially, Owens and Valesky (2011) in citing Hargreaves and Fink, define sustainable educational leadership as follows, “Sustainable educational leadership and improvement preserves and develops deep learning for all that spreads and lasts, in ways that do not harm to and indeed create positive benefit for others around us, now and in the future” (Owens & Valesky, 2011, p. 217).

As it relates specifically to crisis management and system analysis, the Durham Public Schools have established a crisis management vision. The vision states, “A District Emergency Operations and Crisis Management Plan shall be developed, maintained, and implemented to identify potential hazards, mitigate contributing factors, and prepare our staff and students to respond quickly and responsibly to emergencies” (National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, n.d, p. 12). In terms of the management of inter-group mechanisms and relationships, Durham Public Schools works closely with emergency management, law enforcement, public health, and other safety officials at the local, county, state, and federal levels to develop and strengthen

school plans for handling emergencies. Moreover, all schools have emergency and crisis response teams that are an integral part of the school's emergency management plan.

Irrespective to the nature of the environmental contingencies prevalent with the third party emergency management organizations or the inter-group mechanisms, the upper echelon of the organizational structure, as displayed in Figure 2, will be involved in the decision making process. Moreover, there is no formal representation of the crisis management team within the traditional organizational structure. As it relates to organizational behavior, "A large portion of any administrator's time is directed at "power-oriented" behavior-that is, "behavior directed primarily at developing or using relationships in which other people are to some degree willing to defer to one's wishes" (Hoy & Miskel, 2008, p. 227).

From a political perspective, it is of vital importance that the culture of individual school districts be examined in the context of achieving the organization's mission. The system of politics affects inter-group power relationships. According to Hoy and Miskel (2008), "Organizational ideology (culture) can produce a sense of mission among members. Principals

are key actors in the development of ideology and culture of the schools” (p. 231).

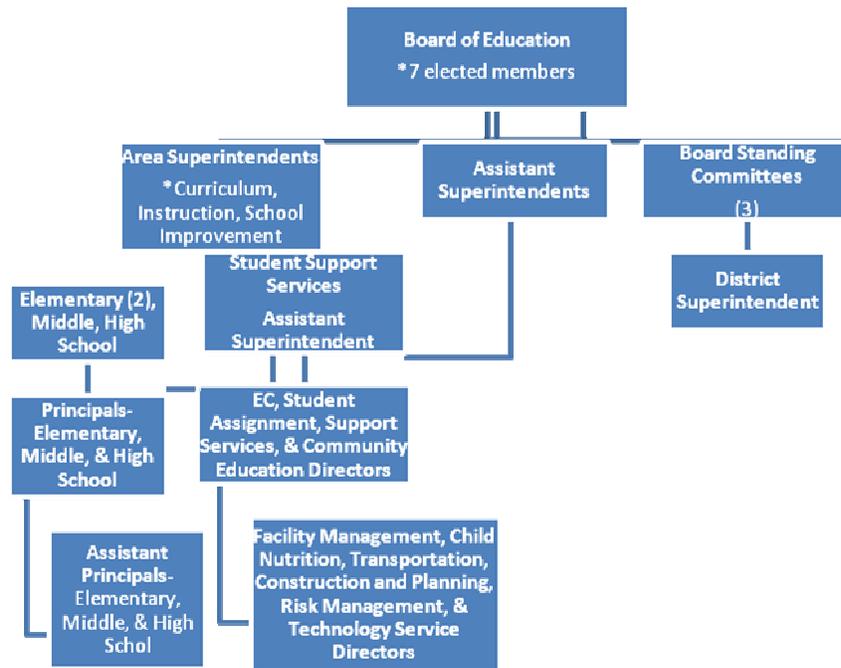


Figure 2

Inferentially, Hoy and Miskel (2008) conclude, “School administrators need to understand these systems of influence and know how to tap into and use them” (p. 231). At the corpus of the systems analysis is the comparative analysis of both power legitimacy and formality. (Hoy & Miskel, 2008). Figure 2a, as conceptualized by Hoy and Miskel (2008), seeks to synthesize the perspectives of legitimacy versus illegitimacy as well as formality versus informality. In the words of Hoy and Miskel (2008), “We propose a synthesis of power relations to include formal and informal authority (legitimate power), and coercive and political power (illegitimate)” (Hoy & Miskel, 2008, p. 233).

		Source of Power	
		Formal	Informal
Legitimacy of Power	Legitimate	Formal Authority	Informal Authority
	Illegitimate	Formal Authority	Informal Authority

	Illegitimate	Coercive Power	Political Power
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Figure 2.a Synthesis of Power Relations

Consequently, power relations play a critical role in underlying political systems that manifest within the school culture. Essentially, there can be three clearly defined responses to administrative power namely: commitment, simple compliance or resistance. The probable responses to power are illustrated below in Figure 2.b.

Type of Power	Commitment	Simple Compliance	Resistance
<i>Referent</i>	XXX	XX	X
<i>Expert</i>	XXX	XX	X
<i>Legitimate</i>	XX	XXX	X
<i>Reward</i>	XX	XXX	X
<i>Coercive</i>	X	XX	XXX

Figure 2.b XXX - Most Likely, XX -Less likely, X - Least likely.

Analysis Project Part 3: Analysis of Effectiveness of Behavior Patterns

“Local governments play a key role in emergency management, assessing the threats to public safety, identifying point of vulnerability, and ensuring that resources can be mobilized for an effective response and quick recovery” (Henstra, 2010, p. 236). In congruence with this mission, the Columbine shootings instigated federal and local government authorities to mandate crisis management planning nationwide. Of note, both Columbine and Virginia Tech claimed to have some measure of crisis management systems in place, yet both failed to activate or implement their plans effectively. At the corpus, both institutions' failures were their incapability of dealing with pre-crisis, crisis, or post-crisis situations. From an analytical perspective the Columbine and Virginia Tech crisis management failures provide key learning opportunities for improved leadership and organizational effectiveness.

According to Seeger et al. (2001), the creation of a crisis management plan generally involves three equally important phases. First, an organization must devise a crisis management team – a structured device to coordinate disparate crisis management and emergency response expertise within the organization and, often times, from external, but involved, publics (Seeger, Sellnoew, & Ulmer, 2001). In other words, an effective crisis management plan must be proactive, cohesive, and well integrated. Moreover, in order to critically assess the strengths and weaknesses of any crisis management plan, some criteria must be used as a benchmark for assessment. “Four critical indicators are linked to an existing crisis management plan, where: (a) crisis management plans addressed multiple crisis categories, (b) crisis plans and procedures provided preparation for different phases of a crisis, (c) organizational systems supported the crisis management program, and (d) a plan involved stakeholders on the planning process when preparing for a crisis” (Catullo, Walker, & Floyd, 2009, pp. 302-303).

Modeling this schema facilitates the development of a diverse and motivated crisis management team that involves both internal work groups and well as uniquely skilled publics. Hence, the Durham Public Schools district has not only demonstrated proactive crisis management strategies, but has also successfully integrated key agencies within their communities. On this evidence, there are no perceptual distortions or biases that exist within the organization. Moreover, the involvement of law enforcement and public health agencies at the county, state, and federal level is a clear indication of the recognition not only for a need for skill diversity, but also an acknowledgment that the school unit has threat assessment and risk management limitations. As it relates to crisis management, the school district seeks to develop, maintain, and prepare their staff and students to respond quickly and responsibly to emergencies.

Although desirable from a public safety standpoint, the absence of emergency experience makes it difficult for public managers to evaluate emergency management programs and to measure performance in this field (Henstra, 2010, p. 236). Simply stated, the very nature and infrequency of such catastrophic events renders their assessment somewhat challenging. However, on the evidence of what transpired at both Columbine and Virginia Tech, one would be forced to conclude both institutions' crisis management programs were weak. Hence, the corpus of effective crisis management reform must be organization change. This writer submits that the Columbine and Virginia Tech fiascos triggered not only change, but integration and stability. "Schools and other educational organizations must confront not merely change, but also the integration of stability and change" (Owens & Valesky, 2011, p. 169). In sum, "School reform and organizational change- are believed by many to have a moral implication, such as the need to correct existing errors or abolishing malpractice, which requires transforming the organization" (p. 169). Durham Public Schools epitomize this leadership paradigm.

Analysis Project Part 4: Prescription for Improvement of Organizational Behaviors

While most scholars agree that organizations that practice proactive crisis management succeed more often in the face of an emergency than those that rely on reactive posturing, the perception of internal and external publics of not only the preparedness of the institution but also the effect of the potential crisis, influences the capability of the organization to survive a damaging event (Penrose, 2000). Consequently, every institution has the ability to perceive a crisis as an opportunity – a growth inducing occurrence, or a threat – something to be feared and shunned. The Durham Public Schools district has identified and conceptualized a well thought out intervention plan for improving the effectiveness of its crisis management planning. Most emphatically, the plan adopted is multi-level, diversified, integrated and continuous.

Evidently, possessing a crisis management plan and executing that plan are not the same. Collins (2007) alludes to this infraction, "Often, businesses that progress and grow without facing emergencies neglect their crisis management plans, allowing these tools to slip into obsolescence. A deteriorated management plan may represent more of a limitation to an organization's ability to withstand a crisis than no plan at all as it symbolizes a false sense of security in the midst of an acute event" (p. 52). By reference, the fact that Columbine did have a crisis management plan, but failed to activate it raises a serious question about its effectiveness.

Positive issues in the system include, each school has an Emergency Preparedness Plan which includes guidelines on how to respond to myriad threats. Although all school plans have similar guidelines, recommendations, and standards, each school implements a response plan that reflects the needs of their individual school community. In conclusion, there were no negative issues encountered in this study. On the contrary, this district arguably provides a blueprint for educational human capital development, organizational change and transformational leadership.

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The relationship between consulting, coaching and training.



There are many ways to look at the relationships which exist among consulting, coaching and training. **L.E.A.P.S.**' philosophical approach to consulting often involves a longer-term commitment to bringing about real changes in company focus and alignment **i.e.** how key processes are performed, and/or how the reporting relationships and spheres of control are organized within each entity.

Consulting often takes the form of a project analysis (as seen above) and involves front-end planning with leaders to define overall scope and engagement objectives. It may also include **L.E.A.P.S.**' facilitating group sessions where participants share perspectives and information and reach new agreements designed to bring about the desired improvements. On the other hand, coaching is not consultative. Personal coaches are not to advise the client as in a consultation, rather coaches function more as facilitators. The coaches role is to guide the client along the safe path of "self-discovery," which in turn leads to wholistic regeneration and ultimately to the fulfillment of personal goals and objectives that are predetermined by the client. Inherent to this process, is the need to balance the client's goals with their individual gift-mix, competencies and psychological profile.