control resources, will find a way to solve it.

As stakeholders, parents bring essentially one item to the school agenda: they want a good education for their children! They cling tenaciously to this point. This very persistence accounts for much of the speed of educational progress in schools where parents have a prestigious role on site management councils.

Further, it is of paramount importance that parents on the council represent the diversity of the student body. A council composed only of parents of academically high-performing students may overlook, indeed, not even think of, the needs of other types of students, thereby failing to address curriculum issues that enable all students to succeed.

While parents focus on school achievement in the broadest sense, educators bring many items to the table. Some wish to preserve traditional programs. For example, they may continue to emphasize a college-bound curriculum in a community that now includes few college-bound students. Some teachers and administrators may not be interested in parental interaction, after-school programs, open houses for the community, multi-cultural/gender fair experiences, and personal accountability for student performance. Entrenched attitudes or practices in schools are resistant to change, and parents can help to identify and eventually consign such resistance away from their children and their school.

Shared decision making engages and affirms people.