

Ref. No. 076-640
Urban Education 516
School-Community Partnerships
Mondays, 4:30-7:10

Prof. Novella Keith

Urban Education 516 School-Community Partnerships in Urban Settings

Rationale

Partnerships with families and community organizations (service agencies, businesses, community groups) constitute an important policy initiative in urban education reform. This reform promotes the school as center for community education, community development, public engagement in school reform, and the delivery of integrated services. Partnerships are identified as priorities in federal and state legislation and policy initiatives such as *Goals 2000* and the *School-to-Work Opportunities Act*, and the federal *Partnership for Family Involvement in Education* (members of this organization include more than 3000 family, school, community, employer, and religious groups). The National Board of Professional Teaching Standards has developed standards in the areas of family involvement and partnerships. A growing body of research and scholarly writing supports the link between partnerships and school improvements. A recent evaluation of a model-- the Healthy Start School-Linked Services, in California--found that parental involvement translated into services that were more accessible, culturally relevant, and more integrated into the school.

Partnerships are also supported by the “new civics” movement, which sees involvement with schools by parents and other constituencies as a way to promote public engagement with and support for the renewal of public institutions. Foundation support in this area has been significant and constant (for instance, the Kettering Foundation and the Pew Foundation). A major supportive umbrella organization, the Civic Practices Network, has the reclaiming of public responsibility for national affairs and community problem-solving as its founding principle.

Although professionals and community members have been involved in partnerships over the last decade, universities have lagged behind in developing courses to provide the requisite skills and knowledge. In particular, prospective partners need to understand and practice communication, project development, and problem solving across the different cultures of professions and communities. This course is designed to help students develop such skills and provide appropriate supportive knowledge.

Course description and objectives

The theory, research, and practice of school-community partnerships will provide the foundations for the class to engage in field work with different modalities of partnerships that support the urban education reform agenda. Partnership models include (a) school-community outreach, through school-based family centers, community education, and community service

projects; (b) school-based service integration; (c) community-based empowerment projects; (d) public engagement projects. Through the course students will develop skills and knowledge enabling them to undertake planning, project/program development, and evaluation pertaining to partnerships. Specifically, they will learn theories, research, and practices related to intercultural communications; cultures and values of different professions and social groups; problem-solving and conflict management; and social and organizational change.

Course requirements

Partnership project. Students will select from one of the following two options:

1. Plan and execute a partnership project that meets the needs of a school and its community
2. Collaborate with a school or community organization on an existing partnership project

The project must meet the following criteria:

1. Address a felt need by partners
2. Involve collaboration among partners to accomplish its goals
3. Engage students in one or more of the dimensions of partnership development: planning, implementation, evaluation
4. Produce a final product that:
 - meets the real needs of partners
 - utilizes community assets
 - links the experience to the goals of the course
 - furthers the student's own intellectual and professional goals

All projects will be undertaken by small groups and involve collaboration with community partners and schools. The final product for all projects will include a written report and presentation to the school/community partner organization.

Personal Journal

Students will keep a personal journal in which they will record descriptions of their partnership experience and personal interpretations of that experience. This document will not be directly shared with others, but will serve as a useful data base for both the partnership project and the final exam/reflective paper.

Personal Goal Statement

Students will develop their own learning and professional goals in relation to the overall goals for the course. These goals will provide the foundation for the students' ongoing reflection and self-evaluation, as well as problem solving when barriers to goal achievement arise in the course of the semester. The goal statement will also be a significant starting point for the development of the final reflective paper.

Final Project Report

At the end of the semester, each group will develop a written and oral report on the partnership project undertaken. Written reports will be presented to the community partners, who will be invited to attend final project presentations.

Final Reflective Paper

At the end of the semester students will reflect on their own process of learning and evaluate their progress towards achieving the goals they identified during the first weeks of the class. In this paper, students will integrate course material related to practice, theory and research on partnerships with their experiences and accomplishments.

In Class Presentations/ Seminar Leadership

There will be opportunities during the course of the semester for individuals or small teams to share the results of reading, analysis or observation with the class. Examples include: analysis of actual partnership models and practices in schools and community sites; exploration of organizational web sites related to partnerships; and sharing specialized reading assignments.

Course organization

Weeks 1-3

Introduction to models for school-community partnerships; making contact with the field; development of learning goals; selection of group projects.

Weeks 4-10

Research, theory, and practice of partnerships; ongoing work in the field. One-third of classes devoted to group reports and problem solving pertaining to field projects.

Weeks 11-13

This part of the course is developed and led by student groups. Groups discuss their projects and project presentation with the class, drawing connections to the theory, research, models, and practices of partnerships and resources to support partnerships. Part of each class is devoted to student-led exercises, sharing and teaching important skills and knowledge each group has developed through their project.

Weeks 14-15

Final project presentations (community partners invited to attend).

Grading

Partnership Project: 50%
Personal Goal Statement: 5%
Final reflective paper: 35
Seminar preparation and participation: 10%

Some Course Readings will be Selected from the Following List

Asher, C. (1988). Improving the school-home connection for poor and minority students. The Urban Review, 20: 109-123. Reprinted in Kretovics and Nussel (eds.) (1994). Transforming urban education (pp. 360-374). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Barber, B. R. (1984). Strong democracy; Participatory politics for a new age. Berkeley: University of California Press

Bloch, M. & Swadener, B. (1992). Relationships between home, community and school: Multicultural considerations and research issues in early childhood. In C.A. Grant (ed.), Research and multicultural education: From the margins to the mainstream (pp. 165-183). Bristol, PA: Falmer.

Boudon, R. and Bourricard, F. (1989). Community. In A Critical Dictionary of Sociology: 73-77.

Boyte, H. C. and Riessman, F. (1986). The new populism; The politics of empowerment. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Burbules, N. C. and Rice, S. (1991). Dialogue across differences: Continuing the conversation. Harvard Educational Review, 61(4): 393-416.

Comer, J. P. (1990). Home, school, and academic learning." In John I. Goodlad & Pamela Keating (eds.) Access to knowledge; An agenda for our nation's schools (pp. 23-42). New York: College Board.

Cummins, J. (1986). Empowering minority students; A framework for intervention. Harvard Educational Review, 56(1): 18-36.

Delgado-Gaitan, C. (1993). Research and policy in reconceptualizing family-school relationships. In Phelan P. and Davidson, A. L. (eds.), Renegotiating cultural diversity in American schools (pp. 139-158). New York: Teachers College Press.

Delpit, L. (1988). The Silenced dialogue: Power and pedagogy in educating other people's children. Harvard Educational Review, 58(3): 280-298.

Dryfoos, Joy G. (1994). Full-service schools; A revolution in health and social services for children, youth, and families. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Epstein, J. L. (1992). School and family partnerships. In M. Alkin (ed.), Encyclopedia of Educational Research (Sixth edition) (pp. 1139-1151). New York: MacMillan.

Friend, M. & Cook, L. (1992). Interactions; Collaboration skills for school professionals. New York: Longman.

Keith, N. (1996). *Can urban school reform and community development be joined? The potential of community schools*. Education and Urban Society (28)2, 237-268.

Linquanti, R. (1992, October). Using community-wide collaboration to foster resiliency in kids: A conceptual framework. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 101 S.W. Main Street, Suite 500.

Logan, J. R. & Molotch, H. L. (1987). *Urban Fortunes; The Political Economy of Place*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Lyon, L. (1987). The Community in Urban Society. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

McKnight, J. L. & Kretzmann, J. (1990). Mapping community capacity. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University, Center for Urban Affairs and Policy Research.

Moore, D. R. (1992). The case for parent and community involvement. In Hess, G. A. (ed.), Empowering teachers and parents; School restructuring through the eyes of anthropologists (pp. 131-155). Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey.

Seidel, R. & Zlotkowski, E. (1993). Common ground: From service-learning to community-learning. *Experiential Education*, 18(3): 10, 15.

Sergiovanni, T. (1994). Organizations or communities? Changing the metaphor changes the theory. Educational Administration Quarterly, 30(2): 214-226.

Swap, S. Mc (1993). Developing home-school partnerships; From concepts to practice. New York: Teachers College Press.

Walsh, J. (1997). *Stories of renewal: Community building and the future of urban America*. New York: Rockefeller Foundation.