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A study on the Central Valley Satellite School : a partnership between business and public education

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**A STUDY ON THE CENTRAL VALLEY SATELLITE SCHOOL:
A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN BUSINESS AND PUBLIC EDUCATION**

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Division of Teacher Education

San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Diane E. Zbasnik

August 1997

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ABSTRACT

A STUDY ON THE CENTRAL VALLEY SATELLITE SCHOOL: A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN BUSINESS AND PUBLIC EDUCATION

by Diane E. Zbasnik

This thesis study is a qualitative approach to an example of a business-education partnership built on the model of corporate satellite schools. The history of this fairly-recent concept in education is documented through a literature review that includes what could be considered a forerunner of the satellite school, the schools of the company town. The Central Valley Satellite School located in San Bernardo, California is the first of its kind on the west coast. A joint venture between the Pacific Circle Corporation and the San Bernardo City Schools, this partnership links a business with a public school.

An anthropologic research posture was taken utilizing interviews, observations, and document analyses. Narrative data was utilized to gain insights into participants' understandings and experiences with the Central Valley Satellite School. Data collected during this study were deconstructed revealing three emerging themes: (a) contrasting perspectives on business-education partnerships; (b) the relationship between the satellite school and its main campus; and (c) the extent and quality of parental involvement.

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CHAPTER ONE:

INTRODUCTION

A Personal Reflection

In 1995, as a substitute teacher, I had the opportunity to observe a classroom in Mountain View, California replete with technology. This classroom had state-of-the-art equipment: CD-ROM, computer, color printer, TV monitor-receiver, and VCR, along with other technology that was not familiar to me. Fastened to all of the equipment were placards that stated "donated by Hewlett-Packard."

How and why did all of this equipment end up here? Why not everywhere? Did someone in this particular school have a favored connection with Hewlett-Packard? When I asked someone about this I was told that Hewlett-Packard donated the equipment in response to a grant teachers in the school had written. But what role did the business play in shaping school curriculum, school policy, and related matters? Was the corporation concerned with improving education or merely acquiring a tax write-off?

Recalling other experiences, I remembered situations in which businesses would send volunteers to schools to assist in the classroom. They helped children with classroom assignments and responded to questions. Volunteers didn't talk about their company or their jobs; they simply came in for a few weeks and then disappeared. Had the partnership dissolved?

On one occasion a man from a local business visited a classroom where I was teaching. He told me his name and asked me what he was supposed to be doing. He had

been in this class twice before. He stood there for a while with his four sharpened pencils in his hand, helped two children and then told me that he needed to get back to work. These incidents provoked my curiosity about partnerships.

At the beginning of the 1995-1996 school year, my school entered a partnership with McDonald's fast food restaurants. One night each week was designated as Kenwood School's night at McDonald's. Any purchases made by parents, faculty, and staff from the school would result in ten percent of the profit for that evening being donated to Kenwood School. Was this a partnership? Although both institutions wanted to make money, nothing directly related to the education of children. This so-called partnership dissolved after five months.

Following this, Kenwood entered into a partnership with a major company located nearby. There were no volunteers and nothing was discussed to help me understand the nature of the "partnership," although the faculty did use the company's conference room for three days for a workshop.

These relationships between businesses and schools appeared shallow, ill-defined, and detached. What benefits are such partnerships beyond providing financial backing now lacking from state support? Are there hidden costs? Shouldn't a partnership relationship between business and education, be a shared engagement that enhances student learning through common goals, strategies, and ongoing communication? Is there a price to pay for accepting financial aid from corporate interests? Are the purposes of

schooling mutually held between corporate and civic interests? These are questions that would later provoke me to engage in this research.

Business-Education Partnerships

One of the most sweeping endeavors in recent years to promote business-education partnerships has been a national effort led by business, labor, government, and education to redefine the mission of American schools. This group issued the Secretary of Labor's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) report (U.S. Department of Labor 1992).

Among its recommendations, SCANS supports a strong, meaningful link between schools and the workplace. The commission's message to schools is to "look beyond the school house to the roles students will play when they leave to become workers, parents, and citizens" (Ibid., xiii). The SCANS report urges business to,

...be concerned about the community's schools, for your sake. The school that is not good enough for your children will be the source of your employees, your customers, and your suppliers. You must work with those on whom you depend, cultivating a long-term relationship. The quality of today's students will determine the future of your enterprise (Ibid., 17).

Since the SCANS report, there has been increasing evidence of greater involvement of business with schools. Some of the partnerships appear to offer creative, innovative ways to strengthen the bond between the workplace and schools. Most, like SCANS, suggest focusing on the role of the school in producing future employees or customers for corporate interests. How does such a bond with corporate interests

influence the policies and practices of schools? In what ways do these partnerships come to redefine the purpose of schooling?

Proponents like Hansen and Mackey (1993) propose that businesses can assist schools by donating money and equipment, providing classroom volunteers, implementing skills needed in the workplace, and developing training programs for teachers, students, and employees. In addition, they suggest that: 1) church volunteers become active members in community advisory groups to help schools with their curricula in areas such as multiculturalism, human relations, and family life and values; 2) police departments can coordinate youth volunteers and programs and tutoring services as part of the after-school activities programs; 3) community organizations provide programs that address drug and alcohol abuse, teen pregnancy, and family issues; and 4) colleges and universities provide inservice training for teachers and parents, organize fine arts programs, and develop workshops for students (97).

Robert L. Wehling, president of the Procter and Gamble Fund suggests that businesses can help the public schools by: 1) mobilizing forces in the community to support what might be needed to enable teachers and school children to concentrate effectively in the classroom; 2) supporting education reform efforts at the local and state level of government; and 3) providing advocacy for every child in school. Ideally, according to Wehling (1993),

The advocate will be the parent, but there are some parents who, for one reason or another, are not, or cannot, be that advocate. That is where business mentors, or tutors, or just friends for these children can help them succeed (6).

If businesses work towards these goals, Wehling (1993) believes, the educational system in the United States will improve and children will succeed in school (6).

Examples of Business-Education Partnerships

In 1990, Vital Link, an approach to business-education partnerships, was introduced by the American Business Conference, an organization of rapidly growing mid-sized companies. Vital Link was created to assist primarily non-college bound students in making the transition between school and the workplace. Vital Link is based on the principle that individual students can be motivated to learn in school if they understand the relationship between school achievement and job success.

The Vital Link partnership approach does not focus on specific occupations, but rather, on an orientation to the workplace. Key project elements include information about required job preparation with a focus on communication skills, a student profile of achievement, and a data base on business resources. Some Vital Link projects involve students as early as the middle school years in one-on-one mentorships while others have partnerships with colleges that offer scholarships. Interest in this program spread so rapidly that two years after it was initiated business and education collaborated to sponsor Vital Link's first national conference.

Another partnership program created between the Austin Independent School District and the IBM Corporation works to create, according to Lehman (1993), a "world class educational system with an environment of excellence, equity, and compassion for Austin's students" (15). Goals for this program include: 1) increasing student

achievement and learning; 2) developing and maintaining a community-wide vision for education; 3) creating a climate that supports continual renewal of the education system; 4) encouraging innovation; and 5) focusing decision-making on the best interest of the students.

A third model is located in Des Moines, Iowa. The Methodist Medical Center operates an intensive mentoring program that pairs "at-risk" students who attend Des Moines public schools with entry-level employees who focus on improvement of students' work ethic and the importance of education. Students in this program work side-by-side with employee mentors to gain an understanding of real-life work environments and to acquire marketable work skills for future employment.

The Des Moines Public School System pays one-half of the students' wages and provides compensation and liability insurance. The school district also employs a teacher and associate to act as on-site consultants. The Iowa Methodist Medical Center provides the remaining portion of the students' wages, staff time and mentors, advocates, and program team members.

Many businesses in their joint ventures with public schools focus on workplace skills and competencies. Some programs allow students to work on site learning skills required for certain positions much like an internship relationship. Programs such as this provide students with a realistic alternative to career preparation that stresses academic learning.

A different focus can be found in a school and university partnership developed between the Waco Independent School District and Baylor University in 1992. A Baylor University professor teaches college courses, supervises student teachers, and works with students on site at the elementary host school, Hillcrest Development School. The goal of the project is to teach children and train teachers at the same time. The professor, Tom Proctor states, "I can't help someone become a good teacher by spending my time in a college classroom talking about what makes good teaching" (Weiss 1996, 11).

The philosophy of the Hillcrest Professional Development School is to reach each child. To do this Hillcrest maintains a low student-teacher ratio (four adults in every classroom) providing individual attention for each student. In addition, Weiss (1996) claims that the professional development school concept unites theory and practice, mixing university research with both youthful enthusiasm and years of classroom experience (11). Teachers and the principal at the school meet on a regular basis to reach mutual agreement on making rules for the school, setting the agenda for faculty meetings, and participating in hiring decisions. As a result of their collaborative efforts, Weiss (1996) reports that Hillcrest students achieved a 96.9 percent attendance rate and raised scores on achievement tests (11).

Corporate Satellite Schools

One of the more unique approaches to a partnership is the concept of corporate satellite schools, a creative endeavor that links businesses and public schools to shared concerns and goals. An example of that relationship is the Central Valley Satellite School

in San Bernardo, California, a collaborative venture between Pacific Circle Corporation and the San Bernardo City Schools. Corporate satellite schools are public schools that operate on business worksites. The businesses provide land, building space, maintenance, utilities, and security, while the school districts provide teachers, materials, curriculum, and administrators. Corporate satellite schools seek to promote a partnership that will provide benefits to taxpayers, businesses, schools, parents, and children. Central Valley Satellite School is a K-3 branch of the host school, Central Valley Elementary, a K-6 school whose main campus is located about a half-mile away.

This research study emerged as a result of becoming acquainted with this school. In order to gain further insight into satellite schools I will examine a particular relationship between a company and a public school. Specifically, the purpose of this study is to examine participants' experiences and understandings of the Central Valley Satellite School located in San Bernardo, California.

One of the outcomes of this study will be to provide the Central Valley Satellite School and Pacific Circle with an outsider's perspective on this unique partnership. Another benefit of this study will be to provide insight for businesses and public schools who may be interested in developing such a partnership.

Research Questions

This study will address the following questions:

RQ1. How do corporate satellite schools and public schools differ in their school environments, curriculum, and resource base?

RQ2. What is the relationship between the corporation and the public school and what are the implications of their relationship?

RQ3. In what ways do parents participate in corporate satellite schools and how is that involvement distinguished from parent participation in public schools?

In order to do this, I will conduct interviews with school personnel, company representatives and parents regarding the partnership, make personal observations of classes and examine school and corporate documents related to the partnership. From the texts generated by interview transcriptions and field notes, I will analyze the data to gain a better understanding of participants' experiences in a corporate satellite school environment and their understandings about the relationship of the school to business. In the following chapter I will trace the historical roots of business-education partnerships from their early inception in company towns to their recent emergence as satellite schools. The literature review will also include a section on parental involvement, an essential component for any school's success.

CHAPTER TWO:

LITERATURE

Company Town: The Cradle of the Satellite School

In a professed spirit of cooperation and mutual benefit, the business community and public schools have, over time, developed partnerships in order to provide education for children. Illustrations of this can be traced as far back as two centuries ago, to communities we now refer to as company towns. To infer that today's satellite school is a first-time on-site relationship between business and education, is to deny the existence of the many company towns that, over the years, succeeded in strengthening the link between corporate responsibility and schooling.

Garner believes the history of company towns is directly "linked to the beginnings of the Industrial Revolution and the rise of the factory system" (1984, x). Before the Industrial Revolution in America, industries began to develop throughout western Europe. Manufacturing started in guild shops and craftworkers worked with simple tools to make cloth, jewelry, silverware, weapons, and leather goods. Products such as these were often traded for food grown in the country or exported to pay for imported luxury items or raw materials. Later manufacturing took place in homes in rural areas where merchants distributed raw materials to workers in their homes and collected finished products. The merchants "owned the raw materials, paid for the work, and found a market for their products" (Hindle and Lubar 1986, 14). Thus, capitalism emerged where the means of

production were owned by an individual who hired the labor of others to do the manufacturing.

Eventually, manufacturing in homes and workshops was replaced by factories that relied on power-driven machines to produce finished products. The textile industry established in Great Britain in 1750 "marked the beginning of the age of the modern factory" (Lampard, "Industrial Revolution," in World Book Encyclopedia 1995 ed., 248). Machines such as the roller-spinning machine, spinning jenny, and spinning mule revolutionized the textile industry. Following this, in 1760, James Watt began work on an invention to improve the steam engine. His efforts were successful and provided industries with a new, cheap, and efficient source of power. The coal and iron industry in Great Britain expanded to provide power to drive the steam engines and new machines and tools used to build ships and bridges.

Lampard (1995) states that,

As the Industrial Revolution grew, private investors and financial institutions were needed to provide money for further expansion of industrialization. Financiers and banks thus became as important as industrialists and factories in the growth of the revolution. For the first time in European history, wealthy business leaders took over the control and organization of manufacturing (246).

In 1793, Samuel Slater, a Rhode Island textile industrialist, organized a Sunday school in order to teach the basic skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic to the children who labored in his Pawtucket factory (Schlesinger 1983). The Colorado Fuel and Iron Company, in 1901, sponsored its own kindergartens to teach English, thereby helping to overcome communication barriers between various immigrant groups. Almost every camp in the town included special facilities in which a teacher, hired by the company, worked

with the children. To understand more fully the business-community relationship, the evolution of the company town, as part of American history, needs to be explored. An insightful definition of this unique concept of a community is provided by author James B.

Allen (1966) who, after considerable research, defines a company town as,

...any community which has been built wholly to support the operations of a single company, in which all homes, buildings, and other real-estate property are owned by that company, having been acquired or erected specifically for the benefit of its employees, and in which the company provides most public services (Allen 1966, 4).

To visualize this, it is first necessary to describe a typical company town in the early 1800's. John S. Garner's (1982) description is best remembered as he said:

Picture, for example, the view from a hilltop that lies inland and distant from the activity of a busy port. From this hilltop it is easy to scan the valley below. A narrow though swiftly flowing river flows the contour of a ravine before widening into a small lake above a dam. In the background are mostly frame buildings, though some are brick or stone. Interspersed among them are oak, elm, hickory, and maple trees (29).

On the surface, this description appears to paint a picture of a serene country setting. But, Garner's visual portrait further reveals that,

A group of small factories figure more prominently in this landscape than the traditional meetinghouse with its steeple. And the noise of water falling from the dam is suppressed by the droning sound of machinery. A smokestack by a foundry sends a plume of smoke into the air. Nearby the factories are clusters of small houses, which are alike in detail-too similar in appearance to account for a native building type. The landscape opens at intervals to reveal the contours of a park or cemetery. Everything appears tidy and well-kept. Overall, an impression of order, routine, prosperity, and propriety is inescapable (Ibid., 29-30).

The first known instance of what has now been described as a company town was started by the Cheney brothers in 1753. Each of the three brothers owned a farm in Hartford County, Connecticut. One built a saw, grist, and fulling mill; one grew an orchard of mulberry trees for establishing a silkworm farm; and the third cultivated various crops. To pool their resources they established the Cheney Brothers Manufacturing

Company in 1838. The company, located in South Manchester, Connecticut, was one of the first company towns "to place equal emphasis on producing a good environment while manufacturing a good product" (Ibid., 30). Once a silk factory was established, they began building a town. Houses for the workers were provided by the company along with Cheney Hall and a small meetinghouse.

Rowland G. Hazard, an industrialist who manufactured wool cloth, started a company in Peace Dale, Rhode Island between 1814 and 1815. In 1848, Hazard's wool company was reorganized and was renamed the Peace Dale Manufacturing Company. Within the next twenty years, two more companies were started by Hazard in the same area. Company earnings were used to build houses and public facilities for the workers. In 1854, a school was built near the companies so the children in the community would have greater access to learning.

In 1815, Joseph Fairbanks constructed a grist mill on the banks of Sleeper's River in Brimfield, Vermont. Fairbanks and his sons specialized in grinding meal and hammering iron for wagons and plows. In 1830, Thaddeus Fairbanks invented the platform scale, a weighing device. As a result of the family's efforts, Fairbanks Village was created and factories, stores, and houses were constructed around the town center. Later, the company constructed a gas plant and an electric generator to heat and light the town's homes. Because of population growth, seventy new homes were built for workers as well as museums that included art, natural history, and literature collections. It was a way of providing "cultural enjoyment for the workers" (Ibid., 38). In 1841 an academy for

instruction in general courses was built. By 1872 "it had 13 instructors, 300 pupils, and a \$100,000 endowment from the company" (Ibid.).

A small manufacturing and farming village already in existence in Ludlow, Massachusetts was purchased by the Ludlow Associates in 1868. An historian of the time recalled that in 1868, at the time of the purchase, the "village consisted of very few old tenement houses, one church, and one single-room schoolhouse owned by the company, situated on two country roads" (Ibid., 41-42). As the town changed, he comments, "new streets were constructed, a number of new cottages and a six-room schoolhouse were built" (Ibid., 41).

During the middle decades of the nineteenth century, company towns began to appear in the New England states of Vermont, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts and subsequently spread to other parts of the United States. Industrialization in the United States began in the New England states; the most successful industry at the time was shipbuilding. In the early 1800s, a small arms industry was created that produced machines and machine tools that could produce standard parts required for mass production. Industrialization in the eastern United States increased rapidly in the 1930s. Pennsylvania's iron industry contributed to advances in using iron to manufacture agricultural tools and railroad tracks. The agricultural, construction, and mining industries expanded as the Eastern population moved westward. As a result of these technological changes the United States had become the "largest and most

competitive industrial nation in the world" (Lampard, "Industrial Revolution," in World Book Encyclopedia, 1995 ed., 254).

Company Towns and Their Schools

Schools played an important role in company towns. James B. Allen (1966) states that the "schools were important not only as educational institutions but also as centers of community life" (104). Companies that owned an entire town had a vested interest in public schools because most of the taxes were paid by the companies. Allen goes on to state that, "since the company had a financial interest in public schools by virtue of its position as the only taxpayer in the community, it was only natural for owners of a company town to take special interest in school-board elections" (122). The superintendent of the company was often the chairman of the local school board.

Companies were able to promote and support education in a variety of ways. Some companies built schools and hired teachers to run daily operations of the schools. Some companies provided free housing to attract teachers from other communities. In some instances, companies and local school boards worked together to adopt policies beneficial to both parties. In some cases, school buildings were constructed by the company and later sold to the school district at a nominal price (Allen 1966).

An additional example of company support for education appeared in the company town of Hopedale, Massachusetts. George Draper, owner of E.D. and G. Draper Company, worked to improve working conditions and workers' skills. Draper firmly believed in education. In a letter written in 1881 to a business acquaintance, he tells of his

"experience in teaching employees to read, write and figure their bills" (Gardner 1984, 170). Workers' children also received instruction in schools built by the company. The Drapers were "proud of the fact that twice as much money per student was spent for education in Hopedale as in neighboring Milford" (Ibid., 182).

The History of Corporate Satellite Schools

The concept of satellite schools was initially developed by Joseph Fernandez, former superintendent of Dade County Public Schools in Florida. As a result of an increasing student population and limited budget, the school system was facing serious problems of overcrowding, low student achievement scores, high dropout rates, and a teacher shortage. Most importantly, the schools lacked financial funds to support ongoing programs and necessary resources and materials. Although various strategies were developed and implemented by administrators in an effort to solve these critical problems, efforts to reform were slowly failing (St. John 1989).

Fernandez decided to confront this challenge, suggesting that a partnership between businesses and public schools be developed. In June of 1987, Fernandez presented his idea of corporate satellite schools to the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce. R. Kirk Landon, the Chief Executive Officer of the American Bankers Insurance Group was impressed by Fernandez's idea and decided to join forces with the district to create a corporate satellite school.

After a few months of cooperative work, a trailer was moved onto the property of a senior high school near the American Bankers Insurance Group. In September of 1987,

members of the teachers' union and school administrators prepared the site for opening day. The school was called, "The Child Place" enrolling twenty-four kindergartners. The on-site staff included a lead teacher in charge of daily operations, classroom teachers and a principal from the nearby elementary school to oversee the entire operation of the school.

In August of 1988, the new \$350,000 school facility "La Petite Academy," located in Miami, Florida was completed and students were moved to the worksite of the American Bankers Insurance Group. Because of the new facility they were able to expand and provide classrooms for first, second and third grades. La Petite Academy is currently a K-3 public school in which the children of employees, as well as children within the boundaries of the elementary school can attend. Students from the corporate satellite school can attend assemblies and plays and can participate in extracurricular activities sponsored by the elementary school. To decrease costs, the American Bankers Insurance Group agreed to provide land, the school facility, maintenance, utilities, and security, while the school district provided teachers, administrators, resources, and was responsible for curriculum.

Proponents claim that the corporate satellite school provides benefits for the school system through lowering costs and easing overcrowding. Taxpayers are relieved of the cost of building new classrooms, because the business assumes the financial responsibility of providing building construction and modernization. Dade County School District was saving \$216,000 for every classroom that the school system did not have to

build, as well as saving on utilities, maintenance, and security, all of which were assumed by the company sponsoring the school (Crothers 1989).

Transportation costs were eliminated because students rode to work with their parents, resulting in a savings of \$1,400 annually per child. Between 1987 and 1990, the first corporate satellite school resulted in a savings for Dade County Public School System of over a million dollars because expenditures on building construction and some operating expenses were paid by the corporation (Beales 1993).

There are benefits to corporations as a result of corporate satellite schools. In 1988, the American Bankers Insurance Group found that absenteeism among parents of children enrolled in corporate satellite schools was approximately 25 percent lower than among other employees, and turnover among these parents was 5.5 to 6 percent compared with a company-wide range of 15.9 percent (Crothers 1989). Employees, supervisors, and high level management all agree that the corporate satellite school positively impacted the work behavior and productivity of employees (Abella 1991). St. John (1989) believes the workplace in corporate satellite schools tends to be more desegregated than community schools, the worksite school bringing together children from different backgrounds and cultures.

For working parents, corporate satellite schools provide convenience, and opportunities to participate in school activities, affording them a greater role in their child's education. In a parent survey conducted by Michael, a San Bernardo district administrator, parents of the satellite school reported that the partnership: 1) allowed

them to spend more time with their children; 2) increased their involvement in their child's education; 3) saved them money; and 4) reduced the complexity of their daily work schedule. Parents also reported improved attendance, punctuality, and work productivity as a result of participating in the program.

Corporate satellite schools also provide students with more opportunities to interact with their parents during the commute to and from work as well as spending lunchtimes together. Beales (1993) claims that children receive more parental attention and support at a corporate satellite school than in a regular public school. In addition, a 1991 study conducted by the Dade County School District found academic performance to be higher than the district and national average among the 72 students attending the American Bankers Satellite School. Results from the Stanford Achievement Test showed that students' scores in reading, math and science proved to be higher than the average score of same-grade students from the national normative sample (Abella 1991).

The corporate satellite school serves as a model for businesses and school systems throughout America, Europe, Japan and New Zealand (Dade County Public Schools 1994). News agencies and television networks have taken an interest in this idea by providing the public with information on corporate satellite schools as well as describing the importance of business-education partnerships. As a result of media reports, La Petite Academy is visited annually by leaders in business, education, government, and the media. Since this innovative idea was put into motion, several businesses and public schools have joined forces to create corporate satellite schools in their communities.

Other Satellite Schools

The Downtown Open School located in Minneapolis, Minnesota is a K-4 corporate satellite school that is sponsored by the Minneapolis Public Schools, IDS Financial Services, and Northern States Power Company. The school opened in 1989, and is available to employees' children as well as children from the local community.

According to a brochure published by the school (1990), "the Downtown Open School is a child-centered place of learning where all individuals help each other acquire knowledge, skills, and positive attitudes towards self and others" (1). In addition, the brochure claims that all students become empowered to solve problems, think creatively, continue learning, and develop their maximum potential. The school's curriculum focuses on individualized curricular programs for students, basic skills, cooperative learning, whole language, hands-on activities, all based on a student-centered philosophy. Parents are actively involved with the school participating in school advisory groups, frequent conferences, and visits to their child on a regular basis.

Also in Minneapolis, the Mill City Montessori School opened on September 4, 1990 on the property of Target, a local discount department store. The school enrolls students in grades K-4 and serves the children of Target's 1,500 employees. This school utilizes a Montessori perspective that provides individualized instruction and encourages children at all age levels to work cooperatively. Based on Montessori's ideas, the curriculum is sequentially designed to move from concrete to abstract concepts while children progress at their own rate of learning.

The Learning Well School in Clearwater, Florida is an example of a partnership developed with the Honeywell Space Systems Group. The on-site K-2 school opened on August 23, 1990 with enrollment limited to Honeywell employees. The company has made a commitment to its employees to help fill the gap between work and family responsibilities by instituting a comprehensive benefits package; the Learning Well School is a reaffirmation and demonstration of that commitment (Avi News 1990). Honeywell provides land, buildings, security, and meal service, in addition to an initial contribution of \$75,000 to help with the initial operating costs of the school. Pinellas Central Elementary School, the host school, provides the teachers, materials, and the curriculum.

The Pinellas County School System and Bayfront Medical Center, also in Clearwater, established the Bay Park corporate satellite school. This unique partnership, created in 1992, is apparently the first in the country that developed collaboration between a hospital and a school district. The idea for the school developed out of the hospital's efforts to provide benefit packages that include employees' families (Green 1992).

Prior to this partnership, Bayfront Medical Center organized a child care center for employees' children who had minor illnesses. From this, a child development center was created on the hospital grounds that provides services for children from eight weeks to five years old. The school was the next logical step as Pinellas County already had developed partnership schools. Bayfront Medical Center provided land, buildings, custodial services, utilities, landscaping, and security personnel. The Pinellas County

School System provided teachers, administrators, materials, supplies, and the curriculum (Ibid.).

Bay Park School opened in August of 1992 and provides classes for students in grades K-3. The new \$500,000 facility is equipped with a computerized security system in each classroom and an outdoor playground. Students that qualify for special services attend Campbell Park Elementary School, the host school participating in this partnership. The district received more than 500 requests for tickets to a presentation on the program given to a meeting of the National School Board Association (Ibid.).

A very unusual partnership was developed in 1993 between the Chi Chi Rodriguez Foundation Golf Club and the Pinellas County Public School System. The Chi Chi Rodriguez Foundation was established in 1979 as an attempt to work with "at-risk" students in kindergarten through high school. To expand on this idea, it was decided that an on-site school would better prepare "at-risk" students to live and work in the real world. The school, the Modesta Robbins Partnership School, claims its program is designed to increase students' self-esteem, social interaction skills, and academic performance.

Bill Hayes, a professional golfer, wanted to start a school where the education would be hands-on, rather than about abstract concepts inside a classroom. The foundation spent nearly \$400,000 to construct and maintain the new school where students use their knowledge in a business environment. Additional financial support from charity golf tournaments, businesses, and other events helps the school maintain daily

operations. The Pinellas County School System selects only fifth-grade students in north Pinellas County to participate in the program. The students are selected because they are identified as "at-risk" described by the district as having come from abusive homes, single-parent families, or they may be having trouble at school or with the law.

The school has two fifth-grade classes with eighteen students in each class. There is one teacher and one assistant for each class. The curriculum guidelines and requirements are the same as those of the public schools. Each classroom is equipped with five computers, a scanner, a TV-VCR, and a laser disc player. The students start their day in the classroom learning skills in the content areas. They apply what they have learned to the business environment where students walk to the pro shop attached to the school. Students evaluate which merchandise sells and help in a snack bar at a nearby lodge while learning math skills. Students venture outside to learn about plants from the golf course landscapers and gain knowledge of chemistry and horticulture. As a result of the program, students' attitudes toward education and learning have changed (Benham 1993). Students in this program have taken an active role in their learning.

Morton Plant Hospital was another partner recruited by Pinellas County Schools, the two joining hands in 1993 to create a partnership. Morton Plant has limited space, so it was decided that the partnership school would be located on the property of South Ward Elementary School, an eighty-five year old school that was to be closed because of declining enrollment. Morton Plant Hospital agreed to pay the school system \$30,000 a year as well as providing school faculty, students, and their families with medical services.

Children can get physical examinations and inoculations at discounted rates (Collins 1991). If children pre-registered with Morton Plant's sick child care program become ill at school, they will be tended by a qualified medical staff. The Pinellas County School System provides the teachers, administrators, materials, and furniture. South Ward Elementary School is a K-5 school for the children of hospital employees. Many employees live outside of the school's boundaries, but the convenient location of the school allows parents to spend more time with their children.

Corporate satellite schools claim to bring public schools and businesses together for the purpose of educating children. This unique partnership is creating a fresh approach to educational reform that fosters communication among teachers, parents, administrators, business leaders, and community members. As a result, it is claimed that students will receive support and encouragement, thus enhancing their success.

Critique of Business-Education Partnerships

The latter decades of the 20th century have seen a dramatic change in global economics. America's dominance in the world marketplace is no longer absolute as other nations compete vigorously for their share of world trade. The mounting pressures of international competition have forced the United States to rethink the way it "does business." Leaders in government, business, and education all agreed that high on the list of priorities was a well-educated, productive, and competitive workforce (Waddock 1994, 9).

In 1988, the Chevron Corporation launched a study to identify programs in which they could more effectively strengthen their corporation's leadership in public education. They began by researching what the company's study team felt were key problems facing education, then examined what percentage of their resources Chevron and other companies had been directing toward the solution. They found that Chevron had focused most of its attention on curriculum improvement and teacher education, with most of the financial support given to colleges and universities to assist in recruiting future candidates for the workplace. The study revealed that the programs that made the most impact were those that addressed systemic change (Sullivan 1993).

This focus is exemplified in a business-education partnership in Fort Worth, Texas, aimed at "creating an educational system that motivates and prepares students for success in school, in the workplace, as citizens, and in their personal lives" (U.S. Department of Labor 1992, 38). The Fort Worth Independent School District's idea of getting business and civic groups involved with the schools was endorsed by its Board of Education and the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce. As a result of their collaborative efforts, Project C-Community, Corporations, and Classrooms--was established.

To ensure success, Project C members surveyed employers and employees to find out what skills and competencies the workplace demanded. The study confirmed the importance of reading, math, writing, speaking and listening, computer literacy, reasoning and problem-solving, and originality and creativity. Project C members also interviewed

teachers and administrators proposing that educational programming should be responsive to workplace needs (Ibid.).

School reform, in the context of the expanded role of business, is a large-scale issue in American education today. Critics warn that pilot issues, case studies, or research of a handful of programs are little more than hunches and do not produce conclusions with large-scale implications. They believe that no reform should become national policy unless it can be made to work consistently. The key factors, they believe, are a relevant curriculum, well-trained teachers, and valid technology (Pogrow 1996).

Despite the increased emphasis on school-to-work partnerships, some observers feel the United States lacks a formal transition system to help students make the connection between school and work. One group studying the impact of fourteen existing programs is hoping that its analyses will produce useful models and practices from which others may learn. Among the key elements to the success of a school-to-work system, they feel, are leadership, commitment, and collaboration from the total community, integrating academic and vocational study as learning experiences for all students, and building a progressive system that begins at an early stage and provides options beyond high school to all students (Charner et al. 1995).

Proponents of SCANS' school-to-work movement (1992) believe those elements are there in its model of a high-performance workplace that requires,
...workers who have a solid foundation in the basic literacy and computation skills, in the thinking skills necessary to put knowledge to work, and in the personal qualities that make workers dedicated and trustworthy (xiii).

SCANS further proposes an emphasis on workplace competencies that would enable students to manage resources, process information, work with others, master complex systems, and use a variety of technologies.

SCANS has been a central player in the reform movement in education today. More than 500 leaders of government, industry, and education produced a blueprint for change that maps a new strategy for America's schools based on the school-to-work transition. The state of Florida, for example, reworked its entire public education structure to reflect the SCANS approach.

Other initiatives include the government-sponsored Goals 2000 program that encourages schools to "break the mold" with systemic change. To some, Goals 2000, a recently passed bill that represents President Clinton's education initiatives, is simply an extension of George Bush's America 2000 plan. The validity of the Bush-led endeavor was questioned by some for not including educators as a vital element in its formulation (Spring 1991). David C. Berliner and Bruce J. Biddle (1995), authors of *The Manufactured Crisis: Myths, Fraud, and the Attack on America's Public Schools*, believe that Clinton's initiatives are based on neo-conservative views and may possibly generate serious problems for schools.

Schools are faced with the difficult task of trying to "retool" an educational system immersed in tradition so it can respond to the needs of the information age. This dilemma is not without controversy, however. While certain corporate interests criticize public schools for their ineffectiveness and an irrelevant curriculum, some defenders of American

education question the motives of certain leaders in the business world and their misreading of the purpose of education.

Berliner and Biddle (1995) point to foreign interests who are relocating manufacturing plants in the United States because of its highly-skilled and productive workforce. Furthermore, a national commission on work skills reported recently that 80 percent of employers were satisfied with the educational background of entry-level workers and only 15 percent were having difficulty acquiring qualified applicants. This evidence would appear to contradict the argument that America's schools are failing and in disarray.

Berliner and Biddle (1995), devote a significant segment of their book to an analysis of the school-work relationship. Their studies indicate that student achievement is not dropping and American education is in good standing in worldwide comparisons, refuting the notion that schools are to blame for nonproductive workers, inadequate preparation in basic skills, lack of technical skills, or insufficient numbers of graduates in the math and science fields.

Berliner and Biddle's research suggests that the United States leads the world in worker productivity. Businesses, they claim, allocate only small portions of training funds for remediation. Technical skills can be taught on the job. They go on to propose that the math-science supply is still adequate and that, in fact, demand is lessening. The most effective way America's schools can respond to the needs of business, they contend, is to

concentrate more on the personal qualities needed in the work force and less on technical skills training.

Berliner and Biddle examined surveys that indicate that those in charge of hiring employees are most concerned with their habits and motivation, and that employers will hire new workers possessing those qualities and train them in the technical skills. Furthermore, economists predict that the greatest growth in the job market will be in the service sector, where high-level skills are not needed (Ibid.).

Neo-conservatives, and right-wing activists, have become outspoken critics of public education. They claim schools are plagued with a bloated bureaucracy, wasted funding, incompetent professionals, and a valueless, meandering curriculum. Other critics contend that efficiency could be vastly improved by adapting business techniques, promoting competition, productivity, the use of technology, and accountability. (Nelson, Polansky, and Carlson 1990). These groups have advocated for school choice and vouchers in an effort to promote the private school system in the United States as an alternative to what they view as a monopoly held by a deteriorating public institution. In addition, an aging population now gives lukewarm support to public initiatives. Disgruntled taxpayers and dissatisfied corporate interests fail to commit support for an increasingly-diverse (and disadvantaged) population and the challenges of schools in a troubled urban environment (Berliner and Biddle 1995).

Despite the critics who accuse the public schools of failing miserably, defenders of the public educational system point out that we live in an age of cynicism, self-interest,

and an eroding confidence in government, institutions, and professions, as a whole. In a survey that compared life in the 1970s to the 1990s, many responsible segments of our society, including education, saw their favorable ratings decrease. Significant for the public schools, however, is that those with the closest contact (parents and local interests), give education, by far, the highest regard (Ibid.).

School reform is a daunting task. The situation can be further complicated when private businesses assume a proprietary role because, in the past, corporations have often been detached from the needs, goals, and mission of public education focusing on their own profit orientation. Nelson, Palonsky, and Carlson (1990) believe that American schools have been controlled by the values of business and industry as an aftermath of the Industrial Revolution and have ignored their primary purpose of enlightenment for the improvement of social justice. Schools, according to Nelson et al., are viewed by corporate interests as providers of submissive and hardworking employees with whom they can rely on to gain a profit and teach an ideology supporting business. This, "conditions workers to accept the authority of a managerial elite" (Berliner and Biddle 1995, 198). This ideology serves to support basic proficiencies desired by business and de-emphasizes skills that promote critical judgment and persuasiveness. Nelson et al. (1990) assert,

...business basic skills are fundamental reading and computational skills that make one more efficient in carrying out management's policies...It is the moral curriculum rather than the academic which is of most interest to business. They want workers who believe that what is good for business is good for the nation, and that management knows what is good for business (200).

Nelson et al. (1990) take a critical view of industry's role in education. In a study of business-produced teaching materials they conclude that students were given biased material which supported business views of environmental, social, and governmental actions. They report that,

Throughout the schools, students are treated as junior workers required to be punctual, have good "work habits," show deference to management, and not engage in critical thought. This hidden curriculum of business has been very successful (200-201).

Preston Townley, president and CEO of the Conference Board, Inc. (1989) claims that, although businesses support education, there is concern that educational reform has been almost non-existent. Furthermore, Townley (1989) believes that "most business-education partnerships, while well-intentioned, are localized, isolated, and fragmented" (3). In addition, Townley claims business leaders are worried because they envision a shortage of both educated and educable workers which will produce a long-term economic impact across the country. Although these concerns run contrary to Berliner and Biddle's findings, they remain prevalent in the beliefs of the public.

This particular focus on the purpose of education has caused critics to question the impact business input has had on American education. Hartoonian and Van Scotter (1996) allege that, too often, corporate America has regarded schools as a training ground to prepare an efficient workforce for a competitive environment. This approach is especially dangerous today, they warn, because concentrating just on job training and careers, in this age of fast-changing technologies, is like "shooting at a moving target" (556).

John Goodlad (1984) provides valuable insight into the purposes of a public education when he asked parents, teachers, and students to prioritize their private goals for education. When asked to rank vocational, social, intellectual, and personal goals, most groups considered intellectual goals as the most important and vocational goals as the least important. The results of this survey contrast sharply with the educational emphasis on preparation for work, control of the labor supply, and economic development (Spring 1991).

Skills training to serve industry and commerce exclusively, other critics point out, ignores the Jeffersonian ideals of a "society's intellectual, moral and spiritual strengths" (Hartoonian and Van Scotter 1996, 556). Any new program based on school-to-work opportunities will need to address underlying cultural issues as well. As John Garner (1982) explains:

A society that scorns excellence in plumbing because it is a humble activity and tolerates mediocrity in philosophy because it is an exalted activity will have both bad plumbing and bad philosophy. Neither its pipes nor its theories will hold water (557).

Education reform movements started with business-supported school programs, promoted the application of business management principles, and later on public policy initiatives. The decade of the nineties has seen a dramatic rise in the level of public interest in education, brought on by job insecurity and the need for retraining and a redefinition of necessary skills. Waddock (1994) claims, reform cannot be brought about "without the conscious support of business partnerships, primarily focused on helping their own employees understand what this is about and why it is important" (13).

Many business leaders, critical of American education in the past, and, in some cases, feeling rebuffed by educators, now see reform as inevitable. Robert Kennedy, CEO of Union Carbide Corporation, believes business is the catalyst that can bring this about. He sees activism, reflected in a broad-based, nationwide movement, that was not present a few years ago (Goodwin-Hockaday 1993).

President Clinton, during his bid for reelection in 1996, often referred to a well-educated workforce when he spoke about "a bridge to the twenty-first century." The engineers and builders will have to include educators reaching out to industry for support and relevance in its curriculum, and business leaders responding with resources and expertise to get the job done.

Berliner and Biddle (1995) contend that Americans often set out to "reform" the public schools because they are concerned about education, and because of their "energy, optimism, and willingness to tinker with social institutions" (344). Yet, most programs geared towards improving education often fail, with very few positive effects. Others are unworkable, costly, and create problems for educators or students. As a result, most programs focusing on improving education are eventually discarded or left behind.

Berliner and Biddle (1995) believe, however, that some efforts to improve education have been successful and that schools will change over time if, they reflect genuine (rather than fictitious) problems faced by schools; they are based on attainable goals that are shared by the people concerned; they are planned with an understanding of structural forces in the society and the education system that will affect the proposed changes; they encourage and respond to debates about alternatives among educators, students, parents, and others affected by those proposals; they involve plans for both starting and maintaining the program; they enlarge (rather than restrict) the lives of affected people; and they are adequately funded (345).

In other words, attempts to improve education are more likely to succeed if they are associated with research suggesting that they actually work.

In many instances, reform programs are set up by the federal government, state legislatures, school boards, or local educators. These programs, are rarely based on evidence or careful reviews of relevant theories and research. Berliner and Biddle (1995) believe that research on education is not used because there is so little of it. In addition, funding for educational research has become near nonexistent. They go on to state that the budget for research on education in the United States amounts to only a few hundred million dollars each year (347).

To address the issue more effectively, Berliner and Biddle (1995) present guidelines for those interested in improving the conduct and effectiveness of American education. They state that schooling in America can be improved by: 1) according parents more dignity and their children more hope; 2) making certain that all schools have funds needed to provide a decent education for their students; 3) reducing the size of our largest schools; 4) enlarging the goals of curricula; and 5) rethinking and redesigning the system for evaluating student achievement.

Berliner and Biddle (1995) assert that schools that want to serve the needs of business should concentrate less on skill training and more on the values that students will need when they enter the workplace. They continue by adding that:

Schools should be preparing workers who believe in striving for quality, who possess a willingness to work hard, who give loyalty to their employers, who understand why punctuality and high rates of attendance are necessary, who can treat customers and fellow workers with respect, and who can work cooperatively in groups (89).

Debate about a curriculum for the future, Berliner and Biddle suggest, should be thorough and ongoing, so some consensus can result. Above all, they are hopeful that society as a whole will become more involved in curriculum planning to counter what they consider as the overly-powerful voices of business and government.

Community Building

One movement gaining favor as an effective means to institute reform is based on the concept of community building. It is emerging in the corporate sector and has implications for public schooling as well. Business, in particular, is beginning to rethink its goals and the way it is structured in response to the many changes taking place in society today. The world is in a period of transition that has reached a unique junction that Jarman and Land (1995) refer to as a "breakpoint." Traditional beliefs about how community works and the relationship of the individual to the group, they contend, are being questioned (Jarman and Land 1992, in Gozdz, 1995). They see a new foundation arising for community that requires new insight, new vision, and new values.

John W. Gardner (1990) affirms that, in a true community environment, individuals have an opportunity to achieve extraordinary performances. He explains that:

Where community exists it confers upon its members identity, a sense of belonging, a measure of security. Individuals acquire a sense of self partly from their continuous relationships to others, and from the culture of their native place. But, with today's mobility, and with family and community disintegration, many of those anchors for the sense of self no longer exist. Without the continuity of the shared values that community provides, freedom cannot survive (Gardner 1990, in Gozdz, 1995).

A view of community that addresses human relationships draws a clear distinction between community and society through the use of the terms *gemeinschaft* and

gesellschaft. *Gemeinschaft* means "community" and is based on a "we" identity that includes individuals' shared goals, values, and a shared conception of being. *Gesellschaft* translates to "society" which is an artificial community where individuals operate independently regardless of any uniting forces in place (Tonnes ([1887] 1957, in Sergiovanni, 1994). Families and neighborhoods traditionally would be considered *gemeinschaft* while corporations and some schools have operated as models of *gesellschaft*.

Their impersonal nature and the rigid control industrial giants have had over people's lives is being challenged by efforts that foster a cooperative spirit to address today's volatile climate. This cooperative spirit is at the core of a new learning model some observers feel is needed not only for business, but for all social institutions including education and the family. Peter M. Senge (1995) believes that leadership in this model must be collective and that performance and practice are at the heart of the learning environment (Senge 1995, in Gozdz, 1995). Any institutional design, Kazimierz Gozdz (1995) contends, must view community as a living system, embracing the paradigm of wholeness that must nurture itself through developmental stages of growth, ultimately responding, in a responsible way, to the issues of a larger society.

One set of criteria for building a new community model has been proposed by John W. Gardner (1990). Some of the characteristics are: 1) wholeness that incorporates diversity and shared values; 2) caring, trust, and participation; 3) communication within

and outside the community; 4) a vision that includes future development of young people; and 5) a structure that institutionalizes maintenance (Gardner 1990, in Gozdz, 1995).

The attributes of this new community model are beginning to effect changes in the way educational institutions are structured. The public school system, in some ways, has resembled a giant corporation with its bureaucratic structure and rigid control. The school is considered by some as a powerful entity that operates in a climate of mystification, objectification, and colonization (Freire 1982). School officials, critics contend, seek control of their clients by discouraging dialogue, making individuals conform to the institution's standards, and denying them their own experiences by replacing them with the school's prescribed culture (Harper, Nelson and Mayfield 1996).

Any school that chooses to embody the principles of community building must, as Sergiovanni (1994) suggests, redefine leadership, where "the emphasis is no longer on power *over* others, but on power *to* accomplish shared visions and goals" (xix). Important attributes of such a system would include: 1) a balance between institutional values and individualism; 2) a democratic ideology built on valued relationships, compassion, and commitment, and shared responsibilities; and 3) a climate that fosters learning through inquiry (xix).

Parental Involvement in Schools

An Historical Perspective

Bloom (1992) claims that recent decades have confirmed a more intensive interest among a growing number of parents in America's school system. The 1960s were a time

when mothers and fathers began to seek more individual identities for themselves and their children. Parents started to realize that their goals and values were not the same as they had been in earlier years, and their role in public education reflected this change in perspective. There was no longer a separation between home and school. Parents were speaking out for themselves and their children as to what was being taught in the public schools. As a result, parents began to question the educational, social, and moral goals of public schools. It was their way of becoming involved in their children's education.

According to Wolfendale (1992), there was a significant rise in parental involvement during the 1970s. The most prominent influence leading to the increase was the impact of the American Head Start Program, a government-sponsored early intervention program for socially disadvantaged children and their families. Through this program, parents became more knowledgeable, more confident, more understanding of the system, and better equipped to ask questions and challenge the status quo—in a word, "they became empowered" (7). It was also during this time that the Parent Teacher Association began to look for a stronger voice in the public school hierarchy.

In the 1980s, parents' views of the educational system differed, and many developed new strategies compatible with their own goals and values. Working and middle-class parents who kept their children in public schools remained active participants and supported contemporary ideas such as parent choice, school-based management, and fiscal reform. Other parents pulled their children out of the public school system and moved them to parochial or private schools in hopes of recreating the homogeneous

communities of the 1950s (Bloom 1992). Many parents were also reacting to what they perceived as a serious problem of violence and drugs in public schools, although a recent survey reported that 90 percent of the public system's students felt safe in their schools (Berliner and Biddle 1995).

Parental involvement in the 1990s continues to be a crucial issue among educators, politicians, and parents. The National Center on Families, Communities, Schools, and Children's Learning developed a new national goal for this decade. They propose that, By the year 2000, all schools should be ready for children and their families. This goal must be set and met by schools at all grade levels, not just schools for very young children. Schools must inform and involve all families, including those with different cultural backgrounds, to gain their ideas and assistance in helping all children succeed in school (Swap 1993, ix).

Berliner and Biddle (1995) suggest that schooling in America can be improved by strengthening ties between communities and their schools. They believe that the evidence resulting from school-community research studies suggests that parental involvement in education is associated with high levels of morale and achievement in schools. They state further that:

When schools are more involved with their communities and when teachers and parents see and talk more often with one another, they are more likely to know about one another's needs and are better able to work in tandem to promote the learning and welfare of students (329).

However, Berliner and Biddle (1995) also believe that there are barriers that may prevent schools and communities from building strong relationships. These barriers include: 1) the large number of American parents who must work; 2) bureaucratic pressures in which schools have very little control; and 3) disjunctures between the culture shared by the educators in the school and that of the parents of the community.

Schools that view themselves as extensions of the community have a higher rate of satisfaction among families, especially when parents and their children are included in the decision-making process at a school level. School site councils, composed of school administrators, teachers, parents, and local leaders who are empowered to set goals and strategies consistent with community standards, have been highly successful in improving a school's performance. Swap (1993) points out that,

When parents and teachers work on school improvement tasks together, there is pleasure in discovering the power of their own voices to create change beyond the classroom and pride in contributing to goals that are shared by the community (11).

Parental Involvement and School Improvement

Collaboration between school and family creates additional resources available for school improvement. Curriculum can be enriched or better defined by parents who have a keen understanding of their community's roots or their own culture. A wide array of local resources can be made available by parents knowledgeable about the world of work, agency connections, or cultural institutions. Many parents are able to offer their services to schools as aides or volunteers, assisting in the individualization and enrichment of student activity. Other parents may have unique talents that can assist in improving school facilities and programs, such as designing playgrounds, enhancing athletic venues, or installing computer labs.

One of the most important factors in a child's success in school is the degree to which his or her parents are actively involved in his or her education (Schneider 1993). More than ever, families today find themselves in need of support and sustenance from

schools to help educate their children. In return, schools need the cooperation of the home to make this possible. The question then becomes, how can families and schools unite to support the children in our society today?

There are many ways that parents can become involved in their children's education. The form parental involvement takes may be shaped by three factors: 1) the resources and opportunities available to the parent; 2) the relationship between parent and child; and 3) the interests of parents in the education of the child. Some parents become involved in school activities because of a school-associated parent friendship community, or as a form of cultural enrichment (Ibid.).

Parents may become involved to intervene in a problem, or they may be interested in program options which are available in order to guide their children in making the best decision. Parents may become classroom volunteers which provides them with the opportunity to observe the overall experience of the child's education through firsthand information about the environment of the school, interacting with teachers, and observing the interactions of the child with other students. Other volunteer roles for parents have included test graders, hall monitors, or lunchroom helpers. In either case, the evidence suggests that parental involvement significantly affects morale and achievement in schools (Berliner and Biddle 1995).

Parents may also become actively involved in a parent-teacher organization. Groups like these discuss school policy, extracurricular activities, and the allocation of school funds. They may participate in after school programs, speak to classes about their

profession, or tutor students who are having difficulty in school. The forms that parental involvement take, along with the direct influence of family resources and the context of the school, will make a difference in the child's educational experience (Schneider 1993).

Berliner and Biddle (1995) believe that parents are more likely to involve themselves in the school if they feel that they have some control over what goes on in the school and that they can influence their children's education. Therefore, schools not only need to encourage parental involvement, but they should give parents the opportunity to express their opinions and concerns about school policies and procedures.

Parental Involvement and School Achievement

Many researchers have studied the link between parental involvement and school achievement. A study conducted by Sattes (1985) cites the positive effects on the achievement of children in grades K-12, either when parents are trained as tutors or when they are simply informed about and support their children's learning. Sattes also reviewed several studies that link parental involvement with increased student self-esteem, fewer behavior problems, and better school attendance (Swap 1993). She concluded after reviewing over forty studies that,

Parental involvement impacts student achievement when that involvement is meaningful to parents. The highest achievement gains occur when parents are involved in preschool or elementary grades as home tutors. However, gains are also reported when parents are involved as supporters and reinforcers of their child's school learning and when parents are informed about the child's school progress (3).

Olmsted and Rubin (1983) conducted four studies that specifically linked parent behaviors to child achievement. The studies showed significant relationships between

parental measures and child achievement. For example, in one study, program parents were observed teaching their children, and their rate of use of Desirable Teaching Behaviors (DTBS) was compared with controls. The researchers found that program parents used more DTBS than control parents. There was a definite correlation between the number of DTBS used by parents and children's scores on the total reading and math subtests of the Stanford Achievement Test. To conclude their studies, they emphasized, ...the strong relationship between parental involvement and child school performance, the willingness of parents to be active participants in their children's education, and the importance of increasing the active participation of parents in schools (Ibid., 5).

Anne Henderson (1987), who reviewed thirty-six studies in 1981 and forty-nine in 1987 on the link between parental involvement and children's school achievement, concluded that,

...the evidence is now beyond dispute: parental involvement improves student achievement. When parents are involved, children do better in school, and they go to better schools (2).

Citing further evidence,

...those parents who engage at home in school-initiated, structured activities designed to complement the school program have children whose reading achievement test scores improve at a faster rate over the course of the school year (Schneider 1993, 78).

Another study was conducted by Swap (1993), to determine the utility of involving parents simply as reinforcers of their children's learning during a fifteen-week pilot program to improve children's reading scores. The children were assigned to a control group, a peer tutoring group, or a peer tutoring group with home reinforcement. The researchers found that,

When the school contacted parents by telephone or letter to inform them about their children's progress, the children performed better on the Stanford Reading Achievement Test than did either the control group or the group that had experienced peer tutoring but no parental reinforcement. For example, reading comprehension scores were twice

as high for the peer tutoring plus parental reinforcement group than that for the peer tutoring group alone (6).

While some Americans felt the unrest and individual expression of the 1960s were eroding the fabric of our society, others viewed the times as promoting dialogue for a more open and democratic society. In either case, America's schools were not immune to the changing times. Parents challenged the public system to become more responsive to their children's needs. The federal government assumed a more active role, as well, especially with such programs as Head Start that targeted the socially-disadvantaged and empowered their parents.

Wolfendale (1992) states that not all parents were satisfied with the direction public school education was taking and were uncomfortable with government mandates, desegregation, and the values they felt public schools were promoting. Many looked for alternatives in the private system, seeking to maintain what they considered to be traditional school values. Public schools responded by offering school choice, school-based management, and fiscal reform to encourage parental support and involvement.

As a result of the 1960s' focus on a more democratic approach to school problems, strategies that led school professionals and families to make meaningful decisions together about school goals and values became popular. Parent volunteers, including those with career expertise, recreational skills, and cultural contributions, provided schools with a valuable human resource. Other assistance came from a variety of local organizations and agencies that enriched a school's curriculum with a unique community perspective.

Berliner and Biddle (1995) believe that American parents, as a rule, are not dissatisfied with public schools. In fact, they contend that this is a myth started by rumors and portrayals of education in the popular press. Furthermore, they cite a study in which parents were asked to rate their local schools. It was found that 72 percent of the parents gave their school an A or B, while only 7 percent graded it a D or F (112). This high level of parental satisfaction with local schools is growing according to Berliner and Biddle (1995) and is higher today than it was seven years ago.

The studies mentioned earlier by Schneider (1993) and Swap (1993) show that parental involvement is a positive factor in raising student performance. Their studies confirm that strong family interest in school positively affects both student performance and behavior, especially in the child's early school years. Epstein (1991) has pointed out that children's reading scores improved when parents devoted additional time at home to complementary school activities.

Even though the corporate satellite school is a relatively new concept in public education, its roots can be traced as far back as two hundred years ago to the advent of company towns. The Industrial Revolution spawned the growth of factories and mass production, very often in areas where no formal communities had been established. Business leaders, in order to insure a stable work force, provided housing for its workers adjacent to its plants and mines. Community institutions, such as government and churches, were established, and eventually schools. These schools often were the center

of community life but the company was actively involved because it provided the tax base for their operation.

The modern satellite school was first developed in the 1980s in Miami, Florida, mainly as the solution to overcrowded schools and a strained budget. The sponsoring business usually provided the land and startup costs and sometimes contributed toward operating expenses. Schools were located near the worksite, primarily as a convenience for employees and their families, and usually served children in the primary grades. Some satellite schools took advantage of their small size by developing programs that provided individualized instruction and cooperative learning. Research showed that worker morale and productivity improved and parents were more actively involved in their child's education (Abella 1991). Sponsorship of satellite schools ranged from manufacturers, retail stores, and banks to hospitals, utilities, and foundations.

The satellite school is a recent example of the collaboration between business and public education. Most other partnerships since World War Two were based on reactions to America's security status during the Cold War period, or, more recently, a response to global competition in the marketplace and the explosive nature of the information age.

Today's ongoing debate about American education includes the issue of the school-to-work connection. Critics contend that schools need to revamp their curriculum and structure to address the needs of tomorrow's workers. Defenders question the motives of business and the overemphasis on preparation for the workplace. They point to the democratic nature of American schooling and its commitment to the Jeffersonian

ideals of intellectualism and morality, adding that business takes a self-serving view of the purpose of an education.

If anything, these advocates assert, schools should concentrate on helping to develop the personal qualities of its students, because those attributes that are more essential in the marketplace. As far as technical skills are concerned, studies show American workers are already the highest in productivity, and that most parents give schools decent marks for performance (Berliner and Biddle 1995). The SCANS group of leaders of business and government may provide a solution that is closest to a balance of job skills and individual growth. Their blueprint of education calls for equal emphasis on the academics, preparation for work, and the development of personal qualities, all in the context of a lifetime continuum of learning.

In light of the controversy, business continues to contract for partnerships with schools. Much of their financial support is aimed at higher education, implying that the "elite," highly-skilled worker is still their top priority. Many of industry's K-12 partnerships, on the other hand, have attempted to address reform, but with little success in effecting systemic change. Business and educational leaders alike are cautioned that any reform measures should be based on shared goals, adequately funded, and thoroughly researched. Above all, any move toward improving education needs to preserve the dignity of parents and provide all children with hope.

The role of parents in public schooling is considered more important than ever. Many became involved and empowered as a result of such programs as Head Start. At

the same time, however, others became disenchanted with public education and looked for alternatives elsewhere. Schools face a challenge in reaching out to the community, overcoming its own bureaucratic obstacles, communicating with working parents, and resolving issues related to cultural diversity.

There is little argument that education improves when schools are able to connect meaningfully with their communities. Research shows that student morale and achievement rise with increased parental involvement (Berliner and Biddle 1995). The resource of parental involvement in school improvement manifests itself in volunteerism, a role in decision making, conferences with teachers, and interaction with the child in the learning process. Schneider (1993) believes there is a strong link between parental involvement, especially when parents were able to teach their children at home. Finally, despite the heavy criticism of public schooling, the vast majority of parents expressed satisfaction with the performance of their local school.

If meaningful reform is to take place, whether in education or business, some theorists believe it must be rooted in the concept of community building (Gardner 1990, in Gozdz, 1995). This process embodies a wholeness of purpose that seeks input and cooperation from the entire group. Those advancing the idea of community do so by distinguishing it from the concept of "society." They argue that society is an artificial community that operates basically in a climate of independence despite an organized structure. On the other hand, community develops in an environment of shared values and goals.

For community building to be successful, there must be a sense of caring and trust by all. Leadership needs to be collective, learning and communication encouraged, and a vision in place that nurtures growth. Some businesses and schools are not true communities, but are bureaucratic institutions maintaining strict control by promoting conformity and obedience (Gardner 1990, in Gozdz, 1995). In the model of community building, the emphasis is not on "power over" others, but on "power to" reach common goals.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

A Qualitative Research Perspective

A qualitative approach was selected for inquiring into the corporate satellite school study because such a perspective recognizes that reality is socially constructed, complex, and everchanging. Researchers who utilize this perspective come to understand and interpret how a variety of participants in a social setting such as a school construct the world around them. To form their interpretations, researchers must gain access to a variety of participants' perspectives, thoughts, attitudes, and opinions. Study designs generally focus on in-depth, long-term interaction with relevant people in one or several sites. The researcher becomes the main research instrument, asking questions and interacting with research participants. The concern with researcher objectivity is replaced by a focus on the impact of subjectivity and particularity on the research process (Glesne and Peshkin 1991).

Qualitative researchers immerse themselves into the lives of others to seek meaning from participants' experiences. Communication is developed which fosters a more personal relationship between researcher and participant. The main focus of this perspective is to involve the researcher and participants in active participatory roles. The openness of qualitative research allows the researcher to approach the inherent complexity of social interaction and to do justice to that complexity, to respect it in its own right (Ibid.). A qualitative research perspective also makes use of several methods to collect

data that focus on direct interactions with the participants. For example, interviews allow the researcher to gain insight into the real-life experiences of the participants, thus promoting meaningful research.

Research Context

The Central Valley Satellite School in San Bernardo is located on property provided by Pacific Circle Corporation. The school consists of five portable buildings that include an administrative office and four classrooms. The portables are spacious (about twice the size of a regular classroom). Most of the classrooms are decorated with student artwork and schoolwork. There is a small playground behind the school which includes a slide, swings, bars, and other recreational equipment.

The area surrounding the school is set with trees and rolling hills. There are a few houses near the school, but no stores or businesses other than the Pacific Circle facility that is located in the neighborhood. It is a somewhat rural community with open fields. Most of the local children in the school are from upper-middle-class families, who are employed as doctors, lawyers, dentists, and other professional workers who live in this area. Children who live on the other side of the freeway, however, come from working-class families. The student population, according to one school official, is approximately 80 percent White and 20 percent other ethnic groups including Hispanics, Asians, African-Americans, and Native Americans. These figures are substantiated with those found in the 1996 edition of *California: Cities, Towns, and Counties* (Hornor 1996).

Central Valley Elementary School, the main campus, is the largest elementary school in the San Bernardo City School District, with a student population of 500. The cultural make-up of the school is similar to the satellite branch with an approximate 80 to 20 ratio of Whites to other ethnic groups. The campus consists of several buildings housing classrooms, a computer lab, a day care center, a cafeteria-gym complex, a playground and an administrative wing.

The satellite school was created as a result of a partnership between the San Bernardo City School District and the Pacific Circle Corporation. The superintendent of the San Bernardo City Schools presented the partnership idea to the Director of Public Affairs at Pacific Circle. This partnership took over one year to develop because the idea needed to be approved by the school board and the employees and management of Pacific Circle.

Within a short time, the partnership was approved and plans for the school began. Initially, the Pacific Circle Corporation invested \$400,000 to prepare the site for the new school, providing the land, and erecting several portable buildings. The Central Valley Satellite School is a K-3 school that enrolls students whose parents are either Pacific Circle employees or residents of the San Bernardo City School District. The partnership gives first priority however, to Pacific Circle corporate employees. Any remaining space is then open to others, according to a waiting list.

There are approximately 112 students who attend the Central Valley Satellite School. There are four classrooms with twenty-eight students in each. The classrooms

are divided into a kindergarten, first grade, and two second and third grade combination classes. Each classroom has one teacher and an instructional aide. The school implements the state's curriculum frameworks as well as providing the same curriculum of the host school. The Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program is a unique characteristic of this school. Students who are deaf and blind attend the host school, but also go to the satellite campus as part of a mainstreaming activity incorporated by the school district. All of the students at the satellite campus are learning sign language. Eventually, school personnel would like to see it become a school in which sign language instructors communicate with the deaf and hard-of-hearing students when they are in the regular classrooms.

The Central Valley Satellite School was selected for this research because it provides access to resources such as a principal, teachers, business leaders, parents, and other professionals who are knowledgeable about corporate satellite schools. This research site was also selected because of the unique partnership developed by the San Bernardo City School District and Pacific Circle. This is the only corporate satellite school located on the west coast and therefore could be examined by those interested in establishing a similar business-education partnership.

Research Participants

The participants selected in this study will include one elementary school principal, two teachers, one parent, two business-employee parents, and one business leader who are involved in the Central Valley Satellite School. The participants were chosen because they are active members in the Central Valley Satellite School and are knowledgeable about

corporate satellite schools. Their knowledge, understanding, and involvement in corporate satellite schools was considered as criteria for selection.

The research participants, corporation, city, school district, and satellite school involved in this study have been given pseudonyms in order to protect their identity and maintain confidentiality. The following section will provide a brief description of the research participants and their affiliation with the Central Valley Satellite School.

Michael is a district administrator for the San Bernardo City Schools. Michael has been involved with the Central Valley Satellite School since its opening in February of 1992. Michael became interested in the idea of a satellite school because it was a way to bring education and business closer together.

Beth is a teacher at the Central Valley Satellite School. Beth first began teaching at Central Valley Elementary School, but transferred to the satellite school after hearing about an available position. Beth enjoys the satellite school because of its small family-like community where everyone knows one another and a high percentage of parents participate in their children's education.

Mary is a teacher at the Central Valley Satellite School. Before coming to the satellite school, Mary taught at another elementary school in San Bernardo. Mary began reading articles about the satellite school and became interested in applying for a position because it sounded like something she wanted to do. After several phone calls and personal contacts, Mary was hired as a teacher at the Central Valley Satellite School.

Samantha is a parent whose son attended the Central Valley Satellite School for one year. Samantha works in private industry (not associated with Pacific Circle), as a consultant to corporations and is also an educator in San Bernardo. Samantha became involved in the satellite school because of her background in business and education and proved to be a resource for the parent organizations at both schools.

Richard is a manager at Pacific Circle as well as a parent involved in the Central Valley Satellite School. Richard heard about the satellite school from other parents and colleagues and decided to enroll his daughter. Richard's daughter attended the school when it opened in 1992 and this will be her last year at the school. Richard volunteers in his daughter's classroom one day per week and is also involved in teaching in the after-school program.

Donna is a Pacific Circle employee and a parent involved in both the Central Valley Elementary School and the Central Valley Satellite School. Donna's daughter attended the satellite school for four years and is now attending Central Valley Elementary School. Donna's son is in his fourth year at the satellite school and will be transferring to the main campus next year. Donna has been a parent volunteer for several years in her children's classrooms.

George is a manager for Pacific Circle in San Bernardo. George's responsibilities include working on government affairs, community relations, and employee and media communications. George heard about the satellite school concept from the superintendent of the San Bernardo City Schools. Eventually they got together and discussed the idea of

a satellite school. George worked closely with Pacific Circle in developing a plan for a satellite school on Pacific Circle property.

Data Collection

Interviewing

Data collection will follow procedures outlined by Seidman (1991) and Glesne and Peshkin (1992). At least two semi-structured, open-ended interviews were conducted with each of the seven participants. Interviews were scheduled in advance, with respect to the participants' schedules, during the 1996-1997 school year at the Central Valley Satellite School in San Bernardo, California. The second interview was conducted, in some cases, by telephone.

The first interviews lasted approximately sixty to ninety minutes using a list of questions developed for the study, along with questions that emerged during conversations between the researcher and participant. The purpose of the first interview was to help the participants feel comfortable and free to express their perspectives, thoughts, opinions, and beliefs.

The second interviews were a phone exchange lasting approximately forty-five minutes. This second interview focused on questions resulting from responses given by participants in the first interview, and corrections and clarifications of data resulting from the first interview. Both interviews were tape recorded and transcribed in the participants' exact words.

Having recorded and transcribed the interviews, the researcher presented the participants with transcriptions so they knew exactly what was said and were therefore able to provide clarification of the transcription and add further comments. The transcriptions enhanced the researcher's understanding of the participants' responses and suggested questions for further use.

Interviewing is an important method to utilize for several reasons. First, it allows the researcher to discover people's experiences and gain insight into those experiences. Second, interviewing provides access to the context of people's behaviors and thereby provides a way for researchers to understand the meaning of that behavior (Seidman 1991). Third, interviewing seeks to explore an individual's opinions, perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs (Glesne and Peshkin 1991). Fourth, according to Glesne and Peshkin (1991), interviewing brings together different persons and personalities and allows the researcher to investigate the reasons why something happened.

Open-ended questions are important in an interview because the participants are able to put together their experiences according to what they believe was important to them, as well as what they valued in their experiences. Open-ended questions also provide an opportunity for the participants to express their experiences in their own words and expand on the questions, thus promoting emergence of new, unanticipated data. Finally, open-ended questions facilitate communication between the researcher and the participant where meaningful exchanges can take place (Ibid.).

Observations

During the fall of the 1996-1997 school year, observations were scheduled at the Central Valley Satellite School. Observations were scheduled in advance with respect to the participants' schedules. Notes were kept about the participants' actions, and conversations, as well as demographic data related to their ethnicity, gender, social class, and age. In addition, observations enabled the researcher to become familiar with the research site, the neighborhood, and the participants. During both the interview and observation process, a field notebook was maintained to record descriptions of people, events, activities, and conversations that included thoughts, ideas, and reflections about what occurred noting patterns that emerged. The data collected from observations was reviewed and analyzed for meaning and emergent themes.

Document Analysis

Documents published by the individual corporate satellite schools, and newspaper articles from the Santa Rosa Press, Tampa Tribune, St. Petersburg Times and the Miami Herald, were examined to corroborate the interviews and observations conducted in this study. The data found in documents raised questions, thereby reshaping observations and interviews. The documents provided a source of data that includes historical, demographic, and personal information that were often unavailable from other sources. Thus, documents enriched what was seen and heard by supporting, expanding, and challenging the researcher's portrayals and perceptions (Glesne and Peshkin 1991).

Making Thematic Connections

Throughout the research process, data obtained from the interviews, observations, and documents was organized in individual files according to the method of data collection. The data was read several times as the researcher looked for emerging patterns.

The data obtained from the interviews was transcribed in the participants' exact words. The transcriptions were read and reviewed and passages of interest highlighted. The researcher reconstructed the data and organized participants' comments and field notes on large pieces of poster board to post the highlighted sections of the transcriptions according to common themes that appeared in the participants' statements.

While interpreting the data, the researcher sorted and organized the participants' responses into categories. Categories emerged from the researcher's interpretation and understanding of the participants' opinions, thoughts, and experiences. The observations and documents were reviewed for material that reflected information related to the categories. In the final analysis, three methods of data collection were utilized in an effort to present thematic connections related to this study.

The data in this study was presented according to the categories. The categories include: 1) participants' understanding of business-education partnerships; 2) contrasting the satellite school and its main campus; and 3) parental involvement at the satellite school.

This study utilizes a qualitative research perspective with the primary focus on the participants' understandings and experiences of the Central Valley Satellite School. The data collected from interviews, observations, and documents, enabled the researcher to identify meaningful components of the satellite school. The next chapter will present data from participants involved in this study.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Participants' Understanding of Business-Education Partnerships

The Business Perspective

As stated in the literature review, Waddock (1994) believes that businesses today need to collaborate with teachers, administrators, parents, and communities "to tackle the systemic problems that afflict many individual schools, districts, and city and state education systems" (5). Past support for public schools has included financial assistance, volunteers, and time.

The satellite school qualifies as an innovative way in which business and education might work cooperatively. George, a business executive with Pacific Circle, refers to the satellite school "as one of the most outstanding examples of a true partnership" stating that,

PC provided the land, provided the \$89,000 dollars for startup costs, and did the site preparation. Did all the grading, and the drainage, and bringing utilities into the buildings and that was quite expensive. So, we provided the land, a cash donation, and the site preparation. That was our part of the partnership. But, then beyond that, on an ongoing basis... obviously what we've provided here are the employees who are the parents.

George used business terminology when he pointed out that PC provides a definitive "market" (children of its employees) for a new "business" (the satellite school) to attract "potential customers," while the school district provides portable buildings, a principal, teachers, and a curriculum. In other words, the school is in charge of the learning process. Analogies similar to this are used by those who believe schools could be

more effective if they used a business-model that must learn to survive in a competitive marketplace (Nelson, Palonsky, and Carlson 1995, 196). As George made clear,

We don't try to tell them what to do. We know we're not in a management role and so, ... we're kind of a silent partner, meaning that we do have a good relationship. We do have ongoing dialogue and we keep thinking about what else we could do to improve this world. But, it's definitely run and managed by the school district.

George's view of a partnership is seen, as he expresses it, "PC's way to improve this world." The "silent partner" tag he mentions would seem to indicate that PC is sensitive about community perception of its role in the satellite operation. In other words, the company is willing to make contributions of time and money, but makes it clear that the school district is responsible for the educational process. Yet the metaphor of a "silent partner" is provoking as it infers a behind the scenes relationship.

If the satellite concept meets the criteria of true reform, as presented by Berliner and Biddle (1995), then the Central Valley operation lacks the research element, but qualifies as a reform venture. The satellite school was, among other things, a response to the needs of many working parents, adequately funded, and based on goals shared by all who were involved which included the interests of PC employees.

From another viewpoint, however, this type of partnership could be seen as doing little to address systemic change Waddock (1994) believes to be essential, and is just another relationship that, although well-intentioned, is localized and isolated, and not the major type of contribution needed for true reform (Townley 1989).

The Central Valley partnership would appear to be similar to an alliance between the American Bankers Insurance Group and the Dade County Public Schools. As stated

in the literature review, the American Bankers Insurance Group agreed to provide the land, the school facility, maintenance, utilities, and security, while the school district provided teachers, administrators, resources, and curriculum. PC saw itself making a contribution as a community leader and providing a convenience for its workers and their children. The company was more than willing to offer time and money, but gave no indication it saw the partnership as a major reform effort of the educational structure or process.

The School Perspective

Two teachers from the satellite faculty emphasized their view of the partnership as a benefit to both the company and employee parents and how that relationship impacts the school. Mary saw family stability as a real concern and felt that a company needs to recognize that the personal lives of its employees, especially those in single-parent situations, is an important consideration. One teacher pointed out that businesses need to recognize the importance of family issues and must try to accommodate their employees. An indication that businesses support family issues would help create happy and productive employees.

This is illustrated in the Learning Well School's (Clearwater, Florida) commitment to its employees to help fill the gap between work and family responsibilities by instituting a comprehensive benefits package. The Learning Well School is a reaffirmation and demonstration of that commitment, although Honeywell employees were entitled to family benefits with or without a school.

Bay Park School, also in Clearwater, is another example of a business focusing on family issues. Bayfront Medical Center, as the partner, provides its employees with benefit packages that include employees' families. The hospital provides a child care center for employees' children who have minor illnesses.

Michael a district administrator states that,
...a business-education partnership involves an ongoing relationship between a business and a school. A partnership implies that the school and business have an established relationship which might include regular activities where business representatives come into the school to volunteer/mentor/tutor.

Because the satellite is a K-3 school, the involvement of business partners as volunteers could be seen as an early entry to career awareness. Starting at the primary level is one of the major elements Charner et al. (1995) believe is needed to build a progressive school-to-work system. However, schools should be cautious about overemphasizing the idea that schooling is primarily preparation for work. Rather, the focus should continue to be on a community institution that promotes academic learning, fellowship, good citizenship and preparation for economic success.

Beth a teacher at the Central Valley Satellite School, claims that the business-education partnership increased parental involvement:

I see it more through the parents because the parents are right there on campus. I have more parents, more male parents in my classroom. Parents these days are very concerned about their children...at our campus, is much different because parents are here all the time...We get about four to five parents eating lunch with their kids on a daily basis. It's a different atmosphere. The employees have the freedom to be involved in their child's education. I can always contact them. It's very easy to see them when they're picking their child up, because it's PC and you can see them all the time.

The convenience of the satellite's location to PC employees and the increased opportunities for parental involvement by PC employees would seem to eliminate some of the barriers that Berliner and Biddle (1995) feel are a hindrance to a strong community-school relationship. The constant contact between parents and teachers, they contend, can better "promote the learning and welfare of students" (329).

The Downtown Open School in Minneapolis, Minnesota is similar to Central Valley, involving parents in their child's education. Many parents participate in school advisory groups, attend frequent conferences, and visit their child on a regular basis (1990).

Businesses do need to consider the family issues of their employees. This may include flextime for parents to volunteer in the classroom, to have lunch with their child, or to participate in special events. These collaborations enable the companies to create a "perk" in benefits for their employees. Businesses, however, should be responsible for family issues for other reasons besides as a perk for employees. Businesses should try to accommodate all families in a community, not only because it is part of their philosophy and concern about their employees, but because it contributes to the overall health of the community they inhabit. Even though businesses provide jobs, they use many of the resources from the community at large, as well, and need to serve a base larger than their own workforce. An alternative view would suggest that the private corporation "perk" was being subsidized by the local community in that the community did not need to build

the alternative site, yet contributed considerable dollars in supporting additional costs in school personnel-easily 85 percent of any school district's budget.

Parents' Perspectives

Parents, school, and company all benefit from a business-education partnership, according to Samantha, a parent and educator, who works in private industry as a consultant to corporations. She acknowledged PC's contribution of initial startup costs, and concluded that:

I don't see anyone who doesn't get something out of the relationship. Of course, students have this environment where parents can come down and interact with their children during the day which is incredible. And, it's not a situation where this campus has something lacking because of its tie in to the partnership with the San Bernardo City Schools. The children aren't missing a thing in terms of educational base. So, there isn't this overriding corporate control which can, of course, mess up the educational base and that whole thing.

The literature review substantiates the economic impact of corporate contributions by pointing out that, between 1987 and 1990, the Dade County Public School System saved over a million dollars because expenditures on building construction and some operating expenses were paid for by the American Bankers Insurance Group (Beales 1993, 2).

Donna, a parent and Pacific Circle employee, strongly affirmed that PC believes education is an important issue. The corporation supports parent involvement and is working to balance the work-life issues of its employees. This is a company she feels values its workers and is willing to offer flextime, extracurricular activities, financial support, professional expertise, and resources.

The views of a business-education partnership provided by the participants seem to be similar because most agree that, to foster better employee relations, a company needs to focus on the welfare of its workers. If businesses want to promote a happier workforce, they need to accommodate their employees by providing a benefits package that includes a convenient school location, time to volunteer in school activities, and most importantly, quality time to spend with their children. Any company strategy, however, should include ways to compensate the entire community when it institutes a public school partnership that results in favored treatment for a special group. One of the participants felt that schools and businesses in this type of arrangement should have separate and clearly-defined roles to preserve the integrity of public education.

Another key issue brought out by several of the participants was the focus on family. Businesses, they felt, must be aware that there needs to be a connection among work, family, and school. This relationship, they hoped, once maintained, would improve employee morale, promote a more stable family environment, and create an atmosphere for greater parental involvement. The work, family, and school relationship, furthermore, would expand the communication and dialogue among parents, teachers, students, and business leaders.

A business-education partnership is a joint venture where collaboration is essential. It is important to note that businesses should not provide just facilities and maintenance assistance, but realistic financial support to offset their impact on the local community.

Contrasting the Satellite School and Its Main Campus

On-Site Location

The satellite school is located on Pacific Circle property, with the main campus situated about a half-mile away. Both are public elementary schools and are part of the San Bernardo City School District. The satellite school offers enrollment to Pacific Circle employees first, and any remaining vacancies are offered to parents that live within that area. Approximately 80 percent of the students who attend the satellite school are children of Pacific Circle employees.

Several articles about satellite schools confirm that parents employed by the corporations are pleased with the on-site locations because they balance work and family issues. A survey conducted by the Central Valley Satellite School found that fourteen out of twenty parents considered the proximity to the workplace as a major advantage. Dan Sevilla, a single father of five, stated that,

....having the extra time to spend with my two youngest children at Pacific Circle's satellite school...is especially valuable. It promotes the family more. With my kids so close, I can go down there and have lunch with them, check up on them, build a relationship with the other kids who hang around my kids.

It is often very difficult for single parents to find quality time to spend with their children while working full-time in order to support the family. This leaves only a few hours for dinner, homework, and "talk time." The satellite school allowed Dan Sevilla to become more involved in his children's lives as well as spending more time with them. It is also apparent that some of his children's friends do not live in his neighborhood and school visits give him the opportunity to find out more about them.

Gloria Hill, a parent in the Learning Well Satellite School pointed out that the school's proximity to the workplace has enabled her to spend more time with her children without interfering with her work. The on-site location allowed her to personally observe her children's progress and talk to their teachers on a regular basis. The on-site location, it appears, promotes parent involvement because parents are able to come to school within a short time. On the other hand, many businesses provide release time for school-related business. With the school at the worksite, it is also clear that time for such business would be minimized resulting in savings for the company.

The nearness to the worksite also includes utilizing the resources of the business. George commented that the satellite school has access to Pacific Circle's security personnel, industrial nurses, fire truck, and public emergency equipment in case of a medical or security emergency. This is a valuable resource because it gives the children, parents, and staff a sense of security and protection. Not only can these resources be utilized in emergency situations, but the teachers can use the professionals' expertise in talking to their classes about their professions. This, of course, is also available from local community law enforcement and fire protection. The satellite students' access to extra benefits of a company's resources (i.e., private protection, professional services) could be criticized as an example of an "elitist" advantage not available to all (Berliner and Biddle 1995).

Donna, a parent and Pacific Circle employee, believes that a next-door location of a satellite school to work is a primary benefit to her (at least for the 80 percent of the parents who work for the company). As she remarked:

It's tremendous. Mornings are tough as it is, getting everybody out the door. And, so, having it five minutes from the workplace...I don't have to go cross-town with traffic. Being able to just walk down and have lunch. My daughter would call me, in kindergarten, if she did something. And I would come down, and take up to fifteen minutes to just check on things or whatever.

Preparing the family to start the day can often be a difficult and challenging task for parents. Once out the door, parents need to think about dropping off their children at school. Some parents may have a long commute because their local school is halfway across town. The on-site location of the satellite school provides PC parents with greater access to their children.

As stated in the literature review, Morton Plant Hospital and Pinellas County Schools developed a partnership that created South Ward Elementary School. Most students who attend South Ward Elementary School live outside of the school's boundaries, but the convenient location of the school allows parents to spend more time with their children.

Samantha, a satellite parent, claimed that the closeness of the school allowed fathers to participate in playground activities with their children as well as yard supervision. In her opinion, male parents and working mothers, as well, are often unable to participate in school activities. With the satellite school, more fathers participate, Samantha felt, because Pacific Circle employs a large percentage of them as engineers,

technicians, and computer specialists, and they often volunteer their professional expertise in the classroom.

Samantha also observed that the most obvious advantage of the on-site location is that PC parents can be closer to their children. She claims that parents feel more comfortable and at ease knowing the teachers, campus, and structure better because of the physical proximity. Working parents in regular public schools may not have the opportunity to meet the teachers and children and observe the classrooms and school. The convenience of the satellite location affords parents working for PC easier access to their children's school, eliminating one of the barriers Berliner and Biddle (1995) see as hampering a strong parent-school relationship (329).

Proximity is a definite advantage, according to George, in that, ...it simplifies the parents' life in terms of having their child nearby as opposed to having like...without a worksite school, there are a number of parents who have to take the child from home to day care and then from day care to school and from school to day care and from day care to home. Just a lot of logistics in terms of transportation and arrangements and who's going to do what. George's affirmation of the on-site location of the worksite school indicates how the arrangement simplifies PC parents' lives. Many satellite parents spend a lot of time picking up and dropping off children at day care, and picking up and dropping them off for extracurricular activities that include sports or special events, programs that are also offered at the main campus.

Educational Programs and School Environments

In the interviews, the participants were asked whether the school programs and school environments were more similar or more different in the two schools. In the view of Michael, a district administrator:

They're more similar. There are some differences, but you'll see differences in a second grade classroom here and a second grade class right next door. But, we tend to work as one staff. We have staff meetings as one school. We articulate as one school. So, the differences don't vary any more than they would just here on the main site depending on the personalities of the teachers, and their philosophies. And, of course, we all have a district curriculum that needs to be covered and we all follow the framework from the state.

As in any school, teachers are expected to follow the district's curriculum and the framework from the state. Therefore, one would find the curriculum at both schools to be more similar than different. However, educational programs differ when teachers integrate their own themes and ideas based on their philosophy, personality, and comfort with subject matter.

Beth, a teacher, agreed with her principal and noted that the curriculum at both schools is more similar than different. She added that the main campus and satellite school work together at grade-levels and incorporate similar activities.

Some satellite operations, however, take on a unique philosophy and character. The staff at the Downtown Open School in Minneapolis, Minnesota believes in individualized curriculum programs for students focusing on basic skills, cooperative learning, whole language, hands-on activities, and a student-centered philosophy. As another example, the Mill City Montessori School in Minneapolis, Minnesota focuses on a

curriculum that is sequentially designed to move from concrete to abstract concepts while children progress at their own rate of learning.

A different perspective was offered by Mary, another satellite teacher, who states, I think there is a difference. And, some of that is who's hired here (satellite school) versus who's hired down there (main campus). We are kind of an island up here (satellite school). I think there's an attempt to coordinate things. There's also a feeling that we take care of the kids and we do what we feel is best.

Even though staffs at both sites meet on a regular basis, this relationship, according to Mary, does not seem to have a strong impact on day-by-day operations at the satellite campus. Her use of the word "island" would indicate that there is not a constant, working relationship between the two, and the satellite staff, for the most part, is operating as a separate school.

Later, in our conversation, Mary added, We don't have a regular meeting with the teachers at the main campus. We know them, but they tend to pretty much have their program and we have ours. It's almost simpler to see us as our own little site than to try and coordinate with what they're doing down there because we're not seeing them everyday. It's difficult. It's good to learn from each other, but it's not a practical thing to try and coordinate everything we're doing, especially with different groups of kids that may have different needs.

In discussing the satellite school, several participants mentioned that they liked the small family-like atmosphere that accompanied the school. In fact, Beth asserted that,

The teachers know every single child here. Down there (main campus), I didn't know every kid. Knowing all of the children makes a big difference. For example, we can do a school-wide holiday play...down there you can't...there's way too many kids...we do weekly assemblies. They're called nifty kid assemblies, self-esteem assemblies...I start out with a ten-minute lesson and each of the teachers gives out a ribbon to one of the kids in their class.

Knowing all of the children on campus makes a big difference. This may be due to size, however, and is not unique simply because Central Valley is a partnership school.

Children and parents alike feel more comfortable knowing each other on a professional and personal level. The small family-like atmosphere allows the staff to put together more plays, assemblies, and extracurricular activities because of the small school population.

Berliner and Biddle (1995) suggest that schools of modest size tend to have advantages. They promote the community feeling and ideal that students should be sharing ideas and experiences with each other. They further state that "affiliation, self-concept as a learner, and motivation to achieve all seem to be higher when a student is in a smaller, more intimate environment" (Berliner and Biddle 1995, 296). It would be extremely difficult to do this with a larger school population of the host school because not all children would have an opportunity to participate. This provides an enhancement for the corporate satellite school not enjoyed by the host community, while the host community assumes personnel costs for smaller classes at the satellite school.

In another example, Beth described the school's satellite squad. The satellite squad consists of older children who go out at lunch time and look for children "doing the right thing." Children receive tickets for this and a drawing is held every week.

Donna, a parent, concluded that,

It's been a comfort level for me and for them (her children) to be smaller, family-oriented, but I think comfort level becomes even bigger when it's a familiarity thing.

Beth's comments about familiarity are consistent with what Donna is saying. Adults and children alike feel more comfortable when they are in a smaller setting and are familiar with their surroundings. This may not be equitable, however, since the home campus may

be supporting the members to allow for exceptionally small class sizes at the satellite school.

Transition From the Satellite School to the Main Campus

There has been some concern that children will have difficulty making the transition from the satellite school to the main campus. Because the satellite school is a K-3 school, children must transfer to the main campus or a neighborhood school in fourth grade. Some children may continue their friendships and others may need to start over and develop new ones, depending on where the children will be attending school. Mary states that,

This is a big transition for them. They're going from a very small site to the largest school in the district. So, there's a lot of concern about how to make that transition, to make sure that they are prepared academically, and able to handle all of the change...

Beth felt just as strongly as her colleague, adding that,

It's a big transition. We definitely PR so that parents will know. This is a very small campus. If you're here for four years, you're very sheltered. Everybody knows you. Everybody knows what you're doing. So, when they go to their home school or neighborhood school...they're very large campuses and it's an adjustment. It's a big, big, adjustment for the kids.

The staff realizes there is some concern about the transition from the satellite campus to a larger school, but, aside from discussions with parents, there is no formal orientation program to assist students and families who are changing campuses.

The transition for one family was not an easy task. Donna's daughter had a

difficult time making the transition from the satellite school to the main campus. Donna

went on to say that,

For my daughter, it was very difficult, and I attribute that to her personality, mostly. She would say that "this is a big school. There's so many kids here. I don't know anybody." Although there are six in her class now who came from the satellite school that wasn't enough reassurance for her. Those kids had coping tools, so they made the adjustment, although I know it was hard for them. I talked to them. But she, in particular, had trouble adjusting.

When asked how she finally managed, Donna replied that it was very difficult for her. This was Donna's first experience with this type of situation. It was heart-wrenching for her because she didn't feel that she had the right tools to help her daughter.

Eventually, they were able to work through the problems related to the transition.

Samantha, another parent, explained the transition her son had experienced, noting that the transition to the main campus was overwhelming at first, but that he had adjusted quickly to the new school. In this example, Samantha's son was able to overcome the changes and was lucky to have had a positive experience. Again, there appear to be no special considerations to help satellite students adjust to a new campus environment.

Resources

The satellite school has a population of 112 students. Because of its small size, the satellite school lacks some of the resources that are readily available at the main campus. For example, a survey conducted by the satellite school showed that eight out of twenty parents stated that a disadvantage of the satellite school was the program limitations such as no computer lab, small library, and few assemblies.

Mary comments,

It's very different here. This (an office in the administrative building) is our library. And they have a large library. In kindergarten this is adequate. By the time they're in third grade and actually reading and they really need the books, it's not adequate. And, it's an interesting thing, too, because Central Valley (main campus), I think, is a particularly affluent site. The parents are able to raise a lot of money. The people claim that there's a lot of balance. They try to create balance between the schools, but I've worked at most schools in this district, and that's an affluent site. So, there's a big difference in the resources that they have versus what we have.

The library at the satellite school is not adequate for kindergartners nor for any other grade level. In my observation, the library had a total of about fifty books. In a collaborative arrangement the satellite school needs to have the same available resources as the main campus.

Mary revealed that, in her opinion, the schools' resources would never be perfectly equal. She mentioned that the satellite school has been pushing for a new library and computers. Even though satellite teachers can acquire additional materials by visiting the main campus, any trip to that site was seen as an inconvenience. As Beth, a fellow teacher, put it:

You work all day and its time to go home and I don't want to go down there (to the main campus) and get those books. I want to go home.

Participants' Perspectives About the Satellite School

Some concern was raised about the satellite school being more like a "private school." Several participants confirmed that people not involved in the satellite school viewed it as an elite, private school, perhaps because of class size and enrollment being offered primarily to children of Pacific Circle employees. Donna states that,

There was a sense, I think, from some, not everyone, that this was sort of an elite, special situation where all kinds of favors were being poured on these children by virtue

of PC. It was really a district public school. So, the only favoritism, if there was any, was that PC kids got first crack at enrollment. But the perception was very much not that in the community, even people not at the main school, but people in my neighborhood, or people I talk to. If I told them where my kids go to school, they would say "the PC School." And some people still call it the PC School. And I'm always very quick to say, "Yes, it's a public school on PC property."

It is clear that some people view the satellite school to be a private school for PC employees financed by Pacific Circle and the local community. Yet, Pacific Circle employees are given first priority at enrollment, with remaining space (20%) only offered to community people on a waiting list.

Samantha, encountering several people who believed that Pacific Circle parents were privileged to be given special consideration, questioned their views stating:

Is this because you'd like to have it yourself? Is that what this is really about? If they just admitted it, and some did, that "Yeah, I'd love to have that myself." It's hard for me, in all fairness, to give much credence to anyone sitting on the outside going, "Ah-hah, the Pacific Circle people have a school for their kids." It's just like please, let's get bigger than this.

Samantha showed an attitude of intolerance and impatience and was especially critical in some of her comments about those who questioned the special consideration given to the satellite school. Her comments reveal her lack of interest in trying to understand another's point of view and unveils her acknowledgment of her privileged position.

George, a Pacific Circle employee, offered an alternative view of the satellite operation. He described a focus group with whom he had been working. George claims that those parents were deciding whether or not to send their children to a private school or a worksite school. The neighborhood school near where they lived was not considered to be an option for those Pacific Circle employees. As a result, George saw more of a

private school versus a public school issue, something he had not even considered when researching this idea.

Parent Organizations

There was difficulty between the two parent organizations at the schools. The Parent Faculty Organization (PFO), already established at the main campus had been in existence for many years. Several parents at the satellite school, however, wanted their own parent organization and formed the Satellite Parents Association (SPA). This led to considerable turmoil between the parents at both schools. Richard, a parent and Pacific Circle employee, observed that,

The first couple of years that this [satellite] school was here, there was a fair amount of contention between the two parent organizations because it had to do with funding. Both organizations were raising money, then the discussion came: How was the money to be spent? And there was a feeling on both campuses where "We raised that money, we ought to be able to spend it the way we want." Then it changed. Folks at the main campus said, "It's all part of the same organization, we should make the decisions on how the money is spent." Of course, the parents here (satellite school) who had raised the ten thousand dollars, didn't feel comfortable with that because they were nervous that the funds would be diverted to the main campus and be spent there rather than at this campus.

Because the new satellite school was next door to an existing one, both parent organizations felt that one was invading the other's territory, especially when it involved the issue of money at the surface level. Had this issue been put forth from the beginning, many problems might have been avoided.

Samantha, a key player in this debate, added that,

The PFO regarded the satellite campus somewhat as an outsider, an intruder. Privileged society, sort of. There was that element of perception. And not willing to recognize the satellite campus or the parents in any formal way. They were not communicated with. All of the social elements of an outsider and how they might be

regarded. Now, I don't know seriously if they were regarded as a threat as much as simply this external group that were not assimilated into the large...into the PFO. And there was constant fighting about funding. Where was the money going when the funds were raised? How did we accumulate monies?

The PFO (at the main campus) saw the SPA (at the satellite school) as a threat to what they had been working on for years. They didn't want the PC portion of the faculty coming in to tell them what to do with money collected and organized events. Both organizations had raised their own monies and had their own ideas about spending it. This conflict was contrary to claims by the administration and corporate sources to promote the satellite school as a collaborative venture.

Samantha pointed out that the main campus had its financial needs established because they had been in existence for years. On the other hand, the satellite campus was trying to institute some guidelines and establish its own identity rather than attempt to work with the host school in a collaborative peer relationship. The PFO believed that both campuses should be assimilated. However, the satellite parents disagreed and stated that their needs were much different. This caused problems for both organizations. The SPA often felt like the PFO was making all of the decisions. When money was needed, SPA members felt as if they had to beg for it. This raises the question if the agenda of the satellite parents couldn't have been better served if they had chosen to work more actively within the PFO structure to meet their shared needs rather than taking a proprietary view of "their" school.

There was obviously a lack of communication and understanding between the two groups as well as an unwillingness to resolve the issue collaboratively. While the PFO

could have been more sensitive to the needs of the SPA, the SPA could have reacted in a more positive way, trying to understand the PFO's responsibilities to Central Valley as a total school environment.

Samantha pointed out her understanding of a major difference between the two parent organizations:

When the SPA met, we didn't do the cookies and milk and all that stuff. We met. We did business, got down to things. We had notes. We kept minutes. Boom, boom, boom. We're charging. We had this goal orientation and its like, "Get out of our way." And over at the PFO, bringing their little cookies and their soda and all this stuff. We're talking about completely separate cultures.

Samantha, who was invited by the principal to participate because of her professional expertise as a mediator, was able to observe both parent groups. Her business bias, however, was reflected by the liberal use of metaphors to distinguish between the two parent organizations, especially when she later reflected that the "cookies and milk" PFO outfit should step aside. This hostility discourages community building and the cooperative spirit and communication needed to resolve issues (Senge 1994, in Gozdz, 1995). To the contrary, the challenge to "get out of our way" has all the elements of a power that seeks to colonize, the very attribute that describes control (Freire 1982). This attitude is steeped in the rationality of a colonizer who moves into an established culture (community) by imposing values and norms on the colonized similar to the way colonizing countries invade the cultures of their colonies, and impose their rules of appropriate behavior and values as they appropriate the resources of the colony for their own profit.

If two distinct groups are to reach any consensus, it must be based on mutual respect and shared responsibility, and not on domination of one group over the other (Sergiovanni 1994). The implication was that the SPA was a no-nonsense, focused organization at the same time, downgrading the PFO as a superficial parent support group more interested in socializing than considering education-related matters.

It seems apparent from Samantha's comments that the primary goal of the SPA was to "get down to business" and organize as they were accustomed to doing in their work culture. This perspective clearly illustrates Sergiovanni's notion of *gesellschaft* described on page 35 of the literature. PFO parents, on the other hand, do not represent such a workplace-oriented group. It would appear they saw themselves not only discussing school issues, but creating community bonds in a social atmosphere to promote communication and friendship among a more diverse body, in other words *gemeinschaft* or a real sense of human community rather than a more exploitative utilitarian view emerging from *gesellschaft*.

It has been evident through the interviews, observations, and documents that there are more differences than similarities between the satellite school and its main campus. Several participants believed that the on-site location of the satellite school was extremely convenient. Most PC participants agreed that, because of the school's proximity, they have a better opportunity to participate in their child's education by volunteering in the classroom, having lunch with their child, checking on their child's progress, and being available in case of an emergency.

The participants' perspectives on the issues of educational programs and school environments were rather unusual. Some participants felt that the curriculum, programs, and environments were very similar to one another. However, a different perspective was articulated by other participants who felt that everything was very different and separate from the main campus. Although both sites utilize the district curriculum and state frameworks, each teacher incorporates his or her own ideas and philosophies, thus creating a more unique and personalized approach.

One difference expressed has been a lack of resources available to the satellite school. The satellite school, although it enjoys many benefits of a small campus, does not have an adequate library, computer lab, or teacher resource center. These resources, however, can be found on the main campus, a half mile down the road.

The belief that the satellite school is an "elite" or "private" school was discussed by several of the participants. Misunderstandings might have been eliminated for the most part, with a clear message to and from the community at the outset of any plan to create a satellite school. Whether or not opinions of community members at large are well-founded or not, any new venture, if it is truly a public undertaking, should include input from as many representatives of local interests as possible. It appears that this was not done, or if it was it was only after the fact. The project was described as an idea generated between school administration and the corporation. After plans were established they "got the approval" of a school board. This seems to have bypassed

community citizens in the initial planning thereby laying the groundwork for later resentment.

An issue difficult for parents was the transition from the satellite school, after third grade, to the main campus, their own neighborhood or a private school. Most agreed that moving from a small, family-like atmosphere of 112 students to a larger school of 500 students would create some difficulties in adjustment for the children.

By far, the most volatile issue described was the conflict between the two parent organizations. It was clear to me that both groups had their own agendas for what was best for their campus, losing sight of the fact that Central Valley is one elementary school located on two sites. The PFO had been in existence for years building its community and culture through its history. In the beginning, PFO parents had a difficult time communicating with the parents at the satellite school. The PFO wanted recognition for what they had been doing for years and, according to some satellite parents, didn't feel comfortable including a new group of parents who seemed to be outsiders to the community and may have had different ideas and opinions. It appears, however, that the SPA parents failed to see the effects of their "foreign colonizing role" on the historically and culturally embedded values of the local community. The SPA only identified "their" feeling alienated and alone as they confronted issues they had never dealt with before.

Although the parent organizations had a shaky beginning, they have now come together and are working towards creating better lines of communication. The breakthrough came when it was decided that the two groups would meet and have a

discussion about a charter. The members in the meeting created a document that specifically stated the roles of each organization, a task that should have been accomplished at the outset and might have avoided a lot of ill will.

Parental Involvement at the Satellite School

Background

One of the most important factors in success in school, according to Schneider (1993), is the degree to which parents are actively involved in their child's education. Studies conducted by Schneider (1993) and Swap (1993) confirm that strong family interest in school positively affects both student performance and behavior, especially in the child's early school years.

Several articles confirm that the on-site location of the satellite school allows parents to become active participants in their children's education. Christian (1992) states that the close proximity between Bay Park Elementary School and Bayfront Elementary School allows parents to become actively involved in their child's education. Lesley Collins (1992) also reports that parents whose children attend the Learning Well School in Clearwater, Florida are able to spend more time with their children at school because of the proximity of the workplace.

In a survey conducted by the Central Valley Satellite School, a majority of parents agreed that being able to volunteer in the classroom, spend time with their children, and consult with teachers were tremendous advantages they would not have had elsewhere.

When asked to point to a key factor in the operation at Central Valley, George stated,

I think the biggest issue by far here is parental involvement. I think the thing that makes it stand out is the fact that there's a lot of studies that indicate that one of the key components to a successful education is having the parents involved. There's been a lot of talk about how parents used to be more involved in schools than they are today. Over the last ten, twenty, thirty years we've kind of disconnected the parents from the school, statistically speaking. I mean, obviously, there are a lot of exceptions, but in general, there used to be more family support, more parental support for children as they went through their education.

A study conducted by Sattes found a positive relationship between student achievement of children in grades K-12 and parent involvement (trained as tutors or when they are simply informed about and support their children's learning) (Sattes 1985, in Swap 1993).

Samantha also pointed to the heavy parental involvement stating that, Central Valley Satellite School is sort of an extraordinary school in that, there's a lot of parent participation throughout. It's just that kind of neighborhood. That kind of socioeconomic profile. The parents are very involved in what their kids are doing. It's a unique situation that a lot of parents don't get to have without this partnership. With the school and with PC, they get to see their kids all week.

Samantha's use of the term "neighborhood" appears to identify the PC worksite, its employees, and families, as the core of the school community and not a residential area that traditionally has defined the location of most schools. This change of focus now regards employment at PC, and not necessarily side-by-side home dwelling, as the major common bond between the school's parents and students.

The Central Valley Satellite School is a unique school because it links business and education and gives the corporate parents the opportunity to participate in their child's education because of the close proximity to the workplace. PC parents visit classrooms

regularly, volunteer in the classroom, eat lunch with their children, and play with their children during recess.

Volunteerism

Volunteering in the classroom is seen as having a strong, positive effect on morale and achievement in schools (Berliner and Biddle 1995). It gives parents an opportunity to spend time with their children, get to know their teachers, and observe the classroom operations. Many teachers welcome outside support in their classrooms that can build strong communication among parents, teachers, and students. For business leaders, volunteering at a worksite based school keeps their employees happy without taking them away from the workplace leading to a better attitude about work and less absenteeism.

George provides one example of a parent who is a professional statistician, taught classes at the K-3 level on statistics, and talked about her job at PC. Parents can be a valuable resource in the classroom. Parents and employees at Pacific Circle often come to the school to speak to children about their professions, part of an enriched curriculum coordinated by staff at the main campus. This gives children the opportunity to learn about a variety of careers, perhaps one that they may consider in their future. It is limited, however, to careers in a technical corporate environment.

Donna has been a volunteer over the past few years serving as a news editor for two years and a member of the technology committee. She attended board meetings, was involved in the SPA, and helped in both of her children's classrooms. When asked about volunteerism, Donna revealed that she felt more in touch with what was happening in her

child's classroom. She was able to observe her son's interactions with the teacher and other students. While in the classroom, Donna felt comfortable chatting with the teacher about her son's progress and class work.

As Schneider (1993) points out, many parents may become classroom volunteers which provides them with the opportunity to observe the overall experience of the child's education through firsthand information about the environment of the school, interacting with teachers, and observing the interactions of the child with other students.

Mary stated that,

We have parents everyday and it's for the five days. We average about three parents a day. I set up a center time where the parents come and during that time, they work with a small group of kids. I have activities that are geared for the parents to do, fairly simple things. Things that don't work well with the whole class, painting, more complicated stuff. Storywriting if the kids are going to tell a story and the parent would write the story. So, they basically do one activity like that per day and then rotate through six different centers so parents can generally work with their own child...

Any teacher would be fortunate to have three parents a day volunteering in the classroom.

The proximity of the workplace enables many PC parents the flexibility to participate in the classroom on a regular basis.

Curriculum

Curriculum is impacted by parental involvement. Parents at the satellite school volunteer to teach individual classes and become involved in after-school programs.

George described a class studying measurements. He explained that the class came to his work station at Pacific Circle because there was a large scale in their shipping department.

The scale is used to weigh trucks and heavy things. The children got on the scale and were weighed together as a class.

Donna, pointing out curriculum enhancement through parental support, notes that, I've also been involved in the hands-on science program. And that's where they try to get parents to volunteer in the primary grades. But, you're given a curriculum and all the materials, and a two-hour training session, and kids sign up. And, it's grouped by age or by grade and you go in and teach science-types of aspects. And each session has a curriculum already defined, whether it's imagery or reflections, or whatever the scientific thing is. And so, a lot of the people up there (at PC), and I know several engineers who taught that. Science and math and those principles are so near and dear to them. So, they get a lot of fun out of doing that.

Richard agreed by adding that, ...a series of enrichment programs, which are after-school programs, and hands-on science is part of that...there's foreign language in Spanish and French, there's sign language, hands-on science, puppet making, sewing classes, and those are all arranged with the enrichment coordinator for the Central Valley School. Then, for the satellite school, there are three or four parents that are active in setting this program up, working with the teachers to arrange the classrooms, figuring out the curriculum, making sure the instructors have been through the educational classes. There are three twice a year so there are six classes and they've always been taught by one of the PC parents.

The example provided by Richard reinforces the notion that the satellite parents and Pacific Circle are supportive by offering their services to programs and activities for children at the satellite campus.

Male Parents

Teachers have always welcomed parent volunteers in the classroom. Traditionally, most of those volunteers have been mothers. With the satellite school in close proximity to the workplace, it is customary now to see fathers on campus. Mary, a teacher, noted that, in her pre-satellite experiences, it was unusual to see fathers volunteering in

classrooms. When she came to the satellite school, that was a major difference. She stated that, "it is important in elementary school because the male role models are very scarce, not just parents, but in general."

George states,

We knew there was going to be a lot of parental involvement. But, what we never thought of is that there turned out to be a gender issue here in that, teachers say not only is there an order of magnitude...more parental involvement than they had ever seen anywhere else, but, half, or more than half, of the volunteers are the fathers. And, this is not true in any other school. In every other school in the district the parent volunteers, the vast majority are the moms and not the dads. And so, there's turned out to be a real gender issue that the teachers love, because in the lower grades there tends to be not much of a male influence. It's more of a female influence. In fact, there's so many dads involved as volunteers in the classrooms, they're eating lunch with their kids and playing kickball with them.

An interesting aspect of the satellite school is the number of male parent volunteers. Because Pacific Circle employs a substantial number of males, the number of fathers who participate is high.

George shared this anecdote about a not-so-frequent case of male bonding in an elementary school setting:

I went down there (satellite school) one day and just happened to get lunch and here's this little boy, kindergarten or first grade. I'm not sure, but kind of a young little boy and they were eating lunch. And his father was sitting next to him but then, both of his grandfathers were there, too. There was a father and two grandfathers having lunch with this student because the father is an engineer here and both grandfathers are managers here. So we had three generations.

Here was a perfect illustration of families involved in community building. This gathering at school had all the ingredients Gardner (1990) suggests for bonding: shared values, participation, communication, and attention to the young. The literature has shown that a child's success in school can be enhanced by parental involvement in

school-related activities (Schneider 1993). This may include volunteering in the classroom, participating in field trips, joining the parent-teacher organization, and talking to children about their lives.

Parental involvement has played a major role in both the satellite school and its main campus. Many participants agreed that the Central Valley neighborhood, where both schools are located, is a middle to upper middle-class area. It is an affluent area where one can find business executives, lawyers, doctors, teachers, and engineers. Because of their professional background and financial income, many families in this area can afford to have one parent, usually the mother, stay home with the children. In this situation, parents have the time to become actively involved in their child's education.

The satellite school and the main campus have high levels of parental involvement, more than you would find at any other public school in the district. It is not unusual to see parents on a daily basis in classrooms or in the cafeteria having lunch with their child. The parents who were interviewed seemed to agree that they were more in tune with what their child was learning and had the opportunity to check on their child's progress at any time.

Both schools were also involved in after-school enrichment programs. These programs were open to any child attending the satellite school or main campus. Programs such as sewing, puppet making, science, and art were offered at both schools. However, most of the programs at the satellite school were taught by Pacific Circle employees whose children attended the satellite school.

One of the most unusual findings was the number of fathers who were participating in their child's education. Past experience has shown that male parents seldom participated in school activities. It was usually mothers who were on PTA boards and helped with classroom parties. At the satellite school, fathers are seen everywhere. They volunteer in the classroom, help with yard supervision, stay for lunch, and join children in playing games at recess.

After conducting numerous interviews with some of the participants of the satellite partnership, it was apparent that most of the comments addressed their perceptions of the partnership, the contrasts in the two campuses, and the extent of parental involvement at the satellite site. Opinions were solicited from the corporate side, school officials, and satellite parents.

PC considered itself a "silent partner" that contributed startup costs and a ready-made student body. School personnel saw the partnership as an opportunity for business to promote family stability, accommodate their employees, and provide greater parental involvement in the school. Parents viewed the partnership as PC's commitment to education and a way to balance work-life issues of its employees.

Even though the two campuses are a half-mile apart, satellite parents considered the close proximity of their school to the worksite a distinct advantage, especially with the increased contact the company allowed them to have at the school. The educational programs at both campuses appeared to be essentially the same. However, the satellite school because of its smaller size, had smaller classes and overall school population but

did not have as many materials as the host school. Parents and teachers alike felt that the transition from the satellite site to the main campus, usually after the third grade, was somewhat difficult. There was no formal transition program or support to assist satellite students and their parents. Some satellite parents found themselves warding off criticism of the Central Valley satellite as an elite school. This criticism may have sparked an initial controversy between the two parent organizations at the Central Valley schools that was later resolved.

The extent of parental involvement was seen by participants as a major contribution to any success they felt the school had achieved. Both teachers and parents pointed out the benefits of volunteer parents and company professionals. PC encouraged employees to offer their services in activities that enhanced the curriculum. Because of the close proximity to the PC worksite, a large number of the volunteers were men.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

Research Question Conclusions

Educational Programs and School Environments

RQ1: How do corporate satellite schools and public schools differ in their educational programs and school environments?

Corporate satellite schools tend to have a small school population and, because of their proximity to company sites, a family-like atmosphere prevails for employees on campus. Parents (most of whom are PC employees), teachers, and students have the opportunity to meet and get to know each other on a more personal level. This creates a positive learning environment for children where they feel comfortable and at ease with the familiar surroundings.

The small school population which may have a negative impact because other schools in the district must share their resources to support smaller class and school size in the corporate satellite school. This smaller size allows the staff to offer more school-wide plays and activities; it is easier to organize the play and give all students the opportunity to participate with 112 students rather than 500. In addition, the satellite school can schedule weekly assemblies. An example given by Beth was the "nifty kid" assemblies on self-esteem. This would be more difficult to do in a larger school setting. The satellite squad, a group of students who look for children doing good things, is also a program offered at the satellite school. Tickets are then given to these students who may win a prize in a weekly drawing.

Because of the small staff, teachers tend to work collaboratively, thus building a strong sense of camaraderie between them. Most teachers at the satellite school believe in a child-centered approach to learning. The educational program includes the use of district curriculum and state frameworks that are also followed at the main campus. The teachers also include their own ideas and themes based on their philosophy, background, and personality. However, the uniqueness comes from parents who use their professional expertise to teach enrichment activities and to inform students about careers. The question arises as to whether PC and its staff should extend their services for the benefit of students at the main campus as well.

Corporation and Public School Relationship

RQ2: What is the relationship between the corporation and the public school and what are the implications of that relationship?

The corporation and the public school see this partnership as an effort to improve education in the United States. They both seek a common goal to promote career awareness and the workplace culture among children to make them more responsible citizens. In this case the corporation and the public school unite, using resources from both, to create a school for children of corporate employees. In this relationship, school-to-work concerns and family issues are seen as major considerations. The corporation and public school maintain contact through ongoing dialogue between key players at both sites. The satellite school is run and managed by the school district

whereas the corporation is a partner that overtly avoids trying to influence school curriculum or policy.

The corporation benefits from this relationship because it is able to recruit quality employees, maintain a productive workforce, and focus on family values. In almost all partnerships, the corporation provides startup costs, maintenance, and security, while the public school provides the curriculum, teachers, and administrators. It is questionable, however, whether the satellite project is a fair and just undertaking in regards to the community in which it is located. While it is true that PC heavily financed startup costs, the end result of establishing a separate school for company families may have adversely affected funding for those schools that lost enrollment of its own neighborhood students to the PC site or that are assuming heavier class sizes to balance low class size in the PC school. Some may view this situation as a form of colonization whereby PC has imposed its own "community" needs where they can enjoy a privileged place thus invading and colonizing an established social community.

Parental Involvement

RQ3: In what ways do parents participate in corporate satellite schools and how is that involvement distinguished from parent participation in public schools?

In some corporate satellite schools, parents have donated their time by working on the school grounds and playground equipment. For example, the parents at the Central Valley Satellite School donated their time and helped to put the playground together. They saved the school considerable money in labor costs. Parents often help with special

events at the satellite school such as fundraising, plays, assemblies, and field trips.

Corporations will offer their employees flextime so they may participate in these special activities.

Because of the on-site location, many parents have the opportunity to work in their child's classroom at least once per week. This allows parents to check on their child's progress, become actively involved in what their child is learning, and communicate regularly with the teacher. Parents also have lunch with their child, supervise during recess, and attend parent meetings once a month. Some parents also participate in the after-school enrichment programs teaching classes in Spanish, science, puppet making, and sewing (programs available at both campuses). A truly unique aspect is the high percentage of fathers who regularly volunteer.

In contrast to the convenience a satellite school affords PC families, parents whose children attend a typical public elementary school, are faced with certain obstacles that limit their active participation. Many parents live and work far away from their child's school which makes it difficult for them to participate. Most of their time is spent commuting to and from work. A large number of parents send their children to school by bus and rarely have an opportunity to visit the school.

Flextime is one way employers offer opportunities for their employees to be involved in school activities. PC advocates a policy that encourages employees to interact with the school. The satellite school is usually much smaller than a regular public school and, in this case, its nearby location makes it readily available to PC parents. Parents from

a larger school may not feel the sense of common bond that a corporate satellite school enjoys, but it may enjoy the advantage of representing a more diverse group with less emphasis on a corporate culture and more concern with fitting in and being good neighbors enhancing their local community relationship.

Corporate satellite schools tend to have a higher percentage of parents from the company participating because of the on-site location and agreements giving corporate employees priority in enrollment. Parents have the opportunity to get to know the teachers, children, and administrators on a personal level. The proximity to the workplace allows parents to come quickly in case of an emergency and also enables them to spend more quality time with their children.

Implications of the Findings

The PC participants seemed to have positive feelings about the Central Valley Satellite School. They mentioned benefits for schools, corporations, parents, teachers, and students. The public school benefits, they believe, because of substantial savings in building construction and expenses. This contention ignores the possibility that taxpayers and other schools may be "subsidizing" the PC satellite school. The satellite school may also utilize the corporation's resources such as professional expertise, equipment, and facilities. The corporation, however, is able to recruit employees from all over the world because of the convenient location of the school. Corporations also experience a lower absenteeism rate among employees and worker productivity increases.

PC parents benefit from this relationship because the on-site location of the satellite school provides convenience and more quality time with their children. Parents are able to participate in school activities, volunteer in the classroom, and share their professional knowledge with students and teachers. Children feel more at ease at the satellite school because they are familiar with the teachers, other students, parents, and school environment. Most importantly, children are comforted knowing that their parents are readily accessible. Many similarities were found among the participants' responses, especially in parental involvement. All agreed that there was a high percentage of PC parent volunteers. They also felt that the closeness of the school allowed them to become more involved in their child's education. Several parents volunteer in their child's classroom at least once per week. Some have lunch with their child on a regular basis and others participate in special events or field trips.

The research participants provided unique responses in their definitions of a business-education partnership. Two responses came from a family-centered point of view. These participants agreed that businesses should try to accommodate the needs of its workers by focusing on family issues. Most of the participants agreed that they would like to see the school expand beyond third grade. This would eliminate a transition to the main campus or neighborhood school. Most participants also agreed that they would like to see a larger library and a computer lab in the school. As of right now, there is not an adequate library or computer lab at the satellite campus. Teachers and students are able to use the resources at the main campus, but would like to, at some stage, have equitable

resources. It appears that the corporation, recognizing their corporate benefit in the relationship, and considering the type of products they produce, could contribute these resources, that will, after all, benefit their employees for the most part and could provide also a tax write-off. In view of their privileged position in receiving local support for their employees benefit package it does not seem to be an unreasonable action.

Recommendations for Future Satellite Schools

The Central Valley Satellite School is the product of a relationship between business and education. As with all new endeavors, there are always some things that can be changed or done differently that would improve the situation. Interviewing participants, studying data, and observing the satellite school has allowed me to interpret, develop, and create my own perspective about corporate satellite schools.

Schools and businesses interested in developing a partnership similar to that between Pacific Circle and the San Bernardo City Schools should consider some of the recommendations offered as a result of this study. For the partnership to be successful, one must find a business that is supportive and committed to its employees and a school district that is innovative and willing to try an alternative approach to public education. On the other hand, in all fairness to the local community taxpayers, these businesses must further consider strategies that compensate the host schools and school districts materially or otherwise, for the privilege of being able to accommodate its employees with a "special" school. Once this has been established, it is important to inform parents at both school sites as well as the community at large. Meetings should be set up to discuss the

idea and a strong effort should be made to solicit feedback from others about suggestions or concerns.

If a partnership is developed, it should be made clear to the public and the corporate participants that the satellite school is a public school located on a business' property, but run by the public school system for the ultimate benefit of society as a whole. Enrollment might be made available to the children of company employees but greater attention must be given to the colonizing effects this could have on local cultures and communities. Parents need to be aware that the educational programs at both schools are similar, following district and state guidelines when developing and implementing programs.

The school district and the corporation must make sure that both schools have equitable resources. For example, both schools should have adequate libraries, computer labs, classrooms, teacher resource centers, playgrounds and equipment, and class sizes. If the resources cannot be equally distributed, alternative solutions need to be explored that would help to provide the sites with a sound educational base.

One of the most important considerations in bringing both schools together is making sure that the parent organizations at both schools are aware of their roles before the partnership has been developed. There can be tension, discomfort, and pain if guidelines are not set in advance. The parent organizations must work together to improve both schools. Any further examination of a satellite operation should take into

consideration the perspectives of the individuals and community of the host school. Their observations could prove to be valuable in any future study of a satellite school.

One of the problems expressed by parent participants was the difficult adjustment their children faced moving to the larger campus from the close-knit comfort they felt at the smaller satellite school. Formal procedures should be instituted to ease that transition. These could include: 1) same-grade classroom exchange programs between the two schools; 2) an orientation day at the main campus for satellite (and other) students; 3) mentoring programs involving older students from the main campus; 4) visitations to the satellite site by higher-grade teachers from the host school; 5) counseling services for special needs; and 6) opportunities for parents of same-grade children at both campuses to know one another.

The school-to-work movement prominent in today's educational scene, and the satellite concept offers the opportunity for schools and corporate sponsors to bring a career-oriented segment into public education. In the case of Central Valley, a K-3 satellite, any school-to-work effort should be seen as the initial stage of a progressive system (Charner et al. 1995). They should consider, however, the implications of such a focus on the lives and full education of students. This is particularly true in cases involving students who are economically disadvantaged. Care must be given to issues of equity so that the schools do not serve to track poor students into low wage, disempowered economic relationships through limited career options.

Work-related experiences for children should be as broad-based as possible, featuring visits, not only to the sponsor's nearby facilities, but to various community work sites, including government and nonprofit. Central Valley should continue to take advantage of the wealth of career expertise at PC by promoting classroom activities that include personnel from the world of work. Every effort should be made to make these school-to-work endeavors available to host school pupils as well and *vice versa*. Reaching out to include others who are not children of PC employees might be interpreted as a broader commitment to the community by a corporate sponsor.

Just because a satellite school is associated with a business should not mean a refocus in the school's primary mission. As a public institution, a school must still hold to democratic ideals that include noble social, cultural, moral, and academic goals. The key is to balance the curriculum so that children have an opportunity to grow academically and personally as the SCANS movement, for example, suggests is so important.

From an historical perspective, today's satellite school can be viewed as a reincarnation of the schools that emerged in America's company towns of years past. Company towns, by definition, were communities that evolved as a result of a factory or mine that emerged in a raw locale. The establishment of a school in the company town was the personification of that community's commitment to permanence.

The satellite school of today has similar roots, but in a different context. Most communities and school systems these days are firmly rooted. It is the companies that are either moving to or starting up in these established communities.

The satellite school is seen as a convenience to families of the nearby company. Because of that convenience factor, the case could be made that the satellite school is the ultimate in the neighborhood school concept. However, this same satellite concept could be viewed as changing a school's neighborhood from one built around a residential locale to a workplace site—a shift from *gemeinschaft* to *gesellschaft*. And, if the satellite movement continues, and becomes widespread, the implications for schools as a social institution, may present a whole new set of problems for society and education to address.

Suggestions for Further Inquiry

Corporate America has a tremendous capacity and, often, willingness to assist education in the United States, primarily to assure itself of a quality workforce. Educators, on the other hand, need to stay focused on the school as a personification of society as a whole, with values that are broader and more far-reaching than those of a corporation. Any curriculum should reflect a proper balance among academic, personal, societal, and work-related goals (Nelson, Palonsky, and Carlson 1990).

The satellite school is a relatively new concept in the business-education relationship. Information about this endeavor however, is spotty and difficult to access. To determine the status of the satellite movement, and advance its cause, lines of communication among satellites and community focused groups need to be improved. This could be established, with the support of business, through a series of symposiums, or even a network web site that would serve as a hub for the exchange of information and

ideas and open public critique. The discussion must be broadened to include all groups sharing societal interest in insuring equity and democracy.

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