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University of Alberta

Reliving the Lived : An Examination of the Field Experiences in Three Collaborative Initiative Schools

by

Mark Paul Yurick 

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

Department of Secondary Education

Edmonton, Alberta

Fall 2000

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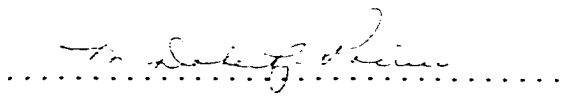

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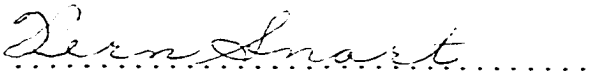

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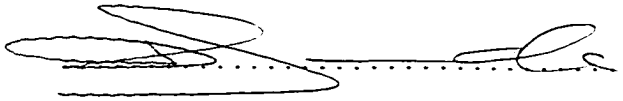

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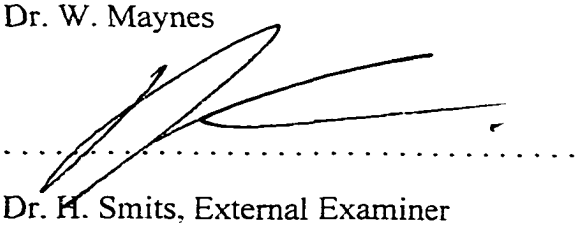

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Abstract

This study examined the lived experiences of student teachers, cooperating teachers, university facilitators, and school coordinators who were currently involved in a model of student teaching entitled the Collaborative Schools Initiative, or CSI. Additionally, the findings of the study have been related to the original goals of the CSI to determine the congruence between the initiative-as-planned and the experiences of those within the school sites.

The CSI model is a result of a joint initiative between the University of Alberta and the Alberta Teachers' Association which began in 1995 and was aimed at reconceptualizing and reorganizing the field experience component of teacher education. The goals of the original project were to promote a collegial model for field experiences using the whole-school setting; provide opportunities for increased collaboration between the participants in the field experience program, explore ways of enhancing the provision of professional development experiences for teachers with support from the Faculty of Education, consider alternatives for compensation and/or recognition of teacher involvement in the field experience program, and define the roles (e.g., university facilitator and school coordinator) and other conditions essential to implementing the collegial model.

The lived experiences of the student teachers, cooperating teachers, school coordinators, and university facilitators were examined and described using an intrinsic case study approach. Data were collected by conducting observations and constructing field notes, engaging in conversations and interviews, reviewing relevant documents, and using a questionnaire.

Distinct phases have been identified that relate to the organization of the field experience: developing a plan, initially orientating the staff, preparing the school for the field experience, orienting the students, facilitating the whole-school experience, teaching about teaching, and working with the university.

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Additionally, four phenomena relating to school culture, mentoring, teacher involvement, and pedagogical awareness have emerged. Also, the key stakeholders involved in the field experience found themselves in complex roles as a result of the CSI model. Finally, recommendations are made relative to the field experience component of teacher education.

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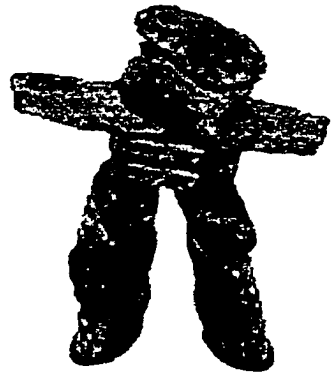
Foreword



The Inukshuk

For the Inuit, these stone figures mean *In the Image of Man*. They were built as directional signs to aid in navigation along Canada's northern shores. The symbol is said to remind us of our dependence on each other and the value of strong relationships.

For the author, this study embraces the metaphor of the Inukshuk. It is hoped that it provides a marker from which further study can occur relative to navigating the complex shoreline of field experiences in teacher education, while at the same time reminding us of the importance of the strong relationship and interdependence that is needed between the profession and the schools of education to make such navigation possible.

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Acknowledgements

As with many journeys in life, this destination could not have been reached without the support of others. I would like to thank the student teachers, the school staffs, and the university facilitators who participated in this study. Without their hard work and dedication to the field experience component of teacher education, this thesis would not have been possible.

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Third, a special thanks to Linda Pasmore for her outstanding assistance in the editing of this document.

Fourth, I would like to thank Zachary, Jamie, and Danny for giving up the fun things that Dad was supposed to be doing with them while he was off at school or writing "his book with no pictures." And finally, I would like to thank Janice for the hours she spent being a single mom throughout my doctoral program. She cannot possibly know how critical her encouragement, love, and support have been to the success of this journey.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Background to the Study

Four-and-one-half years ago I was seconded as a practicum associate to the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta. The position itself was jointly sponsored by the University and the Alberta Teachers' Association and provided practicing teachers with the opportunity to lend their expertise to the faculty through their involvement in teaching courses, supervising student teachers, and participating in various committees and projects. At the same time, many of the teachers who held the two-year appointment stated that it was a tremendous opportunity for personal and professional growth.

It was during this secondment that two events transpired which served as the genesis of this study. The first was the development of my personal interest in preservice teacher education as a direct result of my work as a practicum associate. The second was my involvement in a project entitled the *Collaborative Schools Project*, a major purpose of which was to rethink how field experiences occurred in the schools. Both of these events, although seemingly unrelated at the time, served as catalysts for my doctoral program and, subsequently, this study.

The History of the Collaborative Schools Project

The Meeting of the Minds

In 1994 the Alberta Teachers' Association and three of the four provincial universities jointly sponsored the Directions Conference, the mandate of which was to critically examine the current status of teacher education in Alberta and make appropriate recommendations for future practice. Mr. Larry Booi, now president of the Alberta Teachers' Association, and Dr. Gordon McIntosh, then Assistant Dean, Field Experiences, at the University of Alberta, were both attendees at the conference and were

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assigned the task of being group leaders. The groups were responsible for developing and discussing policy directions for field experience programs. On the second day of the conference, Mr. Booi suggested to Dr. McIntosh that they have a lunch meeting. It was at that meeting that the ideas behind the CSI were discussed.

The Timing Was Right

The meeting occurred at a critical time in teacher education in the province. The recommendations included in *A Nation At Risk: The Holmes Report* were changing the face of teacher education programs throughout North America. Closer to home, the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) had published two studies, *Trying to Teach* (ATA, 1993) and *Trying to Teach: The Necessary Conditions* (ATA, 1994), which closely examined the challenges faced by the profession. Each of the men recalled being acutely aware of the importance of the field experience component of teacher education to the professional growth and success of beginning teachers. Mr. Booi recalled:

> We talked a lot about a whole-school experience, but we were caught in kind of an apprenticeship paradigm where in the end you still ended up with one teacher, and you still basically apprenticed under that teacher. And if you wanted a whole-school experience, you had to structure a whole-school experience, or it simply wouldn't happen. So what would it take to do that? So we talked about the need eventually for a coordinator, a teacher-coordinator, and we saw that as a real potential for leadership. Often it was an add-on for an administrator, whereas if a teacher took that on, the person could devote all their time to it.

Dr. McIntosh's recollection regarding the tone and nature of the conversation extended the key points identified by Mr. Booi and provided a critical insight into the relationship between the Faculty of Education and the professional association at the time:

> The one thing that I would add to what Larry's just said, and I think my recollection is accurate, is that this was not a high point at university-ATA relationship, as I recall. We weren't fighting with each other, but we had come out of a period in which relationships between the ATA and the university was not the best. And so it was important—and that was one of the things that Michael [Podlosky, Professional Development Officer, Alberta Teachers' Association] and I worked on with Luigi [Gatti, Chair, Edmonton Area Field Experiences

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> Committee] and other people—to kind of reestablish a relationship of trust between the faculty and EAFEC [Edmonton Area Field Experiences Committee]. And at the school level one of the things that I felt really lacking was a systematic way to carry on the dialogue between our faculty and teachers at the school level. And so we just didn't have the structure for communication, I felt. We had a lot of people that we called *faculty consultants* connecting in one way or another with a lot of people called *cooperating teachers*, but we didn't have any faculty-to-school structure, . . . so that the school-coordinator idea at that end, the school-coordinator idea just seemed a wonderful idea because it meant that there's somebody that we could talk to at the school. And at our end—and I don't think it's worked as well at our end—but at our end it was to be the *university facilitator*. So we would have these two people; we'd have a connection. Every school that we had student teachers in, we'd have a direct connection. There's somebody we can phone, a university facilitator or a school coordinator who would know everything that was going on in that school with those student teachers. Now, I don't think it's worked out perfectly, but I think the school-coordinator part of it has worked out just about as well as—and then, in fact, it probably worked out even better than I anticipated, because there are so many things that a school coordinator can do and can tell us and can suggest, that that's just turned out to be, in my judgment, a really splendid idea.

Understanding the Need for Change

Both men had a keen understanding of the challenges faced by teachers and teacher education programs. They were acutely aware that in order to better prepare beginning teachers to face these challenges, there needed to be a paradigm shift in the field experience program away from the apprenticeship model towards one that would offer more opportunity for exposure to the whole-school setting. Such opportunities would include exposure to different teachers and teaching styles, visitations outside of the immediate grade or subject area of the student teacher, and coordinated activities that would provide insight to the various ancillary activities that surrounded the operation of a school. Both Dr. McIntosh and Mr. Booi recognized that in order for such a shift to occur, a critical component would be an on-site coordinator who would work with colleagues to organize these activities. Under the apprenticeship model, the task of the field experience coordinator typically fell into the hands of the school administrator. However, both men felt that the challenges and complexities of the role in the new model would require far more time than the already overburdened administrators would be able

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to handle; thus the need for the school coordinator role to be assumed by a member of the teaching staff who was willing to assume the challenges and opportunities offered by this leadership position. Both Mr. Booi and Dr. McIntosh left the meeting understanding that there needed to be a framework in place which would facilitate the implementation of the new model that needed to be developed and supported by the faculty and the professional association.

Developing the Goals

Armstrong et al. (1999), in a paper on the CSI presented to WestCAST in 1999, summarized the meeting between the two men as follows: "The conversation focused on the possibility of engaging in a collaborative field experience project that would be of benefit not only to student teachers but also to teachers who participated in Field Experiences programs" (p. 1). During the conversation the following four "key" ideas were developed:

- A teacher in each collaborative school would volunteer to coordinate student teacher experiences in the school;
- The school coordinator, in collaboration with school staff and a university facilitator, would plan whole-school experiences for the student teachers;
- Cooperating teacher honoraria would be paid into a school's professional development fund instead of to individual cooperating teachers; and
- The project would serve to enhance the professional development of school-based staff (Armstrong et al., 1999, p. 2).

These ideas were transformed into reality when an initiative entitled *The Collaborative Schools Project* was introduced in 1995. A steering committee was struck that included representatives from the faculty and the Alberta Teachers' Association. The members of the original committee representing the profession were Mr. Luigi Gatti (chair of EAFEC), Mr. Michael Podlosky (professional development officer, Alberta Teachers' Association), and Mr. Larry Booi (EAFEC). Representing the Faculty of

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Education from the University of Alberta were Dr. Gordon McIntosh (Assistant Dean, Field Experiences), Dr. Warren Wilde (Elementary Education), and Dr. Ken Ward (Educational Policy Studies). My personal involvement in the project began in September of that year when I was asked by the steering committee to assume the role of one of two project coordinators as part of my responsibility as a practicum associate (now entitled *field experience associate*) seconded to the faculty from a local school jurisdiction. The other project coordinator was a fellow practicum associate whose primary responsibility was in elementary education.

The key ideas that were discussed by Mr. Booi and Dr. McIntosh provided the original framework for the project. The project was designed to enhance the collegial nature of field experiences using the whole-school setting at the elementary, junior high, and senior high levels. As previously mentioned, the partnership consisted of teachers, the Edmonton Area Field Experiences Committee (EAFEC) of the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA), and the Faculty of Education, University of Alberta. The project was to emphasize professional dialogue, reflective practice, and a collaborative approach to decision making within each of the cohort, school-based field experience pilots. Additional foci of the project centered around exploring a range of professional development activities, alternatives to honoraria paid to individual cooperating teachers, and opportunities for collaborative partnerships between the university and the teaching profession.

Bearing in mind the original purpose of the project, the steering committee established the following goals:

- to promote a collegial model for field experiences, using the whole-school setting;
- to provide opportunities for increased collaboration between the participants in the field experience program, resulting in more deliberation and review, reflection, observation of alternative practice, feedback, and support;

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- to explore ways of enhancing the provision of professional development experiences for teachers with support from the Faculty of Education;
- to consider alternatives for compensation and/or recognition of teacher involvement in the field experience program; and
- to define the roles (e.g. university facilitator and school coordinator) and other conditions essential to implementing the collegial model.

Putting the Ideas Into Practice

Selecting the Schools

An advertisement was placed in the *ATA News* soliciting applications from schools interested in participating in the project. There was significant interest from the field. Fifty-seven schools requested application forms; 21 completed applications were received and forwarded to the selection committee for consideration.

Some of the factors considered by the committee when selecting the schools included:

- the nature of the field experience the school could offer,
- the level of staff involvement in the application process,
- the proposed cooperating teacher to student teacher ratio, and
- demographic factors such as the physical location, the size of the school, and the community in which the school was located.

Six schools were selected by the selection committee, which included two elementary schools, two junior high schools, and two high schools. A total of 33 student teachers were placed in the six project schools. The group included 8 student teachers in a 4-week placement, 16 student teachers in an 8-week placement, and 9 elementary student teachers in a 12-week placement.

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Implementing the Project

Successful schools were contacted in the middle of December of 1995 regarding their participation in the project. The Alberta Teachers' Association hosted an orientation meeting at Barnett House in Edmonton the first week in January of 1996. At this meeting the goals of the project were reaffirmed. Key members of the stakeholder groups were introduced, and opportunities were provided for both formal and informal dialogue and discussion. Subsequently, the six school-based field experience coordinators met on campus for six half-day sessions with the project coordinators. The project committee provided the cost of supply teachers to release the school coordinators for the meetings.

The initial meeting was used to orient the school coordinators to the project. Coordinators were asked to project the model onto the situations in their schools to determine the areas of strength and opportunities for growth and improvement. Also, school-based objectives relative to each of the project goals were discussed.

A second meeting focused on the role of the school-based coordinator. A teacher who had informally recently assumed the role of field experience coordinator in the school shared her perception of the role description. The group used this information as a catalyst for discussion relative to their upcoming role.

A third meeting was held featuring the Director of Continuing Professional Education from the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta. The purpose of this meeting was to explore potential linkages between the faculty and the schools relative to collaborative research opportunities and professional development.

The final formative meeting dealt with professional development opportunities available to schools through the Alberta Teachers' Association. The Executive Assistant, Professional Development, addressed the group regarding the current professional development opportunities offered through the association.

Two additional campus-based meetings were held. The purpose of these meetings was to allow the school coordinators the opportunity to share their experiences relative to

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the implementation of the project in their schools and their developing role as coordinator. Also, work was completed on developing a role description for a school-based field experience coordinator, and exemplars of a whole-school experience were developed.

Finally, all key participants in the project (school coordinators, cooperating teachers, school administrators, university, and ATA personnel) were invited to a final meeting early in June of 1996 again hosted by the Alberta Teachers' Association. The project coordinators provided a brief final report, and the individuals present were given the opportunity to ask questions relative to the outcomes of the project to date.

Year 2 of the Project

In September of that year, four additional schools were added to the project (two at the elementary level and two at the junior high), to bring the total number of schools to 10. Six regular meetings were scheduled throughout the year. One of the major foci of the earlier meetings was to orient the new schools to the project. Additionally, emphasis was placed upon the continuation of dialogue and discussion regarding the lived experiences of the key participants in the field experience. The critical nature of the role of the school coordinator in orchestrating a successful whole-school experience was beginning to emerge and be recognized by the project coordinators and the steering committee. Subsequently, the project group was challenged to develop a school coordinator's manual that was intended to serve as a resource for those who were new to the position.

The Next Step

History shows that the conclusion of the second year of the project was a critical time in the development of the current CSI model. The project was found to be highly successful in operationalizing the key foundations and providing enriched field experiences for students, cooperating teachers, and university personnel; and the project continued to receive overwhelming support from both the University and the Alberta Teachers' Association. Notwithstanding the above, in June of 1997 the steering

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committee was faced with the challenge of deciding the future direction of the project. In light of its previous success, the project was transformed naturally from its experimental status into an *initiative* that currently involves more than 120 schools.

The Collaborative Schools Initiative

In the fall of 1997 the Collaborative Schools Initiative, or CSI, was launched. Two new practicum associates in the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta were assigned the roles of coordinators. The goals and objectives of the initiative were similar to those of the original project. Schools that were interested in providing a whole-school experience to a cohort of student teachers, that had an individual in place willing to assume the role of school coordinator, and that were willing to examine professional development opportunities and alternate forms of compensation for student teachers were invited to apply. The response from the field was overwhelming, and in that year over 70 schools were designated as CSI sites.

The project coordinators quickly realized that one of the major obstacles to overcome would be communicating effectively with such a large number of schools. Out of this realization was born a newsletter, *The Collaborative Chronicles*, which was designed both to provide information to the schools about the CSI and to celebrate some of the outstanding field experiences that were being offered by the schools. The first edition was sent to the schools on October 15, 1997, and it featured information about the CSI and upcoming events, as well as exemplars of outstanding field experiences that included testimonials from school coordinators, student teachers, and cooperating teachers. In addition to the newsletter, the school coordinators from the CSI sites were invited to three on-campus supper meetings that were designed for information sharing and informal dialogue.

The CSI project continued in the fall of 1998 under the leadership and supervision of the two coordinators. Additional schools were added to bring the number to over 80. Publication of the newsletter continued, and meetings for the coordinators of the CSI

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schools also continued to be held. However, a difference in the purpose and structure of the meetings was noticeable as they became more focused on topics of interest and areas of need that were being identified by the schools. This focus aligned directly with one of the primary goals of the original project, which centered upon the provision of enhanced professional development opportunities.

For example, the topic of the first meeting that was held on October 5 was "Bridging Professional Development and the Field Experience." Keynote speakers for the evening were Ms. Dorothy Stanley, who was the Executive Assistant of Professional Development at the Alberta Teachers' Association; and Dr. Bill Maynes, the Assistant Dean of Field Experiences at the University of Alberta. A further example was a meeting that was held in November that focused upon conflict resolution for school coordinators. The nature of these meetings and the complexity of the topics discussed clearly demonstrate the evolution of the CSI both at the university and within the field. The opportunities for collaboration that the initiative provided allowed for more complex dialogue and discussion between the faculty and the profession, which resulted in more focused interaction between the two relative to teacher education.

This complexity continued to be evidenced in the following year of the program. In the fall of 1999 two new field experience associates assumed the role of coordinators of the CSI. Under the new leadership, the legacy of bridging the university with the field continued. Issues of the *Collaborative Chronicles* evolved to include general information about the Faculty of Education and its program offerings, in addition to its focus upon the CSI. Clearly, the faculty determined that the newsletter had become a valuable method of communicating to the schools.

Further evidence of a more complex relationship was illustrated in the CSI Mini-Conference that was sponsored by the Department of Elementary Education which took place in November of 1999. Student teachers, their cooperating teachers, and the school coordinators were invited to a one-day conference that included sessions on

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- the role of the university facilitator,
- teacher professional growth plans,
- evaluation writing,
- developing a collaborative school model, and
- dealing with conflict.

The conference was a resounding success and was extremely well attended, and plans are in the works for it to become an annual event that would include the stakeholders in field experiences from both the elementary and secondary levels.

Activities surrounding the CSI continued in the spring of 2000. The completion of student teacher evaluations were identified as a general area of concern by both cooperating teachers and school coordinators. One of the specific areas identified was the role that the evaluations played in the hiring of new graduates. In response to questions from the field, the project coordinators arranged an inservice on evaluation writing that featured representatives of the personnel departments from the two major school districts. Feedback from the well-attended meeting indicated that the participants greatly appreciated the opportunity to hear from and meet with the district personnel.

The spring term ended for the CSI in ceremonial fashion, as representatives from all of the 114 schools were invited to accompany those from the university and the professional association to a windup banquet. Keynote speakers included the Dean of the Faculty of Education, the President of the Alberta Teachers' Association, and some of the individuals who were integrally involved in the development of the original project. One of the highlights of the event was the distribution of a pin commemorating the CSI, which was designed by a student from one of the participating schools.

The professional development initiatives associated with the CSI are continuing. At the time of writing, plans are under way for the second annual mini-conference that will be taking place in November of 2000. As previously mentioned, this conference will

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be much larger in scope and attendance because it will include participants from all departments in the faculty who are associated with field experiences.

Purpose of the Study

Although intuitively it appears that the Collaborative Schools Initiative (CSI) has made a difference in the way that student teachers, cooperating teachers, and university personnel experience the field experience, limited research has been done to support this belief.

The purpose of this study is to examine the lived experiences of the key players involved in the field experience program(s) at CSI school sites, and their perceptions of these experiences. This study then relates the data back to the original key ideas that formed the basis of the goals of the Initiative.

The Research Questions

As previously mentioned, the primary purpose of this study was to research and present the lived experiences of the key stakeholders involved in the field experience at three CSI schools. With that goal in mind, the fundamental research question was, "What is it like to be a student teacher, cooperating teacher, school coordinator, or university facilitator at a Collaborative Initiative School?" A second question asked was, "How do the lived experiences of those in CSI schools relate to the original goals of the project?" Additionally, the findings have been related to the original goals of the CSI to determine the level of congruence between the initiative-as-planned and the experiences of those within the selected school sites. Finally, I see this study as a starting point for others who want to pursue further work in this area.

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CHAPTER II

THE REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Gaining an understanding of teacher education, its programs, models, and the rationale for such is almost as complex as understanding the act of teaching itself. One's journey must begin with the issues surrounding professionalism and professionalization. Understanding these issues is a critical cornerstone to the laying of a foundation through which we can examine the current criticisms specific to education relative to the calls for reform in teacher professionalism and preservice teacher education.

The literature has demonstrated that teachers' professional associations and teacher education programs have responded to these criticisms through working more collaboratively in developing and presenting preservice teacher education. Due to the nature of this study, a review of the literature regarding school-university partnerships, the impetus behind their development, their benefits, and the conditions necessary for their success is a critical next step to furthering my understanding. Finally, because the CSI depends heavily upon the placement of student teachers in a cohort model, recent research and writing on this topic have been included in this review.

Professionalization and Professionalism in Education

In the fall of 1998 Dr. David Blades, in a course on the development of curriculum theory, stated that current writers of postmodern thought such as Foucault, Eisner, and Doll have built upon the groundbreaking work of early authors such as Derrida and Lyotard to illustrate that we are living in a time of global malaise and malcontent (Blades, 1998).

These authors proposed that the world economic order is changing. The rise of multinational corporations and the move towards government deregulation and local autonomy are changing the social fabric of society. Access to information is occurring at

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an unprecedented rate, and the various news media are more than happy to accommodate the public's insatiability with hearing what is wrong rather than what is right in the world today.

We live in uncertain times in which the only constant appears to be a general dissatisfaction with and distrust of major public institutions. It is of little surprise, then, that all aspects of schools and schooling (including teacher professionalization, professionalism, and preparation) are under intense public scrutiny and review. In his article to the *Times Educational Supplement* in July of 1997, Wilby (as cited in Hargraves, 1997) stated, "Governments have always needed scapegoats and if government leaders announce that 'education is the secret to national success,' then it is logical to assume that when things start to go wrong teachers become the new enemy" (p. 6). Popular and often-quoted articles such as "Why Johnny Can't Read" and "The Nation at Risk: What's Wrong With America's Schools?" have captured and fueled society's fascination with and paranoia about problems in schools.

It is important to recognize that such fascination is not without historical precedent. Teachers and teacher education have long been recognized as panaceas for curing society's ills. As early as 83 years ago this point was illustrated in an address from Henry W. Holmes (as cited in Lanier & Featherstone, 1988), the then-Dean of the Harvard Graduate School of Education, when he wrote:

> The making of our nation calls for a new and higher standard in the training of teachers. . . . No factor will be more important than bringing a more serious attitude toward education than the raising of teaching to a new level of competence. . . . The simple truth is that a more serious conception of the place of the teacher in the life of the nation is both necessary and timely. (p. 22)

Modern-day evidence of the critical role that teachers play in shaping the structure of society was evidenced in Labaree's (1992) "The Movement to Professionalize Teaching," in which he wrote:

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> The creation of a professional teaching force will enable us to pursue more effectively all of the major social goals that Americans have traditionally assigned to public schools: social efficacy (raising the standard of living via enhanced skill training), social mobility (increasing social opportunity for the underclass), and political equality (enhancing students' ability to function in a democracy. (p. 127)

Finally, the General Teaching Council Trust (1993; as cited in Bottery & Wright, 1997) stated that

> the education and training of teachers are crucial to the quality of any society. . . . for teachers, above all professionals, must, almost by definition, be intellectually active, authoritative, lively, critical, reflective, flexible and ever attentive to the constant and changing demands of the young and the society for which they are being prepared. (p. 7)

The faith in the teaching profession's ability to mold and shape the very fabric of society places it in a very interesting juxtaposition. The profession often uses the importance placed upon teaching and teachers as justification for increased professionalization and professional status. However, it would be tremendously naïve to believe that the problems faced both globally and locally can simply be resolved by increased professionalism and improved teaching practice. Therefore, teachers find themselves in the untenable position of trying to improve their professional status while at the same time dealing with unrealistic expectations from the public and private sectors. When these expectations cannot be met, the lobby to deprofessionalize teaching becomes greater.

Nevertheless, it is important to distinguish between the efforts of teachers over the years to raise the status of the profession (professionalization) and the behavior that teachers exhibit individually or collectively in schools (professionalism). Hargraves (1997) wrote, "Teachers will also talk about being professional. This usually has a lot to do with how teachers feel they are seen through other people's eyes—in terms of their status, standing, regard and levels of professional reward" (p. 2). In this statement Hargraves discussed the *professionalization* of teaching. Status, reward, and prestige are all by-products of increased professional status in the community.

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Professionalization and Professional Communities

In order to understand the struggle of increasing the professional status of teaching, the conditions that are historically associated with the granting of professional status to any group or occupation must first be considered. In their article "Teacher Professionalism in Local School Contexts," Talbert and McLaughlin (1994) identified these necessary conditions as

> having a specialized knowledge base and shared standards of practice, a strong service ethic, or commitment to meeting client's needs, strong personal identity with, and commitment to, the occupation, and collegial versus bureaucratic control over entry, performance evaluations, and retention in the profession. (p. 127)

In her article "Professional Practice in School Teaching," Preston (1996) identified the following as contingent and interrelated conditions that are necessary for professional status:

- The continual growth of the knowledge base through formal and informal scholarship, research, and development;
- Practitioner involvement in the professional education of other members of the profession, and in research;
- Control over entry according to publicly accountable minimum requirements;
- Development and maintenance of explicit standards of professional competence and practice;
- Autonomy (individual or collective) of practice;
- Professional ethics—commitment to clients and the wider community; and
- Collective organization for professional practice and representation. (p. 249)

Today's Story: Professions Under Siege

There are several reasons why teaching struggles in its effort to garner increased professional status amongst the public and private sectors, as well as within other professional communities. First, however, it is important to recognize that these struggles are occurring in a climate in which the status of all professions is under siege. Hager (1996) identified four factors that are instrumental in developing and contributing to this climate:

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1. Consequences of change: One of the characteristics of a discipline that allows it professional status is possessing a discrete body of knowledge. Information is being generated so rapidly and shared so efficiently that it is difficult for those within the profession to stay current. In addition, the body of knowledge that was once held in sacred trust amongst those in the profession is now readily available to the average person through the advance of technology, such as the Internet. Members of the public with a home computer, Internet access, and a search engine have access to information that was once held exclusive to those within the professional community.

2. An increase in public dissatisfaction with professions: The public perceives most professions to be elitist in nature and impervious to the demands of the free-market system. The news media have demonstrated an attraction and an increased willingness to expose examples of professional incompetence or malpractice. This has led to an increased demand for accountability, regulation, and control of the professions by government-sponsored regulative bodies.

3. Our limited understanding of the nature of professional practice: Writers such as Hager (1996) and Kelchtermans (1996) have recognized that professional practice at one time was identified in a model that promoted "technical rationality." The perception that professionals have a discrete body of knowledge from which they draw in an ordered, scientific fashion to solve the problems that are encountered in daily practice has proven to be problematic. Such a belief is perceived to delimit the role of judgment in practice and does not reflect the complexity of the world in which professionals work. However, to recognize this flaw is counterproductive to the professionalization of the particular discipline, for it is often upon the assumption that this discrete and prescriptive body of knowledge exists that professional status has been granted.

4. The influence of postmodern thought: Additionally, it is important at this time to recognize the postmodern influences upon the professions. The impact of the move from a modernist to a postmodernist view of knowledge and the social world that was

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alluded to previously in this dissertation cannot be ignored. These influences were clearly articulated by Bottery and Wright (1997) in their article "Impoverishing a Sense of Professionalism," in which they stated:

> An increasing skepticism of the "enlightenment project"—the ability of mankind [sic] through a universal reason to transcend the particularities of time and culture and fashion a concept of progress for all humanity—has led to the view that such "grand narratives" are no longer plausible (Lyotard, 1984). The best that one can do in such circumstances is to accept the inevitability of the 'situatedness' of one's existence, and the framing of one's experience; . . . therefore the prognosis for professionals is deeply pessimistic. (p. 9)

This belief, in the absence of such grand narratives in professional contexts, contributes to the erosion of public confidence and support to professions and calls into question the validity of many of the conditions that were previously identified that are normally associated with the granting of professional status.

The Complexities of Teacher Professionalization

In addition to the impediments generalizable to all professions cited in the preceding paragraphs, authors such as Preston (1996), Labaree (1992), and Denemark (1985) felt that the teaching profession has five additional roadblocks impinging upon its efforts to further professionalize. The first of these is the belief that the teaching profession is lacking a widely accepted body of professional knowledge. Preston supported this claim in her statement that there has historically been "a lack of common identity, purpose, and understanding between teachers and academics, leading to some reduced professional effectiveness on both sides" (p. 260). Labaree stated, "The literature on professions suggests that teacher professionalization cannot take place until there is a well-developed body of knowledge on teaching that is able to guide teaching practice" (p. 135). Denemark also articulated the lack of shared knowledge: "Teachers' dismissal of the importance of a knowledge base under-girding instructional practice means that their performance rests upon a narrow, highly personalized view of teaching rather than upon a broad professional base rooted in research and shared practice" (p. 49).

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Adding to the debate is the historical perception that can be found in the proposition of Jones (1986), Bottery and Wright (1997), Kirk (1988), and Pratte and Rury (1991) that university communities and educators in the field have traditionally not worked collaboratively towards research in education. This lack of collaboration is felt to have additionally impinged upon the development of a professional body of knowledge.

A second impediment is believed to be the existence of teachers' unions. Many authors acknowledged that one of the keys to professionalization is to have a self-governing professional body that controls the intake of its members and maintains and enforces professional standards and conduct. They saw the current linkage of teacher associations with teacher unions as problematic as teachers lobby for increased professional status. Preston (1996) commented:

> From the criterion that professions are high status and associated with the middle class came the conclusion that unionism is incompatible with professionalism, and that teacher unions are not appropriate organizations for professional representation because of unionism's connections with the working class. (p. 251)

Meade (1990; as cited in Preston, 1996) further discussed the negative impact of unionism upon teacher professionalism:

> One of the problems is that we don't have a clearly identified profession of either teaching or education. There's no overarching professional body as for example in the medical profession, or the legal profession, or the engineering profession, and therefore in some senses the profession itself has to take some steps to make its identification much clearer than it has been up until now. Indeed, in many respects, the professional role has been taken by default in a relatively unhappy arrangement by the union movement. (p. 258)

Finally, Pratte and Rury (1991) attacked teacher unionism more critically in "Teachers, Professionalism, and Craft": "At best, teaching is seen as a semi- or quasi-profession. For one thing, teachers are not paid like many other professionals. They work for wages and (perhaps more important) they belong to unions" (p. 661).

A third impediment is seen to be the push for teacher professionalization by external agencies and interest groups. Many of the educational reforms aimed at

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professionalizing teaching have been initiated by governments and other agencies in response to the perception that schools and teachers are failing in their attempt to meet the needs of the students and prepare them for the challenges associated with a global economy. Critical to the professionalization of teaching is the need for teachers to recognize the importance of such an activity and undertake a leadership role in the professionalization movement. Current initiatives that have been developed in the absence of teacher involvement have become bureaucratic, with an overemphasis on prescriptive practice techniques and standardized testing as a way of ensuring and monitoring professional practice. This was best illustrated by Denemark (1985), who wrote:

> Many teachers now express frustration that teaching has become less a profession and more a civil service job resulting from the endless amount of regulation and law imposed by government agencies. What other profession would tolerate the degree of control exercised by forces other than members of the profession themselves? (p. 47)

In her article "One Teacher's Profession," English teacher Shumate (1987) clearly demonstrated her frustration with the impact that others have had on her professional efficacy: A teacher "should be viewed as someone who knows what he or she is doing. . . . The time is long past when a teacher should have to justify to everyone—from parents, to students, to janitors" (p. 410).

A fourth impediment to teacher professionalization is the need for a philosophical change to occur amongst teachers themselves. In order for the professionalization of teaching to increase, there must be a clear understanding of all teachers relative to their role as educators. Very few professions have changed so dramatically in the past two decades. There has been a definite shift of focus in teaching away from expertise in content knowledge to having the aptitude and the skills to focus upon individual student learning. Students who were once placed in specialized programs and institutions are now being integrated into regular classrooms. For some teachers this shift in foci must be

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accompanied by a shift in their personal philosophy towards teaching and learning. Schrag (1995), in her article "Teacher Accountability: A Philosophical View," illustrated the need for this shift: "Regrettably, too many teachers follow the same uninspiring routines year after year. They have no vision or alternate approaches to their subject" (p. 664). A friend and colleague who I consider to be a master teacher wrote the following in his story of teaching:

> Sadly I feel that some of my colleagues have no idea why they teach. They teach because they feel they like kids, or because they have an aptitude in a particular subject. They have no purpose to fall back on when kids prove to be not always likeable or they end up teaching a subject they don't like. What they forget is that teaching is a more noble pursuit than simply fulfilling one's likes or dislikes. (J. Larbalestier, personal communication, September 1998)

Finally, Sockett (1996), in his article entitled "Teachers for the 21st Century: Redefining Professionalism," wrote:

> Teaching in contemporary society requires both high academic standards and great moral and practical sophistication. It is an illusion to think of teaching quality in terms of technique, nor is it enough to think that subject knowledge alone will yield quality. At the heart of teaching are moral and ethical relationships, because the teacher takes the responsibility for upbringing of the young. (p. 26)

Any movement to professionalize teaching must have the full support of those already in the profession. The current economic conditions have lent themselves to career lock-in for teachers, which is unhealthy for the profession and those within it who need to move. Those teachers who are unable or unwilling to adjust their philosophy to meet the changing demands of the profession find themselves in front of the students day after day, year after year, with very little opportunity for change, yet having to deal with a position that is becoming increasingly more difficult and challenging.

The final impediment to teaching professionalization to be covered in this review is the nature of teaching itself. In "The Movement to Professionalize Teaching," Labaree (1992) wrote:

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> The implication is that laypersons should have no more say about how a teacher conducts a class than about how a surgeon conducts an operation; both cases are seen as technical matters of professional competence that are best dealt with by peer review. But it is not clear that shaping minds, instilling values, and preparing citizens are the same sort of technical problems as removing an appendix or reducing a fever. (p. 149)

Further complexities of teaching were illustrated by Kelchtermans (1996):

> One of the major professional realities teachers have to come to terms with is the limit of their professional efficacy: teaching activities only determine part of student learning outcomes. Many other factors, over which they have little or no control, determine pupil learning. (p. 313)

Talbert and McLaughlin (1994) identified additional difficulties attributed to the nature of teaching in their article "Teacher Professionalism in Local School Contexts":

> The development of a shared technical culture among teachers is also inhibited, or even defined as illegitimate, by our nation's strong tradition of local control coupled with divergent definitions of valuable knowledge and good teaching practice. . . . The issue of teachers' professionalism, then, may increasingly hinge upon local values and beliefs about "best practice." (p. 128)

Finally, Sergiovanni (1987) best described the fluid nature of teaching: "Teachers ride the wave of the teaching pattern as it unfolds, accommodating to shifting circumstances. When riding the wave, models of teaching and learning are used rationally to inform intuition and enhance professional judgment, not rationalistically to prescribe practice" (pp. 45-46).

Clearly, one of the issues that needs to be addressed as teachers lobby for increased professional status is the education of stakeholder groups as to the unique circumstances that blend theory and practice in teachers' professional lives.

The movement towards increased professionalization in teaching does not come without caution, however. Hargraves (1997) noted:

> Professionalism (improving quality and standards of practice) and professionalization (improving status and standing) are often presented as complementary projects (improve standards and you will improve status), but sometimes they are contradictory. For example, defining professional standards in high status, scientific and technical ways as standards of knowledge and skill can

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> downgrade or neglect the equally important emotional dimensions of teachers' work in terms of being passionate about teaching, and caring for students' learning and lives. (p. 2)

Teacher Education Programs: A Call for Reform

As previously mentioned in this thesis, since the 1983 report *A Nation at Risk*, there has been a movement afoot throughout North America to reform teacher education programs. Many blue-ribbon panels have urged a renaissance in education (Carnegie Forum, 1986: Holmes Group, 1986; National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). The foci of these committees centered upon increasing the educational performance of the nation's youth through large-scale school reform and the restructuring of teacher education.

In 1986 the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy determined that teacher education was the key to success in creating a profession of well-educated teachers prepared to assume new powers and responsibilities to redesign schools for the future. The significance of reform in teacher education in helping the renewal process of education in general was additionally supported by a two-year study of the state of American education in which the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (as cited in Darling-Hammond, 1996) declared that "reform of elementary and secondary education depends first and foremost on restructuring its foundation, the teaching profession" (p. 193).

Slick (1995a), in her book *Emerging Trends in Teacher Education*, credited the Holmes Report with setting the wheels in motion for a reflective and systemic change in teacher education. Slick contended that research by such educational leaders as Goodlad, Berliner, and Boyer emphasized that teachers of the future will need to participate early and continuously during their teacher-preparation programs in the public school arena where they will eventually be employed (p. xi). Selke and Keuter (as cited in Slick, 1995a) indicated that

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> nearly a decade ago, *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century* (Carnegie Forum, 1986) and *Tomorrow's Teachers* (Holmes Group, 1986) served as catalysts for reform that challenged teacher preparation institutes to close the gap between the ivory tower and the world of pedagogical theory and the practical reality of contemporary classrooms. (p. 1)

Early efforts for educational reform featured few connections between the public schools and the needs of teacher education (Goodlad, 1994a). Darling-Hammond (1996) indicated that, by the standards of other professions, teacher education has historically been inconsistent in terms of quality, variable in curriculum substance, and unstably financed. The purposeful and successful linkage between teacher education and school reform as advocated by the Holmes Report and others is difficult to find. Where examples are found, the resulting impact upon teacher education programs appears to be localized. Indeed, Clinchy (1996) contended that in addition to the lack of connection between school and teacher education reforms, it is important to recognize that little consideration had been given to the need to reform higher education at all.

Murray (1986) and Goodlad (1994b) believed that the lack of renewal of all three educational institutions—schools, teacher education programs, and the broader higher education—are the reasons that educational reform efforts have failed to yield widespread results. Many researchers cited teacher education programs themselves as the main source of the problem (Goodlad, 1990a; Little, 1986).

Traditional teacher education programs have been criticized from a number of perspectives, the first of which is the tendency for teacher education to oversimplify the realities of teaching. This perspective was supported in part by the research of Kagan (1992), Bullough (1990), and Griffin (1989). A second criticism focuses upon the lack of adequate time for preparation for the field experience and the lack of time in an actual classroom. Kagan, Griffin, and Lanier and Little (1986) alluded to this perspective in their work. Finally, an area of concern is the novice teachers' feelings of unpreparedness for classroom teaching following their teacher education program, which was discovered

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by Jacknicke and Samiroden in their work with beginning teachers in 1990. All of these criticisms of teacher preparation have brought together universities and teachers' professional associations in an attempt to silence their critics and to better prepare beginning teachers for the workplace demands and increased complexity of schools.

School-University Partnerships: A Response to the Call for Reform

Since the mid 1980s many groups calling for reform in teacher education have promoted the formation of school-university partnerships as the primary means of effecting widespread improvements in public education (Stallings & Kowalski, 1990). Slick and Burrett (1995b) suggested that "the best of theory and practice dictates a paradigm shift in the structure and substance of teacher education, a collaborative structure that joins the scholarship of college and university with the excellence in practice of school personnel" (p. 114).

Fullan (1991) and Lieberman (1990) (both as cited in Emihovich, 1992) acknowledged the importance of school-university partnerships in the following: "Without question, the need for closer collaboration between school districts and university professional education programs in order to facilitate meaningful educational change is widely acknowledged to be greater than ever" (p. 50).

Finally, Watson and Fullan (1992) further supported the critical importance of the linkages between the universities and the schools through their belief that improved education is based on rethinking the relationship between schools and teacher development for two reasons:

1. Teacher education or teacher development is a career-long continuum from the earliest through the latest stages of being a teacher.
2. Teacher development and school development must go hand in hand. In general, you cannot have one without the other. (p. 213)

Watson and Fullan (1992) were supported in these views by the Holmes Group (1990), who believed that

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> improvement and professionalization of teaching depend ultimately on providing teachers with the opportunities to contribute to the development of knowledge in their profession, to form collegial relationships beyond their immediate working environment, and to grow intellectually as they mature professionally. (p. 57)

According to Darling-Hammond (1994), as well as Stallings and Kowalski (1990), partnerships between public schools and higher education are slowly increasing across North America. Some partnerships are connected to educational organizations, and others are independent from formal organizations (Darling-Hammond, 1994).

In a recent study by the Education Commission of the States (as cited in Finney, 1992) on the perceptions of state and educational leaders on teacher education reform, a major finding was that "efforts to link schools, colleges, and universities to improve teacher education are largely *ad hoc* and experimental, but an optimistic sign of renewal in education" (p. 2).

The Benefits of School-University Partnerships

There is a great deal of current writing regarding the potential benefits of school-university partnerships. Emerging themes include enhancing professional development opportunities for experienced teachers, increasing the connections between the world of theory and practice, and improving the university and field-based experiences of beginning teachers. To date, many of these themes are in the developmental stage pending further research and study.

Notwithstanding the above, the research that has been completed on school-university partnerships has illustrated benefits for participants in the collaboration, both at university and school levels. For example, general educational collaborations are perceived to assist researchers in meeting the new demands that are being placed upon them (Howey, 1985). Little (1993) believed that, by working with others and sharing ideas, collaborations allow teachers to "deepen their subject knowledge to assume a more assertive role in the reform of curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment" (p. 134); and that collaborations can give teachers greater access to professional networks. Collaboration

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can also provide teachers with opportunities to generate knowledge through collaborative research and to assess the knowledge of other professionals, rather than simply consume research knowledge (Little, 1993).

Other benefits of school-university collaboration discussed in the literature include improving the quality of preservice preparation programs and increasing levels of communication and trust between the institutions (Kagan, 1992; Keating & Clark, 1988); maximizing scarce resources (Jones & Maloy, 1988; Kagan, 1992) and dividing labor (Hord, 1986); motivating teachers to increase knowledge and improve techniques with the ultimate goal of improving instructional delivery to students (Kagan, 1992); and enhancing "school district status as well as university credibility" (Combleth & Ellsworth, 1994, p. 61).

Slick and Burrett (1995b) confirmed these benefits and introduced others in *Emerging Trends in Teacher Education Preparation*; they identified the following as general and common benefits to collaboration:

- Focusing university research and scholarship on current school problems.
- Connecting university preparation practices with the world of practice.
- Joint ventures in evaluation, planning, and in-service programs.
- Mutual staff development opportunities.
- Interdisciplinary perspectives on problem solving.
- Access to resources of a much broader community.
- Strengthened position for securing external funds, including grants.
- Increased efficiency in using resources.
- Occasions for teachers and teacher educators to assume new roles and exercise leadership.
- Access to community concerns over education and teacher education.
- Input from experienced professionals for improving teacher education programs.
- Impact on school programs at the point of delivery.
- Expanded opportunities for action research and publication.
- A mechanism for reflecting societal priorities into school and preparation programs.
- The environment supportive of translating theory into practice. (p. 215)

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In summary, school-university partnerships encourage and provide opportunity for research that results in the enhancement of the professional body of knowledge. Research on teaching and learning has often been criticized for being based upon contrived studies rather than on the actual contexts of schooling. Also, university faculty who teach teachers are sometimes regarded as being too far removed from the "real world" of the classroom to provide effective knowledge to their students. School-university collaborations are seen as a vehicle through which both of these issues can be addressed.

Teachers themselves, whose practice would benefit the most by the knowledge gained through educational research, have historically been left out of the equation relative to furthering the professional knowledge of their fields. Partnerships are seen as being able to involve teachers through facilitating enterprising, relevant, and responsible research and development in schools.

This research and development serves to add to the collections of knowledge about teaching and learning, which then allows for the development of intellectually sound programs of teacher education that successfully combine theory and practice, or *praxis*, for their students. This successful combination allows the beginning teachers to more quickly develop the "pedagogical tact" that is necessary for successful praxis to occur in classrooms.

Constructing Effective Partnerships

According to the Holmes Group (1990), in order to be successful, school-university partnerships need to be based on the precepts of experimentation (the willingness to try new forms of practice), systematic inquiry (subjecting new ideas to careful study and validation), and reciprocity (mutual exchange and benefit between research and practice).

Watson and Fullan (1992) surveyed the needs of schools and universities and identified the following "truths" associated with school-university collaboration:

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1. School/school systems and universities (at least faculties of education) need each other to be successful.
2. They are dissimilar in key aspects of structure, culture, and reward systems.
3. Working together potentially can provide the coherence, coordination, and persistence essential to teacher and school development.
4. Both parties must work hard at working together—forging new structures, respecting each other's culture, and using shared experiences to problem solve by incorporating the strengths of each culture.
5. Strong partnerships will not happen by accident, good will or establishing ad hoc projects. They require structures, new activities, and a rethinking of the internal workings of each institution as well as their inter-institutional workings. (p. 219)

Evidenced by the work of Watson and Fullan (1992) is the need for organizations that wish to become involved in partnerships of a truly collaborative nature to take the time to become cognizant of the inner workings of each other. True and successful partnerships require shared goals, careful planning, and a tremendous amount of commitment.

Goodlad (1990b) noted that the relationship between the school and the university must be symbiotic in nature. The two institutions must join to satisfy mutual self-interests. As the partnership develops, each member grows to realize that the satisfaction of the self-interest of the other(s) is critical to the satisfaction of its own.

Other authors, such as Glatthorn and Coble (1995), have identified the conditions that are necessary for a successful collaboration between schools and universities in addition to the symbiosis identified by Goodlad (1990b). They stated that in order for school-university partnerships to be effective, the following principles must be taken into consideration:

- The university and the school are equal partners in the development of high quality professionals.
- The expertise of effective classroom teachers, school principals, and university faculty are all valued; they can learn from one another in a climate of openness and inquiry.
- The autonomy of each constituent institution is respected; neither attempts to prescribe for the other.
- Consensus is desired and achieved through open deliberation.

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- Student concerns are important and should be recognized and responded to; student power should be legitimized and operationalized within the limits of school and university policies. (p. 20)

The literature has clearly demonstrated that in order for school-university partnerships to be successful, they must be carefully thought out and will require a large amount of time, effort, and commitment from each of the supporting institutions. Partnerships are not serendipitous undertakings that can withstand the test of time through the striking of an ad hoc committee whose purpose is more political than functional. Nevertheless, when school-university partnerships are developed purposefully and effectively, they yield tremendous benefits for the university and professional community.

The Role of Cohorts in Collaborative Ventures

It is difficult to examine school-university partnerships without recognizing the existence of cohort groups as a critical component of the field experience placement process, because many of the models described in the literature include the use of cohort groups. For example, cohort groups are recommended by a number of theorists and researchers, including Watson and Fullan (1992), Goodlad (1990a), Holmes Group (1986, 1990), and Little (1986). The use of cohorts grew from the concern of isolating novice teachers and thus impeding teacher learning (Goodlad, 1990a). In addition to reducing isolation, cohorts and collaborative practice have been found to be useful in increasing feelings of collegiality and professionalism in novice teachers (Cochran-Smith, 1991; Samiroden & Stewart, 1988; Sandholtz & Merseth, 1992). Additional research on cohorts has yielded equally positive results. For example, O'Donnell (1989) confirmed through interviews of student teachers and cooperating teachers that working in a cohort group helped to alleviate some of the frustrations associated with student teaching and field experience programs. In another study, Teitel (1992) found that student teachers assigned as a cohort were reinforced positively by their interdependence.

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Finally, the establishment of cohort groups within schools has benefits beyond those experienced by the student teachers. Little (1986) found that cooperating teachers were also affected by participating in the cohort experience and that collaborating cohorts helped shape a new school culture in which sharing was the norm.

Therefore, introducing cohorts is a critical component of school-university collaboration. In addition to the immediate benefits experienced by student teachers, cooperating teachers, and university faculty, preliminary evidence has suggested that the skills developed by each of these stakeholder groups have an effect on individual and collective organizational behavior beyond the field experience.

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CHAPTER III

RESEARCH ORIENTATION, DESIGN, AND METHODOLOGY

Research Orientation

In order to fulfill the research goals of understanding and presenting the lived experiences of each of the participants in the field experience, I decided upon intrinsic case study as the research method to guide this study. An intrinsic case study is undertaken when the researcher's interest in the particulars of a given phenomenon provides the impetus for further research and exploration. In an intrinsic case study, Stake (1995) indicated, "We will have a research question, a puzzlement, a need for general understanding, and feel that we may get insight into the question by studying a particular case" (p. 3).

The designs of intrinsic case studies "draw the researcher toward an understanding of what is important about that case within its own world, not so much of the world of research and theorists, but developing its issues, contexts, and interpretations" (Stake, 1995, p. 242). Research methodology utilized in an intrinsic case study tends to be characterized as being more fluid and flexible than that normally associated with other types of case studies.

Therefore, this study is both descriptive and interpretive in nature. It describes the experiences of each of the participants as they fulfill their roles in the field experience, while offering interpretive accounts of those experiences through a complete and thorough data analysis. Peshkin (1993) claimed that interpretive research has value because it provides the reader with an opportunity to understand processes, people, or situations more clearly.

As Stake (1995) explained, cases are bounded, integrated systems, such as a child, a class of children, or a school; not broad, general systems, such as childhood, schooling,

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or education. The case is understood to be one of many of a given phenomenon, and the case study is concerned with what can be learned from the specifics of a single case.

It was critical for me to remember Stake's (1995) thoughts regarding bounded systems as I began this study. The intent was not to deal with the discourse practices of field experiences in relation to a grand or meta-narrative, but rather to look at the experiences of student teachers, cooperating teachers, and university personnel within the bounds of a local context that has been labeled the Collaborative Schools Initiative.

The Nature Of Interpretive Inquiry

Interpretive inquiry, in a hermeneutic sense, begins with a question, a practical concern, or a caring (Packer & Addison, 1989). As previously mentioned, I have a practical concern relative to the experiences of those involved in the CSI and how their experiences relate to the goals of the model. I find myself entering the hermeneutic circle with these real questions in mind. In hermeneutic inquiry it is important for the researcher to identify his or her preunderstanding of the issues or phenomenon being studied. My preunderstanding of the Collaborative Schools Initiative is based upon my work with the program as a practicum associate and one of two coordinators of the initial Collaborative Schools Project. Although this preunderstanding can provide for a more enriched historical analysis of the CSI, I must recognize and account for the effect that it will have upon my entry into the hermeneutic circle. Packer and Addison (1989) acknowledged that "we both understand and at the same time misunderstand; we inevitably shape the phenomena to fit a 'fore structure' that has been shaped by expectations and preconceptions, and by lifestyle, culture, and tradition" (p. 33). It is through my recognition that this forestructure exists that I have ensured that my representation of the cases can be as accurate as possible.

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Sampling

Selecting the Schools

Using more than one school as a research site as per Stake's (1995) collective study approach was desirable for the purposes of this study. It is important to recognize that data collected from each site (however instrumental in attempting to answer the research questions) was enhanced and enriched through purposeful and careful coordination amongst the individual sites.

Three schools were selected for the study. All were currently participating in and fulfilling all of the requirements of the Collaborative Schools Initiative that was coordinated through Undergraduate Student Services in the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta. The schools selected were well established in their relationship with the Collaborative Schools Initiative. This degree to which this relationship has been established was based upon the number of years that the schools have successfully participated in the model as determined through consultation with the professional officer in field experiences. I felt that schools that had a high degree of comfort and familiarity with the model would provide the most enriched research opportunity.

Additionally, strong consideration was given to schools with which I had had some degree of personal contact when I was on campus in my role as practicum associate. I believed that being familiar with the school and having a previous rapport with the school staff would assist me in entering the school community with a higher level of trust that may have been established through my previous visits. I believe that, indeed, this increased trust was evident and provided for more enriched description through data collection.

Participants

The study included three university facilitators, three school coordinators, seven cooperating teachers, and seven student teachers. Additionally, the principals at two of the school sites participated in interviews.

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Data Sources and Data Collection

The study involved participants in the nine-week Advanced Professional Term (APT) of the teacher education program. The APT is the final field experience for the students prior to graduation. The field experience was scheduled from February 14, 2000, to March 24, 2000. Prior to the start of the field experience, I contacted the school coordinators to remind them of their participation in the study and to confirm regularly scheduled meeting dates. In two of the three schools, the university facilitator was in attendance at these meetings as well. The meeting schedule and interview dates with the student teachers were set during the first week of their field experience, upon confirmation of their participation in the study. The same process held true for the cooperating teachers.

Data were collected in each of the three schools on a weekly basis over the nine-week period of the field experience. Data sources included two interviews with each of the student teachers and one interview with each of the cooperating teachers, school coordinators, university facilitators, and school administrators; a questionnaire that was completed by the student teachers; regular observations of the meetings that related to the field experience program in the school; the acquisition of documents related to the field experience at each of the sites, which included orientation manuals, memos to teachers, and support materials provided to the student teachers; and handwritten field notes that were taken during and directly following school visits. An annotated summary of these notes became an integral part of the audit trail (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

From February 14, 2000, to March 24, 2000, I paid a weekly visit to each of the schools. During these visits I attended the meeting that was regularly scheduled by the school coordinator. I also made informal contact with the student teachers, cooperating teachers, school coordinator, and school administration during that time. Each of the visits typically included time both in the staff room and in the hallway and enabled me to gain a clearer understanding of the nature and culture of the school.

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Interviewing

The data collected during the interviews were critical in allowing me to gain an understanding of the perceptions that student teachers, cooperating teachers, school coordinators, and university facilitators held relative to their experiences in a CSI school. Bogdan and Biklen (1998) described *interviewing* as "a method of gathering descriptive data in the subjects' own words so that the researcher can develop insights on how subjects interpret some piece of the world" (p. 96). Flexibility is important to allow the participants to take into account their own unique circumstances and context. Patton (1990) determined that "the purpose of interviewing is to find out what is in and on someone else's mind" (p. 278). Interviews allow researchers to access individuals' thoughts, feelings, and perceptions in ways not normally associated with traditional research techniques. Patton continued, "Effective interviews should cause both the interviewer and the interviewee to feel that a 2-way flow of communication is going on" (p. 327).

Student teachers were interviewed two times during their student-teaching round. The initial interview occurred in the third or fourth week of their field experience, and the final interview took place during the last (ninth) week of their placement. Each interview took approximately 45 minutes to one hour. A semistructured interview guide was used for the initial interview, which included the following:

- Tell me what it feels like to be a student teacher in this school.
- What are some things that you have enjoyed about your field experience?
- Are there some things that you have not enjoyed about your field experience?
- Tell me some of the things that you have done outside of the classroom.
- Who are the key people that you feel have been involved in your field experience? What role or roles did he/she play?

The final interview featured similar questions designed to initiate reflective thought without being restrictive. From an analysis of the initial interviews it became apparent

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that the school culture played a critical role in the student teachers' feelings of belonging to the school community. Therefore, a key addition to the type and nature of the questions focused upon the student teachers' perceptions of the factors associated with the promotion of the culture of caring that they were experiencing.

Similarly, a semistructured interview guide was used to interview the cooperating teachers, who were asked to participate in one interview of approximately 45 to 60 minutes. The interview took place in the final (ninth) week of the field experience. The guide included the following:

- Tell me what it feels like to be a cooperating teacher in this school.
- What are some things that you have really enjoyed about your involvement with your student teacher and the field experience program at your school?
- What are some things that you have not enjoyed about your involvement with your student teacher and the field experience program at your school?
- What are some of the things that you had your student teacher do outside of your classroom?
- What do you see as the role of the school coordinator in the field experience program at this school?
- What do you see as being important to your experience as a cooperating teacher? What things are unimportant?
- One of the things consistently mentioned by the student teachers is their feeling of belonging to the school, and that the staff here are very helpful and caring. Can you share with me any thoughts that you might have regarding the existence of such a culture?

The school coordinators' interviews focused on their leadership position within the field experience program. They were interviewed once near the end of the field experience for approximately 45 to 60 minutes, and the interview included the following:

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- Tell me what it is like to be the school coordinator.
- What are some of the tasks that you complete as the school coordinator?
- Are there advantages associated with taking on the role of school coordinator?
- Are there disadvantages?
- What (if anything) provides you with the most satisfaction in your role?
- What things (if any) do you find the most difficult or frustrating in your role?

Finally, the university facilitator was interviewed to determine the scope and nature of their experiences at the school. Similar in format to the interview of the cooperating teacher and school coordinator, it occurred at the conclusion of the field experience. The interview for the university facilitator included:

- Tell me what it is like to be the university facilitator in this school.
- In what types of activities have you been involved?
- Are there any differences between your experiences at this school and those at other schools in which you have been (or currently are) involved (if appropriate)?
- Have there been any advantages to your participation as the university facilitator in this school?
- What are the challenges or disadvantages (if any) associated with assuming the role of university facilitator?

The purpose of the guides for all the interviews was to initiate a conversation through which the participants shared their current experiences in their role as student teacher, cooperating teacher, school coordinator, or university facilitator. The structure of each guide provided a common starting point, with enough flexibility to allow the participants to take into account unique circumstances and context. All interviews were tape recorded with the participants' consent. A typed transcription of the interview was returned to each participant to allow him or her the opportunity to conduct a thorough member check (Guba & Lincoln, 1985) before the content of the transcript was analyzed.

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Also, in the case of the student teachers, the original transcripts were used to note questions and identify topics that formed the basis for the second interview.

Questionnaire

Data were collected through the use of a questionnaire (see Appendix A), which was administered to the student teachers during the final (ninth) week of their field experience.

Observations

As previously mentioned, data were obtained from written field notes based upon my weekly visits to each school during the field experience. I visited each of the sites a minimum of one half day per week throughout the nine weeks. Each visit began with a short discussion with the student teachers and asking them to describe briefly the activities of the past week related to their field experience. Similar conversations took place with the cooperating teachers and school coordinator. The visits provided me with an opportunity to write field notes that included observations from attendance at all formal meetings and structured activities at each site, and observations gathered from informal interactions within the school community. An annotated summary of the notes became part of the audit trail (Guba & Lincoln, 1985) that I maintained throughout the data collection.

Documents

In addition, I obtained relevant university- and school-based documents such as handbooks, school-generated resources, memos, agendas, minutes of meetings, etc. I began the collection of these documents early in the study and continued throughout the duration of the field experience. These documents served to be a critical resource to reaffirm findings at which I arrived through other sources of data collection.

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Data Analysis

Stake (1995) contended that data analysis in case study research is "a matter of giving meaning to first impressions as well as to final compilations" (p. 71). He continued, "The search for meaning is often a search for patterns, for consistency, for consistency within certain conditions, which we call correspondence" (p. 78). As researchers search for these patterns, they "have certain protocols that help them draw systematically from previous knowledge and cut down on misconceptions" (p. 72).

However, within this activity one must remain cognizant of the value of one's own thoughts and perceptions; Stake observed that within qualitative research "there is much art and much intuitive processing to the search for meaning" (p. 72). Within my research I found myself striving to achieve the delicate balance between being aware of and following well-accepted procedures and protocol, and at the same time honoring the artistic and intuitive dimensions that sound qualitative research requires.

Many writers in the field of qualitative research, such as Bogdan and Biklen (1998), have contended that there are two stages of data analysis. The first stage occurs while data are being collected, and the second stage after the data collection has been completed. I found this to be true in my research. Data analysis proceeded by moving from the interviews to the field notes and documents, and back to the interview transcripts. This process was repeated many times, and coding categories were developed from the themes that emerged from the data.

In the early stages of data collection I became mindful of Merriam's (1998) contention that "the researcher who fails to recognize the importance of the first stage of data analysis runs the risk of ending up with data that are unfocused, repetitious, and overwhelming in the sheer volume of material that needs to be processed" (p. 194). Therefore, it became apparent that I needed an effective, practical, and efficient way of organizing my findings.

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After the data were collected, they were separated and analyzed according to site, and then reconfigured according to role. When reading the transcripts, field notes, and supporting documentation, I highlighted sections, key words, or phrases that appeared to stand out. I then rewrote the highlighted data on a Post-It note and placed all of the Post-It notes from a particular school or role on wall charts. I coded the data by developing categories based on the themes that emerged from the data found on the chart(s). Bogdan and Biklen (1998) advocated this process and indicated that key words and phrases become the researcher's coding categories and provide a practical way to sort descriptive data.

After the coding categories were developed, I constructed a separate chart for each of the categories and placed data on the appropriate chart. I then went back through the transcripts, field notes, and supporting documents and highlighted sections that corresponded with the created codes. I then added that information to the appropriate chart. Following that, I analyzed the data on each of the charts to determine the appropriateness of the coding category and, in the case of two charts, decided that there were distinct enough differences in the nature of the data to create another category.

Finally, I reread the transcripts, field notes, and supporting documents to further identify other insights or patterns that I might have missed. In this process, one other category was identified and charted when the data were analyzed relative to the roles found within the CSI experience.

Once all the data were coded and organized into respective categories, a great deal of time was spent reading from all the categories. From this extensive data analysis seven themes developed relative to the organization of the field experience in the CSI, and four other phenomena attributed to the culture of the CSI are identified. A thorough discussion of the themes identified and their significance to the original goals of the CSI, as well as to the provision of quality field experiences for all stakeholder groups, will be discussed in Chapter IV. The findings from the data related to the roles are found in Chapter V.

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This type of categorization allowed me to identify themes that were unique to an individual school or person and those that were common throughout the CSI experience.

Ethical Considerations

Throughout the research and writing process I was keenly aware of the critical importance of my moral obligation to ensure that the participants of the study were not harmed in any way through their participation, and I had heightened vigilance regarding this issue.

After the school sites were selected and the individual schools had agreed in principle to participate in the study, I met with each of the school coordinators prior to the field experience to explain the purpose of my study and to determine their willingness to participate in the research. After I gained the consent of the school coordinators, it was during the first week of the field experience that I approached the student teachers, cooperating teachers, and university facilitators to determine their willingness to participate in the research. Prior to beginning the interviews, I met with each of the groups or individuals noted and reviewed the informed consent forms (see Appendix D) to reiterate the purpose of the study and the procedures to be followed.

Each participant was informed through a letter (Appendices B and C) and informed consent (Appendix D) form about the nature and purpose of my research. The letter invited voluntary participation and advised the potential participants that their participation was voluntary and that they could opt out of the study at any time. My telephone number and that of my university supervisor were included in the letter in the event that one of the potential participants wanted to contact one of us regarding the study. The participants were asked to sign the informed consent form prior to participating.

The names of the school sites and those of the participants in this study are fictitious, and all comments and responses have remained anonymous. Only my

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university supervisors and I have had access to the data collected, which included field notes, surveys, tape recordings, and interview transcripts.

The participants were asked to consent to having the interviews tape recorded, and they were made aware that they could request at any time to have the tape turned off, that parts or all of the interview could be deleted at their request, or that they could speak "informally" or "off the record" at their discretion upon advising me of their desire to do so. They were also informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time.

As previously mentioned, the participants were provided with copies of the final drafts of transcripts for verification (Appendix E).

The Faculty Research Ethics Review Committee and the school district's Cooperative Activities Program approved the research.

Rigor

Despite tremendous gains being made in the past few years within the research community at large, qualitative research, and, in particular, qualitative research within an educational context, continues to garner large amounts of scrutiny and criticism from those who operate from within a traditional research paradigm. In addressing the question of rigor in qualitative research, Denzin and Lincoln (1994) contended that

> the use of multiple methods, or triangulation, reflects an attempt to secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question. Objective reality can never be captured. Triangulation is not a tool or a strategy of validation, but an alternative to validation. The combination of multiple methods, empirical materials, perspectives and observers in a single study is best understood, then, as a strategy that adds rigor, breadth, and depth to any investigation. (p. 2)

Therefore, the terms for establishing the trustworthiness of qualitative research differ from those used within the traditional positivist paradigm. Credibility, transferability, and dependability are found in place of internal and external validity, reliability, and objectivity. Each of these terms will be addressed in order to provide the reader with an opportunity to assess the rigor that was applied through this study.

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Credibility

In order to establish and enhance the credibility of the study, the strategies of triangulation and member checks were utilized.

Triangulation

As previously stated, Stake (1995) referred to the important role that triangulation plays in establishing the credibility of qualitative research: "Triangulation works to substantiate an interpretation or clarify its different meanings" (p. 173). In this study I attempted to achieve triangulation by using the following:

- multiple sources of data and strategies for data collection, including several different respondents in the various roles in each of the sites. These multiple sources allowed for triangulation by providing for a variety of thoughts, perceptions, and perspectives on each case or role;
- several respondents from each school or stakeholder group. By increasing the number of respondents, a diversity of perceptions was incorporated, thereby increasing the validity of themes or patterns identified in data analysis; and
- multiple opportunities to collect data. The weekly visits to each school site encompassed the complete nine-week period of the field experience. These visits provided for enriched opportunities for data collection and interpretation that would likely not have been as readily available if an abbreviated schedule had been utilized.

Member Checks

Member checks are a critical component of establishing credibility in qualitative research (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). Member checks were completed through the following:

- providing the typewritten transcripts to each participant for editing and approval prior to data analysis; and

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- providing each school coordinator with a draft copy of the case study report of his or her school to ensure that the report accurately reflected the culture, climate, and conditions that surrounded the field experience.

Transferability

Stake (1995), Yin (1994), and Eisner (1991) contended that the transferability of the findings in qualitative research differs from that in more traditional research paradigms through the high level of interactivity with the reader. Qualitative research tends to be more contextual and dependent upon the experience and situatedness of each reader. It tends to be more developed by reader interpretation and based upon reference populations determined by the reader. Therefore, I have attempted to provide the "data base that makes transferability judgments possible on the part of their potential appliers" (Stake, 1995, pp. 35-36) through the use of the descriptive passages referred to and found later in this dissertation.

Dependability and Confirmability

Regular meetings with my advisor and records of those meetings were established to ensure dependability and confirmability. Additionally, I kept a journal reflecting my thoughts and perceptions relative to the nature and process of the study throughout the inquiry. Finally, the member checks alluded to earlier were important factors in addressing dependability and confirmability.

Delimitations

This study had delimitations established by the researcher. They include the following:

1. The study was delimited to the case study of the field experiences in three CSI schools. Comparisons among the three schools, or among the three schools and non-CSI sites, were deliberately not made.

2. Parts of the study were delimited by reference to the original goals of the CSI project.

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3. Although every attempt was made to include the thoughts and perceptions of the key stakeholders in the field experience at the three schools relative to the teaching staff, participation in the interviews was delimited only to the cooperating teachers in each of the sites.

Assumptions

Because of my previous experiences both as a cooperating teacher and a field experience associate, I came to this study with the assumption that the CSI was a model for teacher education that enhanced the experiences of those involved in the field experience program in a school. Through this study, I described the lived experiences of the key stakeholders and broadened my initial personal interpretation.

Summary

It was felt that qualitative intrinsic case study was the most appropriate for representing the lived experiences of those involved in the field experience within a CSI school.

The purpose of this chapter was to provide the reader with a detailed description of the research design and methods in order to further their insight relative to the integrity of the research protocols of the study. It is hoped that such insight will assist the reader in their personal interpretations of the findings.

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CHAPTER IV

THE TALE OF THREE SCHOOLS

An Introduction to the Schools

Hillside Catholic Junior High School

A Description of the School

Hillside is a school of 430 junior-high-aged students, which is located in a bedroom community just outside of Edmonton. For the most part, the students who attend the school come from homes that would be classified as middle to upper middle class. Conversations with the school teaching and administrative staff indicated that the parents of the students in the school were generally supportive of their child's education.

The school was bright and welcoming in that signs advertising the peer support meetings greeted you as you walked through the door. In the office, there was a sense of welcome, yet order. A Bible was located beside the intercom from which the daily announcements were read, a visual reminder of the Catholic faith of the school and a testimony to the seriousness of which the school takes its Catholic mission.

The staff room was bright and cheerful, and as the staff arrived in the morning, good-natured banter and teasing were mixed with the more businesslike conversation associated with work in a school. The staff appeared to be happy, yet focused.

The hallways of the school were bright and cheerful; posters adorned the halls that advertised a multitude of school events ranging from intramural events to the upcoming try-outs for the *Annie* production being sponsored by the drama department. The students in the halls demonstrated an energy and enthusiasm usually associated with the 12- to 15-year-old age group under the caring, yet watchful eyes of the morning supervision team.

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Feeling Welcome and Cared For

After many visits to the school I derived a sense that Hillside was a happy place to be for both students and staff. The school climate was calm, caring, and purposeful. During the interviews my sense of the positive nature of the school was clearly supported. The university facilitator assigned to the school identified it as:

> a together school, and I think it's because it is collaborative. There is no heavyweight at the top where everything gets pushed down. It's very much, we work together, we're providing a service to these kids, and we do it best when we work together.

Mary, one of the cooperating teachers, declared:

> It's just such a professional staff. It's not only comfortable helping student teachers; I think we're all comfortable helping each other out. I don't think it makes a difference whether it's a student teacher or a veteran teacher. I think it's just the camaraderie we've built up here.

Paul and Susan, the student teachers, were also keenly aware of the supportive culture in which their field experience was taking place. In the initial interview after three weeks in the field experience, both highlighted the level of support that they felt was present in the school. In his interview, Paul mentioned:

> Everybody's really supportive, helps you out. It's not departmentalized or anything like that. My last practicum, it was terrible. You just stayed in your two classrooms the whole day and only saw your cooperating teacher and maybe one other. This is way better. You can see a bunch of teachers; you can go to any class you want; they're really open towards it. . . . Here they seem enthused, enthusiastic. I'm not sure why. It's maybe just the atmosphere that is being created by the school; they really promote togetherness and cooperation.

Similarly, in her interview Susan touched upon the supportive nature of the school:

> All the teachers in the school are very welcoming; . . . the staff is great. Like I said, they welcomed us completely and involved us in the extra things, like when they go out Fridays after school or whatever, being a part of that, just bonding, I guess. Building rapport with them is really helpful.

Building a sense of collaboration was identified as one of the critical elements associated with the CSI, and I became interested in what I felt was a chicken-and-egg

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question regarding the collaborative culture that was evident at Hillside. Therefore, in my interview with the principal, I found myself asking the following:

> You talked about school culture, and that's one of the reasons why I was so anxious to speak with you, because the student teachers here and in the other two schools were all unanimous relative to how comfortable they felt in their placements and how they felt that they could access information from any staff member; they felt comfortable talking to school administration; they had all had some interaction with the school administration. Because of that, I think that they had a highly enriched field experience. They were exposed to different folks. And I know that here especially they felt comfortable viewing other classrooms. So here's the million-dollar question: How is it that that culture exists here? I guess I'm looking for the answer to the chicken and the egg: Is it because of that culture that the school was involved in the Collaborative Schools Initiative, and therefore that culture exists generally? Or do you feel in some way—and it's not an either/or—do you feel in some way being involved in the Collaborative Schools Initiative and the way that that field experience program is supposed to happen in the school has contributed in some way to the development of that cultural role in your school?

After careful thought, the principal replied:

> When I came to this school five years ago the culture really was different. . . . We had good people, and they were doing good jobs within the classroom. That was not my concern, but they were working in isolation, and conversation within the school tended to be what was occurring in their personal lives, social kinds of issues, so those kinds of things; there wasn't a lot of professional dialogue. So there was a lot of isolationism, and so that was one of the things that I believe I was brought to the school to try to change. And I used the Collaborative program as one of the many things that we did to try to make that shift. We were kind of on the road already, so I had to wait to have some receptivity to the direction that I wanted the school to go in and to get some buy-in on that. But I was involved in the Collaborative Project, and that was one of the ways that I felt it would be a very positive experience for staff to see the power of collaboration and the working, so it was one of the tools that I used to make that cultural shift. We convened a group of staff to talk about the Collaborative Project. We said, "These are the criteria coming from the university. Why are they having these criteria? What's the background on that? Can we see value in that?" And staff did accept that, and with a lot of coaching and encouragement and cheering on successes, they began the project, and the project became theirs. And there was dialogue as well from that committee to the whole staff about what we were doing, of what the Collaborative Project's about and the expectations for the rest of the school and how important that was for the students and therefore an investment in the future of teachers and how important that was for our school. And so staff saw

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> that that was an expectation and saw the value of that, and so they embraced the philosophy, and we were rolling.

Interestingly enough, it appeared through the interview with the principal that in the case of Hillside, the answer indeed appeared to be "both." In the initial stage of the development of the CSI experience at the school, the opportunity to participate in the project was chosen as a catalyst for enhancing the overall collaborative culture. However, as this culture developed, the residual effect of this development was an increasingly enriched opportunity for student teachers. The presence and importance of the collaborative culture at Hillside was echoed in the interview with Rick Smith, the school coordinator, who, when posed with a question similar to the one above, replied:

> It probably goes back to a few years ago when I was involved in the project with the university, and as a staff we met and we discussed the project and decided as a school, would we like to be part of this? And part of it meant trying to provide a total-school experience for the students coming in as opposed to the traditional model where a student teacher would be assigned to one particular cooperating teacher, and they would just work together pretty well in isolation. And the school bought into it, and we've just continued to maintain that this is the approach we're going to take. And as I say, people have bought into it; they enjoy being a part of the program. Yes, I guess right from the initial stages no one has ever said that they wouldn't like to be part of the whole-school experience for the students, so in a way it might be lucky; it might be the chemistry on the staff. But, mind you, the staff has changed over the years as well, so I think it's just become part of the philosophy of the school.

One of the most critical elements associated with the CSI experience at Hillside was the feeling of collaboration that was pervasive throughout the school. The sense of belonging and cooperation was identified not only by the researcher, but also by the university facilitator and student teachers. The interview with the school principal identified the role that the Collaborative Schools Project played in the development of such a culture. The interview with the school coordinator highlighted not only that a process of involvement was utilized, but also that the "way of being" associated with the CSI had become part of the social fabric of the school. It is critical that one understand the culture of collaboration that existed at Hillside, for it is through this lens that all of the

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activities associated with the field experience took place. The principal clearly emphasized this point in the last sentence of his interview: "If I had a school or I could envision a school where it was isolationism and we brought in a collaborative culture, the project would become more like us than us like them."

Prior to the Field Experience

The recruitment of cooperating teachers took place at the school early in the spring of the previous year. This task, along with the others associated with the field experiences programs at the school, belonged to Rick Smith, the school coordinator. At this meeting Rick provided information to the staff about the field experience programs in general; and because Hillside was a CSI school, Rick reinforced the key attributes of the model that the school had adopted. Over the next few weeks, those interested in becoming directly involved in the field experience program as cooperating teachers contacted Rick regarding their desire to do so, and he forwarded their names to the University of Alberta.

In the early fall Rick, as the school coordinator, received a list from the university of the names of the student teachers who were to be tentatively placed at the school. It was at this point that perhaps one of the first critical roles of his position occurred, when Rick found himself attempting to match the mentoring opportunities provided by his school to the needs expressed by the Faculty of Education. Rick explained: "Prior to when the students arrive, I meet with a number of the different teachers that I think would be a good fit with their program." This meeting and the resulting matches are a critical first step in attempting to ensure the most productive and successful round of student teaching.

Immediately prior to the beginning of a specific round of student teaching, at a staff meeting Rick provided information to the whole staff about the nature and purpose of the student teaching experience, the names of the teachers directly involved, and the number and names of the student teachers who would be visiting the school. Again, the

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nature of the field experience in relation to the school's involvement as a CSI site was revisited. In a follow-up memo to staff, Rick wrote:

> Our school has entered into a project with the University to work at improving the practicum experience using a collaborative model that includes:
>
> - using the whole-school setting
> - using increased collaboration between the participants
> - promoting the development of reflective practices
> - enhancing professional development opportunities.
>
> As part of providing a whole-school setting to their program, we wish to have the student teachers involved in different classrooms. We ask your help in the program by opening your classroom work area for observations, student teachers helping within the classroom, and/or teaching. We want to let them get a feel for all aspects of teaching, which includes work in many classrooms, as well as outside of the classroom.
>
> To this end we have prepared the orientation schedule on the back of this memo. Please feel free to see me if there is a problem with any of this.

As a result of these efforts, prior to the student teachers arriving at the school, the teachers and administrators had a clear sense of the nature and purpose of the field experience and, more important, the role that they would be playing in support of the program.

Additionally, the school prepared a field experience handbook for both the student and cooperating teachers. One would expect that the student teachers' handbook would include operational information such as the schedule, a map of the physical plant, and the generic policies and procedures associated with the running of the school. However, this was not the case. The information previously mentioned was provided to the student teachers in the form of a staff handbook that they also received during their orientation to the school.

The student teachers' handbook contained information that was designed both to assist them in their field experience and to encourage them to engage in critical and reflective thought as they continued their journey of becoming a teacher. The opening article in the handbook was entitled "Before Starting My Practicum, I Wish I Had

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Known." Other articles of note included "Ten Things I've Learned About Teaching" and "Eleven Ways to Be a Great Teacher." Sections on lesson design, questioning strategies, discipline and classroom management, and creating a positive school climate completed the comprehensive booklet. Both of the student teachers mentioned that the handbook was an invaluable resource to them as they completed their field experience.

The handbook that was developed for the cooperating teachers was equally as valuable and comprehensive. The opening page highlighted the key elements of the school's CSI proposal. Subsequent pages provided information on the role of the cooperating teacher, coaching strategies, collaboration, observation, and evaluation.

An Orientation to the School

The staff at Hillside felt that one of the most important components of a successful whole-school experience was a comprehensive orientation to the school. Therefore, in addition to meeting with cooperating teachers during the first week of their field experience, the student teachers were provided with an extensive orientation schedule that provided the following experiences:

- a tour of the physical plant,
- the distribution of the staff and student teacher handbooks,
- a one-half-day visit with school administration,
- an interview with the school counselor, and
- a visitation to every teacher's classroom.

Rick Smith, the school coordinator, described the orientation experience as follows:

> In their first week they really had a chance to observe most of the teachers in our school in action, so they would really have a chance to see an incredible variety of teaching techniques, management skills, those types of things. They had an opportunity to meet with Anne, our counselor, and look at things from a counseling point of view. They met with John, our principal, and had an opportunity to discuss the philosophy of our school. So even before they stepped into the classroom of the cooperating teacher they had been assigned to, they

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> really had an incredible idea of what our school is all about, because they had seen most of the teachers, had a chance to observe and talk with them.

The critical nature of initial orientation was clearly identified in the later conversation with the student teachers. Paul, in his interview, highlighted the importance of the activity:

> We did a lot of observation for the whole first week—observation; tours of the schools; observing other classes; getting comfortable with those students, with the other teachers; being able to talk to them, see how they think the school is, how they feel it is run. . . . A schedule was made for us to go around to these teachers, and we were really encouraged to participate in other classes and get to know what everyone was doing, get really involved in all the other classes, not just be with your individual class and come out a little clone of the teacher that you're with. . . . We had a meeting with the counselor last week. She explained to us what her role was, what kind of students come in and talk to her, what she does administration-wise, counselor-wise, because she's in charge of special ed too, just how busy it really is for her. She seems like a busy lady.

Susan also made a point of mentioning the orientation period in her interview. The following passage illustrates the positive nature of her thoughts on the process:

> For the first week we went around and observed a lot of different teachers. . . . It was really kind of nice, because we went into each classroom and the students saw who we were, so when they saw you doing supervision and that, you're not just a stranger out of the blue. So I like that part of it. . . . We went over the rules of the school, some of the philosophies that the school upholds, and went over some different teaching strategies and lesson planning and just the basics, I guess.

Throughout the preceding text two things become apparent: (a) Obviously, the staff at Hillside felt that early exposure to the total school was a critical component of the whole-school experience; and (b) the student teachers placed high level value on the experiences included within the highly structured orientation.

The Cooperating Teacher(s)

Each of the student teachers was assigned a primary mentor (cooperating teacher) by the school coordinator. Because the student teachers were involved in their advanced professional term (APT), one of the primary considerations in their placement within the school was their teaching major. Notwithstanding the above, as previously mentioned, the

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school coordinator played a critical role in ensuring that the needs of the student teachers were carefully matched with the mentorship opportunities available.

Having the opportunity to view and work with more than one cooperating teacher is a significant movement away from the apprenticeship model of student teaching and is considered a critical component of the CSI project. Therefore, during their nine-week field experience, each of the student teachers found themselves working closely with different teachers in a variety of teaching situations. In his final interview, Paul highlighted the culture and opportunity that resulted in the different experiences that were provided to him:

> At the beginning the principal just said, "Feel free to go into other classes if you like." They encourage you to go with more than one teacher. They don't want you spending more than sixty percent of your time with one teacher; they want you to split it up. So I thought I'd like to try French, just to try it, and so I went with that teacher. And then my afternoons were free; I don't think I needed that much prep time, so I just went and helped out with a phys ed class. . . . My main teaching is social and LA with Rick, and then I did two French classes with another teacher. And then in the afternoons I went and helped out with the phys ed classes, and I thought it was pretty fun that you could go around and see other classes and meet different students, because if I was just with Rick all the time, you'd just know the Grade 8 kids. This gave me a chance to know the Grade 9s and some Grade 7s.

Susan was also provided with several opportunities to see the world beyond her cooperating teacher's classroom, as indicated by the following text:

> With Mary I taught two Grade 7 social and two Grade 7 religion, and then with Don I taught one Grade 9 social class, and with Ed I taught one Grade 7 phys ed class. And then I also had the opportunity to sub two classes for different teachers. I subbed a phys ed class, and I subbed a business class, so those were interesting, new experiences. I knew the students, though, so it wasn't—I knew the majority of them anyhow just because it was the last couple of weeks of my practicum, but it was a good experience because I got to see how the different teachers set up their lesson planning and the stuff that works, what doesn't work when you're making out lesson plans for other people. And I also had the opportunity to make up sub plans for Mary as well. [The opportunities for Susan to supply-teach were provided to her as part of her field experience program in the school. These opportunities occurred with a certificated supply teacher in the classroom.]

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Working With the Principal

One of the strengths of the whole-school experience at Hillside was the principal's active role in the program. After my observations, I concluded that he was an active and willing participant in the field experience program at the school who was keenly interested in supporting the growth and development of the student teachers. Interestingly enough, however, at no time was it evident that the principal assumed any of the tasks of coordinating the field experience that are normally associated with the position of the school coordinator. In conversation with the principal, he described his changed role that transpired as a result of his school's participation in the CSI:

> Support: a big part in the orientation of the students to set out the culture and the vision of the school and kind of our expectations, and trying to urge them to make the jump from student to teacher; to just kind of be a cheerleader—Way to go, guys!—and just ensure that some of the traditions relative to the welcoming and celebrating the conclusion are done, and provide sometimes seminars. I know we did one this time on the next step, preparing for an interview, how do you go about getting your resumes, what kind of things go on their resumes, the formats of interviews, those kinds of things.

The principal's involvement in the field experience was recognized and emphasized by the student teachers in their final interview. Both Paul and Susan demonstrated an appreciation for the formal and informal interactions with the principal that had occurred. Susan recounted:

> With John [the principal], the first week that we were here he discussed different kind of teaching styles, philosophies, how to get success out of your students, basically the mission statement of Hillside and expectations of Hillside in terms of students, parents, teachers, etc., so that we knew what to expect from parents as well as students and ourselves. As well, he did a session with us on processes of being hired, the kind of steps that you want to take in order to do that. That was very valuable for us. Informally, we'd run into him every day: "How's it going?" kind of thing.

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Keeping Things on Track

During my visits to the school it became apparent that providing the student teachers with a whole-school experience required a great deal of ongoing communication and coordination. At Hillside these were accomplished through weekly meetings that the school coordinator held with both the students and cooperating teachers. In his interview, Rick Smith, the school coordinator, shared his perceptions relative to the nature, purpose, and importance of the meetings:

> We try to ensure that all the student teachers that are in our school have a chance to meet at least once a week with myself. And I also ensure that all the cooperating teachers have a chance to meet at least once a week so we can discuss how the program is going, that sort of thing. . . . So let's see. I also try and ensure that the student teachers—or part of my role, I guess, some of the other things I do—I would try to ensure that all the needs of the student teachers are met, and the needs of the cooperating teachers as well.

The critical nature of the weekly meetings in ensuring that the field experience was running smoothly was reinforced in the interview with one of the cooperating teachers, who recounted: "During those meetings we just talked about how things were going, what things we should be looking for in the next week, what things we should be doing, what the student teachers should be doing."

As previously mentioned, the student teachers were involved in weekly meetings with the school coordinator. These meetings were held during instructional time and were not attended by the cooperating teachers for practical as well as pedagogical purposes. For example, the cooperating teachers could not be in attendance because they were in the classroom when their student teachers met. From a pedagogical perspective, not having the cooperating teachers present allowed the student teachers to discuss more openly and honestly issues and challenges that they were facing. During these meetings I observed that, in addition to discussing organizational factors associated with the field experience, many times the discussion evolved into issues relating more to teaching and learning in general centering upon the professional role of the teacher. It was at these

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times that the real strength of the meetings and the critical need for the school coordinator to be a strong professional role model became apparent. In the final interview with the student teachers, Susan highlighted the meetings with the school coordinator as an integral part of the field experience. She remembered that the meetings had many purposes:

> Both Paul and myself meet to just talk at least once a week and just discuss some of the things that are happening and whatever. . . . Rick is making sure that we're doing what we're supposed to be doing and not really being thrown off doing other things that aren't really required of us. He's very keen on checking in with us to make sure that we're teaching this, only this amount, and that we're doing this, that we get a prep to do these things; . . . just really big on making sure that the structure of the field experience is being followed through.

Linking With the University

During the field experience program the Faculty of Education assigns each school a university facilitator. According to the field experience handbook, the main role of this position is to provide a critical link between the university and the schools and to provide advice and assistance when necessary to the key stakeholders involved in the field experience program.

The university facilitator assigned to the school was a graduate student from the Faculty of Education. Hillside was one of three schools in which this individual worked with student teachers. During my observations I concluded that throughout this particular field experience, the facilitator played a minimal role and, when present, was primarily a support for the student teachers. This conclusion was confirmed in interviews with both the school coordinator and a cooperating teacher. When asked about the role of the university facilitator in the recent field experience, the school coordinator remembered:

> My initial contact with the university facilitator, he phoned me and mentioned that—I already knew who was coming to our school, but he phoned me and mentioned that we were going to be having two students, and he asked me some questions just about what time the students should arrive, what type of dress is appropriate, where they should park—just some housekeeping kind of details. And then he mentioned that at a later date he would show up, and we would meet.

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> That was the initial contact. And then from then on I basically found out through the student teachers when the facilitator was going to be showing up at our school. In terms of having any formal sit-down meetings, that hasn't really taken place. He's arrived, he's observed the students, he had some time to meet with the students following his observations of their classes, and then he would leave. So I have not had a lot of contact.

Susan's cooperating teacher also alluded to having minimal contact with the university facilitator:

> I had very little interaction with him because my student teacher was outstanding. And so he came in a number of times, and he watched her lessons a couple of times, and then we just had very brief discussions because things were going so well that he didn't have much to do here. He said he had other things at other schools that needed more of his time, and he was glad to see things were going well here.

In part, this minimal contact may have been due to the organization of the field experience program that was already in place at the school. In his interview, the university facilitator mentioned:

> The school was obviously set up. I was very impressed from the moment I walked into the place. They'd had several student teachers over the years; they knew what they were doing; they knew the type of experience that would help a student teacher grow. They were also very clear that they expected professional behavior from the student teachers. Just an excellent setup that they had. . . . At that point, in talking to the student teachers that were there—there were two that I supervised in that school—what I said to them and I also said to Rick was, I didn't want to be interfering at all. . . . If the school knows what it's doing and the people there know what they're doing, my role is to stay out of it and come in and give support to the kids, ask if there's anything I can do, but it's certainly not my show to run.

In addition to observing that the program offered at the school was well organized and well suited to meet the needs of the student teachers, I believe that the facilitator's perception that his primary role was one of firefighter or problem solver was a major factor in his relationship with the school.

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Experiences Beyond the Classroom Walls

The recognition that the work of teachers extends far beyond the classroom walls was an integral part of the whole-school experience at Hillside. In addition to their work in the classroom, two activities extended and enhanced the field experience of the student teachers:

- involvement in an extracurricular activity: The student teachers were provided with a list of the extracurricular activities that would take place during their field experience. The list included information regarding the nature and type of activity and the name of the teacher-sponsor. The student teachers were then encouraged to select one activity from the list based upon their personal interests and to become involved with the activity over the time of their field experience.
- completion of the special needs "assignment": The student teachers were encouraged to identify one student from their classes who they felt was exhibiting learner characteristics that required program adaptation and modification. The students were then asked to work with their cooperating teacher, the school counselor, and, if necessary, the school administration to develop a comprehensive learner portfolio complete with specific classroom-based strategies designed to help them better meet the needs of the student identified.

In conversation with the school coordinator and the principal, it became apparent that both of these activities were designed to provide the student teachers with extended experiences that directly related to the challenges of teaching and to provide a safe and secure environment through which the student teachers could successfully experience and meet these challenges. In her final interview, Susan spoke at length about the importance of these outside-of-class experiences in her development as a teacher:

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> One of the goals that I set for this experience was that I would like to become a part of the school, having to do the things that a teacher has to do so that you're not blindsided when you go in your first year teaching. I was involved with the peer support team, so that I worked with the counselor of the school and a TA, as well as there's twelve students involved in peer support. With that I went to two different elementary schools as well, so I got to know some other schools in the district, which was nice, meeting some of the staff. We did presentations for students there, so we talked to a lot of the Grade 6s about coming up next year, which would be great if I was here next year. And just other extra things like the ski trip to Marmot that I went on, supervised the *Annie* play last Friday night. I was helping out on the stage there. Sports teams, just helping out with score keeping. One-on-one, I've been working one-on-one a lot with a special-needs student, and actually yesterday as part of my special ed report, I met with Anne, who's the school counselor. Her and I developed an IPP for one of the students, so that was a good experience.

At the End of the Round

The concerted and comprehensive efforts of the staff at Hillside School to embrace the goals of the CSI resulted in a truly enriched field experience opportunity for the student teachers. Although more discussion as to the specific nature of these opportunities relative to the other schools included in this study will occur later in this document, Paul's summary comments of his experiences at the school illustrate his appreciation of the efforts of the school:

> I had very positive experiences here. I like the students; students are really good, and they're really fun, fun to be around. And I also like the teachers. Everybody's really supportive, helps you out. It's not departmentalized or anything like that. You can see a bunch of teachers; you can go to any class you want; they're really open towards it. It's amazing how much everyone wants to help out and help you. Anything that you need, they're right there willing to help; you don't have to search too far or ask too many people. Usually the first person you ask will help you out. . . . At this school we can feel comfortable going to any other teacher and asking them for any advice or help or material, about anything. And the kids are great here; all the activities that you do are really good and fun. It's a really fun school to be at.

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Awasis Elementary School

A Description of the School

In the Cree language *Awasis* means "a good place to be." Awasis Elementary School has a population of approximately 200 students who come from a variety of socioeconomic and educational backgrounds. Information from the school indicates that it serves a neighborhood comprising approximately 40% multiple-family dwellings and 60% single-family and duplex housing. The student population is described in the school's three-year plan as "consisting of a heterogeneous mix of interests and abilities." Additionally, the school is a district site for two very specialized high-needs programs; therefore a segment of the population is bused to the school from outside the immediate attendance area.

After I spent time in the school, it became obvious that it was well deserving of its name. Highlighted in the school mission statement were the beliefs that every child can experience success in learning; and schools provide security and a sense of belonging and community. First impressions of the staff generated the descriptors *calm*, *competent*, and *caring*, all of which were evidenced in subsequent visits to the school.

As is the case in many schools faced with the challenge of working with a diverse student population, the staff at the school appeared to be very supportive and closely knit. The staff room was a focal point in the school and was a comfortable place to be. From the onset I felt that the environment was welcoming as I waited to meet the student teachers. The early Friday morning tradition of a muffin and a specialty coffee that has been embraced by the staff was evidence of their closeness and togetherness.

The Cohort That Clicked

The CSI embraces the cohort model in which more than one student teacher is placed at the school. It is felt that the cohort is necessary in order for the goals of the model to be realized. Accordingly, three student teachers were placed at Awasis who

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were all in their Advanced Professional Term, or the nine-week field experience placement in elementary education.

Each field experience round in all schools typically has a unique characteristic that distinguishes it from others, and, in my opinion, one of the unique features at Awasis was the relationship that formed among the three student teachers during the field experience. From the onset, the background, philosophies, and personalities of Cindy, Janice, and Barb appeared to be just the right mix. In addition to the learnings normally associated with the APT, it became obvious throughout the meetings and interviews that a special kinship developed amongst the three. The good-natured banter, the openness and honesty, and the high level of support found within each session made for enriched and enjoyable discussions.

Although such a high level of connectedness among the student teachers would not be considered unique to these three individuals, in my experience it happens seldom enough for it to be considered special. For the purposes of this study, it is through this lens of cooperation and trust amongst these key actors that one must examine the CSI experience at this school.

Unanticipated Challenges

Before continuing with the description of the field experience program at Awasis, it is important to highlight two unfortunate and unanticipated situations that were faced by the school.

First, the school administration was changed midway through the year due to the incumbent principal's need to deal with urgent family matters. Even though the new acting principal was an experienced and well-respected administrator, any change of that nature under those conditions is certain to have an impact on the culture of a school.

Second, after the third week of the nine-week field experience, Trisha, the school coordinator, was called for surgery and required to take medical leave. This was Trisha's first experience as a school coordinator, because Allison Black, a colleague, had fulfilled

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the role over the past five years. Allison was one of the school coordinators involved in the original project and looked forward to mentoring Trisha in her new role. Upon Trisha's absence, Allison assumed the role with which she had become so familiar, allowing for a smooth and seamless transition.

It is important to have an understanding of these two situations to gain an appreciation of the strength of the staff at the school and their level of commitment to provide a quality field experience for the student teachers

Prior to the Field Experience

As was the case with Hillside School, there was evidence that significant groundwork had been done at the school prior to the arrival of the student teachers. In an examination of field notes and interview transcripts, it became obvious that early in the year the goals and purposes of the various field experience programs were shared with the staff, followed by a discussion on how they would become realized within the framework of the CSI. Teachers were then asked to indicate their interest in participating in the field experience program and the level at which their participation would occur. Based on feedback from the staff, a list of potential cooperating teachers was generated and forwarded to the university. Allison Black, still the school coordinator at the time of that meeting, remembered it simply as, "We talked about what things were going to happen and how it was going to be set up."

Allison's expertise and talent as school coordinator allowed her to apply a simplistic explanation to what is a critically important first step in the implementation of a successful field experience. As did her counterpart at Hillside, at this initial meeting Allison reaffirmed the purposes and roles of the field experience, invited participation at the various levels, and opened the doors for communication. All of these are necessary and important factors in building a truly collaborative field experience program within the school.

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Almost as critical is the subsequent communication regarding the field experience program that happens throughout the year and, more important, just prior to the arrival of the student teachers. One of the cooperating teachers remembered Allison's leadership role in one of the meetings that took place just prior to the start of this field experience:

> Allison's usually the one that says, "These are how many are coming. This is the dates they're coming. This is what we'd like, who's getting them; and this is what we'd like to see with the rest of you in your support."

Again, in this statement, in her capacity as school coordinator, Allison is seen fulfilling the critical roles of coordinating and communicating with her colleagues that are associated with orchestrating the whole-school experience.

Welcome to School: A Cup of Cider and the Second Cup

The student teachers were invited to a meeting at the school for a brief orientation prior to the start of their field experience. The purpose of the meeting was to answer questions that they might have had and to provide them with the initial phase of a two-step orientation process. The orientation at Awasis was done in two stages to prevent the information overload that student teachers normally encounter on the first official day of their field experience. The short meeting covered many of the utilitarian questions normally associated with the field experience. Allison remembered the typical first meeting in her interview:

> They would come in and meet with me, and we'd talk and discuss. And it's funny, even clothing was an issue as to what to wear, that type of thing. So we kind of get that all out of the way.

In addition to the preparation and teaching of lessons, designing unit plans, and understanding classroom management, student teachers were faced with the additional challenge of trying to fit into the unique culture of the school. This first meeting with the coordinator in which many of the mores and values of the school were informally addressed provided the student teachers with a great deal of valuable information.

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A second and more formal orientation to the school was offered on the first official day of the field experience. In her interview Allison recounted a typical orientation session:

> On the day that they came in we would meet, and I'd orient them to the school, and we'd talk about the procedures for behavior and if kids are sick, the bell system, supervision—kind of the technical stuff of the school and the running of the school.

The student teachers all commented on the value of the orientation sessions in helping them become comfortable and accustomed to their new environment. At the first orientation meeting Trisha, the school coordinator, welcomed the students with a cup of cider that was prepared in their honor. One of the student teacher's most lasting impression of the meetings centered upon the feelings of welcome and belonging that they encountered. In one of the interviews she remembered:

> The staff was very welcoming. As soon as you walked in, there were no feelings of, Should I be here? Should I not be there? Everybody was like, "Great! Have a seat," and it was awesome. They mentioned to us on Monday right away, "By the way, Friday is our Second Cup day." And boom! The staff was like, "Come on out for a coffee before Friday morning classes." So that was really good, because it was just like, Wow! We're wanted!

Coordinating the Field Experience

Similar to the situations that existed at Hillside school, weekly meetings with the student teachers and the cooperating teachers served to keep the field experience on track. As one would expect, some of the topics covered at the meeting dealt directly with the organizational components of the field experience, such as timetabling, evaluation, deadlines, and so on. However, it was also observed that many times the discussion at the meetings transcended the operational and began to delve into some of the deeper and more complex issues related to the delivery of public education, and teaching and learning. Perhaps due to the large population of special-needs students within the school

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in both segregated and integrated settings, many discussions centered upon the philosophical and pedagogical issues surrounding these individuals.

One of the catalysts for discussion was the print material that was provided at various times throughout the field experience to the student teachers by the school coordinator. Information regarding lesson design, unit planning, assessment of student writing, story writing, and classroom management was presented. In-depth discussion typically accompanied the distribution of the information, which always featured brainstorming sessions relative to the practical application of the information to the classroom setting. It was in these discussions that I observed the school coordinator being an invaluable resource to the student teachers as she told personal stories related to the topics that gave life to their learning.

I was not the only one who saw value in the Wednesday meetings. In her final interview, one of the student teachers recounted:

> We've also learned a lot. We've covered a lot of things, like processes; we've covered portfolios; we've covered underground tunnels in a school you might not know about [laughter]. And it's neat to know also that another person has bad experiences, but has learned . . . a big reflecting thing again. I've kind of liked these meetings on Wednesday.

The other stakeholders in the field experience cited the critical role that the Wednesday meetings played in the field experience. Both the cooperating teachers and the university facilitator attributed the organization of the field experience in large part to these sessions.

The Meetings With Fred

In contrast to the situation presented at Hillside School, the university presence at Awasis through the role of the facilitator was substantial. The facilitator assigned to the school was a former teacher and administrator and an adjunct to the faculty. His personal experience with facilitating field experiences dated back six years when he first began to

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work for the faculty on a contract basis in 1994. From the onset, it was obvious that Fred enjoyed his role, and he took it very seriously.

In his interview Fred was asked to define what he felt his role was in the field experience. He identified three key areas that, in his opinion, were critical:

> One is being a mentor to a student, giving suggestions for their growth; second, being an advocate for the student should there be a problem, in the sense of knowing what the university regulations or requirements are. Sometimes these have to be re-explained or made clear to cooperating teachers. And I guess too, third, a support base for the cooperating teacher in the school. That basically, I think, is it in a nutshell, those three items.

My own observations as well as information provided by the school coordinator, the student teachers, and the cooperating teachers indicated that Fred fulfilled his role in the school extremely well. Operationally, after consulting with the school, Fred chose to meet with the student teachers as a group early on Tuesday mornings. Over time I observed that these meetings served different purposes. First and foremost, Fred checked with the group to ensure that the field experience was progressing smoothly and on track. Once satisfied that that was the case, he would then work with the student teachers to develop his schedule for the morning and to determine the times that he would observe and debrief with the students. More often than not in the meeting, there would be time for informal discussion. As was the case with Allison, during these informal discussions I saw that Fred's experience as an educator was invaluable to him in his mentorship role. Oftentimes his stories and those of the student teachers added laughter and levity to the discussion.

Following the meeting with the student teachers, Fred made a point to "check in" with the school coordinator and cooperating teachers just to ensure that, from their perspective, things were progressing well. Upcoming dates and deadlines were reaffirmed, and, in some cases, printed memos reminding others of those events were left with the school coordinator to distribute to student and cooperating teachers. On at least

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two occasions I observed Fred scheduling meetings at different times during the week to accommodate the needs of the student teachers.

One of the unique features that Fred brought to the school was the process of interactive journaling that he maintained with each of the student teachers. Each week he would collect their individual writings and respond to them by the following meeting. In their final interview the student teachers commented on how appreciative they were of this process, and, over time, they came to recognize its value.

It is obvious that Fred's vast experience in the public school setting, his work in the faculty, and his commitment to teacher education have led him to be a very effective and well-respected ambassador for the faculty. In their final interview the school coordinator, student teachers, and cooperating teachers all made a point of indicating how appreciative they were of his high level of involvement in the field experience program at the school. It is interesting to note, however, that in every instance each individual did so through contrasting their positive experience with Fred with their experience with another university facilitator with whom they had had contact prior to this student-teaching round.

The Whole-School Experience

As was the case with their student teaching counterparts at Hillside School, the student teachers at Awasis were afforded several opportunities to gain valuable experiences beyond the walls of their primary cooperating teacher's classroom.

Perhaps most important in the provision of such opportunities was the philosophy adopted by the school towards working with student teachers. One of the cooperating teachers summarized the feelings of the staff at Awasis towards these ends:

> We always encourage our student teachers to be a part of our staff, in every sense. They come to the staff meetings. Because they're involved in the small-committee event that they're organizing, they have to report what's going on, the timeline, the expectations, any requests of the teachers that they want the students to do: perhaps decorations or something. They have to report and make those requests of the staff. If we do significant committee work—such as, we had budget

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> recently—we encourage them to stay, and they're certainly made welcome, and then they can choose to stick around and learn to see just what budget is, because it really isn't the dollars; it's all the other goals and expectations and policies, and they could learn through those. And if they would rather not, then they can go off and do some prepping. And most of the time they'll stay. I don't recall too often that they don't want to be part of that.

The teacher's comments clearly indicate a culture in the school that not only *welcomed* the student teachers to participate in many aspects of the school, but also, in an informal sense, *expected* a high level of participation. It is my opinion that such a culture plays an instrumental role in the development of beginning teachers.

The principal of the school also played a key role in the field experience. In addition to participating in the orientation session, she was able to take the time to work with each student teacher on an individual basis. When asked about her involvement, the principal replied:

> I'm very interested in new-teacher education and development. I try at least to observe those students once during their practicum round, and usually I do one kind of rescue session in the area of behavior management with each of them. I think back on the students that we had last, and each of them had a time where the lesson kind of deteriorated, and we were able to debrief together and both learn from that experience. So I think, I hope, that the role of principal in the practicum process is a lot less intimidating than it used to be. . . . I think it's far more as a mentor, more of a mentorship direction, and I think that's very positive.

Having the school coordinator on site to orchestrate the field experience, the changing role of the principal in the program has been articulated by the principals of both sites. Being released from organizing the field experience has allowed them to assume a very different role. In both schools, the principals were seen assuming the role more of instructional leaders and professional mentors for the student teachers. Based on my experience as a school administrator, I feel that there is value in the student teachers' exposure to the school administration in a more collegial and mentoring capacity.

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Additionally, the student teachers were given opportunities to visit several other classes throughout their field experience. One of the cooperating teachers described the experiences of her student teacher over the nine weeks:

> My student teacher this round is working in the Grade 3 class for two periods a week to get a bit of experience of a different teacher or a different setting, different grade. And while I was covering the Grade 6s this round, she took the opportunity in those periods to go out to other classes and observe. Special ed classes she was particularly interested in. So they get an idea that there's more to a school than just the four walls of the one room that they're in. And we have a very supportive staff that they're willing to help and provide opportunities to everybody. When she wanted to go into a certain classroom I just told her, "Go talk to the teacher. Tell her when you're available, and she'll let you know if it's a good time."

Similar to the student teachers at Hillside, all three student teachers at Awasis indicated in their survey and through their interviews that they were offered and took advantage of several experiences outside of their primary cooperating teacher's classroom, and that they found that these experiences added significant value to their student-teaching round. In her interview one of the student teachers highlighted one of the things she learned: "You can just see the dynamics change, just from kids changing room to room; it's completely different."

Interestingly, one of the cooperating teachers told one of the most compelling stories highlighting the differences between the CSI model of student teaching and those related to the old apprenticeship model. She remembered her placement as a student teacher under the old model as follows:

> For my eight weeks of student teaching I was not encouraged to be a part of the staff. I never attended a staff meeting; I don't even recall if I had my lunches in the staff room. I may have, but it's not something that I remember. I'm sure if I went back to that school I couldn't find the staff room, but I could find the class I worked in. I had a great cooperating teacher; he was a very helpful, very supportive person. But he also didn't expect me to do a lot of the extras that are part of teaching. He told me not to worry about supervision, for example, that he would go out. His pretext, I suppose, was based on the fact that I didn't know a lot of the students, didn't know what the playground rules were, but even not expecting me to go and shadow along with him or something. So out of that I

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> found that I didn't get a good sense of the responsibilities involved in those extra things, most particularly the supervision. So my first years of teaching I had to write it in big, bold letters and highlight it on my lesson plans to make sure I went out to them, and then hoped that I actually checked that lesson plan a few minutes before that recess break to get myself outside on time. So it sort of set me up for the wrong attitude towards some of those things, and I had to train myself into them.

This cooperating teacher's story of her field experience highlights the critical differences between the two models. Not only does the whole-school experience required by the CSI model expose the student teachers to different teaching styles, methodologies, and personalities; but it also exposes them to and more adequately prepares them for the demands of the profession that take place beyond the walls of the classroom. One of the student teachers clearly and articulately summed up her thoughts about the nature of her whole-school experience in her final interview: "This is like full, in there teaching, and it's, oh, my gosh, all the aspects beyond teaching that you never even thought of."

Spring Into Stardom

One of the challenges of preservice teacher education is to help the student teachers gain an understanding of and appreciation for the complexities of the expectations that are associated with the profession which are external to the classroom. At Awasis School, providing the student teachers with an opportunity to work as a group on a schoolwide project was considered an integral part of their whole-school experience. In her final interview one of the cooperating teachers highlighted the expectations of the school regarding the extracurricular event:

> We group the student teachers together and give them a project that's a school wide event. This year they did a talent show; other years they've done the winter carnival; last fall that group did the Remembrance Day assembly. So they learn how to do some of those committee-work things as a group within themselves.

In conversation with the school coordinator regarding this expectation, it became obvious that, in her eyes, involving the student teachers in this type of activity served two major purposes. First, it provided valuable firsthand experience to the students about the

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complexities of coordinating and implementing a school wide event. Second, it created the need for the student teachers to work together as a team in all stages of the activity.

It was interesting to observe the process through which the student teachers were provided with the challenge of running the activity. Even though they were given free rein and ownership of the event, I found them working in a tremendously supportive environment. An effective analogy might be that the school treated the student teachers as a parent would a child who was attempting to ride a bike for the first time, providing enough freedom to allow for experiential learning, while carefully watching the progress to assist or intervene when necessary.

It became obvious through the interviews that I was not alone in identifying the importance of the project to the development of the student teachers or the impact that the supportive environment offered by the staff had on the quality of the student teachers' experience. One of the cooperating teachers observed the following in her student teacher:

> They had to plan a talent show, which is what many teachers have to take on as well as their own classroom responsibilities. And I think that was very successful, as well as eye opening—for example, my student teacher— because for the two days prior to the talent show, very often I was left with the class, because all of a sudden their, for example, decorations, instead of taking half an hour, took two hours; those kinds of things. And so after it was over I said, "What have you kind of learned?" and she could pick things out. She said, "If I had my own class, I couldn't have done this."

The aforementioned clearly illustrates the safe environment in which the student teachers were invited to "spread their wings." In instances in which they had underestimated the time or complexity of a task, school staff were there to offer advice and/or assistance. If the student teachers had experienced the challenges associated with underestimating the time taken to decorate a gym as first-year teachers, it is doubtful that they would have had the support of someone taking over their teaching assignment while they completed their task.

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One of the critical lessons learned by the student teachers through this exercise surrounded the community use of the school. They had planned to decorate the gym the night before the talent show and had prepared a number of elaborate posters and banners that would adorn the walls and the stage. Armed with their supplies and a stepladder, they eagerly met in the gym, ready to complete their task. Thankfully, only two posters were up before one of the teachers witnessed their efforts and informed them that Thursday nights were slated for community indoor soccer practices. Needless to say, the student teachers quickly revised their decorating plans. In debriefing the activity the following week, the student teachers indicated that until that moment factors such as this had never crossed their minds when they planned the event.

In their final interview the student teachers unanimously expressed the extreme value of planning the activity. One of them attributed her learning to the culture and climate in which it was allowed to take place. To illustrate her point, she commented:

> The coolest part about that was that we've already done the talent show format, we've been experimenting it, fallen on our faces, learning from it, but I think that was the best part about it. So, actually, I was really appreciative of that; it's good.

In the final interview one of the student teachers made an interesting sideline to the learnings that one would normally associate with the planning of a talent show. She astutely identified the positive impact that such an activity could have on the school community:

> I think that in having our talent show and just how it turned out, the whole staff had to participate in the last act, that it also brought the staff a little bit closer together. . . . After we did our talent show it was a little more, even friendlier than usual, which was really good.

Spring into Stardom turned out to be an activity that displayed more than the talents of the elementary students who braved the stage. It allowed the student teachers to demonstrate and refine their talents of organizing, collaborating, and communicating under the comfortable umbrella of a caring staff. The learnings and feelings generated by

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the successful event were identified by the student teachers as an integral part of their field experience that would serve them well in their careers.

Saying Goodbye

For the three student teachers, during their field experience the school lived up to its Cree name, for it indeed was "a good place to be." The school wholeheartedly embraced the goals of the CSI and provided the student teachers with outstanding opportunities to learn about the teaching profession. Additionally, it did so within a culture of caring and commitment that allowed the student teachers to identify how "comfortable" they felt in the school right from the first orientation meeting. Augmenting the efforts of the school were those of the university facilitator, who approached his role with a high level of integrity and professionalism.

These combined factors provided a field experience that was highly valued by all three of the student teachers. In their final interview, as well as in their survey, they articulated a high level of satisfaction and appreciation for the opportunities that were provided to them. Although it was difficult to select just one passage from the interviews that adequately captures the feelings of the group, one of the student teachers succinctly summarized their feelings:

> I like to come to school. I like to see my girls; I like to see my kids. And I find now when I'm walking down the hall even to the coat room or the door where they're coming in from recess, they're all coming in, I know my kids are the 1s or the 5s, and you know the other ones in between just from seeing them so often after the talent show or just wherever. I found that that was a wonderful experience; a lot of positive comments and just things that I could try, a lot of advice that way. And the whole-school atmosphere here is a lot different than my IPT: a very friendly and cooperative and unique site.

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St. Michael Junior High

A Description of the School

St. Michael is a Catholic junior high school located in a large urban center. It is overwhelmingly the school of choice for neighborhood students, as well as for those who live outside its immediate catchment area, as is evidenced by the school population of over 500 students. The student/parent handbook described the school as "an inclusive Catholic Junior High School with strong leadership, many fine programs, and outstanding teachers and staff who encourage continuous growth and achievement" (student/parent handbook, p. 2). The school motto of "Pursuing One's Dreams, Achieving the Best, Tomorrow's Leaders" is further testimony to the school's commitment to excellence. In her final interview, one of the student teachers at the school described it in this manner:

> The atmosphere of this school, they're high achievers in this school. All the teachers, they strive to do very, very well, and I've seen really great teaching here. I'm not saying that there's not good teachers out there, but relative to all the other schools, it's pretty evident that there's a lot of teachers in this school that are very, very excellent in terms of their commitment to teaching.

The school coordinator and the cooperating teachers all described the school as being very strong academically and athletically. In casual conversation they indicated that there tended to be a very low turnover rate of staff at their school and that it was considered a very desirable place to work within the district. As a result, positions that have become available have been readily sought after by a number of applicants.

Upon entering the school, I immediately noticed the trophy cases that lined both sides of the entranceway. The awards contained within the cases celebrated everything from athletic and scholastic achievement to excellence in the fine and practical arts. Walking through the halls of the school during class breaks, I became aware of the large number of students who were housed in the school. Despite their numbers, the students traveled from class to class in a good-natured manner that at a junior high level is an indication of respect, order, and calm.

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The size of the school and the talent and commitment of the teaching staff allowed it to offer many extracurricular activities to the students. The student handbook contained descriptions of 17 clubs and activities in which students could become involved outside of the regular classroom.

The staff room was bright, spacious, and very well decorated. Pictures of the staff (including the student teachers) were found on one of the bulletin boards. Accompanying the picture was a short biography that each staff member had included. As a visitor to the school, I found that looking at the pictures was a helpful exercise in acquainting myself with the staff of the school, and reading the biographies was enjoyable and informative. Alongside the staff pictures was the draw for the crib tournament in which many of the staff was involved. A casual glance revealed that, unfortunately, Jim, the school coordinator, was relegated to the "B" side early in the tournament.

When the staff arrived for lunch, there was a good-natured hum in the room. They distributed themselves throughout the room, on the couches or at the tables, and the three microwave ovens and the coffee machine were pressed into service. The atmosphere in the staff room could be likened to one that would be associated with a professional sports team at the top of its game. The staff appeared to be happy, confident, and assured.

Two student teachers were assigned to the school for their APT; both were female. One of the students, Kathy, was an after-degree student in the area of science. She had completed her previous degree in psychology. Rhonda, the other nine-week student teacher, was completing her first degree with a major in social studies. One of the features that made St. Michael unique compared to the two other school sites was the existence of a cohort of six student teachers who were in their IPT (introductory professional term) for four weeks while Kathy and Rhonda completed their field experience.

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Organizing the Field Experience

Jim, the school coordinator, had been in his role for the past six years and had a keen understanding of the factors and conditions that needed to be in place to offer a successful field experience while fulfilling the school's commitment to the CSI. As was the case with both of the other schools involved in this study, his work began prior to the arrival of the student teachers. Conveying information from the university relative to the different types of field experience programs, the recruitment and selection of cooperating teachers, reaffirming the goals of the CSI, and communicating the school plan were all important tasks that were completed. In an interview with one of the cooperating teachers, he alluded to Jim's value to the school in his role as coordinator:

> With Jim being in charge of the student teachers, even if the administration changes, he's constant. So we've had other principals, but the philosophy has still been there. And the principals see that it works, so if you see that something works, you would not step in and change it unless—it depends on the person you are. So it's always been that way, and I think it works; I really think it works.

Jim's impact on the understanding of the teachers relative to the roles and purposes of the field experience was evidenced not only in how they carried out the program at the school, but also in how they articulated the program to others. In an interview, one of the cooperating teachers was eager to share with me his understanding of the program:

> We always tried to welcome people that came into the school, right from the beginning. Plus we realized early that for a teacher to be successful, they have to go beyond the classroom, and so we introduced the idea of having one period per week where just the student teachers get together. That means it forces them to talk to each other, forces them out of the class. They have to arrange activities together, whether it's the Halloween Dance, they have to plan activities for the school, air guitar or whatever the case is. So that's been part of the student-teaching round.
>
> Also, it's not just like he's my student teacher [and] I don't want him to go anywhere else. Basically, I want him to be part of the whole community. So it's always been that type of situation. And we tell the student teachers, "If you are going to become a successful teacher, you have to get involved. You cannot go from the classroom to the staff room, and that's it. You're missing out the whole

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> picture." And as a result, it's always been that way; we've always worked cooperatively with the student teachers. So if they want to watch somebody else they can, and they learn from all of us because we're all different-style teachers. Everybody teachers different, different styles, but they all work. So that's really the idea. It's always been that way; when you work together, it's easier than one person working by himself.

These comments from the cooperating teacher clearly illustrate an understanding of the importance of the whole-school experience to the field experience and the culture of collaboration that exists in the school to allow such experiences to occur. This teacher's comment in his interview that "it's always been that way; when you work together, it's easier than one person working by himself" is evidence of this understanding.

The coordination and consistency of the field experience program and the expertise that Jim provided to the staff resulted in a seamless and smooth transition of student teachers from all phases of the program into the school. As previously mentioned, alongside the two APT student teachers were six students from the IPT program.

It was obvious throughout my visits to the school that each group of student teachers was being offered a different experience in accordance with the goals and objectives of their field experience program. This could not have occurred in the school without the careful coordination of someone who had a great deal of knowledge of both the school and the expectations of the university.

An Orientation to the School

Consistent with the other sites, both student teachers indicated that they greatly appreciated the warm and open reception provided to them by the school personnel. In addition, they found the documents that were included in the orientation to be extremely helpful in understanding the organization and culture of the school. At St. Michael all student teachers received two documents as part of their orientation process. The first was a copy of the student/parent handbook, which contained the school philosophy, mission statement, bell schedule, and a great deal of other organizational material. The second

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document was a student teachers' handbook, which contained additional information designed to meet the unique needs of the student teachers.

A feature unique to the orientation provided to the student teachers at St. Michael was that the initial tour of the school was carried out by one of the cooperating teachers prior to a meeting with the school coordinator. In retrospect, the student teachers indicated that they appreciated meeting both of these key people on their first day in the school.

The Whole-School Experience

Consistent with the student teachers at the other school sites, both Kathy and Rhonda were encouraged to observe other teachers teach and take part in schoolwide activities. Rhonda remembered the orientation to the whole-school experience as follows:

> I've had two cooperating teachers, and that's really one of the neat things about the school: I get to have the best of both worlds. I get to teach some of the classes I would never have taught if I were with just one.
>
> And another thing that's happened is that you're allowed to go—actually, you're more encouraged to go to other teachers and to watch their classes and to actually take part in other activities as well. Kathy and I have been involved in other things as well with our teaching, so that's one of the things too: You're more encouraged to go out and seek things. Like during your preps, you really wouldn't be sitting there most of the time and marking; you'd actually be going out, doing some activities, things like that, and I think that keeps you more occupied, and it keeps you more focused as a teacher. You're not really just teacher in the classroom; you're teacher across the school.

Rhonda recollected that the encouragement that she and Kathy received bore fruit throughout the field experience. For example, Rhonda became involved with drama classes, the students' union, peer support, and the yearbook. Kathy spent time outside of her classroom working with the students' union and with students in the Academic Support Program (ASP), because she had a keen interest in developing skills to help students with learning disabilities. Both Rhonda and Kathy on their exit survey indicated that they felt that these outside experiences were "invaluable" to their learning.

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Kathy and Rhonda as Mentors

As previously mentioned, one of the unique features of the field experience program at St. Michael was the integration and coordination of the IPT (four-week) and the APT (nine-week) field experience programs. Both groups of students were in attendance at the regularly scheduled meetings that were held during the overlap of the field experiences. Field notes taken from each meeting illustrated evidence of the APT student teachers acting in a mentorship role with the IPT students. Words such as *coaching*, *reaffirming*, *extending*, and *validating* were used to describe the behavior that I witnessed both Rhonda and Kathy demonstrate during the sessions. Their actions were reminiscent of a big brother or sister giving advice to a younger sibling as he or she struggled with the trials of growing up. Rhonda advised the group, "At one time, I didn't completely understand lesson planning either, . . . but now I know how important it is." At another meeting, one of the IPT student teachers asked Kathy, "What is the tip for today? You guys *[sic]* are always giving us good tips."

The university facilitator also appreciated the mentoring role that the APT students provided; he saw it as a valuable experience:

> The wonderful thing about it was the APT students were very supportive of the IPTs. The IPTs were in awe of the APTs, interestingly. They watched each other teach; they talked about it during these meetings and after school. They got pretty close, and it was a pleasant thing to see, and I was very, very pleased to see it happen. I tried to facilitate that.

For both Kathy and Rhonda, working with the IPT student teachers was not restricted to the meetings in the staff room. By the end of the four-week IPT, each of them had been involved in the classroom with at least one of the IPT students. This involvement ranged from being a supportive observer to more direct involvement in lesson planning and preparation. Rhonda attended an IPT student teacher's class to see how well a game worked that the two had developed together. Kathy remembered a visit

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that an IPT student had made to her classroom that resulted in her cooperating teacher providing advice and assistance to the student:

> I was teaching, and one of the IPT students; she asked to watch me teach, which was kind of intimidating to have your peers watch you. But anyway, okay. And afterwards Andy, my cooperating teacher, he was talking to her about something she could do, and he gave her some information on just basic classroom-management kind of things, but things to think about. And I really appreciated the way that he wasn't just focusing on me, being my teacher, the fact that he was actually willing to help her out a little bit. I think that that made my respect for him go up a bit, I think, just because it wasn't just me he was looking at, but he actually cared enough to help her out. He gave me the same information a couple of weeks ago, but the fact that he gave it to her as well, that really said something to me.

Kathy's experience demonstrates the powerful influence that modeling can have on a beginning professional and further highlights the collaborative culture at the school. The time, care, and attention that Andy took to spend with the student obviously had an impact upon Kathy and perhaps will encourage her to do the same if she is ever placed in a similar situation.

Flying the Flag for the University

Similar to the relationship between the school staff and student teachers fostered by the university facilitator at Awasis School, the university facilitator assigned to St. Michael played an integral role in the field experience at the school throughout the nine-week period.

The facilitator assigned to the school was Dr. Brian Johnson, a full professor who had a keen interest in and a love for working with student teachers. It was evident that he placed a high degree of value in working in the field with student and cooperating teachers. When asked to define his role, he responded with the following:

> I see the role of facilitator primarily as the link between the university and the school, and I think it's very critical that the university be viewed favorably by the teaching force in the field and by the schools that we go to. I think the role is one of protecting students to some extent, but also ensuring that the quality of our student teachers is good, that our student teachers are not overworked or taken

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> advantage of when they're in the schools, that we are well away from the apprenticeship model, and that we're into an innovative kind of a collaborative school-whole-school experience. I think that's the job of the facilitator, to fight fires when he has to or she has to, to also ensure that student teachers that are not effective or will not be good teachers are encouraged to do something else; but basically as a very visible liaison between the field and the university.

Dr. Johnson, perhaps due to his experience over time with teacher education, clearly understood the critical need for the university to successfully bridge its teacher education program into the schools. Prior to the start of the student-teaching round, he sent individual letters to the cooperating teachers, thanking them for their involvement in the field experience program and informing them of the name of their student teachers. He then met with the school coordinator to discuss his role as university facilitator in the field experience, review the critical information from the faculty, and set the dates and times for the regularly scheduled meetings with the student and cooperating teachers. Now was the time to contact the student teachers, which was done by telephone, for introductions and information sharing. As one can see, prior to the start of the field experience, considerable groundwork was done.

Dr. Johnson's thoroughness and presence in the school continued throughout the field experience. Meetings with the school coordinator and student teachers were held every Wednesday morning. Feedback from both IPT and APT student teachers indicated that they looked forward to the meetings. I was present at many of the meetings, and it became evident why the student teachers valued the university facilitator as they did. Each meeting contained the right amount of coaching, sharing, discussion, and laughter. My field notes illustrate several examples of Dr. Johnson supporting and reaffirming the efforts of the student teachers. It was obvious that he had become their cheerleader and trusted mentor. Also, during the time on Wednesdays that Dr. Johnson was in the school, he "touched base" with the cooperating teachers to ensure that, from their perspectives, things regarding their student teachers were running smoothly.

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In discussing the other things that he found himself doing in the school, Dr. Johnson stated:

> I made sure I saw every one of my students teach, and the IPT at least once. The APT, I tried to see all of them, or both of them—I only had the two there—a couple of times a week after they got started, and I think I did. I sat through full lessons just about always with both of them, and I wasn't evaluating them, but I was sort of conversant with what they were doing. . . . I made sure that I was there the last day of school, and because it was the nature of that school and the coordinator is an experienced one, the evaluations were ready. . . . I talked to each student independently, without the cooperating teacher, following his or her evaluation and asked, "How accurate is this? Do you feel good about it? You've signed it." And in every case they were quite happy with that and would prefer that I didn't talk to the cooperating teacher about making any changes, because they said that they're very honest, the evaluations. And I had known, because I'd talked to the cooperating teachers the week before to make sure there were no problems. Actually, I'd talked to them at the point when a notification of concern would have had to go out, to make sure that that wasn't going to happen and that the students were going to survive this round, and they did indeed, and I was assured that a notification of concern was not necessary for any student teacher. And by that time I had seen them all teach and was comfortable with that myself, so I felt pretty good about it.

The process and activities described above and in the preceding paragraphs allowed Dr. Johnson to fulfill all of the critical tasks associated with the role of university facilitator. His presence at the regularly scheduled meetings allowed him to ensure that, from the university perspective, the primary objectives of the field experience programs were being met. Perhaps equally as important, however, was the trust and respect that the key stakeholders in the school had for Dr. Johnson personally and the university in general when they witnessed his commitment to the field experience.

The regular classroom observations allowed for the development of a more effective mentoring relationship with the student teachers, while at the same time providing an effective barometer for measuring their progress. Dr. Johnson indicated that the information gained through these visits proved to be invaluable during the mid-point and final evaluation periods.

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Finally, Dr. Johnson's involvement in the final evaluation process served two critical functions. First, cooperating teachers contended that writing the evaluations was one of the most stressful times associated with the supervision of student teachers; thus they greatly appreciated the supportive presence of the university facilitator during that time. Second, by debriefing the final evaluation with each student teacher, Dr. Johnson was able to ensure that they felt that the evaluation was a fair and accurate summary of their field experience.

Both student teachers recognized and appreciated Dr. Johnson's commitment to the field experience. In their final interview and on the exit survey, they commented on the importance of his role in the success of their practicum. Rhonda summed up her feelings as follows:

> Brian's been more than accessible. He's been to visit a number of times, not even for just a formal meeting. He's dropped by a number of times just to see how we're doing, which is really nice to see. Before I didn't have a bad facilitator, but she was busy doing other things as well, so she did check up on us, but she wasn't as available. He made himself extremely clear that he's here to work on our behalf, which is really nice too; I appreciated that.

Kathy echoed Rhonda's appreciation for Dr. Johnson:

> Brian has done an excellent job. He's been really great in giving feedback. He's come to watch several times, five or six times, whatever, and he's always given really great feedback. And, yes, he's another guy that I can sound ideas off of and talk to, kind of like a neutral party. He's not really got a stake in the school, so, yes, so I can ask him, "I have this situation. Is this normal?" and he could say yes or no; whereas I might not ask another teacher because they live here, they work here kind of thing. He's really been a support network in a sense. He will come by at least once a week, at least. He's come by more than once a week sometimes, and he'll come, and he'll always tell you when he's going to come just so you feel like he's coming when you want him to come and not to feel so uncomfortable about it. And he'll ask you when he can actually come into your classroom to watch. Brian's been really good in the sense that he's always been there when you wanted him to be there, and he's always encouraging, but not overbearing, but encouraging to the point that you want him to be encouraging, and that's one thing I can really say about him: He's been there when you really needed him to be there.

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It is obvious that in the eyes of the student teachers, Dr. Johnson played a critical role in their success at the school. In my interview with Dr. Johnson at the conclusion of the student teaching round, it was not difficult to determine the reason for his success. When asked why he continued to work in the schools in light of the other pressures that full-time faculty face, his eyes lit up as he replied:

> Why did I do it? I believe faculty should be teachers; all faculty should know what the school is all about. I would not want to see us forget the underpinnings of our whole faculty, the reason for our being, and that is to prepare teachers. Everything else stems directly from that important, critical job. So I thought that was part of my job from the beginning, and I looked forward to getting into schools and still do. I love the schools; I like to be in them. I probably enjoy that more than anything else in the job. When I was a student teacher, I think it was a retired professor that spent time with me and was my faculty consultant, as they were called in those days, and he was great. I want to be viewed that way too by my student teachers.

A Tragedy Strikes the School

During the third week of the field experience, a tragedy struck the school in the form of the untimely death of one of the members of the teaching staff. In addition to being a well-respected and well-liked member of the school community, the teacher was also a cooperating teacher for one of the students in the IPT.

It goes without saying that the death placed a pall upon the school and upon the cohort of student teachers. It was during this unexpected and difficult time that the strength of the relationship between the school coordinator and the university facilitator shone through. As expected, the principal and the school staff had to deal with issues that were emerging with parents and students, as well as with their own feelings. In addition to being cognizant of the same issues, the school coordinator immediately thought of the student teachers. He contacted the university facilitator to discuss the possible impact of the situation on the group. Immediately following the discussion with the school coordinator, the university facilitator personally contacted each student teacher by telephone.

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Unfortunately, it is through times of pain and sorrow that the real strength of individuals or organizations becomes apparent. Within the tragic situation experienced by the school, the value of a dedicated school coordinator and university facilitator was evident. It would have been very difficult for the principal to attend to the needs of the cohort of student teachers amongst the other issues that he faced at the time. Fortunately, the care and concern for the cohort of student teachers that was demonstrated by the actions of the two men helped the student teachers through this extremely difficult time.

Leaving the School

As found in the other two schools involved in this study, the quality of the field experience offered by the school made it difficult for the student teachers to say goodbye. In their final interview shortly before their last day, both of them expressed a strong sense of belonging to the school and a reluctance to leave. They both felt a deep sense of gratitude for the efforts of all those associated with their field experience, and they indicated that they had learned a great deal over the past nine weeks. In her final statement, Kathy summed up her feelings admirably:

> How do you summarize nine weeks? My overall experience has been very positive. When I look back to where I started when I was first teaching, I can totally see the change from then till now. My growth as a teacher is immense, yes, just in being able to actually deliver the lessons and plan the lessons; and I've felt, more importantly, that my relationship, my rapport with the students has really changed and grown as well. I've noticed that I feel way more comfortable with the students. I felt comfortable coming in, but now I'm so much more comfortable, mainly because I feel that I'm competent in teaching. I feel more and more comfortable and more competent as a teacher. . . . At first you come in and you're kind of an outsider in the staff room; you're an outsider in the hallway; people don't know you. But now I feel like this is home. I care about it like I would care about my own school. I see a piece of garbage lying in the hallway, and I pick it up. When you're an outsider you wouldn't do something like that, but when it's kind of your home, you do. And so that has been—it's going to be hard to leave, yes, I must say.

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Kathy's response would have made Jim (the school coordinator) smile, for in an earlier interview I had asked him why he continued to assume the role of the school coordinator, and he replied:

> I guess what is most satisfying is when it's the end of the student-teaching round and you see these young kids who have just been through the wringer as a student teacher, and they are absolutely excited and happy that they are now going to be teachers, and to see that growth and that development. They come in; they are very, very apprehensive; and they're leaving quite comfortable. That to me probably is the most satisfaction. And the students, it's really—and I'm sure the university knows this—they're so appreciative of cooperating teachers. They're in tears a lot of times when they're leaving. And when that kind of emotion is displayed, they've had an experience, and that to me is very rewarding.

Identifying the Themes

Organizing the Field Experience

Each of the three schools brought the CSI to life in its own unique way. However, similarities are evident in the trends and patterns associated with the organization and implementation of the field experience program. Some of the activities stemmed from documents that pertain to the field experience, such as the university handbooks and the school coordinator's manual. Others appear to have evolved over time as a result of the school's understanding of what is important and necessary to run a successful field experience under the umbrella of the CSI.

Following an analysis of the data collected from the three school sites, seven distinct phases from the planning to the implementation of the CSI field experience have been identified:

The Development of a Plan

Each of the school coordinators referred to sharing the "school plan" with staff at the initial orientation meeting. One of the conditions of involvement in the original Collaborative Schools Project was that interested schools had to submit a plan for field experiences at their site. The expectation at the time was that the plan was developed with input from the whole-school community. Interestingly, each of the three school

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coordinators referred to the value of having a plan in the school. They indicated that in their school the plan was a dynamic document that had evolved and changed over time in response to the changing expectations of the university, the conditions at the school, and the learnings that had resulted from previous field experiences.

One of the features of having a plan is that it brought the field experience program in the school to an active and participatory level for the teachers. It provided a starting point for dialogue during the initial discussion of the school's participation in the upcoming field experience program. The coordinators indicated that at times the discussion generated ideas for modifications to the plan, which, once reaffirmed by the staff, were made.

It is evident that the development and communication of the school plan serves at least four different functions, all of which contribute significantly to a successful field experience program in the school. First, developing (or reviewing) a schoolwide plan for a field experience program requires careful thought and deliberation regarding the goals of the field experience program in the school, the factors that need to be included in the plan to help the goals become realized, and the activities and/or resources that need to be in place for the plan to work. Second, as the plan is developed or reviewed at staff meetings, there is the opportunity for all staff to contribute to the development or revision of the plan. Teachers who do not directly participate in accepting student teachers into their classroom can still provide their thoughts and ideas relative to the whole-school experience. Inviting all staff to participate results in a solid commitment to the upcoming field experience program. Third, once the plan has been developed, the activities in the plan are determined, and, more important, the roles that need to be played by staff have been identified, staff members have a clearer picture of how the field experience will unfold at their school, and very few surprises or last-minute decisions will be required. The plan also provides the school coordinator with an understanding of the participation of each staff member in the upcoming field experience. And finally, the school plan is an

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effective method of communicating the upcoming field experience with those outside of the school. For example, the plan can be reviewed with the student teachers and the university facilitator(s) to provide a framework for their time in the school. Also, at times parents will express concerns to the school administration regarding the presence of student teachers in the school. Having the plan in place as a springboard for discussion can be a useful tool for the principal or the school coordinator.

Developing a school plan for the provision of field experiences was seen as a positive exercise by the school coordinators. All three school coordinators indicated that many times the *lived* field experience differed from the *planned* field experience due to unforeseen circumstances or conditions that arose during the practicum. At those times the school plan was not perceived to be a limiting factor in the school adjustment to the new conditions.

Historically, cooperating teachers have acknowledged that working with a student teacher forced them to rethink their pedagogy and reflect upon their thoughts, words, and actions that may have become habits. It is my belief that developing and revisiting a field experience plan has the same effect on a school. It brings the involvement of the whole school to a conscious level and requires the staff to reconceptualize and reaffirm the school's role in the field experience component of teacher education.

Initial Orientation for the Staff

Orienting the school staff to the different field experience programs was an important activity that was completed by the school coordinators at all three of the schools. Currently, there are three field experiences in the teacher education program at the university. Each of these is of a different length of time and has different goals and objectives for the student teachers, as well as different expectations for the school. Also, due to the changing dynamic of programming, it is not unusual for the organization or expectations of one of the field experiences to change from year to year.

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Therefore, as the primary link between the university and the school and as the on-site field experience expert, the school coordinator finds him- or herself with the task of orienting the staff to the field experience programs and recruiting cooperating teachers. The school coordinators indicated that this task is not an easy one, for oftentimes the nuances of the objectives of the field experience programs (IPT and APT) are not clearly understood by the school staff. Although designed to be progressive, there are overlapping skills found within the two-field experience programs that require a keen understanding.

The initial orientation meeting is a critical first step in a successful field experience program at a school. Involvement and/or the acceptance of student teachers is a large commitment for a school or a cooperating teacher, and as such requires clear and concise information through which informed decisions can be made. Following the orientation meeting with the staff, information is collected and forwarded to the university relative to the school's potential participation in field experiences.

Preparing the School for the Field Experience

Early in September the school coordinators found themselves performing a third critical task. At this time they had received information from the university regarding their school's participation in the upcoming field experience. It is at this stage that each of the school coordinators reported performing an interesting and significant function. They indicated that they spent some time "matching" the students whose names had been provided to them by the university with the teachers on staff who had expressed an interest in being part of the field experience program at the school. This process is a critical step in the organization of a successful field experience. The school coordinators were aware of the culture of the school and the personalities involved, and they possessed a keen understanding of the types of mentorship opportunities that individual or groups of teachers might provide. The coordinators used this understanding to get the "best fit" possible for the incoming student teachers.

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The value of this task as performed by the school coordinators cannot be underestimated. In non-CSI schools the placements are made by the faculty matching a student teacher with a cooperating teacher. Often this process takes place devoid of knowledge of the local context of the school. In the majority of situations, the process works fine. However, in a few instances placements are not successful, resulting in difficulty and duress for both the student and the cooperating teacher. In the CSI model, having the care, attention, and expertise of the school coordinator involved in making these decisions greatly reduces the risk of an inappropriate placement.

The placement information was then distributed to the staff through an agenda item at a school staff meeting. At this meeting the school plan was revisited, the goals and purposes of the field experience program were discussed, and the pertinent information from the university (the number of student teachers, their names, the type of program[s] in which they were involved, the dates of the round, etc.) was shared. At the end of the meeting all staff had an opportunity to develop a clear sense of their individual role and/or the school's participation in the upcoming field experience programs.

Orienting the Students

In all three sites the student teachers were unanimous in identifying the significance of and their appreciation for their orientation to the school. They experienced a feeling of welcome and belonging to the school that provided a critical foundation for their field experiences.

The success of the orientation was a direct result of the careful planning and preparation that each of the school coordinators and other personnel put into this activity. Staff at each school indicated that it was important for the student teachers to feel comfortable from their first visit.

The nature of the whole-school experience associated with being a CSI school meant that in each of the schools, the orientation to the school included an immediate introduction to the school administration, the support staff, and teachers not directly

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associated with the field experience. The student teachers indicated that this exposure was invaluable to them as they began their field experience.

In all of the schools the orientation included the distribution of print material designed to help the student teachers gain a thorough understanding of the organization and culture of the school. In two of the schools the student teachers additionally received a student teacher handbook that was designed by the school specifically for their use. In these schools the student teachers identified this document as a tremendously helpful resource.

The school coordinator typically facilitated the orientation to the school, with, at some time, school administration participation. Of interest is that in one of the schools the tour of the school was completed by one of the cooperating teachers, who shared the responsibility for the orientation with the school coordinator.

There is little doubt that the successful orientation of the student teachers to the schools was a direct result of the organization and efforts of the school coordinators. The value of someone taking ownership for this role was highlighted by one of the student teachers in their interview who stated: "It was good when we first got here, having that contact person that we could look for, somebody who—I don't know—takes you by the hand for that first day, shows you around, shows you the ropes."

Facilitating the Whole-School Experience

Providing a whole-school experience is a condition of involvement in the CSI; therefore it is not surprising that this was a critical part of the field experience program offered in all three of the schools. Additionally, as one might expect, the student teachers were unanimous in identifying their whole-school experience as one of the most critical components of their development as a beginning teacher.

A thorough examination of the experiences of the student teachers at all three of the schools indicates that the words *whole-school experience* contain at least five distinct components, each contributing in a significant manner towards the development of the

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student teacher's understanding of the complexity of schools, the intricate nature of the role of a teacher, and the subsequent transformation from student to teacher.

1. Introduction to all staff: The student teachers reported that it was extremely worthwhile to be introduced to all of the school staff and to gain an understanding of their roles. The student teachers at St. Michael indicated that they had no idea that schools would have a business manager, and those at Hillside gained an appreciation for the complex role of a counselor in the school. At Awasis the student teachers highlighted as critical learning the role and relationship of teaching assistants in the classroom setting. Additionally, they identified meeting all of the school staff throughout their field experience as a critical factor in developing their feeling of belonging to the school community.

2. Observing different classes, teachers, and subject areas: All of the student teachers indicated the value of observing other teachers teach and, at the secondary level, being able to experience teaching outside of their major content areas of study. These opportunities exposed the student teachers to different teaching styles and methodologies. One of the disadvantages associated with the apprenticeship model of student teaching is the exposure of the student teacher to only one teaching style and personality, and the student teachers' perception that they had to teach "just like their cooperating teacher" to receive a positive evaluation. In contrast, not only are the student teachers in a CSI site expected to observe other teachers and classes, but also this expectation translates into increased flexibility on behalf of the cooperating teachers. For example, in all three of the schools the cooperating teachers mentioned the expectation that their student teachers would take risks and try different teaching styles and techniques. This willingness to allow for pedagogical exploration on the part of the student teachers provided tremendous opportunities for learning. The student teachers indicated that these opportunities were of critical importance in the development of their own teaching personality.

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3. Exposure to extracurricular activities: Whereas in most schools exposing the student teachers to extracurricular activities would not be considered unique, in the CSI schools the orientation to the activities was well organized, and participation in at least one of the activities by the student teachers was expected. All of the student teachers highlighted their involvement within the extracurricular activity as an enjoyable learning experience. It is interesting to note, in many instances, that the student teachers participated in activities that were not directly sponsored by their cooperating teachers, and they were encouraged to participate in activities in which they were interested rather than those in which their cooperating teachers were involved. In addition to expecting the student teachers to pursue an area of interest, organizing their participation in this manner allowed them to work closely with another staff member who might otherwise not have been directly involved with the field experience program.

4. Completing a project: Although the expectations for the project appeared in many forms and differed from school to school, each of the schools expected the student teachers to work together as a group on an activity. At Hillside the student teachers combined to organize an intramural event and a *Reach for the Top* contest. At Awasis the student teachers organized the *Spring into Stardom* talent show, and at St. Michael School the two student teachers were involved in the ski trip.

The student teachers all felt that the projects were very beneficial in exposing them to the complex tasks associated such activities. They mentioned many times that they remembered approaching their cooperating teacher or another staff member for advice and/or assistance as they were planning or implementing the activity. Thus, they were allowed to gain valuable experience within a safe and supportive environment.

Secondly, completing these projects required the student teachers to demonstrate and refine the skills necessary for the completion of such events. *Planning, coordinating, communicating*, and *cooperating* were all words that were used when they described their experience.

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In addition to the learnings associated with the completion of the projects, it was observed that the projects served two additional purposes: (a) The project brought the student teachers together as a cohort group, and (b) it served to raise their profile and give them status around the school with both students and staff.

In all three of the schools I noticed a great deal of pride in the voices of the student teachers as they described their projects to me. It was evident they had gained a great deal of skill and confidence as a result of these experiences.

5. Working with special-needs students: Although only formally stated as an expectation of the whole-school experience at Hillside, in all three of the CSI sites opportunities were provided for the student teachers to work with special-needs students. After conversations with staff at the schools, it became apparent that these opportunities were a result of their school's recognition of the challenges associated with the accommodation for instruction of special-needs students in integrated or segregated settings. It was thus felt that providing these opportunities to the student teachers was a critical component of the field experience program. All of the student teachers mentioned the value of this learning, and they all took advantage of the opportunities that were provided.

Without exception, the whole-school experiences of the student teachers took place beyond the walls of their cooperating teachers' classrooms. What is critical to note is that these experiences were not considered by the schools as "extras," but rather as an integral part of the field experience. As such, the student teaching assignment in the cooperating teacher's classroom was modified to accommodate these experiences. As a result, the cooperating teachers worked closely with their student teachers to develop a schedule that provided the freedom and flexibility for activities outside of the immediate classroom to occur. In planning for the experiences, the cooperating teachers were asked to step outside of the box normally associated with having a student teacher. Without this

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willingness to modify the timetable, the quality of the whole-school experience would not have been as enriched.

Teaching About Teaching

One of the features associated with all three of the CSI sites was the concerted efforts of each school to offer professional development, both in the form of written material and inservices, to provide enriched learning opportunities to the student teachers. These efforts demonstrate the commitment of the schools to take their mentorship role to a higher level, one that requires a larger amount of time and organization.

Topics related to lesson planning, unit planning, and classroom management were covered at all three of the sites. Other topics that were more site specific included assessing student writing, the use of stories in the classroom, and effective questioning techniques. At Awasis and Hillside Schools, the principals were an integral part of the program, offering sessions on classroom management and district hiring practices.

Not surprisingly, the student teachers commented on the usefulness and effectiveness of these sessions on their growth as teachers. Quite obviously, the schools identified the areas of their learning that had been of greatest concern to student teachers in the past and constructed the materials and programs to address these needs. It is interesting to note that all three schools focused upon planning and classroom management as the foundations of their programs. Further investigation found that the schools developed their own print materials or used those acquired from district-level inservices, with little or no contact with the university teacher education program.

Working With the University

Communicating with the faculty and working with the university facilitator are features of a field experience program that are not unique to CSI schools. However, the manner in which these relationships occurred makes these three schools stand out.

In an interview the professional officer in charge of field experience programs at the university commented on the efficiency and effectiveness to which his office had

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become accustomed when working with CSI schools that had a designated school coordinator. He felt that information was passed along to school staff more accurately and effortlessly and, in general, communication between the schools and the university had improved as a result. He also mentioned that schools with coordinators were more likely to be aware of and adhere to the timelines and deadlines associated with the field experience programs. In addition, he indicated that on the rare occasions that difficulties in a field experience did arise, he greatly appreciated the leadership and assistance that the school coordinators provided. He felt that problems were solved more quickly and effectively with the assistance of a school coordinator.

It is obvious that the school coordinators are considered valuable resources by the university. However, communication with the university occurs at the school level as well through the relationship with the university facilitator. In interviews with all three of the university facilitators involved in this project, they drew attention to the differences that they saw between the schools in which they were involved and non-CSI sites. One of the facilitators recalled:

> Some of the other schools I was in, I did have to take a more leadership role, I guess, and that makes it difficult, because then you have the student teachers looking to you, and you have the cooperating teachers looking to you to set up a program, and that's difficult, because by the time that I can get involved to the extent where a program is set up, their practicums are half over. So what I saw at this school was a program up and ready to run. Those kids went in; those student teachers went in, and it was ready to roll. . . . By the end of it the student teachers just raved about the place, that the experience was exactly what they needed, that although they didn't realize it at the start, the structure was what made it successful; that, and of course, the people involved.

The thoughts of the university facilitator who was at this particular school were supported by those of one of his counterparts from one of the other schools involved in this study:

> The communication wasn't there the same way it was at the Collaborative Initiative School. With the other school, it was more work for me in the sense that I had to make sure that I spent more time with the cooperating teacher. . . . In the

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> other situation the students both felt that they had to contact me. That was the school where there was no coordinator, or the principal as the coordinator was too busy, too hard to track down; certainly would listen, but they didn't get to know him as well. They didn't see him very much and didn't feel as comfortable, so I was the first line of defense for them.

It became obvious in casual conversations and in the final interviews with the university facilitators that they greatly appreciated the role that the school coordinators played in the CSI site and noticed a substantial difference in the organization of the field experience program when a coordinator was present

It became obvious in each of the sites examined that the role of the coordinator associated with the CSI had a tremendous impact upon the working relationship between the school and the university, as well as between the school and the university facilitator. Having the coordinator present provided for increased coordination and collaboration between the two institutions and the stakeholders involved in the field experience.

Seeing Other Things

In addition to the components associated with the implementation of the CSI that are identified above, other factors that were common in the three project schools became apparent. These factors were less involved with the organization of the CSI experience and focus more upon the ways of being within the experience itself. Although difficult to articulate, the presence of the following four phenomena was strong enough in the data collected from each of the three schools to warrant identification.

A Culture of Caring

Field notes from each of the three schools highlighted a sense of belonging and caring that I immediately felt upon entering each building. The student teachers and university facilitators in all three of the sites echoed these same feelings. I believe that the culture that facilitated such feelings was a significant contributing factor to the success of the student teachers in all three of the schools. It was my observation, both at St. Michael

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and at Awasis, that during the unfortunate situation they faced, the culture of caring intensified.

My sense of this domineering culture in the schools led me to focus upon it in the interviews with the school staff. I was intrigued by its existence and wanted to gain an understanding of how it came to be. Data collected from the interviews indicated that I was not alone in sensing such a culture or identifying its importance to the successful field experiences in each of the three schools. After careful analysis of the data, the following became evident:

- Indeed, there was an identifiable "manner of being." When asked about the feelings of care and belonging that were experienced by others and by me, the staff members replied that they felt them too. They indicated that they felt that they were a result of everyone "working together" and "caring for each other."
- This "manner of being" had a positive impact on the student teachers and the field experience program offered by the school. In addition to the personal comfort that the student teachers felt, there was evidence of many instances in which they were guided by school staff not directly involved in the field experience. In their final interview all of the student teachers cited examples of these occurrences, ranging from the sharing of resources, helping with the photocopier and laminator, to quietly chatting over coffee.
- The impetus behind the culture and the conditions that sustained it were not easily identifiable. In one of the schools, the principal indicated that when he was new to the school five years ago, one of his goals was to assist the staff in working more cooperatively and collaboratively. Therefore, in this school the culture that exists today might be a direct result of those efforts. An interesting note is that the principal felt at the time that the Collaborative Schools Project could be used as a catalyst for the development of such a culture. In the other

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two schools, however, no one articulated a similar story. Most of the responses indicated, "That's the way it's always been."

Although the principals and teachers were unable to pinpoint the conditions surrounding the development of such a culture, they were in agreement that their participation in the CSI project served to strengthen the feelings of care and collaboration in the schools. One of the teachers commented:

> This is one of the activities that we as a school really enjoy participating in. The student teachers bring a tremendous energy to the school, and we get to work alongside people that we don't normally get to work with. The energy that the student teachers bring seems to last in the school after they're gone.

The comments of this teacher and the feelings of the other teachers and the principals that hosting student teachers has had a positive impact on the schools is one that has been supported in the literature. As previously mentioned in this study, Little (1986) found that collaborating cohorts helped shape the culture of a school and that a residual effect of the student teaching program was felt by the teachers after the students had left the school.

Further study is needed to determine the exact nature of the role that a caring and collaborative school culture plays in the experiences of the student teachers. Also, additional study is needed to determine the impact of a project such as the CSI on developing and sustaining such a culture.

The Mentoring Roles

One of the phenomena associated with the CSI schools was the number of formal and informal mentoring relationships and opportunities that the CSI model provides. Following my observations in the schools, I concluded that there were no fewer than seven mentoring relationships that were consistently evident in each of the three sites between:

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1. Principal and school coordinator: This is one of the formal mentorship roles facilitated by the CSI. The original vision for the project included the school coordinator's role providing an opportunity for a teacher to assume a leadership position in the school. This goal has been realized, and the nature of the position requires the coordinator to work in close contact with the school administration. All three coordinators indicated their appreciation for the support of their administrator as a mentor in helping them fulfill their role.

2. School coordinator and cooperating teachers: In all three schools the school coordinator was seen mentoring a group of cooperating teachers. Although most of the instances observed involved issues directly related to the field experience program, on a few occasions other topics were covered as well. The cooperating teachers in all three of the school sites confirmed that they had a large degree of trust and confidence in their school coordinator.

3. Cooperating teacher and cooperating teacher: The nature of the whole-school experience requires teachers to work together in delivering the program to the student teachers. Many times, this requirement results in a sharing of experiences and ideas. Instances of this nature were observed in all three of the schools where a teacher who was more experienced in working with student teachers was seen mentoring one who was less experienced. The opportunity to work with colleagues in a new and/or different way was observed by the cooperating teachers as one of the highlights of their involvement in the CSI.

4. School coordinator and student teachers: The school coordinator, through the nature of his or her position in the CSI model, becomes a mentor to the student teachers. As was previously mentioned in the description of the sites, I observed many instances where the topics covered at the regularly scheduled meetings involving issues related to the field experience evolved into more complex issues related to teaching and learning. In

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their final interview, all of the student teachers recognized the value of the mentoring relationship with their school coordinator.

5. University facilitator and student teachers: At all three of the schools the student teachers viewed the university facilitators as mentors and supporters. This may have been due to the personalities of the facilitators themselves, or to the different role that they found themselves playing in the CSI schools. Nonetheless, both the student teachers and the university facilitators expressed an appreciation for the bond that developed between them.

6. Other teachers and student teachers: Once again, due to the nature of the whole-school experience, the student teachers found themselves working in close contact with staff members other than their cooperating teachers. These situations provided opportunities for the student teachers to develop mentoring relationships with these other individuals.

7. Student teachers and student teachers: As previously mentioned in the case of St. Michael, IPT student teachers were on site at the same time of the two APT students. The cohort model of student teaching and the nature of the CSI facilitated close communication among all of the student teachers in the school. I observed many instances of the APT students becoming actively involved in a mentoring capacity with their IPT counterparts. Activities such as assisting in the planning of lessons and activities, visiting classrooms, and having informal conversations of support were all evidence of this relationship. Student teaching can be a frightening and lonely time for beginning teachers, and the IPT students greatly appreciated the presence of the APT student teachers.

Involvement at Many Levels

Another phenomenon associated with the field experience program at the three CSI schools was the opportunity for the school staff to participate at one of the various levels associated with the whole-school experience. Quite obviously, the school

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coordinator and those who were working directly with student teachers had the most complete involvement with the field experience program. The next level of participation involved those who worked with the student teachers on a regular basis, but for a reduced period of time. Included in this group are the teachers who sponsored a club or activity in which a student teacher was involved and those who taught in areas to which a student teacher wanted to gain some exposure. The third level of participation included the teachers on staff who opened their classroom doors to the student teachers or who were involved in the delivery of an inservice or professional development session.

In all three of the schools there was 100% participation of the staff in the field experience program. Feedback from the student teachers and the school coordinators indicated that every teacher was directly involved in the field experience program or offered to assist in whatever capacity they were needed.

The different levels of involvement associated with the whole-school experience in the CSI schools allow for a total commitment on the part of the staff in support of the field experience program. They also allow individual staff members to participate in the program at a level that best suits their ability and availability to commit to the program. This ability allows all staff to participate and feel valued. Not only are the different levels of commitment positive for the school, but they are also of tremendous benefit to the student teachers. The more role models that student teachers have during their field experience, the greater are their opportunities for learning.

A Heightened Awareness of Pedagogy

A fourth and final phenomenon that was found in the three CSI sites can best be described as a "heightened awareness of pedagogy." In the traditional model of field experiences, cooperating teachers have indicated that working with a student teacher raises their personal awareness of their pedagogy and requires them to reflect and evaluate their teaching practices. Interestingly, preparing for and providing a whole-

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school experience in the CSI sites examined demonstrated the same phenomena occurring at a whole-school level.

The principals, school coordinators, and cooperating teachers all indicated that one of the outcomes of involvement in the CSI project was that more discussion about teaching and learning had been experienced. When one closely examines this phenomenon, its occurrence comes as little surprise. Within the old apprenticeship model, teaching practices and issues related to pedagogy were kept in the classroom between the student teacher and the cooperating teacher. However, under the umbrella of the CSI, the nature of the whole-school experience facilitates the sharing of practices and pedagogical issues. This sharing then lends itself to dialogue and debate within a safe and secure environment.

Conclusion

An examination of the three CSI sites involved in this study has determined that the field experience program provided to the student teachers was one of significant depth, breadth, and complexity. The completeness of the program can be attributed to each school's commitment to the goals of the CSI. The fulfillment of these goals and, in particular, the organization of the whole-school experience were a result of several factors, the most important of which were the commitment and talents of the individual school coordinators.

Analysis of the data collected from the three schools resulted in the identification of seven distinct phases of the field experience that were common in all three of the CSI sites:

- developing of a school plan,
- offering orientation to staff,
- contacting the university,
- preparing the school for the field experience,
- orienting the students,

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- facilitating the whole-school experience,
- teaching about teaching, and
- working with the university.

In addition to the operational conditions that led to the successful field experience of the student teachers, four phenomena were identified that were present in each of the schools during the time of the study. In light of the fact that the phenomena were evident in all three of the CSI sites, I have assumed that they are due in large part to the CSI program in the school. The phenomena have been identified as

- a culture of caring,
- the mentoring roles,
- involvement at many levels, and
- a universal awareness of pedagogy.

The experiences-as-lived of the staff and students at each of the three schools involved in this study were deep and complex. All participants in the field experience indicated a large amount of learning and satisfaction. In my opinion, the complexity of the field experience program at the schools can be attributed to two key factors. First, the nature of the CSI itself requires an in-depth commitment on the part of all the stakeholders. True collaboration occurred with planning, sharing, and risk. The latter two, sharing and risk, are the critical components necessary for learning and growth. Second, the careful planning and preparation of the school coordinators and other school staff laid the groundwork for a firm foundation from which the field experience program was offered. This firm foundation allowed the participants in the field experience program to grow and explore within a solid and supportive framework.

The three schools involved in this study have shown that with a purpose and a commitment to that purpose, the field experience program offered within a school can have a significant impact not only on the student teachers, but also on the school community as a whole. These schools have recognized the critical importance of the time

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with student teachers. This recognition has driven them to create opportunities for learning and growth that have become exemplars for the rest of the professional community.

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CHAPTER V

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has three main purposes: (a) to discuss the major findings of this study relative to the research questions, (b) to discuss additional findings that emerged through the course of the study, and (c) to provide recommendations and concluding comments pertaining to field experience programs in preservice teacher education. Throughout the chapter the findings of this study have been linked to the existing body of knowledge that relates to school/university partnerships, collaborative ventures, and/or field experiences.

Major Findings

Identifying and Understanding the Roles

Included in the first research question—"What is it like to be a student teacher, cooperating teacher, school coordinator, or university facilitator in a CSI school?"—is a focus on understanding the roles. The CSI project is such a significant movement away from the traditional apprenticeship model of student teaching that it comes as little surprise that the role and expectations associated with being a principal, cooperating teacher, university facilitator, or student teacher in the new model have evolved to accommodate the paradigm shift.

Further, the role of school coordinator, which is a new phenomenon that has been brought to the schools by the CSI, is one whose critical importance to the implementation of the field experience program at the school merits deliberate study and investigation.

It is through an examination of the various roles within the field experience and the way that they interconnect that one can gain a more complete understanding of the conditions that contributed to the experience-as-lived of the participants of this study.

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The School Coordinator

The role of the school coordinator is the most critical to the successful implementation of the field experience program in a school. In all three of the sites examined, the principal, cooperating teachers, student teachers, and university facilitator identified the school coordinator as the key person responsible for the success of the field experience program.

An analysis of the data has identified eight critical components of the coordinator's role:

1. *Key communicator:* The school coordinator is the key communicator between the faculty and the school. Any information or documentation associated with the field experience program is sent directly to the coordinator.

2. *On-site expert of field experiences:* The staff and student teachers relied heavily upon the school coordinator as the "expert" for information related to the field experience program. Issues related to timelines and deadlines, as well as the differences between the goals and objectives of the three phases of student teaching, were all topics that were covered during the nine-week field experience.

There is little wonder that others see and utilize the coordinator in this capacity. The coordinator is on site and readily accessible to the cooperating teachers and student teachers throughout the field experience. This is in contrast to the university facilitator, who is usually present in the school one morning or afternoon per week. Also, the school coordinator has an understanding of the field experience program relative to the context of the school. This 'local knowledge' increases the coordinator's value as a resource. Finally, in certain instances, the school coordinator may have a more in-depth understanding about the various field experience programs than the personnel sent from the university. History has shown that the role of the university facilitator can be a transitory one, filled in some cases by graduate students who are in the role for the first time.

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3. *Organizer of the field experience:* Even though each of the three schools demonstrated a high level of staff participation in the decision-making processes related to the field experience program at the school, it was left completely up to the school coordinator to organize and oversee the running of the program. The coordinators were involved in producing and distributing hard-copy information, organizing and chairing meetings, and generally troubleshooting the field experience program as the need arose.

4. *Gatekeeper between the faculty and the school:* As previously mentioned in this study, one of the critical roles that all three school coordinators felt that they fulfilled was finding the most appropriate "match" between the student teachers and prospective cooperating teachers. The CSI model requires that staff work together, and in most schools, some matches are more effective than others. The coordinator's knowledge of the talents, personalities, and mentoring abilities of the school staff becomes invaluable to the success of the field experience program at the school.

The literature on teacher education programs has indicated that finding appropriate placements has long been an issue. Huling (1997) supported this finding in the article "Early Field Experiences in Teacher Education": "The difficulty of providing quality field experiences is increased when sheer numbers make it difficult to place each candidate with an outstanding teacher who can model the type of learner-centered instruction advocated by most teacher education programs" (p. 3). Teacher education programs can find themselves in difficult positions when it comes to the recruitment of cooperating teachers and the placement of student teachers. Quite often, as Huling has indicated, the number of teachers willing to act as cooperating teachers barely meets the demands of the program. Second, most professional associations' requirements for becoming a cooperating teacher relate more to the number of years in the profession than one's ability to be an effective mentor. Third, at times the abilities, personality, and needs of the student teacher do not match the mentoring opportunities that can be provided by the cooperating teacher.

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The school coordinator's role in "brokering" the opportunities at the school with the needs of the field experience program is an invaluable asset to the university and to the student teachers. The school coordinator's local knowledge and ability to work personally with the school staff to determine the "best fit" for placements facilitates the highest probability of success.

5. *Mentor for student and cooperating teachers:* There were instances throughout the study in which all three school coordinators were observed in a mentorship role with the student teachers and the cooperating teachers. Both groups indicated that they had a high level of trust and confidence in the school coordinators and that they valued their judgment. The instances of mentoring were observed both during the formal meetings with both the student teachers and cooperating teachers and during informal meetings or conversations that arose throughout the course of a school day.

The student teachers from all three of the schools indicated that they felt a comfort in the presence of the school coordinator throughout their field experience. They saw the coordinator as someone who was accessible, easy to talk to, and cared about how well their field experience was going. The cooperating teacher's trust came more from the confidence that the school coordinator was "on top of things" and would let them know if something needed to be changed or altered. Although for different reasons perhaps, the student and cooperating teachers demonstrated a great deal of faith and confidence in the coordinator's ability to fulfill his or her task.

6. *Advocate for the students:* Although not evidenced through observations during the nine-week study, one of the components associated with their role that was mentioned by all three of the school coordinators was that of being an advocate for the students. Within this part of their role they saw themselves ensuring that the goals and objectives of each of the different phases of the field experience program were being met and that student teachers were not teaching too much or too little. Other areas in which they indicated involvement related to the monitoring of the amount of feedback the student

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teachers were receiving and the comfort level of the student teachers in the mid-point and final evaluation process.

7. *Resolver of conflicts:* Although no incident of conflict was observed or reported during the time of this study, all three school coordinators and the two principals identified conflict resolution as an important part of the role. The coordinators felt that this area was the most challenging for them. They indicated that the three most likely sources of conflict were between a student teacher and a cooperating teacher, with a student teacher who was not successfully completing his or her field experience, and between the cooperating teachers and the university facilitator.

Although not considered a conflict, the value of the school coordinator in difficult times was observed in the school that experienced the unfortunate death of a teacher. In this situation, the coordinator played a significant role as liaison with the university facilitator to attend to the needs of the student teachers.

8. *Leader in the school:* Although none of the school coordinators thought of themselves as leaders in the school, the cooperating teachers and the principals in each of the schools strongly identified the leadership that was demonstrated by the coordinator in their school. This identification fulfills the original vision of Mr. Booi and Dr. McIntosh for the CSI providing a leadership position in the school that would be assumed by a teacher. When one examines the tasks associated with the position, it becomes obvious that in order to fulfill the role effectively with the confidence of one's colleagues and administration, highly developed leadership skills are required. Therefore, it comes as little surprise that these skills have been associated with the three coordinators involved in this study.

The role of school coordinator is critical in the successful implementation of the CSI. The role is complex and requires highly developed organizational, communication, and interpersonal skills. Perhaps most important, however, is the commitment to teacher education that the role requires. The role of coordinator did not include financial

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compensation; nor did it include any time off at any of the schools studied. All of the coordinators indicated that they did it for the personal satisfaction that came with the position.

Notwithstanding the above, each of the coordinators mentioned that time to carry out the role was becoming a major issue. With schools putting increasing demands on the teaching staff, time to fulfill roles such as this becomes jeopardized.

Concern over the time that school coordinators are required to spend on fulfilling their role and the issue of some form of compensation has been raised with the local body that governs field experiences in each of the last three years. To date, other than discussion, no progress has been made on this issue.

The Principal

Both of the principals interviewed expressed their appreciation for the new role that they found themselves playing in the field experience program at the school as a result of having a school coordinator on-site. They found themselves relinquishing the administrative and organizational tasks in favor of becoming more involved in a professional capacity. Both principals were an integral part of the student teachers' orientation to the school. They also were involved in providing inservices to the student teachers on topics such as classroom management, portfolios, and district hiring practices. During their interviews the principals declared that they experienced a great deal of satisfaction through contributing to the field experience program in this manner.

The principals also considered themselves a support system for the school coordinator, ready to offer advice or assistance when necessary. This role was reaffirmed through the interviews with the school coordinators, who indicated an understanding of the principal's willingness to act in this role.

Finally, one of the critical roles played by the principal in the CSI model is that of mentoring the leadership skills and abilities of the school coordinators. Two of the

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coordinators mentioned their appreciation for the support and guidance that was available to them from the school administration.

The University Facilitator

The role of the university facilitator was perceived differently by each of the groups involved in the field experience. Therefore, the discussion of the role will be presented as perceived by the school coordinators, the student teachers, the cooperating teachers, and, finally, the facilitators themselves. It is interesting that each of the groups expressed subtle differences in what they perceived the university facilitator's role to be.

1. The school coordinator: The school coordinators had the highest expectations of the university facilitator and envisioned the most complex role for them. They expected the facilitator to have a high degree of knowledge relative to the field experience program at the university. They expected him/her to have classroom experience and the ability to assist student teachers on matters relative to teaching and learning; and, finally, they expected him/her to be able to provide advice and assistance should difficulties with the field experience arise.

The coordinators mentioned that as an ambassador from the university, the university facilitator played an integral role in the perception of the staff of the programming being offered on campus. Therefore, it was of critical importance that this individual be committed to and knowledgeable about his or her position and the university program.

2. The student teachers: The student teachers perceived the university facilitator's role as being mainly supportive. They described the key tasks associated with the role as observing, providing feedback, and offering advice and assistance on matters related to teaching. However, they also believed that the facilitator would become a key resource should problems arise during their field experience. One of the student teachers felt that the facilitator was there to "make sure the school was doing its thing." Another thought of the facilitator as "someone to go to if there was trouble."

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3. The cooperating teachers: The cooperating teachers were adamant that the university facilitator needed to be someone who had recent experience in a classroom, preferably in a Canadian context, to provide credibility when they offered advice or assistance to the student teachers.

For the most part, they perceived the role as being that of a "troubleshooter" or a "firefighter." Many of them commented that if they were not experiencing a problem with a student teacher, their need for contact with the facilitator was minimal.

4. The university facilitators: The university facilitators unanimously identified problem resolution (firefighting) and supporting the student teachers as key requirements of their role. The facilitators at Awasis School and at St. Michael identified a third critical component as representing the university.

In addition to identifying the subtle differences among the role expectations, it is interesting to note the variation in the manner in which the facilitators fulfilled their tasks. The facilitator at Hillside had minimal contact with the school throughout the nine-week period of time. He completed one brief meeting with the school coordinator prior to the start of the field experience. However, he kept in contact with the student teachers through e-mail on a regular basis. Perhaps this was due to his perception that his key role was that of firefighter or problem solver. In contrast, the university facilitators at the other two schools were far more involved in the field experience program. Regularly scheduled meetings were set up, extensive classroom observations and debriefing sessions took place, and regular contact with the cooperating teachers and the school coordinator became the norm. As a result, the interview transcripts from these two schools make far more mention of the value of the role of the university facilitator and the appreciation of their commitment to the school.

The school coordinators clearly had the most accurate understanding of and the highest expectations relative to the role of the university facilitators. Perhaps this was due to the high level of expertise that they possessed relative to field experiences and the

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critical roles that the university facilitator could play in helping the school coordinator fulfill his or her role.

However, it appears that the student teachers' and cooperating teachers' perceptions of the role of the university facilitator were in direct relation to the service that was provided. The Awasis and St. Michael student and cooperating teachers' descriptions of the role were far more in depth than those from Hillside. This is in direct relationship to the amount of time that each facilitator spent in the school.

Data collected from this study on the uncertainties surrounding the role of the university facilitator and the various ways in which individuals fulfilled their role cannot be considered unique. For example, Applegate and Lasley identified incongruencies in the expectations of cooperating teachers and university supervisors as early as 1986. Further evidence of issues related to the role of university personnel in field experiences can be found in Kauffman's (1992) article, "Supervision of Student Teachers":

> Some have suggested eliminating the role of the university supervisor, who exerts less immediate influence on the student teacher (Bowman, 1979; cited in Wood, 1989; Zahorik, 1981). Marrou (1989) and Wood (1989), however, stress the significance of the university supervisor's role as critical, but not as one who duplicates the observing and evaluating role of the cooperating teacher. Scholars have suggested the university supervisor's role as someone who acts as a personal confidant to the cooperating teacher and the student teacher (Zimpher, deVoss, & Nott, 1980) or who manages the administrative, managerial, and technical aspects of supervision rather than the instructional or personal. (Wood, 1989, p. 2)

All three of the facilitators mentioned that in order to adequately fulfill their role, it took them a tremendous amount of time. It is interesting to note that the perception of the facilitator at Hillside, who was a graduate student, was that, in spite of the enjoyment he received from working with student teachers, the remuneration provided for the position was not worth the time and energy it required. He also felt that, in addition to the time the position required, inservicing was an issue. Relative to inservicing, the facilitators at Awasis and St. Michael Schools indicated that they had learned how to

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fulfill their role primarily through experience. Each was an experienced educator, with extensive involvement with the university.

In spite of the difficulties experienced globally with the role of the university supervisor (or in the local context, university facilitator), this study found no major issues or problems between the school and the university personnel. In fact, in the cases of Awasis and St. Michael Schools, the university facilitators played a critical and active role in the field experience and were considered an integral part of its success.

The Cooperating Teachers

It was observed that the cooperating teachers were asked to perform their mentorship role differently in the CSI schools from those involved in the apprenticeship model. As previously mentioned, there is more of an expectation to work collaboratively. Also, there is a more public sharing of one's ideas relative to teaching and learning.

Another factor previously mentioned in this study is that the CSI model allows teachers to participate at many different levels, each level with slightly different expectations and role descriptions. The teachers saw this unique feature of the CSI as advantageous, because it allowed them to "buy into" the program at various levels, depending upon other factors that influenced their decisions to become cooperating teachers. Finally, it was noted by the researcher that the cooperating teachers experienced a loss of control over their student teachers. Supporting the CSI model meant more opportunities were provided to the student teachers to observe and participate in other classes. This resulted in the student teachers assuming less of their cooperating teacher's assignment, which required more coordination on the part of both the cooperating teacher and the student teacher in planning and scheduling.

It is interesting to note that many of the cooperating teachers felt that their student teachers "took more risks" under the CSI model than had been experienced before. This could be due to the exposure to the different teaching styles and techniques that are an integral part of the whole-school experience.

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The Student Teachers

The nature of the CSI also places the student teachers in a variety of different roles, each emphasizing different characteristics. For example, the collaborative nature of the field experience requires the student teachers to work cooperatively and interdependently. Additionally, the opportunities provided to meet and interact with the complete staff facilitate the development of interpersonal and communication skills. Perhaps most important, however, is the impact of the movement away from the philosophy of the apprenticeship model, in which the student teachers worked with only one teacher and therefore witnessed only one teaching style. The exposure to different teachers and classrooms, which is a critical part of the CSI model, encourages student teachers to become more reflective of pedagogy and to take the risks associated with moving outside of their comfort zone. In their final interviews, the student teachers were unanimous in their appreciation of the opportunities to "see and try new things."

Summary

The nature of the field experience in a CSI school is one that is tremendously complex. It requires more organization, coordination, and collaboration amongst the participants. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that the roles traditionally associated with a field experience program in the school correspondingly increase in their complexity.

The school coordinator's role is considered to be the catalyst for a successful CSI field experience. Analysis of the data taken from the three CSI sites revealed that in each of the schools the coordinator fulfilled eight identifiable roles: key communicator, on-site expert, organizer of the field experience, gatekeeper between the university and the school, mentor for student and cooperating teachers, advocate for the students, resolver of conflict, and leader in the school. All three stakeholder groups in the field experience (school staff, student teachers, and university facilitators) commented on the importance of the school coordinator to the implementation of the program. The school coordinators

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remarked that their role gave them a great deal of personal satisfaction, but the time required to fulfill the role was an issue.

In light of having a school coordinator on site, the principals of the schools found themselves fulfilling very different roles. They were involved in more of a supportive, professional-development capacity than an organizational one. Both of the principals interviewed expressed their appreciation for and their satisfaction in their new capacity.

The university facilitator's role was more difficult to define, due to the subtle differences between the expectations and experiences of each of the groups. The school coordinators appeared to have the clearest vision and the highest expectations regarding the facilitator's role. The perception of the role from the other stakeholder groups appeared to result directly from their most recent experience. The school coordinators indicated that they expected the university facilitator to have a high level of expertise about the university program generally, and in field experiences specifically. They also expected them to possess knowledge and skills related to classroom instruction and to be an active presence in the school throughout the field experience.

The student teachers viewed the university facilitator primarily as a support for advice about issues related to teaching and learning. They also indicated that the presence of the facilitator would be necessary if problems in the field experience arose.

The cooperating teachers identified the primary role of the university facilitator as one of offering advice or assistance if problems arose. Many of the cooperating teachers indicated that outside of sharing the progress of the student teachers, they had little or no reason to have contact with the facilitator.

All three of the university facilitators identified problem solving and support of the student teachers as their primary roles. Two of the facilitators also indicated that representing the university was an important function that they fulfilled. The time taken to fulfill their position was a unanimous concern. One of the facilitators indicated the need for more comprehensive inservicing.

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In the CSI model the cooperating teachers found themselves being asked to work more collaboratively with their colleagues. Their ideas about teaching and learning became more transparent, and they found themselves relinquishing control of their student teachers in the whole-school model. Several of the cooperating teachers felt that the new model promoted taking risks on behalf of their student teachers, a situation that they saw as very beneficial for them. As a cohort, the student teachers themselves were required to work more collaboratively and interdependently.

The changing dynamic of the field experience associated with the CSI has required a reconceptualization and a reconfiguration of the traditional roles associated with the practicum. The breadth and depth of the whole-school experience, along with the need for all stakeholders to work within a collaborative model, has increased the interdependence and complexity of the roles.

The Lived Experiences in the Three CSI Schools and the Goals of the Original Project

As previously mentioned, the second research question was, "How do the lived experiences of those involved in three CSI schools relate to the original goals of the project?" Careful analysis has determined that in these sites, the practices found are not only meeting the original goals, but in many cases are also far exceeding them in terms of the depth and complexity of the experiences being provided.

In order to discuss the relationship of the findings to the original goals of the CSI in an effective and cogent manner, they will be discussed relative to each individual goal.

Goal #1: To promote a collegial model for field experiences, using the whole-school setting.

This goal was achieved in all three of the schools examined. Each school demonstrated a strong commitment and desire to offer a whole-school experience to the student teachers. In each of the sites the school coordinators were recognized as the catalyst for the organization of the wide variety of opportunities that were provided to the

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student teachers to become involved with facets of school life beyond their assigned classrooms.

Perhaps the most significant result of the emphasis of providing a whole-school experience was the movement away from the traditional apprenticeship model of teacher education. All of the student teachers involved in the project indicated that they had the opportunity to work with more than one cooperating teacher. The introduction to different teaching and management styles that these opportunities provide is a tremendous learning opportunity for the student teachers. Paul at Hillside recognized this value when he remarked:

> They encouraged us to participate in other classes and get to know what everyone was doing, get really involved in all the other classes, not just be with your individual class and come out a little clone of the teacher that you're with. If you just go into a variety of teachers, you'll see a bunch of other things that you'd like.

The following statement by Kathy from St. Michael further supports the claim that it is of value to be exposed to more than one cooperating teacher:

> This was a great school, with everyone willing to help out. Everyone was very supportive. In my other school I just had contact with my cooperating teacher; they didn't use the whole-school experience, while here we had contact with everyone.

The opportunity to be exposed to more than one teaching style is a critical stage in the development of a beginning teacher. Martin (1997) completed an 18-month study on student teachers and found that

> teaching is shaped according to the models of cooperating teachers. As the student teachers borrow routines, they are not merely mimicking, but rather making an attempt to research into one's own pedagogy the fit between the routine and how one wished to teach. (p. 193)

Therefore, the more exposure to the different teachers that the CSI model provides, the greater the number of opportunities for the student teachers to discover routines that "fit" for them.

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In addition to having more than one cooperating teacher, all of the student teachers involved in the study reported that they were introduced to teachers and classes outside of their subject area, had formal and informal opportunities to discuss pedagogical issues with teaching staff, and were able to meet the nonteaching staff at the school. In two of the three project sites the student teachers received an orientation to other services provided by and/or available to the school (for example, district-level services, community resources, or outside agencies that may be accessed). Finally, all student teachers indicated that they were provided with opportunities to work with students outside of the classroom.

The wide variety of opportunities that were offered to the student teachers was due to the leadership of the school coordinators and the creativity of the school staff. The teachers within the CSI sites appeared to recognize that even if they were not directly responsible for student teachers, they could play a role in providing experiences, sharing resources, and providing support for the field experience program in their school. In all three of the schools, teaching staff who were not directly involved in the field experience opened their classroom doors and invited the student teachers to observe them teach.

Other indicators of a whole-school experience that were observed in the CSI sites included arrangements for the student teachers to be introduced to the counseling program and to music, early-entry, special-needs, and other classes not directly related to the field experience. At Awasis and Hillside Schools, the administrators provided inservicing when the principals offered individual seminars on interviews, portfolios, preparing a resume, and district application processes.

Perhaps one of the most significant benefits of the commitment to offering the whole-school experience was the resulting sense of community in the school. This feeling was reinforced by the comments of Mary, a cooperating teacher from Hillside School, who believed:

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> It's not only comfortable helping student teachers; I think we're all comfortable helping each other out. I don't think it makes a difference whether it's a student teacher or a veteran teacher. I think it's just the camaraderie we've built up here.

The teachers and school coordinators in all of the school sites identified the building of such camaraderie as an outcome of their involvement in the CSI. Providing opportunities for teachers to work together, talk about teaching and learning, and mentor student teachers are critical components of the whole-school experience.

Goal #2: To provide opportunities for collaboration between the participants in the field experience, resulting in more deliberation and review, reflection, observation of alternative practice, feedback, and support.

The emphasis placed upon this area by the CSI model resulted in enriched field experiences for the student teachers and increased opportunities for professional collaboration amongst the school staffs. All of the student teachers attended regularly scheduled meetings with their school coordinator. At Awasis and St. Michael Schools, the student teachers also met regularly with the university facilitators. These regularly scheduled meetings paved the way for increased communication and collaboration between the student teachers and the school, and in the case of Awasis and St. Michael, among the student teachers, the school, and the university.

The meetings served as a valuable opportunity for both formal and informal dialogue and sharing. Field notes of the meetings indicated that in addition to discussing issues related to the field experience, topics extended into teaching and learning in general. At one of the meetings at St. Michael, a student teacher in her advanced professional term (nine-week) was witnessed giving sound pedagogical advice regarding planning to a first-time (introductory professional term) student teacher.

As previously mentioned, the student teachers in all three of the schools indicated that they had frequent opportunities to discuss issues related to teaching and learning with school staff. At Awasis and Hillside Schools, the student teachers made use of a reflective journal throughout their field experience. In these instances, the cooperating

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teachers participated in the journaling process with their student teachers by reading the journal and responding in writing or through discussion.

Additional opportunities that were offered in the schools included having the student teachers observe each other teach, providing them with an opportunity to exchange lesson plans with their cooperating teachers (each teaching the other's lesson), and observe (and in some cases teach) in areas outside of their specialization or program.

The cooperating teachers, when interviewed, generally felt that being involved with the field experience allowed them to interact with other teachers on a more collegial and professional level. They appreciated the opportunities that the meetings provided to discuss and share ideas not only about the field experience, but also about other related pedagogical issues. A reoccurring theme that arose in the interviews with the cooperating teachers centered upon how much they appreciated being able to interact with colleagues "outside of their classrooms." In the interview with the principal of Awasis and Hillside Schools, each of them commented upon how valuable they considered the field experience to be in "bringing their staff together" and perceived it as a very positive, team-building opportunity.

Perhaps one of the most significant benefits of the increased emphasis on collaboration between the schools and the faculty was found at the evaluation time of the field experience. The cooperating teachers very much appreciated the opportunity for feedback from the school coordinator and the university facilitator regarding their evaluations. They felt that the feedback and guidance that resulted from the meetings was invaluable in helping them prepare accurate and meaningful evaluations.

Once again the school coordinator was perceived to have played a critical role in the coordination and implementation of the activities. This perception was evidenced by comments from the student teachers, cooperating teachers, and university facilitators, who felt that many of them would not have happened without the efforts of the school coordinator.

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Goal #3: To explore ways of enhancing the professional development experiences for teachers with support from the Faculty of Education.

This study has found several examples of the CSI fulfilling this goal, the first of which is the development and publication of the newsletter associated with the CSI, the *Collaborative Chronicles.* In the initial stages the issues focused heavily upon highlighting the CSI. However, as time passed, there was increased evidence of the publication expanding to include information geared to the interests of teachers that can be considered more professional development in nature.

Other examples of professional development opportunities initiated by the CSI can be found in the form of the regularly scheduled meetings, symposiums, and mini-conferences coordinated by the project leaders. These opportunities for learning and discussion are an effort to strengthen the ties between the university and the field and are designed in response to feedback from student teachers, cooperating teachers, and school coordinators.

Additionally, in furthering opportunities for professional development, CSI schools have been involved as research sites for special projects. In 1999 three schools undertook a pilot project that involved incorporating the professional growth plans of the teachers with their school's work with student teachers.

Also, the CSI has become a rich site for research at the graduate level. At the time of writing, several research projects at both the master's and doctoral levels have been undertaken. Finally, in the past year a new master's program that focuses on leadership in teacher education has been initiated at the University of Alberta. Although perhaps not directly responsible, the interest generated in teacher education by the CSI certainly has contributed in some way to the development and implementation of the new graduate cohort. This is evidenced by the fact that over half of the students currently enrolled in the cohort group have been recently involved in field experiences at their school, many in the role of the school coordinator.

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Goal #4: To consider alternatives for compensation and/or recognition of teacher involvement in the field experience.

There has been significant movement in the three schools studied to look at the concept of remuneration differently, because all three have pooled the honoraria for the field experience. Discussions with the Professional Officer of Field Experiences in the Faculty of Education indicated that approximately 40% of the cooperating teachers currently involved in the field experience program allocate their money to a school-based professional development fund.

The amount of discussion and preplanning regarding how the funds would be distributed varied amongst the schools. Hillside had a well-articulated and clearly communicated plan in place, whereas St. Michael's plan appeared to be more open and flexible. However, a consistent theme throughout the schools appeared to be that those individuals who accepted the responsibility of being directly involved in the field experience through the role of cooperating teacher had primary access to the fund.

However, aside from the increase in funds allocated to the schools rather than to individual teachers, there has been little or no progress made in developing alternate forms of compensation. A strong commitment from both the university and the professional association to pursue this matter further is needed for any significant change to occur in this area.

Goal #5: To define the roles (e.g., of the university facilitator and the school coordinator) and other conditions that are essential to implementing the collegial model.

When the Collaborative Schools Project began, the steering committee and project coordinators clearly perceived that a key piece of the puzzle would be the development of a role description for both the school coordinator and university facilitator. The need for a role description of the school coordinator arose from the newness of the position to the field experience paradigm and its importance in helping

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schools carry out a field experience program within the goals and objectives of the new model. Additionally, it was felt that a revised role description would be needed for the university facilitator, because the new model would change the face of the working relationship between the university and the field.

With that in mind, a school coordinator's manual was developed by the project team in the second year of the project and was distributed for the first time to the school coordinators of the CSI schools in the fall of 1997. It is interesting to note that the faculty no longer distributes the manual on a widespread basis to new school coordinators. However, it is available upon request.

The purpose and role of the university facilitator are key questions that have arisen from this study and need further discussion and clarification. The collaborative nature and increased complexity of the field experience associated with the CSI model requires the university facilitator to work in close contact with the schools. The interdependence of this new working relationship places increased demands on the facilitator relative to the skills, knowledge, and time that they possess to fulfill their role.

Within the CSI model the role of the university facilitator becomes more complex, with a greater expectation that the individual will become integrally involved with the field experience program at the school. As such, the university must reexamine the nature of its presence in the new CSI model and determine whether it is possible within the existing framework to recruit the appropriate personnel and allocate the necessary resources in terms of time and inservicing.

Additional Findings

A Response to a Need

History has shown us that the CSI as we know it today was born from a need for reform of the existing practices in preservice teacher education. This need was a result of several factors, which included calls for reform from agencies outside of the teacher education paradigm and from within the profession itself, which was concerned with the

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ability of existing education programs to prepare beginning teachers for the complexities of their profession.

Huling (1997) identified one of the critical goals of teacher education programs as providing the teacher candidate with the experiences necessary to build the complex schema required to be an effective classroom facilitator of teaching and learning (p. 3). Six years ago both of the individuals who have been credited with the birth of the CSI recognized the critical importance of integrated and complex field experiences to the overall growth and development of student teachers, and identified the inability of the apprenticeship model of student teaching which was utilized at the time to provide effectively for such experiences.

One of the men credited with the birth of the CSI, Mr. Larry Booi, recalled, "We were caught in kind of an apprenticeship paradigm where in the end you still ended up with one teacher, and you still basically apprenticed under that teacher."

The intuitiveness demonstrated by Dr. McIntosh and Mr. Booi at their initial meeting regarding the inability of the then-current model of student teaching to provide the necessary experiences needed by beginning teachers was becoming more widespread throughout the world of preservice teacher education. They recognized that in order to be more effective, the field experiences of student teachers needed to increase in complexity to mirror the realities faced by the teachers in the schools, and therefore needed to move beyond the walls of an individual cooperating teacher's classroom. Their recognition of the uniqueness and complexity of these new experiences led to the development of the term *whole-school experience*, which, it was hoped, would more accurately reflect the nature of the field experiences that were required and articulate the increased complexity that would be associated with the depth and breadth of the new model.

At the time the project originators were not alone in their assessment of the "apprenticeship" model's limitations in providing the types of field experiences that student teachers required, as identified by Huling (1997). As early as 1984 writers such as

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Evertson, Howley, and Zlotnik (as cited in Kauffman, 1992) doubted the effectiveness of the current practices of student teaching. Others, such as Richardson-Koehler (1988), expressed concerns that in the apprenticeship model student teachers were simply modeling the behavior of their cooperating teachers and were not learning what was necessary to allow them to teach in a variety of classroom settings. Finally, Zahorik (1988; as cited in Kauffman, 1992) cautioned that a student teacher's close contact with only one cooperating teacher might prevent him or her from developing reflective inquiry skills.

Institutions Working Together

In order to move away from the existing paradigm of preservice teacher education, a different framework that included the cooperation and collaboration of the university and the professional association needed to be developed. In retrospect, this need appeared in a timely fashion, for it occurred during "strained" relationships between the faculty and the professional association. As stated previously in this study, partnerships such as the one initiated at the time between the faculty and the professional association improves the quality of preservice preparation programs and increases the levels of communication and trust between the institutions (Cornbleth & Ellsworth, 1994, p. 61).

There was recognition that in order for the project to occur, a plan needed to be put into place. Mr. Booi recalled the two men thinking that if they wanted a whole-school experience, they had to structure a whole-school experience, or it simply would not happen. Their recognition of the importance of structure to the success of the project was supported by the work of Watson and Fullan (1992), who concluded, "Strong partnerships will not happen by accident, good will, or establishing ad hoc projects. They require structures, new activities" (p. 219). Therefore, the "new activities" were the formation of the joint steering committee that was charged with overseeing the project, and the actual development and implementation of the project itself.

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Fulfilling the Principles of Effective Collaborations

It is interesting to note that within the formulation of this structure and the actual implementation of the project, the findings indicate that the two institutions successfully fulfilled many of the conditions deemed necessary by various authors for effective partnerships in teacher education and realized many of the benefits associated with such activities.

In their article "Leadership for Effective Student Teaching," Glatthorn and Coble (1995) identified five principles that must be taken into consideration to ensure a successful partnership between the profession (schools) and schools of education (universities). The phenomenon of the CSI identified in this study can be related to these conditions in the following ways:

- **The university and the school are equal partners in the development of high-quality professionals.**

Equal ownership of the CSI by the faculty and the professional association was evident from the beginning. The two men held responsible for the genesis of the project were representatives from each of these stakeholder groups.

When the project began, a steering committee was struck that included representatives from the faculty and the professional association. The individuals charged with the responsibility of coordinating the original project were teachers seconded to the faculty. In the initial stages, much of the developmental work was completed with direct input from the school coordinators from the original project schools. There are several instances where representatives from the faculty and the professional association worked closely with the school-based personnel on issues and initiatives related to the project.

- **The expertise of effective classroom teachers, school principals, and university faculty is all valued.**

The fulfillment of this condition can be identified throughout the many stages of the project. For example, during the proceedings of the steering committee there was

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evidence of all participants having an equal stake in the project and an equal voice in the decision-making process. Open dialogue and discussion were considered critical components of the consensus-building model that was utilized. Also, as previously mentioned in Chapter 1, school-based personnel worked closely with faculty from the university in the planning and implementation of the meetings and inservices associated with the CSI.

Finally, operating internally within a culture of collaboration is one of the phenomena associated with the CSI schools that have been identified by this study. Beginning with the development of the school plan, the input of all individuals associated with the field experience was welcomed and valued. This spirit of cooperation and collaboration continued throughout the field experience and was evidenced in all stakeholder groups. Valuing the ideas and expertise of all participants in the field experience resulted in changes to the practicum that led to enriched learning opportunities for all those involved.

- **The autonomy of each constituent institution is respected.**

Although the faculty and professional association worked closely in the development and implementation of the CSI, at no time was there evidence of either institution purposefully or inadvertently compromising the integrity of the other. The roles that each of the institutions brought to the table and the constituents they represented were well communicated and clearly understood.

At the school level the same was found to be true. Even though there was a high level of collaboration amongst the stakeholder groups, it occurred within a framework of recognizing and honoring the uniqueness of each participant's role.

- **Consensus is desired and achieved through open deliberation.**

The consensus-building model was utilized effectively at all stages of development of the CSI. The composition of the steering committee ensured that each of the institutions was equally represented at the table. The very nature of this composition

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led to a consensus-building model of decision making. Also, a high level of commitment to the success of the project by both institutions required putting aside territory and agendas in order to work in a totally collaborative manner.

At the school level the very nature of the CSI model required continuous and open discussion and debate regarding the individual and collective practices that would surround the field experience programs. Ideas were translated into behaviors or policies through a collaborative model. In the opinion of this author, this occurred for two reasons that are directly attributed to the CSI model. First, the interconnectiveness and interdependence that the model requires can only be realized within a consensus-building framework. Second, the leadership role in the field experience (the school coordinator) is not considered hierarchical by colleagues. Although faced with the responsibility of coordinating the field experience, the school coordinators have no "line authority" through which to complete their role. This creates the need for them to gain consensus prior to decisions being made and willingness on the part of teachers to participate more openly and freely in the decision-making process.

- **Student concerns are important and should be recognized and responded to; student power should be legitimized and operationalized within the limits of school and university policies** (Glatthorn & Coble, 1995, p. 20).

The student teachers had a definitive voice throughout the field experience in the CSI sites involved in this study. The weekly meetings with the school coordinators provided a vehicle through which the students could engage in honest and purposeful discussion about their field experience. It was evident that the school staffs were open to feedback and suggestions from the student teachers, and changes were made within the field experience to accommodate their feedback. Also, the high level of trust observed between the student teachers and the school coordinators in each of the sites contributed significantly to the openness through which these ideas and concerns were raised.

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Realizing the Benefits

As mentioned earlier in this study, many authors have identified the potential benefits of school university partnerships (Corbleth & Ellsworth, 1994; Howey, 1985; Kagan, 1992; Little, 1993). Slick and Burrett (1995b) developed perhaps the most comprehensive list, identifying four potential benefits. Close examination reveals that many of these have been realized by the CSI.

- **Connecting university programs with the world of practice**

The involvement of the university in the development and implementation of the CSI has allowed for closer connections at two levels: at the policy-making level with the professional body as a whole and at the operational level associated with the individual schools. Within the framework of the steering committee, the CSI required the professional association and the faculty to identify what they felt was important to preservice teacher education and the resulting roles that the field experience programs would play in the development of beginning teachers. This requirement laid the path for more open and direct communication between the two institutions. This path, broken at a tenuous time in their relationship, provided the foundation for the positive climate that exists today.

A second and equally important connection realized through the CSI is the relationship between the faculty and the schools. The findings reveal that for Dr. McIntosh (then the Assistant Dean of Field Experiences), initiating and developing these connections was a critical part of the original vision of the project. He noted:

> One of the things that I felt really lacking was a systematic way to carry on the dialogue between our faculty and teachers at the school level, and so we just didn't have the structure for communication. We had a lot of people that we called *faculty consultants* connecting in one way or another with a lot of people called *cooperating teachers*, but we didn't have any faculty-to-school structure. The school-coordinator idea just seemed a wonderful idea because it meant that there's somebody that we could talk to at the school.

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Dr. McIntosh's prediction of the value of the school coordinator in improving the level of communication has been proven accurate in the findings of this study. As a result of the efforts of the coordinators, school staffs and university personnel indicated that communication and information regarding university programs and field experiences is passed along in a more fluid and timely manner.

- **Occasions for teachers and teacher educators to assume new roles and exercise leadership**

Creating a leadership role for teachers was a key component of the original model, and it has evolved into one of the most essential elements of the CSI. At the onset of the project, the role of school coordinator was seen as having a practical as well as developmental role. In the apprenticeship model, school administrators performed many of the organizational tasks associated with the field experience. The tasks associated with the implementation of the new model were seen to be far more complex and not something that an already overburdened administrator could undertake; hence, due to the time and commitment required, the desire for the role to be fulfilled by someone other than the principal; hopefully, a member of the teaching staff.

Also, as recalled by Mr. Booi, the leadership opportunities that such a role would provide were an integral part of the original discussion:

> We talked about the need eventually for a coordinator, a teacher-coordinator, and we saw that as a real potential for leadership. And it's also one of those situations that pays off well for everyone, because we had a lot of people out there who wanted a leadership position, but they didn't want a curriculum leadership position, they didn't want an administrative position or weren't ready for that, but they wanted to exercise some sort of leadership in something that counted for something. And so what better way to do it than to coordinate a relatively concentrated student-teaching experience? It's time certain; it is positive; you're helping people, and fostering their growth.

The original vision of the importance of the role of school coordinator and the opportunities for growth the role would provide has been realized. The school coordinator is seen as being in a leadership position by student teachers, cooperating

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teachers, and school administrators. The position itself has been identified as the most critical component of a successful CSI experience at the school. The principals who were interviewed stated a high level of confidence in the leadership abilities of their school coordinators. In a conversation at one of the schools, the principal mentioned:

> The school coordinator is a very essential part of the program, and I think it bridges—it takes the program from the administrative level right to the classroom level, and so it has a teacher taking a leadership role with the program, and it brings, I think, a lot of credibility with staff . . . . It's much better because it shares leadership and builds leadership capacity within the school in saying that everything isn't just top down; everybody could be a leader, and we're using the talents of the people on staff. . . . Professionally, it really helped him grow and gave him an opportunity he might not have had otherwise.

The teachers and the student teachers highlighted the "safety" associated with the position. Having the primary organizer of the field experience a member of the teaching staff allowed the coordinator to be considered more grounded, accessible, and approachable.

All three of the school coordinators indicated that their role has been a tremendous learning opportunity and leadership training ground. One of the coordinators remembered how he had started in the role and alluded to some of the benefits:

> Our principal approached me and asked if I would be interested, and he thought it would be a good leadership opportunity, a chance to try something that I haven't had an opportunity to try before. And I just thought it would be a good challenge, something different. It's turned out to be a wonderful opportunity, a great experience all the way around. It's given me an opportunity to work with different staff members, and I guess my qualities as a leader may have been enhanced somewhat, or at least it's given me the opportunity to work on that. And certainly the chance to work with the university has been a very positive thing. I've made a number of different contacts as a result of that, and that's been a really positive growth area for me. . . . It's given me the opportunity to step out a little bit and push myself.

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- **Input from experienced professionals for improving teacher education programs**

The CSI has provided a vehicle through which the profession can interact with the faculty on matters associated with teacher education. In a formal sense, the involvement of the professional association on the CSI Steering Committee provided many opportunities for discussion and the sharing of ideas related not only to the CSI, but also to teacher education in general. In addition, the school coordinator as the key communicator provided a more direct line of communication between the teachers in the school and the faculty. Finally, the meetings that were coordinated through the CSI, such as the mini-conference held in the fall of 1999, provided increased opportunities for teachers and faculty to interact. These opportunities have resulted in closer ties between the teachers in the public school classrooms and those in schools of teacher education.

- **Impact on school programs at point of delivery** (Glatthorn & Coble, 1995, p. 215)

Involvement in the CSI had a tremendous impact on the field experience programs in each of the sites examined in this study. The principals, school coordinators, and cooperating teachers in this study were unanimous in identifying the CSI as having a significant impact on the shaping of their practice relative to the mentoring of student teachers.

All the participants indicated that the presence of a school coordinator and the collaborative nature of the whole-school experience had become a "way of being" in the provision of field experiences in their school. Many indicated that they could not see themselves "going back to the old ways" associated with the apprenticeship model.

Issues or Concerns Associated With the CSI Model

This study has identified two issues associated with the implementation of the CSI model at the school level. The first was expressed by the cooperating teachers and relates to experiencing a "lack of control" of their student teacher. Although the cooperating

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teachers recognized the value of introducing their student teachers to other classrooms and different teachers through the whole-school experience, all of them expressed concern over the time it took to coordinate such activities. Also, they felt that they had less direct "control" over the mentoring of their student teacher, that at times the student teachers wanted to try strategies or techniques that in the eyes of the cooperating teacher may not be suitable. Finally, the cooperating teachers were concerned that the whole-school experience would affect the continuity of instruction of their students, that when the student teachers' timetables became more complex, they were not as able to follow individual classes through the complete block of time designated for the field experience.

It is important to acknowledge that although the cooperating teachers identified the above as issues or concerns related to the field experience in the CSI model, they were also careful to point out that they were "quite minor" compared to the benefits of the model.

Perhaps the most important issue is related to the time and energy required to fulfill the role of the school coordinator. Each of the three school coordinators identified time as being the major issue surrounding their position. When a school is totally involved with the field experience program, the coordinator's role is a yearlong commitment. As identified, all of the other stakeholders in the field experience had a great regard for the importance of the school coordinator, which leads to high expectations.

None of the coordinators involved in this study received any extra remuneration for their role; nor were they provided with any appreciable time from their teaching duties to perform their tasks. It was observed that often the meetings with the student teachers and university facilitators occurred at times when the coordinators had their preparation periods.

Although all of the coordinators indicated that they enjoyed their role and that it gave them a great deal of personal satisfaction, one has to wonder how long they will

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continue in their capacities in the absence of tangible recognition from the university or their schools.

Recommendations

The findings directly and indirectly related to the research questions of this study have led to the development of five recommendations pertaining to teacher education and field experiences. It must be remembered that these recommendations have been developed within the local framework of teacher education and have been identified within the context of only three schools.

1. Critical components of the CSI should become a mandatory part of field experiences.

There is tremendous value of the whole-school experience in preparing student teachers for the challenges that await them. The major components of the CSI, such as placing student teachers in cohorts, the development of a school plan to facilitate student teachers, and the provision of a whole-school experience have been in existence since the Collaborative Schools Project began in 1995. There has been enough feedback from the schools to allow us to conclude that participating in the CSI model not only enriches the experiences offered to the student teachers, but also significantly benefits the schools. In a conversation with the two originators of the program, they too saw the critical need for a next step. When asked what they thought the future should hold, each of them had an answer. Mr. Booi replied:

> If it really looks like it's fundamental to a successful practicum experience, and if you feel that all students should engage in a whole-school experience, if you feel that every school should be well coordinated with respect to this, then would you not make it a requirement? The only question is, does supply and demand and the economics of the situation, the realities of the situation, allow you to make that a requirement? Or do you want to—I guess, do you have the luxury of imposing your will on that? But if you've got over a hundred schools saying, "We think this is a great idea," then the jury's in; it's no longer out. So you could say, "All schools are going to be—" And that would be my preference, but I don't know whether you get enough—I understand there were four thousand placements made last year, but maybe you just make it a requirement. That's door number one. And

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> door number two is, I guess, to run these two tracks, the collaborative schools and the non. I don't even know what the noncollaborative schools are doing now. What are they doing?

Dr. McIntosh also had his thoughts on the future of the project:

> I think we talked about kind of a fading of one into the other, that every school would eventually become a collaborative school, and the collaborative school idea would simply be the way that things are done around here. It would be the routine way. . . . And I think the whole-school experience has proved itself as being just a highly valuable part of preserve teacher education.

This study recommends that all schools that express an interest in accepting student teachers be asked to do so under the umbrella of the CSI. That is, schools that participated in the field experience would be required to submit a short plan outlining the proposed whole-school experience and to commit to accepting a cohort of at least two (preferably three) student teachers.

The development of the school plan has been identified as a valuable collaborative experience for staff in addition to being a critical component of an enriched field experience program at the school. Placing the student teachers in a cohort group facilitates the benefits associated with working collaboratively and interdependently.

2. Closer ties should be developed between the university and the schools.

Although the student teachers in each of the schools involved in this study indicated that they had had a quality field experience, there was little evidence of direct links between course work completed at the university and their practice in the schools. It is interesting to note that in each of the schools the student teachers were provided with hard copies of material related to a variety of topics associated with teaching and learning, such as lesson planning, unit planning, classroom management, and questioning techniques. In all of the schools, the material was developed in response to a perceived need by the student teachers, without soliciting input from the university. This is but one illustration of the potential links between the university-based program and the field

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experience. The collaborative development of these resources would have been a golden opportunity for the schools and the university to come together.

One of the cooperating teachers expressed his desire for greater links with the university:

> I think it's important for the university and the school to have a link, that there's always collaboration where we're always discussing things and we're always looking for better ways. As a matter of fact, what I would like to see—and I don't know if it's possible—is to find out who the curriculum instruction professors are and find out from them what exactly they've done in their classes with the students so that perhaps we can use that in the classrooms. We sometimes don't have an idea of what the students have actually been doing, and so as a cooperating teacher, the student comes in and you kind of tell them what you'd like them to do. It would be nice for a professor to say, "This is what we've done in class," maybe even ask us to visit a couple of their classes so that I can go in and say, "Oh, this is what they're learning. All right. We're going to do some of this stuff in the class," so that their theory becomes more meaningful in the classroom.

Working more closely with what is being taught on campus is exactly what is required. With so much to learn, and in such a short time, the quality and effectiveness of the field experiences are critical for student teachers. Allowing them to successfully "bridge" their learning from the university to a classroom setting will help them develop the critical integration of theory and practice.

Facilitating this increased collaboration and communication between the university and the schools may result in three additional benefits. First, through this increased connection, the teachers in the schools will develop more confidence in and appreciation for those working in teacher education programs. Second, closer relationships with the schools will allow the teacher education programs to respond more quickly to the challenges faced in today's classroom. And third, this increased familiarity with the schools will result in more opportunities for professors to access schools for research and writing.

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It is improbable that the instructors of the university courses will be able to visit all of the schools that take their students. It is equally as unlikely that all cooperating teachers will attend inservices related to the content covered in the university courses. Therefore, it is most likely that information exchange needs to be transmitted through the university facilitator, the school coordinator, and/or the student teachers themselves. Camera-ready outlines complete with classroom links or recommended experiences could be part of the field experience manual. Or, in the current age of technology, this information could be made available to the schools through the use of the university website.

3. The university and the professional association should more formally recognize and nurture the role of the school coordinator.

The role of the school coordinator and the commitment, talents, and abilities of the individual assuming the role are among the most critical components of a successful field experience. Therefore, the university and the professional association must continue to work together to ensure that school coordinators receive the support necessary for them to fulfill their role.

Each of the school coordinators remembered fondly the meetings that were part of their original orientation and indicated their value as inservice opportunities. Therefore, it is recommended that an inservice program be developed to accommodate a reasonable number of new school coordinators each year. The program could be facilitated by some of the more experienced school coordinators, with help from university personnel. The program could follow a similar model to that which was associated with the original CSI project in which the sessions were held after school in a supper-meeting format. In addition to the information they received at the meeting, each of the existing coordinators identified the value of the meetings in building a support network with their colleagues in other schools. Providing these opportunities for the new school coordinators will be a tremendous asset to them as they struggle to fulfill their new role, and allowing the more

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experienced coordinators to facilitate the sessions will honor their knowledge and expertise and extend their leadership opportunities beyond the walls of their school.

Finally, the current policy of distributing the coordinator's manual only upon request should be reconsidered. If the manual is dated and requires revision, a committee charged with the responsibility of updating the manual to allow it to reflect the current conditions and expectations associated with the field experience program should be formed.

4. The university and the professional association should reexamine the role of the university facilitator and allocate resources for people to fulfill the role effectively.

The data in the study related to the university facilitator revealed inconsistency within and amongst the groups as to the role of the facilitator in the field experience. The widespread nature of this confusion indicated that a problem existed either with the identification or the communication of the role. The student teachers and cooperating teachers identified the role of the facilitator in direct relationship with their current experience; that is, the role that they identified appeared to be based upon duties that the current facilitator actually performed.

In addition to the role of the university facilitator being associated with the various field experience programs, the basic expectations needed to fulfill the role need to be clearly communicated and monitored. When asked about the role of the facilitator, although in most cases they were extremely pleased with the current individual, many of the cooperating teachers and student teachers chose to highlight experiences of the past in which other individuals fulfilling the role had not been as committed or knowledgeable. This inconsistency creates serious difficulties for the university with the schools, as oftentimes the university facilitator is the only person that the schools can link with the university community. In defense of those facilitators who are perceived as not being

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committed, two of the three university facilitators involved in this study indicated that time was a major impediment facing them as they attempted to fulfill their role.

Therefore, this study recommends that the university and the professional association work together to clearly identify the overall purpose of the university facilitator in the field experience program and define the role in each of the different programs. Consequently, consideration must be given to the time necessary to complete the tasks. If adequate resources in the form of time cannot be allocated, then the original expectations of the role(s) need to be reconsidered.

Once the purpose and expectations of the role have been developed, the university must ensure that only those who are committed to the success of the field experience component of teacher education and who have the skills and knowledge required to work in the schools are selected to fulfill this role. In order for this to occur, those most directly involved with the schools must have total autonomy in the selection and retention of university facilitators.

Finally, some method of gathering feedback from a sample of the school coordinators, cooperating teachers, and student teachers on the performance of the facilitator (similar to the questionnaires that students complete regarding their instructors on campus) should be implemented. The information gathered can then be used individually or collectively to determine the effectiveness of the role.

5. The university community as a whole should more fully recognize the value and uniqueness of the Faculty of Education as a professional school.

Although not directly related to the original research question, *significant* concern was expressed by members at all levels of this study representing stakeholder groups that the Faculty of Education and its professorate must retain quality teacher education as a number one priority. In order to do so, faculty members must have an understanding of the professional practice of teachers. The challenges associated with matching the skills and qualities needed to fulfill the requirements of an academic position in a research

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institution with those of a professional school such as teacher education are not unique to the local institution. In fact, this issue of finding individuals who can contribute in both capacities is well documented. In his article "Who's Teaching America's Teachers?" Ciscell (1993) identified the typical education professor as having fewer than five years' experience in the schools, and for most, the experience occurred over two decades ago. Also, Ducharme and Agne (1983; as cited in Ciscell, 1993) found that 30% of university professors in the 1980s had no previous field experience. Ciscell concluded that it was little wonder that graduates from teacher education programs felt that their professors had difficulty "relating" to public schools.

In their interview, both Dr. Gordon McIntosh (Professor Emeritus and former Assistant Dean of Field Experiences), and Mr. Larry Booi (President of the Alberta Teachers' Association) expressed concerns over the trends that they were seeing in universities related to Faculties of Education. Dr. McIntosh stated:

> The university is becoming more and more in a sense centered into itself. It's becoming more and more an academy, a research academy, with a set of expectations for academic staff, which means only the most unusual academic staff member is really going to commit himself or herself to teacher education. I just don't see large numbers of these incoming staff members—they're not selected because they're committed to teacher education. I think they're selected because they're reasonable teachers, but that's definitely a second or third criterion. It's their research productivity, their publication record, and their ability to attract grants. Those dynamics are so strong internal to the university that if we're going to have a strong undergrad teacher-education program, it's because the profession, and I'll say with the school coordinators as the agents of the profession, they're going to be the key actors, together with that small coterie of relative permanent people here that are committed to it. I may be wrong about it, but . . . .

Following the conversation, Mr. Booi concurred with Dr. McIntosh's thoughts:

> It's a serious... it's a very serious threat looming on the horizon, and part of the reason why this project has prevailed and expanded and been so appreciated is that the motivation—and I say this with respect for the fact that people do have research that they have to do—but the motivation wasn't to do a project, to publish some things out of it, to declare a victory, and to move on. The motivation that pushed this whole project was genuinely to try to solve some problems that

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> were inherent in an old structure, to try to come up with new ways that would improve the student-teaching experience for prospective teachers, and then in the long run, to improve what kids were getting in schools from those teachers. . . . And it's getting worse, and the institutional factors are clearly driving it that way. In the end you have to look at how the institution rewards what behavior, and where are the institutional rewards for doing a first-rate job with undergraduate teaching or with working with the student-teaching program? And where are the institutional rewards for research and publication? . . . But what it requires also is that the university has to recognize that being a faculty as a professional school has a different responsibility than simply the Department of Chemistry. And in the Department of Chemistry they teach, they work with graduate students, they research, and they publish. In this faculty we have those things, and we have this professional school responsibility.

The concerns identified by both Dr. McIntosh and Mr. Booi related to the faculty's continued focus on providing a quality teacher education program and being able to staff accordingly were echoed by a current member of the faculty who also happened to be fulfilling the role of university facilitator at one of the schools:

> I know that we're hiring primarily now for researchers, writers, but I would not want to see us forget the underpinnings of our whole faculty, the reason for our being, and that is to prepare teachers. Everything else stems directly from that important, critical job.

The expectations that these three parties had for the ability of the faculty to hire academic staff with a working knowledge of the school were also found in the schools. The school coordinators and cooperating teachers indicated the need to be able to have confidence in the role of the professorate in the development of student teachers. In his interview, one of the cooperating teachers outlined his expectations for a member of the university community:

> They have to have done some teaching, because, unfortunately, we've had situations where the person didn't have any practical teaching experience, and that really posed a problem, because they sometimes would evaluate a student teacher based on information that was perhaps theory but not practical, and that posed a problem in some cases.

The "problem" identified by the cooperating teacher cited above will become more widespread if university communities place the same amount of research and

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writing pressure on teacher educators that they do on academic staff located in other faculties. If not reconciled, these pressures will result in fewer and fewer full-time academic staff willing to venture out into the schools, which will then result in a crippling loss of credibility and support by the profession and a decline in the quality of the program being offered to the students.

Halford (1998), in her article "Easing the Way for New Teachers," wrote: "When compared to other professions such as medicine and law, which recognize the needs of new professionals more fully, some observers have dubbed education 'the profession that eats its young'" (p. 1). Gozales and Sosa (1993; as cited in Halford 1998) indicated that young teachers who leave the profession within the first three years have cited poor preparation and the lack of mentoring opportunities as the two primary reasons for their lack of success in the classroom. It is hoped that through consideration of these five recommendations, those in positions of power in the development and implementation of teacher education programs will use them as a starting point for critical analysis and discourse regarding the current practices at their institutions and the field experience programs within, for it is through this critical reflection that teacher education programs can evolve to best meet the needs of the students they prepare.

Conclusions

Teaching as a profession has become incredibly complex. The demands placed upon teachers in today's classroom are requiring a highly developed skill set and body of professional knowledge, as well as the ability to work collaboratively in a variety of challenging settings. As a result, teacher education programs, and specifically the field experience component of teacher education programs, must be designed in such a way as to reflect these demands in a safe and nurturing environment.

Representatives from faculties of education must have the opportunity to interact with the schools on an open and consistent basis to get purposeful and timely feedback from the profession. The CSI model has provided a catalyst through which the university,

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the professional association, and the schools have engaged in thoughtful and purposeful dialogue and debate regarding the nature and role of field experiences in teacher education. This engagement has served to bring these partners together in working towards a quality preservice teacher education program.

This study has found that participating in the CSI model of field experiences has been a tremendously positive learning experience and growth opportunity for all stakeholders. Although student teachers need exemplary role models, they also must learn to become independent thinkers with the ability to critically examine the theories and practices of teaching as they relate to their personal development as a teacher. Also, teachers need the opportunity to discuss ideas and issues related to their professional practice that go beyond the day-to-day challenges of working in the school.

At the school level, the CSI model has involved many teachers in pedagogical thought and critical reflection. Practices related to teaching and learning in the individual classroom as well as within the whole school have been articulated and examined. School staffs have found themselves being faced with the questions, "What is effective?" and "For what do we stand?" which has resulted in a reexamination of their individual and collective philosophies, beliefs, and practices. These reflective practices have allowed the teachers opportunities to work collaboratively on the shared goal of enhancing the opportunities that the school has provided for student teachers. The result of this collaboration has been a fostering of the development of new collegial relationships.

The whole-school experience associated with the CSI model has prepared student teachers for the challenges they will face throughout their careers. The integrated nature of the model has led to a greater understanding on the part of the student teachers of the complexities of teaching. The opportunity to experience many different teaching styles and techniques and the exposure to all facets of the school community have allowed the student teachers to gain an in-depth understanding of the role of a teacher.

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Also, the collaborative culture found within the CSI model has facilitated the development of the skills and attitudes necessary to work cooperatively and interdependently. These are critical attributes necessary for teachers to work together in meeting the demands presented in today's schools. Additionally, collegiality has increased through the development of new working and mentoring relationships. Student teachers and cooperating teachers have found themselves working with more people in different capacities than would normally be associated with student teaching. Finally, in the whole-school experience, teachers have been provided with opportunities to participate in various levels of the field experience. The nature and commitment associated with the roles have varied, accommodating the skills and readiness of each individual teacher to contribute to the program.

Within the CSI model there has been a changing of roles. The role of the school administrator has changed significantly in this model. Moving away from the tasks associated with the organization of the field experience, the principals have found themselves in much more of a mentoring or teaching role.

The university facilitator has experienced additional changes. Due to the collaborative nature of the field experience, there has been an increased expectation that the university facilitator would maintain a presence in the school. This increased presence has resulted in increased expectations related to the expertise and commitment of the facilitator. As a result, it is critical that university facilitators have a high level of engagement with the school, as well as a working knowledge of the theories of teaching and learning that are taught in the university setting.

Finally, the role of the school coordinator is considered to be the most critical component of the CSI model in ensuring the success of the whole-school experience. School coordinators need to be inserviced for their role, and some type of tangible recognition needs to be afforded to these individuals. The time that the position requires was the only impediment to the role identified by this study.

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Thoughtful, purposeful reflection on the role that schools can play in the mentoring of the student teachers will result in enriched opportunities that are of benefit to all those involved. This study has found that adopting the CSI model takes a huge step toward helping schools develop such opportunities. Perhaps these thoughts were best articulated by one of the school coordinators, who concluded:

> Based on discussions with the student teachers—and this is not just in this particular round; this goes back for the last few years—when they have had the opportunity in their callbacks to discuss with other student teachers how their rounds are going, . . . they're incredibly pleased with how this round has gone. I think they're very happy that they've had an opportunity to be involved with a school that uses a collaborative approach to student teaching, and I think that says something for the project that we're involved with. Their experience, like I say, is always incredibly positive, and it has to have something to do with the approach in the program that we're involved with.

In addition to facilitating a culture within a school that provides for enriched field experiences for all those involved in the program, the CSI model offers other important opportunities. When student teachers, cooperating teachers, and school staffs can engage in purposeful inquiry and reflection regarding teaching and learning, they can begin to challenge the practices of the profession. When this occurs, obstacles to reform can be overcome, and true change can take place. The opportunities that the CSI model provides to engage in such practices, in my opinion, is one of its greatest strengths.

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APPENDIX A

STUDENT TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

Collaborative Schools Initiative Research Project
Student Teacher Questionnaire

One of the goals of your field experience was to provide you with a whole school experience. Please reply to the following relative to your personal experiences during this student teaching round.

Work with more than one cooperating teacher

Frequently _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____

Exposure to teachers/classes outside of your subject area

Frequently _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____

Contact with school administration

Frequently _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____

Contact with other student teachers

Frequently _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____

Intervisitations to other student teacher's classes

Frequently _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____

Regular meetings with other student teachers and the school coordinator

Frequently _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____

Regular meetings with the University Facilitator

Frequently _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____

An orientation to other services provided by and/or available to the school (for example, district level services or outside agencies that may be utilized in the school)

Frequently _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____

Regular verbal feedback from your cooperating teacher(s) regarding your lessons, units

Frequently _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____

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Regular written feedback from your cooperating teacher(s) regarding your lessons, units

Frequently _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____

Verbal and/or written feedback from the university facilitator regarding your lessons/units

Frequently _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____

Opportunities to participate in formal discussions regarding teaching and learning

Frequently _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____

Opportunities to participate in informal discussions regarding teaching and learning

Frequently _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____

Opportunities to work with students outside of the classroom

Frequently _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____

If frequently or sometimes please expand upon the nature of your experience.

_____

_____

Opportunities to meet the nonteaching staff at your school

Frequently _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____

If frequently or sometimes, do you feel that these opportunities were beneficial? Why or why not?

_____

_____

The use of a reflective journal

Frequently _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____

If frequently or sometimes, do you feel that the use of a reflective journal was beneficial? Why or why not?

_____

_____

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Based upon your discussions with other student teachers at your callback sessions, are there any factors associated with your field experience that you feel are unique? If so, please explain.

Thank you for your participation in this survey!

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APPENDIX B

STUDENT TEACHER LETTER OF INVITATION

Draft

Dear _____:

The purpose of this letter is to invite you to participate in a study that I am doing regarding the nature of the field experience in a Collaborative Initiative School. I am a graduate student in the Department of Secondary Education at the University of Alberta, with an interest in preservice teacher education, focusing specifically upon the field experience component of the program.

Your involvement in the study is voluntary. If you choose to participate, you will be asked to attend a very brief weekly meeting in which we will discuss activities related to your field experience. Also, depending upon the length of your field experience, you will be asked to complete two to four short interviews of approximately 30 minutes in length scheduled at mutually agreeable times. With your permission the interviews will be audiotaped, and a transcription of the interview will be provided to you. The purpose of the audiotape and the transcript is to fully include your ideas for later data analysis. Finally, you will be asked to complete a short questionnaire just prior to the conclusion of the field experience

Throughout the research, the use of fictitious names will protect your identity and that of the school. All responses or comments in the questionnaire or interview will be confidential. Beside myself, only my university supervisors will have direct access to the raw data. If at any time you wish to withdraw from the research, you may do so simply by letting me know. At that time, your data will be struck from the project. The research in its completed form will be compiled in a document that is open to the public.

Please return the completed consent form by _____. Any questions regarding the purpose of the research or your potential involvement can be directed to me through telephone at my home number (780) 430-7286 or electronically through e-mail at *myurick@telusplanet.net* or to my supervisor, Dr. Maryanne Doherty-Poirier at (780) 492-2218 or through e-mail at mdoherty@ualberta.ca.

Thank you for considering my request.

Sincerely,

Mark Yurick
Doctoral Student

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APPENDIX C

COOPERATING TEACHER/SCHOOL COORDINATOR/UNIVERSITY FACILITATOR LETTER OF INVITATION

Draft

Dear _____:

The purpose of this letter is to invite you to participate in a study that I am doing regarding the nature of the field experience in a Collaborative Initiative School. I am a graduate student in the Department of Secondary Education at the University of Alberta, with an interest in preservice teacher education, focusing specifically upon the field experience component of the program.

Your involvement in the study is voluntary. You will be asked to complete a short interview of approximately 30 minutes in length scheduled at a mutually agreeable time near the conclusion of the field experience. With your permission the interviews will be audiotaped, and a transcription of the interview will be provided to you. The purpose of the audiotape and the transcript is to fully include your ideas for later data analysis.

Throughout the research the use of fictitious names will protect your identity and that of the school. All responses or comments in the questionnaire or interview will be confidential. Beside myself, only my university supervisors will have direct access to the raw data. If at any time you wish to withdraw from the research, you may do so simply by letting me know. At that time, your data will be struck from the project. The research in its completed form will be compiled in a document that is open to the public.

Please return the completed consent form by _____. Any questions regarding the purpose of the research or your potential involvement can be directed to me through telephone at my home number (780) 430-7286 or electronically through e-mail at *myurick@telusplanet.net*, or to my supervisor, Dr. Maryanne Doherty-Poirier at (780) 492-2218 or through e-mail at mdoherty@ualberta.ca.

Thank you for considering my request.

Sincerely,

Mark Yurick
Doctoral Student

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APPENDIX D

VOLUNTARY INVOLVEMENT CONSENT FORM

The University of Alberta
Department of Secondary Education
Collaborative Schools Initiative Field Experience Study

VOLUNTARY INVOLVEMENT CONSENT FORM

I, _____, hereby consent to be

- Interviewed
- Tape-recorded

and to complete a questionnaire by Mark Yurick.

I understand that:

- I may withdraw from the research at any time without penalty.
- All information gathered will be treated confidentially and discussed only with your supervisors.
- Any information that identifies me will be destroyed upon completion of this research.
- I will not be identifiable in any documents resulting from this research.

I also understand that the results of this research will be used only in the following:

- Research thesis
- Presentations and written articles to other educators

_____ _____
Printed name Signature

Date signed: _____
For further information concerning the completion of this form please contact Mark Yurick at Hardisty School at 469-0426 or through e-mail at myurick@telusplanet.net, or to my supervisor, Dr. Maryanne Doherty-Poirier at (780) 492-2218 or through e-mail at mdoherty@ualberta.ca.

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APPENDIX E

TRANSCRIPT LETTER

June 1, 2000

Dear _____:

Thank you again for your help with my study. Please find enclosed a copy of the transcript of our interview. It is critical that your thoughts and ideas are accurately represented in my study. As such, if you have a moment, please read through the transcript to ensure it reflects the tone, nature, and key points of our interview. If changes are necessary, feel free to make them on the document itself.

If changes were needed, I would ask that you contact me at 479-9282 (w) or 430-7286 (h) at your earliest convenience and I will make arrangements with you to pick up the edited version.

Once again thank you for your participation and your outstanding work in the field experience component of teacher education.

Cheers!

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APPENDIX F

VALIDATION LETTER

July 15, 2000

Dear School Coordinator,

I hope this letter finds you well and that you have been having a great summer to date. Please find enclosed a draft of the case study report that I have written to describe the field experience program in your school this past winter.

As we previously discussed, having you check the description for accuracy is an important part of my study. As such, I would ask that you take the time to read the enclosed pages to ensure that they accurately reflect the situations and circumstances surrounding the events that are depicted.

If there are changes necessary, or you have any concerns regarding the information found within the description, please contact me immediately at 479-9282 (w) or at 430-7286 (h) in order to discuss the matter(s) further.

Once again, thank you for your support of and participation in my study.

Cheers!

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