

Working Together so that *ALL* Students Can Succeed

A Collaboratively Designed Framework For School and Community Leadership Fostering Healthy Development and Lifelong Learning

For:
Parents
Present and Future Teachers and Administrators
Physical and Mental Healthcare Providers
Policy Makers
Spiritual Leaders
Community Leaders
And All People Concerned about the Current State of Education

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Abstract

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The purpose of the study is to find a new way for schools to meet the increased expectations that **all** students will succeed in school. New societal expectations for public schools beginning in the 1990's and beyond require schools to move from graduating approximately 75 percent of their students, to preparing all of their students to graduate and be prepared for higher education and/or the workforce. Concomitantly, standards for achieving a diploma have been raised. These societal expectations are currently reflected in federal "leave No Child Behind" legislation which mandates higher educational standards for all states.

Changes in society including increased violence, change in family configurations, and a host of social issues are diverting attention from teaching and learning. Schools are not prepared to address mounting social issues. The education profession has traditionally responded to increased academic expectations by adding a variety of remedial programs and strategies for reaching diverse learners. However, the children in poverty, who are often also children of color, too frequently are not successful.

What will be required are new collaborations with social service, healthcare, social justice, business, and other community providers who will have shared responsibility and accountability for results. Changes will also be required in funding;

higher education preparation for teachers, administrators, social workers, and healthcare workers; and leadership development.

In part one of this study, a new framework for delivering services was collaboratively developed by the select Seminar for Excellence of the Capital Area School Development Association. CASDA is a part of the State University of New York in the Albany area, and is under the direction of Dr. Ruth Kellogg, Executive Director.

In part two, the collaborative project begun incrementally in the late 1970's in the Berne-Knox-Westerlo Central School District in southern rural Albany County in New York was studied. The former Superintendent Mr. Robert Drake, and Program Coordinator Ms. Linda Berquist, were interviewed.

School District data over time clearly demonstrate that the dropout rate fell from a reported approximately 6% in 1978, to 1.9% in 1990, to under 1% in 1994 where it has consistently remained. The college attendance which was 64.4% in 1989, grew to 91% in 2003. This can be attributed primarily to the school district's collaborative and integrated services developed to meet student needs.

This case study strongly supports the hypothesis: Changing the way we serve children and families from fixed processes and variable outcomes to fixed outcomes and variable processes creates a paradigm shift that will allow for closing gaps between needs and services.

Collaboration with a variety of service providers over time has resulted in outstanding and demonstrable progress toward healthy development and lifelong learning for all Berne-Knox-Westerlo Central School District students.

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Chapter I

Introduction

Statement of the Problem

Education is in the midst of change academically and socially. In the area of student academic performance, a requirement for **all** students to meet state-determined standards as well as national standards (“No Child Left Behind” legislation) is a major shift from academic performance expectations based upon standard distribution, or the normal curve. School violence has escalated to epidemic proportions. Failure and violence are endemic in the education system.

There is a need for a new way to educate students that is based upon the assumption that **all** students can learn. A peaceful environment is essential for academic learning to occur.

Hypothesis: Changing the way we serve children and families from fixed processes and variable outcomes to fixed outcomes and variable processes creates a paradigm shift that will allow for closing gaps between needs and services.

The Philosophy and Implication of “All” The word “all” is the pivotal word in education policy for the 1990’s and early 2000’s in the area of school reform. The word “all” is being used in this dissertation because it is currently a word that drives change in education. (Sobol. *A New Compact For Learning: Improving Public Elementary, Middle, and Secondary Education Results in the 1990’s*. New York State Education Department, 1992).

Prior to the late 1980’s in the United States, schools were allowed a margin of error. If 75% of the students of the United States graduated with diplomas, this was considered acceptable, and a positive development from the early 1900’s when only about one quarter of students were expected to graduate.

Expectations drive change. The word “all” is driving not only educators, but also the larger community, to view our educational system differently. The media often portray education as “failing”. This perception is due at least in part to a change in expectation. The U. S. public school K-12 system is successful with about 75% of students overall, and if the public expectation is consistent with that expectation, it is viewed as successful. However, demands for better workforce skills from the business sector in the early 1980’s began driving public expectations higher.

In New York State, Education Commissioner Thomas Sobol wrote *A New Compact For learning: Improving Public Elementary, Middle, and Secondary*

Education Results in the 1990's." This document, which followed a pilot program in select school districts entitled "Excellence and Accountability", initiated a long transformative process in New York State.

The document begins by discussing the great gains for students in New York State. It states that at the beginning of the century, only one in four students finished high school. However, today three out of four students are graduating from high school. The Compact states that, "Scores on tests of basic skills have risen; more students are enrolled in challenging academic courses than were so 20 years ago; more are studying a second language." However, the Compact goes on to say that, "But the world spins on, and times change. As this century rushes to an end, the world that most of us knew in our growing up, and even in our adult years, is vanishing. Everything about us is changing: the makeup of our population; family groups and patterns of family living; the nature of our economy and the demands of the workplace; the dramatic realignments of nations and cultures on the world scene, and our increasingly threatened economic preeminence; the capacity of technology to transform our lives; our knowledge of the universe and of ourselves." With continual change we must ask ourselves if our schools are preparing students for the past that will soon disappear, or for the unknown future that is emerging. With economic demands for changes in how we work, are we preparing students for an industrial age, or are we preparing them for an information age? Will our students be flexible and able to adjust to

changing job markets, and thus potentially many changes in career within his or her lifetime? Are our students learning individually only to be expected to perform and problem-solve in teams? Are we preparing students adequately for the jobs that will exist when they graduate from high school or college? Is there an alignment between what students must know, be like, and be able to do in the 21st century? Is allowing one quarter of our students to fail acceptable? Will the economy still have jobs for students without even a high school education? Or are we allowing this 25% of our student population to move into hopelessness and poverty, which for many continues a cycle of public dependence and often leads to crime.

The word “all” in the volumes of literature of education reform for the 1990’s and early 2000’s is directed to raising standards for all students, including the one quarter formerly expected to fail. This is a staggering change, and no area in the educational process can remain unchanged if the expectation is to be realized. At the same time we are expecting that all students will graduate. In New York State we have eliminated the local diploma. New standards have been developed for all students. There has been a transition period of several years to move from one statewide accountability system to another. National standardized tests have been eliminated. A long process of developing higher standards for all students, using large academic committees and including Columbia University professors and others, has resulted in changes in expectations in every academic

area. However, even greater impact has been felt with the requirement for **all** students to pass the same regents exams. During the transition period which is still continuing in 2004, the bar for passing the exams has gradually increased.

The impact has been felt dramatically at the school level. A focus on remediation has changed to more focus on prevention of failure. Academic intervention services have been required for students in danger of failing. Special Education has not been excluded, and years of working through the changes necessary to allow and expect most special education students to take and pass the same exams, allowing for special provisions such as extra time, and special assistance from aides, has challenged notions of what special education students can achieve.

While this dissertation deals with New York State, the movement for higher standards for **all** students has occurred nationwide. The United States Constitution does not provide for education, and leaves to the states what is not addressed. Therefore, while national standards currently require all states to raise educational standards for all students, the implementation of this expectation is different within each state.

Possibly the greatest change implied by the word “all” has been required in the area of educational philosophy. Teacher preparation programs were fairly standardized across the country focusing on passing, failing, remediation, and distributions of scores from high to low along the traditional bell-shaped curve.

Student report cards reflected that philosophy. Students received A, B, C, D, or F and were required to repeat entire courses if a subject were failed. Students were blamed for lack of success, and often their family situation was blamed as well. Teachers taught, and students were expected to pass based upon taking a course, doing required homework, and passing tests. If the student failed, it was the student's fault. In the new system student accountability continues, but there is greater focus on teacher accountability. When students fail, the system requires accountability of the teacher, the administrator, and the school as a whole. Public reporting allows the community to examine the success of its schools in comparison with schools of similar demographics. However, requiring regents diplomas of all students is a paradigm shift that has continued in spite of many political challenges.

Parents want their children to succeed in school, graduate, and be prepared to compete for jobs. Businesses want employees who can read, make decisions, compute, and have good work ethics. Colleges had shown their evidence of low expectations of high school graduates by including remedial classes for entering freshmen. Businesses developed remedial classes in basic skills for employees. Low expectations were addressed by the business and higher education communities and this helped to drive education reform at the public school elementary and secondary levels.

“No Child Left Behind” national legislation, described in the literature review in Chapter 2, reinforces the expectation of all students succeeding. Instead of a 75% graduation rate, now a 100% rate is expected. **All students are expected to be ready for college and/or the workforce upon graduation from high school.** Accountability for results is now expected throughout the system. The philosophy that some children can learn can no longer be accepted as teacher expectations drive results. Failure is not acceptable, and teachers and administrators are expected to prevent, or diagnose and treat, challenges to student success. In other words, the “system” can no longer allow students to fail. It must continually monitor results and intervene whenever necessary to build in supports so that every student succeeds.

The system of “no excuses” has removed permission to say that the student failed because of his environment—his home and community. Where drugs, poverty, abuse, violence, or lack of family supports are hindering student progress, new ways to support students must be designed. This is the rationale for a dissertation on the topic of “Collaborative School and Community Leadership that Fosters Healthy Development and Lifelong Learning.” This dissertation recognizes that inherent in the school reform process is the need to address social issues that are causing our students to be unprepared for learning or unable to focus on learning. These supports will be required if we are to be able to ensure that all students will have an equal opportunity for success. However, schools

were never designed with social work as part of the structure. This means that schools that have worked in isolation from the rest of the community, who do not generally have the finances to hire adequate numbers of social workers and others to deal with needed family supports, must now reach out to the broader community for help. This has taken many forms. In general, support from the community has been called upon in a crisis. Working together with the broader community has been seen as necessary only when a specific need arose for which the school did not have services to adequately respond. Initial reaching out occurred sporadically. As systems began to develop to include more services, practices such as locating service agencies in schools in order to be more accessible developed. Full service schools are one such type of relationship that uses the publicly-supported school buildings after regular school hours to house services and make them more accessible to families.

The next step in developing relationships with agencies, and one upon which this dissertation focuses, is a more systemic integration of services within the school. The first part of Chapter 4 will deal with a process for developing a systemic collaborative model and the kinds of implications that will ensue. It is a process that will look different in every community. While the process can be replicated, the results will vary based upon school community needs and agencies involved.

Collaborative leadership is taking the next step in school reform. It is realizing that the schools cannot do it alone. Societal pressures; differences in educational experiences before Kindergarten; nutrition, health, mental health of the child and the family; lack of jobs and economic independence; drugs; changes in family structures and supports; lack of extended and /or fully-functioning families are among many issues leaving families without the basic foundational supports essential to support children's learning. We are moving toward collaborative solutions to issues because we recognize that the school, which is the basic unit for providing education, was never designed to include other services within its system. It will be necessary, in an era that does not accept failure, for these collaborate relationships to become systemic. Accountability without responsibility will not work. Social service agencies, that provide for the social welfare of the child within the context of the family, are also accountable for results. Yet, social service providers have been left to after school hours, often dependent upon families to provide transportation themselves for services to be accessed. These services, while at times working directly in the home, generally are provided at a distance. Even though the child, within the context of a family, is the "consumer" or the recipient of services, these services generally have been provided separate from the school. Thus, often neither the school nor the service provider is meeting success.

This dissertation takes a holistic approach. The child is a whole person, within a family system, and both must be treated holistically. Schools and service providing agencies, working with families, need to work together. They need a common plan for each student which addresses common needs and goals. Students, families, schools, and service agencies cannot be successful alone in this new paradigm of “all” students meeting success. All agencies involved will need to participate in goal-setting, strategizing, collaborating, as well as creating, developing, implementing, assessing and reassessing, and revising approaches for new ways of helping **all** students to meet success.

For the purposes of this dissertation, and in order to be in alignment with the education expectations of the 21st century, the word **all** will be used throughout to reflect the current expectations reflected in A New Compact for Learning. (Sobol. 1992). The Principles of the Compact are as follows:

1. All children can learn.
2. Focus on results.
3. Aim for mastery.
4. Provide the means.
5. Provide authority with accountability.
6. Reward success and remedy failure.

The first principle that “All children can learn” is a paradigm shift from previous expectations. By allowing one quarter of our students to fail, we were

affirming a philosophy that not all students were capable of learning. By using the bell-shaped curve to plot scores when a specific test is given to a group of students at a specific time, a curve that includes high and failing performance, we were reinforcing the expectation of failure for some. However, by administering tests when the student is ready and has mastered the material, we build in systemic supports and allow time to be a variable. By building services into the educational system, we alter how schools and other service providers traditionally have provided services. In other words, we can examine and change those things which were constant and inhibiting positive change such as: teacher, bus driver, and coaching contracts; school calendars; pass-fail grading systems; retention in the same grade; remedial approaches and services; location of social services offices with access to students only during after-school hours; and lack of planning time between and among teachers, administrators, counselors, and other school personnel and external service providers. These are the fixed processes which result in uneven or unequal outcomes. In order to have every student successful, the outcomes for all students (i. e. regents diplomas) need to be fixed, and the processes to achieve them must become variable. School teachers and administrators need to plan collaboratively with all of the agencies that support children and families including probation, mental health, and physical health to address the broader goals common to all of the agencies. Beyond locating service providers together and housing them in a common location such as a school,

it is essential to incorporate them systemically through common planning, common goals, and joint accountability for outcomes. This is the distinction between some of the collaborative efforts seen in full-service and community schools, and collaborative leadership. Collaborative school and community leadership is taking the next evolutionary step.

In Chapter 4, systemic school and community collaborative leadership is developed by using the CASDA Select Seminar. The process will be shown as it evolved. For example, the language of each service area is unique to that specific area. However, when diverse agencies come together, a new language begins to develop that allows the new collaborative partners to address their common responsibility with shared accountability for results.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to develop a new framework for service delivery that addresses the current educational expectations of success for **all** students. The study will also examine one rural model of collaborative service delivery that developed over several years. Drop-out rates and college acceptance rates will be the primary data reviewed to determine the effectiveness of the program.

Importance of the Study

Current educational systems were designed based upon the theory of standard scoring, also known as the bell-shaped, or normal curve. Standard scoring predicts that if an exam is administered at a specific time, to a heterogeneous group of students, the performance scores of all of the students tested will be distributed along a curve of high, average, and poor academic performance. Standard deviation means that the largest number of scores will occur at the mean or average, or letter grade C, with approximately equal distribution of A's and B's and also D's and F's.

Another way to look at this system, designed upon expectations of distribution based upon the bell-shaped or normal curve, is to consider inherent expectations of high achievement and failure. Before a teacher meets a new class of students, there is already an expectation that some students will be very high achievers, some low achievers, and many will be average achievers.

Expectations of high, average, and low student academic performance are also incorporated when student Aptitude and I.Q. tests are utilized within the framework of our education system. One expectation created is that someone on the lower end of the range of I.Q. or aptitude will perform poorly, and therefore poor performance is expected, or at least anticipated, of that student.

Sometimes a teacher's expectation for a student is based upon past

performance, previous teacher perception, and/or sibling achievement. This can create a situation where educators set expectations low, and act in ways that may increase that student's likelihood of meeting that expectation. While much research has been done on the effects of teacher expectations on student learning, that is not the subject for review here. However, we may need research to look further for reasons underlying teacher's low expectations of some students to see the relationship, if any, to the teacher's higher education preparation program, and its emphasis on the distribution of student scores as represented by the "normal distribution", or the bell-shaped curve.

In the 1990's, school reform efforts began to change the paradigm of expectations for student academic achievement based upon the distribution of the normal curve, to the stated expectation of "**All Children Can Learn.**" This paradigm shift meant that learning standards would be the same for **all** students, but time, methods of instruction, and resources would be variables. Within this new paradigm, **all** students must achieve at high levels in order to graduate and to be prepared for success at the next level, whether higher education or work. This new system meant that educators could no longer maintain expectations that some students will fail, thus allowing many students to achieve at sub-standard levels. Accountability within the new system of fixed outcomes and variable processes, meant that children were no longer allowed to fail, and the accountability for student success rested upon the teachers and administrators.

When a paradigm shifts from expectation of success for some, to success for **all**, there are many ramifications for system change. Most schools were academically structured upon expectations of failure for some. Resulting evidence includes grading systems that include failing grades, retention within a grade level, remedial instruction, and failure to receive credit for an academic course. In other words, there was a “place” for the low-level learner, and some of the accommodations were low report card grades, remedial methods and classes, retention within the same grade level, and failure to gain academic credit for a course. While a high percentage of dropouts would cause concern, there was an expectation of a dropout rate of approximately 3-5%. Another concern raised by the new paradigm of high standards for **all** students was the number of students in ninth grade who were not found within the same cohort in twelfth grade.

New measures for success were implemented across the United States to meet each state’s newly developed graduation standards. While states were allowed to develop their own standards and measures for student academic success instead of imposition from the federal level, every student was expected to meet the new standards. Federal legislation to “Leave No Child Behind” reinforced the new mandate for success for **all**.

The new paradigm will not be realized without much-needed systemic change. Credentialing of new teachers, and in-service for established teachers, as well as changes in educational administration preparation programs, must place

emphasis on new expectations and methods. Anticipated changes to teacher, staff, and student schedules, both in length of day and numbers of days, challenge contracts as well as parent and student expectations. Unions and Associations have charged that the new requirements are unfunded mandates, and have made demands for more resources. A successful fiscal-equity legal challenge in New York State is requiring more resources for the traditionally underserved populations, especially in urban areas such as New York City. However, the expectations and demands for higher standards by the business community still prevail. Higher standards for all students are well underway toward implementation with “safety nets” until some students, especially those with disabilities, are adequately prepared for success.

However, the new paradigm of success for **all** may fail if we are unable to change our delivery of services for children and families. Currently we are only beginning to realize that simply adding more requirements and tasks to what teachers and administrators are already doing will not solve the problem. Many of the children whom we had allowed, even at times expected to fail, cannot be served adequately within the current system. Many schools are failing to meet the new federal and state requirements because societal problems continue to escalate. School violence has changed the learning environment as many students and staff live with fear, and experience resultant difficulty concentrating on learning.

There are many societal factors affecting schools that were minimal by comparison as recently as the 1960's and 1970's. Drug abuse; violence; pregnancies; physical, sexual, mental, and emotional abuse; lack of extended families; changes in the model of the traditional family structure; economic changes often requiring both parents to work outside the home; and the inclusion of suicide and homicide as problem-solving options, have radically changed the schools' responsibilities and environment. These societal changes impact a child's welfare, ability to learn, and support for learning.

The challenge facing education today is meeting regulatory expectations requiring schools to assure success for **all** in the face of extensive changes in society. Reporting to the public on a variety of indicators, made available on the internet, and in the media, has awakened the public even more to the discrepancies of achievement by students, schools, and school districts. Some tests show the United States lagging behind many other countries in student academic indicators. The need for change is well established, but the questions remain: Can we create new delivery systems that will ensure that **all** students can and will learn? Can we design and implement collaborative school and community leadership models that foster healthy development and lifelong learning for **all** students?

Continuing to work as we always have will not enable us to address educational and social issues of the twenty-first century. We must find new ways

to collaborate that will leverage our services and focus them on students and their individual and collective success. **Schools must change their systems of providing and accessing services in order to meet new standards for success for every student.**

Scope of the Study:

The concept of collaboration and its possibilities for positive change will be explored at the school and community level, with an example of collaborative leadership fostering healthy development and lifelong learning at the school district level.

Traditional roles of parents, teachers, administrators, and schools, as well as health, mental health, social services, justice and prevention services, community leaders, and institutions of higher learning, do not provide for collaboration among providers who serve children and families. This study will bring together representatives of those who serve children, to design a new framework for collaboration that will enable children and families, and those who serve them, to realize success.

Rationale for the Study:

A variety of experimental designs that bring together services for children and families have been, and are being, tried across the United States. Examples in the literature review in Chapter 2 will be examined for some of

the concepts and models previously, or currently, in place, such as full-service schools, co-location of services, relocation of services, and community schools. However, vital as these efforts are, there currently is no systematic implementation, thus limiting the effects of such experiments primarily to the local communities. This study will attempt to design a blueprint for a collaboration that results in systemic delivery of services that meet the needs of each child in order to facilitate his/her success. While the results will be unique to each school community, the CASDA Select Seminar process can be replicated.

Definition of Terms:

The term “collaboration” will be defined/described in this section. All other definitions are located in the Glossary in the Appendix.

Collaboration Defined/Described

Collaboration is a unified approach to a mutual concern. Collaboration allows one to create an impact exponentially by the bringing together of multiple perspectives and applying them in a uniform manner.

Collaboration provides for mutual understanding and mutual goals. It allows each person to remain individual while bringing together consensus on matters of import. Collaboration results in sound and meaningful solutions due to the increased level of expertise that is brought to the table.

Collaboration allows one to see through the eyes of another. It

promotes a feeling of unity and support. Support comes from knowing that you are not alone in solving a problem. Unity means that there is a sense of camaraderie and belief that by working together, issues can be resolved and members of society can be elevated.

Collaboration within the school and community setting means that leaders of each respective agency will come together with their varied resources and perspectives, and desire for improvement in the lives of students. Healthy development and lifelong learning are the mutual goals of all agencies that provide services to children and families, whether the perspective is education, mental or physical health, or agencies that strive to alter self-destructive behaviors. Looked at broadly, the mission of each separate agency that serves children and families is derived from a broad goal of supporting each child toward healthy development and lifelong learning. Thus, by combining perspectives and resources, agencies can meet their mutual goals, which are derived from the overarching goal of healthy development and lifelong learning.

The solution of ‘collaborative leadership to foster healthy development and lifelong learning’ is win-win in that it serves children and families, and leads to the accomplishment of agency goals. Collaboration, as used here, is the working together of all service-providing agencies for the purpose of service to children and families. The benefactors

are children, families, schools, service providers, the community, and the society at large.

Overview of the Study:

The study will be a blueprint for educational change through collaboration. It will be designed by thirty-three participants in a Select Seminar sponsored by the Capital Area School Development Association (CASDA), an agency affiliated with the School of Education at the State University of New York at Albany. The author was a participant, and writer of the Select Seminar final report entitled, A View From the Inside: Collaborative School and Community Leadership Fostering Healthy Development and Lifelong Learning. The Select Seminar and the report were executed during the scope of this doctoral process which began in 2000. The Select Seminar findings will be incorporated into Chapter 4 of this document using the term “we” because the author was a participant/writer in the five-day process. The final report was disseminated widely by CASDA throughout the state of New York to educators, legislators, and the business community, as well as to parents and school board members. It was also disseminated to all of the Chief State School Officers of the fifty states. Presentations were given by Select Seminar participants, who were able to provide further demonstration of the model from a variety of perspectives. The

study will include the report of the five-day Select Seminar, and include a locally developed model of collaborative leadership.

The model program, developed and implemented at the Berne Knox-Westerlo Central School District, began in the 1986-87 school year. The initiator and leader of the project was also a participant in the CASDA Select Seminar. A detailed explanation of the Select Seminar model, used for over twenty years to develop experimental research into challenges facing the education community, will be given in Chapter 3.

Chapter 4 will include an interview of the former Superintendent of Schools and the initiator and continuing manager of the project. Data obtained from the school district and the New York State Education Department will be examined to assess the impact of the program, especially upon the drop-out rates and college acceptance rates.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Improving student academic performance for all students in the midst of escalating school violence is a mandate that has the potential to cripple many American schools. The new mandated requirements of Leave No Child Behind

legislation are necessitating not only school, but also societal change. The imminent need is causing educators, parents, and community leaders to seek counsel with each other. Slowly, the need to come together to address issues of grave importance to every community stakeholder is being realized. Those who long to return to the days when life was simpler are frustrated as the tide of violence, societal ills and expectations simultaneously rise at perhaps unprecedented speed. The world wide web makes global communications faster than the communication connections between parent and child. Opportunities to explore the unknown in ways that would otherwise be impossible due to time and distance are enabling students to access information for which they are not socially or developmentally prepared.

The many changes already enumerated in this paper are only part of the changing landscape experienced by children. In the face of uncertainty in many life situations, they are expected to be academically motivated high-achievers. The need to create environments where children can learn motivated students, parents, teachers, administrators, religious leaders, teacher union leaders, school board leaders, and law enforcement and social service agencies to come together. In 1994, these thirty-seven leaders formed what became known as the Capital Region Safe Schools Task Force in the Albany, New York Capital Region. The document produced from the Task Force, called Safe Schools: A Model Plan begins with an introductory challenge:

The time is here when we are being challenged as perhaps never before in this nation to stem the tide of violence that is leaving no one untouched. . . To be reactionary alone is not enough. We need to begin to build a healthy contemporary society that values its children and has the courage to set standards for behavior. . . a healthy society that from childhood to old age values and protects the democratic ideals upon which this nation was founded and upon which it must survive. . .

(Sue Shipe, Chairperson, Capital Region Safe Schools Task Force, 1995) The Task Force began by examining the question: “How are we going to stop the violence erupting in our schools and communities?”

Safe Schools: A Model Plan includes the following topics: code of behavior, immediate response strategy, respect for diversity, training for violence prevention, safety to and from school, early intervention, instructional strategies, curriculum, integrating strategies of alternative education into school structure, student empowerment, school traditions, building a positive physical environment, parental role, communication, school community partnership, assessment, and a safe school center.

The product of the Capital Region Safe Schools Task Force, Safe Schools: A Model Plan, was disseminated broadly to school districts throughout New York State as well as to Chief State School Officers, and local, state and national political leaders. Many large associations and unions represented on the Task Force participated by having workshops on Safe Schools: A Model Plan at their

annual State Conferences. Local newspapers promoted the use of the Plan as a model for school communities to develop their own Safe Schools Plan.

Project SAVE, New York state school safety legislation, was enacted largely due to the work of the Capital Region Safe Schools Task Force and their development of Safe Schools: A Model Plan. At the request of the Safe Schools Task Force, Governor George Pataki declared October 20-26, 1996 to be Safe Schools Week.

In an address to the United States Department of Education Improving America's Schools Act Conference in Atlanta, (U. S. Department of Education audio recording, School Environment Workshop panel, IASA Atlanta, 1996) and again at a meeting of the New York Division of Criminal Justice Services in Albany, New York, Sue Shipe, Chairperson of the Capital Region Safe Schools Task Force said: "When Bill Moyers interviewed young people who had committed homicides as part of gang activity, he asked them, 'Why?' Over and over the response was that the gang cared. In the gang, they belonged. We need to find ways to reconnect our children with the institutions of family, church, school, and government. They need to feel they belong, that they matter. Perhaps the greatest predictors that we will have only more violence in our future is: 1) that we see children taking the lives of others without remorse, and 2) that adults are using real life situations of torture and killing as entertainment. It is as if they are no longer connected with their own humanity. We need to learn how to teach children to care for others. . . Violence in our society has been

allowed to increase because we as a society have set the conditions for that to occur.”

The No Child Left Behind Legislation was signed into law by President George W. Bush on January 8, 2002. (U. S. Department of Education web site at [www. ED.gov.](http://www.ED.gov)) The four prongs of the legislation are as follows:

- 1) Stronger Accountability for Results
- 2) More Freedom for States and Communities
- 3) Encouraging Proven Education Methods
- 4) More Choices for Parents

Under 1) the accountability provisions, “states must describe how they will close the achievement gap and make sure **all** students, including those who are disadvantaged, achieve academic proficiency. They must produce annual state and school district report cards that inform parents and communities. In New York State, the accountability requirement has been implemented, and is being reported through the New York State Education Department web site, thereby allowing parents and community members to access the academic results of their school, or any other school, and see a breakdown of results by advantage, disadvantage, gender, minority or majority, and several other indicators.

Under 2) More Freedom for States and Communities, school funding is somewhat deregulated to allow for combined funding streams for up to fifty percent of their categorical funding.

Under 3) Encouraging Proven Education Methods, Federal funding is targeted to support programs and teaching methods scientifically proven to be effective.

Under 4) More Choices for Parents, flexibility is given to parents of children in persistently low-performing or unsafe schools to attend other schools, including Charter Schools, within their school district, and the district must provide transportation and supplemental educational service.

Educators and social scientists, as well as parents, can learn more about the undeniable reality of children killing children in Jack and Jill, Why They Kill: Saving Our Children, Saving Ourselves by James E. Shaw, Ph. D. As part of his doctoral work and fulfilling his own need to understand, Dr. Shaw interviewed 103 young people in the California Youth Authority. All of these young people had committed homicide. They had killed other students, parents, siblings or other family members. One had killed her seven-week old child.

Dr. Shaw wanted his research to uncover the underlying causes for the violent behaviors. Whether intervention at any point might have mattered was one of the questions he pursued. He interviewed the same young people on several occasions, allowing each to tell his/her own story. The underlying causes that were revealed, regardless of socio-economic status, race, differences in geography, schooling, or any other differences, were the same. In Dr. Shaw's

own words, “Two powerful themes emerged in life stories of the incarcerated adolescents I interviewed. These two messages, and others, would continue to be uttered repeatedly, over the nearly four-year period in which I interviewed these children: (1) The lack of parental love and (2) sexual and other abuse at home. . . .During my research, I coined the term adolescenticide—the phenomenon of children taking the lives of other children.” (Author’s Note, pages xv-xx)

The need for educational change mandated by the broader society and reflected in legislation; the challenge for citizens in the Albany, New York area who are attempting to create safe schools by combining their efforts toward addressing issues surrounding school safety; and the alarming societal trends in violence that have reached the point of children killing children not only in our cities, but in wealthy suburbs, have been described here.

The next step in this Literature Review is to examine needs, and rights and responsibilities, and then to begin to look at some of the current research involving ‘collaborative school and community leadership fostering healthy development and lifelong learning’.

In The Irreducible Needs of Children: What Every Child Must Have to Grow, Learn, and Flourish, (Brazelton, M. D., and Greenspan, M. D. 2000) these needs are delineated from the experiences and research of a pediatrician and a child psychiatrist.

The authors devote one chapter each to describing needs of children which they identify as:

- 1) The need for ongoing nurturing relationships
- 2) The need for physical protection, safety, and regulation
- 3) The need for experiences tailored to individual differences
- 4) The need for developmentally appropriate experiences
- 5) The need for limit setting, structure, and expectations
- 6) The need for stable, supportive communities and cultural continuity

A quote from the Introduction that suggests a strong tie to the topic of this Dissertation is as follows: “We consider each of these irreducible needs in terms of their implications for family life, child care, education, the social service and welfare systems, the criminal justice system and the health and mental health systems. We also attempt to formulate recommendations for changes in our policies with regard to each of the needs. In doing so, we hope to challenge the status quo and provide recommendations for enlightened policies in the 21st century.”

In United We Stand: Reflections on a True Democracy, (Shipe, 2000) there are thirteen Bills of Rights and Responsibilities for various groups including: Women and Men, Government Leaders, Those Who Give Healthcare, Parents, Students, School Staff, and School Community Members. The following

two Bills of Rights and Responsibilities, for school community members, and also for students, are included here because 1) they pertain to collaborative school and community leadership, and 2) they help to clarify the concept of **all** as it relates to students and to school community members.

Bill of Rights and Responsibilities For School Community Members

All community members are entitled to contribute their knowledge and skills in service to the learning needs of students.

All community members are entitled to respect for their contributions to family, school and community.

All community members are entitled to promote civic responsibility through appropriate mentoring of student work.

All community members are expected to respect all student, staff, and school property and act in accordance with all standards for conduct on school property.

All community members are expected to support the system they assist in developing.

All community members are expected to model the behavior they desire for students to emulate.

All community members are entitled and expected to live their lives as model citizens, family members and societal caretakers.

All community members are entitled and expected to protect the young

from harm—physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually.

All community members are entitled to express through communication mechanisms that value and respect their contribution.

All community members are entitled to be free.

Bills of Rights and Responsibilities for Students

All students are entitled to a support system that values their lives and individual contribution.

All students are entitled to demonstrate their abilities—talents, skills, creativity—in a manner consistent with their own intuitive expression.

All students are entitled to healthcare, food and a safe environment that allows for physical, mental, emotional and spiritual growth.

All students are expected to contribute their unique talents and skills in service to their home, school and community.

All students are expected to develop sound judgment that leads to wise decision making and health choices.

All students are expected to give and to command respect.

All students are entitled to participate in decisions affecting their safety, educational program and life choices.

All students are entitled and expected to live lives with freedom of choice and responsible action.

All students, parents, staff and community members are entitled to respectful

consideration of their ideas and contributions.

All students are entitled to be free.

The author describes the rights and responsibilities inherent in each of the roles listed above. However, when all of these roles are combined to provide collaborative leadership, the combination of talent, education, skills, and experience may be described by the following outcomes:

The Empowered Organization (Shipe, 2000)

“An Empowered Organization is an organization which utilizes the full capabilities of all its members toward reaching its agreed-upon vision, mission and goals.

An Empowered Leadership effectively maximizes the skills of the entire staff through commitment to shared decision-making, effective communication, respect for diverse perspectives and experience, and dedication to the concept of collaboration to reach the best possible solution.

An Empowered Staff trusts the leadership of the organization, feels respected and valued, and contributes time, energy, and intellectual and emotional resources toward the attainment of the shared vision, mission, and goals.

An Empowered Customer trusts that his needs will be met through the responsive staff of the organization, and feels comfortable communicating those needs.”

The following resources are devoted to collaborative leadership in full service schools. A national network of full service schools, the Coalition of Community Schools, is part of the Institute For Educational Leadership located in Washington, D.C.

Three articles will be reviewed here for their varied perspectives. The first is called “All Together Now” (Black. 2004) Ms. Black states that, “Children learn best when their basic needs—including food, shelter, and clothing—are met and when their families are free from worry about employment, housing, health, and child care. Full service schools aim to meet all of those needs under one roof.”

While the outcome desired may be better student academic performance, this approach reinforces the idea that teaching and learning do not occur in a vacuum. The needs of children and their families, and whether these needs are met, directly influence a student’s well-being, and ability to learn.

For example, it was found by research done at the WestEd San Francisco-based Regional Education Center that there is ‘a significant relationship between school achievement scores and nonacademic factors.’ These factors include exercise and nutrition, but also include low rates of alcohol, tobacco, and drug use, and caring schools and neighborhoods. (Black 2004).

Full-service schools provide several advantages by connecting schools with community agencies. Some advantages include providing supportive

services; combining resources; allowing schools to focus on learning; cost-effective services through combined fiscal management; a focus on prevention; making services easily accessible at one location; and starting services at earlier ages.

In “Concept Paper for Schools as Center of Community”, (Executive Summary, 2004, KnowledgeWorks Foundation), the five-point strands listed below are suggested for building broad consensus in community linkages.

- 1) The role of community in an era of accountability
- 2) Building community-school partnerships
- 3) Building a new type of school facility
- 4) Smart growth, sustainability and community renewal
- 5) Building the capacity to develop schools as Centers of Community

Limited funding due to severe budget constraints is forcing communities to find new ways to work that capitalize on the expertise of schools, local government agencies, and civic and community organizations. One example of collaboration is the Coalition for Community Schools.

The Coalition for Community Schools is a network of practitioners of the philosophy of collaborative school and community leadership fostering healthy development and lifelong learning. Community Schools may be found in almost every state. Some of the ways that community schools are impacting the way we do the business of schooling are: engaging students in real world learning;

involving students as community resources; helping families address barriers to learning; bringing together assets from many areas, thus freeing up the school to focus on teaching and learning; leveraging private community resources; and better utilizing school buildings to provide additional time and resources for students after regular school hours. Combining efforts of all who serve children and families, and making schools the centers for other services focuses broad support toward learner-centered development. (A Handbook for State Policy Leaders, Executive Summary, Coalition for Community Schools, www.communityschools.org)

One successful example of the impact of tending to the emotional needs of young children can be found in the United Kingdom. The program called, “Place to Be” is experiencing success with young children by encouraging expression of their feelings in a safe place through the arts, drama, play and sound. Children may find here the only constant caring adult in their lives. The adults who run the program use only volunteer counselors who are trained to communicate with the children in a variety of ways. Children have a place where they can learn that caring adults do listen and understand. These relationships foster stability and help children learn that even among the chaos they may experience in their family relationships, better relationships are possible.

The positive results of this program can be seen in the schools implementing the program. Schools are reportedly more peaceful; teachers are

less stressed; and children are provided a healthy outlet for expression. (John Clamp, “Hearing the Cries for Help”, *Kindred Spirit*, Issue 36, 1996).

Impact of the Literature Review

The literature in this review and in the bibliography were selected because of their relevance to this topic, their impact upon the topic of this study, and their powerful influence within the helping professions. For example, the book Jack and Jill, Why They Kill: Saving Our children, Saving Ourselves by James E. Shaw, Ph. D. can be used by parents, school board members, and members of all of the providers of services to children and families. Safe Schools: A Model Plan has already influenced school safety planning in all of New York State. In an era of escalating violence where children are not only victims, but also perpetrators, this literature, as well as this study, has the opportunity for broad societal impact on issues surrounding ‘collaborative school and community leadership fostering healthy development and lifelong learning’.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Approach

The approach to researching the topic of “Collaborative School and Community Leadership Fostering Healthy Development and Lifelong Learning” will be quasi-experimental. A broad base of research, some of which is included in the Literature Review in Chapter 2 and in the Bibliography, establishes that new ways need to be developed to address current educational challenges.

Literature from universities and organizations from California to Boston supports the view that higher academic achievement is expected of **all** students, and this mandate is further complicated by increasing societal pressures as described in Chapter 1. Several professions such as education, mental health, healthcare, law enforcement, politicians, and clergy are experiencing similar lack of success with primarily disadvantaged children and youth. Support services have traditionally been viewed by schools as “add-ons” rather than included

systemically. The need for new ways to address this challenge is firmly established in the literature of all professions listed above.

This study attempts to find a way to address the issues described.

While at this time there is a broad base of information documenting the challenge, there are few success stories for dealing with it. Across the nation, generally small-scale experimental approaches are being attempted. This study is new research from practitioners who experience this challenge, and it brings to bear their best thinking and creativity. Clearly, as the adage so aptly describes, ‘if we always do what we’ve always done we’ll always get what we always got’.

Changing a paradigm of how we work, from isolation to collaboration, and from fixed processes and variable outcomes to fixed outcomes and variable processes, will require new ways of thinking.

The quasi-experimental approach will be used to develop, through a CASDA Select Seminar process, a new blueprint for addressing the need for **all** students to succeed. One example of this approach will be the Berne-Knox-Westerlo Central School District which has been developing collaborative working relationships with service providers since 1987. The initiator and manager of the project, Mrs. Linda Berquist, will be interviewed. Academic performance data and other data collected over time will be examined. An interview with Mr. Robert Drake, former Superintendent of Schools for the

Berne-Knox-Westerlo Central School District will also provide information regarding the development, implementation, and results of the program.

Dr. Ruth J. Kellogg is the Executive Director of the Capital Area School Development Association, (CASDA), which provides professional development to over 120 school districts in the Albany area of New York state. She is also a former superintendent of two school districts, and a former District Superintendent of the Capital Region Board of Cooperative Educational Services, (BOCES), which provides a variety of occupational and special education services for students, as well as professional training and resources for staff, for 25 school districts in the New York Capital Region. The Select Seminar, which provides one of the two research approaches to this dissertation, was held under her leadership.

Data-Gathering Method and Database of Study

Select Seminar Process

The Capital Area School Development Association (CASDA) of the Capital Region surrounding Albany, New York has sponsored Select Seminars since 1985. This process was designed and developed by the former Executive Director Dr. Richard Bamberger and Associate Director Dr. Nelson Armlin of the State University of New York at Albany, and continues under the leadership of

Executive Director Dr. Ruth J. Kellogg. CASDA is a not-for-profit extension of the University that addresses a variety of professional development needs within school districts. Currently, there is a major component linking research to practice, under the leadership of Dr. Ray O’Connell, in addition to a continuing focus on professional development. The CASDA Select Seminar is best described by Dr. Ruth J. Kellogg as it appears in the CASDA literature:

“The Capital Area School Development Association (CASDA) has been sponsoring Select Seminars since 1985 as a form of professional development. These Seminars provide a forum for educators to consider major issues and make written recommendations to improve the quality of education. Reports of the Select Seminars are published by CASDA and circulated regionally and nationally. Reports have been reproduced by four State Departments of Education for use in professional development and orientation programs.

The Select Seminar process has received a great deal of attention and has been replicated across the country. It has been extremely gratifying to be credited by colleagues with developing what is essentially a quite simple format and process.

The CASDA Select Seminars follow a very simple structure based upon a set of guiding principles:

1. Participants need to commit adequate time—to work, to reflect, and to write. Most seminars have been conducted for five full days spread about

a month apart over the first three months with the final session being a two-day overnight retreat in the middle to the end of the fourth month.

2. A conducive working environment is very important. The Seminars have been conducted in “protected environments”—away from the work site, in quiet and aesthetically pleasing surroundings with special care given to the quality of food and refreshments. We believe this clearly is a first step in communicating to participants that the Seminar is special and there are high expectations that the deliberations of its members will have an important result.
3. The Seminar participants are the experts. We believe these Select Seminars have been successful in part because of the high degree of personal and professional respect afforded participants and the central belief on which the Seminar series was founded: “that consciously competent teachers and administrators are the best arbiters of educational practice.” While participants do extensive reading during the Seminars, visiting experts and lecturers are not usually a part of this experience. The participants of a Seminar are the body of experts.
4. Roles are “checked at the door”. One’s ideas must stand on their own, be debated, accepted, or discarded without reference to one’s position or education. There is never just one role group represented in a Seminar.

5. Seminars are self-governing entities with organizers serving the group.

The coordination of the Seminar is managed by personnel from CASDA. After providing the initial structure and on-going logistical support, they work to transfer the governance and direction from themselves to the participants. By the end of the Seminar, it is fair to say that the Seminar becomes self-governed with the coordinators taking direction from the Seminar group.

The experience is at least as important as the product. All Seminar participants agree that the process, the experience, is most important; in fact the report might be quite different if the process continued over time, instead of representing but one point in an ongoing process when, although there is much agreement on important issues, there is some disagreement as well. Even so, the report provides an important documentation of the experience and serves to validate for each of the participants the energy and effort they expended. We firmly believe that such an ongoing conversation can only result in better education for all of our children.

We also firmly believe that this process effectively promotes significant professional development. The use of the process in other states, the popularity of the Seminar reports, and the many testimonials from the participants over the years convince us of the viability of the process.”

Summary

In summary, two methods of quasi-experimental research will be used for this study. The first part will be a report of a CASDA Select Seminar Excellence in Education on collaborative community leadership fostering healthy development and lifelong learning. The initial report, written by this author who was also a participant in the Select Seminar, was published in 2002 and disseminated broadly throughout New York State and through education organizations and State Departments of Education nationally. The Seminar Participants are listed below, and serve to demonstrate a broad range of providers of services to children and families in the Capital Region.

Linda Bakst, School Board Member

Linda Berquist, Co-Chair, Southern Rural Albany County

School and Human Services Partnership, Berne-Knox-Westerlo
High School

Carrol Brewer, Director of Pupil Services, Ballston Spa Central
School District

Kimberly Brown, Graduate Assistant, CASDA

Dorinda Davis, Principal, Philip Schuyler Elementary, Albany City
School District

Kathryn Gerbino, Associate Executive Director, Parsons Child and
Family Center

Cathy Golas, Director of Prevention Services, Catholic School

Office, Albany

Josephine Iglesias, School Social Worker, Philip Schuyler Elementary,

Albany City School District

Ruth Kellogg, Executive Director, CASDA

Mary Kline, Director of Adult, Community, and Outreach Education,

Herkimer County Board of Cooperative Services (BOCES)

Sylvia LaVine, Music Teacher, Sharon Springs Central School District

Hal Lawson, Professor and Special Assistant to the Provost, University at

Albany-School of Social Welfare

Lynne Lenhardt, School Board Member, Capital Region BOCES and

Bethlehem Central School District

James Leveskas, Principal, St. Casimir School, Albany

George Mager, Social Studies Teacher, Granville Central School District

Julie Magnano, Behavior Support Specialist, BOCES—Capital Region

Maywood School

Joe Mancini, Deputy Director Schenectady County Probation Services,

Schenectady, New York

Ray O'Connell, Director of Leadership, Research and Development,

University at Albany/CASDA

Sherman Parker, Superintendent of Schools, Lake George Central School

District, Lake George, New York

Janet Perloff, Associate Dean, University at Albany-School of
Social Welfare

Barbara Quackenbush, Middle School Principal, Burnt Hills-Ballston
Lake Central School District, Burnt Hills, New York

Kevin Quinn, Associate Professor of Educational and Counseling
Psychology, University at Albany

Vibetta Sanders, School Social Worker, Veeder Elementary, South
Colonie Central School District, Colonie, New York

Alisa Scapatici, English Teacher, Albany Academy for Girls

Karen Schimke, CEO and President, Schuyler Center for Analysis and
Advocacy, Albany, New York

Sue Shipe, President, International Institute For Human Empowerment,
Inc., Albany, New York

Jack Simeone, Associate Executive Director, Catholic Charities
Albany/Rensselaer, Albany, New York

June Skula-Channing, Social Worker, Cocksackie-Athens Central School
District, Cocksackie, New York

Joanne Sole, Associate Director, CASDA

Tonya Warner, English Teacher, Germantown Central School District,
Germantown, New York

Evelyn Williams, Consultant, Mentor, Lecturer, University at
Albany, School of Social Welfare

Linda Wistar, Social Worker, Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk Central School
District, Selkirk, New York

Geraldine Wolfe, Superintendent of Schools, Catskill Central School
District, Catskill, New York

The second part of the quasi-experimental research utilized for this study will be two interviews and a review of the program initiated by the Berne-Knox-Westerlo Central School District to address the underperformance of its students. Interviewed will be Mrs. Linda Berquist, initiator and manager of the project, and also Co-Chair, Southern Rural Albany County School and Human Services Partnership, and Mr. Robert Drake, retired, Superintendent of Schools during the first several years of the project. Both subjective data (opinion of leadership/participants), and objective data will be reviewed to determine program effectiveness.

It is anticipated that data will emerge from the study and the partnership to support the hypothesis that “changing the way we serve children and families from fixed processes and variable outcomes to fixed outcomes and variable processes creates a paradigm shift that will help to close gaps between needs and services.”

Validity and Reliability: The data in the CASDA Select Seminar is valid in that it incorporates the views of all participants. The report was edited by all Seminar participants to ensure that it represents consensus. The Select Seminar process is reliable and has been replicated annually for approximately twenty years.

Originality and Limitations: The entire study is original quasi-experimental research. Limitations of the data are the inclusion of only one collaborative project, and the limited availability of long-term data. The school district program is reflective of the unique needs of the school community for which it was developed, and therefore cannot be replicated.

Chapter 4

Data Analysis

Overview

Chapter 4 will be divided into two sections of quasi-experimental Research.

Part I

The first part will be the report of the Capital Area School Development Association Select Seminar on Excellence. The report was developed by consensus of the seminar participants. The final report was written by the author and edited by all seminar participants and the CASDA staff. The topic for the seminar was “Collaborative School and Community Leadership Fostering Healthy Development and Lifelong Learning.”

Part II

The second part will consist of the Berne-Knox-Westerlo Central School District as one example of collaborative leadership developed over time.

The project will include the following:

- * Narrative description of the Berne-Knox-Westerlo collaborative including a background description of the school district and community;
- * Process for establishing collaborative school and community leadership;
- * Impact of collaborative school and community leadership project;
- * Results of the project;
- * Data from the New York State Education Department; and
- * Partnership: Description of the Southern Rural Albany School and Human Services Partnership

Part I

Capital Area School Development Association Select Seminar Excellence in Education: “Collaborative School and Community Leadership Fostering Healthy Development and Lifelong Learning.”

Introduction

The 2001-2002 CASDA Select Seminar brought together a distinguished group of people from various positions and backgrounds to share their best thinking and varied perspectives on developing an effective Inclusive School-Agency Partnership Model for the purpose of fostering healthy development and

lifelong learning. This Seminar was unique in terms of the diversity of participants from school districts, agencies, and the university. The topic necessitated a stimulating conversation on new and different approaches to collaborative leadership.

Throughout the five-day period, participants explored many issues including the following:

- **changing roles and responsibilities of educational leaders in the development of agency and community connections for the purpose of improving results in the classroom;**
- **barriers and challenges (renamed opportunities by the participants) in effectively and efficiently creating a partnership among schools, health, and social providers;**
- **characteristics of an inclusive school community, and;**
- **training and preparation of teachers, school leaders, social workers, and leaders of social and health service agencies to forge viable partnerships.**

We came to the table initially on November 27, 2001. Thirty-three people participated representing various roles and responsibilities, as follows: public and private schools and higher education; teachers, administrators, and leaders of not-for-profit organizations; educators and mental health providers; professors of social work, education and health; local, county, and state

leaders; criminal justice directors and community activists. Each of us had a perception of the problem. Each of us had a part of the solution. **All of us could reach many children successfully with our services. None of us could reach all of the children successfully.** In fact, all of us had met the same results: The children of poverty had escaped our goodwill and our best efforts. If they helped to define our success, we were not successful. In addition to the children of poverty, we focused on children from all socio-economic levels since the collaborative model must benefit all, not just a few. It should and must be applicable to every school district in the region, in the state, and in the nation.

We wondered why we had come together as we had. Many who spoke wondered why they had been chosen. Some of us felt we did not have the wide range of experience necessary to define and solve the problem. We didn't feel like experts in the face of what is really a national problem. Little by little, over the five days of the seminar, we began to realize that by being in, or having been in, the trenches, we were daily witnesses to the frustrations of those who work with children. With some children, especially those who came to us with at least somewhat of a support system, we found we could be successful. Those who have a broad network of family and community support, we could help prepare for college and work within the ways we had learned to work. But for some, those living in adverse conditions, alienated

from the vital support of empowering family and community structures, all our best efforts were too often met with failure. We had already seen that those with whom we were not successful often were found in places for the disenfranchised—jails, or homes for troubled youths, or were working in substandard jobs. They were living in hopelessness, continuing the cycle of failure and its associated social challenges, without the knowledge, skills, and means to escape.

We as professionals don't like to admit when our systems fail. High graduation rates, large numbers of students pursuing advanced learning, scholarships, and awards programs speak to our success as professionals. We love nothing more than to sit with the successful, and wish them well as we await similar outcomes in subsequent classes of students.

But other statistics make us ashamed and frustrated. What about all the children we can't seem to reach? All our best efforts using the best research and knowledge available, cannot turn some of our children from gangs, drugs, and other high risk behaviors. When our children look for gangs to have their needs met, and find dealing drugs as the most lucrative employment, we are left to blame the environment and say it isn't our fault. But then we are left with the question of 'Why?' If we've mastered the best our professions have to offer; if we participate readily in everything from cooperative learning to participatory management of our schools; if we offer counseling and after-

school activities, mentoring and home visits; why do we still lose too many of our children in poverty who often are also our children of color?

In preparation for each day of the Select Seminar, we read important and relevant research on this topic. These valuable documents characterized the problem, and demonstrated evidence with sad statistics. We read about how others had attempted to solve these problems through relocation, or co-location, of services. A full-service school was a model with which some of us were familiar, and others of us had experienced. Still, the problem of how to give our school-community services in ways that would really address their needs seemed to haunt us.

The efforts of those who had tried to close the service-delivery gap inspired us. Those talented people who had tried, and occasionally succeeded, to address the learning gap, were evidence that when we work together we can elicit new ideas on how to address issues. After two sessions of feeling overwhelmed by the issues, a few participants began to move into a new direction. After defining the problem, and after reading about how some other people had begun to address the problem, we began to feel a sense of hope, and a new sense of power. Working in isolation as most of us always had, we saw little hope but doing more of the same. We saw that alone we might work even harder, but we would not be working smarter. However, instances such as this, of working professionals coming together in new ways, inspired our

creativity and challenged our intellect and our hearts. Maybe we could find a better way if we combined our expertise. And so we began.

The Current Status

Enormous pressures are being exerted on schools today to improve academic achievement, as measured by standardized test scores. Districts nationwide are gearing up for the most significant change in federal regulation of public schools in decades. The goal is to leave no child behind, and as a result, no school district will be untouched. This federal legislation mandates that schools meet the academic needs of all children at every level. Can schools do this alone? Does academic achievement involve the “whole child?” Can collaborative, interdependent relationships enhance academic achievement and contribute to other positive results as well? How do educators gain some influence and control over the extra-school factors that influence learning? Can new interprofessional and interorganizational arrangements increase the retention rate of professionals, improve their performance, and increase their job satisfaction? Do children benefit when their teachers and administrators feel empowered to make a difference? The current status of increasing pressures on schools set the stage for the need to explore interprofessional and interorganizational arrangements. Collaborative school and community leadership provided focus for the discussions through the Select Seminar.

The context set the stage for the necessity to get to know one another, and learn about one another's jobs. What is the scope of your responsibilities? What does your agency do? Where are you successful? What are your challenges? We found we really did not know each other's role. And, we found that schools are viewed by many healthcare and social workers, as well as probation officers, as wanting to work in isolation. While this may not be true for a number of reasons, the perception becomes reality in the minds of many.

Where we found evidence that our schools were working with others who provide services to children, we too often learned that these service providers were an afterthought. In other words, they were called in to "fix" a problem, whether it was a disciplinary problem, or a recently bereft family. It may have been where abuse had been discovered, or a student had been mandated by the Courts to attend school but had behavior unacceptable to the school. Faced with challenges beyond the scope of their expertise, those in leadership roles had sought assistance from outside the school.

While we found isolated instances of success, we too often found that the success was not systemic, nor was it sustained. That brought us to more issues: If we could demonstrate that something was working, how could we then convince others so that they, too, might find new ways of working to be rewarding?

Then the issue of lack of support also needed to be addressed. If one school could work more closely with the community and reap positive rewards in terms of student success, how could one then convince others within the school system to change behaviors? How could one convince the board of education that this way of working needed support to continue? How could one, on top of all of one's traditional responsibilities, add this new way of working? And why would one want to change? Would teachers see this as simply one more reform or one more addition to their already stressed workload? And with so little long-term evidence to support a new way of working together, why would anyone try, especially in the wake of new standards and assessments that have already stressed the system close to breaking?

The current situation is one with which we are all familiar. We know what to do as a teacher, administrator, community leader, social worker, probation officer, healthcare worker, or parent. There is comfort in these roles because we learned them, we do them, we know what to expect in them, and we know what is expected of us.

In a new paradigm, we will have to work differently. We cannot work in isolation. We will have to collaborate in making decisions. We will lose some control; we will gain some help in meeting common goals. We will need to let go of turf. We will have to acknowledge the expertise of other professionals.

We cannot allow schools to work in isolation. And as providers, we cannot allow ourselves the luxury of working alone with a limited set of objectives. **THEY ARE ALL OUR CHILDREN.** While we are experiencing success with some, we are experiencing failure with others. While schools in suburban areas may experience success with higher numbers of children, schools in urban and rural areas are denied many of the needed services. Inequity of resources is part of the reason for failure, and they will need adjustment as part of the recipe for success. But a large part of future success will be the result of new ways of seeing the problem, and new ways of resolving it. And these new ways will require the creativity, indeed, the ingenuity of each one of us in our variety of roles. **BECAUSE, NONE OF US WILL BE SUCCESSFUL UNTIL ALL OF US ARE SUCCESSFUL.** And we cannot call ourselves successful when so many of our children drop out of school, and sometimes out of life. We recognized that we are all accountable for all children, not just the privileged, the ones with support systems, or the ones whose parents speak English well as a foundation for all other learning. We must meet the challenges of language, poverty, health issues, class, and geography—and we will!

The current status as described in the assigned literature follows, and provided for us a dynamic and dramatic picture of our children in the United States with which to begin our work. The following statistics were published

in the Children's Defense Fund Yearbook 2001 entitled "The State of America's Children":

- * Every second a public school student is suspended.
- Every 9 seconds a high school student drops out.
- Every 10 seconds a public school student is corporally punished.
- Every 20 seconds a child is arrested.
- Every 24 seconds a baby is born to an unmarried mother.
- Every 44 seconds a baby is born into poverty.
- Every minute a baby is born without health insurance.
- Every minute a baby is born to a teen mother.
- Every 2 minutes a baby is born at low birthweight (less than 5 lbs., 8 oz.)
- Every 4 minutes a baby is born to a mother who had late or no prenatal care.
- Every 4 minutes a child is arrested for drug abuse.
- Every 8 minutes a child is arrested for a violent crime.
- Every 9 minutes a baby is born with a very low birthweight (less than 3 lbs., 4 oz.)
- Every 11 minutes a child is reported abused or neglected.
- Every 19 minutes a baby dies.

- Every 37 minutes a baby is born to a mother who is not a high school graduate.
- Every 42 minutes a child or youth under 20 dies from an accident.
- Every 2 hours 20 minutes a child or youth under 20 is killed by a firearm.
- Every 3 hours a child or youth under 20 is a homicide victim.
- Every 4 hours a child or youth under 20 commits suicide.
- Every day a young person under 25 dies from HIV infection.

And also, from the same source, these important facts about American children:

- 3 in 5 preschoolers have their mothers in the labor force.
- 2 in 5 never complete a single year of college.
- 1 in 2 will live in a single parent family at some point in childhood.
- 1 in 3 is born to unmarried parents.
- 1 in 3 will be poor at some point in childhood.
- 1 in 3 is behind a year or more in school.
- 1 in 4 lives with only one parent.
- 1 in 5 is born to a mother who did not graduate from high school.
- 1 in 5 has a foreign-born mother.
- 1 in 5 was born poor.
- 1 in 6 is poor now.

- 1 in 6 is born to a mother who did not receive prenatal care in the first three months of pregnancy.
- 1 in 7 has no health insurance.
- 1 in 7 has a worker in the family but still is poor.
- 1 in 8 never graduates from high school.
- 1 in 8 is born to a teenage mother.
- 1 in 8 lives in a family receiving food stamps.
- 1 in 12 has a disability.
- 1 in 13 was born with low birth weight.
- 1 in 15 lives at less than half the poverty level.
- 1 in 24 lives with neither parent.
- 1 in 26 is born to a mother who received late or no prenatal care.
- 1 in 60 see parents divorce in any year.
- 1 in 139 will die before a first birthday.
- 1 in 1,056 will be killed by guns before age 20.

These statistics reminded the participants that many, many children and adults have significant needs that require new thinking and collaborative solutions. This helped to put the work of the five days in perspective.

These national statistics were considered concomitantly with the demographic changes occurring the region. Example of the regional

changes impacting families and schools included the following: the loss of production jobs, the imperative for higher education, the growing number of single parent households, the growing number of families in which children are home alone due to working adults, the increasing number of children whose first language is not English, and the increasing number of blended families, to name a few. Society is definitely changing, and the challenges to schools and educators have never been greater.

Regardless of the changes, schools have been charged by federal legislation to “Leave No Child Behind.” This mandate requires that schools do business differently to meet the needs of all children regardless of socio-economic status, race, gender, age, or location. Throughout the five days of deliberations, the Seminar participants focused on ALL children and the need for collaborative school and community leadership to make it happen.

The Challenges to Change

In spite of strong desire to see each child succeed, overwhelming constraints at times made us doubt our ability, or anyone’s ability, to make substantive change. It was easy to list the challenges:

- differing philosophies
- lack of common definitions across agencies

- numbers of case loads
- lack of understanding across agencies serving children
- lack of sustainable funding for new initiatives
- confidentiality issues
- salaries for healthcare versus public schools
- limited funding mechanisms
- differences in human resource policies and practices
- lack of feedback loop to teacher
- lack of time for planning across agencies
- concern for security with additional people in the schools
- competition for turf
- lack of communication
- lack of trust across agencies
- lack of trust of reform efforts
- overworked teachers and administrators
- lack of a common vision
- lack of balance between work and personal life
- lack of flexibility in using existing resources
- lack of respect by and for parents

- lack of alignment of federal, state, county, and local planning and resources
- lack of belief that we can change the system
- inequitable funding across school districts
- unyielding stress of standards and assessments
- lack of collaboration at the highest levels in government
- lack of focus on the child and his/her family unit
- lack of state assurance of equitable funding
- reliance on individual initiative rather than systemic planning.

However, in the true spirit of the Select Seminar model, we began to see differently. We began to see that the barriers and challenges could be overcome. Here are comments from some participants:” There are no true barriers to working more collaboratively on behalf of families and children. The typical list of barriers. . . .are more excuses than barriers. Each can be overcome through desire and persistence. The question is: How do you create and sustain the desire and persistence? What conditions are needed to develop the trust and respect that is needed for teams to grow healthfully and maintain survival? We know, too, how to answer these questions. The expertise exists. We, those of us providing services and supports, know the behaviors we do and do not opt to engage in, are the real barriers, and possibly the real answers or solutions.”

“When I begin to feel anxious about our ability to create a cohesive product within our time frame, I realize I need to trust the process. Other disparate groups have used a similar CASDA model to create useful, readable documents, and so shall we, too. It’s the same for the development of a collaboration model in our schools: you’ve got to trust the process.”

“I think we need to modify our expectations to a certain extent about what should happen within the framework of a school day. It has been stated many times throughout his conference that we have to look at the child holistically and facilitate avenues of services, interventions, and processes to meet the goal of educating the child. I believe we need to build into the schedule time for collaboration, facilitate sharing of information and services, and have a common goal of helping each student achieve his/her best. Teachers need to be educated and encouraged toward a new way of thinking. Information sharing needs to be accessible and stream-bred. . . .through education and enlightenment, everyone needs to jump on board to make this successful.”

“I feel strongly that for students to be successful in school specifically they need to form a connection. For some students it may be music, sports or some particular teacher or their friends. Most students

want to feel a part of the whole. If the school is able to forge a connection in some way, the process is underway. Students who do not connect often slip through the cracks. Knowing this, we should use this to our advantage and apply it toward student achievement.”

Thus, as we moved through the Select Seminar process, a diverse group with previously unrecognized needs for the expertise of one another, we began that important paradigm shift.

Why Change? What Is In It For Me?

“The process is also an important product. We begin to look at the world differently.

Initially it may feel like putting pants on backward!

It is a process, and it’s never-ending. People come and go. Circumstances change. Continuous improvement is what schools are being asked to do.

Everyone of us is asked to be more accountable—where it has failed has been where people didn’t include specific outcomes.

Enlightened self-interest—Ask ‘what’s in this for me? What’s in it for us?’ This will help provide focus.

Ultimately this should make it better for all of us.”

“We need to value everyone, the total community.”

“Focus on performance, not just on tests.”

“In our discussion of why we need inclusive school communities, one of our members talked about the fact that she had performed 35 suicide assessments since September. (It is now March.) The positive thing is that they were assessments that led to students obtaining appropriate help, but again, the school is attempting to stop up holes in the dam. We are just short of a crisis, and the arrangement in which one social worker is responsible for 800 students is incredibly dangerous. With this model, it is difficult to keep one’s head above water. There is not time for preventative work. Can an inclusive school community save lives? As dramatic as it sounds, it is true.”

“We also need to help enlighten the nonbelievers. A stable staff can help as well. Lots of turnover can provide barriers for the sustainment of the creation and continuation of the inclusive school.”

“We spent lots of time discussing the benefits of the inclusive school. Administrators, teachers, agency members, parents, and students may very well ask, ‘what’s in it for me?’ There must be positive outcomes for everyone involved in a collaborative model. Children must benefit but the adults who work with the children must be able to view their jobs with greater satisfaction and to experience a greater sense of accomplishment. Some of the positive outcomes from the group follow:

- **no kids fall through the cracks;**

- **reduction in the drop out rates;**
- **increased attendance;**
- **improved teaching quality;**
- **improved learning quality and academic performance;**
- **supports for teachers and all staff; more cost effective than alternative and special education programs;**
- **safer schools;**
- **parent empowerment if done properly, and ultimately, partnerships.”**

Everyone ultimately benefits in a successful collaborative relationship, and that is the way it should be. Educators, health and social service providers, and parents no longer feel as though they are alone with their unique problems. Communicating, sharing, delegating, consulting, and referring are all part of the model that enhances the life of the child and his/her family as well as the professionals providing the services.

“When we operate our schools in isolation and wall out the outside, we exclude resources that could help the school be more successful.”

Preparation for a Changing Time with Changing Mindsets

“Here we are—excited and anxious about the task ahead of us. . . My concern is, can we enlighten those in our agencies/schools who do not understand the importance of collaboration?”

“Some of this work entails suspending in an appropriate balance, two frames of reference. Both are described as the school community or alternatively, as the inclusive school community. One frame is a single school, both as a planning unit and as an action system. The other is the school’s family and community ecologies, including feeder patterns of schools, higher education and early childhood programs. It’s not one or the other frame; it’s both.”

“Much of what I gleaned from my reading of the reflective writing was aptly summarized. The writings clearly reveal that:

1. The child is the focal point, with both the community and the family as supports.
2. Schools and community agencies have the mission of bringing parents into the collaborative process.
3. The child study teams already in existence within the schools can be an excellent vehicle within which collaboration can take place. However, confidentiality and trust are barriers that must be overcome, as is the full understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the multiple cultures. Much training needs to take place prior to a large group meeting.

4. Extension of the school day may be necessary in order to accommodate the various groups; teacher contracts and unions would present another barrier that must be surmounted.”

“Our group has come up with some good ideas in addressing the need for more interdisciplinary coursework for teachers, administrators, social workers and service providers. . . We also need to develop a plan for inservice training designed to help schools and communities see their possibilities for collaboration and then gain the skills to make it possible.”

Changing the mindsets seemed paramount in preparing for a changing time. Our belief systems and values need to be challenged. We need to focus on the needs of ALL children, not some children.

The belief system should look like this. . .

All children can learn

All teachers can teach.

All administrators can administer.

All parents can parent.”

The following questions challenged our thinking, guided our direction, and established the necessity for changing mindsets in order to think, talk, and act differently:

- How do we change from blaming the child for lack of success, to helping the child deal with the barriers to success?
- How do we change our thinking of “damaged child” and “damaged family”?
- What can we do to increase minority teaching staff?
- How can we ensure respect for diversity in the following areas?
Curriculum, school and community activities, lectures and dances; respect includes individualism; reading/instructional materials; training and professional development; patience with learning; bulletin boards to celebrate success.
- How do we balance security and having the community in our schools?
- How do we change the culture from high stakes testing only, to include broader child-centered outcomes?
- How do we change the idea that excluding students is a solution?
- How do we define student performance?
- How do principals get to know the players in the community?
- How do board members and superintendents play a leadership role in collaborating with other agencies?
- How do we create a structure that fosters linkages?
- Who are the members of a collaborative model?

- What are the new roles of the participants?
- What are the support systems needed to be successful?
- How do we make student performance a children's agenda: include academic, social, civic, emotional, behavioral, arts, respect, trust, being prepared, being interactive; go beyond State Education Department requirements?
- How do we include the necessary players: early childhood development, public health agencies, social services, private healthcare providers, mental health providers, parents, families, law enforcement, juvenile justice, religious organizations, business community, recreation and sports community, after-school programs, and others in the "community"?
- How can burn-out of staff be avoided?
- How can/should funding be blended?
- How can reporting by various agencies be coordinated?
- How can we have a value-added model, not a deficit model?
- Can we follow-up with what happens to our graduates?
- What are parents' aspirations for their children?
- How can we meet the needs of the "whole" child, person?
- How do we perform our jobs and share accountability?
- How can we all become child advocates?

- How do we understand and create a more inclusive community?
- How do ALL people feel the need to connect to the process/product?
- How do we develop the need for interdependence and how do we do it to ensure success?
- How do we develop leadership skills at all levels?
- How do we create the environment in our schools so that ALL children can learn?

These kinds of questions are important for any school and community thinking about or working on collaborative endeavors. Change is inevitable.

The process is important in each community and must be tailor-made to that community. The “model” is a living organism and can react to the environment. Schools need to be ready for children, not just children ready for school.

Creating a New Paradigm for Success for ALL Students

Change has always been prevalent in the operation of schools from open classrooms to literacy-based instruction to whole language approach to cooperative learning, and the list could continue for pages. People are often weary of change, and view it as a fad with no concrete or lasting results. Change must yield improvements and respond to the growing

pressures to improve results. As change is discussed in this section, it implies improvements for the purpose of fostering healthy development and lifelong learning.

Changing thinking and subsequent behaviors are always a challenge. We know what school looks like because of the picture we have in our minds from childhood. We know our roles because we have often witnessed others performing them, and we have sometimes been carrying them out, meeting ours and others' expectations, for several years. Change itself can be uncomfortable. It has been said that we are not afraid of change; we are afraid of being changed. One of the greatest challenges to becoming empowered in new ways is changing our thinking. Once we have looked at the current status, and realized the need for change, the next step is to look at what needs to happen to realize the desired outcomes.

A. The Inclusive School Community

*** Definition: An inclusive school community uses family and community resources for success in school, healthy development, and lifelong learning.**

The following quote provides the rationale for this type of community:

“Schools are not wholly effective when they operate as

stand-alone organizations in which educators attempt to do it all, alone.’ To be effective, educators and schools must be able to draw on family and community resources for children’s healthy development, learning, and success in school. Reciprocally, when educators and schools are effective, parents, social and health service providers, and local leaders benefit. In brief, collaboration is a practical necessity because educators, social and health service providers, parents, and local leaders fundamentally depend on each other to achieve the results each stakeholder group wants and needs.”

* **Characteristics of an Inclusive School Community:**

Expanded boundaries: Reaching beyond the school to gain the benefits of family and community resources for learning, academic achievement, and healthy development

Expanded opportunities: For all students to learn and reach their potential

Agreement: Shared purpose and vision

Connectedness: Creating linkages with agencies and families for mutual benefit

Leadership: Integrated and stable

Communication: Reliable mechanisms

Shared Responsibility: For results and for collaboration processes

Committed advocates: Acting on the behalf of collaboration for children, families and schools

* **Sustaining the Effort:**

Continuing Commitment: including collaborative leadership

Innovation: Opportunities to explore new ideas

Ongoing Communication: All partners are linked effectively

Creative Funding: Finding ways to use and braid resources

Ongoing evaluation: Use evaluation to learn and improve

Document and Celebrate Success

B. The Inclusive School Community: Stages of Development

As we begin to expand our thinking from a school in isolation, to one of collaborative school and community resources, the language we use may begin to reflect inclusiveness. Schools are in different stages of development so they need to analyze where they are on the continuum and how much change they may need. The following diagrams reflect the continuum to an inclusive school community:

LANGUAGE

From: Students to Youth to Family to Community

SCHOOL PERSPECTIVE

From: Status Quo to Connect with Providers to Interdependent to Integration

PARENTS

From: Involvement to Empowerment to Family Support to

Key Community Development

TEACHERS

From: Stand Alone to Referral to Service Providers in Classroom to

Integrate Instruction with Service Plan

C. New Collaborations

How can educators work more effectively with service providers without losing their focus on instruction?

VISION

- Vision and leadership support initiatives, teacher involvement and teacher leadership.
- Teachers should not have to do it all.
- We need to work smarter, not harder.
- The new model will delegate some responsibilities to others: parent aides, counselors, health care providers.
- System will create processes to facilitate delegation, i. e., school council for decision making.
- Commitment of all participants is necessary for success in the long haul.

- Intervention design should be responsive to what teachers want.
- Plans that are acceptable foster participation with integrity. Teachers must feel supported.
- Teachers mediate the assistance they require.

PLANNING

- Recommend a school-family-community coordinator.
- Works as an adjunct to the principal (could come from within; could start part-time and grow).
- Amount of coordination will determine the scope and complexity of what is possible;
- Establish a technical support team to plan the initiatives, agree on policies, establish mechanism for accountability, and oversee implementations;
- Also collect data, interpret statistics—perhaps University participation, i.e., interns as adjuncts, and
- Address the assumption that teachers want collaboration.

TRAINING

- Specific training for professionals in working with empowered parents, conflict resolution:

Teachable skill necessary “to play”;

Teachers will receive benefits of the interventions;

Helps bring up performance, especially of the lowest quartile; and

Create concrete linkages between new services and test score improvements: increased attendance, reduced discipline problems, more time, better health care, concrete services, parental involvement

IMPLEMENTATION

- *Move past cooperation and coordination to collaboration*
- Producing something new requires, time, trust, and confidence;
- Create “on-call supports: substitute teachers, teachers assistants, assistance of social and health service providers, and the children’s parents.
- New role for teachers differs across grades;
- Different responses at elementary, middle and high schools;
- All teachers can be resources to a particular student; and
- Improve ratio of adults to kids.

ACCOUNTABILITY

- Technical support could come from various places
- University programs;
- Teacher release time;
- Utilization of data already collected; and data needs to be represented in an accessible way;
- Outcomes should reinforce teacher’s participation;

- Celebrate victories;
- Acknowledge successes and create a feedback loop; and
- New program linked to positive outcomes.

D. Higher Education Preparation For Change

FUNDAMENTALS OF THE DELIVERY MODEL

The next edition delineates how higher education needs to prepare teachers, administrator, social workers, and other service providers with the skill and attitudes to collaborate, as needed, in improve results for all students and the professionals who serve them.

“Children, youth, and families challenged by poverty, social exclusion, and racial and ethnic discrimination require new specially designed improvement strategies.

Every model must include assessment, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms that enable learning, continuous improvement, infrastructure development, and capacity building.”

PRE-SERVICE TRAINING

“The traditional departmental structure of the university—which is an outmoded mechanism for managing knowledge—must change.” Dean Corrigan

CROSS-TRAINING OF PROFESSIONALS

(Co-Taught courses and common curriculum): Educational, human services,

and health professionals can benefit from interprofessional education and training.

Moving from status quo format to a more dynamic approach that integrates the paradigms from each profession.

Separate training of professionals limits their capacity to work together.

Courses that cross disciplines as a dynamic approach to getting educators and service providers to understand the others' orientation, paradigms approaches to problem solving.

EXPERIENTIAL TRAINING

Experiential training provides the opportunity to work in a different type of environment to gain a better understanding of the service being provided and how that service might be enhanced through collaborative efforts.

Grand Rounds Model: This is a case-based model. For example, a teacher could intern for a short time with a social service agency that serves children and families, a child welfare agency, a probation agency; a social work student could spend a short time with a teacher, with an administrator, a CSE chair, etc.; the experience would allow time for conferencing/discussion on specifics of cases.

Fishbowl Model: This technique provides each person with an opportunity to hear, and to be heard.

INTERACTIVE CONVERSATIONS

Sharing among students and faculty of varying perceptions, needs, and new awarenesses as well as current research. This provides each person with a better understanding of current gaps in how services are provided, and innovative approaches in design.

STRUCTURED AROUND BEST PRACTICES

Study of existing models of collaboration that are successful: including Philip Schuyler Elementary School and Giffen Elementary School in Albany, and Berne-Knox-Westerlo Central School District in the Capital Region of Albany, New York.

Importance of not reinventing the wheel, but learning from past efforts, building on them and improving them.

There may be existing, well-functioning structures in place (i.e. shared decision making, Comprehensive District Education Plan) to facilitate collaborative efforts.

IN-SERVICE TRAINING

- Interprofessional Training Teams to Explain Model

Teams of professionals, representing education, human services and healthcare could demonstrate how to utilize collaborative models to school personnel, and raise awareness of the usefulness of such a model. This could take place at faculty meetings or in-service training days.

Recruitment of interested faculty to participate in more advanced training with members of the community, parents, human service providers and others.

* IMPACT OF CHANGE ON SCHOOLS

Understanding the changing nature of the work environment in schools and the subsequently expanded role of the teacher; contractual issues; and high stakes testing.

- FUNDING STREAMS

Importance of understanding the complexity of multiple funding streams and the limitations they impose; and the ability to access grants.

* FEDERAL/STATE/LOCAL MANDATES

The impact of creating change within the boundaries of laws, rules, and regulations is immense. Waivers may need to be sought when these impede desired progress.

* GUIDING PRINCIPLES/PARADIGMS OF EACH PROFESSION

Understanding the mental models of the other professions is necessary to begin to develop new models across service providers. In other words, each profession needs to develop an understanding of how the other professions think and work including the restrictions within the operation of each system.

- RESULTS OF LOCAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- NECESSARY SKILLS

- Mediation
- Conflict Resolution
- Communication: Listening; sharing information; interacting with adults versus interacting with children; understanding the language of other professionals; awareness of our use of language; development of sensitivity/ awareness to the communication styles, practices, native language, and skills of others.
- SOLUTION-FOCUSED PROBLEM SOLVING
- INTERDISCIPLINARY PLANNING
- LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT among all levels of staffing and including parents.
- GROUP-BASED DECISION MAKING
- GROUP FACILITATION (task-centered and process-oriented)
- CONDUCTING AND EFFECTIVELY USING A LOCAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT
- ACCESSING COMMUNITY RESOURCES
- ADVOCACY
- CASE CONFERENCING
- MORE EXPENSIVE TRAINING OFFERED FOR COMMUNITY TEAMS

Provide content and skills to local teams of educators, human service and health professionals along with parents to assist them in working together to create or enhance collaborative efforts in their communities.

- **KEY DECISION-MAKERS/STAKEHOLDERS MUST PARTICIPATE,** in order to ensure: empowerment, resources, and support.
- **PARENTS MUST BE INVOLVED AND ENGAGED**

This type of involvement and engagement goes well beyond the typical P.T.A. functions and parent-teacher conferences. While these activities are necessary, they are not sufficient to tap the talents and expertise of the parents.

By training active parents to survey the community, the true needs of children and families can be assessed and addressed.

Parents can be trained to conduct workshops, perform outreach, and take leadership in the implementation of collaborative projects.

Parents must be included in the training environment with school and human service staff.

Utilize parents to be trained as natural helpers in their school community whereby they conduct outreach in canvassing parents for their input relative to school-community needs. In doing so, the trained natural helpers are brought into the in-service training of school-human service personnel and offer their wider perspective about student and family needs.

To understand the impact of social issues on the individual, the family, the school, and the community means we have to look at the root causes. Some steps toward addressing lack of learning, and inhibited social development, begin with a scan of the total environment.

CONTENT

- IMPACT OF POVERTY AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS OF FAMILIES

(It is essential to remember not to blame families for problems.)

- COMMUNITY RESOURCES, within the school and in the community.

What are they? How are they accessed?

- LEGAL DIMENSIONS

The rules of the game—understanding the legal constraints of the various players. Examples of the legal dimensions are confidentiality and access to records.

E. Changing Roles and Responsibilities

What are the changing roles and responsibilities of educational leaders in the development of agency and community connections?"

In the following section, we have identified several roles, and shown how these roles will broaden as we move toward viable collaborations between school and community agencies. The changing roles involve a wide range of people and agencies in a proactive preventative role as we move toward producing healthy children, families, and communities. We must do a better

job at determining how to link children to the services and how to reach children before they enter schools through family connections. The dissemination of information must be formalized so that community agencies share information to allow the schools to retrieve information on available services.

The county should be responsible for getting information out to the schools in a user-friendly way about what services are available. The schools should be responsible for establishing contacts in order to develop dynamic partnerships. Once the partnerships are initiated, each organization has the responsibility to give up some of its authority. A paradigm shift takes place when partner agencies understand how working together will make them stronger.

How can schools be linked to health and social providers for the benefit of students?

The school can make linkages by developing an infrastructure that supports resource oriented schools. The first step is identifying needs and then assessing what resources are available in the community. A formalized agreement should be made with agencies by identifying shared needs, problems and paths to solution. A relationship should be established by inviting the agencies into the school. The idea, once you have identified these shared challenges and convinced all stakeholders of the benefits of

collaboration, is to identify shared outcomes. Shared planning, implementation and evaluation are a must. All stakeholders are involved (internal and external “publics”) in planning and decision-making (for example, through Shared Decision Making teams.)

As we develop an approach for addressing barriers to learning, we must include more outreach that links with community resources, better coordination of school-owned services, and quality collaboration and integration of school and community services.

(How) Do these new school-agency linkage models improve results in the classroom?

Learning and achievement outcomes are positive indicators regarding the school-agency linkages. For example, one study reports 36 of the 49 programs involved in full service models report academic gains. The gains reported included improvements in reading and math test scores, looked at over a two or three year period. Most of the schools were elementary schools. Successes were limited to students who received special services, such as case management, intensive mental health services, or extended day sessions.

Each school will need to decide what it wants to measure in its evaluation. Some benchmark indicators of progress for addressing school accountability include increased attendance, reduced tardiness, reduced discipline referrals, less bullying and sexual harassment, increased family involvement with child

and schooling, fewer referrals for specialized assistance, fewer referrals for special education, fewer pregnancies, fewer suspensions, fewer dropouts, and increased graduation rates. A long-term indicator of academic improvement would be reflected in the School Report Card.

Some of the outcomes of school-agency linkage models are diverse curriculum, before and after school programming that provide extended academic opportunities, rich resources focusing on non-academic issues, and collaborations that allow for immediate response to student need. This allows teachers to focus on teaching. The notion of isolation is lessened as more and more people work toward common goals. It is hoped that staff and leadership position turnover rates and burnouts in all agencies will be significantly minimized.

How does improved student performance enhance services and improve the work of service providers?

Service providers have an interest in making sure that children feel included and successful in the schools. When they are invited into the schools, the child's natural environment, to do their work, they are involved with the student in a setting where others have knowledge about the student. Services become accessible because the schools provide a captive audience. A broader population of students can be involved when services are on-site. This can help with early intervention and prevention. Students become familiar with

the person and the services and (s)he is not viewed as an outsider. Students then self refer and provide referrals of their friends as they interact with the familiar face on campus.

The vision is not to collate, but to plan. Blending funds to minimize spending on the same processes by differing service providers will allow for greater efficiency when allocating financial resources.

CHANGING THE APPROACH

The broader picture will look more like the following:

Community Resources Approach

Establish Trusting Partnerships

Multiple Outcomes

Child and Family Resource Focus

Integration of Services

Dynamic Evolution

In order to create and establish the change thus far described, it is necessary to consider how leadership roles need to evolve. We need to expand our “notion” of how leaders lead, and how each perceives herself/himself. It is important to realize that in the new paradigm of collaborative leadership, traditional roles must expand to comprise leadership with a broader concept of community. Parents are to be valued for their leadership role in the lives of their children as not only role models, value-developers, and boundary

interpreters, but also as the primary coordinators for addressing all of the individual child's needs. Parents are the quality controllers, and the innovative guides through a child's life from conception to adulthood. All community leaders need to address parents as empowered contributors in the child's development. By supporting each child through appropriate service provision, each leader contributes to holistic development that ensures learning and success.

A renaissance of emerging leadership roles creates a dynamic that prepares for new kinds of collaboration and engagement. Changes in how we see our roles begin to be reflected in our attitudes, beliefs, and behavior. This essential shift allows our thinking to enable and support actions to better serve all children.

“A paradigm shift takes place when partner agencies understand how working together will make them stronger. . .in the new paradigm of collaborative leadership, traditional roles must expand to comprise leadership with a broader concept of community.”

F. Emerging Leadership Roles

Principal

From

*School Leader

*School Manager

To

*Community Leader

*Multiple Resource Manager

*Disciplinarian

*Implementer

*Dependent Upon Research

*Hands Off

From

*Working in Solitude

*Developing Leadership in Teachers

*Encouraging Student performance

*A Leader of Teachers

*Accountable for School Performance

*School and Parent Communication

Teacher

*Classroom Leader

*Pupil Resource Manager

*Designer and Implementer

*Developing Research

*Hands On

To

*Working Collaboratively

*Developing Leadership in
Total Community

Resources

*Encouraging Total School-
Community Resources

*A Leader of Leaders

*Accountable for Child
Development and School
Performance

*School resources and
Community Communication

Resources

*Classroom Manager	*Manager of Student Resources
*Academic Performance Focus	*Total Child Development Focus
From	To
*Disciplinarian	* Child Development Coordinator
*Accountable for Few Objectives	*Accountable for Multiple Objectives
*School Focus	* Child Resource Focus
*Accountable for Classroom	* Shared Accountability for Child
*Academic Performance	*Development and Academic Performance

Community Resource Leaders

**(Mental Health Providers, Probation, Child and Family Services,
Social Services, YMCA, Legal Aide, Public Health)**

*Add-On to “Fix” Students	*Collaborator in Planning and Implementing Success
*Ad Hoc	*Integral

*Work in Isolation

*Work as Part of Viable Student

Resource Team

*Separate from Academic Performance

*Enhancer of Academics

*Accountable to Self and Profession

*Accountable to Resource Team

From

To

*Access through Deficit, School

*Incorporated Into Total-School

“At-Risk” Model

Planning

*Available for Few Students

*Available for All Students

*Uninvolved in Design of

*Partner in Design of Total School

Environment

The benefits of collaborative community leadership improve outcomes for all involved. Obtaining improved results can foster a positive working and learning environment. Finding satisfaction in one’s calling to serve children improves job satisfaction. Sharing success with children and adults leads to further collaborations. With success comes a precious value-added component. Each child who succeeds, who is healthy and loves to learn, is a life enriched that has the potential to contribute to family, community, and the society at large. Each lost, depletes human resources and stresses systems.

The joy of providing for the young to learn and grow is possibly the most important factor in choosing a service profession. When we improve our

effectiveness, we not only assist children, but we, the adults who serve children, may also find enhanced professional fulfillment.

G. Benefits/Outcomes

- *Improved Attendance and Graduation Rates
- *Reduced Tardies, Dropouts, and Suspensions
- *Shared Responsibility
- *Improved Accountability
- *Increased Family Involvement
- *Improved Learning and Achievement outcomes
- *Reduced Referrals and Reliance on Service Assistance
- *Reduced Reliance on Costly High-End Intervention Programs and Placement of Youth Outside of Their Home and Community
- *Improved Job Satisfaction
- *Expanded Data for Evaluation and Decision-Making

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A PARAGIDM OF “SUCCESS FOR ALL CHILDREN”

Over the course of five days, we began to believe that the barriers could be overcome, and we developed recommendations that, if successfully implemented by those with corresponding responsibilities, would help to ensure success for all our children.

A. Attitudinal Dimension

1. See each child as unique, and capable of learning.
2. Drop the title “at risk”. All people are at risk at different times in their lives and in the face of overwhelming events or situations. Serve all children, paying particular attention to those living in poverty with languages other than English, and those experiencing traumatic family difficulties.
3. Encourage within all agencies serving children the acceptance of the variety of “family” configuration, recognizing non-traditional roles in support of the child.

B. Legislative Initiatives

1. Develop legislative support for flexible funding to allow for more creative partnerships across school districts and agencies.
2. Emphasize comprehensive planning for children and youth at the federal, state, county, and local levels.
3. Develop non-partisan advocacy for interagency resource support systems for all children.
4. Develop school board support for new comprehensive agency/school district planning at the national, state, county and local levels.
5. Develop legislative support for broader student outcomes to reflect the goal of “healthy development and lifelong learning.” Student achievement must be reflected within broad developmental learning and academic goals

rather than only test scores based upon narrow, academically limiting standards.

C. Training and Preparation

1. Develop multi-disciplinary and multi-agency planning opportunities as part of teacher, healthcare, social service, juvenile justice, and higher-education preparation.
2. Enhance teacher preparation with emphasis on classroom resource team leadership.
3. Design and implement leadership development programs for parents that focus on the parent as the child's first and most important educational leader.
4. Develop and implement police and other criminal justice employee programs that focus on youth developmental needs and positive youth leadership.

D. School Structure

1. Amend, or develop school security plans that reflect the addition of interagency-school resource teams.
2. Institute a Resource Coordinator position at the school district level.
3. Provide contractual time for planning for school district interagency teams.

Summary of the Select Seminar

We had many doubts when we began. At first we couldn't envision a mode of operating out of our current paradigms so that we could address the needs of children "falling between the cracks." As we progressed, we found that the barriers were real and tangible but not insurmountable.

When we let go of our allegiance to present paradigms of working, when we let down our guards and listened to one another, we began to realize that each of us was frustrated by our own professions' inability to be successful with the same children. When we began to listen with a focus on solutions and made our first tiny steps toward change, we became energized. Our creativity began to take over. We suddenly envisioned working together across multiple agency responsibilities, and being successful with those children whose failure had haunted us. We began to see that, if we worked together, we really could make a difference! We became believers.

(The following quotes were taken directly from the Select Seminar Participants) "The whole idea of an inclusive school community is so grand. We could talk about it forever." "I am excited at this since I feel this is a necessary program for our schools and community." "With any change event, there is a need for persons to 'champion' the vision. There is a need for unwavering commitment, enthusiasm, and leveled focus to bring forth the dream. . .Perhaps. . .an inclusion model can be created that opens up opportunities of leadership from all segments of the designed community."

At the conclusion of the Seminar, all of the participants gave the following invitation: “We invite you to join us by taking on the challenge of collaborative school and community leadership fostering healthy development and lifelong learning.”

Part II Berne-Knox-Westerlo School District Collaborative Project

Introduction

The following is a description of the collaborative program in the Berne-Knox-Westerlo School district. This is how one participant in the Select Seminar just described has modeled a collaborative approach to ‘fostering healthy development and life long learning’ for the past approximately twenty years.

This is only one model of what developing partnerships to support children might look like. It is an example of a rural model, and how a rural school district was able to improve student outcomes by collaborating with other service providers.

It needs to be stressed here that this process may look differently in every school district because every district has unique needs and resources. A full-service model is one way of accomplishing the link between those with needs, and those agencies that address needs. For example, a full-service model co-locates

agencies at the school site. This provides easy access to services within the school community. It brings the services to a location that is common and familiar to families. However, in rural areas, services may be several miles away from families, thus necessitating different solutions to problems of access.

The long-range goal of the Seminar Participants is for collaborative leadership for schools utilizing Resource Teams composed of school and other agency personnel. These Teams would have decision making authority and joint accountability for results. Full-service models, and the model to be described at Berne-Knox-Westerlo, are steps along the continuum between:

*isolation with authority and accountability for student learning at the school level at one end, and *collaborative multi-agency leadership resource teams with joint authority and accountability at the other end of the spectrum. The latter has not yet been achieved.

However, as educators yield individual authority to joint authority; as they move beyond cooperation to collaborative teams; as they envision roles as interdependent rather than independent; and as they recognize that it truly does ‘take a whole village to raise a child’, the process for collaborative leadership will begin to emerge that has the potential to more successfully address student learning.

A. Description

Berne-Knox-Westerlo Central School District is a school district located in the mountains in Southern Albany County in New York. The school district which comprises three towns is 120 square miles. Demographics are approximately 30% professional and 70% blue collar. The school is the hub of the family-centered community. There are twelve different Christian churches within the three-town radius, and the school district leadership meets with church leaders to talk about youth behavior and activities within the community. Separation of Church and State are upheld, but communication is regarded as important.

In 1978, Ms. Linda Berquist, a Select Seminar participant, began teaching English at the Berne-Knox-Westerlo High School. She described the environment at the high school in 1978 as having 1) little community involvement, 2) high staff turnover, and 3) disgruntled staff, and 4) a chaotic environment with many ninth and tenth graders failing.

She described the needs at the High School at the time as 1) staff stability, 2) social work services, and 3) a needs assessment.

B. Process

Although Ms. Berquist was an English Teacher, she contacted the Albany County Mental Health agency. This is significant for two reasons. 1) The Albany County Mental Health agency had the means to be able to provide assistance. However, it required personal contact and establishing a relationship with the agency for those means to be accessed. 2) The contact

with the mental health agency was made by a teacher, Ms. Berquist, with the support of the Superintendent Mr. Robert Drake. The leadership emerged from within the school, and that is significant. The support of the Superintendent was essential for Ms. Berquist to be able to begin to develop a partnership. In an empowered organization, leadership can emerge from any level, but requires top-down support to experience success. Thus the trust of the Superintendent, and his support enabled Ms. Berquist to initiate a partnership.

The initial contact with Albany County Mental Health resulted in the agency sending a volunteer worker to the high school on one afternoon per week. There was little impact, according to Ms. Berquist, because the volunteer worker could only see one student or one family in the limited time period. The provider was located off site. However, this first step started a concept of a more full-time provider. Ms. Berquist began to look for more providers through BOCES (Board of Cooperative Educational Services), an intermediary educational provider, and other mental health agencies.

The next step was the establishment of a regional meeting with the Department of Social Services. Ms. Berquist then applied and received a Youth-At-Risk grant for the school district. The grant provided funding for a social worker from Catholic Family Charities.

More networking resulted in more partnerships. Ms. Lois Wilson, and the New York State Senate Education Committee hosted annual Youth-At-Risk conferences. These conferences provided the opportunity for sharing programs and resources, as well as networking. Other county and state departments became linked through these conferences and regional meetings. Ms. Linda Berquist developed relationships and brought agencies together through regional meetings that resulted in the eventual development of the “Southern Rural Albany County School and Human Services Partnership”. Now, in 2004, Ms. Berquist is Co-chair of this growing partnership which currently has 51 agencies involved.

C. Impact

The impact of one person, seeing a need and reaching out to agencies that have resources to address that need, should not be underestimated. It is important to acknowledge the impact of a vision to help all students succeed. It is also essential that the Superintendent of Schools held a similar vision, recognized and supported a teacher leader with strong initiative, and freed that teacher from some responsibilities to be able to have the freedom and support to reach out and partner with other agencies.

The impact of a “spark plug” is vital. Ms. Berquist is a dedicated teacher who was willing to go beyond the requirements of her role. She moved the boundary of her role to include many leadership activities. In addition, she

effectively used her writing skills to develop grant applications and bring in money for the school district to hire a social worker, and supplement teacher services to provide additional support for at-risk students.

Ms. Berquist was interviewed on April 6, 2004. At this time she had developed the partnerships with Berne-Knox-Westerlo school district for over 25 years. It is important to acknowledge this program which developed incrementally as needs were identified, relationships established, and further networking at local, county and state levels evolved. This incremental approach has been initiated and sustained because of the vision and energy of one teacher, and the recognition, participation, and supportive leadership of the Superintendent. Continuity has been maintained by the promotion of the High School Principal to Superintendent in 2000 upon the retirement of Mr. Drake, thus supporting the continuation of an educational philosophy of collaboration.

Ms. Berquist further used her writing skills to develop formal contracts and Memorandums of Understanding with partnering agencies. These documents were given Superintendent and School Board approval. In the example of this particular collaborative model, one teacher continues to lead by being an initiator; implementer; writer of grant proposals, memorandums of understanding and contracts; assessor of needs; and a leader who extends her leadership through networking, establishing a formal Partnership, and hosting conferences for the sharing of resources and programs.

Ms. Berquist also recognized the need to have the support of the County Executive in order to be successful in maintaining formal partnerships. The Southern Rural Albany County School and Human Services Partnership's most recent conference included opening remarks by Mr. Michael Breslin, Albany County Executive.

In a collaborative arrangement, it is important that agencies bring their respective resources to the table. One such significant contribution was the use of space by Hudson Valley Community College for the Partnership to host their annual conference. This in-kind contribution had a value of approximately \$2000.00.

According to Ms. Berquist, these additional resources serve approximately 15% of the high school population annually. The students to be served are generally failing two or more subjects. She reported that it is a challenge to address special needs in buildings where rooms were designed, built and being almost fully utilized as classrooms. In one small area, there was a "place" for these students that could include counseling, small academic classes, social work, academic assistance, in-school suspension, and a GED (general education diploma) program. Students were well-behaved and appeared comfortable in the setting. A teacher was sitting with students in the in-school suspension area to help with academic assignments. This is an effective way to address student

behaviors while avoiding out-of-school suspensions that, repeated frequently, may lead to failure and dropping out of school.

Ms. Berquist has effectively provided “connections”. Students are included in programs that help to address their needs rather than being allowed to fail and potentially drop out of school.

Lockers are assigned that are near this special-service area so that students who might be prone to roaming halls or arriving at classes unprepared are not allowed to do so. Supervision is close, but positive and professional. There is a sense of family and belonging, often cited as lacking among students who are disaffected.

The environment was calm. There were no students seen in these situations. Ms. Berquist, after many years, has become a full-time Coordinator of the interagency efforts, and coordinates all of the agencies and services involved.

One aspect of concern for this program was expressed by Ms. Berquist, Coordinator, and Mr. Robert Drake, former Superintendent. What will happen to the program when Ms. Berquist leaves? Will the program be sustainable? Will others rise to leadership to continue and also expand the services? Will the philosophy of collaboration survive changes in the Board of Education? Do parents recognize the value of these efforts? Will they elect Board members who will continue the program? Is the Partnership dependent on the vision of one

person, or has that vision become integrated as a part of the philosophy of the administration and the Board of Education?

The question cannot be answered at this time as Ms. Berquist is actively working to expand the current program. One change in administration and a few changes in Board of Education members has so far only resulted in broad continuing support for the program. However, according to the Superintendent, Board elections always place the program in a precarious situation.

It is also possible that changes in education and legislative mandates for all children to learn will require that this program of collaborative support services be continued. Legislators may also use this program as a guide as they develop legislative mandates in alignment with No Child Left Behind or future education policy. As education standards are addressed, it is not unreasonable to expect societal demands for ever-increasing levels of academic achievement to continue.

Another important aspect of this program is in its expressed difference with full-service schools. When I asked Ms. Berquist how this program differed from full-service schools, she responded that in this program, rather than having programs located on site and cooperative with the school program, the services are integrated into the program. In the Capital Region area of Albany, New York, this program has been a leader in providing support services to students.

D. Results

The results of the collaborative school community project studied as part of this Dissertation will be reported in three ways:

1. Interview and perspective of the Project Coordinator
2. Interview and perspective of the former Superintendent of Schools
3. Data collected by the New York State Education Department

Interview and Perspective of the Project Coordinator

The following are results of the collaborative school community project as reported by Ms. Berquist on April 6 at an interview held at the Berne-Knox Westerlo Central School District at the High School and also at the District Administrative Offices.

Ms. Berquist has led the development of interagency collaboration since she began as an English teacher in the Berne-Knox-Westerlo High School in 1978. She reports that the high school in the late 1970's had a dropout rate of approximately five-six percent. One of the important results of a collaborative approach to helping students succeed and the many kinds of programs initiated, is that the school district has since 1994 maintained a drop-out rate of approximately one percent or lower. The success of this approach is that the at-risk students are finding their needs met through the safety net the school has provided, and are now graduating from high school.

Statistics in education never truly tell the human story. Each of these students who under the traditional system of education would have been in danger

of failing and dropping out is a successful student moving out of high school into a job or college. Multiplied by the number of years that fewer students have been lost by the system into underemployment, lack of education, and possibly resultant poverty and or crime, the impact on human quality of life and contribution to society is grave. **This impact is a stark reminder of how changing the system from fixed processes and variable outcomes, to fixed outcomes (graduation) and variable processes (appropriate programs designed to meet student needs) can result in all students learning.**

While many positive outcomes will be described here, another of the most important is the positive improvement in numbers of students graduating and going to 2-year and to 4-year colleges. By year 2000, approximately 83% percent of the high school graduates were going into a two-year or four-year college.

In New York State, over the course of the last approximately ten years, standards for high school graduation have been increasing. The school district diploma for lower performing students and regents diploma for higher achieving students have been replaced by regents diplomas for all students. Testing requirements have been raised annually, so that even as the standards for graduation increased, the numbers of students graduating has simultaneously increased. Earlier predictions were that increased academic standards would result in higher dropout rates, failures, and students failing to receive diplomas. The

results have been otherwise in Berne-Knox-Westerlo as graduation rates, and the number of students going to college have increased as standards were raised.

Many other improved results are of an anecdotal nature, but important as they reflect the learning environment, the community, attitude toward learning, and willingness to address new challenges together. Some of these results described by Ms. Berquist are as follows:

*Community trust of the school district as evidenced by willingness to approach the school district for assistance and also to work collaboratively on issues.

*New collaborative arrangements. For example, the provision of a shelter for families experiencing domestic violence with transportation to school from the protected site provided by the school district.

*Community forums where the community identifies four or five issues to work together and address as partners.

*Fewer referrals to Special Education because students are served in the smaller and more intimate setting with counseling, small classes, and small student-teacher ratio.

*Academics have become important to the families where there was little interest previously.

*The safety net programs have moved into the middle and elementary school levels to address student needs and thereby avoid the large number of students failing courses in the ninth grade.

- *Fewer numbers of students are failing classes in the ninth grade.
- *There are few fights, fewer referrals to remediation, and a decrease in the pregnancy rate.
- *Staff and student attendance have improved.
- *Staff stability and trust have improved.
- *The local newspaper no longer publishes articles focused on negative aspects.
- *There is satisfaction expressed by the stakeholders.
- *Issues between and among students are diffused before they develop into fights.
- *Leadership programs have been established that encourage students to mentor other students, and to report abuse and suicide ideation as well as drugs or anything that interferes with school safety.

Ms. Berquist states that there are many diverse needs, and that one approach cannot meet all of those needs. Students are diverse; schools are diverse. Multiple issues require a multi-prong approach, using all of the community resources to make the school experience successful.

When asked what the three issues were that she first saw as in need of improvement when she first began working in the Berne-Knox-Westerlo High School, Ms. Berquist stated that they were 1) staff stability, 2) accessing social work services, and 3) identifying needs. The collaborative working relationships and subsequent variety of programs established met these three indicators and much more.

Interview and Perspective of the former Superintendent of Schools

Mr. Robert Drake was interviewed the following day, April 7, 2004, at the State University of New York in Albany. Mr. Drake had retired in 2000 but was followed in that position by Mr. Steve Schrade, the high school principal hired by Mr. Drake. This succession to the position of superintendent helped to provide the stability of philosophy needed to help assure that the collaborative approach and resultant new programs would continue and expand.

Mr. Drake reported that the biggest change as a result of the program was the “aspirations and expectation of families changed.” This is an important factor as expectations for students are critical, whether from teachers, the guidance department, administrators, or families. Mr. Drake felt that Guidance is the key because the philosophy of the guidance department has an impact upon the guidance provided students toward school, college, and future jobs. When Mr. Drake first went to Berne-Knox-Westerlo, the view of the students was that they were not as talented and gifted as those students in other small schools, and therefore couldn't compete. Mr. Drake made changes in the athletic schedules so that students competed with other rural schools that had more challenging sports programs. He believes that students have to be able to see themselves as capable of competing. Success has bred more success as students have expanded their athletic and academic aspirations by taking more difficult courses and playing more challenging teams.

Higher expectations have helped to lead more students to not only graduate from high school who might not have under the traditional way that schools are organized, but to go on to college. The number of students attending either 2-year or 4-year colleges in 2000 when Mr. Drake retired was approximately 83 %. The following year that percentage was retained at 82%.

Other important anecdotal information regarding positive results of the Collaborative programs were reported by Mr. Drake as follows:

- *Increased involvement based upon increased numbers of collaborative contracts.
- *Increased community meetings to address district and community needs.
- *Increased number and quality of community relationships.
- *Increased aspirations for students from school and community.
- *Increased opportunities for students.
- *Improved attendance and academic data as shown on Superintendent's longitudinal data.
- *Newsletter giving positive recognition of students and resultant role models for other students.
- *Community satisfaction as expressed by passing of bond issue after many negative financial years.
- *Students going on to higher level colleges they previously wouldn't have dreamed of attending.

*More people working together such as an increase in participation in the Parent Teacher Association.

*Increased collaboration between the town and the school district.

*Addition of a youth program in the summer.

Mr. Drake described the role of the Superintendent as “not to be a manager, but to see holistically and to know how everyone is affected. It is important to see how each group will be affected before a decision is made. The role of the superintendent is to step back and see how all of the parts fit.”

Mr. Drake also said that he saw the value of a person like Ms. Berquist, and he gave her the freedom to do the job (of leading the collaborative efforts) because she showed the district how much she’s worth. “You’ve got to value what she’s done.”

The impact of leadership, while not the topic of this Dissertation, is a critical issue in education. This effort, spearheaded by a teacher, and recognized and supported by the superintendent for the potential value it held for the district, is an example of leadership that emerges from within, (teacher), and of the kind of leadership that empowers others, (superintendent). Without the vision, and willingness to trust and take risks, this collaborative effort which has proven to be successful in the Berne-Knox-Westerlo Central School District might not have been realized.

Data from the New York State Education Department

The Board of Regents and the State Education Department, under New York Chapter 655 of the Laws of 1987 (which amended Section 215-a of State Education Law), are required to submit annually a report on the state of education to the Governor and Legislature. This report is expected to cover trends in enrollment, indicators of student achievement in specific academic studies, in addition to graduation, college attendance, and other information regarding staff preparation, turnover and other indicators. The New York State Education Department collects the data from the school districts, collates the data, and prepares the statistical profiles in the annual New York—The State of Learning Chapter 655 Report. The data is reported out by individual district. It is produced in written form, and also can be found on the web site www.emsc.nysed.gov/irts/ch655_99/home.html. (which stands for Elementary, Middle, Secondary, and Continuing Education, New York State Education Department, Government, Chapter 655), the Office that produces the report. Ms. Martha Musser is the head of the Department under the current leadership of Commissioner Richard Mills. This Office was helpful by providing copies to this author of the 655 report for several (but not all) years beginning in 1989. Current information can be found on the State Education Department web site under School Report Card, Albany County, Berne-Knox-Westerlo School District.

The data for the Berne-Knox-Westerlo School District over the past 15 years indicates a poverty rate, reported as “free and reduced lunch rates” that is

consistently 15-22%. The annual percentage of students reported to be at risk of failing by Ms. Berquist is approximately 15%. The census poverty index reported for years 1994, 1995, 1996, and 1997 when it was publicly reported was consistently 15.

Although the dropout rate was reported by Ms. Berquist to be at approximately 6% when she began working in the high school in 1978, data collected in the years 1989 showed a dropout rate of 1.9%. The remaining years were 1.4% for 1992, 0.3% in 1994, 0.6% in 1995, and no dropouts reported in 1996. In 1997 the district population was 1256 and the high school dropout rate was 0.8%. The dropout rate remained consistent and by 2002 was 0.3%.

Of all the statistics gathered that can be reported publicly, probably the decline in the dropout rate is the most significant when reviewing the results of the collaborative efforts of the Berne-Knox-Westerlo Central School District. With a population of approximately 100 students per grade level in the Middle-High School, a dropout rate of 6 percent means that six students out of 100 are likely to experience inability to find meaningful work, inability to continue education in an institution of higher learning, but also possibly becoming disaffected in society and living in poverty and sometimes even incarcerated. It also means that society is prevented from many potential years of contribution of the talents and skills of these students. The cost to society is overwhelming in

terms of social programs that may be needed to meet the needs of people whose childhood needs were left unmet.

However, a dropout rate does not adequately reflect the changes in the quality of the school environment experienced by the addition of meaningful programs and staff. Classrooms that would have had disaffected youth, potentially restless and causing disruption, can focus on learning. Personal problems of the youth are dealt with appropriate personnel including a Resource Officer who provides a close link among students, schools, and families. Problems can be dealt with through prevention and intervention, thus eliminating many of the issues before they develop into fights, and use of drugs and other risky behaviors.

The school environment is also improved when the focus is on positive reinforcement rather than the negativity of control and punishment procedures. Teachers and other staff can find fulfillment in their chosen careers when they are successful. Costs to the district of special education referrals are better controlled. Parents can be a part of their child's success in overcoming difficulties rather than spiraling into the depressive conditions surrounding failure and dropping out.

A large quantity of data, yet only some of what appears in the New York State Education Department web site, appears in this appendix. While the reporting shows trends of higher academic achievement over time with the addition of higher standards and as measured on New York State assessments, most significant for this project is the data regarding those students graduating

from High School, and attending 2-year and 4-year colleges or other post-secondary education. In 1989, the percentage of graduates going on to college (including both 2-year and 4-year colleges) was 64.4%. Data collected during the 1980's and 1990's did not distinguish between two-year or four-year college. In the year 2001, attendance data also included "other" postsecondary education.

The dropout rate, and the percentages of students reported attending college, according to data taken from the New York State Chapter 655 Report to the Governor and the Legislature, follows. No data was available for 1991, 1993, and 1998.

Rates Reported for the Berne-Knox-Westerlo Central School District

	Dropout	College
1990	1.9%	64.4%
1992	1.4%	58.0%
1994	0.3%	59.5%
1995	0.6%	69.8%
1996	0.0%	80.6%
1997	0.8%	77.2%
1999	0.8%	no data
2000	0.3%	no data

(data for the following years includes 2-year, 4-year, and “other”

postsecondary education)

2001	0.8%	85%
2002	0.3%	82.0%
2003	0.8%	91%

An increase of 26.6% in college or other post-secondary education between the years of 1990 and 2003, is a significant improvement. The change also reflects higher academic standards for all students, and public reporting regulations require the inclusion of disabled students within the reporting for all students.

While it not possible to say that the increase in students graduating from high school and also attending post-secondary education is due solely to the collaborative programs integrated into the district curriculum and practice, it is possible to say with some certainty that the chief cause of improved student performance over time was due to these changes. **According to the former superintendent, Mr. Drake, and the teacher/coordinator Ms. Berquist, the progressive collaborative changes instituted to meet the needs of each student have resulted in 1)more students succeeding and at higher rates; 2)improved school environment; and 3)public approval and commitment to the process.**

Partnership

Southern Rural Albany County School and Human Services Partnership (SRAC)

Another result of the collaborative relationships initiated by Mr. Drake and Ms. Berquist, and continued under the leadership of current Superintendent Steve Schrade, is the development of a large partnership called the Southern Rural Albany County School and Human Services Partnership.

A Resource Guide to this partnership is entitled “Linking schools with human service agencies in the Capital Region”. It was prepared by the Partnership, and produced at Berne-Knox-Westerlo Central School District.

According to the Resource Guide, the mission of the Partnership appears as follows:

Limited resources within local schools and human service agencies challenge administrators, counselors, and teachers at a time when learning standards are being raised. Many classrooms include students, whose skills and abilities are well above grade level and other students who have learning, social and emotional challenges. Human service needs compete for shrinking dollars for staffing and programming. Meeting these diverse needs requires collaborative planning, creativity, and resourcefulness. Establishing linkages creates a sense of community networking.

The Southern Rural Albany County School and Human Services Coordinating Council is a partnership model for interagency collaboration that seeks to examine rural human service needs of our county and develops collaborative relationships to coordinate services for maximum effectiveness and efficiency.

Contacts for more information for SRAC are listed as:

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Albany County Mental Health
175 Green Street
Albany, New York 12202
(518) 474-4550

While the results of the program at the Berne-Knox-Westerlo are exemplary, the collaborative relationships that have developed are also important. This formal partnership allows for joint planning, sharing of resources, and the opportunity to provide and share services for the betterment of the agencies and schools as needed.

The current structure provides for agencies to have agency membership. However, due to the increasing visibility and popularity of SRAC, some people have requested individual membership, which has the potential to significantly increase both human and financial resources.

As of March 2004, members of the Southern Rural Albany County School and Human Services Partnership are as follows:

Albany Citizens Council/Alcoholism and Other Chemical Dependencies, Inc.

Albany City Schools

Albany County Department for Children, Youth and Families

Albany County Comprehensive Crime Victim and Sexual Violence Center

Albany County Executive

Albany County Head Start

Albany County Probation

Albany County Rural Housing Alliance

Albany County STOP DWI

Albany County Youth Bureau

Berkshire Farms Center and Services for Youth

Berne-Knox-Westerlo Central School District

Bethlehem Central School District

Bethlehem Networks Project

Capital District Beginnings

Capital District Developmental Disabilities Office

Capital Region BOCES

Catholic Charities of Albany and Rensselaer Counties

Children Program and Family Resource Center

City of Albany Department of youth and Family Services

Clearview Center, Inc.

College of St. Rose

Community Maternity Services

COMPEER for Youth

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Albany County

Council for Community Services

Crime Victim and Sexual Violence Center

Crossroads Center for Children

Equinox

Family and Children's Service of the Capital Region, Inc.

Families United Network/Parsons Child and Family Center

First Expressions Preschool/Albany Medical Center

Four Winds Saratoga and Psychiatric Services, P.C.

Greenville Central School District

Guilderland Central School District

Helderberg Interfaith Community Safe Haven, Inc.

Hope House, Inc.

LaSalle School for Boys

Parsons Child and Family Center

Preschool Early Development and Screening Committee of Albany, Inc.

Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk Central School District

St. Anne institute

St. Catherine's Center for Children

St. Peter's Hospital Department of Women and Children

The Capital District Child Care Coordinating Council, Inc.

The Capital District Child Care Coord. Council/ KINDNESS Project

The Center for Family and Youth

Trinity Institution/Homer Perkins Center

Vanderheyden Hall, Inc.

Voorheesville Central School District

The Wildwood Institute

One example of the effective leadership of the Southern Rural Albany County School and Human Services Partnership is their coordinated conference on April 2, 2004, called “Emotional Behavioral and Developmental Problems: Early Identification and Intervention.” The conference was sponsored by:

Hudson Valley Community College Department of Teacher Preparation
and Department of Human Services

Parsons Child and Family Center

Capital Region BOCES

Four Winds Hospital

University at Albany—School of Social Welfare

Approximately 150 people attended this conference, and it was at this point that requests were made for increasing the partnership program to include individuals. Keynote speakers included:

Anthony Malone, M.D., Developmental Pediatrician; and Jeffrey Daly, M.D., Child Psychiatrist. A number of specialists provided workshops, or participated in panel discussions on topics such as bullying and harassment prevention; non-traditional services and 85 supports for Albany County

families raising children with challenging behaviors; and nurturing responsible behavior, and building social-emotional well-being.

The Albany County Executive made opening remarks, and his Office is a member of the Partnership.

The motto on the cover of a flyer for the SRAC appropriately describes the efforts already experienced at Berne-Knox-Westerlo Central School District: “Helping each other in Southern Rural Albany County.” It is this cooperative attitude and collaborative effort that is producing results.

Chapter 5

Summary, Discussion and Recommendations

Summary

This study supports the hypothesis that: **Changing the way we serve children and families from fixed processes and variable outcomes to fixed outcomes and variable processes creates a paradigm shift that will allow for closing gaps between needs and services.**

The study was conducted in two parts. Part I was a Select Seminar on Excellence conducted by the Capital Area School Development Association (CASDA) of the State University of New York in Albany. CASDA has sponsored Select Seminars on Excellence in Education annually for approximately twenty years as part of the University’s research in education.

The author of this study was a participant in the Select Seminar, and also the writer of the final report on collaborative leadership. The Select Seminar was held over the period of five full days including one overnight that included evening programming. The report was developed by consensus by the 33 seminar participants representing education from the view points of administrators, teachers, school boards of education, public and private schools, higher education institutions including the areas of social welfare and education, and mental health providers and not-for-profit organizations interested in child welfare and education. The draft report was reviewed by all seminar participants with their revisions included to ensure representation of all parties. The final report was edited by CASDA staff. Every measure was taken to ensure that the final report reflected consensus of the participants. All participants endorsed the concept of collaborative leadership across multiple agencies to focus human resources toward finding solutions for those students with whom our professions had traditionally been unsuccessful, especially the children of poverty who often are also our children of color.

The support generated for this approach was apparent in the many presentations given by participants to their constituent groups including New York State School Boards Association, New York State Education Department, New York State Legislature, Capital Region BOCES, local school districts, and other service providing agencies. Therefore, the results of the Select Seminar in

Excellence endorsed the concept of collaborative leadership including the hypothesis for this study. The lack of success we were experiencing with these same children requires a different approach using the best each of our professions has to offer. We can no longer be satisfied when some of our children continue to fail because new educational expectations require success for all students.

The paradigm shifts as we reorganize our roles and methods of delivering services from the fixed processes of the past to new ways of collaborating that require addressing barriers such as traditional approaches to our roles by higher education, funding streams developed by legislatures, and community expectations regarding how schools and other agencies provide services. The new paradigm makes student success the fixed outcome and changes the way services are delivered with all the concomitant change required. In the new paradigm, healthy development and lifelong learning become the fixed outcomes, and the means, or delivery of teaching and healthcare become the variables.

In Part II of the study, one example of school and community leadership fostering healthy development and lifelong learning was examined. The Berne-Knox-Westerlo Central School District has been creating new relationships in support of students since the late 1970's. The former superintendent and the teacher who eventually became the full-time project coordinator were interviewed. The superintendent was there until retirement in 2000 when the project was already firmly established with the school community.

The leadership of the project was initiated by a concerned teacher, Ms. Linda Berquist. Ms. Berquist was a former English teacher who joined the high school team in 1978. In her interviews she described the conditions of the school at the time she began teaching. At that time the dropout rate was between 5-6%. There were many student failures, especially at the ninth grade level. She began to attempt to analyze student needs, develop needs assessments of the high school, and seek other service providers who could help support the students. She developed a grant application which resulted in Youth-At-Risk funding for the next 15 years. The grant brought resources to support these students that were beyond the budget supported by the district.

Ms. Berquist was the initiator and implementer of the project. Her vision and abilities for garnering support from other agencies were supported and valued by the superintendent who recognized her value to the students, parents, and teachers of the school district. His support was critical as Ms. Berquist would not have been relieved from other duties and given the backing of the district for her outreach without it. Thus the synergy of two visionary leaders leveraged energy and direction toward developing this program.

Data over the period of 13 years collected by the New York State Education Department support the results of this program. Two essential indicators for school success improved over the time period. When Ms. Berquist began teaching in 1978, she reports that the dropout rate was between 5-6%.

While the author was unable to obtain verification by the New York State Education Department, that figure is reasonable within a district that is not providing meaningful programming for its at-risk students.

By the 1989-90 school year, data from the New York State Education Department in its annual Chapter 655 report to the Governor and the Legislature included dropout data and high school completion and postsecondary education data. This data was followed through 2003. While there are a few gaps in the data made available, the trend of fewer dropouts over time and increased numbers of students going on to higher education is significant.

The program at Berne-Knox-Westerlo had another important outcome beyond the academic success of its at-risk population, a population percentage also consistent with the percentage of free and reduced lunch, a poverty indicator. Many of the relationships established resulted in not only new working arrangements with the high school, and later the entire district, but also resulted in the establishment of an organization of leaders who wanted an ongoing collaborative relationship. The organization that resulted is the Southern Rural Albany School and Human Services Partnership. Its membership is enumerated in Chapter 4. The membership is currently only of organizations and thus represents literally thousands of educators and mental health providers. Currently the leadership is considering expanding even further to include memberships by individuals. These organizations have formed a partnership with a mission to

provide collaborative services and support to schools. The future potential of this organization is great as the number of school districts involved has increased.

Thus the Select Seminar in Excellence and the program at the Berne-Knox-Westerlo Central School District support the hypothesis that “changing the way we serve children and families from fixed processes and variable outcomes to fixed outcomes and variable processes creates a paradigm shift that will allow for closing gaps between needs and services.”

Results of the Project

Data collected from the New York State Education Department in its annual Chapter 655 Report to the Governor and the Legislature clearly demonstrate that the results at the Berne-Knox-Westerlo Central School District have improved over the time period that collaborative supports for students have developed. Dropout rates, which began at 5-6% as reported by Ms. Berquist, and were at 1.9% in 1990 as reported by the Chapter 655 Report, continued to show improvement. During the last four years, the dropout rate has vacillated between 0.3% and 0.8%. Not only has the dropout rate improved over time, but also it has remained fairly constant throughout the last four years.

The rate of students attending two-year and four-year colleges and other post-secondary education has also improved significantly. Beginning in 1990, the rate of students attending college was 64.4%. In 2003 the rate of students going

on to college and other post-secondary education was 91%. This is an increase in college attendance of 26.6 %.

Other Project results include:

Increased parent, teacher, and community expectations for all students.

Improved school environment.

Increased community support and trust.

Increased services for families.

Fewer numbers of students failing in ninth grade.

Fewer fights among students.

Greater staff stability.

Improved attendance rates of students and staff.

Improved public relations with media.

Fewer referrals to Special Education.

Extension of the program from high school to total district.

Increased academic and athletic challenges for students.

Greater staff stability and continuity of leadership.

Committed partnerships on behalf of children.

Summary: Results of the Select Seminar on Excellence in Education

Consensus from the Seminar Participants that we need to work together

across agencies to be able to address those students, particularly

the children of poverty and often also of color, with whom none of us had been successful.

Consensus among the Seminar Participants that we need to reconsider our traditional roles and develop new ways of working together.

Consensus among the Seminar Participants that we need to find ways to cross the boundaries of our roles, often reinforced by the way we provide funding for education and healthcare that have developed over time, and find new ways to collaborate.

Recommendations

The results of this study may be far reaching. The study has come at a time when there are many public outcries regarding failing schools, unprepared workforce, limited resources for schools and services, and a societal need for all students to be educated with a minimum of a high school diploma.

Teacher preparation programs have long prepared prospective teachers to expect that some students will fail. Passing or failing at school has often been viewed as the responsibility of the student, with blame for failure resting on the “environment”, lack of parental support, lack of preschool experiences, improper nutrition, and numerous other influences on learning. What has changed has been a perspective that we must stop using these reasons for failure as excuses, and put the accountability on the adults to address the barriers to learning.

Teachers have not always, if ever, been adequately prepared to deal with what we often label as our “at risk” students. While special funding and programs for “at risk” students have been available for the past several years, still the professions that address needs of families and children, including education, have had only limited success. Students continue to fail; publics continue to decry their failure; and welfare roles and prisons too often reflect them. Clearly we have come to a time within our society where public expectations for all students have been raised. Yet those of us who were prepared by higher education to accept failure, and those currently being prepared to teach, are caught in the middle between preparation for a time when some student failure was accepted, and being expected to produce students who not only graduate from high school but are expected to experience success at the next level, whether college or work.

Those of us currently in education are also caught in roles defined for a time when some student failure was expected and allowed. Our schools have report cards that carry grades for failing. We “hold back” our students and have them repeat entire grades rather than identifying the knowledge that we need to address and moving each student forward at his own level of readiness.

We are isolated in buildings, often designed at a time when students were moved from grade to grade in industrial fashion with little arrangement for the impact of technology, smaller class groupings, or places for more intensive instruction.

Little has changed in many schools about how student behavior is “managed.” While discipline policies describe expected behaviors, little has changed in how we address the undesired behaviors. While many of us have learned that being punitive does not produce positive results over time, we may still be lost as to how to address these issues. The concept of unmet needs, addressing these needs through prevention and intervention, is part of the language of the involved professional, but is often rebutted by communities and other teachers. All of us have attended school and carry a picture in our minds of what it was like when we attended school. Perhaps that contributes to making change within our school communities so challenging.

Yet, as traditional and conservative as many of our school communities remain, excited and visionary leadership has helped many school personnel and communities accept new ways of addressing student and family concerns that alleviate issues and free schools to focus on for their mission of teaching and learning.

Occurring simultaneously with the need for higher education preparation for teachers who now need to look at ways to make all students successful, is the escalation in violence and other social challenges. Problem solving through drugs and violence is evident in the media and available for student viewing everyday. Increased violence in schools, locally and nationally, makes learning ways to prevent violence and to intervene safely an important part of every teacher’s

education. As we attempt to change our system to meet current expectations in the face of dramatic social change, we may find that we are asked to do a job similar to repairing a plane in mid-air. We cannot stop, take time to relearn, and then start up our schools when we are ready. We must continue to grow and develop professionally, continue to research and learn from other's research, and to change our expectations about learning and failure to meet the new requirements. In other words, many of us were prepared to teach in circumstances that no longer exist, and our institutions are still only beginning to address these new requirements.

Our legislators also depend upon professionals to advise them in order to stay current with new societal requirements. Legislators come from a variety of backgrounds, but we can safely say that all of them went to school at some time. They, too, carry images of how school "used to be", and need to be kept in alignment with current trends by the learned professionals. However, there is often a large gap between those who develop policy, and those charged with its implementation. For educators to be successful, they need to bring the legislators "under the tent" with them. They need to work together to address issues. They need to be sure that laws and regulations help rather than hinder the schools in their job of teaching of all students. They need to begin to reexamine many of the concepts and underlying structures that were designed for a time past.

In the 1990's the New York State Education Department worked alongside other agencies such as Health and Mental Health to look at how funding was provided statewide. The author was a participant in these discussions. One simple finding with extensive implications for collaboration was the finding that all agencies except education moved funds from the state level to the county level for distribution. In education, the funding moved from the state to the district. In New York State there are over 700 school districts, and the intermediary agencies, the Board of Cooperative Educational Services, overlap at times up to five counties. This makes cooperative and collaborative planning very challenging, as the lines of resource distribution are not the same. However, due to geography and the difficulty of changing traditions that serve some, but not all, well, the struggle for changing funding to better provide for collaboration will be challenging.

Changing our thinking is probably our most challenging task. Moving thinking beyond what is to what could be is an individual experience. In the early 1990's with the education reform agenda being led in New York by the New York State Education Department, training within the Department began with helping those in leadership roles begin to question their own paradigm about schooling. The New Compact for Learning developed by then Commissioner Thomas Sobol presented a strong case for needed change in education brought about by new societal needs. This document has already been described in Chapter 2, Literature

Review. It was a controversial document that challenged the reader to question the structure of schooling and the expectation of failure for some students. It put into question the very foundation, the bell shaped curve, upon which our expectations had been developed. We began to question what we had not questioned: can all students really learn? When we were directed to make that happen, we had to begin by challenging our own thinking before we could challenge the thinking of others.

Implications for change in order to prepare all students to succeed fall into every category of services. The teacher must find new ways of reaching the students who were previously allowed to fail. The administrators must help the teachers while also addressing their own expectations for student behavior. Student suspensions, separating a student from school, do not help prepare a student for success. Methods of addressing student issues that lead to intolerable behaviors need to find resolution early. Administrators need to find ways to address student needs before they erupt into difficult behaviors.

Service providers can no longer be satisfied that they helped most of the students. What about the ones who were not helped? It is no longer acceptable to say that the student or family was not responsive to therapy. It now becomes the responsibility of the therapist or provider to find new ways to which that student or family will respond. Accountability has moved from the patient or student to the adults who provide the services.

One might think of the illustrative joke that says, “the operation was a success but the patient died.” How do we define success? Do we simply say that we did all we could but the student failed? Or, do we look for new ways to attend to that student to ensure success? Accountability has moved in education to the teachers, administrators, and school board members. Not unlike the retail business, parents are in many places being given the choice to take their students to schools where they can experience success. Competition for students is a new concept because public education has long been a monopoly. But lack of accountability for the performance of some students is putting the system in jeopardy. It will be necessary for the system to change and be successful with the new expectations of all students learning in order to maintain its place in society as the main, and often the only provider, of education.

Legislators also are coming under closer scrutiny as lawsuits are challenging education funding. The issue of equity was recently challenged in New York by several urban school districts. After a number of legal challenges, the legislature has been charged to equalize educational funding. This contradicts a long held practice with poor students generally receiving a lesser quality education while wealthier students and school districts provide more access to technology, certified teachers, and other resources. The mandate for all students to succeed is likely, in the opinion of this author, to challenge how we fund

education to ensure at least a sound basic education with support for success for all students.

Another implication for this study is the need for preparing leadership that is able to collaborate. Our current way of delivering services is generally to be accountable for our agency's results. If there are eventually cross-agency leadership teams established to address education and concomitant needs of students in order to be prepared for learning, new ways of providing accountability will need to be designed. If all agencies are accountable for student success, one will not be able to call oneself successful within one's agency as long as there is student failure. This end of the spectrum of collaborative leadership may not be developed for several years, but the vision of the Seminar Participants held that as a future option.

Education is in a change mode. It is moving from expectation of failure for some students, to expectation of success for all. Words are easy. The challenges to how we deliver education, whether on an individual level with one student, or a national level, can be expected to be controversial and somewhat tumultuous. Belief systems, higher education preparation, legislative support, leadership models, and the perceptions of the providers and the communities and families from which our students come will all experience change. The question will be whether we can all grasp the vision, commit to it, and commit to leading, and enduring, the changes that will be necessary. Just the inclusion and eventual

integration of technology has far-reaching implications. But by changing our paradigm from success for some, to success for all, all systems will react to change.

The Select Seminar on Excellence in Education had many recommendations. Those recommendations will be revisited here for their implications.

1. See each child as unique, and capable of learning. This recommendation has been reviewed extensively within this study and is the mental paradigm shift from a model of success for some, to success for all.
2. Drop the title “at risk”. Every student, every person, is at some points within life experiences at risk. This may be due to job loss, illness, death of a family member, or other personal experience. However, these are all human experiences to which none of us is immune. Therefore, rather than separating out students based upon life events over which they have no control, we need to look at the student as having needs, and supporting those needs as they arise.
3. Encourage within all agencies serving children the acceptance of the variety of “family” configurations, recognizing non-traditional roles in support of the child. This acceptance eliminates one of the chief excuses often used by educators of the “broken home.” Often accompanying this label is an attitude of, “What can you expect?” One of the great changes

of the last 20 years, and continuing to change, is the structure of family, or who supports the child. The one-parent family is no longer simply an odd arrangement, but is a factor with which schools must learn to deal. Parent conferences held during workdays so that working parents are unable to attend is not acceptable. Neither are parent organizations which meet when parents are not available. The school needs to reconsider all of its schedules to ensure that it is inclusive to all parents or those who meet the needs of the child.

4. Develop legislative support for flexible funding to allow for more creative partnerships across school districts and agencies. The way grants are designed and funding allocated drives much of collaboration, or lack of it, at the school and district level. This is a topic that deserves much research to find out what kinds of funding mechanisms support learning and healthy development, and what kinds erect barriers to collaboration and learning.
5. Emphasize comprehensive planning for children and youth at the federal, state, county, and local levels. Too often we look at issues in a vacuum. Schools are about learning, but they also are the place where students spend most of their time outside of home. We need to look at students holistically and ask not only what they need to know, be able to do, and understand, but we need to look at what support they need in order to be

successful. We can look at these issues and determine what the barriers to comprehensive planning are. This will require studies on funding, leadership, social service and education preparation programs, but also will need to be modeled from the highest levels of government. The United States Department of Education was not long ago a part of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. While the role of the Education Department developed until a specialized agency was required, the isolation of the Education Department from the other service agencies does not promote collaboration. In the 1990's the Department of Education worked collaboratively with the Office of Justice as it implemented many conferences and documents dealing with school violence. This model of collaboration needs to be expanded to include all of those agencies that serve children and families.

6. Develop non-partisan advocacy for interagency resource support systems for all children based upon needs. Non-partisan advocacy is especially challenging in a democratic system that has become competitive around partisan issues. Power struggles often result in the loss of excellent programming replaced by other programming with similar ends. This is a disruptive process. We need to begin to cross partisan boundaries and support programs that are successful regardless of which political party initiated them.

7. Develop school board support for new comprehensive agency/school district planning at the national, state, county, and local levels. The movement for community schools is reaching many urban areas. This has potential to inform other school districts of new ways to provide services. We are working through a continuum of new methods of addressing the challenge of all students learning. Full-service schools, relocating services into the school buildings to be more accessible to parents and families, community school coalitions, and collaborative efforts on a broad scale such as the Southern Rural Albany County School And Human Services Partnership are some of the models developing. Where they gain success it is important that the information be disseminated so that others can learn and develop their own programs. The excitement surrounding this effort may be that overall we are not developing a cookie-cutter approach to learning, but we are developing new models of collaboration that are specific to our school community needs and inform new research simultaneously.
8. Develop legislative support for broader student outcomes to reflect the goal of “healthy development and lifelong learning.” Student achievement must be reflected within broad developmental learning and academic goals rather than only test scores based upon narrow, academically limiting standards. This may be one of the biggest challenges because it requires

public information sharing, overcoming partisanship, and going beyond the narrow definition of student success in current national legislation. A key to shared accountability is broad outcomes that include the services of all who support children and their learning.

9. Develop multi-disciplinary and multi-agency planning opportunities as part of teacher, healthcare, social service, juvenile justice, and higher-education programs. This study has addressed the need for changes in the higher education preparation programs. However, it will also be necessary to make changes in the preparation of other service providers including an expectation of success for all students, and the expectation to be able to work in teams across agencies to problem-solve, diagnose, and treat the many issues that families and students need to be able to resolve. When students are incarcerated, for example, that should not be seen as a success, but as a failure of those who provide services to have successfully met that student's needs.
10. Enhance teacher preparation with emphasis on classroom team leadership. This recommendation will require some changes in the current isolation of education from other areas. For example, the State University of New York at Albany has begun combining some programs between education and social welfare. This is a beginning of working across previous boundaries that did not assist in addressing the "bigger picture" of how we

help families and children. In one example used by previous Commissioner Sobol, when a student was shot in one of the high schools in New York City, no one was aware of the several different agencies serving the assailant. Services were each being used in isolation from all of the others and from the school. This is an example of uncoordinated services that, working together, might have been able to more fully and successfully address that student's needs and intervened before a tragedy occurred.

11. Design and implement leadership development programs for parents that focus on the parent as the child's first and most important educational leader. This is a different perspective on the important role of the parent. At times schools have used as an excuse that the parents have not properly educated and supported the child. This recommendation moves some accountability for parent productivity to the school to provide parent leadership preparation. Parent resource centers can be one effective way of providing support for parents to help them lead each other. Books and resources on effective parenting, discipline, nutrition, and conversing with students can often support parents. Parents are leaders in their own right. They can serve to be strong resources and advocates for children, and may become a powerful ally of the school when viewed as important educational leaders of their own children.

12. Develop and implement police and other criminal justice employee programs that focus on youth developmental needs and positive youth leadership. It is important to bring the Probation and other youth-serving professionals into the child-development philosophy model for serving children. Knowing what kinds of needs children have at various developmental stages, what kinds of behaviors are often the result of unmet needs, and becoming part of a helpful link to those needs is important. The Resource Officer in the Berne-Knox-Westerlo Central School District knows the families within the community, is aware when a crisis arises, and can help to garner the support needed. This is a proactive and positive approach to enforcement. It does not mean that students will no longer be accountable for behaviors that have occurred, but it does place responsibility on the adults serving children to be aware of changes within the family and community that may impact student behavior.
13. Amend or develop school security plans that reflect the addition of interagency-school resource teams. In 2004, in light of the escalation of violent crimes committed against and sometimes by students against students and staff, this is an important issue. Staff in schools have become less trusting of others from outside the school. Safety plans require procedures such as fingerprinting, signing in, nametags, security forces, metal detectors, and other means of alleviating the issues surrounding

violence. At the same time, as we look for new ways of addressing student needs, we are preparing for broader support through incorporation of people from other agencies. Security plans will need to reflect how these new people within the school are to be viewed and managed.

14. Institute a Resource Coordinator position at the school district level. This is an important finding from the interview with Ms. Berquist. Her leadership role began when she was a teacher. This complicated her job as much of what she needed to do was during school time and at other locations. Her role evolved over time until she now is a full-time coordinator. She put strong emphasis upon on the need for a dedicated position of Resource Coordinator who can devote the full position to developing the partnerships for supporting students.
15. Provide contractual time for planning for school district interagency teams. Time and resources were the two barriers listed by school districts when attempting new educational reform initiatives in the 1990's. Time set aside when each of the parties within the partnership is available to meet is crucial for communicating, assessing, planning, implementing, and reassessing in order to be successful. One example of successful teaming is the Child Support Teams which are required to meet across professionals within the school setting. By expanding this model to

include professionals outside the school who also address student and family needs, there is a model in place that can be used.

16. There are recommendations for further study that are needed. We need to study current models of collaboration that are resulting in improved results.
17. We need to continue working to develop new models. We have not exhausted the possibilities; in fact, we may only be beginning. Trends tend to come a go in education. In the early 1990's the New York State Education Department had a grant program for community schools. That grant lasted only a few years, and when it ended, those models that were ripe for study and perhaps replication were no longer networked and studied. It may be time to begin to study this model extensively, find out what works and what doesn't, and find out how the model is different depending on factors such as whether the school district is rural, suburban, or urban.
18. We need long-term research on the results of all of the models that are developing. Programs based upon grants are always in danger of losing funding and therefore losing all support. While those who initiate grant sources may say that they expect local districts to pick up these programs and support them, that is not a reasonable expectation. Communities have limits as to what they can support financially. Staff and materials costs

continue to rise and cannot readily be assumed into the annual district budget. We need leaders who think long-range, and then take these programs and provide research into their results. Stronger partnerships with higher education, with students and faculty researching and publishing results, can help to disseminate these models.

19. We need to disseminate this information. With the expansion of ability to access information such as through the internet, we have an opportunity to widely disseminate information and make it available to a broader public. However, connecting the research to the people who need it can be a challenge in an era of information explosion. We need to establish formal linkages among educators, legislators, government officials, and human service providers that ensure that all are adequately informed. At this time, collaborative efforts are not systemic. They are evolving at different rates in different models at different locations. Over time it will be important to provide for adequate dissemination that can inform others as they begin this process.
20. We need to work with policy makers to address barriers to change. This may be one of the biggest challenges because we have yet to identify all of the barriers. We know that funding and how it is disseminated is an important factor. Grant monies that “dry up” leaving schools to lose services is a huge problem. Legislative budgets that are not approved in a

timely manner leave school districts unsure of whether they can continue programs and services. Funding streams tend to fragment services, and discourage collaboration. Partisanship causes unnecessary changes in programs important to student success. Organizational structures may need to be reviewed and revised. Strong leadership from government may be needed to help make the changes systemic. Representatives from human services need to come together to assess barriers and develop plans for overcoming them.

Acknowledgement of the Process

This study is itself an example of collaborative leadership. It reflects the thinking and efforts of many people including the Capital Area School Development Association (CASDA); the Select Seminar on Excellence in Education participants; the Berne-Knox-Westerlo Central School District including Ms. Linda Berquist and Mr. Robert Drake; and the New York State Education Department Office for Information Research Technologies that provided the long-term data on the Berne-Knox-Westerlo School District.

Listing names of participants is not adequate to describe the influence of each person on the study. The author first met Ms. Berquist and Mr. Drake in the early 1990's when the school district was part of an experimental study called "Excellence and Accountability" led by the Office of Elementary, Secondary, and

Continuing Education of the New York State Education Department. This program was a forerunner of A New Compact for Learning, the document by former Commissioner Sobol which initiated the statewide school reform effort. Mr. Drake and Ms. Berquist were active with this pilot program, and already had developed many collaborative strategies in support of students. It was their work that first brought this author's attention to the topic.

The Select Seminar participants had different experiences which influenced this study. All were frustrated with a lack of success with the same students—those children of poverty who were also often children of color. Their experiences and, more importantly, their willingness to open themselves to new ways of addressing common issues were inspiring. They worked in large groups and in small groups. They labored over consensus in their small groups before presenting their ideas to the larger group. They read; they studied. They contemplated; they struggled. At just the point on the third day when strong feelings of frustration filled the environment, they began to make small breakthroughs in their own thinking.

Small groups were seen in hallways and standing together over computers. Some groups were verbally articulate; some preferred to display their ideas visually. Some chose role playing to describe the change that would be needed. But all of the participants, amid admitted frustration and fear of deadlines, were

committed to the task of designing a blueprint for action that would lead us away from the frustration of failure that each was experiencing.

Whether one would come to the realizations of the group without going through the process is debatable. However, by being a participant, one could see the evolution of the process. As the barriers began to come down, the ideas began to flow. We began to envision solutions to the problems with which our professions are so deeply challenged. As those solutions began to emerge, we realized that had we not been together, arguing, examining, comparing, assessing, and caring, these solutions might never have come to us. This realization brought about the first dawning, and with it a new excitement. To say that we left with something akin to a conversion would be accurate. We were inspired, excited, scared, and in awe of the potential results. Writing began to flow, and presentations were quickly developed so that these new revelations could be shared with some and disseminated to many.

The diligence of Ms. Berquist and Mr. Drake cannot be underestimated. They have been pioneers in the Capital Region of New York State. Leadership in this collaboration at Berne-Knox-Westerlo Central School District has continued, even with the change in Superintendents, because the model has become institutionalized.

The concept of collaborating for improved results is also institutionalized in the minds of many people across the state and nation. The Capital Area School Development Association (CASDA) of the State University of New York at Albany, under the leadership of Dr. Ruth Kellogg, positively influences educational research, professional development, and practice in New York. CASDA extends its influence nationally through its annual seminar publications and as an active member of the National School Development Council, a national network of School Study Councils, of which Dr. Kellogg is President. For the invaluable leadership of Dr. Kellogg, CASDA, Mr. Drake, and Ms. Berquist, we, and all of the education and human service community, are indebted.

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Bell Shaped Curve—a statistical distribution that projects that the largest number will fall at the mean, with equal numbers falling at similar ranges above and below the mean. Basing student academic performance expectations on normal distribution creates an expectation, and therefore acceptance, of failure.

Collaborative Leadership—Focusing resources from multiple areas of human services in support of student development and learning.

Paradigm—a conceptual way of understanding.

Paradigm shift—change in conceptual thinking.

School Report Card—New York State public school reporting system.

Service delivery—the manner in which social and educational services reach the student/consumer.

Appendices B through F

Appendices B, C, D, E, and F were downloaded from the New York State Education Department web site and contain information reported by school districts, and collated into the annual Chapter 655 Report to the Governor and the Legislature.

Appendix G was photo-copied from the annual printed version of the Chapter 655 report 1991-1997.

Dissertation Interview Questions:

A Collaboratively Designed Framework for School and Community Leadership Fostering Healthy Development and Lifelong Learning

A. Background:

1. Please tell me some points of interest regarding the history of Berne-Knox-Westerlo Central School District.
2. When did you begin serving B-K-W CSD, and in what capacity?
3. What is your personal history with the district? (positions held; responsibilities)
4. Please describe the school community of B-K-W in terms of: geography, population, jobs, values, special characteristics, other.
5. Please describe the situation at Berne-Knox-Westerlo CSD when you began working there in terms of: community involvement, faculty and staff communication, and school environment.

B. Process for establishing collaborative school and community leadership:

6. What did you see as the three greatest needs for improvement in the B-K-W CSD during your first two years working there?
7. Why did you decide to begin to reach out to other service providers? When did that process start? What was the reaction of each agency?
8. When did you begin collaboratively working with other agencies that serve children and families? What were the first steps? What were your beginning successes?
9. What kinds of agreements did you make/do you have? (MOU's, informal)
10. What was your involvement in the process?
11. How did you communicate with other organizations?

12. Where did/do you meet? How often? (Please describe over time).
13. Please describe the development of your collaborative program with other service providers over time.
14. Please provide and describe student academic data at the time the program began.
15. Please provide and describe student social data such as dropout rates, pregnancy rates, and all other data collected at the time you began.

C. Results of collaborative school and community leadership project:

16. What data have you continued to collect and maintain over time until the present?
17. Please demonstrate through the data what achievements have been made.
18. In what way/ways has the collaborative partnership supported improvement?
19. What has been the impact of collaboration with other service providers over time?
20. What data demonstrate the improvement of student academic achievement over time?
21. What data demonstrate the improvement of student social data over time?
22. How has the school environment changed as a result of collaboration including: relationships among students, faculty, staff, and administrators, and across roles; safety of students and staff?
23. How would you describe the relationships between the internal school community and parents, school board members, and other stakeholders?
24. What have been the greatest indicators of success of the collaborative partnerships with other agencies: Student academic performance? School safety? Student attitudes? Community attitudes? Student social data? Graduation rates? College rates? Others?

25. Please describe why you support an interagency leadership approach to supporting student success.

D. Recommendations:

26. What recommendations would you have for other schools or school districts contemplating beginning this process? What would you do differently if you had it to do over again?

27. Please describe the Southern Rural Albany County School and Human Services Partnership. Include any documents you are free to share such as Vision and Mission Statements, Goals, etc. How does Berne-Know-Westerlo CSD fit into that partnership? How has the partnership improved the B-K-W Central School District? Additional comments.

Thank you for your participation in this important study! Your school district will receive a copy of the final report which will acknowledge each of you, and your school district, for sharing this important educational research so that parents, educators, and other stakeholders may benefit.