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A Study of an Urban School District's School-Business Partnership Program

by

Donald James Grant

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in

Educational Administration

Department of Educational Policy Studies

Edmonton, Alberta

Spring, 1998

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled A Study of an Urban School District's School-Business Partnership Program submitted by Donald James Grant in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Administration.

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Abstract

This study examines basic concepts in the development of a school-business partnership program in an urban school district. The evolution of school-business partnerships is explored and current trends are described. The terminology related to school-business partnerships is clarified, and a description of several types of partnerships is offered.

One individual representing the school district office and ten individuals involved in four different school-business partnerships participated in the study. These participants were interviewed to provide their perceptions of school-business partnerships related to the Specific Research Questions of the study.

The Specific Research Questions of the study included: 1. Why does a school district, a school or a member of the private sector involve itself in a School Business Partnership Program? 2(a). What are the perceived benefits to be derived from involvement in a School-Business partnership Program; for students; for the school (or school district); for the private sector or community partner? 2(b). What are the perceived weaknesses in the School-Business partnership Program in this school district? 3. What type of evaluation process is utilized in School-Business Partnership Programs?

Summary and discussion of the data gleaned from transcriptions of audio taped interviews with participants led to conclusions applicable to the Specific Research Questions. These conclusions related to participant's reasons for involvement in partnerships, benefits attributed to this involvement, identified

weaknesses in the partnership program and evaluation processes used by partnerships.

The study offers a presentation of findings, conclusions and the implications for theory. Recommendations are offered to the school district, to school personnel involved and to private sector partners. The study concludes with implications for practise and recommendations for further research in the area of school-business partnership programs.

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Table of Contents

Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY 1
Introduction 1
Statement of Purpose 2
Significance of the Study... 2
Limitations of the Study..... 3
Delimitations of the Study 3
Assumptions of the Study 4
Ethical Considerations 4
Definitions 4
Research Design.... 5
Organization of the Dissertation... 6

Chapter 2 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE..... 8
Introduction 8
Business Involvement With Schools 9
The Motives Behind the Partnership Movement 15
Trends in the Area of School-Business Partnership Programs 16
Defining School-Business Partnerships 22
The Development of a School-Business Partnership Program 25
Determining a Need 25
Steps in Establishing a School-Business Partnership Program 29
The Development of School-Business Partnership Policies... 35
Ethical Guidelines for School-Business Partnerships... 36
Employability Skills Needed in Canada.. 39
Types of School-Business Partnership Programs..... 41
Benefits of School-Business Partnership Programs..... 44
Benefits to Students..... 45
Benefits to Schools 46
Benefits to Business Partners 47
A Conceptual Framework for School-Business Partnership Programs..... 49
Summary..... 51

Chapter 3 RESEARCH METHOD AND DESIGN 54
Statement of Purpose 54
Philosophical Stance..... 54
Limitations of the Study 56
Assumptions of the Study 57
Development of the Research Questions..... 57
Participant Selection 58
Ethical Considerations 60
Data Gathering..... 60
Data Analysis 61

Chapter 4 PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS, THEIR SCHOOLS AND THEIR EDUCATIONAL PARTNERS 65
The Urban School District 66
Annapolis school division 66
Participants Schools and Partners 66
Brownell high school 66
Bounty museum 67
Caswell junior high school 67
Camio computers inc. 68
Dundonald high school 68
Delaware hospital 69
Erindale high school 70
Einborough construction incorporated 70
Description of Participants 71
Summary 75

Chapter 5 THE DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOL-BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS 76
Historical Background 76
Educational Partnership Benefits 77
Benefits to the school Partner 77
Benefits to the Private or Public Sector Partner 78
Conceptual Framework of the Educational Partnership 79
The Partnership Process 80
Exploration 80
Matching 81
Steps to Success 81
Planning 81
Goals of the program 82
Objectives of the program 82
Action plans 82
Implementation 82
Promotion 83
Recognition 83
Review and Evaluation 84
Maintenance and Renewal of the Educational Partnership 84
Partnership Launch 85
A Strategy for Renewal 85
On-going planning 85
Continuity of leadership 85
Problem solving process 86
Extension and Expansion 86
Partnerships in the Study 86
Partnership One - School and Museum 87
Partnership Two - School and Computer Company 88
Partnership Three - School and Hospital 89
Partnership Four - School and Construction Company 90
Discussion 92

Summary 94

Chapter 6 OUTCOMES OF SCHOOL-BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMS 96
Introduction 96
Specific Research Question 1 96
Annapolis District Office 96
Brownell High School - Bounty Museum 97
Caswell Junior High School - Camio Computers Inc. 99
Dundonald High School - Delaware Hospital 100
Erindale High School - Einborough Construction 101
Summary and Discussion of Specific Research Question 1 101
Societal change 101
Economic need 102
Community involvement 103
Concern for educational outcomes 104
Specific Research Question 2(a).. 104
Annapolis District Office 105
Brownell High School - Bounty Museum 106
Caswell Junior High School - Camio Computers Inc. 109
Dundonald High School - Delaware Hospital 113
Erindale High School - Einborough Construction 115
Summary and Discussion of Specific Research Question 2(a).. 118
Student Benefits 118
Level of learning 118
Leading edge technology 119
Personal growth 119
Career choices 120
School and District Benefits 120
Community involvement 120
Improved learning opportunities 121
Cutting edge technology 122
Private Sector or Community Partner Benefits.. 122
Good public relations 123
Influence on future citizens 123
Potential business 123
Specific Research Question 2(b).. 124
Annapolis District Office 124
Brownell High School - Bounty Museum 125
Caswell Junior High School - Camio Computers Inc. 127
Dundonald High School - Delaware Hospital 128
Erindale High School - Einborough Construction 128
Summary and Discussion of Specific Research Question 2(b) .. 129
Time 129
Lack of understanding 130
Mixed concerns 130
Specific Research Question 3 130
Annapolis District Office 131

Brownell High School - Bounty Museum 131
Caswell Junior High School - Camio Computers Inc. 132
Dundonald High School - Delaware Hospital 133
Erindale High School - Einborough Construction 134
Summary and Discussion of Specific Research Question 3 135
Informal evaluation 135
Need for formal evaluation 135
External evaluation 136
Conclusions 136
Specific research question 1 136
Specific research question 2(a) 137
Specific research question 2(b) 137
Specific research question 3 138

Chapter 7 OVERVIEW, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 139
Overview of the Study 139
Purpose of the Study 139
Method 140
Findings 140
Conclusions 141
Implications for Theory 143
Recommendations 146
School district recommendations 146
School principal/teacher recommendations 147
Private sector partner recommendations 147
Implications for Practice 148
Recommendations for Further Research 148
Reflections 149

BIBLIOGRAPHY 150

APPENDICES 156
Appendix A: Research Project Application 157
Appendix B: Partnership Profile 159
Appendix C: Consent Letter to Participants 161
Appendix D: Letter to Participants Confirming Transcription Accuracy 162
Appendix E: Cover Story and Introductory Comments to Interviews 163
Appendix F: Annapolis School District Evaluation Instrument 165

List of Tables

2.1 Operating Principles for Business-Education Partnerships 32
2.2 Policy Development in Canadian Provinces and Territories Regarding School-Business Partnerships..... 36
2.3 Ethical Guidelines for Business-Education Partnerships 37
2.4 Employability Skills Profile 39
4.1 Participants, Related Organizations and Role in Organization 71
5.2 Schools, Business Partners and Type of Business 86

List of Figures

2.1 Conceptual Framework for School-Business Partnership Programs..... 53

5.1 Conceptual Framework for the Annapolis School District's Educational Partnership Program 79

Chapter 1
INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Introduction

A current initiative in education is the enhancement of the relationship between the district school board and the corporate community within the school district. The corporate community has become more vocal in recent years in expressing its concerns regarding the academic program offered to those students in the secondary phase of their twelve years in the school system . The majority of these concerns, as reflected by the Committee for Economic Development (1985) and Gardner (1993), revolve around a belief that students graduating from secondary school programs are not emerging with the skills necessary to help them make the transition from a school environment to that of a business environment with ease and success. Those in the corporate community recognize that post-secondary programs are an important phase in the overall preparation of future businesspersons and professionals, but a concern exists that public school educational programming does not adequately expose students to the realities of the business world, nor provide them with the skills needed in that world. John Farrell (1991), president of Telecom Canada, reflected his concerns regarding the changes that are affecting Canada and its education system when he stated

> We now live in a knowledge-based economy, in which we are increasingly dependent on technology for continued growth and effective international competitiveness. In this new economy, learning, information, and skilled intelligence are the raw materials. Hence, as Canada becomes a technology trading nation, its educational system has become as vital - if not more vital - to our national infrastructure as roads, railways, and ports were at the turn of this century. (p. 3)

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was threefold: 1.) to determine the benefits associated with an urban School District's involvement in a Partnership Program with businesses and organizations in the community, 2.) to identify weaknesses in the Partnership Program that might contribute to hindering success, and 3.) to determine what method of evaluation process was being utilized by Partnerships.

The following research questions guided this study:

1. Why does a School District, a school or a member of the private sector involve itself in a School Business Partnership Program?

2.(a.) What are the perceived benefits to be derived from involvement in a School-Business Partnership Program?

- for students?
- for the school(or School District)?
- for the private sector or community partner?

(b.) What are the perceived weaknesses in the School-Business Partnership Program in this School District?

3. What method of evaluation is utilized in School-Business Partnership Programs?

Significance of the Study

The 1990's have been a period when the role of education is being critically examined by all those associated with schools and school boards (Gardner, 1993; Holcomb, 1993). There is extreme concern that schools are not accountable for what is being taught, that high school graduates are ill prepared to pursue either post-secondary training or employment opportunities, and that

from a business perspective, traditional curriculums bear little relationship to the perceived needs of students entering the "corporate world" (Levine, 1985).

One of the phenomena experienced in education in recent years is that of the business world expressing its concerns about student skill acquisition, as well as a concern that students need to be exposed to the "corporate world" much sooner than at the end of post-secondary training (Levine & Trachtman, 1988; Gardner, 1993). At the same time that these concerns exist, there also exists a willingness on the part of business to recognize that they have skills, expertise, and often resources that schools do not have, and that these can be shared between the two in the form of partnership programs (Otterbourg, 1986; Ruffin, 1983; Warwick, 1993; West, 1985).

It is important to study this phenomenon of School-Business Partnership Programs to determine if there are benefits to their existence, and if the benefits received are the ones that are being sought by those involved.

If there is a willingness on the part of both sides in this issue to develop a positive program that can be viewed as being mutually beneficial, students experiencing the program will be the ones who will ultimately benefit from it (Barrington & Assoc., 1987; Otterbourgh, 1986;).

Limitations of the Study

This study will be limited by the following considerations:

1. The time available to complete the data collection (1995-1996)
2. The interviewing abilities of the researcher and the accompanying ability to accurately interpret the data
3. The willingness of respondents to share their perceptions
4. Partnerships studied were examples of successful relationships

Delimitations of the Study

This study was delimited by the following:

1. The study was restricted to one urban School District
2. Four School-Business Partnerships were examined
3. The number of respondents totaled 11 individuals involved in four identified Educational Partnerships in the District.
4. The study included to three secondary high schools and one junior high school involved in Partnerships.

Assumptions of the Study

The following assumption was made at the commencement of this study:

1. The perceptions of the participants reflected their beliefs regarding School-Business Partnerships.

Ethical Considerations

This study conformed to the University of Alberta's policies and procedures related to research ethics.

The nature of this study did not lend itself to concerns about ethical dilemmas. Those involved in the study were free to share information and were not confronted with questions that caused hardship or harm. The subjects in the study participated voluntarily and had access to data related to their interviews throughout the course of the study. The subjects were free to remove themselves from the study at any time if it was their desire to do so.

Definitions

The following definitions apply in this study:

District - This term refers a school district, usually, the Annapolis School District involved in the study.

Participant/Respondent - Interchangeable terms which refer to those individuals involved in the study.

Partner - Refers to one or the other individual or group related to an identified School-Business Partnership in the study.

School-Business Partnership - The following definition as stated by the Conference Board of Canada (1997) will provide the reader with a perspective of what the partnerships in this study reflect

> Business-education partnerships are mutually beneficial relationships between employers and educators that enhance learning for students and other learners. Most business-education partnerships are co-operative relationships in which partners share values and objectives, human, material or financial resources, and roles and responsibilities in order to achieve desired learning outcomes.

Transferability - The extent to which the findings of a study may be applied to other situations in other contexts.

Research Design

The study was of a qualitative nature. A period of time was spent in the central office of the School District becoming familiar with the business Partnership Program the District offered. Four schools were selected for the study. The partners of the schools reflected four different types of private sector business: a privately owned company (a construction company), a multinational company (a computer company), a community organization (a hospital), and a provincial government organization (a museum).

Teachers and administrators from the schools were interviewed to gain an educational perspective on School-Business Partnerships. An individual from

each business was interviewed to gain a private sector view of School-Business Partnerships.

Conclusions and recommendations were drawn from an analysis of the data.

Organization of the Dissertation

The dissertation is divided into seven chapters. Chapter 2 presents a review of literature relevant to School-Business Partnership Programs. The review outlines motives behind the Partnership movement, trends in the area and moves to outlining methods of establishing Partnership Programs in school districts.

Chapter 3 provides a description and a rationale for the method and research design utilized in this study. The research questions used in the study and the data management techniques used are described.

Chapter 4 provides a description of the School District, the schools and the Partners involved in the study. A profile of each participant in the study is included. This provides the reader with the background knowledge needed to understand the setting and the individuals involved in the study.

Chapter 5 outlines the School District's strategy for developing School-Business Partnerships. Each Partnership is described to reflect the effectiveness of the strategies provided by the central office of the District in the development of each Partnership agreement.

Chapter 6 presents the outcomes of discussions with those involved in the study. Findings in relation to the three research questions followed by conclusions complete the chapter.

Chapter 7 presents an overview of the study. Findings and conclusions are presented followed by implications for theory, recommendations and implications for practice and further research.

The dissertation concludes with a bibliography and appendices.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The concept of partnerships in education is not new. Kaulback and MacKay (1994) discussed the development of connections between the school and the community as being common since the development of the Canadian education system as it is known today. These linkages were very informal, and often involved parents and members of the community being involved working with teachers or occasionally playing the role as "lay persons" (p. 12) in the classroom. A more formal linkage was witnessed in members of the community and the business sector involving themselves in the education system as members of local school boards.

In recent years, the education system in Canada and the United States has come under heavy criticism and has experienced substantial pressure to implement change. The driving force behind this desire for change is the result of a number of factors. Global changes in the latter half of this century have had a significant effect on the outcomes expected of the field of education. Fallis and Chuchmuch (1994, p. 35) identified a number of factors that have put pressure on the education system. These include shifting global economics, advancing high technology, deteriorating social structures within the country, rising political dissatisfaction, and declining popular opinion. What has emerged out of this criticism has been the development of various interest groups, each of which has a vision of what skills education should be providing young people in today's schools. Included in these interest groups are parents, community groups, political representatives, educators and business people. With the exception of the educators, Fallis and Chuchmuch (1994, p. 35) identified these groups as those who have blamed education for the variety of problems which we face today. These problems would include all the social, economic, political and educational ills of the country. Of the interest groups identified, those

representing the corporate world, or the business sector in general, have taken a leadership role in challenging the effectiveness of today's educational system.

The concerns of the corporate and business sectors and the concerns of educators, have blended to develop new strategies for education. In an effort to provide a solution to an identified problem , School-Business Partnership Programs have been developed in many urban and rural school districts as a method of bridging the gap that has emerged between education, and those in the business sector who feel they have resources to offer in the education of young people in today's changing world.

Business Involvement With Schools

The history of the relationship between education and the business community can be traced historically to the 1830's. Sola (1989, pp. 76-82) discussed the evolution of this relationship and noted changes at various points in the last century. As early as the 1870's the businessman was portrayed as a role model for young people, slowly replacing the soldier. He spoke of a cyclical history of promotion, involvement, criticism and withdrawal between the business community and the educational community. Consistent through this relationship was an acceptance that the capitalistic economic system was a natural outcome of a democratic political system. He noted that whenever the business community sought educational reform, it was usually based on a concern for "the long-term stability, predictability and security of capitalist institutions" (p. 78). Similarly, he noted that cooperation between educators and businesspersons had been cyclical. Today, as at various times in the past, teachers appear to be encouraging a renewed business and education relationship. As stated by Sola (1989)

> Cooperation between educators and businesspersons has been cyclical. During the progressive era, teachers ... were very skeptical of the intentions of the business community and, on some

> occasions, fought for a balance between the use of schools for business interests and for the common good. Today, teachers...appear to be encouraging a renewed business/education partnership. (P. 80)

In a similar vein, Patrick and Eells (1969) presented the viewpoint that the post-war era reflected a higher level of business interest in education. It was their position that business needed a policy regarding their relationship with education that would see mutual benefits for each of the partners. They reflected

> A corporate policy of support to education is often no more than a crystallizing accumulation of unevaluated practices plus a pinch of prejudice. But good or bad, rigid or flexible, thoughtful or careless, a defined policy is necessary to any company that has the foresight to pursue objectives and the desire to improve educational relationships. (p. 75)

Charner and Rolzinski (1987, pp. 5-10) presented a similar viewpoint when they stated

> Whether in terms of formal partnerships between educational institutions and businesses or in terms of the preparation and retraining of human resources, education and work need to be more closely integrated. (p. 5)

In addressing the various types of involvements that have emerged between education and business they established the position that education was a continuing process that began in the public school and carried on through to the business world. They believed that educators assumed a "reactive posture" (p. 6) or a "proactive posture" (p. 6) regarding changes in society that affected the educational needs of those in it. The reactive posture saw changes in strategies in direct response to changes that had already happened. The proactive posture saw educators developing new educational strategies to meet anticipated changes. The types of changes identified which were predicted to affect

education and its relationship to business included social and demographic shifts, economic shifts and technological shifts.

Social and demographic shifts referred to such things as and an aging population, "mid-career compaction" (p. 6), increased life expectancies and an increased number of women in the work force. The economic shifts predicted to affect education and business were: a decline in the industrial sector, a growth in the service sector, the continued growth in self-employment and the continued growth of international trade and Third-World development. The third major shift identified was that of technological changes. These included rapid advances in the technological sector that created new jobs and eliminated old ones and demanded "collaborative approaches to human resources management" (p. 9). In agreeing with the rapid technological changes described, Matthews and Norgaard (1984) stated

> We are in the midst of a ...revolution, one that concerns how our industrial and educational institutions must adapt to the changes introduced by high technology and our transition to an information society." (p. 11)

The societal changes described contributed to placing new and different demands on the educational system and its relationship with the business sector.

In a discussion of the broad goals of education, Finch and Crunkilton (1987) talked of education as divided into two categories, formal and informal. The formal education was that received as part of the structured public education system. Informal education was a cumulating of various educational experiences that might involve the school, but as well, the family, the community and the business sector. Superimposed on, and merged with, formal and informal education, was what they referred to as "education for life and education for earning a living" (p. 8). Education for life was described as that derived from experiences related to volunteer work, or from involvement in personal interest areas. Education for earning a living related to experiential learning opportunities, such as involvement with the business sector, that might influence

future career decisions. This need for education for earning a living was determined to be a contributing factor in the development of a renewed interest in providing students with opportunities to be involved with the business world in the form of hands-on experiences. These experiences emerged as part of vocational and technical curriculums, as well as, other types of courses and relationships tied to the business sector.

In a similar vein, Jamieson, Miller and Watts (1985) discussed the emergence of student-centered experiential learning as being related to school-business relationships and partnerships. They referred experiential learning as related to "work simulations" (p. 9) that were part of partnering activities between schools and business. It was their position that "work simulations ensure that, while the method of the learning is student centered, the framework of the learning is located firmly in the social world" (p. 9).

Resnick and Wirt (1996) presented a position that reflected a different position on the involvement of education and business. Thirty years ago, the driving concern among educators was access to schooling. Today's world has reflected an increased interest in the quality of learning that schools' produce. It was their proposal that business and education work co-operatively to create "an educational system in which academic and vocational preparation are intimately linked and in which structured worksite experiences are available to young people as a complement to their school programs" (p. 8).

In a discussion regarding the quality of Canadian education, Holmes (1990) established the position that education serves the following roles: "an intellectual/academic purpose, a cultural purpose, a social purpose, an expressive purpose, a moral and spiritual purpose, and lastly, a vocational and economic purpose" (p. 4). It was his position that the role of education in influencing vocational and economic purposes was of equal importance to the others listed. The broad mandate of education required the co-operation of business to complete mutually beneficial goals. In doing so, the kind of people valued by society can be produced.

The literature reflected a belief that the emergence of school-business partnerships were the result of an identified need. This need was determined by both the education sector and the private sector and was tied to the belief that the learning outcomes would be of benefit to each co-operating partner. Porat (1987) took the view, while addressing the same issue, that

> human beings have survived thus far by recognizing their biologically social, cooperative nature. Educational partnerships are building bridges between two communities that have traditionally operated separately. The reality and resource gap is spanned through a mutually beneficial liaison. (p. 7)

To meet this need to link education to the business world, a variety of relationships and programs have emerged in the past several years. Those that could be easily linked with schools would include types of work experience programs, work education programs, co-op education programs, mentorship programs and continuing education programs as well as school-business partnership programs.

The most common type of school-business relationship was that of work education courses. Fedorak (1992) citing Ozirney (1984) defined work education as a "course of study that will enable students to develop skills and to acquire knowledge required in entering the world of work" (p. 4). The Ministry of Education (1995) in British Columbia termed work education courses as "work experience" (p. 4). Under the umbrella of this course, students experienced several different world of work experiences, including: work experience placements, job shadowing, career mentoring, community-based career seminars, electronic work experience (linkage through computers), student employment, community service and entrepreneurship. Saskatchewan Education (1989) listed the seven goals of work experience education programs as

- Life-Long Learning
- Understanding and Relating to Others
- Self-Concept Development

- Positive Life Style
- Career and Consumer Decision Awareness
- Membership in Society
- Growing with change (p. 4)

All of the experiences listed above required a high level of commitment and co-operation on the part of the school and the business or community organization involved.

Co-operative education was presented by Barnes and O'Connor (1987) as a program somewhat similar to work education. It was defined as an "experimental method of learning that is intended to integrate a student's in-school program of study with a community-based training station for learning" (p. 1). Co-op Ed was often seen as the university or college level, but has been offered at the high school level, as well. This type of program was viewed as a type of "partnership between the school, the employer and the student with each of the partners sharing the responsibility for student growth and learning" (p. 1).

In some school districts, mentorship programs emerged as a strand from existing work education or co-op education programs. Hamilton (1990) described a mentor as

> An older, more experienced person who seeks to further the development of character and competence in a younger person by guiding the latter in acquiring mastery of progressively more complex skills and tasks in which the mentor is already proficient. (p. 156)

In a similar fashion, mentors acted as partners with the school or the school district and the students involved.

The focus of this study was on the type of School-Business Partnerships that saw a specific mutually beneficial relationship emerge from the efforts of a school and a specific business or community organization. This type of School-Business Partnership might reflect a number of different strands, such as those

described, but these would be limited to involvement by the students from one school and the co-operating business partner.

The Motives Behind the Partnership Movement

> It's an ambitious venture to restructure education to teach students what they really need to know . . . to narrow the gap between education and the real world. (Grunig, 1996)

Those in the field of education are not blind to the changes in the world that have been described above, nor are they oblivious to the criticisms that have been leveled at them by a wide variety of stakeholder groups who have concerns about the effectiveness, efficiency, and quality of the education system in Canada. Concerns regarding education-business partnership from the educational perspective revolve around understanding the primary objectives of business involving itself in the educational process; how it is to involve itself; and what exactly it intends to gain from this involvement. Fallis and Chuchmuch (1994) identified the "subtle threat" (p. 40) to education in terms of educational integrity and the existence of a truly "full and equal" (p. 40) partnership with the business sector as an important concern of education. The basic motive for education's involvement in this initiative is to enhance what educators believe to be an already effective educational system by utilizing the resources of the business sector to aid in the development of additional programs that can have a positive effect on the over all education of the young people in the system.

The business sector's motives for involvement in education are tied more closely to economic concerns. Their concerns revolve around the belief that a large number of students emerging from the education system lack the proper skills to be effective employees. Levine (1985) listed some general assumptions made by the business sector regarding education and schools:

- lack of appropriate training at the high school level causes unemployment

- better high school achievement test results will produce better trained graduates.
- current high technology requires major alterations in the high school curriculum.
- business support will restore confidence in public schools. (p. 22)

It could be argued whether these assumptions are totally accurate, however, these beliefs are not uncommon and must be dealt with by those in the field of education. It mustn't be assumed that the business sector is totally critical and cynical when it considers the effectiveness of the education system. Many in the business world believe they have skills, resources and expertise in areas where education doesn't. Matthews and Norgaard (1984) commented on the willingness of industry to involve itself in the field of education when they stated

> More important than the fine print is the attitude that partners bring to an alliance. Essential to effective collaboration is a climate that encourages an unhindered flow of new ideas, a willingness to confront differences as they arise, and a desire to arrive at solutions in spite of the obstacles that may present themselves. (p. 140)

Fallis and Chuchmuch (1994) acknowledged the fact that the business sector does not consider itself qualified to take over the field of education when they quoted R. D. Kennedy, the chairman of Union Carbide, explaining the corporate position that " we in business are not teachers or school principals. But we understand organizations and how to bring about change. We may be able to do something about the public apathy towards education" (p. 29).

Trends in the Area of School-Business Partnership Programs

There were several trends identified in education, business and society that contributed to attitudinal changes with regards to school-business partnerships. Bosetti, Webber and Johnson (1993) pointed out current trends related to education and the workplace when they stated

- 70% of student currently in Grade 12 will likely enter directly into the work force
- business and industry are facing the demand for better educated, highly skilled workers
- technological impact – the need for workers to have the capability to learn new skills
- by the year 2000, 40% of all new jobs will be classified as highly skilled (requiring solid reading, computing and thinking skills) compared to 24% today
- by the year 2000, one in three new jobs will require a university degree, with two of three jobs requiring more than 12 year of education and training (p. 14)

These types of statistics supported the belief that education continued to be paramount in the eyes of employers and lent support to the concept of business partnering with education to influence the learning outcomes of students.

Frank (1997) identified another trend related to industry and education when he discussed how resources for education have been restrained and linkages with business and industry would continue to be developed through mutually beneficial relationships such as school-business partnerships to expand this resource base. He also identified the inverse relationship which existed between education and unemployment and between education and income levels. It was his belief that "education for workplace skills is a central part of our objective" (p. 9) for the education system.

Rhèaume (1997) presented a view of changing trends in the area of corporate community investment. It was his belief the corporate community investment had expanded to include education. He felt these investments had become more focussed, with a "growing emphasis on partnerships" (p. 4).

In a similar vein, O'Connor and Allen (1996, p. 12) considered the explosive growth rate of partnerships in education the result of four factors. Firstly, government pressure to see public education deliver programming and services in a more cost-effective manner led to developing partnerships with the

private sector as a means to lower costs. Secondly, they spoke of schools partnering with private industry in an effort to keep pace with emerging technology. A third rationale to develop partnerships related to the belief "that economic development was closely linked with quality education" (p.12). Lastly, was the "growing consensus that experience in the workplace validates curricula" (p. 12). Educational partnerships that have evolved offered experiential learning outcomes that were both timely and relevant. They referred to emerging relationships or actions as "horizon ideas" (p. 18). These included such things as

- partnerships with social service agencies
- private sector takeover of public education
- entrepreneurial education
- mandatory work experience
- corporations collaborating with school boards
- colleges to regulate teachers
- improving the status of the trades (p. 18)

If some or all of these trends were enacted, the relationship between business and education would be reflected in a different way than is the current practice.

Another trend identified by O'Connor and Allen (1996) was the positive shift towards a better understanding of school-business partnerships. Part of the shift was that of labeling key misunderstandings about the interpersonal and operational aspects of education partnerships. The first misunderstanding noted was that of "mistaken identities" (p. 19). They discussed the stereotypical viewpoints of both educators and employers. Educators were seen as naïve about the business world, ignorant about the economic situation of the country, isolated from reality and overpaid for their contribution to the community. Employers were described as poorly educated and often uncultured, impatient with the bureaucracy surrounding the education system, disinterested in a liberal arts education and limited to the view that schools did nothing more that develop students as a product for business. As was the case in examining any

stereotype, those who accepted them as true, were misinformed. The second misunderstanding was identified as "the futility of isolated change" (p. 20). They suggested that research showed there was little value in attempting to promote school improvement by focusing on a single dimension of education. It was their view that "change must be viewed as a system-wide effort involving all dimensions of the educational system" (p. 20). The third misunderstanding discussed related to the "perceived threat to school curriculum" (p. 20). They referred to a belief that big business intended to "hijack" school curriculums. It was their position that the experience in Canadian school-business partnerships was that business was "interested in helping to initiate programs that mesh with the school curriculum,...in fact, most business leaders feel that corporations are ill-suited to design and deliver curriculum" (p. 20). Their position was opposed to Barlow (1994) who stated

> ...the commercialization of the classroom and the corporate intrusion into education are producing a generation of children who are, in Ralph Nader's words, "growing up corporate." Bereft of childhood, they are treated as consumers-in-training, pre-workers, future entrepreneurs, the consumers of tomorrow. (p. 48)

The fourth misunderstanding was described as "automatic emulation" (p. 20). This misunderstanding dealt with the belief that successful partnerships that had impacted positively on school improvement could be automatically replicated by other schools. It was determined that this was far from the norm. Lastly, "innovation reigns supreme" was presented as the fifth misunderstanding regarding school-business partnerships. Research here showed that "partnership practitioners often mistake innovation as evidence of genuine school improvements" (p. 20). It was pointed out that unless innovations penetrated the mainstream education system, authentic school improvement may not be the result.

On a more positive note, Bagin, Ferguson and Marx (1985) expressed the opinion that as the emergence of school-business partnerships continued,

"business people must understand that education is a sound investment in the future of their community their state and their nation" (p. 55).

Several authors identified the rising social consciousness of the business sector and an increased willingness to assume a higher degree of social responsibility as a trend that has emerged in the past several years. (Burt & Lessinger, 1970; Chaffre, 1980; Jackson, 1994; Watt & Mirota, 1997)

The challenge faced by the emerging trends affecting school-business partnerships was described clearly by Jackson (1994) when he stated

> The challenge posed ...is to find a way of being able to incorporate appropriate successful business organizational strategies and marketplace employability skill outcomes compatible with national economic goals into schools in a way which will at the same time respect the legitimate educational and social-political goals of education and public schooling. (p. 51)

Several authors directed their work towards school-business partnership programs at the Provincial level. The trends presented below related to current practice in western Canada.

Barrington (1987) indicated in a study of the Calgary Board of Education's Partnership Program that the societal conditions were right for the Board to enter into a School-Business Partnership Program in 1984. Unlike the partnerships that were evolving in the United States at this time, the Calgary partnerships were based on a different set of values and expectations. Barrington (1987, p. iv) described the partnerships in the United States as having emerged from concerns of the business sector about a myriad of problems surrounding education. These included educational funding, and ranged through student attitudes, low skill levels, low standards for teachers, to poor attendance and school discipline concerns. The American model was built on an emphasis of material resources being supplied by the business sector for use by the schools. In Alberta, as was the case in other parts of Canada, the partnership model for schools and the business sector was based more on the provision and sharing of

human resources, rather than corporate donations of money or other material resources. According to Barrington (1987), " its purpose is to enrich the learning experiences of students through the provision of time and expertise" (p. iv). Similarly, Watt and Mirota (1997) indicated most partnerships "are co-operative relationships in which partners share values, objectives, human, material or financial resources, roles and responsibilities in order to achieve desired learning outcomes" (p.1). Demster and Marck (1995) referred to the efforts and successes of the Calgary public school district when it was indicated

> Calgary is leading the nation, on a per-capita basis, in school-business partnerships. The Calgary public school board has wedded more than half of its 215 schools to businesses ranging from oil companies, the Gap and the Calgary Herald. The goal is to have all schools linked with business by 2000. (p. A6)

Since Calgary's venture into the area of School-Business Partnership Programs, they have become more common throughout the Province. Alberta Education (1994) has listed in its goals for education its intention to " provide more choice of student programs and increase parental/community involvement in education" (p. 15) with the intended result of creating a climate where "business and the community have a meaningful role in education" (p. 15).

The Honorable Clint Dunford (1997), Alberta Minister of Advanced Education and Career Development, speaking at the 8th Annual Reaching for Success: Business and Education Working Together Conference, identified seven key principles the Alberta Government is relying on to "strengthen the links between learning and the economy" (p. 1). These principles evolved out of work by 11 Alberta Government departments in a strategy termed "People and Prosperity" (p. 3). He identified the seven principles developed to support this vision as

1. Human resources are our greatest asset.

2. Partnerships will be essential to the success of a renewed human resource strategy.
3. Diversity of knowledge and skills is a strength.
4. Keeping knowledge and skills current.
5. Opportunities for youth through the Transitions for Youth initiative.
6. Overcoming barriers to employment.
7. Support of workplace innovations. (pp. 3-7)

The predominant themes these principles reflected were those of life long learning, diversification of knowledge and skills, developing employability skills and the use of partnership strategies with education.

The program outlined by Dunford reflected the current trend of developing relationships between education and business and education and government, with the outcome being improved learning opportunities for young people in Alberta.

Defining School-Business Partnerships

The term " partnership" implies a concept of sharing or engaging in some kind of activity with another individual or group of individuals. Partnerships are often associated with the business sector, as they are a basic occurrence in the corporate world. The idea that education could partner with a corporation, or that a school could partner with a business is still somewhat new and not totally understood by many stakeholders in education.

In order to become comfortable with what a school business partnership is, it is important to examine a number of definitions of these types of relationships. In a study examining the Calgary Partnership Program, Barrington (1987) described a partnership as "one which fosters direct, ongoing, and mutually beneficial relationships between Calgary businesses or organizations and Calgary Board of Education schools. The purpose of the program is to enrich the learning experience of students through the provision of time and expertise" (p. 1). Another perspective of the term partnership related to

education was presented by Warwick (1993) when he described it as " a long-term, mutually beneficial relationship between a business or a community non-profit agency and education, based on the needs of each partner through a wise use of each other's resources" (p. 219). Watt and Mirota (1997), writing for the Conference Board of Canada, talked of business-education partnerships as "mutually beneficial relationships between employers and educators that are designed to enhance learning for students and other learners" (p. 1). Bosetti, Webber and Johnson (1993) presented the position that a school-business partnership was defined: as a long-term, mutually beneficial relationship between an organization and a school" (p.12). Similarly, Bloom (1997) discussed the mutually beneficial relationship which exist in educational partnerships when he stated

> They may involve other educational stakeholders as partners, including students, employees, parents, communities, labour and government organizations. Most business-education partnerships are co-operative relationships in which partners share values, objectives, roles and responsibilities, and human, material or financial resources in order to enhance the quality of relevance of education and training. (p. 2)

O'Connor and Allen (1996) presented the position that true partnerships, such as those mutually beneficial linkages described above, need to be distinguished from other forms of education-employer relationships such as "commercial relationships and sponsorship relationships " (p. 9). Commercial relationships were defined as those where products were marketed in a school in exchange for financial compensation. Sponsorship relationships would be described as those where a business or other organization's logo was prominently displayed in return for goods donated to a school. The Business-Education Forum, as cited in The Conference Board of Canada (1997) echoed the belief that partnerships are relationships in which partners share values, objectives, human, material or financial resources, roles and responsibilities in order to achieve desired learning outcomes" (p. 110).

Knight (1995) offered a definition of partnership which described the school-business alliance as a means to better prepare students for the transition to work when he stated a partnership was "formal or informal agreement or understanding between educators, business and others for the purpose of helping students make a smooth transition to the workplace or to further study" (p.1).

Merenda and Farrar (1989) expressed the belief that partnerships were needed for educational improvement. They felt that "schools want and need partners, not patrons who criticize and dictate" (p. 10).

Larsen (1992) shared the business perspective of partnerships when she referred to the mutually beneficial relationship between two groups or organizations as "network dyads" (p. 83). Although these business world relationships often saw "the primary economic transaction as the transfer of product . . . most of the partnered organizations were tightly interlocked, . . . others appeared to be more loosely coupled" (pp.80-81). Larsen (1993) outlined the conditions for these network dyads as depending "heavily on a strategy of long term gain and investment, not short opportunism to gain economic advantage" (p. 227).

The definitions presented demonstrate the range of thought that can exist related to a School-Business Partnership. It can exist for the sole purpose of attempting to increase employability skills, or it can exist to provide a richer, more beneficial relationship where both partners are engaged in a mutually beneficial learning experience that is ongoing and utilizes available expertise wisely. Perhaps the most reasonable way to consider the concept of school business partnerships was described by Kaulback and MacKay (1994) when they stated "the partnership concept is only limited by the imagination of the participants. Partnerships cut across all school disciplines and involve a multitude of outside agencies , addressing a variety of educational needs" (p. 13).

The Development of a School-Business Partnership Program

> Our current industrial and educational systems did not evolve overnight and the reform of these systems will naturally take time. With courage, concern and cooperation . . . we can orchestrate our talents to meet this challenge head-on. We may not play the same instruments, but we can all play in the same key. (Farrell, 1991, p. 8)

Determining A Need

As a school district considers the option of forming school-business partnerships within the community, it must first determine if a need exists that would warrant the time and effort it takes to implement an effective School-Business Partnership Program. The impetus to implement a new program such as a School-Business Partnership Program does not have to come from the business sector. It can be the result of initiatives by the Board, by administrators in central office, or from a school which has discovered a link to a specific industry or business. The desire for a district to implement a School-Business Partnership Program may be the result of a parent group affiliated with the business sector, or it may come from the desire of a community or business group who feel there should be a beneficial relationship established between the school district and the local business community.

Three factors were described by Levine (1985) as being significant in the development of formal relationships between business and education:

> First, the definition of education has expanded beyond the traditional schooling in the usual time frames . . . this carries with it implications for shared institutional responsibilities . . . Second, structural changes in the economy highlight the relationship between education and economic growth . . . Third, demographic changes and a low level of public support for public schools create a need for alliances with the private sector " (p. 5)

As can be seen, a number of factors can contribute to the need for a school district to examine the potential of involving itself in the formation of a School-Business Partnership Program.

A school district must be convinced that the stakeholder groups within the district are in general agreement with and have a willingness to commit to the development of a School-Business Partnership Program. Otterbourg (1986, pp. 22-26) suggested that school districts should design a survey instrument which outlines the intentions of the Board in relation to entering into a School-Business Partnership Program. All those mentioned above, parents, community and business people, staff and also students should be surveyed to determine if the perceived need of the planners in central office are congruent with the perceived needs of the community.

O'Connor and Allen (1996) stressed knowledge of the community was crucial when a district was considering entering into or starting a Partnership Program. It was their position that "an effective partnership in education occurs when available resources are matched against the perceived needs of the community" (p. 44). They proposed that a needs assessment should be carried out early in the partnership planning to provide "current and relevant information" (p.44) needed for the decision making process. They offered three basic approaches when conducting a needs assessment. These included the questionnaire, the key informant method and the public forum.

The objective when using a questionnaire was to identify a broad cross section of the community and use the questionnaire to gather data related to the questions raised by the potential partnership. Questionnaires can be conducted by phone or by mail.

The authors indicated "the key informant approach is more targeted" (p. 44). They indicated this method saw a limited number of people contacted who were "sufficiently informed to provide insights into into needs in a particular area" (p. 44).

The third approach saw the use of the public forum as the means to determine the needs of the community. Thy indicated this method provided a means of gathering information "in a dynamic and interactive manner" (p. 44). They provided the viewpoint that

> A well structured townhall forum involving significant stakeholders can fuel a quality discussion regarding the needs of a community relative to youth, education and partnerships. It can also provide the partnership planning team with an immediate sense of groups and individuals who might be interested in participating in partnership activities. (p.44)

The type of questions designed for the needs assessment would vary from community to community, but they suggested "regardless of local circumstances, it is always important to identify areas of strength and weaknesses in three broad areas: business/industry, education and parents" (p. 45).

Once the needs assessment has been completed, a rationale for a partnership in education can be established. This rationale should reflect the prioritized needs determined by the needs assessment process. The authors stressed that "care must be taken to avoid selecting needs which do not directly relate to the design, delivery or assessment of education" (p. 48). This document define clearly why the need(s) should be met and how the community would benefit from the existence of the educational partnership.

The Conference Board of Canada (1997), under the guidance of the Corporate Council on Education, offered a "value assessment process" (p. 114) as another method to establish or confirm needs in a community with regards to School-Business Partnerships. The authors described how value assessment was used

- to set organizations-wide, local or program specific objectives
- to assess the current or potential value of partnerships and programs

- to identify key questions and data needed to make decisions about implementing, improving, or canceling programs
- to establish a baseline for performance for purposes of analysis and comparison
- to reconsider objectives and reassess the value of partnerships and programs (p. 114)

It was explained that each organization can concentrate on the whole or part of Value Assessment "most appropriate to its circumstances and implements the process to suit its own internal requirements" (p. 114).

To gain important information related to School-Business Partnerships this process asked key questions including

- What do we want to accomplish?
- What will we accept as a measure of accomplishment?
- What activities are we prepared to undertake:
- Do we have sufficient resources to act effectively? (p. 114)

The Conference board considered the benefits to be accrued from a Value Assessment Process worth its being utilized by a district examining School-Business Partnerships. These included: "improved objective setting; identification of effective programs; enhanced decision making; it encouraged program replication; improved performance measurement and increased internal support for education programs: (p. 114).

As described, those stakeholders in the education field who are considering entering into partnerships with the private sector must first make the determination if this decision was the correct one for the school district and would provide the desired learning outcomes for the students involved. Wellington (1993) presented the viewpoint that education was in a position to benefit from the development of School-Business partnerships, but only if there existed a willingness to adapt to opportunities presented. He proposed

> There is not a simple casual relationship between education and industry, and certainly no proven link between education and

> economic performance.... Education...in its critical role can shape and monitor social and economic developments; in its adaptive role it attempts to match and react to these developments. (p. 35)

Steps in Establishing a School-Business Partnership Program

The reasons for establishing a School-Business Partnership Program in a school district can be varied, however, there are certain basic steps which should be followed in order to contribute to the potential success of the program that is put in place. Warwick (1993) outlined basic strategies that should be implemented in the early stages of the development process:

Purpose:	Why are we doing this?
Strategy:	What do we intend to do?
Objectives:	What do we intend to achieve?
Responsibility:	Who will be responsible for making it happen?
Authority:	What authorizing actions are needed?
Communication:	How will we tell people what has to be done?
Implementation:	How and when do we intend to do it?
Review:	Has it worked, and can it be done better?

(p.31)

These basic questions have to be answered, or a framework has to be in place to be able to get the answers before the program can be launched.

In discussing the establishment of a School-Business Partnership Program, Otterbourg (1986, pp. 17-19) stressed the importance of careful planning before entering into any formal agreements. She indicated this planning process could range from three months to two years, depending on the district and the complexity of the program being designed. She strongly suggested the formation of a " Partnership Planning Team " (p. 17) as being an integral part of the development process. The members of this planning team must reflect the interests of the stakeholder groups in the district. It should include central office personnel, school site administrators, teacher representatives, business-professional-civic- and community representatives and the district superintendent. This planning team would be responsible for

coordinating the needs assessment, deciding on the processes to be used in establishing the program, establishing timelines for the program development, and agreeing on the partnership formats of the district.

Once the initial development of the program has taken place, the district needs to establish what Otterbourg (1986) described as the " management team" (p. 112). She viewed this group's role as being to perform these functions:

> - act as catalysts, thereby encouraging and facilitating relationships between the school district and the community at large;
> - solicit, coordinate, and assign resources (human, material, financial) to best meet identified needs and school improvement efforts;
> - take care of transportation, paperwork, and preparation and dissemination of materials relating to the program;
> - orient, train (as appropriate), and recognize human resources for their services to students and school staff. (p. 112)

Each district should have various staff individuals involved in an operational group such as this, in addition to representatives from the partnership group in the community.

Several basic considerations must be dealt with when a school district has made the decision to establish a School-Business Partnership Program. This decision needs to be carefully planned, and basic strategies need to be examined by the district.

Reynolds (1994, pp. 27-28) and the Alberta Chamber of Resources (1992, pp. 9-13), while addressing the same issue, presented similar viewpoints when advice and basic guidelines for establishing partnership programs were offered. The importance of establishing relationships based on trust, starting slowly with simple plans, the need for commitment, and the importance of evaluating annually were stressed. Both authors outlined similar 10 point plans which formulate guidelines for school districts developing a School-Business Partnership Program. These included:

1. Acknowledge the Self Interest Motive

- each party in a partnership hopes to gain something; accept the fact that each partner has an agenda, but work together to accept this.

2. Identify Benefits Sought

- be up-front with business partners and determine the basis of their motivation.

3. Take It Slowly, Keep It Simple

- have a clearly defined focus; take on only what you can do a good job of covering.

4. Scrutinize Corporate Values and Mission

- take a hard look at what type of business partner the district is planning to link with; are their goals and values similar to those of the district?

5. Develop a Business Plan and Seek Commitment

- the plan should incorporate goals, objectives, activities and responsibilities for implementation; seek commitment from the CEOs of each partner.

6. Monitor and Evaluate

- evaluation should be ongoing to ensure both partners are satisfied, and a yearly evaluation should re-examine events and plan for the coming year.

7. Practice Shared Decision Making

- partnership implies no one individual is in control; decisions must be mutually agreed upon, and should lead to win-win situations.

8. Develop Meaningful Programs/Processes

- the vision of the partnership will direct the type of programs that emerge from it; activities should go beyond the superficial, to those that have a greater sense of purpose.

9. Set up Appropriate Channels of Communication and Authority

- open lines of communication and an understanding of the organization of the partnership will reduce potential misunderstandings.

10. Publicity

-marketing and promotion are vital to the community understanding the nature of the program; celebrate successes!

Bloom (1997) offered a set of Operating Principles for those interested in establishing a School-Business Partnership Program. He discussed the need for a format, or plan, for partnering as "many partners are unclear about the meaning, purpose, context and beliefs of partnership, and about how they can turn the concept into a workable, successful reality" (p. 2).

Table (2.1) shows the 18 Operating Principles Bloom (1997) felt would contribute to a successful business-education partnership.

Inception and Development	**Operation**	**Evaluation**
■ Develop through consultation with all partners to meet learners' needs ■ Set up clear objectives that support the partner organizations' goals ■ Test actions against the ethics and core values of all the partners	■ Create a partnership team with a clear mandate and continuity of membership ■ Recruit champions and advocates in the partner organizations ■ Identify resource needs to ensure that resources are adequate to complete activities successfully ■ Define clear roles and responsibilities for all the partners ■ Express expected behaviors and outcomes to all participants ■ Train participants to carry out their partnership roles and responsibilities ■ Identify, learn from and apply successful practices as the basis for improvement	■ Measure and evaluate performance to make informed decisions that ensure continuous improvement ■ Share evaluation results regularly with all partners and stakeholders
Ownership		**Communication**
■ Share ownership to build commitment and encourage participation ■ Gain commitment of leaders in the partner organizations and build grassroots support		■ Define communications needs and have a communications component at each stage of partnership activity ■ Build in personal recognition and feedback to participants ■ Recognize and celebrate the partnership's successes

Table (2.1). Operating Principles for Business-Education Partnerships (Bloom, 1997, p.3)

Bloom (1997) believed each of the 18 Operating Principles contributed to success in a partnership. He presented a three stage development process for business-education partnerships. The "concept" (p. 2) stage saw partners exploring concepts and ideas while using the Operating Principles as a framework for planning. The "macro-implementation" (p. 2) stage saw partners focusing on practical issues involving moving from the concept level to the implementation level. Lastly, was the "micro-implementation" (p. 2) stage where partners focused on day to day implementation problems while using the framework of the Operating Principles to guide them.

Before moving on to the types of School-Business Partnership Programs a district could develop, it should be noted that there are often obstacles a school district must face and deal with before it will be able to proceed with the types of strategies listed above. Otterbourg (1986) identified these six potential obstacles:

1. The perception of cost-effectiveness
2. Breadth of commitment
3. School rigidity and bureaucracy
4. Conflicting misconceptions
5. Competing demands on available time
6. Quantity versus quality (pp. 5-6)

The establishment of a School-Business Partnership Program might not be best for a district to involve itself in. It may prove to be more costly in time, effort and human resources than can be justified by the outcomes of such a program. The needs assessment of a district may indicate that a School-Business Partnership Program is considered nothing more than a fad, and is not viewed as an important component of the overall educational program in the district. Point two identifies the breadth of commitment as a potential obstacle. While schools are used to committing time, expertise and resources over long periods of time, potential partners in the business sector may not be as comfortable in doing the same, depending on the nature of the business, or the current state of the

economy. Those entering into these types of programs with schools need to understand that they are making a commitment to the educational process and not to a short, in and out relationship.

The natural bureaucratic nature of school districts can block potential relationships if delays are a problem in terms of decision making and policy formation. This is especially true if the potential partner is used to operating at in a business environment where decisions take place and action plans are implemented quickly. The problem of conflicting misconceptions can emerge if the lines of communication between the district and the potential partners are not established well. Otterbourg (1986) indicated that both sides can be at fault here. Educators often fear " business might meddle in affairs about which it knows nothing" and the business sector often reflects " corporate disillusionment and misunderstanding regarding the products of public education" (p. 5). These activities can lead to " foot-dragging behavior" (p. 5) on both sides. The demands on the time of those attempting to design and implement a School-Business Partnership Program can be great, and this fact may influence the degree of success a program enjoys. The last point made - quantity versus quality - is an interesting one. It has to be remembered that a School-Business Partnership Program is intended as an educational experience for the students involved in it. It takes thoughtful planning and implementation to ensure the educational needs of those students in the program are being met. Too much too soon, or partnerships that are thrown together, or partnerships that are not based on the correct goals and objectives, will not survive, and will damage the credibility of a partnership program. As well, they do not serve as good examples to potential partners with good intentions.

The Development of School-Business Partnership Policies

Watt and Mirota (1997) indicated the shape of public education in Canada was changing and because of these changes, those who could be considered stakeholders in education were defining their view of schools and the school's relationship to the business sector. They presented the view that many Canadians saw employer involvement in education as "a social responsibility and necessary tool to help students develop skills for the 21st Century, and to equip schools with additional resources and expertise" (p.1). Coupled with this view of business-education relationships was the concern that the corporate sector "may take advantage of schools as attractive markets for their products or use them as training grounds for a highly skilled employee base" (p.1).

The need for the existence of some form of policy development related the emergence of School-Business relationships was identified as integral in developing partnerships throughout Canada that were ethically sound, mutually beneficial and were developed "in accordance to the overall objectives and mission statements of public education systems" (p. 2).

Watt and Mirota (1997) presented the position that a clear understanding of the Business-Education Partnership was vital for ethical relationships to develop when they stated

> The role of business in education is no longer easily defined nor clearly understood. As business-education partnerships become more varied and complex, it is essential for educators and business to ensure that they conduct themselves ethically in all their dealings. (p. 2)

They commented on the existence of two levels of policy development regarding School-Business Partnerships. One was the "bottom-up approach" (p. 2) in which governance and internal regulations were at the school board or school level. The second type of policy development saw the "top-down approach" (p. 2) of Provincial Ministries of Education drafting policies related to school-business partnerships. They presented the range of policy development

in Canadian Provinces and Territories which varied from Ministerial level leadership, to school based initiatives. This information is summarized in Table (2.2).

It was their position that "efforts to govern and monitor partnerships are important tools - not only to ensure ethical and mutually beneficial practices, but also to develop best practice and outcomes-based analysis". (p. 4)

Table (2.2).

PROVINCE	INITIATIVES
Newfoundland	Ministerial Draft Policy
Prince Edward Island	Ministerial Guidelines
New Brunswick	Ministerial Guidelines
Nova Scotia	School-based Guidelines
Quebec	Ministerial Guidelines
Ontario	Ministerial Framework
Manitoba	Business Advisory Group
Saskatchewan	Saskatchewan Training Strategy
Alberta	Provincial Policy Statement "People and Prosperity"
British Columbia	Ministerial Guidelines
Yukon	No formal initiatives
Northwest Territories	No formal initiatives

Table (2.2). Policy Development in Canadian Provinces and Territories Regarding School-Business Partnerships. (The Conference Board of Canada, 1997, in Watt & Mirota, 1997, (p. 3)

Ethical Guidelines for School-Business Partnerships

In the previous discussion of the need for policy development for School-Business Partnership Programs, Watt and Mirota (1997) talked of the need for partnerships to "conduct themselves ethically" (p. 2). The Business-Education Partnerships Forum (1997), in working with the Conference Board of Canada, produced a series of ethical guidelines for those seeking to partner business and

education. These guidelines stressed commitment, mutual input and involvement, mutual benefits and the voluntary nature of the relationship. These ethical guidelines are presented in Table (2.3).

Canadian Employers and educators support business-education partnerships that:

Enhance the quality and relevance of education for learners	Are consistent with the ethics and core values of all partners	Are developed and structured in consultation with all partners
Mutually benefit all partners	Are based on the clearly defined expectations of all partners	Recognize and respect each partner's expertise
Treat fairly and equitably all those served by the partnership	Are based on shared or aligned objectives that support the goals of the partner organization	Identify clearly defined roles and responsibilities for all partners
Provide opportunities for all partners to meet their shared social responsibilities toward education	Allocate resources to complement and not replace public funding for education	Involve individual participants on a voluntary basis
Acknowledge and celebrate each partner's contributions through appropriate forms of recognition	Measure and evaluate partnership performance to make informed decisions that ensure continuous improvement	

Table (2.3). Ethical Guidelines for Business-Education Partnerships (Business-Education Forum, 1997)

As pointed out by the authors, the ethical guidelines established, mirror beliefs presented earlier in the paper regarding educational partnerships. The most important features of any school-business partnership are its educational value to those involved in the partnership, and the fact that all stakeholders in the partnership share a mutually beneficial role in the design, development and implementation and evaluation of the partnership's objectives. As indicated in Table (2.3), the ethics of a school-business partnership require a high level of voluntary commitment, require that the partners reflect similar expectations and goals and as well, respect the expertise each partner brings to the partnership.

Regarding the purpose of the ethical guidelines, Dr. Michael Bloom, a senior research associate with the Conference board of Canada, was cited in O'Connor & Allen (1996) as stating

> The Guidelines enable partners to work together to promote public good through education – and be seen to be doing so. This is important because, like many other relationships, partnerships involve both the 'powerful' and the 'powerless'. The powerful in partnerships are educators and employers ...The powerless are students and employees. Partnership is a high type of relationship, one with an elevated purpose: to enhance learning for learners. Ethical guidelines help protect these powerless, intended beneficiaries of partnerships and ensure that they are always the focus of educators' and employers' partnership decision-making and activities. Above all, guidelines help ensure that learners genuinely benefit from their participation in partnerships. (p. 29)

O'Connor and Allen (1996), citing the Canadian Teacher's Federation's ethical guidelines for partnerships in education, stated

> The involvement of business in education should be regulated and monitored in the public interest and the key determinants of the worth of any partnership should be its benefits to students and its potential to contribute to strengthening school-community partnerships. (p. 30)

Their position reflected the similar belief that school-business partnerships needed to be based on a voluntary agreement that was mutually beneficial. The thrust of their discussion of ethical guidelines related to the belief that any partnership between the private sector and education needed to be free of any type of exploitation and that "big business's exceptional access to financial resources should give it no advantage in establishing policy direction in education nor in buying influence in the classroom" (p. 30).

The authors went on to cite Jennifer Lewinton in the April 18th edition of the Toronto Globe and Mail as indicating "there is one golden rule for business-education alliances: put students first." Her position was consistent with others

reflecting on the need for ethical guidelines related to the development and implementation of school-business partnership programs.

Employability Skills Needed in Canada

An outcome of School-Business Partnership Programs believed to be important was the learning outcomes derived by students participating in partnerships. (Alberta Education,1992; Bosetti, Webber &Johnson, 1993; Chaffre, 1980; Dempster & Mark, 1995 and Grunig, 1996) These often related to accumulating not just academic skills through traditional education, but to real-world skills seen as needed in the workplace. AECL's Director of Communication, Leslie Gosselin, as cited in Hartsook (1996), pointed out ". . . teachers and teens gain exposure to science and technology role models through nationally and internationally renowned scientists made available by the company". (pp. 2-3)

Tied to the belief that students needed skill acquisition to enter the workforce was the development of the Employability Skills Profile (Corporate Council of Canada, 1996). This profile highlighted the academic, personal management and teamwork skills identified by Canadian employers as those needed by young people entering the Canadian workforce. Business-Education Partnerships, in part, develop the skills outlined in the profile. These skills are presented in Table (2.4).

Employability Skills Profile
The Critical Skills Required of the Canadian Workforce

Academic Skills	**Personal Management Skills**	**Teamwork Skills**
Those skills which provide the basic foundation to get, keep and progress on a job and to achieve the best results	The combination of skills, attitudes and behaviors required to get, keep and progress on a job and to achieve the best results	Those skills needed to work with others on a job and to achieve the best results

Canadian employers need a person who can:	Canadian employers need a person who can demonstrate:	Canadian employers need a person who can:
Communicate ■ Understand and speak the languages in which business is conducted ■ Listen to understand and learn ■ Read, comprehend and use written materials, including graphs, charts and displays ■ Write effectively in the languages in which business is conducted	**Positive Attitudes and Behaviors** ■ Self-esteem and confidence ■ Honesty, integrity and personal ethics ■ A positive attitude toward learning, growth and personal health ■ Initiative, energy and persistence to get the job done	**Work with Others** ■ Understand and contribute to the organization's goals ■ Understand and work within the culture of the group ■ Plan and make decisions with others and support the outcomes ■ Respect the thoughts and opinions of others in the group ■ Exercise "give and take" to achieve group results ■ Seek a team approach as appropriate ■ Lead when appropriate, mobilizing the group for high performance
Think ■ Think critically and act logically to evaluate situations, solve problems and make decisions ■ Understand and solve problems involving mathematics and use the results ■ Use technology, instruments, tools, and information systems effectively ■ Access and apply specialized knowledge from various fields(e.g., skilled trades, technology, physical sciences, arts and social sciences	**Responsibility** ■ The ability to set goals and priorities in work and personal life ■ The ability to plan and manage time, money and other resources to achieve goals ■ Accountability for actions taken	
Learn ■ Continue to learn for life	**Adaptability** ■ A positive attitude toward change ■ Recognition of and respect for people's diversity and individual differences ■ The ability to identify and suggest new ideas to get the jog done - creatively	

Table (2.4). Employability Skills Profile (Corporate Council on Education, 1996)

A closer examination of the Employability Skills Profile presented in Table (2.4) reflected the fact that those skills listed are those skills sets the education sector strives to achieve, but applies to a workforce setting. The Academic, Personal Management and Teamwork Skills listed are all required to be successful in an academic setting. The Corporate Council of Canada has aligned these educational skills with the needs of Canadian employers and determined that skills acquired in the education sector from a young age, and that are developed through years of formal schooling, were applicable to what Canadian employers were seeking in high school graduates. The ability to think critically and creatively, to communicate clearly, to have a thirst for knowledge, to have a high degree of adaptability and a willingness to accept the challenge of responsibility are skills that, both in the education milieu and the private sector setting, will contribute to a higher level of success. This belief reflected the acceptance of the fact that the experiential learning transpiring in School-Business Partnerships was transferable from the school setting to the workforce setting.

Types of School-Business Partnership Programs

There exist a variety of School-Business Partnership Programs throughout the country's school districts. As indicated earlier in the paper, the types of School Business Partnerships that have evolved in Canada are commonly based on the sharing of human resources and expertise, and rely significantly less on monetary and material contributions than do many of the School-Business Partnership Programs in school districts in the United States.

Partnerships in the United States often arose out a concern on the part of the private sector that there existed the need to help education improve what it was doing. Merenda (1989), as cited in Swainson (1992), identified five levels that existed in the development of business involvement in education in the United States:

1. Policy partnerships that shape the public and political debate to bring about changes in legislation to change the overall direction of the educational system,
2. Improvement partnerships that identify needed reforms and work over the long term to make these reforms happen,
3. Management partnerships which provide management support and business expertise in a broad range of areas,
4. Teacher training and development partnerships which encourage individuals to obtain graduate degrees in science or math, and
5. Classroom partnerships where volunteers bring their business or occupational expertise directly into the classroom or bring the classroom to the business. (p. 5)

Chaffre (1980) in a discussion of the types of involvement between the private sector and education identified four levels of corporate involvement:

1. Collaborative activities that directly or indirectly involve students,
2. Cooperative efforts to aid schools or school districts that don't involve students,
3. Involvement by individuals from business and industry on boards and at the decision making level,
4. Education-related activities by business or industry without the cooperation of local schools or school districts. (p. 7)

In Alberta, as in much of the rest of Canada, the involvement of education with partners from the private sector always involve students, and rarely are based on the exchange of material goods or money. Canadian partnerships would fall into the categories of education-related, collaborative, and classroom oriented.

As described earlier, Alberta Education is an advocate of a higher degree of community and business involvement in the field of education. This involvement is developed on a district by district basis throughout the province. As would be expected, urban districts have a larger opportunity to involve themselves in School-Business Partnership Programs, but several rural jurisdictions have developed partnerships using whatever resources are available in their communities. This fact has been noted in the results of the

Partnership Profile instrument (Appendix B) distributed to schools and businesses throughout the province by the Alberta Chamber of Resources (1992).

Within any given school district, a School-Business Partnership Program can be district-based, or school- based. A district-based partnership would see a corporate partner linking with a school district and operating with a coordinator in central office whose job it would be to help the partner link with various schools within the district according to need or interest. A school-based partnership would see a business or industry linking with a specific school and working closely with the students in that one school. This would be similar to what Otterbourgh (1986) referred to as the "Adopt-A-School" (p. 90-91) concept in the United States, except in Alberta's case, there would be no monetary or material gain by the school in the relationship. It would be based on agreements and goals established by both partners. The typical type of partnership program that is seen in Alberta is a blending of these two types of systems; a larger corporation might link itself to a school system in an effort to reach more students, whereas a smaller industry or business might be more comfortable with linking with just one school because of size or proximity. The depth and level of the partnership is often limited by the availability of human resources within the business partner.

Regardless of the School-Business Partnership Program model the school district adopts, Chaffre (1980) offered the three "don'ts" (p. 33) of partnerships: " the partnership should not be viewed as a recruitment scheme for the business; the partnership should not be a public relations stunt for either member; and, neither partner should make promises that cannot be kept" (p. 33). Matthews and Norgaard (1984) identified an important concept, noting how partnerships are collaborative relationships where both parties should benefit when they stated " each of the parties involved must have resolved in its own mind the following two points: they cannot compete with each other and win, and that each has something to gain from the collaboration" (p. 182).

Benefits of School-Business Partnership Programs

In order for benefits to be derived from a School-Business Partnership Program, Bloom (1997, p. 7) described four qualities that were required by most successful partnerships. He described these as: having a common purpose or motive; a mutual commitment to the relationship; a high level of performance on the part of the participating partners and an effective level of communication within the partner relationship. It was his position that with these qualities established, the potential for success was greatly enhanced. Success in relation to School-Business Partnerships was described as having the following three meanings

- Success means creating a partnership that is able to operate one or more programs with the full co-operation and active participation of the partners.
- Success means achieving the learning outcomes that are mutually sought and agreed to by the partners.
- Success means being able to evaluate and communicate the results of evaluation to the partners and the larger community that is benefiting from the partnership activity. (p. 7)

Once a successful School-Business Partnership has evolved, the benefits of such a relationship can then be determined.

Bloom (1997) proposed "investing in business-education partnerships is a good way to invest in the future prosperity of Canada" (p. 4). It was his position that

> Business-education partnerships are an effective way to enhance educational experiences and learning outcomes for students and other learners, . . . they help ensure that our education system produces educated, highly skilled graduates with the knowledge, skills, expertise

> and attitudes to create the highly valued products and services that support our standard of living. (p. 4)

In a similar vein, Knight (1995) identified the benefits of School-Business Partnerships as fitting in three broad categories: "educational, social, and relational" (p. 12). When these categories were broken down further as benefits to students, benefits to schools and benefits to business partners, recurring themes emerged in the literature.

Benefits to Students

The increased experiential learning opportunities afforded students through School-Business Partnerships were considered by many as an important benefits. (Alberta Chamber of Resources, 1992; Bloom, 1997; Knight, 1995; Lewis, 1986; Otterbourg, 1986; Warwick, 1989) Tied to experiential learning were the experiences that aided students in attaining job related skills and a sense of career direction. (Alberta Chamber of Resources, 1992; Bloom, 1997; Knight, 1995; O'Connor & Allen, 1996; Bosetti, Webber and Johnson, 1993; Otterbourg, 1986) Equally important benefits identified were related to students developing a better sense of self-worth, a more positive attitude towards the relevance of education and a sense of community involvement. (Bloom, 1992; Knight, 1995; Warwick, 1989)

Other benefits for students accrued through involvement in School-Business Partnerships were identified by several authors. Bloom (1997) listed involvement in expanded and modernized curricula and involvement in a form of education more relevant to students as benefits enjoyed by those participating in a partnership. Knight (1995) identified increased student motivation as a benefit resulting from involvement in a partnering relationship outside of the school setting. He also tied this involvement to the belief that students learned adults in the community placed a high value on education and lastly, that students gained

a better understanding of the value of good citizenship through the various activities and opportunities that partnerships provided them.

O'Connor and Allen (1996) stressed the importance of receiving hands-on technical training as an important student benefit. This belief was tied to the job related skills and career direction benefits outlined above.

The Alberta Chamber of Resources (1992) indicated the use of community experts led to specific skill enhancement and consistent encouragement for students to say in school. This was consistent with the value placed on education as previously stated by Knight.

Benefits to Schools

Through involvement in School-Business Partnerships, schools were able to develop new programs to enhance student learning outcomes through access to business resources, expertise, state of the art technology and career role models and mentors. (Alberta Chamber of Resources, 1992; Bloom, 1997; Bosetti, Webber and Johnson, 1993; Knight, 1995; Levine and Trachtman, 1988; Lewis, 1986; O'Connor & Allen, 1996; Northwest-Midwest Institute, 1988; Otterbourg, 1986; Warwick, 1989) Involvement in School-Business Partnerships created opportunities for schools to develop an increased awareness of the corporate community and enabled them to recognize the contribution the private sector could make to the education community through partnership activities. (Bosetti, Webber and Johnson, 1993; Knight, 1995; Levine and Trachtman, 1988;Lewis, 1986; Northwest-Midwest Institute, 1988; Warwick, 1989) Lastly, learning outcomes for teachers in the form of expanded knowledge, professional development opportunities and expanded professional awareness were cited as benefits derived from partnership involvement. (Bloom, 1997; Lavine and & Trachtman, 1988; Swainson, 1992; Warwick, 1989)

Several authors identified other benefits received by schools through their involvement in School-Business Partnerships in addition to the benefits identified

above. Bloom (1997) indicated that a school's involvement in a School-Business Partnership Program had a positive affect on the graduation rates of those involved. This fact confirms the need in the minds of students to successfully complete their course work in an effort to move to the next phase of their career or education. Knight (1995) believed the partnership experience provided the professional staff of schools involved a broader perspective of the role education played in the development of the future career choices of students. As well, he felt partnerships afforded teachers the opportunity to accrue training in technical areas that private industry could provide with more ease than the education sector. Lewis (1986) felt that partnerships afforded schools the opportunity for an increased level of recognition by the private sector through involvement in School-Business Partnerships. This recognition was related to the expanded understanding of the role of schools that private sector partners gained. As well, he indicated the benefit of having input into the training and development of the future workforce through enhanced program offerings that partnerships provided as significant to education. The Northeast-Midwest Institute (1988) agreed that a school benefit received from participation in partnerships was their involvement in the development of job markets for students and graduates. An interesting benefit identified by Otterbourg (1986) was that of an increased level of communication and trust that resulted between schools and their private sector community as a result of partnering activities.

Benefits to Business Partners

The predominant theme that emerged regarding benefits to business partners related to the ultimate goal of developing a more highly skilled, well educated graduate, who would eventually be of more value to society in the future workforce, in part, due to involvement in School-Business Partnership Programs. These outcomes were the result of curriculum enhancement, imparting skills and expectations of employers and the experiential learning

component of School-Business Partnerships. (Alberta Chamber of Resources, 1992; Bloom, 1997; Bosetti, Webber and Johnson, 1993; Chaffre, 1980; Knight, 1995; O'Connor & Allen, 1996; Levine and Trachtman, 1988; Lewis, 1986)

A second predominant theme related to business and their involvement in School-Business Partnership Programs was noted. This related to the enhanced public image for the business involved in the partnership. Out of this, it was noted employee morale improved and the belief the business was a good corporate citizen emerged. (Alberta Chamber of Resources, 1992; Bloom, 1992; Bosetti, Webber and Johnson, 1993; Chaffre, 1980; Knight, 1995; Lewis, 1986; Otterbourg, 1986; Rhèaume, 1997; Swainson, 1992)

A third theme that emerged from the literature related to the intrinsic value to the business partner with regards to positive developments in the area of Human Resource Development. Several authors identified an improvement to employee moral and an increased level of personal satisfaction as benefits resulting from involvement in educational partnerships. (Bloom, 1997; Bosetti, et al, 1993; Knight, 1995; O'Connor & Allen, 1996; Lewis, 1986, Rhèaume, 1997; Otterbourg, 1986; Warwick, 1989).

O'Connor and Allen (1996) reported improvement in employee's interpersonal skills as a benefit, as well as the development of a "learning culture" (p. 34) with the organization. This was the result of the requirement of knowing one's own organization's value and expertise base in an effort to share it with the educational partner. This point was mirrored by Lewis (1986) when it was noted that companies had to improve their internal educational and training programs to facilitate a more productive level of participation in the partnership. Bosetti, Webber and Johnson (1993) referred to this increase of internal training as "team building" (p. 13) within the organization. These authors noted these benefits were all contributors to an enhanced level of job satisfaction within organizations involved in School-Business Partnership Programs.

The last theme which emerged from the literature related to an increased level of awareness on the part of private industry for the relevance of education,

the wide variety of curricular enhancements being developed in education and a better basic understanding of young people in today's schools. (Alberta Chamber of Resources, 1992; Bloom, 1997; Knight, 1995; Lewis, 1986; Rhèaume, 1997; Warwich, 1989).

A Conceptual Framework for School-Business Partnership Programs

A School-Business Partnership Program Model is presented in Figure (2.1). The Board of Education of the school district is ultimately responsible for the types of partnerships that evolve within the district. The dotted lines in the Model depict the need for the relationship between the Board, community organizations and business and industry to be seamless. The belief in the process of working together as educational partners needs to be in place at this level before the planning and establishment of Partnerships can evolve within a school district.

The Model moves to the next level, consisting of the senior administrators at the central office of the school district. The senior administrators of the school district and those who are assigned to the Planning Team provide the conceptual basis for the continued development of a Partnership Program in a school district. At this level, the philosophical basis for the development of a Partnership Program must be established. This planning level must envision the extent to which the school district will commit to, and involve themselves in, a School-Business Partnership Program. The values and educational expectations of the school district need to be reflected in the policies and procedures related to the district's involvement in any Partnership.

The next level of the Model reflects a two stranded approach to the development of School-Business Partnerships. Partnerships between the community or private sector industry can be linked directly to the school district as a single entity and operate at a "system" level. This strand would see the Management Team consist of senior administrators and an appointed

coordinator and representatives of the private sector partner working together to develop, plan and implement the establishment of a functioning Partnership. The parallel strand at this level of the Model is represented by the School Based Partnership, where the Partnering relationship is that of one school developing a relationship directly with a community organization or a member of business or industry. The Management Team on this strand would consist of the Principal of the school, teacher or teachers in the school and representatives of the business the school had linked with (the Private Sector Partner). This stage of the Model is where the important decision to continue with the development and formation of the Partnership is made. Conversely, the decision may be made to dissolve the Partnership negotiations at this point.

The next level of the Model reflects the implementation stage. At this level, the Partnership operates interactively for the mutual benefit of both Partners. Each side of the relationship works together with the intent of achieving the goals and objectives laid out for the Partnership in the planning stages depicted earlier in the Model.

As the Partnership operates, the benefits of its formation are received by the stakeholders in the Partnership. These would include benefits for the students; the school; the District and the private sector Partner.

The literature suggests that there needs to be a Partnership Evaluation Process that takes place to ensure the goals and objectives are being achieved and the benefits of the Partnership are being received. This researcher developed the Evaluation Wheel in the Model which depicts the evaluation process that was reflected in this study. The type of evaluation can be either formal or informal in structure, but it is integral that the key players in the Partnership have input into the evaluation instrument or process. The input needed for an accurate evaluation must come from those closely tied to the Partnership, namely, the teachers, the administrators, the students and the private sector partners. The Model depicts how the flow of information needs to

private sector partners. The Model depicts how the flow of information needs to be seamless in order to create an accurate evaluation of the success or non-success of the Partnership or Partnership activity.

The results of the Partnership evaluation need to flow back through the two strands of the relationship: the Educational Partner and the Private Sector Partner. The key players on the Education side – the teachers, the Principals and the Superintendents – need to make decisions as to the educational benefits their student's and school's participation in the Partnership has provided. The key players on the Private Sector side – the CEO or the Partnership Coordinator – need to measure the benefits received by their company's involvement in the Partnership. This stage of the Model provides the opportunity to continue the Partnership, or agree to dissolve it.

The results of the Evaluation Process must flow back to the Board of Education. The results of the evaluation of the Partnerships in the school district will empower the Board to make informed decisions about the continuation, expansion or reduction of the School-Business Partnership Program in the school district. This action completes the cycle of the School-Business Partnership Program Model.

Summary .

The literature identified the concern of business about the outcomes of the educational process as a key factor in the emergence of School-Business Partnership Programs. An historical perspective of business involvement with schools was presented. Motives behind School-Business Partnerships and current trends related to partnerships were explored. After establishing a contextual understanding of the School-Business Partnership, the steps related to establishing partnerships were presented. Various types of School-Business Partnerships were identified and described. The benefits received by

stakeholders in partnering relationships were identified and presented. The chapter concluded with an examination of a conceptual framework for School-Business Partnership Programs.

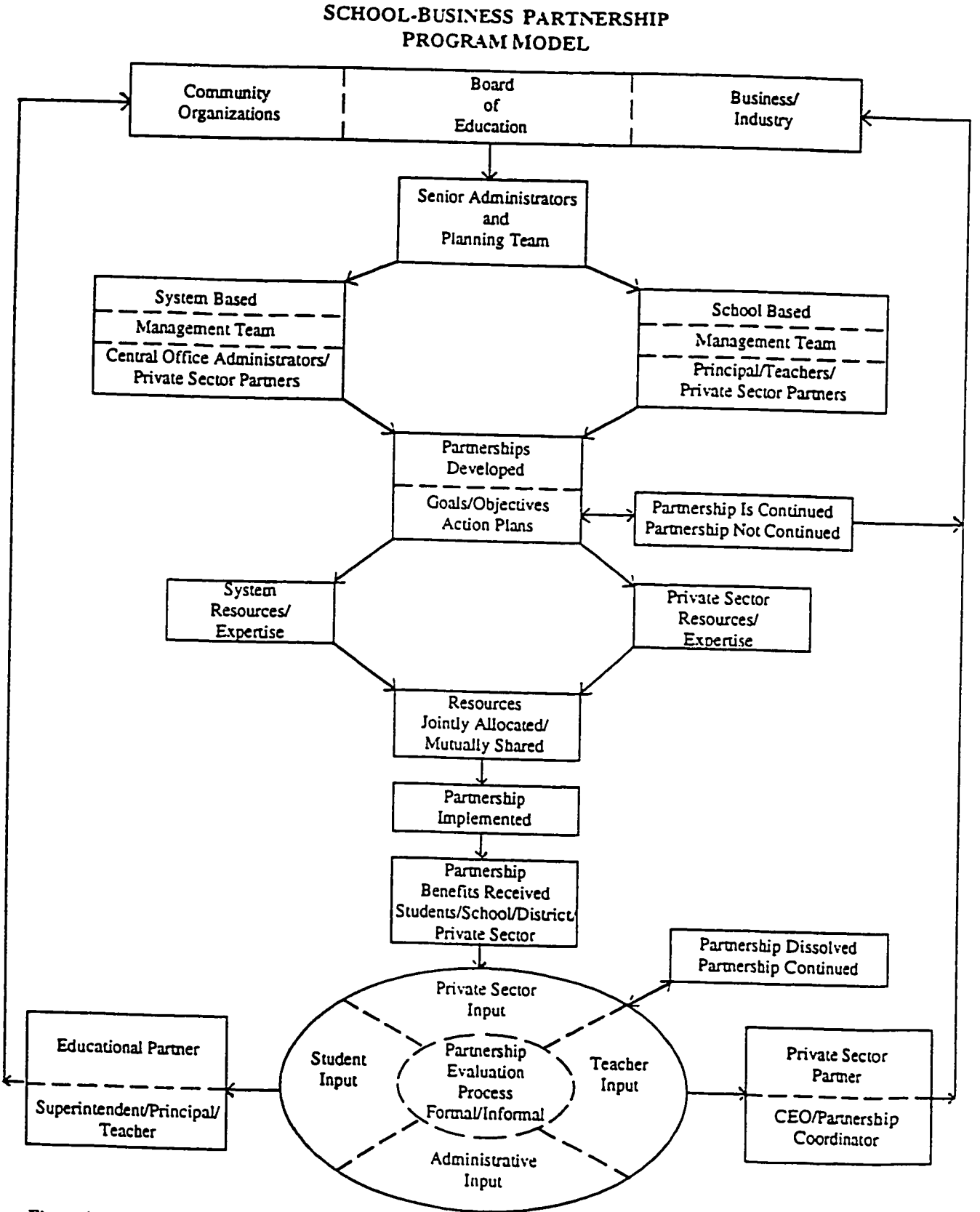

Figure (2.1). Conceptual Framework for School-Business Partnership Programs (Adapted from Knight, 1995 and Swainson, 1992)

Chapter 3

RESEARCH METHOD AND DESIGN

Statement of Purpose

As stated in Chapter 1, this study provided the opportunity to examine School-Business Partnerships in an urban School District with the purpose of determining:

1. The benefits associated with an urban School District's involvement in a School-Business Partnership Program.
2. The existence of weakness in the Partnership Program that might hinder success.
3. The method of evaluation utilized by Partnerships.

Philosophical Stance

This study was done within a qualitative framework, with emphasis placed on the analysis of data gathered through personal interviews. The study examined the involvement of an urban school district in a Business-Partnership Program by discussing with those participating in the programs the reasons why they were involved and what their perceptions were as to the benefits gained by involvement in such a program. The respondents identified perceived benefits in the existing program in addition to perceived weaknesses. The respondents were encouraged tell their stories about their involvement in School-Business Partnerships and these were shared with the reader. The individuals interviewed represented various groups that were included in the Partnerships. It was assumed that their involvement in the program was purposive, and their stories provided a rich base of data from which their reality, related to outcomes from their involvement in a School-Business Partnership Program, was interpreted.

The beliefs and opinions of a number of respondents, both from the education perspective and the business perspective were recorded to identify categories or themes which emerged. Those categories and themes were crucial in answering the questions raised by the study.

Three weeks were spent in the Central Office of the urban School District working with the coordinator of the Partnership Program. At that time, several potential respondents were met and their involvement in School-Business Partnerships were discussed in general terms. The researchers then chose which of the participants in those Partnerships would be approached regarding participation in the study. Those who accepted the invitation to participate in the study were then informed about the purpose of the study and the extent to which they would be involved. Permission of those willing to participate was then sought in the form of the Consent to Participate document (Appendix C). The interview process consisted of a meeting with the respondent at their place of business during which time an in-depth interview took place. This interview was recorded on audio tape and transcribed at a later date. One in-depth interview took place over the telephone in the form of a audio taped conference call.

Through analysis of data gathered using an in-depth interview, an understanding was reached about how those involved in School-Business Partnerships viewed the program and whether their perspectives varied, depending on whether the program was being viewed through an educational lens, or a business lens. Their reality and their perspective was what the study come to understand and describe. Glesne and Peshkin (1992) summed up this concept of multiple perspectives when they stated

> since qualitative researchers deal with multiple, socially constructed realities or qualities that are complex and indivisible into discrete variables, they regard their research task as coming to understand and interpret how the various participants in a social setting construct the world around them. (p. 6)

Limitations of the Study

As indicated in Chapter 1, limitation number one related to the time available to complete data collection. This did not pose serious problems for the completion of the study. The intent of the study was to complete the data collection within the framework of the 1995-1996 school year. This was accomplished.

The second limitation related to the researcher's ability to conduct interview based research and the necessary data interpretation that would follow. Course work completed at the graduate level provided the opportunity to experience this type of research and subsequent data analysis. The researcher found that the structure, completion and analysis of the interviews was within the researcher's range of skills and abilities, therefore the concerns raised by limitation number two did not hinder the completion of the study.

Limitation number three raised a concern about the willingness of respondents to share their perceptions. It was found as the study progressed, those individuals who expressed willingness to be involved in the study were very willing to share knowledge, opinions and expertise throughout the interview and analysis process.

The fourth limitation pointed out that the Partnerships examined in the study were all successful and ongoing. The fact that these Partnerships had experienced a high level of success and were continuing to develop, influenced data related to perceived weaknesses of a School-Business Partnership. Weaknesses identified were School-Partner specific and did not related to weaknesses that had contributed to a failure of a Partnership agreement.

In summary, the four limitations of the study did not hinder the completion of the study, nor did they negatively affect the outcomes of the study.

Assumptions of the Study

One assumption was identified as the study was undertaken. This assumption related to the researcher's belief that the perceptions of those individuals involved in the study would reflect their beliefs regarding School-Business Partnerships and their involvement in a Partnership. In the interview process, it was made clear to the respondents that the purpose of the study was to record their opinions and feelings with regard to their involvement in a School-Business Partnership. It was found that all respondents spoke freely and honestly throughout the interviews and often would preface remarks with the clarification that their comments were related to their Partnership specifically or that their comments were their personal opinion, and might not reflect that of the School District, or the Partner. It should be noted that the perceptions of the School District Director of Communications and Community Relations often reflected the position of the School District regarding Partnerships. In this case, the respondent made it clear that her role was that of a liaison between exiting Partnerships and the central office of the School District. Throughout the interview process, she differentiated between her personal opinion, and the position of the School District. This individual was clear in the understanding that her involvement with School-Business Partnerships was from the perspective of a member of the senior administration team of the District, and not that of a "hands on" participant at the school level.

Development of the Research Questions

To give direction to the interview process used in the study, Research Questions had to be developed that gave participants guidance and direction in focusing their views on School-Business Partnerships. Several questions were formulated which directed the conversation in the semi-structured interviews

conducted with the participants. Of these, three Specific Research Questions were key in determining the conclusions of the study. Those included:

1. Why does a School District, a school or a member of the private sector involve itself in a School-Business Partnership Program?

2.(a) What are the perceived benefits to be derived from involvement in a School-Business Partnership Program?

- for students?
- for the school (or School District)?
- for the private sector or community partner?

(b) What are the perceived weaknesses in the School-Business Partnership Program in this School District?

3. What method of evaluation is utilized in School-Business Partnership Programs?

Participant Selection

The study conducted in-depth interviews with individuals involved in the School-Business Partnership Program at the District, business and school levels. The interviews were conducted with those who administered and coordinated the School-Business Partnerships program from the perspective of the School District, those who coordinated the program at the school level, and those in the business community who were working with educators and students in a Partnership role.

The study was limited to an examination of four different Partnerships. The researcher elected to involve Partnerships that represented different types of businesses or community organizations. The four Partnerships chosen represented a multinational company, a local construction company, a health care facility and a museum. The respondents in the study consisted of an administrator in the school (and a cooperating teacher if appropriate), a

representative of the business in the Partnership and a representative of the School District office. The number of respondents in the study totaled 11. Those who made up the sample were selected on a non-random basis. Their inclusion in the study was based on discussions with those in Central Office who made suggestions about potential Partnerships that might be considered for inclusion, and discussions held by the researcher and potential respondents. The researcher was comfortable that the partnerships chosen represented a cross-section of the population that made up the School-Business Partnerships in the District. It was decided on the onset of the study not to include students in the group that was interviewed. This was based on a number of factors. The study examined the School-Business Partnership from an adult perspective. The focus of the study was to determine why the stakeholders in the education and business sectors involved themselves in Partnerships, the benefits that these individuals saw in Partnerships, to identify any weaknesses that existed in the School-Business Partnership Program and to outline methods of evaluation that were utilized to determine their level of success. It was felt that although student responses would have provided additional data, it would have been difficult to identify which participating students from the Partnerships would have had a broad enough understanding of the purpose and intent of a School-Business Partnership Program to adequately respond to the research questions. Other concerns related to the age and maturity level of the students involved and to their willingness to commit to a formal interview for research purposes .

Each respondent was approached and the purpose of the study was explained to them and any questions they had about the level of their involvement was clarified. These discussions were held in person, or by telephone interview. It was also made clear to all respondents that permission to conduct the study had been received by the School District. Each respondent was asked to involve themselves in the study on a voluntary basis. Those who chose to become involved were guaranteed confidentiality, and anonymity. Respondents were free to discontinue their involvement in the study at any time

if should they chose to do so. Those involved in the study had access to data which related to their interviews, and consultations with regards to transcription accuracy were guaranteed.

Ethical Considerations

This study conformed to the University of Alberta's policies and procedures relating to research ethics.

The nature of this study did not lend itself to concerns about ethical dilemmas. Those involved in the study felt free to share information and were not confronted with questions that caused hardship or harm. As indicated, subjects participated voluntarily, had access to data related to their interviews, and were free to remove themselves from the study if they wished to do so.

Data Gathering

The research in this study conformed to the interpretivist paradigm. The study was qualitative in nature, in that a combination of data gathering techniques were used to provide a rich data base from which an understanding of the perspectives of those involved in the School- Business Partnership Program was developed. Four different methods of data gathering were used in the study. These included any documents or records regarding the program provided by those involved, informal conversations and casual observations that took place, the use of a reflective log, and tape recorded interviews with selected respondents.

Documents and records related to School-Business Partnership Programs provided what Guba and Lincoln (1981) refer to as "a stable, rich, rewarding resource. . . a natural, in context, source of information" (p. 232). Written documentation provided valuable background information about the planning,

implementation, and monitoring of the program that was operating in the School District.

During a three week field experience, when the researcher was working at the District Office, the opportunity to interact with those involved in the School-Business Partnership Program presented itself. Conversations with School District personnel, with employees of involved business firms and with teachers and administrators in schools involved in School-Business Partnerships, provided a glimpse of how those individuals experienced the School-Business Partnership Program on a day-to-day basis. These experiences included explanations of their Partnership, program and event descriptions and anecdotal stories. Reactions to those conversations, and to observations made by the researcher were recorded in the reflective log.

Recording and the reflective log provided the opportunity to reflect daily on interactions with respondents and also to contemplate reactions to conversations and observations.

The bulk of the data gathered was in the form of tape recorded interviews with participants in the study. These recorded interviews were semi-structured in nature, and attempted to provide the opportunity for the respondents to share their reality , beliefs and opinions. The transcribed tapes formed the basis from which were determined categories, themes and commonalities that emerged as a deeper understanding of what the respondents shared took place.

Data Analysis

> A naturalistic paradigm, relying on field study as a fundamental technique, which views truth as ineluctable, that is, as ultimately inescapable. Sufficient immersion in and experience with a phenomenological field yields inevitable conclusions about what is important, dynamic, and pervasive in that field. (Guba & Lincoln, 1981, p. 55)

This quotation reflected the intent of the study with respect to analysis of the data. Conclusions were reached about what reality was for the participants in

the study regarding their involvement in a School-Business Partnership Program. The study determined what was important, dynamic and pervasive about the Program as it existed in the urban School District studied.

Glesne and Peshkin (1992) in discussing data analysis of qualitative studies referred to the recorded thoughts of one of their students who had completed a course based research project

> My first thoughts concern the holistic nature of the process. There really is no way to separate the parts of research from one another. Data gathering includes parts of analysis, analysis leads to more data, writing leads to a greater understanding of both analysis and data. The process is totally holistic, each piece absolutely necessary to the whole. (p. 148)

Like the student referred to in the quotation, this study too, approached the data analysis from this holistic perspective. The researcher became familiarized with the data as they were accumulated.

The methods described to gather data provided a significant volume of material. The sheer volume of material forced categorizing and filing data as it was received, in order to retain control of information. A plan which utilized the concept of "analytic files" (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 128) aided in this process. Those files provided the framework needed to initiate an interpretation of the data.

As each participant interview was completed, it was transcribed immediately. The process of identifying categories, subcategories and identifying themes and commonalities followed after each successive interview. Perceptions and interpretations that emerged from the interview data was compared with the analysis of information accumulated through other data gathering methods. As this information merged and blended, the understanding of the contextual reality of the respondents increased.

A major concern in interpretation of data in this qualitative study was trustworthiness. If achieved, the outcomes of this study could make a contribution to the field, so that others may "confirm, expand, and inform their

own work" (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 146). Glesne and Peshkin referred to several factors that influenced the acquisition of trustworthy data. These included time, triangulation, acknowledging biases, sharing information, and delimiting the study (1992, pp. 146-147).

This study was bounded by time constraints in that the data gathering phase took place over a specific school year (1995-1996) while school was in session and the School-Business Partnership Program was operational. During this period of the study however, as much time as necessary was devoted to building positive relationships with the participants and accumulating accurate data through the interview process and the other data gathering methods described earlier. During the study, the researcher was confident that by sharing the interview data with the respondents and having them check the transcriptions for accuracy, the information shared accurately reflected the way they felt about their involvement in the School-Business Partnerships. It also accurately reflected their opinions about School-Business Partnerships that they were willing to share.

The triangulation of data gathered from several perspectives contributed to the trustworthiness of interpretations made in the study. By examining written documentation, keeping an accurate reflective log, and analyzing the taped interviews, the study related available information to answer the questions raised in the study.

The question of researcher bias was a concern. The researcher's bias was towards the development of better relationships between education and the corporate community. The intention of the study was not to confirm this, but to determine if the specific strategy of a School-Business Partnership Program was moving education closer to this end by determining if individuals involved in the study saw tangible benefits to the existence of such relationships. A high level of subjectivity was maintained as the data of the study was interpreted. Every effort was made to ensure that individuals or circumstances that may have influenced the outcome of the study were not overlooked.

The interpretive process was shared with the respondents in the study. Transcription drafts were shared with those in the study. This allowed for verification of insiders' perspectives, for new ideas or perspectives to emerge, or potentially problematic sections or statements to be identified and eliminated.

Lastly, the limitations of this study were made clear from the onset to the those who were involved in its development. The description of the nature of the study, the phenomena to be examined, and the description of the District within which the study was conducted, will make it clear to the reader the depth and breadth of the study undertaken.

CHAPTER 4

PROFILE OF THE PARTICIPANTS , THEIR SCHOOLS AND THEIR EDUCATIONAL PARTNERS

This chapter introduces information about the participants, their schools, and the business, organization, or association that form their Partnership. This information will provide the reader with the background information that will assist in gaining a better understanding of the varied types of individuals and private sector groups who have entered into differing types of School-Business Partnership Programs.

First, a description of the urban School District is presented to provide an overall understanding of the size, diversity, and extent of the educational programming offered in this large Western Canadian city. Next, a description of the schools involved in the study is presented. Coupled with this information is a description of the School-Business Partners for each of the schools described.

A profile of the participants in the study is then presented. These are presented as participants representing the District Office, and each of the four schools and the four partners in the study.

The following descriptions related to schools are based on information contained in various School District and school produced publications, comments made by teachers or administrators, and from observations made during visits to each of the schools. The descriptions related to the private sector Partners are based on printed materials provided to this researcher, comments made by the participants, and observations made during visits to each site.

Pseudonyms were employed to mask the identity of the teachers, their schools, and their private sector Partners. The pseudonyms have been chosen so that the surname of the participants match the name of the school and the private sector Partner.

The Urban School District

Annapolis school division. The Annapolis School Division was a large urban school district that served a major city in the northern half of the province. The operating budget for this district exceeded $381 million. There were 201 schools in the district including: 135 elementary, 18 elementary-junior high, 29 junior high, 13 senior high, 4 other schools, and 7 other educational services. Enrollment in the district was 76,585 students. The district had no boundary restrictions for school registration and had operated from a site-based management model for the last 15 to 20 years.

The programming offered in the District's schools reflected the diverse needs of its large student population. In addition to regular programming, the District offered language programs other than English, visual and performing arts programs, programs focusing on native culture, special needs programming for those who had physical, hearing or visual impairments, and an ESL program. In addition, the district offered Academic Challenge programming at the elementary and junior high level, and an International Baccalaureate Program at the senior high school level.

Participant's Schools and Partners

Brownell high school. Brownell High School is located in the north sector of the city, and served the needs of approximately 1,360 students in grades ten through twelve. The school was not new, but it was maintained very well. The halls were spotless and students reflected a pride in their school. The school had a very business-like air to it.

The school had a diverse mix of students which came from a variety of ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. The school offered programs for students with a wide range of abilities. Languages other than English that were

taught included French, German, Ukrainian and Arabic. There also existed an English as a second Language (ESL) program. There was an Advanced Placement program for gifted students, a regular academic program, and a program for students with identified learning disabilities. The school emphasized a positive and supportive school climate. The school was committed to providing effective programming, challenging students to perform to a high standard, and to providing a safe learning environment for all students.

The female principal, who had been in the school four years was assisted in the administration of the school by two female assistant principals and one male assistant principal. The on-site management of school business was the responsibility of a female manager. The principal of the building reflected an obvious pride in her school and it was apparent that she was very much aware of all facets of running a successful school. The school operated under the site-based management style that was the norm in the district.

Bounty museum. Bounty Museum is located in a city approximately two and one half hours south of Annapolis School District. It served not just the immediate city and surrounding area, but is world renowned for its work in the area of paleontology.

The museum opened in September of 1985, with a mandate to collect, conserve, research, display and interpret palaeontological history. It operated with a staff of 27, including seven scientists with doctorate degrees in palaeontology, sedimentology or biology. The museum was formally associated with both the two major provincial universities. Average yearly attendance at the museum averaged 400,000 to 500,000 visitors. The museum offered educational programming which reached 25,000 students yearly.
It was considered one of Canada's premier museum attractions.

Caswell junior high school. Caswell Junior High School was located in the northeast quadrant of the city and had a school population of approximately

530 students in grades seven through nine. The school was constructed five years ago, and still reflected that "new" school feel. It was bright and airy, and had a very positive atmosphere to it.

The school was committed to community involvement, by both its students and their parents. The school focused on academic achievement, with its goal to have their students graduate as potentially responsible and contributing citizens of the community.

The school's administration structure was led by a male principal who had been serving in that role since the school opened. There was no vice-principal in this school, but the principal was assisted by a female teacher who held the title of Coordinator. The school operated under the site-based management style that was the norm in the School District.

Camio computers inc.. Camio Computers Inc., with revenue in excess of $70 billion, held the position as the world's largest information technology service company. The firm employed 80,000 people worldwide and provided consulting, systems integration and solution development services to its global client base. Camio was also ranked as the world's largest software company.

The Camio branch office which partnered with Caswell School, reflected the local level involvement the firm sought to achieve with its customer base and the firm's willingness to explore new possibilities in the field of education.

Dundonald high school. Dundonald High School was located in the west quadrant of the city and served a population of mixed socio-economic backgrounds. The school had a population of just over 2000 students. The physical plant was quite large and spread out. The school was not new, and had additions added to it at various stages of its history.

The school reflected a closed campus philosophy that saw students who had non-assigned time in libraries or study halls during the day. This contributed to a sense of order in the halls of the school. The school offered a wide ranging

academic program that suited the needs of a diverse population of students. In addition to the courses required for a standard high school diploma, several options were offered to students that ranged from industrial education, language programs, to fine arts programs. The school was fortunate to have adjacent to it a complex that boasted a stadium with a track, a swimming pool, tennis courts, and playing fields. The school reflected the philosophy that each student should experience an environment that fostered good results, responsibility and recognition for good performance. The school reflected an attitude that all its students were young adults who should be treated with respect.

At the time of the study, the school's principal was a male who had been newly appointed to the school in the spring of the previous school year. There were three assistant principals, two male and one female. The administration team was assisted by teachers who assumed the role of department heads. The school operated under the site-based management style that was the norm in the School District.

Delaware hospital. Delaware Hospital had a century old history in the community as a traditional medical facility. In the early 1990's, the hospital became part of a health care group, which saw the hospital assume a new role in the integrated regional health system in the Annapolis area.

The move to the integrated delivery model Delaware Hospital took put more emphasis on health, health promotion and prevention as strategies to compliment the more traditional role it once had.

Delaware Hospital offered a range of health care options including: emergency services, women's health, surgical services, mental health services and multifaceted medical services which included: palliative support, geriatric assessment, coronary services and community outreach services.

The hospital's annual operating budget exceeded $46.5 million and saw a combined full and part-time staff of 1,300.

Erindale high school. Erindale High School was located in the northeast section of the city and had a population of approximately 1,960 students. The school was physically imposing, and consisted of several wings and levels. The school was not new, but appeared to be maintained quite well. The school had a diverse mix of students coming from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds.

The school reflected the belief that learning was a life-long process and this process involved students, parents and the community. Students were expected to assume responsibility for their choices regarding behavior and learning. A safe, stimulating learning environment was strived for daily. The academic programs offered at Erindale reflected the wide ranging needs of the students. Regular, enriched and modified programming was offered, as well as Advanced Level placements. There existed a full compliment of courses fulfilling the requirements of Alberta Education, as well as a variety of optional courses, ranging from career and technological studies to fine arts and second languages. The school facilities were excellent and served the needs of the myriad of programs offered to students.

The school administration team consisted of a principal and three assistant principals. The teachers on staff were departmentalized and had a significant of involvement in the decision making process through the chairperson of each department. The school operated under the site-based management style that was the norm in the School District.

Einborough construction incorporated. Einborough Construction was a family owned construction company that was founded in 1908. In 1976, it was purchased by senior management employees. Currently, it is now owned by over 700 shareholders which represent 100% employee ownership. The firm was involved in various types of construction - commercial, institutional, industrial, residential, civil, and highway construction, as well as project and construction management and building design. The firm was Canadian based with its headquarters in the city.

Description of Participants

Participant	Organization	Position with Organization
Anna	Annapolis School District	Director of Communications and Community Relations
Beth	Brownell High School	Principal
Bob	Brownell High School	Teacher
Bill	Bounty Museum	Collections Technician
Carl	Caswell Jr. High School	Principal
Cam	Caswell Jr. High School	Instructional Technology Specialist
Chuck	Camio Computers Inc.	Service Marketing Executive
Don	Dundonald High School	Assistant Principal
Deb	Delaware Hospital	Health Care Group Manager
Ed	Erindale High School	Teacher
Earl	Einborough Construction	Personnel Services Manager

Table (4.1). Participants, Related Organization and Role in the Organization.

This section provides demographic and general information about each of the participants. The participants are presented in the following order. Firstly, the individual representing the central office of the School District is described. Next, individuals from each of the schools involved in the study and the individuals who work with them in each of the private sector Partnerships are described. The information presented here was gleaned from the interview transcripts, and from casual conversations experienced during visits to the various schools and Partner sites.

Anna had been employed by the School District for a number of years. She was a university graduate and had completed some graduate level work. She had a background in marketing in the private sector. At various stages in her employment with the School District, Anna held a number of positions of ever increasing responsibility in the Marketing and Public Relations departments. She was not a teacher, nor had she had any site experience in the administration of a school. At the time of the study, Anna was the Director of Communications and Community Relations with the School District.

Beth was a middle aged woman who had been associated with the school district for 21 years. In her career with the school district, she held a number of teaching positions and then moved into the area of school administration. She was the principal of Brownell High School for the previous three years. She had been at the school as long as the partnership with the museum had been in existence. The relationship that existed between Beth's school and the museum was one of several informal relationships the school had developed with various businesses and organizations outside the school.

Bob was a middle aged man with an Education degree who had taught in the School District for the previous 15 years. His teaching area of expertise included Biology and Science. His current teaching assignment was in a senior high school. He was instrumental in setting up the Partnership that existed between his school and the museum. This Partnership was Bob's first exposure to the concept of a school linking itself with a group or organization outside the school. His involvement emerged due to a friendship with a technician at the museum, and the belief that the students in his school would benefit from the experience to be gained working with the scientists from the museum.

Bill was a formally a teacher who had moved into the collections department at the Bounty Museum. He had formal university training in the area of science and education. His role at the museum was one of collection technician. Bill involved himself and the Museum in the Partnership because of the belief the Museum had something experiential to offer high school students beyond the usual museum visits that many schools arranged for their students. He was a key planner in the development of the pPartnership, and continues to oversee it for the museum.

Carl was the middle-aged principal of Caswell school. He had several years experience with the School District in the classroom, and then in the area of school administration. He was involved in the planning of the school from its inception. This saw him planning for a year and a half prior to the school being built. The school opened four years ago and he has held the role of principal

since that time. Carl was the reason the school formed a Partnership with the computer company it was linked with. His vision for a school on the cutting edge of educational technology led him to search the market for a player in the computer industry who was willing to work with him and his team to plan some innovative and exciting things for the new school.

Cam had been employed in the School District for the last 20 years. His role had moved from teacher to central office, where he assumed a consulting role. His assignment at Caswell saw him as an instructional technology specialist. He worked very closely with the principal in developing the technological vision for the school. Cam has worked at the school since it opened four years ago. In addition to his work at the school, Cam has been involved in presentations related to technology and education at the school and District level.

Chuck was a middle-aged executive with Camio Computing Corporation. He had been with the firm for 18 years. His executive role with the firm was in the area of service marketing. This niche of the company saw marketing of computer related services to organizations or businesses. It included formulation of strategies, selection of hardware and software, the creation of the proper environment for the computer systems, as well as the installation and integration of products and the ongoing maintenance and upgrading of network systems created for the client. His relationship with Caswell School developed three years ago and evolved into the point position he now holds with Camio. Prior to his involvement with this partnership, Chuck's relationship with the education sector was limited to that of a former student and currently as a parent with children in the public school system.

Don was the vice-principal at Dundonald High School. He had been employed in the School District since 1968. In that time, he had assumed various roles as a classroom teacher and then moved into the area of administration. He was committed to the concept of community involvement for the students at his school. He viewed School-Business Partnerships as an

excellent way to establish a positive relationship with the community and his school. Don had his school involved in a Partnership with the Delaware Hospital in 1988. Since that time, the school had expanded its Partnerships to include other organizations and businesses in the District.

Deb was a woman in her late thirties who is the manager of a health care group that was associated with, and housed in, Dundonald High School. Her background was in the field of nursing, health care and health care education. Deb was a registered nurse, with a Bachelor of Science degree as well as a Masters Degree in Education. She had a wide variety of professional experiences in the area of cooperative education. Her role was that of "connector" between the health center and the school in the partnering relationship that had been established. Deb had been in her current position for two and one half years.

Ed was a qualified journeyman in the area of motor mechanics who worked in the private sector prior to earning a B.Ed. and entering the field of education as a teacher. He was employed in the School District for the past 11 years, primarily in the area of vocational training. He had been exposed to a number of relationships with groups outside the school, but was instrumental in developing the formal Partnership with Einborough Construction.

Earl was employed by Einborough Construction as the manager of personnel services. In that role, he was involved in labor relations, personnel development and hiring and firing of employees. Earl had no experience as a teacher, or as a school administrator. His involvement in the partnership with Erindale High School dated back the 5 years the partnership had existed. It was his first venture into developing a School-Business Partnership with any educational institution.

Summary

Teachers and administrators from three urban high schools and one urban junior high school were involved in this study. In addition, employees from a museum, a multinational computer firm, a hospital and health care group, and a private construction firm were included in the interview process. One employee from the urban School District's central office was also included.

With the exception of the junior high school, each of the three other schools had school populations in excess of 1000 students. Each of these schools had an administration team that consisted of a Principal and three Assistant Principals. The junior high school had just the Principal. Each of the high schools in this study had a comprehensive program of studies which included courses required for the standard high school diploma, as well as an array of additional program offerings. The junior high school reflected a program commonly found at that level, with the exception of the career and technology studies program that reflected a high level of computer technology. Each school in the study had at least one established partnership between the school and the private sector. All of the schools were part of the public school system.

All of those interviewed in this study reflected a high level of satisfaction with the position they held. The role they played at their school or their business ranged from classroom teacher, to school administrator to middle and upper management.

Chapter 5

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOL-BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS

This chapter presents material related to the development of a School-Business Partnership Program. This information provides the reader with the background knowledge needed to understand the nature of a School-Business Partnership Program from the perspective of this School District. First, background material is presented to indicate to the reader how and why the School District chose to involve itself in a Partnership Program. Next, the District's position on the steps to develop an maintain a partnering relationship is presented. Finally, each Partnership is examined to determine the basis of the relationship and how this reflected the Partnership Program plan of the School District. A summary and conclusions are then presented.

The information in this chapter was gleaned from an unpublished handbook the school division utilized in its marketing and communications departments (EPS, 1993). As well, a similar handbook developed by another large urban school district in the province was used for comparative purposes (Calgary Board of Education, 1986; Winnitoy, 1984). Information relating to the various partnerships was gleaned from the tape transcriptions, casual conversations with Partnership participants, personal notes kept by the researcher, and from conversations with District Office personnel closely related to the Partnership program.

Historical Background

The history of the School District reflected the existence of relationships with business and community organizations prior to the formal development of the Partnership Program. Although many schools were satisfied with the types of relationships that had evolved, an increasing number were interested in establishing a close-knit, more structured, one-to-one Partnership with a closely

matched organization. In order to provide this opportunity to interested schools, a framework was required to allow these types of relationships to develop. In 1987, personnel from the School District developed a Partnership Model that reflected the needs of the students in the District, and one that fit the Alberta Education curriculum. At that point in time, it was decided the Partnership Program should not appear restricted to only School-Business relationships. Other sectors of the community were encouraged to form relationships with schools in what was titled the Educational Partnerships Program. This program was approved by the school board in December of 1989.

Educational Partnership Program Benefits

The Program, as conceptualized by the School District, was one that would be mutually beneficial between the District, the school, and the cooperating Partner. It was believed that relationships established between schools and public and private sector Partners would promote better education, develop a better trained work force, and strengthen the economy.

Benefits to the School Partner

The primary benefit to the school was seen to be the opportunity for students to be exposed to the "outside" world. This exposure to individuals, groups and businesses enabled schools to exchange new ideas with the community. Students were given the opportunity to experience how skills learned in school were applied in a private sector setting. Other benefits to the school included access to business facilities and equipment, and opportunities for teachers to learn new skills, expand their ideas, update curricula, and participate in career training.

Benefits to the Private or Public Sector Partner

The School District believed the Partners benefited greatly from the impact they had on students. This impact was felt be important in preparing the future work force with the skills and attitudes necessary for success in service to the community, and in future business endeavors. There were several other benefits identified that resulted from a partnership experience. These included:

- an increased awareness of the role business plays in the community
- opportunities for employees to develop or apply their creative energies and interpersonal skills
- an increased awareness of the industry and business standards among educators and the effect this could have on curriculum development.

The evolution of the Educational Partnerships Program in this School District reflected the beliefs of a similar program that emerged in the mid-eighties in a large urban school district in the southern half of the province. This district equated the concept of "innovative learning" (Calgary Board of Education, 1986) to the type of learning that was experienced in their Partnerships in Education Program. They too, reflected a belief in the need for students to experience their community and for the community to have an increased role in the education system. Benefits described by the Calgary Board of Education (1986) included: the belief that there was an increased awareness and understanding of the public school system, as well as an enhanced public image in the community for the private sector Partners. As well as affecting curriculum change and allowing students to experience a "hands on" learning style, the board saw the private sector Partners as providing role models for young people and individuals who influenced career choices for students.

Conceptual Framework of the Educational Partnership

Figure (5.1) represents the structure of the Educational Partnership Program as defined by this School District. The framework represented the joint-venture nature of any partnering relationship. The strength of the Partnership lay in the commitment of those reflecting both sides of the relationship. The duties outlined below reflected one way of dividing and distributing responsibilities. It should be noted that partners would be free to redesign this framework to better reflect the needs of their specific Partnership.

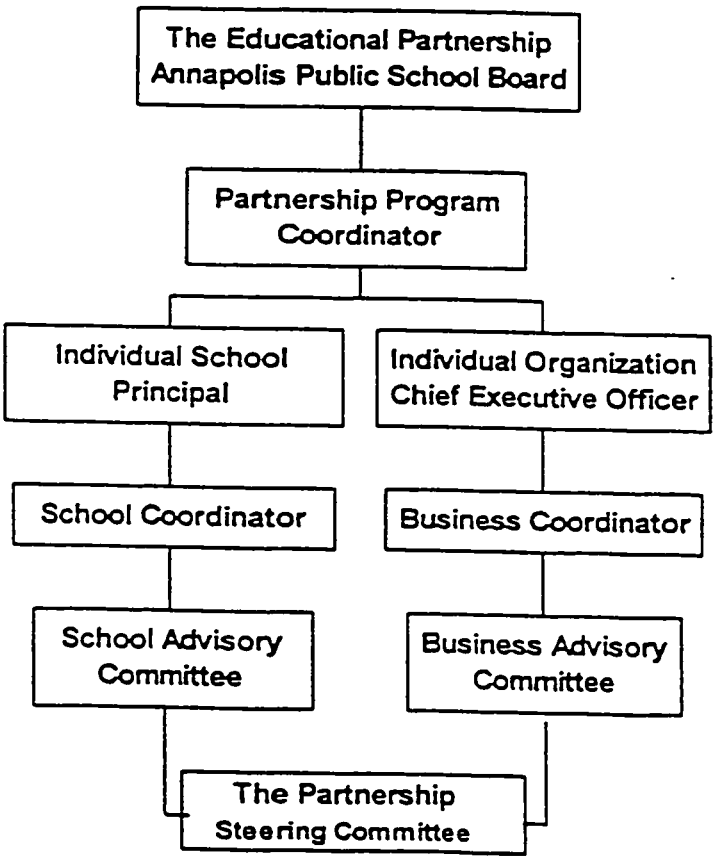

Figure (5.1). Conceptual Framework for the Annapolis School District's Educational Partnership Program (EPS, 1992, pp. 8-9)

The Partnership Program Coordinator directed and coordinated the program on a District wide level at the direction of the board. The principal and the chief executive officer of the Partnership both had the responsibility to

establish top level commitment to the relationship. Both provided the support and resources necessary for the relationship to become and remain a strong one. The school and business coordinators needed to work closely with the steering committee to design an effective program that matched the needs and resources of both Partners. The advisory committees of both Partners were needed to provide feedback to the coordinators on the progress of the Partnership. The members of these committees represented a cross-section of those involved. The steering committee was represented by individuals from both sides of the relationship. The responsibility of this group reflected the vision and the long term planning of the Partnership.

The Partnership Process

Exploration

The School District defined the first step in the partnering process as providing schools and community associations and businesses with the information they needed to make an informed decision about whether or not to pursue a partnering relationship. The board believed that a true Partnership involved a considerable investment in time and energy. A mechanism was needed to identify schools who sought partners in the private sector and vise versa. Out of this need evolved the School Profile and the Business Profile.

The School Profile reflected the school's goals and priorities, what they sought in a partner and what resources and expertise could be shared. The Business Profile reflected the nature of the business and how the business could contribute to the education of students in the school division. In addition, it reflected what resources and expertise they were willing to share. The School District's Partnership Program Coordinator was assigned the task of trying to find a suitable match for interested groups. It was hoped that if schools and private sector groups were closely matched, the resulting Partnership would share a

common vision, a sense of purpose, and the motivation to keep the relationship functioning.

Matching

Potential partners were aligned by the coordinator. These meetings provided the opportunity for discussions that revolved around the vision for the partnership, the goals, and the roles and responsibilities. The School District made it clear that each partner needed to be comfortable with the goals and objectives of the other. Central Office personnel involved in the Partnership Program found true partnerships took time to develop, therefore the matching process could extend over several months and involve several different potential partners. Once a decision was made to pursue a relationship, the school principal and the senior management of the organization took control of the direction the partnership would take. Following the match being made, the planning and implementation process began.

The process of exploration and matching mirrored the process followed by the neighboring urban School District. Profiles were developed by both the schools and the potential Partners, then potential Partners were given the opportunity to meet and discuss needs, interests and priorities in an effort to cement a relationship. Again, it was stressed that the commitment of the senior management of the company was crucial to the development of a School-Business Partnership relationship. (Calgary Board of Education, 1986)

Steps to Success

Planning

The individuals producing the Partnerships Handbook (EPS, 1993) believed Partnerships operate optimally when both Partners work toward a

common goal. It was suggested the Partnerships develop a mission statements, which would be statements of general purpose. The mission statement needed to answer the question "Why does this Partnership exist?". When the mission statement had been established, the goals for the Partnership, the short and long term objectives, as well as any action plans required for the Partnership were established.

Goals of the program. The goals identified the depth and nature of the priorities of the Partnership for both the school and the business. The School District suggested these be limited to five.

Objectives of the program. Those in the District office hoped the objectives of the Partnerships would reflect those of the curriculum whenever possible. An objective was defined as a measurable statement that specified what was to be achieved by a target date.

Action plans. Action plans moved the Partnership from the discussion stage to the achievement stage. The plan outlined the events which led to the achievement of defined objectives. The School District promoted the concept of short-term and long-term action plans. The short-term plans included achievable objectives (field trips or guest speakers), while long-term plans included objectives more difficult to achieve (curriculum enhancement or staff development).

Implementation

When the planning described above was completed, the implementation of the Partnership was left to the structures that existed within the schools and the private sector Partners. The Partnerships began with a formal ceremony (a

Partnership launch) which involved the whole school and VIPs from the community and the private sector, or it simply moved ahead according the plans of the Partnership committee. The School District indicated a high level of on-going, two-way communication was required for the Partnership to attain a high level of success.

Promotion

The School District identified promotion of the Partnership as a high priority for both Partners in the relationship. The internal publics of both Partners; staff, students and parents on the school side, and company employees on the other side, needed to be made aware of every stage of the Partnership development. In addition, the external publics of both partners, the general community or client base they served, needed to be made aware of the developing Partnership. It was suggested the Partnership retain a visible presence in both the school and the Partnership organization.

Recognition

The essential component of the Educational Partnership was the voluntary nature of the relationship. Recognition for the time, talent and expertise that volunteers contributed to the Partnership involved determining the most appropriate type of recognition needed for those individuals. The School District suggested this recognition should be ongoing, personal and public. The specific types of strategies for recognition were left for each Partnership to determine.

Review and Evaluation

School District planners acknowledged the uniqueness of each Partnership that existed. Therefore, it was suggested no one method of evaluation would be effective throughout the District. It was suggested that a strategy of ongoing monitoring would be an effective method of informing both members of the partnership's ongoing activities. In order for the partnership to measure its effectiveness in meeting their goals and objectives, it was suggested a yearly evaluation be completed. The evaluation used provided a measure of accountability. The planners acknowledged the reality of tight budgets in both the educational sector and the private sector and suggested the use of a cost/benefit analysis of the Partnership as a method to determine if the continuation of the Partnership was worthwhile. This evaluation was designed by the partners, or a standard form (Appendix F) was used. A separate evaluation was completed by the school and the Partner. The results of the evaluations were used as a starting point to plan the events of the upcoming year.

Maintenance and Renewal of the Educational Partnership

The School District planning staff acknowledged there were problems associated with schools and the private sector partners engaged in a Partnership agreement. The key factor identified was that of continuity of leadership. On each of the side of the Partnership, change was a matter of course. If a key player on either side of the relationship was removed through transfer, promotion, retirement or any one of a number of factors, the momentum of the Partnership was put at risk.

To counteract this problem, the District offered a strategy for dealing with this and other potential problems. This strategy included use of a formal Partnership launch, renewal strategies, and planning to extend relationships.

Partnership Launch

A formal ceremony to sign the Partnership agreement between the school and its Partner confirmed in the minds of all participants the existence of the Partnership. The broad-based involvement by members of both organizations contributed to a higher level of ownership in the minds of all involved. This launch ceremony was not a requirement of the District, but was offered as a strategy to cement an agreement.

A Strategy for Renewal

Renewal strategies offered by the school District's central office planners included ongoing planning, continuity of leadership, and a problem-solving process.

On-going planning. When a Partnership was established, the planning was no longer focused on the implementation of the program. Priorities changed and energy was needed to devise new plans for the Partnership. To maintain relevance, the Partnership needed to develop flexibility in its planning process. A structure needed to be developed to handle these changes - open lines of communication, a decision making process, and a system for problem solving needed to be put in place.

Continuity of leadership. A broad base of commitment and responsibility was suggested as the way to counteract crucial leadership changes in the school or the partner organization. Inclusion of several staff members in positions of responsibility reduced the potential for the Partnership falling victim to failing due to the loss of one key individual.

Problem solving process. Those planning the program suggested the establishment of a "problem catching" and "problem solving" procedure. The procedure for problem solving included internal personnel on both sides of the Partnership, as well as any individual at the District office who was able to lend assistance.

Extension and Expansion

Those School District planners who authored the Handbook, expressed the belief that without continuous growth and maturation, Educational Partnerships ran the risk of stagnation. Extension and expansion activities were closely linked to the on-going monitoring and evaluation that a Partnership participated in. Evaluation resulted in determining successful and less successful ventures. Out of this analysis, emerged strategies to expand and improve on the activities of the Partnership.

Partnerships in the Study

Table (5.2) reflects the schools and business Partners that participated in the study.

Partnerships in the Study

School	Business Partner	Type of Business
Brownell High School	Bounty Museum	Provincial Museum
Caswell Jr. High School	Camio Computers Inc.	Computer Company
Dundonald High School	Delaware Hospital	Hospital/Health Care Group
Erindale High School	Einborough Construction	Construction Company

Table (5.2). Schools, Business Partners and Type of Business

Partnership One - School and Museum

This Partnership was represented by the linking of a medium sized high school and a museum with a world wide reputation in the field of paleontology research. Unlike the matching model presented earlier, this relationship emerged from the initiative of a teacher at the school who had involved his students in a field trip experience to the museum. This was described by Bob, the teacher, when he stated

> We were field tripping about 200 students down to the museum on a program relating to the Bio. 20 and the Science 20 program. I happen to be a friend with one of the curators down there. So we sat for coffee and he took me on a tour of the back room and sat and discussed a few things that the kids could possibly do and it seemed to mushroom from there.

The museum Partnership had been functioning for three years, and it appeared to be strong enough to continue. The basis for this Partnership was educational. The science teacher was exploring the possibility of including his students in an activity that would link the work of the museum with the work he was doing with his students in the area of paleontology. The strength of the relationship was the willingness of the museum to share its expertise with the students in the area of working with fossil remains and artifacts and Bob's commitment to the continuation of the program. The nature of this Partnership was best described as informal. An extended period of meetings to determine the mission statement, the goals and objectives, and the long term plans for the Partnership did not happen. The relationship developed at a rate Bob and his contact Bill at the museum were comfortable with. Another key player in the development of this Partnership was the principal, Beth. When discussing the involvement of the school administration, Bob stated

> . . . in any of these relationships, the most important person is that person in the role of administration. The administration in this school is so supportive to new ideas. You are not afraid to go and say "Hey, I would like to try this". To me, that is the most important, . . . to allow your staff to try something even if it may fail.

This Partnership did not include the formal launching ceremony. This was do to the informal nature of the relationship. Beth, the principal, felt

> . . . its easier when you sit down, have coffee and say, "What can you do for me,. . . what can I do for you?" than it is to go through a long involved process in terms of goal setting,. . . I have found that the formal setting can be an impediment. Number one, its very time consuming and I'm a much more action oriented person, . . .what is it we need to do and lets do it!

The evaluation of this Partnership adopted the same informal approach. No formal evaluation meetings were conducted and no documents were produced that outlined the evaluation of the previous year, or plans for the next year. The evaluation that was conducted revolved around the work the students were doing for the museum. Bob shared the thought that

> There is an evaluation of the work that the kids have done. The kids who work on those fossils also come on the field trip with us and there is an evaluation done on what they have worked on at the school. But it seems like it is more just a very informal setting on what to do next, or how to expand it.

Partnership Two - School and Computer Company

This Partnership joined a school and a large computer company in a formal Partnership agreement. This relationship more closely reflected the School District's matching and exploration outline, however, the Partnership emerged due to the efforts of the principal of the school. Carl, the principal, was interested in working closely with a computer company to plan the educational technology to be used in his new school. Carl explained

> I searched the market. I looked at all the major players, this company was the only one that was willing to open discussions, . . . to look at educational solutions. The other companies told me that they had the solution and it was in the cardboard box that contained their product. I didn't want that.

This Partnership had existed four years, the length of time the school had been open. Carl, the principal, had been at the school since it opened and his contacts at the computer company had not changed significantly in that time. This relationship emerged out of a defined educational need. Carl had a vision of what he wanted for this new school's computer technology, and the computer company was prepared to meet with Carl and agree on how they could be a part of implementing this vision. In Carl's view, the relationship that developed was a "symbiotic relationship where students gain". Although this Partnership was launched with a formal signing ceremony, the evaluation of the Partnership remains on an informal level. When describing the method of evaluating the partnership Carl stated

> We do it very informally. We tend to meet at least three times a year to say, "How is the partnership going?, Where are we going to take it?, Are both sides still benefiting?".

Partnership Three - School and Hospital

This Partnership represented the first and oldest Partnership in the School District. The school and the hospital were involved in a relationship since 1988. Don, the assistant principal of the school, was a key player in the Partnership since that time. The hospital was a full service facility that served a large section of the city. There existed a high level of community involvement through the hospital and the school. Don's belief that students need involvement in the community to experience the adult world was shown when he stated

> You know, a lot of these students, once they get out into the adult world or, when in fact they are working with the partnerships, the feedback we get from the partners is that a lot of them display a degree of maturity that the teachers do not see in the classroom.

The hospital's wide range of opportunities provided to the school's students was a driving force behind the longevity of the Partnership. Although the school participated in the formal recognition of the Partnership with the hospital at the District level, the relationship operated on an informal level. Don and his contact Deb at the health care group were located in the same building complex, so the ability to communicate and meet was not problematic. The evaluation of the Partnership was reflected in this informal structure. Don described the strategy of using student feedback to evaluate the Partnership's progress when he stated

> The evaluation,. . . I think its a cumulative type of thing. I mean, we certainly like to sit down with students after they've come off the experience and sit and talk to them about their experience. I know my own daughter,. . . spent time in the operating room, . . . it was invaluable, the experience she had.

Deb echoed the belief in using student feedback to help evaluate effectiveness when she referred to the evaluation as "retrospective,. . . why don't we ask the students?".

Partnership Four - School and Construction Company

The development of this Partnership resulted, in part, from a concern on the part of the construction company for the type of student that emerged from the public education system. Earl, the personnel manager of the company alluded to this when he stated

> . . . we were concerned, as a company, about the quality or the readiness of students entering the business world. That's one of the reasons, among others, that we got involved in this partnership.

He also referred to his company's willingness to share its expertise with educators when he shared

> . . . the company has a very sophisticated professional development program here,. . . we ran some of the staff of the school through our professional development courses, . . . they got a better idea of the skills and qualities that business was looking for in people.

Ed, the teacher linked to the Partnership at the school, spoke of the opportunity to share information and expertise when he stated, " . . . from the educators point of view, we didn't want to just be skill-specific to anyone, particularly in the business area. Its certainly allowed for a better blending and shared information.".

The Partnership had existed since 1990. At that time, a launching ceremony kicked off the formal relationship. Earl recollected

> We had a signing ceremony,. . .the Minister of Education was down, the representative from the school, the principal, and the representative from our company signed the agreement to, you know, enter into this partnership.

Although the Partnership reflected many of the formal structures outlined in the District's planning guide, the evaluation of this Partnership remained quite informal. The evaluation strategy was a blending of on-going evaluation of projects and events as they were completed, and a yearly review. Bob reflected on the importance of benefiting students when he referred to the evaluation of the Partnership. He stated

> We try and evaluate every particular event that we get involved in at the end and whether it was beneficial to the students. That is the priority and that is the first question that comes up every time. How beneficial was it to the students and is it something that we should continue with? Is it

> something that we should modify, or is it something that we should maybe move away from and not pursue. Each event is evaluated for its merit. We do that as a committee.

Earl talked about evaluating the Partnership as a "fleeting thing". He too, was concerned about evaluating in terms of the success of the students involved in the program.

Discussion

The commitment to Partnerships in the School District evolved out of a long standing practice of school involvement with their immediate communities. The Partnership program moved these loosely coupled relationships to a program that was more tightly coupled, structured and identifiable. From what the literature referred to as School-Business Partnership Programs emerged what this district titled the Educational Partnership Program. As described by Anna, a department director in the district office

> We came to realize that many of the partnering activities that were taking place in schools weren't strictly with businesses,. . . they were with community organizations, service groups, hospitals, and other public service type institutions. So, the business title became a bit of a misnomer,. . . and since we didn't want to differentiate or create a hierarchy of partnerships, we felt it was important to have a project title that was all encompassing, and reflected all kinds of relationships that were taking place out there.

The primary objective for the Educational Partnerships Program of enabling students to experience first hand the "working" world outside of the school appeared to be achieved. The reflections of the Partnership participants confirmed this as a primary benefit for the students involved in the Partnerships studied. Deb's feelings, when reflecting on their Partnership's students, were consistent with many in the study when she stated

> Real life testing, role modeling, maybe finding a mentor,. . . and when I say real life, (I mean) finding what opportunity is there and matching that with what they thought was there,. . . an opportunity for students to critically think,. . .

The School District's hopes for the private sector Partners appeared to be meeting their objectives. Anna shared this view

> . . . since education is on the front burner and is in the spot light with the media and others, many businesses are approaching us and asking us for some more information on how they can get involved. I think what is significant about Educational Partnerships as a community investment strategy for corporations is that it can touch all employees, and it can have meaning for just about everybody on the staff.

The School District's handbook for establishing Partnerships appeared clear, concise, sequential, and was consistent with the literature and current practice. (EPS, 1993; Calgary Board of Education, 1986) The current administration's support for the program was made clear by Anna's reference to the Superintendent's role when she shared

> I think that there is a great commitment on the part of this district to ensure that the relationship with the business community is successful,. . . the Business Partnership Program being part of it,. . . one is that our Superintendent will be having quarterly meetings with about fifteen chief executive officers from the largest companies in the city,. . . he is quite simply, trying to develop a relationship with those in business and industry in this city who are leaders, as he is a leader in education.

The examination of the four Partnerships in the study showed variance in the establishment and practice of the Partnerships, but all were consistent in that they reflected a high degree of longevity, and the belief that their Partnership was effective, viable, and achieved positive results for students. The evaluation methods used in these Partnerships were consistent only in that the evaluations were executed on an informal basis. None of the Partnerships studied utilized a formal annual evaluation as suggested by the School District's central office.

To conclude, the School District established an Educational Partnership Program. The District office offered a strategic plan for establishing a relationship and a conceptual framework outlining a Partnership plan. A coordinator, who acted as a resource person and liaison, was provided to lend assistance to schools and community groups interested in creating Partnerships.

The current practice of the four Partnerships studied showed the individual partners, not the District office, were the prime reasons for the success (or failure) of a Partnership. Those studied did not rely heavily on the District office for expertise or resources. The individual school contact person took ownership for the program and worked closely with their community Partner. The community Partners reflected the same commitment to making the Partnership a viable operation.

Summary

Information was presented which outlined the School District's strategies for developing a School-Business or Educational Partnership. The benefits believed to result from involvement in an Educational Partnership were identified both for the school and the private sector partner involved. A conceptual framework for Educational Partnerships was presented to reflect the School District's view of the Partnership structure. An implementation plan was presented to demonstrate how the School District envisioned the identification, development, establishment, and evaluation of an Educational Partnership. The practice of a similar urban school district were used for comparative purposes.

Next, the four Partnerships in the study were examined to reflect similarities and dissimilarities in how the Partnerships were initiated, evolved, and were evaluated. The practices of the Partnerships involved were compared to strategies offered by the School District. Data gleaned from the taped

interview transcriptions provided the thoughts and insights of the subjects involved in each Partnership.

Chapter 6

OUTCOMES OF SCHOOL-BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMS

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present findings in relation to the three Research Questions identified in Chapter 1. The responses to each of the Research Questions are presented for the individual from the Annapolis School District Office and then for each Partnership in turn. Following presentation of responses to each Specific Research Question, summary and discussion of the findings will follow. The chapter closes with conclusions related to each Specific Research Question.

Specific Research Question 1.

Specific Research Question 1 asked: Why does a School District, a school, or a member of the private sector involve itself in a School-Business Partnership Program?

Annapolis District Office

Anna's role with the District Office was that of Director of Communications and Community Relations. Anna reflected the belief that the District's involvement in what she termed "Educational Partnerships" was the result of changes in the expectations of the community. She stated

> I think it meets a need of a changing society, I wouldn't necessarily just ascribe it to changes in economics. I think it speaks to the changes in our community demand for accountability, our community demand for involvement, and our community demand for more information about a school system that they have been funding for over 110 years with pretty much no involvement,...and since I believe those changes are there in

> our community right now, projects like Educational Partnerships speak to those needs, and economics is part of it.

Anna went on to share her belief that School-Business Partnerships evolved in the Annapolis District because it was a way to involve a higher number of taxpayers who supported the District, but no longer had children in public schools. She shared this thought

> . . . there was a direct correlation between the birth of the School-Business Partnership Program and our knowledge that seventy percent of Annapolis taxpayers who funded schools did not have children in school, . . . I think the emphasis has changed somewhat from being our way of trying to include a portion of the community, . . . to it being that part of the community interested in knowing what's going on here.

Brownell High School - Bounty Museum

Beth, the Principal of Brownell High School reacted to the question with the belief that the need for schools to reach out and link with the community is long overdue. She also tied this concept to the need for schools to work in conjunction with the private sector to help students develop applicable skills that will carry them into future careers they may choose. She stated

> . . . where does career development happen? It doesn't happen within the four walls of the classroom. Our goal in school should be to make our walls invisible. Too long have we been isolated from the community, operating as separate institutions, not reaching out to the community. We are training people for the world of work, eventually careers, occupations, trades and technologies, . . . what better place to do it in than that environment?

Beth also acknowledged economic demands and changes in public attitude as being impetus for change regarding schools and their relationship with the private sector. She saw the evolution of School-Business Partnerships as a natural outgrowth of a concern about public education. She commented

> You just can't continue to be everything to all people, so you have to share your resources. I say that is one of the reasons for the business partnerships. I really think that part of the driving force behind it was that the business and non-school community was becoming disillusioned about public education, . . .people in the work force have not been happy with the quality of student that has been graduating.

Bob, a teacher at Brownell High School and the prime driver behind the development of the Partnership with the Bounty Museum had a view about School-Business Partnerships that brought it much closer to the classroom. His belief was that it was an individual, or a teacher who was solely responsible for establishing relationships that could be beneficial for students. He stated

> I feel it is driven by a teacher who comes up with an idea and is willing to pursue it, . . . I don't see companies come into the school saying this is what we would like to do with you, it is more the other way around.

Tied to his belief that the teacher should be the catalyst, was his belief that extending the classroom to the community in the form of Partnerships created a better learning opportunity for his students. He explained

> I think we need more of this all the time. Mainly because it gives students other options than just what we teach in the curriculum, . . . and there is so much more than what we just teach, and this is another way that we can show kids some of that extra.

Bill, a former teacher and a member of the collections department at Bounty Museum, alluded to a need to "bridge" the gap between schools and an organization such as the museum in his response to Specific Research Question 1. He explained

> I think there was a mind set, . . . from this institution and from my experience in education, a mind set where they were two different worlds. I think there was a recognition of the need to bridge that, or part of it.

Caswell Junior High School - Camio Computers Inc.

Carl, the Principal at Caswell, saw his school's involvement in a School-Business Partnership as a way for his school to involve itself on a different level with the community, while at the same time, expanding opportunities for the students in the school. He felt the school's involvement in a Partnership was in part economic, but more importantly, a result of re-thinking the role of educators in today's society. When discussing Partnerships meeting a need for societal change, and the economics needs of our times, he stated

> I think at first glance it appears economic, but societal in the extent that we're out of the paradigm of educators as founts of all knowledge and keepers of that knowledge and wisdom. We are aware that in the 90's that when we all talk, we are stronger as a team than we are as individuals, . . . it is more of a shared vision mentality rather than "I know the answer and therefore I'll let you see the vision, if you talk nicely to me."

Cam, a teacher-technology specialist at the school, felt the school's move to its Partnership position was in part related to the need to provide information to the students and at the same time, allow the public to see that the school was doing what it could to provide opportunities for students to access information that private industry had available to it. Relating the Partnership to the effectiveness of the school, Cam indicated

> For sure, it allows a more free flow of information from industry, which is part of the bill paying public. One of the pressures that is on public education obviously is money, the other one is credibility. The bill paying public, I think, has a feeling that education is not, in many ways, providing the kinds of services that business, at least, need and they translate that into what students need.

Chuck, an executive with Camio Computer Inc. felt his company's involvement in a School-Business Partnership was driven by a combination of

changing educational needs, changing societal expectations, and by changing economic demands. He indicated

> The difference in teaching from what I've experienced is one of so much more information available, . . . you're needing to get into technological solutions, . . . what's being taught is how to get information, organize it, and do critical analysis. . .

Dundonald High School - Delaware Hospital

Don, an Assistant Principal at Dundonald High School, talked of improving his school and making it more effective by expanding the school's profile in the community through its involvement in a School-Business Partnership. He stressed the importance of the students recognizing their role as contributing members of a community and how Partnerships enabled this to become part of the culture of the school. He stated

> Well, from our point of view, I think we looked at partnerships as a way of expanding our profile in the community. We looked at the school as having to become more involved in the community, . . . We talk to our students all the time about volunteering, we talk to them about their role in the community, and I think there's something to be gained by just bringing a heightened awareness to the young people that, yes, you are a part of a community and in order to make that community a healthy, vibrant community, you are a part of it and you have to do your part.

Deb, who was employed by the Delaware Hospital, spoke to Research Question 1 as being related to a sense of community on the part of both the school and the Hospital. She felt both sides of the Partnership were able to influence each other and the surrounding community in a positive way. She indicated

> (My organization values its role in the partnership) . . . as part of their community commitment, . . . and you know, looking after and being part of the influencing positive help in this part of the city.

Erindale High School - Einborough Construction

Ed, a teacher at Erindale, felt his school's involvement in the Partnership was tied to the future direction of schools. He felt involvement in this Partnership enabled his school and his program to better teach students the realities of the world around them, away from the confines of the walls of the school. He shared

> I think that (partnering) certainly does improve the direction of schools. It gives us the ability to deal with what is happening in the world today. It taps into real world problem solving.

He also acknowledged that Partnership relationships can't be based on the belief that the school can tie into the resources of a private sector Partner. Ed indicated, "if that is all that we are involving them for is the money and we don't want to share any knowledge and information back and forth, its doomed".

Earl, the manager of Personnel Services at Einborough Construction alluded to his firm's desire to become involved with the public education system because they felt the time was right and there was a climate conducive to a positive partnering arrangement. He indicated

> I think its our economy, but I think its philosophy, too. Sometimes, when you have enough criticism, people start to say, "Hey, maybe we should do something about this", . . .We have some very responsible employers our there that want to get involved in the school without influencing, to a major degree, the curriculum.

Summary and Discussion of Specific Research Question 1.

Recurring themes that emerged in the responses to Research Question 1 were societal change, economic need, community involvement and concern for educational outcomes.

Societal change. Anna referred to the needs of a changing society in her discussion of School-Business Partnerships. She tied her thoughts to the belief

that part of the changing environment around education related to the demand for accountability of the public school system and the need for schools to be open communicators with their involved and non-involved publics. Beth shared the belief that schools need to change by being more sensitive to concerns that exist around the quality of public education. Schools can no longer deliver their curriculums in a traditional manner because society has become disillusioned about the quality of the learning outcomes of that delivery mode. She felt that the resource sharing that existed between public education and the private sector was one way Business-Education Partnerships represent this need for change. Bill, too, recognized the need for change as he discussed how Partnerships are "bridging the gap" between two different worlds - the world of traditional education and the world of the private sector. Carl saw societal change being reflected in a re-definition of the role of educators and education. He viewed this movement as a paradigm shift, where society and educators were re-aligning themselves to play different roles in the delivery of education to young people. Cam identified the societal change as being related to the vast amount of information needed to be accessed by students and how linkages with private industry could help make this a reality. Earl felt the climate for developing new and different relationships between schools and industry was a result of the attitudinal change on the part of society. He discussed a willingness on the part of private industry to influence, in a positive manner, the learning outcomes of students without demanding control of educational curriculums.

Economic need. Six of the eleven individuals in the study indicated that current economic conditions had a role in the development of School-Business Partnership Programs. In the audio-taped interviews, one of the factors related to the economy and education that became apparent was the need to recognize resources are limited in all parts of the economy. Anna, Beth, Carl and Cam all referred to the school and the community (or private sector) sharing resources and knowledge. Several of the respondents made reference to the private

sector having resources that schools did not have, but certainly could make use of in the delivery of traditional curriculums. Cam, for example, referred to the vast amount of knowledge that exists in the world and how their Partnership with Camio Computers Inc. was providing services that enabled students at Caswell to access information through computer hardware and software.

While the majority of respondents referred to economics as a contributing factor in Partnership development, Ed cautioned that Partnership relations cannot be based on the belief that the private sector partner will continually inject financial resources into the school.

The awareness on the part of the individuals in the study that economic conditions of recent years had a negative influence on education was apparent. Also apparent, was the awareness that the private sector had a genuine interest in contributing to a better public education system.

Community involvement. All individuals, with the exception of two, alluded to the need for increased community involvement as a contributing reason for the development of School-Business Partnerships. Part of this need related to the societal changes already discussed, and part of it related to other reasons. Anna discussed how 70% of taxpayers in the school district no longer had children in schools, but still were relied upon to support the public education system through taxation. She implied at the very least, this group of citizens needs to be kept informed about what is happening in schools. Others referred to the elimination of the isolation of the school. Beth talked about making the walls of the school invisible, while Carl talked of the paradigm shift of having educators and community members work together to form a more effective team. Don and Deb, in the hospital partnership, stressed community involvement as the driving force behind much of what they did with students. Crucial to their partnering activities was imparting the belief that ownership in and commitment to your community makes for good citizens and good communities. Earl contributed the belief that good corporate citizens want to give back to the

community and one way of achieving this was to work with schools in Partnering relationships.

Concern for educational outcomes. Underlying themes in the discussion of educational outcomes included accountability, credibility and validity. The question of whether the public education system was being successful in turning out graduates who were able to move into the workforce was noted. From the School District prospective, Anna acknowledged there had been an increase in demands for accountability. The community needed to be informed about what schools were doing, how they were doing this, and whether these educational strategies were being successful. She saw the expansion of the public education system into the milieu of School-Business Partnerships as a positive step in sharing education with the community.

Beth and Ed's comments tied educational outcomes to the career development opportunities of School-Business Partnerships. Both talked about exposure to "real" world activities and the benefits to be gained by doing so. Cam and Bill, like Anna, tied involvement in School-Business Partnerships to improving the quality of high school graduates and to improving the credibility of high school programs offered in the eyes of the general public.

Specific Research Question 2(a).

Specific Research Question 2(a) asked: What are the perceived benefits to be derived from involvement in a School-Business Partnership Program?

- for students ?
- for the school (or school district) ?
- for the private sector or community partner?

Annapolis District Office

Anna reflected on many benefits derived from involvement in School-Business Partnerships. In terms of student benefits, Anna shared an anecdote that for her, demonstrated what students can gain from involvement in School-Business Partnership Programs. She stated

> . . . I think that those benefits are as varied and significant as the individuals involved in the program. I remember this story in one of our partnerships of a young man at a district high school who wanted desperately to be in construction, but was pretty much failing all fronts in school. Their business partnership in that school was with a local construction company, . . .instead of having the counselor, who had failed to motivate this young man, or his parents, who had failed equally to motivate him, or the principal talk to him about his career options and his choices in school. They had the foreman from one of the large construction projects that this company was undertaking talk to this young man. At the risk of sounding snappy, he was able to change this young man's life in a way that no one in the school was capable of doing. Because there he was, with dirt under his finger nails, talking about the realities of life on a site and how you couldn't succeed without math or physics or some of those other things. Now that's a very tangible and pragmatic benefit.

Anna's thoughts about the benefits to schools in the District being involved in School Business Partnerships revolved around recognizing that schools are doing good things, but need to expose what they are doing to the general community if there is to be an acknowledgment and recognition of what truly beneficial things are being undertaken and achieved by the public school system. Anna stated

> I think its very, very important for schools to view themselves and to be viewed as an integral part of the community, . . . and if we remain insular, as I think we have to a certain extent in the past, . . . and don't have connections with the community and specifically, the business community, I think there is a danger that the significant work of schools can be

> overlooked by the business community, . . .and significant links between what goes on in schools and what goes on in the work place can be overlooked.

Anna presented a very interesting view of how business benefits from involvement in Partnerships. Her description drew an interesting parallel between education and the business world when she stated

> I think there are a number of benefits for the business community, one, being they have an opportunity to be involved in the place that is essentially doing the pre-work training for them, so they have the opportunity to take a broad side view and be involved in the organization that is training the leaders and employees and business owners of the future, . . . and I don't believe there is a huge discrepancy between the education world's agenda and the business world's agenda. I think we are all engaged in our future prosperity and I guess I don't believe in cynics who think the business community has a sinister agenda, . . . they may speak in more business-like language and they may use profit and loss analogies more readily than we would in school, but I think their underlying reason for being is to make our society prosperous and I don't see there's any difference between what schools are about and what businesses are about.

Brownell High School - Bounty Museum

Beth discussed benefits to the students in terms of life-long learning, relevancy of curriculum, the experience of the work- world and the potential to really "hook" kids in through experiential learning. She expanded on these ideas when she stated

> I think one of the issues for educators today is relevancy of curriculum, and if you can make that tie in for kids between the curriculum and the world of work, it provides unique life-long learning experiences.

She shared her belief that Partnership situations enabled students to see the link between skills gained in the classroom and their applicability in the work-site. She pointed out

> . . . the skills that go along with learning, learning how to learn, discipline, all of those things are things that you need in the work force, . . . working together in groups, working together on a team, . . . those are very direct benefits, . . . plus we have had one of our students employed by the museum and now plans to go on and study in that area, . . .

Beth examined the effect of the Partnership on her school and identified positive public relations for the school as a key benefit, as well as the opportunity for life-long learning for the students. She stated

> I think it does a lot of positive public relations for the school, . . . I think parents are really happy to see that kind of tie in with life-long learning, with careers and with the world of work. It gives kids an opportunity that they wouldn't have had in a regular curriculum as such, . . .

Beth identified benefits to the museum as being related to them being able to accomplish some things using the students, but primarily, she felt the Partnership was very good advertising for the museum in the Annapolis School District. She shared

> . . . it is scientific work we are doing here at the school, which is really important for them, . . . the work is done properly, and at a limited cost, . . . plus, I think its really positive recognition(for the museum) , . . .its good advertisement for them.

Beth talked about the "mutual benefit" that existed between her school and the museum. She identified this as the "fit" that existed between the two as being one that made working together productive and quite simple. She explained

> . . . for the Museum, its a matter of shipping the fossils up and sending them to us, our kids working on them and we ship them back. Occasionally, they will send up one of their paleontologists to visit us, and that sort of thing, and so, its something that benefits both of us and it fits in with the on-going process that happens in both organizations. I think that's what will make business partnerships successful.

Bob, the classroom teacher, identified student benefits as being related to learning and curriculum. He demonstrated his enthusiasm for the Partnership when he stated

> Probably the biggest benefit to students is that there is no downside to it, . . . the school is doing things other than just in the classroom, which is important. They see how a lot of things are supported by our curriculum, which to me, is important as well. And probably the most important thing in this program is that they are getting a view of things we do not teach in the classroom, . . . a number of students have decided that something along this field might be a possibility for them in the future.

In examining the benefits to his school and the School District, Bob felt the relationship with the Museum was a magnet to draw interested students to Brownell. He felt the School District was gaining a program that it had not been able to offer prior to the establishment of the Partnership. He indicated " . . . for the school itself, it has been a selling factor, . . . there have been a number of kids come to this school just because of the palaeontology projects".

Bob identified positive public relations for the Museum as a benefit to their Partner. He described how they used the Partnership to aid in initiating other programs offered at Bounty Museum. He explained how "the museum has used this project in promotion with the government, . . . they have also used it promoting in a number of new programs that they are initiating, such as the day dig". He also pointed out that Brownell students completed work with Museum fossils and this benefited the Partner as well. Bob shared the fact that "they have also used the products we have worked on for them, . . . right now there is a display in the Alberta Legislature which is the materials that we have worked on".

Bill, the museum employee, tied his belief that students benefited from the Partnership through the "hands-on" learning provided. This was confirmed with his statement "I think its important for students, . . . to get their hands on the real thing, . . . they get to make real mistakes in the real world, and I think that's the

real thing". The school benefits Bill recognized related to positive experiences for the school's staff and the ability to recruit new students to Brownell. He stated

> . . . I think they've got three staff members there who are pretty involved with it, and I think that kind of commitment from the staff helps the school, . . . and I'm told, and this is from teachers there, that it helps recruit students, . . .

Bill felt there were several areas where the Museum benefited as a result of its involvement in the Partnership. These included positive public relations, community involvement, a willingness to try something new, and benefits to museum employees. As stated by Bill

> I think there's some good publicity spin off. It hasn't been really huge or anything like that, but significant also is an awareness of the need to be involved in the community in some way or another. I think it sort of is part of a willingness to experiment too, . . . I think we are playing that role.

Caswell Junior High School - Camio Computers Inc.

Carl, the principal at Caswell Junior High was able to identify benefits to the students, the school, the District and the Partnering firm when asked about the positive ramifications of the Partnership the school was involved in. In his words, the students "gained expertise, experience and knowledge" from their involvement with a huge multinational corporation. In Carl's words, "they have no problems giving us answers , looking at other solutions and looking at things in different ways that an individual can't". When reflecting on the benefits derived by his school through its involvement in the Partnership with Camio Computers, Carl felt the relationship had put his school on the cutting edge of computer education technology. He reflected

> I think we're probably cutting edge right now in technology in North America anyway, in that we are not a pre-canned educational solution for

> a building. The solution was for this building, and this type of programming and that's been used in other places now. The other one, is that there is some benefit of hardware and software and we benefited from a consulting expertise that would have cost us hundreds and thousands of dollars.

The success of this Partnership led Carl to indicate the School District had benefited because it caused people in the District to re-examine the various computer options that exist and in Carl's words "we certainly broke some of the ice".

Carl shared his beliefs that the Partner firm was benefiting from this relationship as well. It was his belief that the firm had increased its "credibility" in the educational sector, made some "meaningful connections", gained a "foothold" and he added, "I think for them, on the other side, its translated into money and that's where the success is".

Cam, the technology specialist at the school, felt students were benefiting from this Partnership from their exposure to leading edge technology and the expertise and consulting that came along with the relationship. He did point out one spin off of the relationship was some career direction for some students when he stated

> Certainly, we have had several students leave who know darn well that they want a career in the technology field somehow, . . . again I would hesitate to suggest that was a direct result of the Business Partnership, but more of a result of their exposure to the technology.

When the benefits of the Partnership for the school were considered, Cam talked of the relationship between the school, the District and the community as benefiting mutually due to the existence of the Partnership. In considering the benefits to the community, he stated

> . . . it likes the idea of the business partnership, because the bill paying public often has a feeling that education is not preparing the kids and is not tied into the "real world". The establishment of the formal business

> partnership I think increases those ties, although the community probably wouldn't see any direct way that happens.

He linked the school benefits to the benefits identified for students when he made the following observations related to leading edge technology:

> Certainly, again in terms of keeping us on the leading edge, in terms of helping us with long term planning, in having the expertise to be able to better predict, . . . where technology is going and where we should be positioning ourselves, is probably the main benefit.

Cam shared that he felt Caswell Junior High had become a showcase for the District in terms of the things that were happening related to technology and education. He indicated that the school is able to share new found expertise at the District level when he stated

> . . . just on Friday and Saturday we were at Central Office. . . they had a conference - Education in the Fast Lane. We did two presentations there; one on a new learning program that we have, and the other one which is actually a story that we have been telling since we have opened and that is how to take your vision of education through to a technology implementation plan . . . and some strategies for doing that.

Cam saw the benefits of the Partnership for Camio Computers as being related to that company gaining exposure in the School District and being able to prove that their expertise in the area of computer technology related to education could be applied to classrooms and schools. His views are reflected in the following comments:

> Four years ago, when we opened, MS DOS was virtually unheard of for instruction at the elementary or the junior high level. What happened now is that many other junior high schools have gone to MS DOS equipment. So they certainly have benefited in that.

Chuck, the computer company executive, when asked about benefits to students through the Partnership, stressed the concepts of access and understanding. He expanded on this through his statement

> Well, students gain access to what should be a business, or most current technology and information. I would expect that they would gain an understanding that the business world out there is . . .its not a not-for-profit type of arrangement, that there are people out there . . . live people that are just like their parents . . . they are doing business . . .

The benefits that were tied to the school were obvious, in that the school was involved in the design and delivery of the technology provided by the computer company. Chuck pointed out that the Partner relationship was very much a "community model" and that the school had worked hard to make it this way. In his words, this type of arrangement gave the relationship that existed a "pretty broad representation". In this sense, the Partnership benefited not just Caswell Junior High and Camio Computers, but benefited the Annapolis School District as a whole.

In analyzing how Camio's involvement in the Partnership had benefited the company, Chuck was divided in his thinking. On one hand, a relationship or bond had been formed between the school and the company. This was as he indicated, "being a Partner in the true sense of mutual benefit". The company's prime reason for entering into the relationship was not just for profit, but to demonstrate its willingness to work closely with a school in an educational environment, as opposed to a business environment. He also recognized the business benefits that had emerged out of the existence of the Partnership. These included product sales, public relations, exposure to new markets and increased sales potential. Chuck described this when he stated

> . . . we've tried to keep as many people at Camio involved with it. Like I say, I'm the point man. . . but you've got as many as six or seven different people at Camio involved actively . . . In exchange for that . . . the flip side of that is they do buy our product, they do showcase our product and take

> every opportunity to promote this relationship and that school has a positive effect on the district because that creates more business for us in other areas. Its not that big of a sector in terms of revenues. Its more of a proving ground for our technologies and the benefit we hope to get is that people will start to use our products and our technology and we'll be successful in that.

Dundonald High School - Delaware Hospital

Don, the Assistant Principal at Dundonald High School, linked the benefits to students through the Partnership as being related to gaining a level of maturity, personal growth and attaining some career direction. Don felt it was very important for "young people to gain a different perspective of, for lack of a better word, the adult world". Don alluded to how students, once out in a job setting, adjust to what is expected of them. He stated

> . . . the feedback we get from the partners is that a lot of them display a degree of maturity that the teachers may not see in the classroom . . . there is a completely different influence and a completely different approach to how they are spending their time. A degree of maturity shows that, often times, doesn't show in the classroom.

Another important benefit identified was that Partnerships often provide students an opportunity to experience learning outside of the classroom, and this may help influence career decisions in the future. Don indicated that in his experience, the major concern of most high school students was that of not knowing what would happen to them after they graduate. In Don's words, the existence of the Partnership provided the opportunity to develop "a perspective of what is needed to be successful after they leave school".

The benefits to the school were closely tied to those identified for students. It was Don's belief that if the school was able to provide students with the opportunity for personal growth, something positive was being accomplished. Don clarified this with the statement

> . . .just the way they have gained, you know, an experience that they didn't have before. So I think whenever we can give them some experiences that allow them some personal growth, from an educator's point of view, we've done something, and something positive.

When considering the benefits accrued by the private sector Partner, Don talked of the partner having influence in the development of the "workforce of the future". The private sector, in Don's mind, had a "vested interest" in working with young people, as they would soon be those seeking employment in their post-secondary years. One interesting point Don brought up related to "transferability skills". He stated

> We found that a lot of businesses in the West end are not necessarily looking at students with post-secondary kinds of training. There are a lot of businesses that are prepared to work with students and, all they really want is what they have referred to as "transferability skills". In other words, give us a young person who is prepared to show up every day, on time, and is prepared to show a little initiative, and we will work with them. Give us somebody that we can mold, and somebody who is malleable and we will work with that person.

Deb, the health care group manager, was able to identify several benefits to students through their involvement in a School-Business Partnership Program. These included real-life experiences, testing, role modeling, mentoring and critical thinking. When discussing this, she shared

> Real life, testing, role modeling, maybe finding a mentor, and when I say real life, . . . finding what opportunity is out there and matching that with what they thought was there . . . an opportunity for students to think critically . . . so they can challenge a teacher who says something . . .

Although strongly committed to Business Partnerships, Deb had reservations about how the school and especially, other teachers in the school, might benefit from the School-Business relationship that existed. Deb mentioned "I don't know that they benefit from it as much as the students do and those of us that are directly involved in the Partnerships". She explained that teachers were

all so busy that unless tied directly to the Partnership, "they have other business to do".

In relating possible benefits to the School District by Dundonald High School being involved in a Partnership, she felt that it provided the District with a "reality test" in terms of "what should be in the curriculum" and "how the schools must be a community partner". Deb's feeling was that the District benefited because "the school board itself is made up of community people, so I think they have a lot to gain".

When examining the business partner side of the relationship, Deb felt the benefit received was the opportunity to work with young people as future members of the workforce. She stated

> I think the corporate community, through Business-Education Partnerships, can give input into what they're expecting of a graduate. Some of those cores, . . . computer literacy, commitment to the job, basic language skills, communication skills, and so on, . . . I think that this is the mechanism to give input.

Erindale High School - Einborough Construction

Ed, a teacher at Erindale, believed the benefits from involvement in the Partnership with Einborough Construction were very similar for the students involved and the school as a whole. He believed that if the school was benefiting, then so were the students, and vise versa. In working to develop the Partnership, Ed wanted the students and the school to "tap into leading edge technology". He explained

> A lot of people have questioned,. . . why a construction company?. . .but we felt that they are a company making money and producing something for the present and the future. There is a lot of problem solving in the work they are involved in. Not only do they build bridges and tunnels, they design the infrastructure for cities, . . . we wanted to make sure that our students were getting up-to-date information.

Ed stressed the importance of students gaining positive real-life experiences through the Partnership when he stated

> In a few years, they are going to be in a working profession and they are going to come up against problems. They are going to have to work with other people and do some teamwork, . . . basically, real-life problem solving.

Ed found that the diversity of the school's Partner enabled the benefits of the relationship to flow through the school as a whole. It was not simply the school and a construction company teaching students how to build things. He explained

> They can tap into the Partnership in many ways. Einborough comes in and does a career fair for us and students get involved in a number of career areas. The Partnership also allows us to tap into any partner that the business is involved in. It actually branches off like the hub of a wheel. Our partner does have corporate lawyers, doctors, . . . a whole variety, and they try and build some bridges to other sectors of the business community to get information. . . (to students).

Ed outlined several specific ways the Partnership benefited the students and the school when he stated

> They come into the trades and work with the students there, they work in our career and life management program, they come in and actually teach part of the course. Our learning assistance and at-risk students get involved with Einborough and we try to get them on to job sites and see if

they can work with some of their employees and convince them to tap back into the school environment.

In discussing the benefits to Einborough, the Partner, Ed expressed the belief they were being proactive by deciding to partner with a school. He felt it exemplified one way that Einborough was a "good corporate citizen" in the

community. He also felt they were looking to the future and taking an active role in helping to produce a "better citizen" and a "better employee" for the years to come.

Earl, the manager of personnel services for Einborough Construction was able to identify three benefits to students that were a result of the School-Business Partnership. These ranged from purely economic, to influencing how schools were delivering their curricula. He described

> We have made two $1000 scholarships available. . . one for academic excellence and one for technical excellence. Its to encourage students to get into the engineering program at a recognized university or an engineering related diploma program at a trade school. We also have cash awards for the grade 11 students to encourage them into the trades and technologies.

Earl talked about the ability to positively influence the "quality of student" entering the workforce, through the student's involvement with his firm and the Partnership. This involvement included "mentoring opportunities, job shadows and job site visits".

Lastly, Earl felt students were benefiting on a larger scale by his firm's work in helping "educators re-focus on what their courses should be like to meet the needs of business, as opposed to being purely academic".

When identifying benefits to his firm through their involvement in the Partnership, Earl admitted "its really something that's very hard to measure". He admitted that his firm "may not receive any direct benefit for this partnership". His view was more altruistic, in that they weren't seeking direct benefits, but were content to be a positive influence on students and the community. He explained this when he stated

> We know that there are going to be some students that are going to come out of this partnership program who are going to be better citizens, . . . who are going to be more suitable for the workforce. We may take advantage of those students, but someone is going to benefit for sure.

Summary and Discussion of Specific Research Question 2(a)

Specific Research Question 2(a) dealt with identifying the benefits associated with School-Business Partnership Programs for the students involved, the school or School District and lastly, for the private sector or community Partner. The responses of those involved in the study were dealt with under those three categories.

Student Benefits

Four recurrent themes emerged when respondents discussed how students benefited from their involvement in the Partnerships that participated in the study. These included an increased level of learning, exposure to leading edge technology, personal growth and choice of future career.

Level of learning. All respondents made some reference to students learning through their involvement in a School-Business Partnership Program. These references used terms such as "hands-on learning", "real world experiences", "life-long learning", and "experiential learning". Those in the Partnerships involved with young people, felt that the learning that was taking place outside of the classroom, the "real world" learning, was of significant benefit to the students and a positive supplement to what was taking place in traditional classroom settings. Exposure to problem solving situations, teamwork situations, and situations where critical and creative thinking skills were needed, were all examples of how students learned experientially with their School-Business Partner. Positive learning situations that were the result of role-modeling and mentoring opportunities created by the Partnerships were also identified.

Leading edge technology. Those partnered to the computer company and the construction company made reference to the benefits of being exposed to the latest technology that industry could offer and how this allowed them to gain, as Carl stated "experience, expertise and knowledge". The ability of private sector Partners to be able to provide newer technologies than schools was referred to in the discussions related to the need for schools to be able to tap into resources and expertise other than what the public education system was able to provide. Tied to the exposure to state of the art technology, was the belief that students were gaining a better understanding of the business world in which this technology was being applied. Ed expanded on this when he pointed out that the construction company partner acted like the "hub of a wheel" due to its connections to other sectors of the economy (medicine, law, commerce) where students were able to make inroads and benefit through experiential learning situations.

Personal growth. Three Partnerships identified personal growth as a student benefit. The Hospital-School relationship was one that was convinced that involvement in the Partnership was a contributing factor to students gaining a higher "level of maturity" and a much better perspective of the "adult world". By being exposed to a number of different experiences with the Partner, students were able to demonstrate a level of maturity not consistent with what was seen in the classroom setting. Tied to this was Beth's belief that being able to "hook" kids through experiential learning enables young people to see themselves in a different light, away from their peer group at the school. Don believed the completely different influence on students and the completely different approach to how they spent their time on job sites, contributed to the personal growth needed to move them closer to the level of concerned and caring citizens. Earl, the construction company executive, also alluded to personal growth related to students becoming better citizens.

Career choices. By allowing students to be exposed to a variety of experiences made available by the existence of Partnerships, five of those involved believed this was contributing to students' ability to choose a career path. Beth, for one, alluded to parents being pleased that their students were making the tie in between the world of work and future career opportunities. Bob, on the other hand, credited the relationship with the Museum and the opportunities created because of it, with making students more aware of potential career opportunities in the field of science and paleontology. The exposure to the technology of Camio Computers had Cam convinced that several students would pursue a career in some area of technology. It was felt students gained a comfort level with the business world through their involvement in Partnerships and a better knowledge of the skills they need to acquire to be successful in their chosen career.

School or School District Benefits

Three recurrent themes emerged when those involved in the study discussed benefits received by the school or the School District through involvement in a School-Business Partnership Program. These included: community involvement, improved learning opportunities and exposure to cutting edge technology.

Community involvement. Community involvement reflected an increased level of commitment to, and interaction with, the community of the school, or of the District as a whole. Tied closely to this was the belief that positive public relations resulted from all the Partnerships in the study, and this was linked to a form of good community relations.

Eight of eleven individuals who participated in the study identified community involvement as being a positive benefit to their School-Business Partnership. Anna, from the District Office, saw Partnerships as a means to link

with the business community and through interaction, create an exchange of understanding about what each accomplished in the city. Anna had the unique view that the education world's agenda and the business world's agenda were parallel and that ultimately, both sought "to make our society prosperous". Others, including Cam, Chuck and Deb, spoke in general terms about how Partnerships succeeded in linking the school and community together and how these relationships were a positive reflection on the School District as a whole. Chuck, a computer executive, talked of this type of linkage as a "community model". As a parent of students in the school system, he felt good about the existence of School-Business Partnerships. Beth, Bob and Bill referred to involvement in Partnerships as "good public relations" for the school and surrounding community. These individuals also felt involvement in their Partnership impacted positively when recruiting students to their schools. Ed believed that his entire school benefited through their Partnership because the community identified itself with the Partnership, not just the specific students who were directly involved in it.

In a different form of public relations, one Partnership (Erindale-Einborough) established scholarships for grade 11 and 12 students. This benefit was linked to positive public relations for the school, the District and the Partnership.

Improved learning opportunities. Improved learning opportunities related to how Partnership involvement had enabled the school, or the District, to expand learning for students and staff.

Beth and Bob (Brownell-Bounty Museum) were in agreement that various forms of "life-long learning" took place because of the exposure the school had to the Museum and its work. This "life-long learning" was not limited to students, staff benefited as well. The programs offered in the school had expanded because of it, as had the number of students and staff involved. They, along with Carl, Cam, Deb and Ed all agreed that the expertise and consulting skills

brought to the school by the Partnerships contributed to increased learning. It also impacted the school in terms of program delivery and curriculum development. Because of the exchange of knowledge, schools involved in Partnerships have had the opportunity to share expertise with other schools in the District. The District itself, re-examined its strategy for computer technology education and implementation due to Partnership involvement and the knowledge sharing that emerged.

Cutting edge technology. The two Partnerships that most reflected private industry, the computer company Partnership and the construction company Partnership, each identified the exposure to "cutting edge technology" as a benefit schools and the District received through the School-Business Partnerships. Carl discussed how the technology of his computer company Partner enabled his school to develop new and innovative methods of delivering computer technology to his students. Cam, his technology specialist, echoed this sentiment and also identified how the link with Camio Computers helped him to better position his school to react to technological change in the industry. Ed's reference to "cutting edge technology", because of the nature of Einborough Construction, was more related to building and other trades, as well as science and technology. The consistent result of this exposure to the latest technology was the message that the students and the schools were the winners in the relationship.

Private Sector or Community Partner Benefits

Three recurrent themes emerged when those involved in the study discussed how private sector or community Partners benefited from their involvement in a School-Business Partnership. These included: good public relations, influence in the development of future citizens and development of future business potential.

Good public relations. Eight of 11 participants in the study identified positive public relations for the private sector Partner as the prime benefit for involvement in a School-Business Partnership. This was determined subjectively, as no Partnership practiced any formal evaluation analysis of their relationship. It was the feeling of those interviewed that the exposure received by the Partner, in the school and in the community, was a form of advertising the Partners could not have attained without their commitment to a School-Business Partnership. The construction company executive admitted his firm may not "receive any direct benefit for this partnership", yet he acknowledged they were content to be a positive influence on students and the community.

Influence on future citizens. Five of 11 participants in the study indicated the opportunity to influence the future employees, business leaders and business owners, was a benefit for the private sector Partners involved in School-Business Partnerships. This influence resulted from the belief that School-Business Partnerships were mutually beneficial. The private sector Partners, while not benefiting in obvious material ways, felt their influence would make a difference in years to come. This was referred to by one individual as the "vested interest" of the Partner, that is, working with young people who may ultimately become the employees of the future.

Potential business. The computer company-school Partnership alluded to the company having made "meaningful connections" and having increased its "credibility" in the educational market. However, the Partnership remained very much a mutually beneficial relationship. Any potential business would emerge naturally, as opposed to being the result of a strategy for entering into the Partnership. Product sales, public relations, exposure to new markets and increased sales potential were identified as various benefits that emerged from this Partnership. However, It was noted by the company representative that

profit was not the motivator for entering the Partnership because "its not that big a sector in terms of revenues".

It should be noted that although "altruism" was mentioned as a reason for involvement in a School-Business Partnership, all respondents were consistent in their belief that each Partner in a relationship was accruing benefits. These benefits were not necessarily monetary, or easily quantified, but each Partner was thought to be gaining positive experiences from their role in the relationship.

Specific Research Question 2(b)

Specific Research Question 2(b) asked: What are the perceived weaknesses in the School-Business Partnership Program in this School District?

Annapolis District Office

Anna identified one weakness in the School-Business Partnership Program of the District. The weakness was related not to how the Program emerged and was being delivered, but related to a more general concern. This concern revolved around the actual definition of the term "Partnership". She explained

> Yes, there is one weakness that is quite glaring, and that is that we have historically used a definition of partnership that is a little rigid. I think that we might have scared off some potential partners - but not from the business community, but from the schools.

Her belief was that central administration needed to develop more flexibility in their thinking. In order to continue to be successful, the District needed to

> . . . be willing to embrace broader definitions of partnerships, . . . to give people options. . . for people to get in and get out of partnerships. . . give people options to have short relationships and long term relationships and not be bound by one definition and one launch of a partnership that seems to have to start something that may never end.

Anna indicated that the central office administration of the District had acknowledged this weakness and she mentioned "our definition of partnership is shifting all the time, and will continue to stretch the boundary".

Brownell High School - Boundary Museum

Beth, the Brownell Principal, identified several weaknesses that existed for her Partnership. The primary two were resources and time. She explained

> . . . because with downsizing in schools, and I can look at our school in particular, and every school is exactly the same way, you have fewer administrators, you have fewer counselors, you want to leave your resources in the classroom and so, your teachers are busier. We don't have prep time for English marking, we don't have prep time for people who coach, those are things we used to have, and so you ask people to take on more in that area and then you ask them to take on more by looking at partnerships, . . . it gets to be exhausting.

She also identified a subtle pressure that existed for schools to become involved in Partnerships. She was firm in the belief Partnerships were not for all schools or every administrator when she stated

> I think for schools that don't have partnerships, . . . they feel a lot of pressure to have one and I'm not so sure they should. I think its something that you look at if you have the resources to do it and it makes sense to do it, then do it. If it doesn't, and you feel you are doing it for lip service reasons, then there is no heart in it. You probably won't survive if it is based on that kind of thing.

Beth believed that a further weakness in the Partnership Program related to a lack of understanding of the nature of Partnerships. She explained ". . . Partnerships don't have to go on forever . . . that's the other thing people have to realize . . . they can be short term, they can be for a particular purpose, and they can end".

She felt this concern and confusion about long term commitment had caused some problems with the Program. She believed there existed this "concept that because it begins, it should go on forever". She felt there existed "a need for short term partnerships for very goal directed kinds of things".

Lastly, Beth felt a weakness that existed had to do with schools in the District having to "compete" with other schools for what resources might exist in the community for School-Business Partnerships. She explained

> We are a public education institution and a notion of competition within that is somewhat a bit of a problem because when we are competing with each other for resources in the community, it doesn't make sense . . . so, we are always trying to balance the two things; the school and District perspective, and the community perspective.

As a classroom teacher, Bob saw the only weakness in the relationship as being a lack of promotion for Partnerships at the District level. He explained his position when he stated

> Right now, there seems to be no central office promotion at all, and it is based strictly on the school's promotion. Its something that I feel the public should be made aware of,. . . some of the programs we are running in the schools. . . and the public is totally unaware of most of them.

Bob reflected on the fact that even though he was actively involved in a successful Partnership, he had no idea what else was happening in the District because of lack of available information. The was obvious when he stated

> I don't really see enough coordination between the district and the Partnerships. There is very little information, . . . for instance, I don't know what any Partnership at any other school is doing. Even for myself, working with the District . . . it seems a little silly.

Bill, the museum curator, identified some basic day to day problems as weaknesses in the Partnership. These were related specifically to his

Partnership and not to the District program as a whole. The distance from the Museum and the school was problematic. It led to transportation costs and problems, and eliminated daily, face to face interactions. When identifying weaknesses, Bill stated

> . . . off the top of my head, the transportation of the fossils. The second would be that we need to be more involved . . . we need to have technicians out there more . . .with the distance, you just don't whip up to Annapolis and whip back the same day. So, that's certainly a factor.

The quality of work the students were doing with the fossils was tied to the distance problem as well. He shared

> Sometimes the quality of the work isn't quite what we hoped for and that's our problem, . . . its our job to go up and make sure they're doing it, . . . so if its not happening, its really our fault.

On the administrative side of the Partnership, Bill felt there needed to be a higher level of contact between the administrators in both buildings. He indicated that ". . . there needs to be a little more contact between the Principal and our Director to reassure both of these people, . . . I think that is worthwhile".

Caswell Junior High School - Camio Computers Inc.

Carl, Caswell's Principal, identified perception as the weakness in the Partnership Program in the District. He believed the School District needed to better define the term partner and give more direction to and resources for those schools looking to establish partnering relationships. In his words, Carl stated

> . . . while there is a new sense of entrepreneurial spirit, for some people I don't think its clear enough with the direction. What does that mean? There is still a lot of, I call it, "old world mentality", . . . we're crawling into bed with the wrong people. So there needs to be support for people. I think there needs to be a clear statement, . . . so that does get back to

> District support and District defining, . . . while its been clearly demonstrated, it has not been said.

Dundonald High School - Delaware Hospital

Don, Dundonald's Assistant Principal, identified the amount of time needed to devote to Partnerships as a possible weakness. In his view, this wasn't so much a negative connotation, but a simple fact - he was limited to what he could do by the time he had to devote to Partnership development. In his words, he explained, "I think there's a certain amount of time that has to be devoted to developing Partnerships . . . but I don't look at that as being negative, I look at that as being a positive experience".

Deb, Don's colleague in the Partnership, identified time as being a weakness as well. Her concern was the lack of time and how time was in effect, always tied to the School District's priorities and resources. She indicated

> A weakness may be time. Its certainly not resources, not money, not material things, its certainly not the number of students, but I think the weakness would be time.

She felt creating the availability of time devoted to Partnerships fell on upper levels of the educational ladder when she stated

> . . . and that's where I see the District, the Board and Alberta Education . . . if this could be at a higher priority, things would be different. Then teachers would have allowable time . . . to work on the Business Partnership.

Erindale High School - Einborough Construction

Ed, a teacher, had been involved in a very successful partnership. The only weakness he was able to identify had to do with the physical distance between the school, at one end of town, and the Partner, at the other end of the city. This caused problems at the logistics level only, as he explained

> The only real drawback I saw in the Partnership that we were involved with was the location. One is on the north side and one is on the south side. It is tough to move people back and forth that kind of distance. You have to make sure that both sides know who to and how information is transferred, otherwise, you can lose track of bits and pieces of it. Once that is in place and there is a process for it, it seems to work quite well.

In Earl's words, from the perception of Einborough Construction, "I couldn't come up with any disadvantages of getting into a partnership with a school". As positive as he was about partnering, Earl did list three potential weaknesses: time, enthusiasm and politics. As stated by Earl

> I don't know if you would call them weaknesses, I would say they are struggles; there is always the time factor, there's the enthusiasm, . . . like you've got to keep this thing going and you lose your enthusiasm after a while. There are some politics which you have to get around. . .

Summary and Discussion of Specific Research Question 2(b)

Specific Research Question 2(b) dealt with identifying weaknesses related to School-Business Partnerships in the Annapolis School District. Three recurrent themes emerged when those involved in the study discussed weaknesses they perceived in the Partnerships. These included: time, lack of understanding and mixed concerns.

Time. Four of nine individuals in the study identified time as a weakness related to School-Business Partnerships. Time and resources were aligned closely in the minds of the participants; time being the resource. Concern was voiced about the lack of time teachers had available to devote to a Partnering relationship with the school. A Partnership was identified as one more commitment, or one more program that required more of the teacher's time. It was believed that if developing School-Business Partnerships was to be a

priority, then the District, the Board and Alberta Education needed to priories it and create more opportunity for Partnerships to develop. Those on the private sector side identified how involvement in a Partnership took time away from all the other duties they were responsible for with their company.

Lack of understanding. Four of nine participants made reference to a lack of understanding of the term School-Business Partnership and the ramifications of becoming involved in a Partnership. The District Office indicated that the definition of Partnership was "shifting all the time" and this was thought to be a contributing factor to the confusion. Another participant agreed that the District needed to re-define expectations so that Partnerships could be short term, long term, or goal specific. The Caswell Principal echoed that the District needed to be clearer in its expectations and provide more resources to those schools hoping to establish a School-Business Partnership.

Mixed concerns. In addition to the two themes presented, there were several other issues that were seen as weaknesses in School-Business Partnerships. Examples included: concerns around day to day problems of transportation, distance between locations and levels of communication between school administrators and private sector partners. Another was the subtle pressure from the District for schools to become involved in a Partnership. It was felt this contributed to a level of competition between schools that might prove to be a negative experience for the District. Lastly, maintaining the enthusiasm needed to keep a Partnership going was identified as an on-going problem.

Specific Research Question 3

Specific Research Question 3 asked: What method of evaluation is utilized in School-Business Partnership Programs?

Annapolis District Office

Anna spoke to the use of a School District evaluation instrument termed a General Attitude Survey. This was administered annually in the District and from the data drawn from that instrument, Anna was able to determine that there appeared to be a positive attitude on the part of the general community with regard to the District's involvement in School-Business or Educational Partnerships. Anna indicated

> We are getting a growing sense that there is an understanding of what's going on by the general community, . . . about what's going on in schools. There is a sense on their part that the school system is becoming increasingly more reflective of the community values. So there is some hard data to suggest that a number of things that we are doing to involve our community in meaningful ways in schools are working, . . . one of them being School Business Partnerships or Educational Partnerships.

Brownell High School - Bounty Museum

Bob, the teacher who had been instrumental in establishing the Partnership, felt that any evaluation of the Partnership that took place was on a totally informal basis. No annual meeting was called to review the previous year and no formalized strategies were identified for the coming year. Rather, built into the field trip component of the relationship, was a form of evaluation, not so much of the Partnership, but of the quality of work the students had been doing for the Museum. At this time, some informal discussions were held regarding plans for the upcoming year. Bob explained this process when he stated

> There hasn't been any formal evaluations, other than we go down twice a year on field trips and every time we go down there, we bring fossil supplies back with us. The kids who work on those fossils come on the field trip and there is an evaluation of their work done with the fossils . . . but it seems like it is more just a very informal setting on what to do next.

Bill, when discussing the nature of the evaluation that took place between the Museum and Brownell High School stated, "I think you're safe to describe it as ad-hoc". He expressed the concern that a more formal method of analysis might be needed if the relationship was going to continue as well as it had. He made the point, "I think in order to keep going, we need to sit down and just make sure that everybody's happy with what's going on".

Caswell Junior High School - Camio Computers Inc.

Carl indicated his school and Camio preferred to meet several times a year and engage in on-going evaluation, rather than having an annual meeting for that purpose. He also stated that the evaluation process they were using was very informal and did not involve any evaluation instruments. The key component in their discussions appeared to be whether the relationship continued to be mutually beneficial to each Partner. Carl stated

> We do it very informally, . . . we do it more frequently, . . . we tend to meet at least three times a year to say, how is the Partnership going?, where are we going to take it?, are both sides still benefiting?

Cam, Carl's technology expert echoed the fact that any evaluation that took place between the school and Camio was very informal. He believed that the evaluation used was highly subjective, and thus, difficult to quantify. He confirmed the fact that the Partnership continued to be beneficial to all parties involved, therefore, was a continued success. As Cam put it, "there is certainly no formal evaluation, . . . what we know is that it continues to be beneficial to all of us, but that is very subjective".

Chuck, Camio's executive, agreed that the evaluation process of the Partnership was very informal. He talked about how the several meetings held between Partners were opportunities to discuss current happenings and re-

define the direction the Partnership was going. The meetings provided the forum for idea generation, more than a forum to measure accomplishments or failures. He shared his view of the meeting process

> Its definitely informal, . . . we get together, well, . . . at times its everyday and other times its once a quarter. We just kind of review what's happening in the District and what's happening in their school or where they want to go, . . . Carl's vision has shifted, . . . and from his point of view, its this is what I want to get done, . . . I want to be able to do this, . . . I want to be able, for instance, to offer education outside the boundaries of my school, outside the boundaries of the city, maybe outside the boundaries of the Province. So, Camio, what are the things stopping you? . . . you are the technology company, you tell me how I can do this? So, those decisions are made jointly and we're fast going down the path to helping them do that. But as far as evaluation goes, there's no formal scoring process.

Dundonald High School - Delaware Hospital

Don, Dundonald's Assistant Principal, limited his discussion of Partnership evaluation to his efforts in determining whether the experience for the student involved in the Partnership was beneficial. His evaluation of the Partnership was what he termed "cumulative". He was aware of the successes of students involved in the Partnership and that evaluative feedback was his measure of how successful the relationship was. Don shared an anecdote about his daughter which demonstrated how the evaluation of this partnership was tied very closely positive student experiences. He stated

> I think its a cumulative type of thing, I mean we certainly like to sit down with students after they've come off the experience and talk to them, . . . I know my own daughter, who wanted to go into medicine, spent time at the Delaware, and the experience she had was invaluable because she spent time in the operating room, . . .

Don's hospital partner, Deb agreed that no formal type of evaluation process existed in the Partnership. She believed a method of evaluation could

be developed that would involve some "descriptive tracking" of student experiences, or the number of interactions with the Hospital or the community. To date, this had not happened.

Erindale High School - Einborough Construction

Ed shared that the evaluation of his Partnership took place throughout the year, as events and activities took place. Each was evaluated in terms of its benefit to the students involved. Ed explained

> We try and evaluate every event that we get involved in at the end, . . . to determine whether it was beneficial to the students That is the priority and that is the first question that comes up every time, . . . how beneficial was it to the students and is it something that we should continue with? . . . is it something we should modify? . . . or is it something we should maybe move away from and not pursue? Each time, each event is evaluated for its own merit. We do that as a committee.

Earl was in agreement with Ed that the evaluation process utilized by the Partnership was "on an informal basis". He reflected on a more formalized process that existed where Partnerships could be evaluated at the provincial and then the national level to determine which of them could be considered the best in the province and the nation. Involvement in this competition was important for this Partnership because it had the effect of peaking interest in developing it. The recognition that accompanied winning an award was considered a positive evaluation of what the school and Einborough had accomplished through their Partnership. As Earl explained

> . . . we won the award for the best Business-Education Partnership in Alberta from the Conference Board of Canada, . . . that sort of just peaked our interest in keeping our involvement, . . . so when we were recognized as the Alberta flagship, we knew we were doing something right, so we continue to do it.

Summary and Discussion of Specific Research Question 3

Specific Research Questions 3 asked participants to identify the method of evaluation used to determine if the School-Business Partnership was meeting the objectives of the Partnership. Three themes emerged when those involved in the study discussed the question. These included: informal evaluation, developing formal evaluation and external evaluation.

Informal evaluation. Nine individuals in the study referred to informal evaluation methods as the process that was utilized in their Partnership. The predominant method used was the joint meeting. These were held with varying frequency, depending on the Partnership. Out of these informal discussions came a sense of direction, decisions about upcoming events and joint planning for the future. Primary to these discussions was the concern that the Partnership continued to be mutually beneficial and that activities of the relationship were beneficial to students. One school used student based interviews as a form of evaluating whether the students were benefiting from their experience with the Business Partner.

Need for formal evaluation. Four of 10 individuals referred to formal evaluation of School-Business Partnerships in responding to Specific Research Question 3. The District General Attitude Survey was administered annually to the community. This instrument was not specific to School-Business Partnerships, but did provide data regarding attitudes towards the existence of a School-Business Partnership Program in the District. Two other participants indicated a need for a more formal evaluation to ensure that the Partnerships were firm on their accomplishments, their weaknesses and the direction they were taking for the future. Reference was also made to the concept of developing a tracking instrument to provide data on the interactions between the school and the Partner.

External evaluation. One participant described how entering the Partnership in a provincial and national competition involving School-Business Partnerships was one method of determining the success of the Partnership. The feedback received from their involvement in the competition was a positive evaluation of their accomplishments and confirmed to them they should continue their Partnership plan.

Conclusions

Based on the findings in the Summary and Discussion of each Specific Research Question, the following conclusions were drawn.

Specific research question 1. Why does a School District, a school, or a member of the private sector involve itself in a School-Business Partnership Program?

The School District recognized the public's recent demand for accountability of the public education system. This concern for the quality of education had led the District, and the schools in it, to seek the expertise and resources available in the private sector through the formation of School-Business Partnerships. The paradigm shift of coupling educators and business people to form an effective team to positively affect the learning outcomes of students was an result of the establishment of a School-Business Partnership Program.

The private sector's willingness to enter into Partnerships emerged from: 1.) a concern about the quality of the current high school graduate, 2.) the belief that they had expertise and resources to contribute, 3.) the interest to affect change in public education, and 4.) the need to demonstrate to the community they were good corporate citizens and willing to commit to a change process in education.

Specific research question 2(a). What are the perceived benefits to be derived from involvement in a School-Business Partnership Program?

- for students?
- for the school (or School District)?
- for the private sector or community Partner?

Students, through Partnerships, experienced an exposure to leading edge technology, gained experience and expertise through "real world" experiential learning, and gained a level of maturity that would aid them in making career choices for their future.

By involving schools and the School District in School-Business Partnerships, the opportunity for increased community involvement, increased learning opportunities for students and staff and the opportunity to benefit from the latest business expertise and industry technology arose.

Involvement in School-Business Partnerships rewarded the private sector with a very positive level of community awareness through good public relations, allowed them a participatory role in the education of young people emerging into the workforce, and to some extent, provided the development of potential business opportunities to emerge in the future.

Specific research question 2(b). What are the perceived weaknesses in the School-Business Partnership Program in the School District?

The weaknesses identified by participants in the study related to things that must happen at the District level if School-Business Partnerships are to be successful. The District needed to clarify its definition of the term School-Business, or Educational Partnership. Confusion existed in terms of understanding the expectations of those involved in Partnerships as well as what kind of relationship could be termed a Partnership. The District needed to make Educational Partnerships a priority by providing more resources for their

identification, development and maintenance. This would have to include an increased level of time available for those involved in Partnerships.

Specific research question 3. What method of evaluation is utilized in School-Business Partnership Programs?

The findings presented earlier indicated a School-Business Partnership need not have a formal evaluation process in place, if joint meetings were held frequently and the result of these meetings was: 1) an understanding of the mutually beneficial nature of the Partnership, 2) an understanding of what the Partnership had accomplished, and 3) future planning for the Partnership took place.

Chapter 7

OVERVIEW, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

An overview of the study of School-Business Partnerships in a large urban School District is presented in this chapter. The purpose of the study and the method used is reviewed. The discussion and findings presented in Chapter 7 are summarized and more general conclusions based on the opinions of the researcher are offered as being transferable to other School-Business Partnership Programs in other School Districts.

Overview of the Study

The purpose of the study, methods that were employed in having participants respond to the research questions, and an indication of findings presented in an earlier chapter are presented in this section.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to identify and describe the understandings of several participants involved in School-Business Partnerships, as related to the three research questions that drove the study. As identified earlier, these research questions were:

1.) Why does a School District, a school, or a member of the private sector involve itself in a School-Business Partnership Program?

2(a). What are the perceived benefits to be derived from involvement in a School-Business Partnership Program?

- for students?
- for the school (or School District)?
- for the private sector or community partner?

2.) What method of evaluation is utilized in School-Business Partnership Programs?

Method

Permission to conduct the study was sought and received from the urban School District. Four different types of Partnerships were then chosen for the study. These represented three secondary high schools, one junior high school, a Provincial museum, a multinational computer corporation, a hospital, and a large construction company. Ten individuals involved in the Partnerships, two females and eight males, made up the majority of the participant sample. One female, representing the central office administration of the School District was also included in the study.

Each individual was approached regarding participation in the study and was given the option of discontinuing at any time. Each participant was involved in one in-depth interview. In addition to the transcriptions of these interviews, data in the form of field notes made by the researcher after each interview, informal conversations held at schools and Partner sites, information gleaned from central office files and other school documents, were collected. Upon reading the transcription of their interview and agreeing to the accuracy of their content, these data were analyzed in light of the three Research Questions identified. The responses of each individual in the study to questions posed during the interview process were analyzed. The responses were then categorized by the researcher. Themes which emerged related to each Research Question were presented in Chapter 6.

Findings

Findings in relation to the three Specific Research Questions were presented, summarized and discussed in Chapter 6.

Findings related to Specific Research Question 1, "Why does a school District, a school, or a member of the private sector involve itself in a School-Business Partnership Program?" identified four themes that helped explain this

phenomenon: societal change, economic need, community involvement and concern for educational outcomes.

The themes that emerged from the findings of Specific Research Question 2(a), "What are the perceived benefits to be derived from involvement in a School-Business Partnership Program for students, for the school (or School District) and for the private sector or community partner?" were presented in relation to each participant in the partnership. Student benefit themes included: an increased level of learning , exposure to leading edge technology, personal growth, and influence on career choices. School or School District benefit themes included: increased community involvement, improved learning opportunities, and the opportunity to access cutting edge technologies. Private sector or community partner benefits were brought out in themes related to good public relations, the ability to influence future citizens and the ability to develop business.

Findings related to Specific Research Question 2(b), "What are the perceived weaknesses in the School-Business Partnership Program in this School District?" brought out themes that included: time needed for Partnerships, lack of understanding of the nature of Partnerships and several other mixed concerns.

Findings related to Specific Research Question 3, "What type of evaluation process is utilized in School-Business Partnership Programs?", identified three themes that helped answer the question: the use of informal evaluation, the need for a more formal type of evaluation and the use of external evaluations.

Conclusions

The conclusions offered here are in addition to those presented at the end of Chapter 6. These conclusions are of a broader nature and are based on the results of the analysis of the transcriptions provided by the participants in the study. Specifically, these conclusions relate to the need for School-Business

Partnership Programs, benefits related to involvement, support needed for Partnership Programs and evaluation needs.

The following general conclusions are based on the researcher's interpretations of the findings and conclusions presented in Chapter 6.

1. Involvement in a School-Business Partnership Program is a logical extension of the need for School Districts (and schools) to link with the business community. This need emerged due to economic pressures on the educational system and a changing society that questioned the quality of the public education system and sought input in the process of educating young people.
2. Students benefit positively from involvement in School-Business Partnership Programs. There was no down-side to this involvement. The learning outcomes derived were experiential and contributed to an increased knowledge base, personal growth and influenced career planning.
3. The School District's involvement in School-Business Partnerships benefited the public education system. Partnerships strengthened the District's relationship with the community, demonstrated a willingness to change how public education was delivered and created new learning opportunities for employees and students.
4. Involvement in a School-Business Partnership Program provided the means for concerned private sector Partners to involve themselves in the education process. This involvement demonstrated commitment and concern to the community and afforded the opportunity to have input in the educational outcomes of the public school system.
5. The School District should devote more resources to the development of their School-Business Partnership Program. A higher level of clarity needs to exist regarding understanding what the District's expectations are for those schools planning to enter into Partnerships.

6. Evaluation of a School-Business Partnership was related to the needs of each individual relationship and does not hinge on a formal evaluation process or instrument.

It is hoped that the conclusions offered here have a degree of transferability that would see them applicable to other School Districts and other School-Business Partnerships. As stated in Chapter 1, transferability referred to the extent to which the findings may be applied to other situations in other contexts. This same concept was referred to by Rudestam and Newton (1992) as "external validity"(p. 39) and in quoting Guba and Lincoln (1981) as "fittingness"(p.38).

The researcher has no way of knowing the extent to which the results of this study could be transferred to other settings. The intent was to provide detailed information about each participant, their school, the School District and the Partner organization in an effort to enable the reader to better understand the context from which general conclusions were offered and thus, be able to make informed judgements regarding their applicability to other School District settings.

Implications for Theory

The Conceptual Framework presented in Chapter 2 was parallel to what was experienced in this study of Annapolis School District's School-Business Partnership Program.

The Board of Education in the School District reflected a belief that the Board needed to extend its efforts to work cooperatively with the community it served. The senior administration of the District was committed to developing closer ties with the business community in an effort to create extended learning opportunities for the young people in the public school system.

The Partnerships examined in the study reflected the School-Based strand of the Model presented in Chapter 2. The District reflected a willingness

to develop alternate types of Partnerships, or District based Partnerships, but this study was limited to school-based Partnerships.

The Partnerships that participated in the study all reflected a belief and willingness to share expertise with each other. All of the partners were in agreement that resources and expertise were shared, and that the benefits that were accrued from the Partnership were mutually beneficial. In all cases, the belief existed that the benefits were worthwhile, educationally sound, and ongoing.

The Partnerships examined in this study all reflected an informal approach to the Partnership Evaluation Process presented in the School-Business Partnership Program Model. Each Partnership sought input from the stakeholders involved and from this feedback, drew conclusions as to the level of success of the activities and programs of the Partnerships. Similar to the Model, this feedback was brought back to both the Educational and Private Sector Partners and flowed back to the board and the senior administration of the School District.

In summary, the School-Business Partnership Program examined in this study accurately reflected the practice of the School-Business Partnership Program Model that was developed by this researcher to reflect the information in the review of the literature presented in Chapter 2.

The themes which emerged from this study and the conclusions reached from them, paralleled much of the thinking reflected in the Literature Review chapter.

The conclusions reached from the analysis of Specific Research Question 1 were reflected in the work of Barnes and O'Connor (1987), Bloom (1997), Fallis and Chuchmuch (1994), Hamilton (1990), Holmes (1990), Levine (1985), Matthews and Norgaard (1984), Patrick and Eells 91969), Porat (1987) and Sola (1989). All these writers echoed similar positions on the need for education to enter into new alliances with those in the business world. Those authors, as well as Barrington (1987), BC Ministry of Education (1995), Charner and Rolzinski

(1987), Finch and Crunkilton (1987), Jamieson, Miller and Watts (1985), Resnick and Wirt (1996), Saskatchewan Education (1989) and Watt and Mirota (1997) shared the belief that private industry sought to share resources and expertise in an effort to influence learning outcomes in education.

Specific Research Question 2(a), which dealt with accrued benefits for stakeholders in School-Business Partnerships, led to conclusions similar to the literature presented in Chapter 2 of the study. Student benefits of experiential learning, an increased level of self-worth and maturity, and the influence on career choices were all documented by Alberta Chamber of Resources (1992), Bloom (1997), Bossetti, Webber and Johnson (1993), Knight (1995), Lewis (1986), Otterbourg (1986) and Warwick (1989). School benefits of enhanced programming, access to resources and expertise and access to state of the art technology paralleled benefits presented by Alberta Education (1992), Bloom (1997), Bosseti, et al (1993), Knight (1995), Levine and Trachtman (1988), Lewis (1986), Northeast-Midwest Institute (1988), O'Connor and Allen and Otterbourg (1996). In a similar vein, school benefits of expanded learning opportunities for teachers were seen in the work of Bloom (1997), Bosetti, et al (1993), Knight (1995), Levine and Trachtman (1988), Swainson (1992) and Warwick (1989).

The benefits to Business Partners in School-Business Partnerships reflected in the work of Alberta Chamber of Resources (1992), Bloom (1997), Bosetti, et al (1993), Chaffre (1980), Knight (1995), Lewis (1986), Levine and Trachtman (1988), Northeast-Midwest Institute (1988), O'Connor and Allen (1996), Otterbourg (1986), Rhèame (1997) and Warwick (1989), mirrored the findings and conclusions of this study.

Specific Research Question 2(b) asked about perceived weaknesses in School-Business Partnership Programs. The conclusions drawn from analysis of data related to this question were found to be specific to this study and this School District. The literature supported the belief that a clear understanding of Partnerships (Bloom (1997), Bosetti, et al (1993), O'Connor and Allen (1996),

Otterbourg (1986) and Watt and Mirota (1997)) was necessary for success. However, the literature did not reflect the same level of concern over the time required to develop and maintain School-Business Partnerships. Otterbourg (1986) for example, made reference to the planning process and the time needed to reach implementation, but did not stress time as a weakness in partnering relationships.

The answer to the third Research Question reached the conclusion that evaluation of a Partnership was highly specific to each Partnership, need not be formal, but needed to be regular and informative. The literature more commonly supported the use of a formal evaluation process as the method that best determined the level of success of a Partnership. (Alberta Chamber of Resources (1992), Bloom (1997), EPS (1993), Reynolds (1994) and Warwick (1993))

In summary, the conclusions of this study, while not exactly those reflected in the literature, were not distant to what authors in the area presented in their work related to the topic of School-Business Partnerships.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions drawn from this study, the following recommendations are put forward:

School district recommendations. The School District should continue to encourage individuals in their employ to seek Partnership opportunities for their schools. At the same time, the District should increase the level of resources allocated for Educational Partnerships (or School-Business Partnerships) in an effort to strengthen the program that has existed since 1989. The District should engage in the practice of having those schools which have developed successful Partnerships act as mentors for other schools which are at the initial stages of Partnership planning.

School principal/teacher recommendations. The Principal should poll the staff of the school as to their overall interest in developing a School-Business Partnership. Informal leaders could then be identified who might take on the responsibility of seeking and developing a School-Business Partnership. The Principal should use the same strategy with the school community or parent council to determine the level of interest for the establishment of a School-Business Partnership. Lastly, if the Principal has a staff member who is committed to a Partnership opportunity, support that commitment with whatever resources are available at the school.

Teachers involved in School-Business Partnerships need to ensure the activities of the Partnership are of educational value and are reflecting the educational philosophy of the school. If the teacher, and not the Principal, is the prime motivational force behind the development of the Partnership, keeping the lines of communication open between the school administration and the business Partner is very important. Finally, teachers involved in Partnerships need to weigh the time commitment to the Partnership versus the time needed to fulfill their role as a classroom teacher, so that one is not impeding the success of the other.

Private sector partner recommendations. Those in the private sector who are interested in developing a School-Business Partnership need to be aware of the time commitment needed to develop a relationship of this nature. This is important, as the outcomes of School-Business Partnerships are educational benefits, learning opportunities for students and other intangible benefits that would not be reflected in the Partner's profit and loss statement. It is recommended that any business should determine its area of expertise, determine if there exists interest in sharing that expertise, determine if there is a potential partnering opportunity with a school and seek to become involved.

Implications for Practice

The results of this study indicated that in recent years, there has been an expansion of interest in the outcomes of public education. The impetus for this interest was partly driven by a change in the economic climate, but also in social and political change, that saw concerns being voiced over the quality of high school graduate and the skills that graduate carried into post-secondary education or training and the world of work. The private sector believed they could contribute to the educational process by some level of involvement with schools through the development of Educational, or School-Business Partnerships. In the coming years, all school districts, urban and rural, will feel pressure to involve their external public in relationships that will see a higher level of input from that segment of the community whose children have long since left the public school system. The implications for education are three fold:

1. The education sector must be willing to accept a higher level of input and involvement from the private sector.
2. The phenomena of School-Business Partnerships is an evolving one and School Districts need to be flexible in terms of their willingness to create learning opportunities in ways that could be termed "non-traditional".
3. The technological advances of recent years have created learning opportunities that could radically change the delivery of traditional education. Involvement with the private sector to better take advantage of technological advances may very well become the norm, rather than the exception, in the near future.

Recommendations for Further Research

The following 4 recommendations are offered for further research:

1. Replication of this study in a similar District in the Province.

2. A comparative study using two or more School Districts with similar types of Partnerships could be undertaken in an effort to determine if methods and practices created similar outcomes.
3. Studies designed to determine student learning outcomes in schools involved in School-Business Partnerships.
4. Quantitative studies that would further our understanding of School-Business Partnerships by surveying a large sample of participants in a variety of School Districts. These studies could seek to determine a better understanding of: reasons for involvement, levels of satisfaction, or levels of private sector involvement.

Reflections

This study demonstrated that successful, ongoing School-Business Partnerships reflect a changing pattern in the relationship between the education sector and the private sector. Partnerships, such as those in this study, demonstrate how political, societal and economic changes have created a need and, at the same time, a willingness on the part of educators and those in the business community to join forces to affect change in the learning outcomes of today's students. Partnerships can be ongoing, while others can be of a shorter duration and end after specific goals are achieved. Still others are not able to attain success and choose termination as a strategy, rather than existing as a negative or neutral influence on the learning outcomes of the students involved in the Partnership.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Research project application

COOPERATIVE ACTIVITIES PROGRAM

PROJECT APPLICATION
(Research)

1.) **Description of the Research Project.**

Title: School-Business Partnership Programs

Objectives: To determine the advantages and disadvantages of an urban school district involving itself in a School-Business Partnership Program (SBPP)

Procedure/Evaluation: The study will be qualitative in nature and will involve the analysis and interpretation of data gathered from several sources, including: interviews, documents, and a reflective journal.

Ethical Considerations: Please review attached documentation.

2.) **Value to the School District.**

In recent years, education has been criticized by the private sector for not adequately preparing students for the "world of work". A reaction to this criticism has been the emergence of School-Business Partnership Programs (SBPPs) that provide educators and those in the private sector the opportunity to work jointly, sharing their time and expertise, to provide a unique series of educational opportunities for students.

The focus of this study is to interview several individuals involved in SBPPs and to determine from these interviews whether the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the program are congruent with what the school district views as the strengths and weaknesses of the program. It is hoped the analysis of the interview data will indicate whether the SBPP is achieving the educational outcomes for students that it was intended to achieve. Members of the private sector will also be interviewed to determine how they view their involvement in SBPPs.

The analysis of data gathered from those involved in SBPPs should provide the school district with a clearer understanding of the level of success of the existing program, as well as providing an identification of weaknesses that may not have been apparent as the program has evolved. It is hoped that

recommendations will emerge out of this study regarding the establishment, maintenance, and growth of SBPPs. Information regarding these issues should be of use to central office personnel, principals, teachers, and students involved in SBPPs.

3.) **Suggested personnel, school and times.**

The study will consist of about 12 interviews of approximately one hour each. It is possible those interviewed may be asked to be involved in a second interview if clarification is needed regarding information that emerges out of the first interview. Those interviewed will include: district office personnel; high school principals; high school teachers; and high school students who are involved in the Educational Partnerships Program.

District office personnel I hope to interview would include: the Director, Communication-Community Relations and the Coordinator of the Educational Partnerships Program. It is hoped that these individuals would be in a position to help determine individuals in specific schools who would be willing to discuss their partnerships. Those site-based individuals should, in turn, be able to suggest individuals from the private sector who would be willing to discuss their involvement from the business perspective.

4.) **Anticipated project timeline and completion date of final report.**

I am in a position to start the research almost immediately. The start date of the research will have direct bearing on the completion date, but I would anticipate that all interviews would be completed by the end of October, 1995. If interviews could be arranged in June of 1995, this would accelerate the completion date of the interview data. The completion date for the thesis is anticipated to be Spring of 1998.

Appendix B: Partnership Profile

The Canadian Manufacturers' Association

Construction Owners Association of Alberta

The Alberta Teachers' Association

Alberta Career Development and Employment

Alberta Education

Purpose

There is evidence which suggests that some young people are experiencing difficulty making a successful transition from school to work. A recent study commissioned through the Alberta Chamber of Resources involving business, educators, government and others supports this claim. The key recommendation that emerged from the study was that businesses, educators, students and others community members must communicate more effectively in order to address collective challenges, such as those revolving around school to work issues.

It appears that partnerships between schools and communities are perhaps the best way to look at collective challenges and find mutually beneficial solutions. The sponsors of this profile share this belief and feel that more partnerships dealing with "school to work" issues are essential. To encourage and support strong, positive partnerships, this project will result in a report that:

- establishes an inventory of partnerships in Alberta,
- proposes guidelines for establishing and maintaining partnerships, and
- contains profiles of selected "lighthouse" partnerships.

Definition of Partnerships

For the purposes of this profile, partnerships are defined as follows: A partnership is a formal or informal agreement or understanding between educators, business and others for the purpose of helping students make a smooth transition to the workplace or to further study. Examples of the types of partnerships that would fall under this definition are included in the profile.

This definition will include those partnerships where there is an agreement to undertake some activity (related to the above) over some period of time. The partnership need not be formal but there should be more than agreeing to "have coffee" after a "career days" discussion. The period of planned activity would normally be over one school year or more.

Finally, as information about work experience education programs (high school credits) is available from other sources, you do not need to describe them under this profile.

Instructions for Completion of Profile

1. Please complete one profile for each partnership. Please photocopy this profile if you need more copies
2. Please answer all the questions.
3. Return the completed profile(s) to: Alberta Career Development and Employment, 9th Floor, City Centre Building, 10155 102 St., T5J 4L5 – Attention: Lenora Forseth. Please return the profile(s) by April 15, 1992.
4. If you have any questions, please call 1-800-661-3753 (toll free) and ask for Lenora or Geri (in Edmonton, please call 422-4266).

Your cooperation in this matter is vital and greatly appreciated.

1. Please describe the partnership you are profiling. (Include the partnership "name" if applicable.)

_____

_____

2. Location of partnership (town, city, etc.) _____

3. Who are the partners*?

Partners Involved	Organization and Contact Person	Address	Phone No. Fax No.	Organization's Key Activities
School Partner				
Business Partner**				
"Other" Partner				

* If there are more partners, please list them on a separate sheet.

** Under "Organizations' Key Activities", please note what products/services the business provides and its number of employees.

4. Please rank up to 5 goals (1-5) of the partnership, with #1 being the most important goal.

Goal	Rank
Enhancing career information for young people	
Enhancing the image of service industry	
Enhancing the image of careers in trades and technology	
Strengthening existing training and education programs	
Influencing students to continue education/training	
Improving language, math and science skills	
Expanding existing opportunities for career preparation	
Increasing knowledge of workplace expectations	
Promoting communication between school and business	
Drop-out intervention	
Influencing curriculum development	
Other (Please Specify)_____	

5. Please check the main activities of the partnership.

Activity	
Classroom instruction	
Career exposure	
Guidance/counselling	
Job shadowing/mentoring	
Tutoring	
Field trips	
Scholarships/awards, special recognition	
Teacher professional development	
Financial support for activities	
Computer-based instruction	
Use of equipment, facilities and resources (businesses, schools, or others)	
Other (Please Specify)_____	

6. How long has this partnership been in place? _____ Will this partnership continue next year? _____

7. How many students are involved in the partnership? Please fill in the appropriate box(es).

Elementary ☐ Junior High ☐ Senior High ☐ Post- Secondary ☐

8.* How successful has the partnership been (please check one)?

Very Successful ☐ Successful ☐ Don't Know ☐ Unsuccessful ☐

Please comment

9.* What kinds of challenges has the partnership faced?

10. How has this partnership benefitted:

a. the school partner? _____

b. the business partner? _____

c. other partners? _____

11. What critical advice would you offer to others that are thinking about starting a partnership?

*Responses to questions 8 and 9 will be kept strictly confidential.

Those returning this profile will receive a copy of the report.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE.

Appendix C: Consent Letter to Participants

Consent to Participate in the
School Business Partnership Program Study

Dear Colleague,

Thank-you for your interest and willingness to be a part of this study of School Business Partnership Programs.

I am requesting that you acknowledge your consent in written form. Please do so by signing the bottom of this letter. Two copies will be provided so that you may keep one for your records.

As a participant in this study, you will be asked to engage in a maximum of two interviews, although it is anticipated that one interview will provide enough data to contribute to the completion of the study. The length of time you are committing to the interview process will vary from one half to one and one half hours.

As a volunteer respondent in this study, you reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time. The data collected in this study will be treated as confidential, . . . all names and places will be assigned pseudonyms in all documents which are to be presented in public forums or for publications. You will be provided with a copy of the transcripts of interview(s) so that you can identify any data which you do not wish me to use. Any data that you identify as sensitive will be deleted from the record before any analysis takes place.

Following the conclusion of this study, the District Office will be provided with a copy of the results of the study. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at 1-306-373-6949 or email dgrant@gpu.srv.ualberta.ca.

Your contribution to the completion of this study is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Don Grant

.....

I, _____ acknowledge that I give permission to Don Grant to include me in the study as described above.

Appendix D: Letter to Participants Confirming Transcription Accuracy

May 5, 1996

Communications-Community Relations

Centre for Education
One Kingsway
Edmonton, Alberta
T5H 4G9

Dear _____,

Earlier this school year, you were kind enough to take the time to participate in a taped interview related to Educational Partnerships. A transcription of this interview is enclosed.

It is my intention to use the data gathered in this and other interviews as the basis for my analysis. It is important to me that you are satisfied that the transcription reflects your statements as recorded during our earlier meeting. If there are any parts of the interview you would prefer not to be included in my analysis, I would ask that you mark these statements in the margin of the transcription. Any parts of the interview that you wish to be deleted will not be included in my analysis. Once you are satisfied with the transcription, please return it in the stamped, self-addressed envelope provided.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank-you once again for your time, patience and willingness to participate in the study.

I trust things have gone well for you this school year and that your continued involvement in Educational Partnerships provides you with a strengthened commitment to the positive relationship that can exist between education, business and the community.

Sincerely,

Don Grant
Ph.D. Candidate
Department of Educational Policy Studies
University of Alberta

Appendix E: Cover Story and Introductory Comments to Interviews

Cover Story

The cover story is designed to put the respondents at ease and to answer the following questions:

1. Who you are.
2. What you are doing.
3. Why you are doing it.
4. What you will do with the results.
5. How the study site and participants were selected.
6. Any possible benefits as well as risks to the participant.
7. The promise of confidentiality and anonymity to participants and site.
8. The number of interviews that will be conducted.
9. The length of time of that day's interview session will last.
10. The types of recording of data that will take place (notes, audio tape recording)
11. Clarification that the interview is not intended to evaluate or judge, but to provide data that will help to expand knowledge of School Business Partnership Programs.
12. Clarification that there are no right or wrong answers to the questions that will be asked.

.....

Good morning (afternoon). My name is Don Grant, and I am a doctoral student at the University of Alberta. My dissertation topic revolves around examining a School Business Partnership Program in a large urban school district.

As an school administrator with nearly twenty years experience in secondary education, I have a keen interest in the developing phenomena of the linkages and relationships that are developing between the business and corporate sector and the educational sector.

As part of my Ph.D. program , I did a Field Experience with Annapolis Public Schools, where I was able to work closely with the Communications-Community Relations division in an effort to gain a better understanding of what is called their Educational Partnerships Program. I felt this would provide an excellent opportunity to study a Partnership Program that was experiencing success and a positive growth pattern. Key individuals in the administration of this program were approached about involving themselves in this study, so that is why we are meeting today.

I would like to conduct an interview of approximately one hour today, and possibly a follow-up interview at a later date. I would like to tape record the interview and transcribe it. As the interview is conducted, I may jot some notes as we talk as a way to help me keep track of our discussion or to help remind me of points I may wish to return to during the interview. The transcription of this interview will be sent to you for verification. You have the right to opt out at any point, or to ask that the recorder be turned off.

The contents of this interview will be strictly confidential and anonymous, both in terms of people and the School District, Schools, and Businesses involved in the study. I would like you to be as candid as possible, as the purpose of the study is to come to an understanding of the attitudes about School Business Partnerships as they exist in this school district. Please be aware that there are no right or wrong answers. I am seeking your opinion as an individual with expertise in the area of School Business Partnerships. It is my hope that through our discussion you will come to a better understanding of the role you play in the Partnership Program and the value it has to those who are participating in it.

Do you have any questions before we begin? OK, let us begin.

Appendix F: Annapolis School District Evaluation Instrument

Program Evaluation - School

Educational Partnership Program Evaluation

For the School Partner

Part I

• Please provide a list of partnership activities carried out over the past school year.

• Please comment on the exchange of services and resources that took place within the partnership over the past year.

• Did your partnership draft a written plan of your partnership's goals and objectives before starting activities?

☐ Yes ☐ No If so, please attach.

• How often do the co-ordinators meet to discuss activities or evaluate the program?

☐ Weekly ☐ Biweekly ☐ Monthly ☐ Once a semester

• Is there enough awareness of the partnership among staff members and students?

☐ Yes ☐ No

• How are staff members and students kept informed of partnership activities?

☐ Regular updates
☐ School newsletters
☐ Posters
☐ Meetings
☐ Announcements
☐ Assemblies
☐ Other (specify)

• Approximately, how many students/staff were involved in the partnership program?

Number of students: _____ Number of staff: _____

• Is enough time allotted per activity?

Program Evaluation - Business

Educational Partnership Program Evaluation

For the Business Partner

Part 1

• Please provide a list of partnership activities carried out over the past school year.

• Please comment on the exchange of services and resources that took place within the partnership over the past year.

• Did your partnership draft a written plan of your partnership's goals and objectives before starting activities?

☐ Yes ☐ No If so, please attach.

• How often do the co-ordinators meet to discuss activities or evaluate the program?

☐ Weekly ☐ Biweekly ☐ Monthly ☐ Once a semester

• Is there enough awareness of the partnership among staff members and students?

☐ Yes ☐ No

• How are staff members and students kept informed of partnership activities?

☐ Monthly updates
☐ School newsletters
☐ Posters
☐ Meetings
☐ Announcements
☐ Assemblies
☐ Other (specify)

• Approximately, how many students/staff were involved in the partnership program?

Number of students: _____ Number of staff: _____

• Is enough time allotted per activity?

☐ Usually ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never

☐ Yes ☐ No

• To what extent do you feel that your partnership is accomplishing its goals and objectives

☐ To a considerable extent ☐ To some extent ☐ Not at all
☐ Don't know.

Part II

• How satisfied are you with the following aspects of your partnership? Please rate each factor from one to five based on the following scale:

1 = very satisfied

2 = quite satisfied

3 = undecided

4 = not very satisfied

5 = not at all satisfied

The extent to which you are able to meet the needs expressed by your business partner:

1 2 3 4 5

The degree to which you are able to respond to needs that you feel are important:

1 2 3 4 5

The extent to which you agree with your school partner on the priorities for the partnership

1 2 3 4 5

The extent to which your organization's needs are being met

1 2 3 4 5

The extent to which your organization's staff is committed to the partnership concept

1 2 3 4 5

The degree of enthusiasm of your organization's staff for the program

1 2 3 4 5

The extent to which your organization's staff participate/get involved with the program

1 2 3 4 5

The extent to which your organization's staff see the program as beneficial

1 2 3 4 5

The degree to which students benefit from the partnership program

1 2 3 4 5

The degree to which the school staff benefit from the partnership program

1 2 3 4 5

The degree of enthusiasm in most of the students

1 2 3 4 5

The degree of enthusiasm in most of the school staff

1 2 3 4 5

The way the students interact with the personnel from your organization

1 2 3 4 5

The type of students who get involved in partnership activities:

1 2 3 4 5

The way staff from your organization interact with school staff

1 2 3 4 5

The way personnel from your organization interact with students

1 2 3 4 5

The amount of planning that goes into partnership activities

1 2 3 4 5

The amount of help you receive from the school staff in planning activities

1 2 3 4 5

The amount of help you receive from school staff in staging activities

1 2 3 4 5

The kind of activities that you get involved in

1 2 3 4 5

The extent to which students provide suggestions or directions for partnership activities

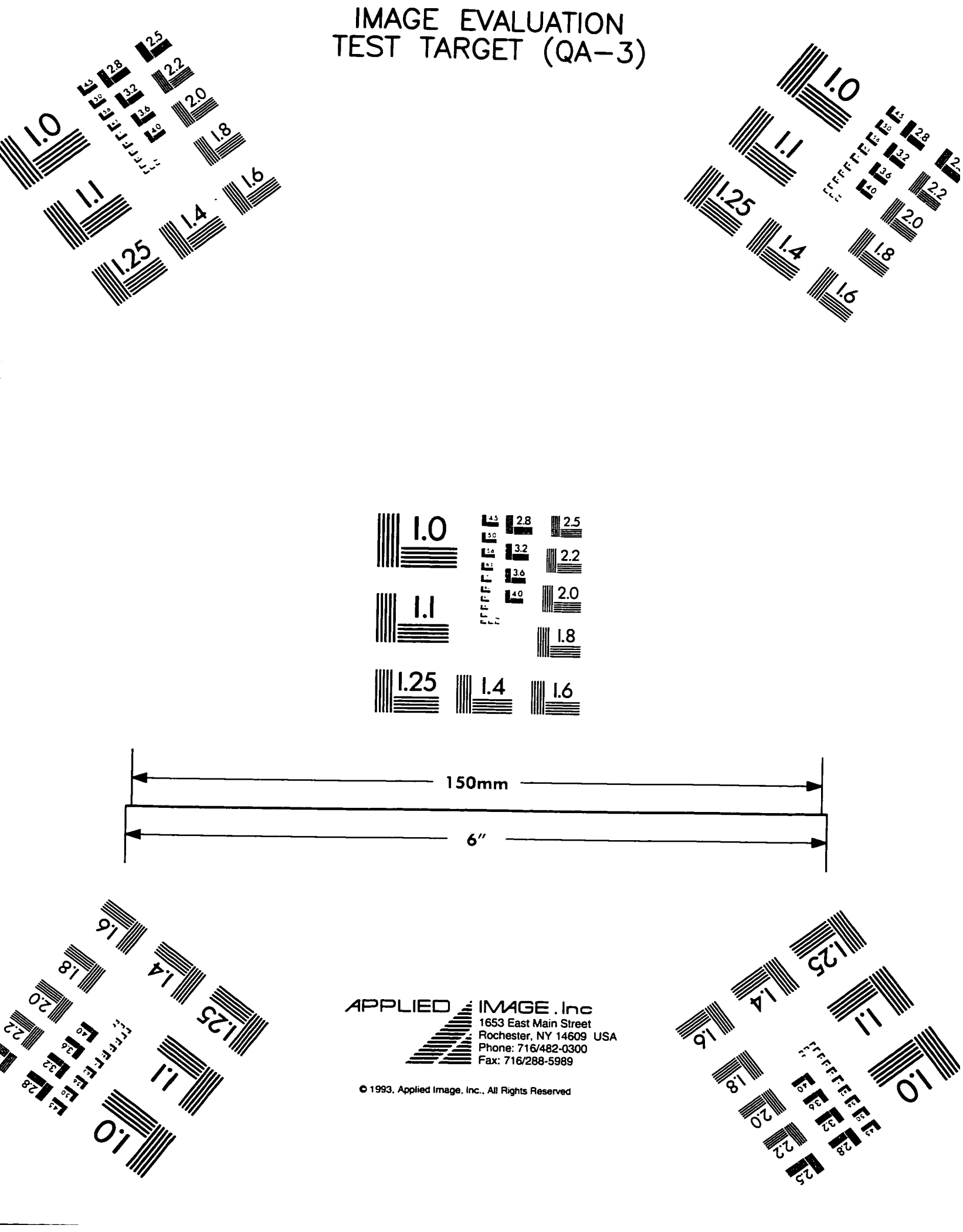
1 2 3 4 5

Part III

- What difficulties, if any, have you experienced with the program? How would you improve the program?

- What new activities would you like to see included in your partnership program?

- Additional comments:



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