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CHAPTER 6

Communities, Schools, and Teachers

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- Two definitions of community—as neighborhoods and as social networks—relate to students' education outcomes.
- Three factors have changed the composition and structure of U.S. communities.
- There are benefits and challenges with school–community collaboration.
- Teachers can become agents for community responsiveness in schools.

Children develop and learn within complex systems that include their families, schools, and communities (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). Epstein (2011) contends that when there is overlap between and among caring adults in students' families, schools, and communities, or "spheres of influence," students' learning and development are enhanced. This theory has been supported by over two decades of research showing the quantitative and qualitative impact of family and community engagement on students' learning and achievement (Galindo & Sheldon, 2011; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Sanders & Sheldon, 2009). In this chapter, we focus specifically on the relationship between communities and schools, which has been an enduring topic in the field of education. It was central in the work of Dewey (1976) and remains a critical component in constructivist approaches to learning and in reform initiatives such as integrated services in schools (Sanders & Hembrick-Roberts, 2013). We also describe how teachers can serve as agents for community responsiveness within schools through collaborative and inclusive professional practices.

This chapter first defines community and discusses key theories and studies linking communities to education and related outcomes. It then describes the impact of immigration, deindustrialization, and increasing economic inequality on U.S. communities. The third section discusses the school as a vital community institution and the benefits of and barriers to school–community collaboration. The fourth section describes ways in which teachers can engage in community-responsive instruction in order to create effective school environments for all children and youth. The concluding section highlights the main ideas of the chapter and suggests future directions for the preparation and professional development of community-responsive teachers.

FRAMING COMMUNITY

The term "community" can refer to bounded geographic locations, as in the case of neighborhoods, or alternatively to the relationships or networks among individuals with similar interests and goals, which can include or transcend geographic boundaries. Both of these definitions have been the focus of scholarship within education and related fields. In this section we discuss the theory and research on how each of these definitions of community directly and indirectly relates to students' education outcomes.

Communities as Neighborhoods

Interest in the impact of neighborhoods on children and adolescents dates back nearly 70 years (Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn, 2000). Neighborhood studies have generally compared youth outcomes in economically distressed and more affluent communities. With few exceptions, these studies report that children and adolescents residing in low-income neighborhoods show lower rates of school readiness and achievement (Catsambis & Beveridge, 2001; Chase-Lansdale, Gordon, Brooks-Gunn, & Klebanov, 2000); more behavioral and emotional problems (de Souza Briggs, 1997); higher incidents of delinquency (Kingston, Huizinga, & Elliott, 2009) and school dropout (Aaronson, 1997); lower grades (Dornbusch, Ritter, & Steinberg, 1991); and lower levels of educational attainment (Garner & Raudenbush, 1991) than their more affluent counterparts.

Over time, several theories have been posited to explain how high-poverty neighborhoods affect these outcomes. Prominent approaches include social disorganization or structural theories, contagion or epidemic theories, and environmental theories. According to social disorganization theories, structural factors in neighborhoods explain incidents of antisocial behaviors among youth. More specifically, theorists within this tradition posit that neighborhoods with high levels of poverty, residential instability, single-parent households, and ethnic heterogeneity produce high rates of delinquency and school dropout through their negative impact on community cohesion and order (Sampson & Morenoff, 1997; Sampson,

Morenoff, & Gannon-Rowley, 2002; Shaw & McKay, 1969). Sociologist Julius Wilson (1996) argues that neighborhood disorganization disproportionately affects children and youth of color who are more likely to be segregated in high-density, low-income communities.

Empirical support for social disorganization theory includes studies using census and neighborhood survey data. For example, Sampson and Groves (1989) found that higher incomes and residential stability were negatively associated with crime and delinquency, whereas ethnic heterogeneity and urbanization were positively associated with crime and delinquency. In a more recent study, Kingston and colleagues (2009) also found support for the social disorganization theory. Based on parent and youth data from 44 neighborhoods in Denver, the researchers found that indicators of social disorganization, specifically poverty and ethnic and racial heterogeneity, predicted delinquency rates and lower rates of social control, respectively. Importantly, the study also found a strong relationship between delinquency rates and youths' perceptions of limited opportunities for their futures. The researchers concluded that students in high-poverty neighborhoods with low levels of social control lack optimism about their future opportunities. They are thus more vulnerable to delinquent and antischool behaviors, as well as association with peers engaged in such behaviors.

Similarly, epidemic or social contagion theories argue that neighborhoods affect youth outcomes through a process of peer influence (Crane, 1991; Jones & Jones, 2000). These theories contend that youth from disadvantaged neighborhoods are more likely than others to drop out of school, make poor grades, and not attend college because they are exposed to peers who exhibit or encourage such behaviors. This peer group influence can occur either directly through imitation or indirectly through the internalization of norms and attitudes antithetical to school success (South, Baumer, & Lutz, 2003). In a study using longitudinal data from 1,128 respondents in the National Survey of Children, South and colleagues (2003) examined factors contributing to higher rates of school dropout and lower rates of high school graduation in socioeconomically distressed communities. The authors found that approximately one-third of the observed effect of community socioeconomic disadvantage on school dropout could be explained by the educational behaviors of peers, a result consistent with epidemic models of neighborhood effects.

Other theorists and researchers focus on what can loosely be categorized as environmental factors to explain the impact of neighborhoods on children and youth. Berliner (2006, 2009), for example, argues that neighborhood characteristics, such as "collective efficacy," or community members' shared sense of having control over their environments and lives, affect educational outcomes (2009, p. 31). According to Berliner, limited collective efficacy in low-income communities, along with other conditions associated with poverty, such as environmental pollutants and poor housing and health care, are related to physical, sociological, and psychological problems that children often bring to school. Consequently, poor children are not as likely as more affluent children to succeed in school without significant efforts to ameliorate their living conditions.

Berliner (2006) points to decades of census tract data showing the negative influence of low-income communities on a host of educational, behavioral, and emotional outcomes to support his thesis. He observed:

> It does take a whole village to raise a child, and we actually know a little bit about how to do that. What we seem not to know how to do in modern America is to raise the village to promote communal values that ensure that all our children will prosper. We need to face the fact that our whole society needs to be held as accountable for providing healthy children ready to learn as our schools are for delivering quality instruction. (p. 988)

Communities as Social Networks

Other theorists have focused on communities as networks of individuals and institutions, such as families, schools, and faith organizations, that provide members with resources and support. These networks can reside in neighborhoods or extend beyond them. The resources and support embedded within these networks that facilitate purposeful action are referred to as *social capital* (Coleman, 1988; Lin, 2001). Theory and research show that social capital can protect individual children and youth from the risk factors and negative outcomes associated with low-income communities.

Social capital has both "bonding" and "bridging" functions. The function of bonding social capital is to create stronger ties between members of a social network in order to build community cohesion. The function of bridging social capital is to build connections across communities to expand access to important (or potentially important) human and material resources (Halpern, 2005). Through bonding and bridging social capital, individuals within communities can access resources needed to achieve individual and collective goals. For example, studies of Latino neighborhoods reveal strong social ties among community members even under conditions of economic scarcity (Small, 2004). These community ties provide families with social support and informal services through trusting and reciprocal relationships often defined by shared kinship, language, and ethnic identity (Coleman, 1988; Portes, 1998). Such social networks may be particularly important for childbearing mothers when other agents of support are scarce (Small & McDermott, 2006).

Communities need certain characteristics in order to be high-quality sources of social capital. The quality of the social capital available through communities largely depends on the degree of trust and obligations among network members (Coleman, 1988). Close networks facilitate the flow of resources or social capital within the group. Group control mechanisms constrain or reinforce actions to ensure that individuals' well-being is monitored and a common culture and set of orientations are created (Coleman, 1988). In addition, a sense of collectivism, rather than individualism, within the community facilitates feelings of reciprocity and mutual benefit—values that are related to better disposition for sharing resources (Coleman, 1988; Kao, 2004).

Bonding and bridging capital within low-income communities have been found to increase positive social, developmental, and educational outcomes for children and youth (Coleman, Hoffer, & Kilgore, 1982). Whereas parental social capital has been found to have more direct influences on students' academic achievement, community social capital has been found to have significant and primarily indirect effects on school achievement and attainment through its effects on students' peer groups and school-related attitudes and behaviors (Israel, Beaulieu, & Hartless, 2001; Perna & Titus, 2005).

A study of 827 African American adolescents in an urban school district, for example, found that students' involvement in community-based organizations, such as the African American church, indirectly influenced academic achievement through its positive and significant influence on their academic self-concept. A subset of these students was interviewed to enhance the interpretation of the survey data. Focal students reported that church provided them with opportunities to engage in a number of activities that required school-related skills, such as public speaking and reading and analyzing texts, in a supportive, nurturing environment. The social capital garnered through relationships between these youth and caring, encouraging adults provided them with the positive motivation and conception of self that are necessary for academic success (Sanders, 1998).

Similar findings based on high school data from the National Educational Longitudinal Study led Israel and colleagues (2001) to conclude:

> Access to adults outside the immediate family has a positive effect on these students.... The role of community social capital may not directly influence high school students' educational performance, but it may exert indirect effects through the variety of programs, organizations, and activities available in a locality. By these means, citizens can convey the importance of high educational performance to children. (pp. 62–63)

School-based social networks can also play a fundamental role in the well-being of families and children (Horvat, Weininger, & Lareau, 2003; McNeal, 1999). For instance, within the school context, if parents are able to form a sense of community, they can be mutual sources of information, can monitor each other's children, and can respond collectively to resolve school issues (Horvat et al., 2003). School personnel can also expand and strengthen children's social networks, helping them to successfully meet the demands of their environments. In addition to teachers and coaches acting as mentors, confidantes, and role models for children, Spilsbury (2005) found that other school personnel also play significant roles. For example, his study in Ohio neighborhoods found that school crossing guards play critical roles within children's social networks. In addition to helping children negotiate busy streets, crossing guards protected them from bullies, provided them with mittens, hats, and scarves during the winter months, buttoned their coats, wiped their noses, and provided emotional support after difficult school days. Other studies (see Stanton-Salazar, 2001) have reported similar findings and underscore the

significance of schools and their personnel for the well-being of students and their families.

Thus communities, whether conceived as neighborhoods or social networks, influence educational, social, and emotional outcomes for children and youth. These influences are both direct and indirect and can serve as either risk or protective factors for young people. Economically distressed neighborhoods are associated with a variety of negative child and youth outcomes. Some theorists attribute these outcomes to high levels of social disorganization, others to peer contagion, and still others to the environmental risks and lack of collective efficacy that characterize many communities with high levels of poverty. Yet these neighborhoods also include resources embedded within and across social networks that can minimize and ameliorate the negative effects of poverty. For educators, being able to understand communities in their complexity, including the potential risk and protective factors that exist across socioeconomic strata, is essential for meeting the needs of all students. Equally important is recognizing the dynamic nature of communities and factors contributing to their continual change.

CHANGING U.S. COMMUNITIES

Three macrolevel trends have generated important changes in U.S. communities: immigration, deindustrialization of urban cities, and economic inequality. These trends have had important consequences for the types of student populations that schools currently serve and will serve in the foreseeable future.

Immigration

Perhaps one of the most important demographic changes affecting U.S. communities is the significant increase of immigrants, particularly from Latin America and Asia. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, self-identified Latinos and Asians accounted for 16% and 5%, respectively, of the total population, with over 50.5 million Latinos and 14 million Asians living in the United States (Humes, Jones, & Ramirez, 2011). Latinos and Asians experienced a higher population growth (43% for both groups) between 2000 and 2010 than whites and blacks (6% and 12%, respectively; Humes et al., 2011). Based on population projections, by 2050, one in three individuals in the United States will be Latino or Asian, compared to one in five in 2010 (Martin & Midgley, 2010). This trend is due to increased immigration to the United States and higher fertility rates among some ethnic groups. Latinas, for example, had a fertility rate of 2.73 children in 2009, in comparison to 1.99 for white females and 2.06 for black females (Martin et al., 2011). These population changes are having and will continue to have a significant impact on the cultures, practices, and lifestyles of communities in this country.

Most immigrants live in California, Texas, New York, Florida, Illinois, and New Jersey, with California, New York, and New Jersey having the highest concentrations. However, immigrant settlement patterns are rapidly becoming more

dispersed throughout the United States. States such as Nevada, North Carolina, and Georgia, which are not among the most common receiving states, have experienced a steady increase of immigrants in the past 20 years. The number of immigrants in these states more than tripled (Beavers & D'Amico, 2005). Living in geographical areas with high (or low) concentrations of immigrants has important consequences for their adaptation and adjustment.

Diversity among immigrants is also reflected in their poverty levels and English language skills. Although the 2010 poverty rate for the foreign-born population was 19%, immigrants from Latin America and Africa were more likely to be poor (23% and 21%, respectively) than foreign-born Asians (14%). Poverty rates were even higher for foreign-born children (31%), with Mexican and African children having poverty rates of 46% and 37%, respectively (Grieco et al., 2012). Nationally, 18% of U.S.-born children and 72% of immigrant children spoke a language other than English at home (Hernandez, 2004). Moreover, in 2000, about 25% of children in immigrant families lived in households in which no one age 14 or older spoke "English only" or spoke "English very well." Although prior studies suggest that most children of immigrant parents prefer to use English, retention of a native language has varied by country of origin (Portes & Hao, 1998). Children from Latino backgrounds have been most likely to maintain their native language.

Immigrants, as a diverse group, bring important cultural and social assets to the United States. Immigrant parents tend to cultivate and rely on strong ethnic communities and social networks, participating in ethnic organizations that encourage positive outcomes (Small, 2004). Being part of a strong ethnic community yields possibilities for valuable information about jobs and educational opportunities, helpful social contacts, or financial support (Zhou & Bankston, 1998). Cohesive ethnic communities also facilitate social control among adolescents, affirm cultural values, and may provide exposure to positive role models (Coleman, 1988). As such, these communities house protective factors that can counterbalance the economic disadvantage many immigrant children experience (Portes, 1998).

Communities in the United States, then, are becoming more diverse as a result of current immigration and fertility trends. Although there are commonalities among immigrants, they differ in their national origins, cultures, languages, educational and social backgrounds, and relocation experiences, which have consequences for the communities where they reside. In addition to immigration, deindustrialization has also significantly changed how communities in the United States are organized and function.

Industrialization/Deindustrialization and Urbanization/ Suburbanization

The proportion of individuals living in urban, suburban, and rural areas has been historically influenced by periods of industrialization and deindustrialization. The rapid expansion of industries and subsequent increasing labor demand and economic growth during the early 20th century was accompanied by a significant period of urbanization. Cities such as Detroit, Chicago, Philadelphia, Cleveland,

and Newark experienced important economic and population growth during the first half of the 1900s, in some cases until the late 1960s. These cities were niches for economic prosperity that also provided some economic opportunities for racial and ethnic minorities, especially because labor demands could not be filled solely by the white population. The expansion of cities during this time period also coincided with the largest voluntary migration of African Americans from the South to northern cities, known as the Great Migration (1915–1970; Wilkerson, 2010). Thus, during this time period, the population in cities not only grew, but its racial and ethnic makeup also changed.

Between 1950 and 2000, the population of the United States increased from 152 to 272 million, although some large cities began to experience a negative growth rate (Smith & Allen, 2008). After World War II, in the 1950s, suburbanization in the United States intensified. Economic prosperity after the war, governmental incentives to lower housing costs in suburbia, and the decentralization of industry facilitated growth of the suburbs. At this point, cities began to experience "white flight," the large-scale and rapid outmigration of individuals of European descent from the city to the suburbs (Jackson, 1987). The outmigration of whites had negative consequences for the prosperity and well-being of the cities, mainly due to the exodus of economic resources. Cities rapidly became financially debilitated and experienced significant funding cuts for several public services, including education and social welfare. With increasing residential mobility, the economic health of cities continued to decline. More homes became vacant, housing values decreased, and revenue from property taxes tumbled. The departure of businesses and shopping facilities also had a negative impact on urban economies (Hanlon & Vicino, 2007).

As cities have experienced racial residential segregation and economic crises, indicators of well-being such as health and safety have been negatively affected (Williams & Collins, 2001). Moreover, education indicators, such as test scores, attendance, and graduation rates, reflect the problems that are commonly found in schools serving inner-city children and youth. Many of these schools are plagued with larger student enrollments and fewer resources compared with their suburban and, to a lesser degree, rural counterparts (Kozol, 1992; Lippman, Burns, & McArthur, 1996), and these circumstances present obstacles to students' learning and development (Anyon, 2005).

It is important to note that suburbanization is not only a white phenomenon. Although whites began exiting cities first (Garnett, 2007), racial and ethnic minorities were responsible for the significant population increases in suburban communities during the 1990s (Frey, 2003). Some racial/ethnic minorities and immigrants viewed owning a home in the suburbs as a symbol of integration into the United States or a sign of prosperity (Garnett, 2007). Most moved into what is currently referred to as inner or first-ring suburbs. Inner or first-ring suburbs are those that lie just outside of cities, while those that are farther away are known as the outer suburbs. In terms of prosperity, there is a fundamental distinction between inner or first-ring suburbs and outer suburbs (Garnett, 2007). Indeed, Puentes (2001) has argued that some inner suburbs experience similar or worse problems than cities

as their populations have increased in racial and ethnic diversity and wealthier residents have moved to the more affluent outer suburbs (Madden, 2000).

Increasing Economic Inequality

The third important trend that has had important consequences for U.S. communities is the increasing economic inequality that has occurred since 1965 (Reich, 2008). Sawhill and McLanahan (2006) define a society with economic opportunity as one "in which all children have a roughly equal chance of success regardless of the economic status of the family into which they were born" (p. 3). Similarly, a society has strong social mobility opportunities when the position of individuals within the economic structure is a function of their own merits and does not depend on their family background or inheritance. In other words, all children in such societies have equal chances of success, and correlations between parents' and children's incomes or occupations are small or nonexistent (Jenks & Tach, 2005).

The notion of the United States as the land of opportunities and social mobility is a fundamental element of the "American dream" (Hochschild & Scovronick, 2003). However, it is well known that the likelihood of transforming the "American dream" into reality varies significantly as a function of race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. In contrast to popular beliefs, income inequality in the United States has grown steadily since the late 1970s, with a major widening of the income gap between the middle and upper classes. Income has been increasing and taxes have been decreasing for the wealthy more than any other group in society (Knowledge Economy Network, 2012).

Beyond the global economic recession experienced since 2007 and historical events such as the Great Depression and several major wars, there are three key factors that have had important consequences for income inequality in the United States. First, the structure of the economy has significantly shifted from manufacturing and goods production to service provision, which brings along standardization of procedures, use of advanced technologies, and increasing demands for highly skilled workers (Clark & Clark, 2011). Second, the United States economy, described as an "hourglass," has been characterized by the expansion of high-skill and high-income jobs and low-skill and low-income jobs, along with a decline of middle-level jobs, which has significantly reduced economic mobility. Moreover, patterns of job expansion are racialized (Wright & Dwyer, 2003). Whites are concentrated at the upper level of the structure, whereas blacks and Latinos are concentrated at the bottom of the employment structure. Third, with globalization and increasing trade agreements with low-wage countries, the routine part of production or services (e.g., keypunch operators, routine data processing) is transferred to countries where labor is cheaper. As a result, good-paying routine jobs in the United States are decreasing (Reich, 2008). These three characteristics of the U.S. economy have contributed to a steady increase in income inequality.

In sum, the three macrolevel factors that are generating important changes in U.S. communities are immigration, deindustrialization and suburbanization, and

increasing economic inequality. These factors have affected communities throughout the United States, resulting in greater ethnic heterogeneity, residential mobility, and economic insecurity. Schools, in collaboration with individuals and other institutions in students' communities, can help to address these conditions and lessen their impact on the learning and development of children and youth. In the following section, we discuss the benefits and challenges of school–community collaboration.

SCHOOL–COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

Schools, at their best, are institutions intricately linked to the stability and well-being of their surrounding communities (Tatian, Kingsley, Parilla, & Pendall, 2012). Schools can realize this potential by strategically partnering with individuals and organizations to enhance the social capital available to students, families, community members, and school personnel. In this section, we define school–community partnerships and describe their benefits, as well as challenges to their successful implementation.

Defining School-Community Partnerships

School–community partnerships refer to connections between schools and individuals, businesses, organizations, and institutions within or beyond the geographic boundaries of neighborhoods. Within the theoretical literature, there are a number of rationales for school–community partnerships. Proponents emphasize their importance for effective school functioning, arguing that such collaboration can provide underresourced schools with human, financial, and material resources to operate more effectively (Waddock, 1995). Proponents also argue that school–community partnerships, specifically those that involve businesses and universities, are critically important because leaders, managers, and personnel in business and higher education are uniquely equipped to help schools ensure that students are college and career ready (Nasworthy & Rood, 1990). Others argue that through mentoring, tutoring, and other volunteer programs, school–community partnerships can increase the number of caring adults available to children and youth and committed to their learning and well-being (Merz & Furman, 1997). Still others view school–community partnerships as integral to school reform and broader efforts to improve community health and development (Mediratta, Shah, & McAlister, 2009).

School–community partnerships fall along a continuum from simple to complex. On the left end of the continuum are simple partnerships that require very little coordination, planning, or cultural and structural shifts in school functioning. Consequently, they are relatively easy to implement, especially for schools that lack the experience needed for more complex partnerships. For example, a school might partner with a local business to procure refreshments for an event or prizes for an incentive program. When well implemented, the impact of simple partnerships is

likely to be positive, albeit limited. As school–community partnerships move right along the continuum, they increase in complexity. On the far right end are long-term partnerships characterized by bidirectional or multidirectional exchange, high levels of interaction, and extensive planning and coordination. Community schools that offer onsite integrated health, counseling, and recreational services to students and families are examples of complex partnerships.

In addition, school–community partnerships may have multiple foci. Activities may be student-centered, family-centered, school-centered, or community-centered. Student-centered activities include those that provide direct services or goods to students, for example, mentoring and tutoring programs, contextual learning and job-shadowing opportunities, as well as the provision of awards and scholarships to students. Family-centered activities are those that have parents or entire families as their primary focus. This category includes activities such as parenting workshops, general educational development (GED) and other adult education classes, parent/family incentives and awards, and family fun and learning nights. School-centered activities are those that benefit the school as a whole, such as beautification projects and the donation of school equipment and materials or activities that benefit the faculty, such as staff development and classroom assistance. Community-centered activities have as their primary focus the community and its citizens, for example, charitable outreach, neighborhood art projects, and community service and revitalization activities.

Schools can collaborate with a variety of community partners to plan and implement partnership activities. These partners include (1) large corporations and small businesses, (2) universities and educational institutions, (3) faith-based organizations, (4) government and military agencies, (5) health care organizations, (6) national service and volunteer organizations, (7) social service agencies, (8) charitable organizations, (9) senior citizen organizations, (10) cultural and recreational institutions, (11) media organizations, (12) sports franchises and associations, (13) other groups such as sororities and fraternities, and (14) community volunteers that can provide resources and social support to youth and schools (Sanders, 2006).

Research has documented the benefits of well-planned and implemented community partnerships. Community–school collaborations focused on academic subjects have been shown to enhance students' attitudes toward these subjects (Clark, 2002). Mentoring programs established through such partnerships have been found to have significant and positive effects on students' grades, school attendance, and exposure to career opportunities (McPartland & Nettles, 1991; Thompson & Kelly-Vance, 2001). Partnerships with businesses and other community organizations have provided schools with needed equipment, materials, and technical assistance and support for student instruction (Mickelson, 1999; Scales et al., 2005). Documented benefits of more complex school–community partnerships, such as community schools' offering integrated services, include behavioral and academic gains for students and greater access to needed services, and reduced stress and increased engagement in their children's education for parents (Sanders & Hembrick-Roberts, in press).

Challenges to School–Community Partnerships

School–community partnerships are not without challenges. Planning, designing, implementing, evaluating, and maintaining school–community partnerships take time, funding, leadership, and committed school and community members (Epstein et al., 2009). When any of these components are missing or insufficient, partnership activities fail to achieve the outcomes previously described (Sanders, 2006). Whether or how schools address these challenges depends largely on their organizational cultures.

As normative environments, schools are governed by patterns of behavior regarded as typical more than by clear rules or guidelines. These collective patterns constitute the school culture. Although cultures within schools and classrooms differ, there are some commonly observed norms that can impede effective school–community collaboration. Two such norms are isolation and autonomy. Mutually reinforcing, these cultural norms establish defined boundaries around classrooms and teacher practice (Lortie, 2002) that often extend to the school as a whole. That is, to maintain their ability to carry out their core functions—effective teaching and learning—schools may rationally feel the need to isolate themselves from "outsiders." This isolation also provides a degree of professional autonomy that educational leaders and practitioners value (Pearson & Moomaw, 2005) but that severely restricts community engagement.

Two additional norms that affect how schools conceptualize their roles and relationships with their surrounding communities are order and control. Schools are characterized by a high degree of population density and a nonselective and sometimes unwilling population. To carry out their core responsibilities, schools must coordinate and control students' behaviors. Consequently, one measure of school and teacher effectiveness is the extent to which schools can maintain acceptable levels of order and control. By definition, collaborating with individuals and organizations in the community requires that schools relinquish or share some of the control exercised by teachers and administrators. Consequently, many schools may resist partnership efforts, especially when they threaten to penetrate organizational planning and decision making (Shatkin & Gershberg, 2007).

Yet research shows that with a clear understanding of the benefits of partnerships; strong leadership that models, provides professional support for, and rewards collaborative practice; and persistence and time, schools can develop transformative cultures that challenge norms that impede community engagement (Comer, 1995; Epstein, 2011). Teachers, through their efforts in the classroom, school, and community, can play an essential role in achieving this cultural transformation.

TEACHERS AS AGENTS OF COMMUNITY RESPONSIVENESS

Recognizing the role of teachers in developing collaborative classrooms and schools, this section describes how teachers can engage in professional practice that is responsive to students' communities. The community-responsive teaching

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strategies that we describe include collaboration with community-based organizations and individuals to enhance students' learning; incorporation of families' funds of knowledge into classroom lessons; and the development of community-based service learning projects to encourage civic engagement. Although not exhaustive, these practices illustrate how teachers can overcome norms of isolation and control to facilitate stronger school–community ties that promote students' learning and development.

Collaborating with Community-Based Organizations

Principles of universal design for learning and multicultural education highlight the importance of making instructional styles and classroom content relevant to students in order to enhance learning and reduce disruptive behaviors (Banks, 2001; Hackman, 2008; Nieto, 1999). One way that teachers can create more relevant and engaging learning opportunities is by increasing the role, visibility, and presence of community individuals and institutions in students' formal education. For example, teachers can identify individuals from community organizations to serve as guest speakers, provide demonstrations, deliver performances, and provide hands-on learning opportunities. When linked to the school curriculum, this outreach can boost students' enjoyment of and engagement with subject matter content. History can come alive as local citizens recount their life experiences, ratios and proportions can be made more meaningful as students work with local artists to paint a community mural, and lessons about changing seasons can be enhanced by community walks led by local leaders. These activities are just a few of the ways that teachers can connect communities and schools.

To successfully implement these and similar activities, teachers must become knowledgeable about the community surrounding the school. Because many teachers, especially those in urban schools, live outside the neighborhoods where they teach, this requires intentional effort. Freiberg and Driscoll (2000) use the term "advance work" to describe what teachers do to get to know their students and school communities. Regarding the latter, Frieberg (2002) suggests that teachers can shop in the neighborhoods where they teach, attend and volunteer for community events, eat at local diners and restaurants, and borrow books from the local library. To identify potential resources to support classroom instruction, teachers can also drive, walk, or take a bus through the neighborhood, noting the businesses, social service agencies, faith-based organizations, health care facilities, and educational institutions within a 5-mile radius of the school (Sanders, 2006). Through this "advance work," teachers can establish authentic, supportive, and academically challenging learning environments theoretically and empirically linked to higher student achievement (Marks, 2000).

Funds of Knowledge

To develop stronger relationships with students' families, teachers can incorporate their "funds of knowledge" into educational practice. Funds of knowledge refer to

the sociocultural and economic knowledge and traditions manifested in daily activities that are also situated in the historical evolution of families (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzales, 1992). All families, regardless of their socioeconomic status, immigrant origin, ethnicity, or language, have strengths and resources deriving from their life experiences that can enrich the school environment. Teachers and schools working within this framework incorporate their students' family traditions and experiences in the curriculum, classroom activities, and assignments to enhance learning (Gonzalez, Moll, & Amanti, 2005) and overcome cultural differences between the school and the home (Warren, Hong, Rubin, & Uy, 2009).

Accessing families' funds of knowledge requires that teachers systematically gather information about their interests, experiences, and lives. This information is often gathered through classroom assignments or ethnographic interviews at students' homes. Teachers can work with university researchers and faculty and school colleagues to develop appropriate interview questions, analyze the data, and brainstorm strategies to incorporate their findings into classroom instruction (Genzuk, 1999). Genzuk (1999) describes how this process allowed one teacher to move from a deficit to a strengths-based approach when working with Mexican American youth.

Indeed, there are several benefits of using strategies such as "funds of knowledge" to develop strong partnerships with communities. First, it helps to create trusting and respectful relationships with families because schools show that they know, respect, and value their cultures and traditions regardless of how different they are from the mainstream. Given the history of oppression and discrimination that many minority groups have experienced (Spring, 2010), some families may feel alienated by the school system. Incorporating families' "funds of knowledge" into the school and classroom could be an important first step in building stronger connections between students' homes and the school.

Second, it can help strengthen parents' sense of efficacy as partners in their children's education. Some parents may feel that they don't have the experience and know-how to help their children with their schoolwork or navigate the school system. However, these negative perceptions could be neutralized if parents realize that schools are validating and acknowledging their experiences and traditions as relevant for their children's learning. Third, incorporating family-based knowledge into the classroom helps to make students' learning experiences more meaningful. Learning is situated in a familiar social context and is conceptualized as reciprocal when the knowledge that students bring to the classroom is also recognized as relevant.

Service Learning Projects

Advocates of service learning argue that although educational and intellectual achievement are necessary aspects of public education, equally important is a focus on community and civic participation. Writing two decades ago, Ruggenberg (1993) argued that without the balance of both, "we give students the impression that acts of courage, compassion, duty, and commitment are rare, and surely done by extraordinary people; people much different from them" (p. 13). Service learning

projects provide students with opportunities to assist individuals or agencies in addressing social and environmental problems or community needs. Field experiences can include working with emotionally or physically disabled children, planting community gardens, or organizing voter registration drives. The goals of service learning include building stronger neighborhoods and communities, creating more active and involved citizens, and invigorating classroom instruction.

Careful planning that includes teachers, administrators, and supervisors of the field experiences is required to successfully incorporate students' service learning projects into the school curriculum. The curriculum should be adapted to include opportunities for students to reflect on their service learning experiences, tie them to academic content, and analyze the consequences of their work (Halsted & Schine, 1994; Ruggenberg, 1993). Studies suggest that when tied to coursework, service learning helps students to gain a more comprehensive understanding of academic subjects and positively affects their reflective judgment (Eyler, 2002). At the same time, involvement in service learning has been linked to stronger self-efficacy and civic engagement attitudes (Morgan & Streb, 2001).

There are a variety of resources that teachers can draw on to help them design and evaluate effective service learning projects. One of these is a handbook developed through a collaboration between the University of San Diego and the San Diego Unified School District (2010). The handbook, designed specifically for teachers of elementary school students, describes the underlying principles of service learning, provides examples of service learning projects for different academic subjects, and provides reflection and evaluation exercises for students. The National Service-Learning Clearinghouse (2012) is another useful resource for teachers at all grade levels; it offers a database titled Service-Learning Ideas and Curricular Examples. The database contains hundreds of service learning lesson plans, syllabi, and project ideas that are submitted by educators and service learning practitioners. Teachers can filter the entries by student and school demographics, type of service, and theoretical approach. Through the use of such resources, teachers can create learning opportunities that are responsive to both student and community needs.

CONCLUSION

School–community collaboration matters for children and youth. It is a mechanism to enhance the social capital available to students, families, community members, and school personnel. As such, school–community collaboration can improve school functioning, facilitate community development, and enhance students' learning and well-being. By engaging in community-responsive practices, teachers play a key role in creating school cultures that support and sustain effective community partnerships.

To be effective as agents of community responsiveness in schools, teachers require professional development (Epstein & Sanders, 2006). Ideally, teachers' professional preparation for collaboration would begin during the preservice stage of

teacher training so that they enter schools and classrooms with a clear understanding of the benefits and rewards of collaboration, as well as a working knowledge of strategies for successful collaboration. It also would be an ongoing theme of the inservice professional development of educators so that the day-to-day reality of teaching and classroom management would not cloud their view of themselves as partners in the development of children and youth.

In addition to a greater emphasis on collaboration, preservice teachers also require professional development to build their capacities to work with diverse populations. Growing diversity in U.S. communities is providing a broad set of opportunities for enriching the learning experiences of all students. Yet this same diversity poses challenges to schools and teachers. Stress and conflict can emerge between communities and school personnel if differences in cultural lenses, norms, and expectations regarding the ways of educating and socializing children exist (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1978, 2004). Being able to cross borders of difference is critical for meaningful and sustained connections between educators and the families and communities they serve. Thus teachers need opportunities to enhance their skills as border crossers (Sanders, 2009).

The first decade of the 21st century suggests that our society and schools are becoming more diverse and complex. Teacher educators must ensure that their graduates are prepared to meet the needs of PreK–12 students in these challenging times. This is no easy task given limited credit hours and national and state standards and requirements. Nevertheless, teacher professional development programs must find ways to prepare teachers to be critical, innovative, and collaborative thinkers and strategists, as well as pedagogical and subject matter experts. Integrating key themes such as family and community engagement, collaborative decision making, and diversity into methods and content courses, action research projects, and internships is one way to begin to meet this challenge. Theory and research suggest that we should attend to these themes, and our increasingly diverse schools and communities demand that we do so.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Which of the theories explaining the impact of neighborhoods on student outcomes do you find most compelling? Explain.

2. Do you think school–community partnerships are important for students regardless of socioeconomic status? Why or why not?

3. What can teachers and administrators do to ensure that social networks within schools are inclusive of diverse populations?

4. What skills, knowledge, and dispositions do teachers need in order to successfully implement the community-responsive teaching strategies described? What courses and experiences are needed to prepare teachers for community-responsive teaching?

5. Many schools pull students from a variety of neighborhoods. What does this mean for school–community partnerships and community-responsive teaching? Explain.

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Handbook of
Professional Development
in Education

Successful Models and Practices, PreK–12

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Foreword by Andy Hargreaves

This volume evolved out of our years of consulting in schools, as administrators and teachers implemented new programs that were meant to help their students learn. Working with them has guided us to read and reflect on what is known about how adult learning takes place, as well as how successful school reform happens. Therefore, this book is dedicated to the educators who work with children across the grades and the scholars across the decades who have examined the issues that our schools and teachers face.