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ABSTRACT

It is recognized that the character of American society is changing. Schools face a difficult set of conditions as they attempt to respond to the challenge of increasing the academic achievement of America's multicultural children. A number of proposals have advocated collaboration between human services and schools to provide a more systematic response to the problems of poverty, poor housing, family instability, and health that undermine the ability and willingness of young people to become educated. In addition, school/private-sector collaboration has been urged. This paper presents a conception of collaboration that argues that greater comprehensiveness, coordination, and efficiency of human service delivery are not sufficient to respond to the problems of disadvantaged youth, nor to the needs of the larger society that wants a more competent work force. A broader and theoretically more powerful conception is of collaboration that includes parents and the private sector as well as human services. Explored is collaboration aimed at building "social capital" for youth and their families. A view of collaboration that builds a new moral and political commitment to a "social contract" with youth that explicitly links school achievement to employment and higher education opportunities is given. (37 references) (RR)

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COMMUNITY COLLABORATION AND THE RESTRUCTURING OF SCHOOLS

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COMMUNITY COLLABORATION AND THE RESTRUCTURING OF SCHOOLS

Calvin Stone and Gary Wehlage

I. INTRODUCTION

It is widely recognized that the character of American society is changing as ethnic and racial minorities make up an increasing percentage of the population. This is having a profound effect on schools which are having difficulty educating many poor and minority students. While historically this has been true to some extent, exacerbating the problem are new social forces that make families less stable today than they were a few decades ago. For example, the "Norman Rockwell" family of a working father, housewife mother, and two children now constitutes only about six percent of American homes (Hodgkinson, 1991). Moreover, in the inner cities, the sense of community is eroding, the schools are criticized as inadequate and inequitable, and the future is bleak for many youth in terms of perceived opportunities for work consistent with the American dream of upward social and economic mobility.

Clearly the schools face a difficult set of conditions as they attempt to respond to the challenge of increasing the academic achievement of America's children. But problems exist not only with the characteristics of the clients being served, concerns about the quality of American schools themselves make our success in meeting this challenge questionable. Numerous critics and interests groups have called for school reforms that will lead to higher levels of academic achievement by all students. International comparisons indicate that even middle class American students compare poorly with other nations on math and science tests (Roser, 1992; Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1989).

In previous generations, when a different economy relied on muscle power for much of its productivity, low academic achievement or failing to graduate from high school were not necessarily serious problems. Now, however, these outcomes are considered problems for society as well as major handicaps for individuals. Dropping out and under-achievement are viewed as

social problems because it is assumed they result in low economic productivity, increased social costs to communities and the perpetuation of unstable family conditions that limit opportunities for future generations. Schools are also being challenged to make major improvements in the academic achievement of non-college-bound students (William T. Grant Foundation, 1988; New American Schools Development Corporation, 1991). Educators are being told that they must strive for excellence and equity in student outcomes because it is now believed by an increasing portion of society that schools can no longer function as a sorting mechanism that selects winners and throws out the losers (Committee for Economic Development, 1985; 1987). Providing all students with a high quality education is increasingly a national necessity that is driving at least part of the school reform movement in this country.

Given the challenge of ensuring excellence and equity of educational outcomes, attention must be given to strategies that address lower achieving students. How can schools provide a high quality education for those not destined for a traditional four-year university degree, but who will nevertheless comprise the basic work force in an age of high technology? We begin to explore answers to this and other questions by offering a framework for restructuring schools around a conception of collaboration in which schools utilize a variety of community resources.

A number of proposals have advocated collaboration between human services and schools in an effort to provide a more systematic response to the problems of poverty, poor housing, family instability and health that undermine the ability and willingness of young people to become educated. (Levy & Copple, 1989; Melaville with Blank, 1991; Bruner, 1991). The main theme of these proposals is school-human service collaboration based on coordination and integration of information and services. The purpose of such collaboration is to produce greater efficiency in the delivery of services and more comprehensive strategies to eliminate gaps and overlaps in services to youth and their families.

In addition, school-private sector collaboration has been urged (Clark, 1991). For some time now, schools have received various forms of assistance through school-business partnerships. Financial donations, speakers and opportunities for students and staff to interact with members of the business community are typical forms of assistance. Some communities, such as Boston, have developed a "compact" agreement between the school system, which promises improved student outcomes, and the business sector, which promises high school graduates support for higher education and job opportunities.

In this article, we present a conception of collaboration that is potentially more powerful than is impled by those above. We argue that greater comprehensiveness, coordination and efficiency of human service delivery, while certainly desirable goals, are not sufficient to respond to the problems of disadvantaged youth, nor to the needs of the larger society that wants a more competent work force. The current widely discussed conception of collaboration, built around providing more and better health and social services, runs the danger of responding primarily to the symptoms of peoples' problems and is inadequate in the long run.

We present a broader and theoretically more powerful conception of collaboration that includes parents and the private sector as well as human services. The purpose of such collaboration is intended to focus on the need to rebuild the social fabric of families and communities. Schools are called upon to use parents, community organizations and the private sector to strengthen the educational power of the institution. This admittedly complex and ambitious agenda is justified, in our view, because communities, families and schools have suffered an alarming decline as institutions in recent decades, and a response that simply prescribes more efficient use of resources is not sufficient. In fact, in an age of shrinking resources for schools and families, it is incumbent upon policy makers to find fundamentally new strategies that strengthen our primary institutions.

To anticipate the argument of this paper, we explore a conception of collaboration aimed at building "social capital" for youth and their families. We extend the aim of collaboration beyond the delivery of human services that tend to respond to the symptoms of deeper social ills. We present a conception of collaboration that builds a new moral and political commitment to a "social contract" with youth that explicitly links school achievement to employment and higher education opportunities. In order to provide the political basis for the fundamental changes implied by this conception of collaboration, we suggest that communities explore new institutional arrangements to plan, implement and legitimate new policies and initiatives.

II. SOCIAL CAPITAL THEORY

We use social capital theory as an orienting device to shape our discussion of the kinds of outcomes that collaboration should seek to produce. Social capital theory, developed by James Coleman (1987a; 1987b; 1988), helps explain how certain characteristics of families and communities relate to student success in school. We extend Coleman's work to show how relationships between the school and parents, human services, community organizations and the private sector offer opportunities for building social capital for students and for educators. To help develop further the implications of social capital theory, we offer concrete examples of how the integration of school and selected community resources has the potential for promoting a school that can produce excellence and equity of achievement for all students.

Coleman identifies three kinds of capital that people possess in varying amounts. One is financial/physical capital; this refers to money and the productive equipment that money can buy to produce goods and services. A second form of capital is human; this is less tangible than the first but refers to skills and knowledge (often acquired through education) that allow people to act in purposeful and productive ways. The third form, social capital, refers to the social and organizational relationships among people that facilitate collective action. Social capital is the

structure of obligations and expectations that underlie organized, purposeful behavior or action. Social interactions within this structure also create an information flow and maintains norms that help establish a trustworthy, predictable context for organized activity.

Coleman offers several examples that illustrate the way in which social capital, when held collectively by a group of individuals, leads to a trustworthy, predictable context for action. One example describes the rotating-credit association common in Southeast Asia (Coleman, 1988). These associations are informal groups comprised of friends, relatives and neighbors who meet regularly to contribute to and draw upon a central fund of money. The fund is created by each member making a contribution which then gives that person a turn in using the money. The relationship among the members of the association is built on the obligation to contribute and the expectation that one's turn will come, but ultimately it rests on trust that no one will abscond with the money. Coleman observes, "one could not imagine a rotating-credit association operating successfully in urban areas marked by a high degree of social disorganization--or in other words, by a lack of social capital" (Coleman, 1988).

This example is particularly instructive because it illustrates some of the differences among financial, human and social capital. The rotating-credit association generates financial capital which in turn is used by members whose human capital (skills and knowledge) permit them to go into the business of producing goods or services. Without the social capital of the credit association, however, these other forms of capital could not be organized and acted upon. It is the network of people who have organized a set of relationships based on norms, obligations and information flow that activates the system of rotating credit.

Social capital functions in communities, and it also functions within families. Families have more or less social capital; i.e., social relations among members that communicate expectations, norms, sanctions. Social capital is developed through these social relationships

between parents and children. When a network of families share a set of expectations, norms and sanctions, then Coleman argues that "intergenerational closure" tends to occur. For example, if parents are friends of the parents of their children's friends, a network of social relations exists in which there is a flow of information making it more likely that parents and children share expectations and there are more consistent use of sanctions. In some cases, whole communities develop closure which creates especially strong social capital. In contrast, when a parent does not have close relationships with other parents or community members who share expectations and norms, the openness of this situation leads to uncertainty of expectations for behavior.

According to the theory, the development of social capital by children contributes to their acquisition of human capital through formal education. A family may have substantial financial capital and the parents may have considerable human capital as a result of their own formal education and experience. However, according to Coleman, there can be a "lack of social capital in the family if there are not strong relations between children and parents" (Coleman, 1988). The lack of strong social relations can result from several circumstances. For example, youth's allegiance to a peer group and its culture can weaken social relations within the family, or, attenuation can result from parents' inability to give time and attention to their children due to work obligations or other sources of stress. Coleman argues that one of the effects on children living in a single-parent home is reduced interactions with adults and the weakening of social capital.

One implication of the current stress on family life is that new mechanisms should be created to assist children in building social capital. Schools are one obvious institution that can help children do this, but like families, schools and communities must create the conditions that will facilitate the development of social capital. A similar point of view is expressed by Wilensky and Kline (1988) who, after a review of urban school reform strategies, conclude that the crisis of

urban education is found in the demise of community, and "the solution for schools and communities alike lies in renewing the school-community link and creating programs and institutions that address the vital needs of young people and the adults they live with."

Given this analysis of the problem, a central issue is: how can educational policy and practice help strengthen social capital that is essential for promoting individual school achievement, family and neighborhood stability and economic productivity? In the remainder of this paper, we explore how schools can collaborate with individuals and institutions in the community as a way to promote (1) parent participation in their children's education; (2) linkages with business and industry that provide youth with apprentice-like experiences; and (3) collaboration with health, social services and non-profit community organizations. These three strategies are intended to help strengthen families and schools while establishing a social contract that promotes national economic strength as well as individual economic security.

III. PARENT PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION

"Parent involvement" is widely advocated as a way to strengthen schools and promote academic achievement. However, the term has taken on the character of a slogan that fails to convey the kinds of activities that will lead to desired goals. To provide some content to this idea, we present a conception of parental participation that calls for <u>functional participation</u> in school activities and <u>personal interaction</u> with their children about school work and educational issues. Parent participation is defined in ways consistent with the development of social capital. That such participation and involvement has positive effects on children's achievement is a major theme in recent research (Epstein, 1987). In addition, recent analyses of National Education Longitudinal Study data by Peng, Lee, Wang and Walberg (1992) found that "child-parent interaction and parental educational expectations are consistently related to resiliency" among academically successful but economically disadvantaged youth. Also using the same data set,

Rumberger (1992) found that parents' interactions with their children lends support to "Coleman's conception of social capital and other work on p. renting style." To facilitate the kind of parental participation identified in this research, schools need to be restructured in particular ways to facilitate change relations between educators, parents and their children.

Creating functional participation and personal interaction by parents is obviously a challenging task because of the gulf that now exists between many parents and schools. Evidence of this gulf is presented by Seeley, Niemeyer and Greenspan (1991) who conducted in-depth interviews with 25 inner-city elementary principals about parent involvement. One finding that emerged was that most schools now give only lip-service to parent involvement. The reasons for this are several. One principal pointed to the number of children in her school who were being raised without a natural parent in the home. Children, according to her, are being raised by parent surrogates such as grandparents, aunts, godparents and foster parents. A second problem mentioned by several principals was family mobility; frequent family moves made their involvement in the school unlikely.

Third, principals of. .i indicated that there was a lack of mutual trust. Many parents had bad school experiences when they were students and they still harbor resentment or fear that inhibits their involvement. They are deeply alienated and understandably avoid contact with the school. On the other hand, a few angry parents come to school with a confrontational posture; principals spoke about parents who were abusive or even violent and had to be kept out of the building. One said that parents were too willing to come to school; "My first priority was to...get the community out of there, and establish strict security procedures for coming into the building. I couldn't have shopping carts and baby carriages--you couldn't walk down the hall. Teachers were constantly interrupted by parents who wanted to speak to them." However, other principals spoke of a close relationship with parents, but the focus was often not on educational matters.

One said, "They come to us if they need help concerning food stamps, if their having trouble with their husbands or wives, if their having trouble getting their welfare checks."

How can schools respond to these varied impediments to parent participation and involvement in ways that strengthen children's education and the school as an institution? Creating productive functional and interactional parent involvement is fraught with difficulties, but we believe resolving these difficulties is essential if the most disadvantaged portion of our population is to receive a high quality education that will permit them to function productively in twenty-first century.

The School Development Program at Yale University, created by James Comer, offers a concrete example of how parental participation might lead to increased levels of social capital in homes and schools (Comer, 1986). Among the things that Comer's strategy promotes is active participation by parents, not only in school decisions through a governing council, but also by contributing to the routines of the school. For example, some parents contribute to the daily operation of the school as paid workers and many others volunteer their time. Parents also serve as tutors and they help educators involve other parents in adult support groups and workshops. Parents develop workshops for themselves on a variety of topics that include information about academic and social programs of the school and how to help children succeed in school. Other workshops address non-educational topics; for example, one school in Comer's program offered parents a course on cosmetology because that is what the mothers wanted. Thus, functional parental involvement means that parents participate in many school activities including instruction, classroom assistance, governance and attending adult education classes.

The conception of parents as a resource who have a functional relationship with the school contributes to the successful operation of the school. This characteristic has the potential for building social capital for parents, their children and educators themselves. When parents

perform needed tasks that organize and instruct children and adults, a context exists in which the communication of information, ideas and norms is promoted. While only a handful of parents can be involved in school governance, all can be involved in workshops that inform them about school goals, teach them how to align family and school expectations as well as learn about topics of personal interest. It may be that the best place to start is by responding to the personal needs of parents, such as those alluded to by the principal quoted earlier who said that requests came for help regarding marital problems, food stamps and welfare checks. At its best, the Comer model promotes two-way communication in that parents are expected to offer ideas about how school policies and practices can be improved. By making the communication a two-way exchange, the relationship between parents and educators becomes authentic.

A principal in Prince Georges County where the Yale model has been replicated, said that she committed herself to "listen, listen, listen" to parents as the first step in making the school responsive to them. Successful examples of the Yale model appear to have overcome what Comer has termed the "misalignment" between the school and home by educating parents about the requirements their children must meet for school success and by informing the school about the needs and interests of families. Comer stated that this model "...restores trust, mutual respect and agreement... It uses parents as their strengths permit and develops in them a sense of ownership for the school and responsibility for its outcomes" (Comer, 1986). When this occurs, social capital is likely to accrue and this will empower parents and educators alike.

Unfortunately most schools are neither committed nor prepared to establish functional relations with parents. Most educators do not have the skills and knowledge necessary to act on the premise that parents can be collaborators in the educational process. In this sense schools themselves lack the social capital (i.e., information channels, knowledge, norms and sanctions) that is essential if they are to successfully involve parents. By restructuring schools in ways that

establish a functional relationship between educators and parents, an interdependence can be developed that builds the necessary social capital for both groups.

While developing social capital empowers parents, students and educators, ideally the effects extend beyond these groups. When parents communicate with the parents of their children's friends--when parents get to know one another--then the adults in a community can come to an understanding about the kinds of behavior by their children that are to be encouraged and sanctioned. For this to occur, consensus on shared norms for behavior must be established for all parties--teachers, parents and students. Shared norms should guide parents and teachers in understanding and supporting each other in the different but overlapping worlds of home and school. For example, what behaviors do teachers expect regarding parents helping their children at home with school work? What does it mean for students to work hard on academics? What expectations exist about home work on the part of parents and teachers? And how are teachers expected to respond to the cultural characteristics of the children they teach? When parents and students communicate sufficiently to reach such an understanding, then what Coleman calls "inter-generational closure" is established. The effect of parent participation in creating inter-generational closure is described by Coleman and Hoffer (1987) in their claim that Catholic schools are more effective than public schools with students considered at risk of failure and dropping out. Their explanation for this hinges on the presence of social capital among Catholic families that originates from a shared belief system and that is strengthened by a network of communication and inter-generational closure around norms and expectations that function to promote educational values and higher school performance.

In its most complete form of development, this community of understanding provides support for norms that allows any adult to help monitor the behavior of any of the community's children. In most communities, the school is the natural location for maintaining this consensus.

By helping whole communities to achieve inter-generational closure, the schools are in a position to make certain that established norms align with an orientation to school achievement. In this context, school personnel will have become trusted members of the adult network empowered by the community to further promote such norms. Through this process parents, teachers and students collectively obtain social capital necessary for successful schools.

We assume that the development of social capital can occur within any community to facilitate support and encouragement for children to conduct themselves in ways that produce school achievement. Our hypothesis is that when parents are a resource with a functional role in the school the following things are likely to happen: (a) information flow occurs both ways between parents and schools; (b) this information contains norms and expectations for parent, student and teacher behavior; and (c) organizational skills are developed to create a more trustworthy context for action. In general, functional participation by parents in school life, particularly in the elementary and middle schools, is likely to build the social capital that both they and schools need to successfully educate young people.

III. SCHOOL-BUSINESS SECTOR COLLABORATION

Throughout the 1980's a number of reports, including some sponsored by business and industry, expressed concern about the future of America's workforce (National Center on Education and the Economy, 1990). In general, it has been noted that our future workforce will be smaller due to a lower U.S. birthrate; that because the birthrate was especially low among white middle income Americans, business and industry in the future will have to dip further into the labor pool, hiring more workers from low-income and minority backgrounds. Because poor and minority youth have characteristically not been as educationally successful as middle income whites, business forecasters are predicting that the qualified segment of the workforce destined

for jobs not requiring a college education will be in short supply and that employers will have to hire young people deficient in social, employability and academic skills.

The implications of this scenario are usually based on a number of assumptions as well as the predicted trends. It is often assumed that a direct relationship exists between educational outcomes and economic productivity. It is further assumed that this nation's relatively poor showing on achievement tests, relative to other advanced nations, and an apparent inability of schools and families to adequately socialize youth to workplace norms, are now causing and will increasingly cause productivity problems for American industry. This analysis tends to hold schools primarily responsible for creating the problem and identifies reform of public education as the solution. Within this perspective, business and industry are dependent on the ability of public education to create a high quality workforce.

There is, however, another perspective that presents a more complex but, we believe, more realistic analysis of the relationship between schooling and employment. This perspective is ecological in that in takes into consideration the impact that business and employment practices have on education as well as the effect of education on the business world. It is important to consider the effect that students' perceptions about prospects for future employment opportunities have on their motivation for school achievement. For example, Bishop (1987) argued that the lack of incentives for academic achievement has undermined effort among non-college-bound students. Those destined for college have an incentive to work hard in school, but not the non-college-bound group. Bishop points out that employers do not use grades or other evidence of academic knowledge, skill or competence to make hiring decisions. Generally, employers do not inspect transcripts for either courses taken or grades. While many employers insist on a diploma for employment, other academic records are ignored. The result, claims Bishop, is the lack of any need for students not bound for college to achieve even though a

person's knowledge of mathematics, science and communication skills can be related to their eventual productivity on the job.

While Bishop's argument applies broadly to non-college-bound students, John Ogbu (1974) studied a working class and predominantly minority community in an effort to explain why minority children were not motivated to achieve in school. He found that children had adopted a pessimistic view of future opportunities based on the conditions for employment prospects observed in their community. According to Ogbu, they perceived that a "job ceiling" existed for individuals within their status group. Given dismal prospects for a future career and concluding that school achievement would probably not enhance these prospects, Ogbu's subjects made a "rational" decision not to put much effort into their schoolwork.

Similarly, Comer (1988) found that alienation in low income children becomes apparent at about age 8, the age when children become capable of understanding that their families differ from others in terms of income, education and life style. This is also the age when the gap in school achievement begins to accelerate as economically disadvantaged children perceive that success is unattainable and begin to withdraw from serious engagement, protecting themselves from failure by deciding that school is unimportant. Schorr (1988) also observed that in third or fourth grade disadvantaged students begin to lose ground academically because, "...at this point the awareness of discrepant values between school and home increases and the gulf widens between skills acquired at home and skills needed for school success".

These critics share the perspective that school achievement is nested in, and dependent on, other contexts--family, community and employment. The history of job discrimination as well as the often subtle messages from society about future employment are translated by young people into personal scenarios ranging from hope to despair. Unfortunately, the employment future looks bleak to many non-college-bound youth and therefore motivation to achieve within

the mainstream culture begins to erode at an early age. One element that appears to be missing can be defined in terms of social capital: there is not a sense of mutual obligation and trust regarding whether individual achievement will lead to rewarding employment.

As it now stands, business will not receive the well-prepared and productive employees it desires if at the front end schools must educate youth who hold little hope for decent jobs. Nor are students not bound for college likely to sustain their effort at achievement without some link between it and employment opportunities. This analysis has important implications in defining a purpose for collaboration between school and business in educating America's youth. Collaborative relationships between school and business should be to forge a social contract with the nation's youth that provides attractive opportunities for training and work in exchange for achievement and job readiness.

However, in addition to social-psychological barriers faced by youth, structural barriers impede American youth in making the transition from school to work. Among western industrialized countries, the U.S. has developed a comparatively poor system for the transition to work for students who do not use college as the bridge to employment. Youth joining the workforce just after high school, regardless of whether or not they achieved a diploma, are typically faced with a five or six year period of work in the secondary job market. During this period, their earnings usually will not support a family, the training that they receive is not significant in providing a base of technical skill, and the job that they hold has little career potential. Rather, these jobs fill the interim years between high school and the age (23 or 24 years old) when many of these young adults will be seriously considered for a job in the primary labor market. In the interim, many youth have only the opportunity to age rather than the opportunity to develop skills and have experiences that will contribute to the chances of a better job in the future.

Opportunities for education and training at America's colleges and universities are currently accessible to approximately half the nation's youth, but only about one-third of American young people eventually become college graduates. Expenditures on youth who partake of higher education are heavily subsidized by a combination of state and federal expenditures. These subsidies are in excess of $4000 per student per year (Sheets, Lerman, Hahn, & Butler, 1988). Government subsidies for college participants would not be especially noteworthy if there existed a parallel and equitably funded system that would provide training for youth who directly enter the workforce. However, Hamilton (1990) using data provided by Sheets et. al.,(1988) estimates that the public subsidy to non-college youth in this country is about one-seventh that available to college attenders. In contrast to other western industrialized countries, the U.S. public investment in employment and training for youth who do not attend college is relatively low; for example, it is only 30% of the German investment and 18% of Sweden's.

Our private investment in training also is less than that in other Western industrialized countries. While the U.S. businesses spend $40-60 billion on training (Eurich, 1985; Sheets, et al., 1988), these expenditures are weighted heavily in favor of those who have already benefitted from some (subsidized) college training. White collar workers receive 75% of the formal training provided by employers while workers who do not have a high school diploma receive a meager 5% (Sheets et al., 1988). Altogether, only 8% of our front-line workers receive training on the job (National Center on Education and the Economy, 1990) and, the training received by individuals in entry level jobs is often restricted to a brief orientation on safety and the accomplishment of routine tasks (Sheets, et al., 1988). This can be compared with the contributions of West German employers to the training of youth in the country's well-developed apprenticeship system. There, private industry's contribution is approximately $20 billion per year (Lerman, 1990) to serve 1.72 million youth (George, 1987): approximately $11,600 per

apprenticed youth per year. These expenditures include training wages (20-40% of the wages paid to skilled workers), wages paid to instructors and funds to provide training aids and materials (George, 1987). These costs are borne by business but offset by the productivity of the apprentices.

One strategy for addressing the problem of providing high quality training and education for the non-college-bound is some variation of the European apprenticeship. Hamilton (1990) reported that more than half of West Germany's 15 to 18 year old youth are involved in apprenticeships in the public and private sectors. He points out that an apprenticeship system of education for youth simultaneously addresses important psychosocial development needs of youth, provides an engaging education that results in students obtaining in-depth knowledge and skill, and satisfies the society's need to be highly competitive in terms of productivity. Hamilton identified four key features of apprenticeship education that contribute to these positive outcomes:

1. Workplaces and other community settings are exploited as learning environments;
2. Work experience is linked to academic learning;
3. Youth are simultaneously workers with real responsibilities and learners; and
4. Close relationships are fostered between youth and adult mentors.

German students spend up to four days per week working side-by-side with adults and assume adult responsibilities in the primary sector of the workforce. This defies what seems to have become the American stereotype that youth cannot function with maturity until their mid-twenties, and that consequently the best we can do is to provide unskilled secondary economy jobs that serve as an aging vat. Indeed, German youth live up to their country's expectations while U.S. youth live down to ours.

Apprenticeships provide the integration of non-college bound youth into the adult workforce and prevents the isolation of youth by age groups. By bringing youth into close contact with persons of other generations, natural interaction will occur as people take part in the network of human contacts with its array of roles, obligations and responsibilities. The German system provides young people with opportunities to build social capital that have few parallels in American society. In contrast, this country funnels youth into the secondary service economy. In many of these work settings, such as fast-food chains, adults are few and youth are numerous; the norms of the workplace tend to be established by youth, and it is unlikely these settings contribute much to the development of social capital. It is even more unlikely that advanced technical skills and knowledge are learned in these settings.

In Germany, youth involved in an apprenticeship continue with their academic learning. Formal classroom education is provided one or more days per week with students attending classes with fellow apprentices who are engaged in similar occupational training. Many of the classes are therefore oriented around occupational themes and problems that are common to those being experienced in the workplace by the students. With a curriculum focused on occupational clusters, students are educated for a variety of related jobs; this avoids narrowly defined job-specific training. This approach is consistent with a workplace organization built around emerging high productivity models.

German education of non-college-bound youth is part of a system that funnels students into several qualitatively different high schools, some leading to college, some not. It is important to point out, however, that there are safeguards in this system that minimize the impact of wrong choices for individuals. Routes are available to take students out of the apprenticeship track and into academic colleges that provide professional degrees. Though he clearly gives high marks to the German apprenticeship system, Hamilton believes that the U.S. should establish its own

version rather than replicating another country's program. It is important to build on existing programs that have apprentice-like features, such as cooperative programs and community service, that are already accepted and functioning well. Moreover, Americans need to build a system that has checks and balances that preserve choices at various points on the educational ladder to avoid harmful tracking. A good apprenticeship program is less likely to result in harmful tracking than the present system in America that leaves about half of the nation's youth adrift in "general" school programs leading neither to work nor college.

A version of the apprenticeship was developed by the Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce in their report (National Center on Education and the Economy, 1990). Their proposal is framed by an analysis of the declining position of the U.S. in the world economy and goes on to address education from the perspective of the productivity of the workforce. The Commission conducted research in the major industrialized countries of the world to compare the various programs of training and education, how the transition from school to work is managed, and the organization of work and its related training prerequisites.

The Commission found: "In our expectations for young people, the resources that we devote to them and the rewards for performance that we give them, our whole system conspires to produce minimal educational effort or achievement among our students who are not college-bound." Because American business still relies on a turn of the (last) century model of production, workers are not called upon to be well-educated and skilled. Other nations have turned to high performance or high productivity means for organizing the work force that may well make work more challenging and attractive to youth and that dovetails with their youth apprenticeship and training programs. Other industrialized countries have created national standards that link schooling and work. In conjunction with such standards, forms of support are made available that do not exist for American youth.

To summarize, the Commission found in other nations support for youth in making the transition from school to work that includes: 1) professionalized education through school-work apprenticeships for non-college-bound youth; 2) comprehensive labor market systems that combine training, labor market information, job search and income maintenance during transition periods; 3) company based training through general revenue or payroll tax financing; and 4) a national consensus on the importance of moving to high productivity forms of work organization and building high wage economies.

A major Commission recommendation was to create a national educational performance standard, the "certificate of initial mastery," that certifies attainment of certain uniform standards of achievement. Generally this certificate would be attained at age 16. Upon earning the certificate students become eligible for a number of options: going to work, entering a college preparatory program or studying for a technical certificate. The intent of this proposal is that all students should receive the certificate of initial mastery, though some students would likely attain the certificate later than others. Alternative learning environments, funded by each state, would be available to students who were not successful in attaining the certificate in traditional school programs.

We believe that a national standard, such as the certificate of initial mastery, can contribute to educational goals of building social and human capital. Restructuring curriculum and school programs around some set of universal performance standards accepted by the private sector and higher education will provide parents and schools with social capital in the form of shared expectations, mutual obligations, and better defined (trustworthy) routes to success. If such standards are coordinated with an incentive and reward system that leads to high quality apprenticeship-like opportunities for youth, then the standards will have meaning for those youth not bound for college and will encourage serious engagement in school work.

Therefore, in addition to providing training, an important function of the apprenticeship is its highly visible symbolic role in the "social contract" linking youth to employment. The social contract provides that young people receive an implied promise of reasonably good and secure employment, assuming they meet certain agreed upon standards of achievement and performance. Obviously, collaboration between the schools and the business sector will be critical in creating experiences that youth perceive as opportunities.

The vision a social contract for youth utilizing some version of apprenticeship is, however, not likely to produce much initiative among individual business firms. Indeed, it would be to an individual firm's advantage to have all other firms invest in training youth, have one's own firm invest nothing, but hire from the pool of talent trained by others. This is the kind of conundrum that is, as Hamilton points out, the "natural province" of governments. Because our economy lacks a tradition of cooperation among competing firms and because it is market driven, it is difficult to imagine the implementation of an American apprenticeship unless federal and/or state governments took the lead in brokering the necessary social contract.

In addition to our view that government has a crucial role to play, the private sector must make a commitment to work with schools to generate genuinely new opportunities for American youth. Ideas such as the certificate of initial mastery will not have the desired effect unless they are linked directly to training for career opportunities. Schooling must be seen by the private sector as more than the acquisition of knowledge and skills; schooling is also the development of social capital. Collaboration between schools and the private sector should be constructed around a consensus about the importance of education, training, and a reasonable promise of future opportunities as a way of developing a work force capable of participating in high performance work organizations.

V. SCHOOL-HUMAN SERVICES COLLABORATION

Many practitioners and policymakers in the human services recognize that they share common concerns, and yet much of their potential to assist the nation's disadvantaged is lost because of the fragmentation and isolation of the various forms of assistance. This fragmentation exists in spite of our knowledge that "...the needs of children and families (education, health, social, housing family support to name the most obvious) are not isolated but very interconnected" (Earle & Kysilko, 1991). Despite this awareness, health, social services, and education agencies face a common problem--each partially addresses similar and related concerns in isolation of other related services.

Fragmentation is an unintended outcome of the professional specialization and categorical legislation that characterizes social service, education and health providers. To cite a common example, a school nurse collects information about inoculation for measles but cannot provide the necessary immunization. Instead she must refer a student to the city health department where another nurse will provide the service. If, in her contact with the child, the city nurse observes evidence of neglect she makes a referral to a county social worker. If the social worker's investigation reveals a family need for financial support, the case is transferred from the social services division to a case worker in the income maintenance division. In this typical example the work of professionals is specialized by occupation and by agency. Efficiency is compromised because only part of the necessary services can be provided by each professional, and even if there were no service gaps in the total system, access is so difficult that only the most informed and tenacious clients can be expected to combine the fragments into a useful response to their problems.

Schools also contribute to the fragmentation of services because typically they do not provide help to students in concert with other agencies in the community. Moreover, despite the

often heard claim from educators that strong families are needed to prepare children to succeed in school, educators continue to remain isolated from children's families. Rather, schools have an individualistic definition of student problems; i.e., schools treat students defined by categorical symptoms (low reading scores; retained in grade) as if the problems behind these symptoms were individual and personal, and never social in origin. Students are seen as having a self-contained internal problem and counseling, remediation, and assigning the student to a special class or program are typical institutional responses. The model implies a strategy of "fixing" the student who is judged internally deficient on some measure, but plans are usually restricted to assistance that is available within the walls of the school and provided by employees of the school district.

Meanwhile, outside the school walls there are a variety of human service agencies and a multitude of community-based non-profit organizations that are responding to the economic and social deterioration of families and communities. But to a large extent the non-school human services function with a restricted mandate to serve only individuals or families that have already crossed a high threshold of long-term neglect, abuse, violence or deprivation--in other words, a crisis. It is the crisis orientation and reactive mode that characterizes much of our conception of intervention by human service agencies. Generally, if no extreme conditions can be documented, then assistance is not available. Where assistance is available it is typically not coordinated with assistance that a student receives through the school.

A plethora of proposals for collaboration between schools and human services have been offered in response to a verdict that the current system suffers "failure by fragmentation" (Gardner, 1990; Clearinghouse on Urban Education, 1990). The main purpose of most of these proposals is to increase efficiency and effectiveness of services; i.e., collaboration intends to promote the integration and coordination of programs into a comprehensive system that can provide a holistic and systematic approach to helping children and families (Melaville with Blank,

1991). However, given the nature of the problems facing disadvantaged crisis-ridden families collaboration can not be confined to only increasing the efficiency and the coordination of existing services to individuals. We believe that in some communities the situation is ripe for reconceptualizing the role of social services to build long-term preventive strategies that will help communities become functional.

Where disadvantaged people are concentrated, the problem can be seen not as the treatment of individuals but rather that of community-building (Wilensky & Kline, 1988). Educationally, this also suggests a different agenda for addressing the social and family causes of school failure and under-achievement. The issue becomes one of using schools, health, social services and other local organizations to empower families to respond to the common problems of their neighborhoods and communities. This approach implies that social services treat people less as clients in need of direct services and more as people with resources who can respond to the human problems created by deteriorated neighborhoods. The goal of collaboration for human services is to work with other institutions to help rebuild the social and economic infrastructure of communities.

Responding effectively to many of the problems of contemporary urban life, means that collaboration must go beyond attempts to improve the efficiency of the system as it is currently organized. First, collaboration is an opportunity to reallocate some human service resources that are now crisis driven and not used for purposes of well-planned preventive approaches. Second, the severity of problems in many geographic areas calls for a shift in focus from the individual client to rebuilding of whole communities. Stronger neighborhoods and communities, i.e., people with greater social capital, must address some of the conditions that now create a demand for current forms of social services. The need for this strategy seems apparent in the face of social problems that far out-strip the capacity of conventional human services to respond.

Social disorganization and the destruction of social capital have been described as an "epidemic" in some neighborhoods (Crane, 1991). Symptoms of this disorganization can be measured with a variety of data. For example, Ricketts and Sawhill (1988), using 1980 census data, identified "underclass" tracts (containing 2500-8000 people) having a high proportion of people in each of four high risk categories: 33% high school dropouts, 33% welfare recipients, 50% female heads of households, and 50% unemployed males. This concentration of risk factors existed in 880 U.S. census tracts. These data only begin to describe the social milieu in which school under-achievement and dropout are prominent, teen-age births frequent while at the same time the adults are bereft of the kind of social and human capital that can lead to success in mainstream society.

Neighborhoods where the economic and cultural bases have deteriorated have also been analyzed by William J. Wilson. He provides a poignant analysis of what this means to the children of such a neighborhood.

> "...in ghetto neighborhoods that have experienced a steady out-migration of middle- and working-class families -- communities, in other words, that lack a social buffer -- a sudden and/or prolonged increase in joblessness, as existed in the 1970s and first half of the 1980s, creates a ripple effect resulting in an exponential increase in related forms of social dislocation. ...And as the prospects for employment diminish, other alternatives such as welfare and the underground economy are not only increasingly relied on, they come to be seen as a way of life.
>
> Thus, in such neighborhoods the chances are overwhelming that children will seldom interact on a sustained basis with people who are employed or with families that have a steady breadwinner; the relationship between schooling and post-school employment takes on a different meaning. The development of cognitive, linguistic and other educational and job-related skills necessary for the world of work in the mainstream economy is thereby adversely affected. In such neighborhoods, therefore, teachers become frustrated and do not teach and children do not learn. A vicious cycle is perpetuated through the family, through the community and through the schools (Wilson, 1987).

Schorr (1988) framed the same problem in the following terms:

> Although there are still plenty of people in these neighborhoods who work very hard, there is no longer the critical mass of stable, achievement-oriented families

> that once provided neighborhood cohesion, sanctions against aberrant behavior, and support for churches and other basic community institutions. Missing are essential practical connections to mainstream society, the informal ties to the world of work that provide models of conventional roles and behavior and could alert youngsters to job openings and help them obtain employment. (p. 19-20)

Without using Coleman's terminology, Wilson and Schorr are pointing out that social capital is a missing critical element in those neighborhoods that have spiraled downward. Without the integrating and cohesive influence of social capital, the potential for maintaining a functioning community is lost to normless self-interest and alienation from the mainstream culture. For those who live in such a milieu the social forces are often overwhelming and beyond the control of individuals.

Schorr described numerous successful programs that target disadvantaged populations. One type is the federally initiated Head Start Program that began in 1965; by 1985 it was serving one-fifth of the nation's eligible three to five year old children. Head Start is best known for its educational mission but blends education with other initiatives; health, nutrition, social services and parent support. Much of Head Start's service is to families and communities. Schorr believes, as do many observers, that "when three to five-year-old children are systematically helped to think, reason, and speak clearly; when they are provided hot meals, social services, health evaluations and health care; when families become partners in their children's learning experiences, are helped toward self-sufficiency, and gain greater confidence in themselves as parents and as contributing members of the community, the results are measurable and dramatic". The Head Start Program, as well as other early childhood programs, are likely to result in a reduced student need for special education, reduced teen pregnancy and dropout, and increased access to college and productive employment. Schorr estimated that society reaps a fourfold return on dollars invested in such programs.

Federal programs backed by the power of legislation and funding are one way of creating interventions to benefit disadvantaged youth. However, in addition many opportunities to build social capital depend upon local initiative. Schorr described an effort in Watts that began after the riots of 1965. A presidential commission identified the lack of accessible health care facilities as a precipitating factor. The Martin Luther King General Hospital was founded, and shortly after its opening the staff of the pediatrics department realized that the traditional role of a hospital in the community would not lead to significant improvement of the dismal health conditions of the Watts community. The hospital began to build a full service system, collaborating with community organizations, foundations and the school district. Collaboration among these organizations initiated a model child care center, a family day care network, a training program for child care workers, a Head Start Program and the Magnet High School for the Health Professions. The magnet school serves 180 high school students, most of whom are African American and disadvantaged. In addition to classroom instruction that focuses on the health professions, students work in medical laboratories, and participate in patient care in the hospital, and according to Schorr, many students have a strong collegial relationship with the professional staff at the hospital.

Critical to the conceptualization of this full service care center and school was that "In Watts it didn't seem to make sense to view health and illness simply as biological entities residing in individuals in isolation of their surroundings... (O)nce pediatricians get used to thinking about children's lives beyond the examining table...they are propelled into acquiring and training others in new skills, into setting up and running community programs, and into collaborating with professionals and agencies from outside the health care arena" (Schorr, 1988).

A high school curriculum has been developed that engages students in real problems and issues facing their community, thus allowing students to participate in higher order thinking and

the creation of knowledge, and to simultaneously become contributing members of the community. It is this kind of learning and activity with purpose that builds the social and human capital that is necessary to reconstruct local communities. The Magnet High School for the Health Professions has created functional relationships for its students in programs devoted to health care and community service. It is an example of the kind of school program that can help rebuild local communities as well as stimulate the desire for further education and provide avenues toward employment. How can communities develop and implement systemic strategies that combine education, social services and linkages with business to strengthen the social capital of disadvantaged youth? In the next section, we begin to explore the political-organizational complexities of this undertaking.

V. COLLABORATION REQUIRES A COLLABORATIVE ORGANIZATION

In 1968 the Kerner Commission cautioned that the U.S. was moving toward two separate societies, one consisting of the "haves" the other of the "have-nots". That scenario seems not to have improved much, it may have even worsened for many, in the intervening years. An increasing number of the nation's children and youth are growing up without functional connections to the opportunities that exist in the mainstream society and without ties to institutions or individuals that can provide effective role models of success within the mainstream culture. To develop social capital for these children will require that the more advantaged citizens not isolate themselves from disadvantaged children and their families, but rather means must be found for developing relationships that cross class and racial lines.

How might the schools, other human service agencies and businesses proceed in efforts to bridge the gap that now exists and help young people develop social capital for themselves? At the level of daily life, what specific new institutional practices might be initiated that would begin to accomplish the ambitious agenda suggested here? Throughout this paper we have given some

examples of existing practices that contribute to the formation of social capital. Below we develop a more idealized version of collaboration by intertwining actual examples from observations and the literature, with imagined possibilities, to create a composite description of collaboration that could strengthen social capital.

Collaboration In Dunn's Park

The Dunn's Park community is the site of a number of significant new efforts to develop collaboration among youth-serving institutions. An initial agreement to collaborate was reached five years ago when influential members of the community, including the mayor, director of county human services, the superintendent of schools, and local religious and business leaders met out of concern for what they viewed as school and community deterioration and a high level of young adult unemployment. In meetings that followed, the group determined that the health of the community depended on the establishment of a coordinated response and shared sense of responsibility for the community's welfare. It was also determined that the children would have "first call" on the resources of all the involved organizations.

Initial efforts to collaborate focused on opening up lines of communication with parents of the community's children through meetings sponsored by the schools. Emphasis was placed on being responsive to the few parents who attended the initial meetings, and seeking their help and advice about how to build a broader base of support for changing things in the community. What the Dunn's Park community discovered was that the apathy that they thought existed among parents, about support for schools and the community, could be quickly overcome. Today, there are parent volunteers serving in each of the elementary school classrooms; the schools are governed with help from advisory groups that include elected parent representatives; and, several evenings each week and on weekends the school building is used by parents and other adults from the community for meetings and recreational activities.

Some of the meetings that take place in the school are joint efforts of parents and the school. For example, a group of parents and teachers had met to determine if there were strategies that the parents could use at home to help the children to be more successful in the school. A reading teacher presented classes for parents that included discussions and demonstrations designed to teach parents how to be the home-teachers of their children. This resulted in a commitment on the part of many parents to spend at least 40 minutes each evening working with their children on reading. The shared norms and commitments for home-teaching that resulted from these meetings is allowing the school and the community to "leverage" the skills of the highly trained reading teacher via the formation of social capital that will benefit parents, students and the school.

Another example of parent-educator cooperation occurred when the Pastor of an African-American church agreed to teach a class at the school, for the predominantly white teaching staff, about the problems faced by minority children in the school and in the community. The class led to a concerted and successful effort on the part of educators, affected parents and the Pastor's church, to establish mechanisms for the school's most needy families to obtain the material, health care, and social support that the children needed in order to concentrate on learning. Part of this effort involved setting up satellite county social service offices at several of the schools. There the school district and county social workers share space and have the common mandate to be family advocates in providing preventive as well as crisis oriented services. One joint innovation was the development of a common management information system that has facilitated "one stop" client service: health care, housing, help with heating bills, and eligibility for all county programs can be arranged at a single location. The cooperation and shared sense of purpose that has developed between the two bureaucracies, the county and the school district, represents social capital that is of mutual benefit to the organizations and to their clients.

There have been other significant contributions made by parents who had less time and perhaps less patience for attending meetings that had a political agenda. A group of minority fathers arranged a very successful trip to see a major league baseball game for students of all races. And, some of the parents at one of the elementary schools got shrubs and grass seed donated by a local nursery, and on arbor day involved many students and their parents in planting and clean-up that transformed the outside appearance of the school. Certainly the process as well as the resulting pride and ownership in the appearance of the school represent forms of social capital.

In Dunn's Park there was also growing concern about the number of students who dropped out of school before graduation without the skills and work habits necessary to obtain anything but secondary economy jobs. And, crime by juveniles had been steadily increasing. In response to these problems the schools, county human services and the juvenile court worked together to design a specialty school that is helping to retain dropouts in school and to provide community-based programming for some of the juvenile offenders who otherwise would have been sent to the state reformatory. Because each youth sent to the reformatory costs the community $35,000 per year, this collaborative strategy has resulted in savings that can be applied to other needs. In addition, the interagency cooperation that began has resulted in an exchange and flow of new ideas for developing, in conjunction with community-based organizations, positive and preventive opportunities for the community's most needy adolescents.

Another major effort is underway at Dunn's Park High School where educators are working with community business leaders to develop training programs that will respond to the high rate of unemployment and to business' need for a well trained workforce. Believing that student achievement in school is affected by student perceptions about future opportunities, Dunn's Park employers have offered a guarantee that they will provide jobs with career potential

to every qualified graduate of the high school. This promise is made in a personal appearance in every sixth grade class by representatives of the Chamber of Commerce. And, the promise is followed by long-term business involvement with individual students in a mentoring and try-out employment program. In addition, the business leaders have pledged dollars to provide college tuition for students who cannot afford college and who will agree to return to Dunn's Park to work for at least two years after graduating.

Dunn's Park businesses have also renewed efforts to provide training for high school students by expanding opportunities in cooperative education programs that combine classroom and on the job training that is provided by employers. There is an effort underway to expand the scope of the on the job training to make it more like the European apprenticeships. The problem, however, with moving to an apprenticeship program, is that there is no state or national credentialing program that will allow such training to be fully recognized for high school graduation or as preparation for post-secondary education.

The joint business-school efforts that are taking place at Dunn's Park are resulting in shared expectations and mutual obligations among the community's businesses and youth. These represent elements of social capital that are beginning to benefit youth, and that in the future will also benefit business.

Reform and restructuring of education and other human services is a massive problem that partly requires federal and state action. Some federal and state authority seems necessary to establish a mechanism in the private sector that creates apprenticeship-like opportunities. National organizations like the Council of Chief State School Officers are in a position to broker broad business support for such sweeping change in education and business. Since financing and accrediting education in this country is largely a state function, action at that level is essential to

legitimate new forms of schooling. Programs involving apprenticeships and student assessment built around performance and mastery require the sanction of the state to become legitimate.

However, a tradition of local control is also part of the American political system. Local collaboratives may be initiated that can become mechanisms for translating local interests into political and programmatic responses for more effective youth-serving institutions. Local action is essential in establishing the legitimacy of local reform initiatives. It is the local business community that must be persuaded to participate in an education and training program that incurs costs, but is also good for them and for the youth of their community. It is the needs and interests of local parents that must be understood and acted upon by a school system. Moreover, health and welfare resources vary from community to community and this fact will help shape the ways in which human services can be re-deployed.

We began this paper by saying that collaboration is most likely to succeed if it becomes a means of strengthening the school as a social institution and building social capital for those increasingly disadvantaged segments of the population. Our proposal calls for three strategies--parent involvement, school-business collaboration that prepares youth for good jobs, and strengthening families through a system of community support and community redevelopment. To organize and implement these ideas will require people of intelligence and good will at the local level who will need help from national organizations as well as federal and state governments. Our proposal asks communities to take ownership of local problems and to customize solutions through local collaboratives.

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