Chapter I

Introduction to the Study

The business community has a long tradition of involvement in the public schools. During the first half of the century, business leaders worked with schools in a leadership or policy-making capacity, serving primarily on school boards. Their main objective was to ensure a readily available work force to meet the demands of the growing industrialized nation (Timpane, 1984; Tyack, 1974). The growth of business and labor after World War I influenced the development of a practical vocational curriculum administered according to business management techniques (Burke, 1986). "The prodigious expansion of the public schools after World War II turned out to be the last page of this chapter in the history of business involvement in the schools" (Timpane, 1984, p. 389). Throughout the 1960's and 1970's, corporations were largely absent from the public school arena (Mann, 1987a; Timpane, 1984).

During the last quarter of this century, a renewed interest in establishing links between the education community and the business community has emerged. Two major occurrences helped to highlight the need for education and business to work together. The first was the release of the National Commission on Excellence in Education's report, A Nation at Risk, in 1983. This document reported that the "educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded" and encouraged public support to improve the quality of education. The second was the launching of the "Partners in Education" program by President Reagan on October 13, 1983 (Burke, 1986). The call to businesses to support schools was catapulted to the headlines by President Reagan through his resolve that all schools should form partnerships in education (Lynch, 1984; McCormick, 1984).

American presidents continued to show their support for partnerships between schools and businesses. President Bush initiated his strategy for improving education through his America 2000 program. "This strategy included a challenge to local communities for the creation of local coalitions - America 2000 Communities - to promote the National Education Goals" (Lund, 1993, p. 10). Most recently, President Clinton demonstrated support through his encouragement of the School-to-Work initiative (Brustein & Mahler, 1994). On May 4, 1994, the President signed into law the School-to-Work Opportunities Act, which was designed to help address the nation's serious skills shortage through encouraging partnerships between educators and employers (Brustein & Mahler, 1994). This interest in forming school/business partnerships has been documented at all levels of the government, including the Commonwealth of Virginia. Elise Harrison, former Project Director for Virginia Department of Volunteerism, wrote this statement based on a survey of all school districts in the state. "Partnerships are abundant in Virginia. Almost all school districts in Virginia have established some kind of arrangement with their local communities to work together to improve education" (Harrison, 1991, p. 5).

There continued to be a trend toward involvement between schools and businesses as documented by the National Center for Educational Statistics. In 1983-84 there were 42,000 school/business partnerships and by 1987-88 partnership programs had grown to 140,800 (Heaviside, 1989). Most recently, Powe (1996) wrote, "surveys, conducted over the last two

decades by the National Alliance of Business, the Council for Economic Development, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, show that the communities struggling most with public education problems tend to be those with the least local business involvement in the school" (1996, p. 32). Although business-education alliances seem to make sense, such alliances have not always worked (Powe, 1996). Little has been known about how effective these partnerships have been or how to ensure their success, especially in the elementary school.

It is evident that the nation's leaders believe that schools, businesses and the nation would benefit from collaborative efforts between schools and business. These partnerships need to begin at the first level of the public education system, the elementary school (D. Merenda, Director of NAPE, personal communication, March 17, 1997). To help ensure the success of these programs, best practices need to be documented, used and shared. Inherent in this statement is the justification for this study.

Statement of the Problem

There continues to be a proliferation of school/business partnerships in this country. (Danzberger,, Bodinger-deUriarte, & Clark, 1996). Educational partnerships have been viewed as a way to improve education; yet, little has been documented about the success of collaborative efforts between educational institutions and corporations. It was recommended by Paugh (1995) that "case studies be conducted with individual partnerships to focus on each success based on the partnership's specific goals and factors which influence that success" (p. 104). This study focused on what it takes to make a school/business partnership work in an elementary school. An in-depth study of an elementary school's partnership program was conducted to determine how and to describe why it began, and to identify the factors that made it work.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine how school/business partnerships work in the elementary school through a single case study approach. Specifically, the factors that make an elementary school/business partnership successful were identified through the study of one case - an elementary school in a large suburban school division in Virginia. In this study, the source of leadership within the partnership was examined as well as how the principal's leadership impacted the effectiveness of the program. For the purposes of this study, a successful partnership was one in which the school and business have worked together for at least three years and have documented improvement in student achievement during the partnership years.

Research Questions

There were two questions addressed in this study. The first question was: How do school/business partnerships work in an elementary school? The second and primary question was: What are the factors that make an elementary school/business partnership successful?

Significance of the Study

School/business partnerships have been viewed as means of improving education in the elementary and secondary schools (Tushnet, 1993; Fiske, 1991). Some partnerships have become vehicles for fundamental changes in education and some have provided a means of delivering services to students and faculties to improve education or student outcomes (Danzberger, Bodinger-deUriarte, & Clark, 1996). Both the education community and the business community have recognized the benefits of schools and business working together (Ottenburger, 1986).

Despite the fact that both businesses and schools have acknowledged the importance of forming these alliances, many individuals in the schools and businesses developed partnerships through a process of trial and error (Tushnet, 1993). Some partnerships in the elementary schools have been successful, but often these partnership programs do not work (Tushnet, 1993). Participants in the programs often have found it difficult to sustain their partnership. Mann (1984) found that "most business activities in schools are brief and episodic; they seldom run long enough to make a long-term difference" (p. 21).

This study addresses concerns about the effectiveness of partnerships. Barton (1983) wrote that, "We need either longitudinal or retrospective studies of what factors contribute to the success or failure of partnerships, so others are not doomed to make the same mistakes, and can enter partnerships with sufficient information to make them work" (p. 69). This study was important because:

- It identified factors necessary to make a school/business partnership work in an elementary school that were not available in the literature.
- It provided information on how to establish, implement, and maintain a school/business partnership in an elementary school at a time when partnerships were being viewed as essential to the success of schools.
- It helped provide information for those willing to contribute funds for partnership programs as well as educators who might want to form partnerships.
- It provided an example of a program that can be replicated.
- It provided a body of knowledge on elementary school programs currently not available.

As many schools have faced the dichotomous situation of dwindling financial resources and an increase in instructional demands, it has become increasingly important to garner support for education from sources beyond the walls of the classroom and school building. At a time when support for public education has declined, enlarging the school community to include businesses has become a natural way to increase interest and goodwill toward schools. However, for school/business partnerships to mature into strong political allies, the partnership must be successful (Mann, 1984). With a trend toward increased collaboration between businesses and schools, it was important to document effective practices that could be shared with school administrators, teachers, business leaders, instructors of preparation programs, and staff development planners. This study examined a school/business partnership with a history of successfully collaborating working together and documented the success factors as viewed by the key participants in the program.

Definition of Terms

School/Business Partnership: a mutually supportive arrangement between a business and a school or school district, often in the form of a written contract, in which the partners commit themselves to specific goals and activities intended to benefit students (McDonald, Merenda, Otterbourg, Spinner, & Sysak, 1990, p. 21).

Informant: the person being interviewed. It is used interchangeably with interviewee, and conversational partner. "Informant usually means someone who is telling us about the research setting, about how things work in that setting, not just about his or her own experiences" (Rubin and Rubin, 1995, p. 11).

Assumptions

This study was based on the assumption that school/business partnerships are desirable and mutually beneficial. The researcher trusted that the informants were truthful and provided information to the best of their ability, based on their knowledge and experiences in the program.

Limitations of the Study

This single case study was limited to one partnership program in an elementary school in Virginia and, therefore, may not be generalized to all elementary schools. It provided a rich description of one school's process for establishing and maintaining one of several successful partnerships.

Organization of the Study

This study is organized in five chapters. Chapter One contains an introduction to the study, the statement of the problem, the purpose for the study, the significance of the study, a definition of terms used in this research, and the organization of the study.

Chapter Two contains a review of the literature associated with school/business partnerships. A brief summary of the partnership movement in recent history and school/business partnerships in elementary schools was presented. A review of studies dealing with partnerships, as well as the themes that emerge from the literature as critical success factors, are highlighted. The study also presents a brief overview of the program in the school district being studied. Finally, a summary of the chapter was included.

Chapter Three contains the methodology used in this study. It includes a description of the population, the selection criteria, the source of evidence, the interview protocol, and the data analysis.

Chapter Four contains an analysis of the data collected in the case study. Summary tables are included to aid in the explanation of data.

Chapter Five includes a summary of the case study and conclusions about the factors critical to the success of a school/business partnership. Recommendations for further study conclude this chapter.

CHAPTER II

Literature Review

> The effort to create educational opportunities for all our students and to prepare them for the challenges that await them in the coming century requires the best from all of us. One way schools, businesses, universities, and social and cultural organizations are working to meet this challenge is by creating partnerships among themselves. (Tushnet, 1993, p. v)
>
> Richard W. Riley, U.S. Secretary of Education

Organization of Chapter Two

This chapter will review the literature related to school/business partnerships. While there was an abundance of information on school/business partnerships, the information dealing specifically with school/business partnerships in the elementary school was somewhat limited. The relevant information was extrapolated from pertinent sources that lent support to this topic. This review is divided into four sections. The first section highlights information on the school/business partnerships movement. The second part is focused on partnerships in the elementary school. The third section is an examination of the studies that document factors for success in school/business partnerships, and the fourth section contains those factors that emerged consistently throughout the literature as indicators of success when establishing a school/business partnership.

Creating partnerships to strengthen or enhance the education system was viewed as a viable means of providing support to the public schools. The National Association of Partnerships in Education contends that partnerships in education are an effective response to the call to improve productivity of the schools (McDonald, Merenda, Otterbourg, Spinner, & Sysak, 1990). In the 1990's, collaborative efforts were viewed as a means of resolving many of the issues and concerns in the United States. People were seeking ways to work together more effectively. “Partnerships have become the watchword of the nineties” (Grobe, 1993, p. 1).

The School/Business Partnership Movement

The school/business partnership movement began in the late 1970's. It was then that the term “partnership” became a popular expression (Grobe, 1993). Some partnerships were initiated by schools, while others were initiated by corporations or other organizations. A considerable number of partnerships began as a result of court mandated decisions related to desegregation. Partnerships in Boston, Cleveland, Los Angeles, Denver, Dallas, Providence, and Buffalo were the result of court actions (Levine, 1983). Many of the initial partnerships were motivated by public relation concerns and business interest in being viewed as a good neighbor in the large urban areas (Asche & McGinley, 1989; Grobe, 1993; Lund, 1993). These initial partnerships mainly focused on giving financial donations, equipment, or student rewards and incentives for attendance and good grades (Grobe, 1993).

After the release of some well-publicized national reports from various commissions and national foundations, a concern for the quality of public education was evident. These reports strongly indicated a need for educational reform (Asche & McGinley, 1989; Grobe, 1993). Many business leaders became concerned about the lack of preparedness of future

workers to compete in a global market as the country began moving from an industrial era to a technological epoch. According to Levine (1983), three major changes occurring in the American economy pointed to business being more dependent on the quality of public education:

> First, global competition will increasingly require American industry to work smarter, faster, and more efficiently. In order to do this employees need to be able to adapt to technological change in the workplace.
>
> Second, a shift in our economic base from smokestack industry to information-based, high technology industry has created an increasing demand for better educated workers with knowledge and skills in mathematics, science and technology.
>
> Third, in order to maintain our leadership in these new industrial areas we are dependent upon highly skilled individuals to keep us on the "cutting edge" of new technologies through research and development. (Levine, 1983, p. 59)

The release of statistical data during this same time frame, such as the information listed below, gave credence to the need for school improvement.

- 23 million Americans are classified as functional illiterates with an additional 2.3 million people joining that pool annually.
- 46 million Americans fall in the category of marginally literate.
- According to the U. S. Department of Labor, 75 percent of the unemployed work force cannot easily be trained for jobs due to the lack of necessary communication and problem-solving skills.
- The average scores of students in aptitude tests in mathematics have declined since 1963.
- 20 to 30 percent of American high school students become dropouts.
- 40 percent of 17 year olds lack higher order skills, such as drawing inferences from written works. Only one fifth can write a persuasive essay, and only one-third can solve a complex mathematics problem, which requires several steps. (School/business Partnerships, 1985, p. 19)
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This concern over changes in the labor supply was a major impetus to the partnership movement and served as a catalyst that brought schools and businesses together (Timpane, 1984). "The decade beginning in 1983 was characterized by one of increased interest in education by business and a concomitant willingness by educators to welcome business people

into the schools as partners" (Lund, 1993, p. 10). Throughout this nation, schools and businesses were coming together to form partnerships.

There were several different types of partnerships formed during this era. Barton (1983), in one of the first studies on partnerships, examined the different types of partnerships. He identified nine types: (1) Helping Hand, (2) Collaborative Councils, (3) Transition To Work, (4) Cooperative Education, (5) Vocation Education, (6) Experienced Based Career Education, (7) Partnerships For Economic Development, (8) Contracting Out By Education, and (9) Industry Contracting With Education. Barton did not try to determine how successful these collaborative efforts were.

Later, Otterbourg (1986) conducted a study to determine the kinds of partnerships being implemented in the schools. She surveyed over one hundred partnership programs and determined a clear pattern existed. She concluded that the programs seemed to be "multidimensional with a variety of program formats" being used. The programs, ranked from the most frequently used to the least frequently used, were:

(1) Adopt-A-School
(2) volunteer programs
(3) school/business-university-civic organization alliances
(4) community schools
(5) foundations
(6) clearinghouses
(7) countrywide projects
(8) committees
(9) regional associations
(10) statewide organizations
(11) others such as national organizations, lobbying groups, general associations, and the creation of new magnet schools. (Otterbourg, 1986, p. 9)

As indicated above, the Adopt-A-School model was the most frequently used format. However, some schools no longer have applied the term, citing a distinction between an adoptive relationship and a partnership (Asche & McGinley, 1989). Conversely, Paugh (1995) found in her research that the majority of the participants in the school district that she studied preferred to retain the term "Adopt-A-School" as the name for their partnership programs.

There are several general characteristics shared by the Adopt-A-School programs. The programs usually include the following:

> The adoptive agreement lasted at least one school year. Specific programs are developed by the business and the schools to address objectives that will improve education for the majority of the students; programs generally include a component - tutoring small groups of students or assisting in classrooms, for instance - that focuses on mastery in reading, mathematics, and other basic subjects; the partnerships are supported by the school board, top administrators, and top managers of the participating businesses; and the programs are reciprocal. As schools and business volunteers become more involved in the program, communications and activities that benefit both adoptive parties follow. (McCormick, 1984, p. 25)

The ranking of the types of partnerships reflected the popularity of the various programs but did not purport to make any correlation between popularity and success of the program. To date, there was no study to determine if one type of partnership is more successful than another.

These school/business partnerships were often viewed as beneficial to both the corporation and the school. MacDowell (1989) noted that:

> The companies feel they benefit from school/business partnerships in many ways including:
>
> - greater consumer understanding of the company's products, services, and policies;
> - improved public image through direct involvement in socially responsible activities;
> - fewer problems with employee job training, equal employment opportunities, and readiness for entry-level position;
> - improved morale in the workplace;
> - creation of a means for measuring the impact of business's involvement in education.
>
> Schools have seen even broader benefits from these partnerships, including:
>
> - new resources, ideas, and commitments with which to pursue the goals of improving schools;
> - a broader base of support from influential leaders and the public;
> - improvement in morale as teachers experience a closer relationship with the community and a new dimension of community support;
> - greater opportunities for students to learn about careers, the economy, and real-world applications of academic subjects;
> - raising students' aspirations through interaction with adults who serve as positive career role models;
> - job experiences and opportunities for students. (MacDowell, 1989, p. 9).

The partnership movement remains vibrant today, as school/business partnerships are being formed each year. In the school district being studied, many new school/business partnerships were formed this past school year and the district expected to continue to add additional school/business partnerships each school year.

Elementary School/Business Partnerships

In the last two decades, as the school/business partnership movement has grown, so has the involvement of businesses in the elementary school. As local school districts initiated their

school partnership policies, many of them implemented kindergarten through twelfth grade partnership programs. There was evidence of elementary programs in various parts of the country. One of the earliest and most widely recognized partnerships occurred in Boston. In March of 1975, a division-wide program linked twenty-one businesses and schools as partners to develop quality education for all of the 76,000 students in the Boston public school system (Grobe, 1993). By 1978, school/business partnerships were also being formed in Los Angeles, the first of which was the sponsorship of an elementary school by the Atlantic Richfield Company (McCormick, 1984). Examples of Adopt-A-School programs were noted in large cities throughout the United States (Lacey, 1983). Lacey identified active programs in Chicago, New York, Memphis, and Salt Lake City in 1983. As a result of the active programs in urban communities, large and small corporations began to connect with schools throughout the country. By 1982, elementary school programs were mentioned in the National School Volunteer Program (currently known as the National Association of Partners in Education) and the National Center for Education Statistics survey. The study conducted in 1982 determined that 79 percent of all United States public elementary and secondary schools had established some links between the schools and the business community (McCormick, 1984).

The U. S. Department of Education, through the Office of Education Research and Improvement (OERI), also joined efforts to encourage educational partnerships in both the elementary and secondary schools. Beginning in the fiscal year 1990, OERI has spent over three million dollars a year to fund and study programs in the elementary and secondary schools (Danzberger, Bodinger-deUriate, Clarke, (1996) & Gruskin, 1994).

Another program that had implications for elementary school partnerships was the School-to-Work Initiative. The U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Labor formed a partnership to implement the School-to-Work initiative which also encouraged schools and businesses to form partnerships. “One of the themes of the School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994 is to develop connections between school and work. The best way to do this is to develop greater partnerships of all types with business and industry” (Hoerner & Wherley, 1995 p.111). According to recently released data, employer participation in School-to-Work partnerships has exceeded all expectations. One in four U.S. businesses was involved in a School-to-Work initiative.

While there have been a plethora of partnerships in elementary and secondary schools throughout the country, there has been some concern about their effectiveness. The Conference Board, an organization founded in 1916 “to enhance the contribution of business to society,” reported that “there is a growing realization that these limited relationships have rarely been effective modes for stimulating change in the schools. Rather, they have provided peripheral support for the schools by supplementing the school budget, mostly for non-instructional purposes” (Lund, 1993, p. 10).

Review of Research on School/Business Partnerships

There have been several studies, reports and articles that have examined partnerships or collaborative groups with the purpose of culling out those factors that have lead to a successful relationship between schools and businesses. This section of the literature reviewed reports on those relevant studies over the last fifteen years that describe factors for success in

school/business partnerships. The studies were summarized and the factors for success are listed. This information is presented in this format specifically to document factors for success as delineated by the various researchers and authors. Hopkins in her work used a similar format to present studies (Hopkins, 1995). The studies included in this research were as follows:

Lacey 1983

One of the earliest studies focusing on the success of school/business partnership was done by Lacey (1983). This case study was part of the research report series of the National Commission for Employment Policy. In July of 1983, Lacey conducted an in-depth study involving major businesses and school leaders in Memphis, Tennessee. He reviewed fifty-five programs and selected the Memphis partnership because he considered the Memphis Adopt-A-School Programs to be "the most energetic and illuminating program" of all he reviewed. He related information gained from Memphis to information in four other major cities (Chicago, New York, Salt Lake City, and Boston). Several themes consistent with school/business partnerships were presented. According to Lacey, three complementary themes characterized successful partnerships:

(1) Personal Involvement: Ongoing visible and personal commitment from top level corporate executives can determine how well a partnership matures. The quality of personal working relationships at all levels of schools and companies determines how well the partnership achieves its goals over time.

(2) Networking: In a climate of effective communication, commitments to partnerships develop rather than level off or decline over time. At the level of the individual school building, teachers, school administrators, and company employees learn each other's languages and ways. When several schools and companies form partnerships, exchange of ideas and bartering of resources becomes possible.

(3) Systematic management of program planning and start-up: Methods required to stimulate and maintain active involvement of company volunteers and seasoned school personnel in joint projects require a framework for sound management.

The caliber of the program and the longevity of the program were used as the success factors for the partnerships. Lacey (1983) recommended that additional studies of the processes for developing successful partnerships be conducted.

Kalish 1987

Kalish (1987) did a case study of the Fairfax Count, Virginia Public Schools (FCPS partnership to determine how school/business partnerships work. Kalish examined the partnership program between the school district and the business community, as represented on

the business/industry council, to determine the major factors that made the partnership work. Kalish found in her study that the following factors make a partnership work:

- The superintendent must nurture the partnership. The leadership of the superintendent drives the partnership with support from business/industry.
- The stakeholders in this study mandate top performance. The CEO's must feel that they have a mission and that their presence can make a difference if they are to stay involved with the partnership.
- The partnership projects which the schools recommend to business/industry for funding/support need to be projects of major proportions, as well as ongoing, to keep individuals active and interested in the partnership.
- Support of the partnership is needed from the school board and local governing body. If the partnership is to work, the school board must be kept informed of partnership activities.
- A partnership needs to be designed in a way to permit mutual pursuits of the goals of the partners, if the partnership is to work. A common cause must drive the partnership.
- The schools make the decisions regarding projects for the partnership to develop and fund.
- A need exists at the present time for the development of a long-term plan for the partnership. It can be construed that, at the outset of the partnership, the strategy of choosing not to have a plan is a plan.

Anthony 1992

Anthony (1992) completed a case history of the New Horizons Project, a school/business partnership in Richmond, Virginia. New Horizons Project was a partnership between the Richmond Public School District and the Metropolitan Richmond Private Industry Council. This partnership was established to prepare youths from economically disadvantaged environments to enter the world of work. Anthony's research was significant to this study because, as part of the case history, Anthony identified factors that became a part of the implementation process, as well as the factors that led to the success and demise of the project. The following success factors have been extrapolated by this researcher from the conclusions and recommendations presented in the case history. The factors for success are:

- The superintendent and his staff must be committed to the program and maintain some consistency in the office of the superintendent.

- CEOs must be directly involved in the partnership for their support to remain constant. The program was most successful during the years that influential CEOs committed their companies to the success of the program.

- The business/corporate community needs to experience success toward reaching its goal to sustain interest and involvement in the program.

- Cooperation among the various interested parties is essential to the success of the project.
- Create an advisory board composed of key decision makers.
- A systematic study of the partnership should be done periodically to ascertain existing strengths and weaknesses.

Grobe 1993

As part of a study for the United States Office of Educational Research and Improvement, Grobe (1993) synthesized existing information on educational partnerships. This study concluded that there are some generic elements of educational partnerships that make them effective. She concluded that the components of successful partnerships are:

- Top-level Leadership
- Grounding in Community Needs
- Effective Public Relation
- Clear Roles and Responsibilities
- Racial-Ethnic Involvement
- Strategic Planning
- Effective Management and Staffing Structure
- Shared Decision Making and Interagency Ownership
- Shared Credit and Recognition
- Appropriate, Well-timed Resources
- Technical Assistance
- Formal Agreements
- Actions and Frequent Success
- Patience, Vigilance, and Increased Involvement

- Local Ownership (Grobe, 1993)

In the book Synthesis of Existing Knowledge and Practice in the Field of Educational Partnership, Grobe (1993) contends that, while numerous characteristics were highlighted in her study, the above delineations represented the major components of a successful education-business partnership.

Mattessich and Monsey 1992

Another summary of existing research literature which focused on "factors which influence the success of collaboration" was done by Mattessich and Monsey in 1992. This extensive study dealt with partnerships across the spectrum, including health, social science, public affairs arena, and education. Since collaboration has been a process used in the implementation of partnerships (Gray, 1989), this study was included in this review.

These researchers examined one hundred thirty-three documents dealing with the topic of collaboration. The scope of the research included works from education, social science, health and public affairs. After screening out studies which did not meet the criteria for validity and relevance to collaboration, eighteen studies were culled; they were reviewed for factors which the studies reported as influencing the success of collaboration (Mattessich & Monsey, 1992). From this meta-analysis, nineteen factors which influence the successes of collaboration were identified. These nineteen factors were grouped into six categories. The categories with accompanying factors are:

1. Factors Related to the Environment
    - A. History of collaboration or cooperation in the community
    - B. Collaborative group seen as a leader in the community
    - C. Political/social climate favorable
2. Factors Related to Membership Characteristics
    - A. Mutual respect, understanding, and trust
    - B. Appropriate cross section of members
    - C. Members see collaboration as in their self-interest
    - D. Ability to compromise
3. Factors Related to Process/Structure
    - A. Members share a stake in both process and outcome
    - B. Multiple layers in decision making
    - C. Flexibility
    - D. Development of clear roles and policy guidelines
4. Factors Related to Communication
    - A. Open and frequent communication
    - B. Established formal and informal links
5. Factors Related to Purpose
    - A. Concrete, attainable goals and objectives
    - B. Shared vision
    - C. Unique purpose
6. Factors Related to Resources
    - A. Sufficient funds

B. Skilled convener. (p. 46)

Tushnet 1993

This was another study of the educational partnership programs that received funding from the Office of Educational Research and Improvement of the U.S. Department of Education. The author and his team members reviewed the thirty funded partnership programs to collect and provide practical information that could be used by communities throughout this country. As a result of this work, Tushnet listed the following steps for developing a successful partnership:

1. Successful educational partnerships address real problems. Potential partners should share their perceptions of the problems faced in the community and in the schools.

2. Successful educational partnerships can take many forms. Partnerships can operate with a dominate partner, as a coalition, or as collaborative. It is not so much the organization of the partnership, but whether it is appropriate for the problems being addressed and the community in which the partnership is situated.

3. Successful educational partnerships build on conversations with all players that include discussion about the content of activities. Prior to forming a partnership, all organizations, including the unit to be affected, such as a school, must engage in discussion about the partnership.

4. Successful educational partnerships communicate with all participants and the community after they have been organized. Early partnership communications should focus on the reason for the partnership, including the problems it is designed to address. Communication of the content and the roles of the participants also is important.

5. Leadership in successful educational partnerships helps build commitment and support activities. Leadership can be distributed among participating organizations. Or one individual can serve as a leader of the partnership.

6. Successful educational partnerships provide resources, particularly technical assistance, to those who are expected to change behavior, roles, and/or relationships.

7. Successful educational partnerships engage in evaluation and adaptive planning.

8. Successful educational partnerships acknowledge and confront problems. Problems are used as an opportunity to examine processes and structures.

> Decision making procedures are designed to advance the partnership as well as solve the immediate problem. Efficiency in dealing with concerns is less important than ensuring continuing partnership cohesion. (p. 2)

Paugh 1995

Paugh (1995) did a follow up study on the work of Mattessich and Monsey (1992). Paugh's work took the nineteen Factors Influencing Successful Collaboration identified by Mattessich and Monsey and applied them specifically to school and business collaborations. Based on Paugh's research the following recommendations for success were made to school/business collaborators:

1) To influence success of the collaborations, the partners may choose to concentrate on improving the following in descending order: 1) the management, decision-making, and operational systems of a collaborative effort (process/structure); 2) the collaborative group exists (environment); 3) the skills, attitudes, and opinions of the individuals in the partnership and the culture and capacity of the organizations (membership); and 4) the channels used by collaborative partners to send and receive information, keep one another informed, and convey opinions to influence the group's actions (communication). There is no indication that improving any one factor will greatly improve success, since it is mostly influenced by the combination of all the variables.

2) It is recommended that all six variables (communication, environment, membership, process/structure, process, and structure) be considered in all phases of the collaborative process, since it is their common contribution that largely influences success. Since many variables are interrelated, building one may strengthen another. To eliminate any one factor may eliminate the catalyst for the success of the collaboration.

3) In view of the findings that the success of the partnerships was slightly above average and that the schools and business differed significantly in each's relationship between success and purpose, it is recommended that each partnership reevaluate its goals: a) to determine if they align with the seven district-wide goals of the Adopt-A-School program; b) to verify that the school and business partners all agree on the goals; and c) to construct them as measurable goals so that each can be evaluated. The construction of measurable goals is vital for any collaborative effort.

4) Since changes in the contact individuals representing the organizations involved in the partnership weaken the collaboration, every effort should be made to have those individuals remain constant; based on comments of individuals and previous studies.

5) Based on several statements by the partners, it is recommended that more assistance be given to the collaborators from leaders in terms of training, meetings and publication of a newsletter to share ideas of "what works" in the partnership.

Hopkins 1995

Another study that is relevant to this research was completed for the National Association of Partners in Education, investigating the structure of school/business partnership organizations. The study focused on directors of school/business partnership programs. Hopkins (1995) concluded that partnership directors should "build strong coalitions with teachers, school administrators, parents, students and community members. Each of these entities should be represented on the partnership decision making boards. The building of these coalitions is essential to partnership program success" (p. 191).

Danzberger, Bodinger-deUriarte, and Clark 1996

This study was also sponsored by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI). OERI funded several elementary and secondary partnership programs that were working toward educational improvement goals. The funding was done partially to identify the practices and structures associated with partnership programs that were having a positive impact in their community (1996). The publication, A Guide To Promising Practices in Educational Partnerships, was written as a result of the findings from the case studies. This document provided examples of successful practices in a variety of partnership activities. The findings from Danzberger, Bodinger-deUriate, Clarke's (1996) studies that were relevant to this work are:

- Outside funding stimulates action;
- Each participating organization is challenged to change policies and procedures to accommodate a new way of working with others;
- Partnership approaches require adaptation to fit each community, school district, and school;
- A shared vision and deep commitment among partners can overcome weaknesses in program design and implementation;
- Leadership is critical in a complex partnership;
- Leaders who reflect commitment to particular programs and processes may be more successful than leaders who see themselves as facilitators;
- Identifying and solving problems, using adaptive planning, contributes to success;
- A complex partnership can be strengthened by breaking it down into components; and
- When partnerships do not receive feedback regularly, their importance may dwindle. (p. 2)
-

These various researchers have reported factors for a successful partnership in a variety of ways. Some have examined one program and others have studied several programs. None of the studies examined in this literature review dealt solely with school/business partnerships in

the elementary school. The consistent themes reflecting the findings of the various researchers was presented in a narrative below.

Emerging Themes from the Literature

A variety of recommendations of factors necessary for a successful partnership appeared throughout the proliferation of literature on the subject of school/business partnerships. However, some consistent themes did emerge and are presented here in summary format. The factors for success as determined from the literature are: Top-level Leadership; Shared Vision and Goals; Adequate Human and Financial Resources; Mutually Beneficial Programs; Meaningful Projects or Shared Concerns; Effective Communications; Organizational Structures and Processes; Strategic Planning and Evaluation; and Broad and Growing Involvement.

Top-level Leadership and Support

Strong leadership or support from the top in both the business and educational environment is one factor that surfaced consistently throughout the literature. (Blake, 1993; Davies, 1996; Grobe, 1993; Kalish, 1987; Otterbourg, 1986) "The success of collaborative programs depends to a large degree, on the commitment which they receive from the highest echelons of the educational hierarchy" (Anthony, 1992, p. 166). The required leadership depends on the type and location of the program involved. A school-based program would require the support of the principal, while a system-wide program would require involvement of the superintendent. Blake (1993) in her experience as supervisor of school/business relations in Howard County, Maryland, contends, "top-level commitment is essential; developing a successful partnership is not a task to be delegated" (p. 32). All programs in a school district, however, need the conceptual commitment from central office and the school board (Grobe, 1992; Powe, 1996). "Officials who want to promote collaboration should use their bully pulpits to provide moral, civic, and educational leadership" (Davies, 1996, p. 21).

Shared Vision/Goals

Aligning the organization around a shared vision, mission or goal is a basic leadership principle that is evident in many successful businesses and organizations (Kouzes & Posner, 1987). Establishing and maintaining a successful school/business partnership is no exception to this principle. Partnerships and the various programs or activities they sponsored were most likely to be successful when participants have shared expectations and understandings of project goals (Blake, 1993; Danzberger, Bodinger-deUriate, Clarke, 1996). In fact, in Danzberger, Bodinger-deUriate, and Clarke's (1996) study, they found "that the most successfully implemented partnerships were initiated to address particular problems, where partners shared similar views of that problem" (p. 7). These authors also determined that organizations without a common belief or deeply held concern had difficulties early in the development of their partnership. Actively involving participants from both sides of the partnership in the planning, and implementation of the program should be an integral part of the process (Atelia & Blank, 1991; Hopkins, 1995; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; National Education Association, 1991; Powe, 1996: Schwartz, 1990;).

Adequate Human and Financial Resources

The partnership needs adequate human and financial resources to develop and sustain a successful program (Grobe, 1993; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; Tushnet, 1993). Before pursuing a partnership, an assessment of available resources should be made to determine if adequate resources are available to substantively meet the needs of the partnership project (Otterbourg, 1986). Resources can take many different forms. They can be financial and/or human resources, as well as in kind support (Mattessich & Monsey, 1992). In the Mattessich and Monsey (1992) meta-analysis, twelve of the research studies they reviewed found resources to be a factor for success. Paugh (1995), however, determined in her research that resources were found not to contribute significantly to the success of school/business partnerships.

Mutually Beneficial

School/business partnerships should provide real benefits to both the school and the business according to several authors and practitioners (Burke, 1986; Gray, 1989; Lacey, 1983; Merenda, 1989; Melaville & Blank, 1991). "The most successful partnerships appear to be those in which exchanges take place: all participating partners receive some benefit from the relationship, such as human services, materials and equipment, tax write-offs, professional staff development, and site use" (Otterbourg, 1986, p. 8). Many programs now are deemed successful only if they are mutually beneficial (Hopkins, 1995; Mann, 1984; McCormick, 1984; Schwartz, 1990).

Meaningful Projects

Partnership projects should be meaningful to keep individuals active and interested in the partnership program (Kalish, 1987; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; Paugh, 1995; Tushnet, 1993). The most successful partnerships are established to address a particular concern. Danzberger, Bodinger-deUriate, Clarke (1996) found that the most successfully implemented partnerships were initiated to address particular problems, where partners shared similar views of that problem. Even when there was disagreement about how to resolve the problem, partnerships were successful if there was consensus about the nature of the central problem. Tushnet (1993) found that successful partnerships addressed real problems. Successful collaborative efforts are driven by a need, crisis or opportunity (Mattessich & Monsey, 1992).

Effective Communication

Partnerships need to have an effective means of keeping participants informed (Kalish, 1987; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; Paugh, 1995; Danzberger, Bodinger-deUriate, Clarke, 1996; Tushnet, 1993). "Communication refers to the channels used by collaborative partners to send and receive information, keep one another informed, and convey opinions to influence the group's actions" according to Mattessich and Monsey (1992, p. 26). Strong ongoing communication enhances partnership programs (Otterbourg, 1986). It was important to have a common vocabulary as part of the communication process to promote understanding and cooperation (Harrison, 1991). There should be both formal and informal means of

communication and it needs to be frequent and open in a successful collaborative effort (Mattessich & Monsey, 1992).

Organizational Structure/Processes

Successful partnerships have clearly defined operating procedures as well as clearly articulated definitions of roles and responsibilities of the various collaborators (Harrison, 1991; Grobe, 1993; Paugh, 1995; Danzberger, Bodinger-deUriate, Clarke, 1996). "Process/structure refers to the management, decision-making, and operational systems of a collaborative effort" (Mattessich & Monsey, 1992, p. 22;). Tushnet (1993) found that in successful educational partnerships, decision making procedures actually advance the partnership as well as solve problems.

Strategic Planning/Evaluation

Strategic planning principles should be implemented in partnership programs (Grobe, 1993). It is important to develop an implementation plan that includes a process for monitoring ongoing progress; determining if goals have been reached; and assessing program effectiveness (Grobe, 1993; Lacey, 1983; Otterbourg, 1986). A well designed evaluation system is also required to determine whether students are benefitting from the program (Tushnet, 1993; Otterbourg, 1986). Evaluations should be used to help make future decisions about the partnership and the direction of the program (Harrison, 1991).

Broad/Growing Involvement

Partnerships should involve a broad cross-section of members (Atelia & Blank, 1991; Grobe, 1993; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; Paugh, 1995). It strengthens the partnership to have a diverse organization that is reflective of the school community it serves. When appropriate, the school/business partnership should include teachers, parents, students, business representative and administrators in significant ways (Grobe, 1993). "The collaborative group includes representatives from each segment of the community who will be affected by its activities" (Mattessich & Monsey, 1992, p. 20).

- The group should carefully review who should be involved in the collaborative endeavor. They should take time to identify the people who have either explicit or unspoken control over relevant issues. These key people should be invited to become partners or to participate in the collaboration some other way.

- Partners should continuously monitor whether new groups or individuals should be brought into the ongoing process. A formal integration education plan for new members should be developed.

- The cross-section of members can not be so broad and the number of collaborative members so great that the process of collaboration becomes unmanageable.

- If agencies are similar in terms of purpose, areas served, characteristics of clients, the kinds of clients served, etc., they will already have some amount of understanding and interdependence upon which to build (Mattessich & Monsey, 1992, p. 20).

Summary

This chapter contains a brief history of the school/business partnership movement since the late 1970's when the term “partnership” became the popular expression for schools and businesses working together in collaborative efforts. Some of the influences that led to the partnership movement are presented, as well as some of the elements that led to the popularity of the movement.

There is a specific focus on the school/business partnership in the elementary school. This section includes information that indicates the longevity of the partnership programs in elementary schools.

A chronological review of the studies conducted over the past fifteen years that included some information on the factors for establishing a successful school/business partnership are presented. These studies or reports all include sections that identify factors for establishing a successful school/business partnership. None of these studies focus just on an elementary school partnership program.

The last section contained success factors that consistently emerged from the literature as indicators of success when establishing a school/business partnership. These factors are: Top-level Leadership; Shared Vision and Goals; Adequate Human and Financial Resources; Mutually Beneficial Programs; Meaningful Projects or Shared Concerns; Effective Communication; Organizational Structures and Processes; Strategic Planning and Evaluation; and Broad and Growing Involvement. These factors are identified as factors that occurred throughout the literature; however, no two studies or reports listed the same factors for success. The various studies had some of the same factors for success in a school/business partnership therefore the emerging themes were developed.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine how school/business partnerships work in the elementary school. Specifically, the factors that make an elementary school/business partnership successful were identified.

This chapter describes the methodology used to conduct the research for this study. A single case study design was used in a selected elementary school identified as having a successful school/business partnership. The Director of Business and Industry Relations for the study district identified several elementary schools with school/business partnerships that work successfully. One school was selected to participate in the study based on pre-established criteria presented later in this chapter. The techniques used to complete the research for this study included structured and informal interviews, as well as document collection and analysis. Extensive interviews were conducted to obtain data about the partnership and the process used to establish and maintain a successful partnership program. The interview protocol established by Kalish (1987), as well as an ethics protocol developed by McCracken (1988) for establishing trust, were used prior to and during the interview process.

Permission to conduct the study was sought and approved from the Research Screening Committee of the selected school district and the Human Subjects committee of the university.

Selection of Study School District

There were several reasons that the selected school district was chosen for this research study. First, this was a partial replication of a study done ten years ago by Judith Kalish in the same school district.

Second, the study district was located in the largest and most diverse county in the Commonwealth of Virginia and, therefore, had a greater number of partnership programs from which to choose. Kalish (1987) reported that this school district had a variety of activities embodying partnership efforts which were a result of private sector and public school collaborations.

Third, the overall Business and Industry program in the study school district generally was viewed as a successful program as evidenced by the leadership role of its director. The director was former president of VAPE (Virginia Association for Partners in Education) and a frequent speaker at conferences about partnerships throughout the State.

Fourth, the partnership program in the study district had the support of top level leadership including the superintendent and school board (Kalish, 1987). According to the director, the superintendent had remained very supportive of partnerships, as evidenced by his attendance at 98% of all partnership kick-off sessions and his very vocal support of partnership efforts. “He was instrumental in working with the local business community to expand the county’s large school/business partnership program” (McCaffrey, 1997, p.1). Support from

top level leadership emerged as a critical success factor in the literature (Kalish, 1987; Levine, 1988; Grobe, 1993; Hopkins, 1995).

Fifth, the selected school district's Business and Industry Program had a person designated as the director. Having a director was identified in earlier research as a characteristic of a successful school/business partnership program (Hopkins, 1995).

Selection of School Site

Five schools were recommended by the Director of Business and Industry Relations. The schools had active partnerships with the same business for three years or more. According to the Director, it takes at least three years to establish trust and credibility between the partners . Several of the schools recommended by the director had been recognized in county-wide events for their outstanding partnership programs.

The researcher selected one school among the five to participate in the research study. The selected partnership met the following criteria:

1. The partnership was recognized as successful by the State of Virginia and received the 1994 Governor's Partnership In Education Award.
2. The partnership program was viewed as successful by the Director of Business and Industry Program for the study school district.
3. The partnership had been in existence for nine years.
4. The school had documented student improvement resulting since the involvement with the partnership.
5. The leaders in the elementary school and the business were willing to participate in the research project.
6. Some of the critical success factors for school/business partnerships determined from the literature were evident in the program, based on the initial interview with the principal.

The Elementary School

The elementary school that participated in this school/business partnership was located in the suburbs of a large metropolitan area. The school was a magnet school for the arts and sciences and had approximately 750 students from various communities at the time of this study. The school served a very diverse student population and had been designated as a "Special Needs" School by the school district based on the high percentage of "at risk" and low income students as well as other factors addressed later in this document. This elementary school was a twenty-nine year old facility but was equipped with current technological equipment. In addition to the regular elementary programs, the school also contained a science lab, a before/after school program, a head start program, and a Gifted and Talented Center as extra programs designed to meet the needs of its population.

Because of the magnet program, students from throughout the area requested permission to attend the school. As a result of the special programs and the reputation of the school, there was great demand from parents to have their children attend the study elementary school. Parents willingly participated in a lottery system to get their child accepted into the program. There was a waiting list to get into the school at the time of this study.

The Business

The business was a large shareholder-owned corporation that was headquartered in the metropolitan area where the school was located. The corporation was located in a large modern five-year-old secured facility which required one to register before meeting members of the staff. The fully equipped structure contained underground parking and a full service cafeteria. The monthly steering committee meetings were held at this facility.

The corporation established a Foundation in 1991 to oversee the company's philanthropic activities. The funding for the school/business partnership activities was through this foundation. The company participated in two other partnerships, one with another elementary school in addition to the study school/business partnership, and the other with a high school in the area. The major focus of all three was to work with the "at risk" student population. This corporation proudly displayed information in the lobby which showed that 46% of its employees participated in volunteer activities, and that they contributed 44,750 community service hours valued at $1,269,110 dollars. Because of their strong commitment to community service they had received numerous awards and considered themselves to be an example for other corporations and businesses to follow.

Sources of Data

Document Collection

The Director of Business and Industry Relations of the study district agreed to provide pertinent information about partnership programs in the school district in general. Specific information about the program at the selected school was provided by the principal and other participants in the program. Data were collected from documents or other sources such as: minutes from meetings, partnership agreements, letters, memos, newspaper articles, reports or other media such as videos and tapes, and were used to corroborate and expand on the information gathered from the interviews. There were several reasons for using documents in the research process according to Yin (1984): “first, documents are helpful in verifying the correct spelling and titles of names of organizations that have been mentioned in an interview; second, documents can provide other specific details to corroborate information from other sources; and third, inferences can be made from documents to aid in understanding the culture” (p. 80).

Observations

Observing participants engaged in activities related to the school/business partnership was an important way to collect data and develop an understanding of the partnership culture. The researcher made several visits to the school and the corporation prior to beginning the actual interviews. According to Rubin and Rubin (1995), “Opportunities for showing support without unqualified approval can arise when you precede the interviewing with a period of observation. During the observation period you communicate respect for the culture” (p.133). This pre-interview observation period began to create an awareness about the research project and provided an opportunity for some informants to meet the researcher in an informal setting which helped established a level of comfort prior to the interviews.

The researcher was at the elementary school on several occasions to meet with the principal, attend a staff meeting, and observe mentors working with students. Additionally, a visit to the corporation was made to observe a steering committee meeting. At that meeting, the principal introduced the researcher and told members of the committee about the research study. Notes were made about these sessions in the researcher's journal. On another occasion the researcher attended a county wide School Improvement Planning sessions where school staff, parents, and business volunteers were all invited to learn about the planning process and to begin developing a school plan.

All of these observation opportunities provided meaningful insight about this elementary school/business partnership and began to portray the level of involvement business partnership participants had in the school's program. Against this background of observations, the researcher proceeded with the interviews to learn more about the partnership.

After the interviews with key informants, the researcher attended another steering committee meeting to do a comparative review of the steering committee over a ten month span and follow-up on the progress of certain partnership projects. More observations of the mentors were made. In these post-interview observations the researcher did informal interviews of the mentors and mentees and actually sat-in on some sessions. These participatory observations, where the researcher observed and participated, also aided in a more in-depth understanding of the partnership program.

Selection of Informants

Selection of the informants or interviewees was crucial to the success of a qualitative study (Rubin and Rubin, 1995). Informants were selected based on their knowledge of the program as organizers and participants. The requirements recommended by both Spradley (1979) and Rubin and Rubin (1995) served as the minimum criteria to select the informants. The informants had:

- **Thorough enculturation** with the school/business partnership. An encultured informant is one who is a part of the culture and knows it well.

- **Current and past involvement** with the partnership. This helps informants review what they know, interpret new events, and apply knowledge to solve problems.

- **Adequate time** to participate in interview process. (Spradley, 1979, p. 49)

Rubin and Rubin (1995) state that "interviewees should be knowledgeable about the cultural arena or the situation or experience being studied; they should be willing to talk; and when people in the arena have different perspectives, the interviewees should present the range of points of view" (Rubin and Rubin, 1995, p. 66).

The initial list of key informants was developed with the principal of the school. This researcher sought informants who were knowledgeable, available, able to communicate their information effectively (Krathwohl, 1993), and had first hand experience (Rubin and Rubin,

1995). The participants for this study consisted of twelve individuals who were involved with the school/business partnership of the selected elementary school. Five of the informants had been involved in the program since its inception nine years ago. The selected key informants were chosen from three groups: school staff, parents, and business employees. The following informants agreed to participate in the study:

School Staff Informants

1. The principal of the elementary school, one of the founders of the partnership, actively involved in the program since its inception
2. A teacher who was involved with the partnership from the beginning
3. A classroom teacher, who worked with the program for two years, and was selected Teacher of the Year by the partnership, did not serve on the steering committee
4. The guidance counselor, who served as chairperson responsible for the mentorship program
5. The assistant principal

Parent Informants

1. The former president of the PTA who was actively involved in the partnership

District Level Informant

1. Director of Office of Business/Industry Relations

Business Informants

1. A parent and employee, one of the founding members, a key person in initiating the program, and coordinating the career shadowing program
2. A former parent, one of the co-founding members, key person in initiating the program, an employee at Freddie Mac
3. An employee who volunteered as a mentor and was recognized as Mentor of the Year, did not serve on steering committee
4. A Freddie Mac employee, chairperson for the steering committee
5. A Freddie Mac employee who was the acting manger of the community relations division and was responsible for the management of this and other partnerships

Interview Protocol

The researcher worked to keep the interviews as "guided conversations" moving through a series of stages (Rubin and Rubin, 1995). According to Rubin and Rubin (1995), most interviews move through seven stages:

(1) Creating Natural Involvement. Interviews typically begin with informal chatting.

(2) Encouraging Conversational Competence. Early in the interview reassure the informant that they are competent and that the researcher is interested in what they have to say.

(3) Showing Understanding. Throughout the interview, encourage the informant to be frank and open as well as provide in depth answer. To show understanding, ask follow-up questions that demonstrate one understood the main themes.

(4) Getting Facts and Basic Descriptions. Once the researcher has demonstrated an understanding of the conversational partner cognitively and emotionally, the researcher concentrates on obtaining basic information about the topical or cultural arena.

(5) Asking Difficult Questions. Once the researcher has collected basic descriptive data, more sensitive or emotional questions may be asked. It may take more than one session to reach this stage.

(6) Toning Down The Emotional Level. Once one or more sensitive or emotional topics has been discussed, the goal becomes to bring the interviewee down from this level without losing the openness of the discussion.

(7) Closing While Maintaining Contact. At this point the researcher begins to bring closure to the session, but maintains a way of returning for more questions if necessary. (p. 128)

This conversational model served only as a guide throughout the interviews. It provided a basis for understanding the interview process for the novice researcher. The stages were not intended to be followed verbatim or inflexibly, but served "as a kind of interpersonal scaffolding" to guide the interviewer throughout the interview relationship (Rubin and Rubin, 1995). The protocol established by Kalish (1987) provided a framework for the process followed before and during each interview. The interview protocol established by Kalish with some modifications (1987) was used as follows:

Prior to the interview:

- Telephone calls were made to set the date, time, and place for the interview. At this time the informant was asked to plan on approximately one hour for the interview.
- The research project was reviewed briefly.
- A set of interview/research questions were mailed or faxed to the informant in advance of the interview, if requested.

The protocol followed during the interview included:

- A brief review of the research project, if needed.
- A brief biographic sketch of the researcher, as needed.
- A copy of the informed consent form, required by the university, reviewed by the informant and signed (the original remained with the researcher and a copy was provided to the informant).
- Request for permission to tape record the interview.
- Permission to quote the informant as part of the informed consent form.
- Supporting documentation requested (i.e., memos, etc., things not in the files).
- A request for a follow-up contact, if needed.

In addition to the above protocol, an ethics protocol was a part of the procedure to help establish trust between the informant and the researcher. The researcher was granted permission to use the Standard Ethics Protocol developed by McCracken (1988). This protocol as well as the requirements established by the university reassured the interviewee of voluntary participation and the confidentiality of information obtained from the interview. It was read to the interviewee at the beginning of the interview process. One copy was given to the respondent, and one signed original was kept with the interviewer.

The Interview Questions

Three different types of questions were asked during the interview process. According to Rubin and Rubin (1995) there are three kinds of qualitative questions: main questions, probe questions, and follow-up questions.

- **Main questions** structured the discussion by breaking the subject into specific answerable parts. Main questions were prepared in advance after the researcher has available background material or conducted preliminary interviews. Although the main questions structured the interview, but were not followed rigidly. Main questions were modified based on what was learned during the interview (Rubin and Rubin, 1995).
- **Probe questions** encouraged the interviewee to expand on the matter at hand, complete an example or narrative, or explain a statement that the interviewer did not understand.
- **Follow-up questions** allowed the researcher to get richer more in-depth answers; to explore newly discovered avenues; and to test and modify emerging themes. Follow-up questions asked for details and examples and explore unusual premises. Using the follow-up question the researcher found missing details to help complete a narrative (Rubin and Rubin, 1995).

The three types of questions were asked of all informants. The school employees, the business employees, and the parents each received questions designed to elicit responses about the partnership from their perspective.

The interview questions stemmed from the themes that emerged from the literature. According to McCracken (1988) one of the major purposes of the literature review was to aid in the development of the questions to be used in the interview. McCracken (1988) contended that the literature review helps the researcher to "establish the domain" that will be explored during the interview. "It specifies the categories and relationships that may organize the data. It helps to indicate the larger factors that direct respondent testimony. It helps to determine what the respondent should ask about and what he or she should listen for" (McCracken, 1988, p. 31). Several main questions followed by probe questions have been developed; however, these questions were not necessarily asked verbatim or in any specific order, but were used more as a guide to the researcher. The main questions with potential probe questions (*) asked of each informant were:

1. Tell me about your school/business partnership.
2. Tell me something specifically that you can point to that is a direct result of the partnership program with Freddie Mac?
3. If someone asked you if this program was successful, what would you tell them?
    * To what would you attribute the success of the program?
    * How do you measure success?
4. To what would you attribute its longevity (9 years)?
5. Who initiated the partnership?
    * How did the program begin?
    * Who is the driving force or key leader(s) who makes the partnership work?
6. What is the program doing for children?
    * In what ways are children better off because of this program?
7. Is the program beneficial to you as a/an (administrator, business person, teacher)?
    * How is it beneficial to you?
    * Does that influence your participation? If so, how?
8. What were the steps taken in the development of the program?
9. Does the partnership have specific goals it is trying to accomplish?
    * How does it determine when the goals of the program have been achieved?
10. Were there any problems that you had to overcome to be successful? If so, how did you resolve them?
11. What are the factors that contribute to maintaining a successful partnership?
    * How do you measure success?
12. Is there anything else I should know to understand fully the factors necessary for making a school/business partnership work?
13. What advice would you offer to other schools and communities that want to build partnerships?
    * What would you have liked to have seen done differently if you had it to do all over again?
14. Who else should I interview to find out more about the program?

Prior to beginning the actual case study the interview process was field tested. The researcher interviewed both an elementary principal and a business executive who participated in a partnership. The field testing aided the researcher in refining the process and procedures and interview questions before beginning the actual case study.

The researcher interviewed each informant. A tape recorder was used to capture the interview. The researcher estimated that the interviews would last approximately one hour. However, the informants were given a "generous time-frame" to share their information in their own words (McCracken, 1988). The researcher listened to the tapes and then had them professionally transcribed verbatim.

Data Analysis

The data collected from the interviews and documents were analyzed primarily qualitatively. Some quantitative data such as attendance records and test scores were also used in this research study. Codification of the data occurred to delineate themes and categories. According to Rubin and Rubin (1995), the coding process began by reading and rereading the interviews so that the general content of the data was clearly in mind. During the rereading, the researcher began to identify the themes, concepts and ideas that were being explored during the interviews (Rubin and Rubin, 1995). Using colored pencils to correlate with identified themes, this researcher marked the themes, concepts and ideas each time they appeared in the interview (Rubin and Rubin, 1995). As new themes, concepts and ideas appeared they were identified and new codes were designated to capture this additional information (Rubin and Rubin, 1995). A variety of tools and matrices were used to aid in data collection and analysis. Some of these documents were:

1. Contact summary form. A form was completed for each of the participants in the study. It contained some personal data but also provided a means of capturing initial impressions, and salient points from the informant (Miles & Huberman, 1994).
2. Document summary form. This form was used to capture and summarize documents pertinent to the study. It allowed for quick survey of information without having to review the entire document (Miles & Huberman, 1994).
3. Matrix of critical success factors. This matrix contained the critical success factors that emerged from the literature, in addition to a list of the informants. It provided a means of comparing informants' list of critical success factors to those determined from the literature.

In the final stages of the analysis, the data were organized to formulate themes, refine concepts and link them together to create a clear description or explanation of the topic (Rubin and Rubin, 1995). Through this process the researcher gained a better understanding of factors that made this partnership program work in this elementary school.

Summary

This chapter contains an explanation of the methods used to collect the research data for this study. It provides information on the criteria for selecting the study school district, as well as the process for selecting one school for the in-depth case study. A description of the population and a means of collecting the evidence were included. The interview protocol and sample questions, including the various stages of the interview process, provided what occurred during the interviews. Finally, a description of how the data were analyzed is provided.

CHAPTER IV

Presentation and Analysis of Data

This research study was conducted to determine how school/business partnerships work at the elementary school level. The factors that make an elementary school/business partnership successful were identified through an in-depth study of one case - an elementary school in a large suburban school division in Virginia. In this study the source of leadership within the partnership was also examined as well as how the principal's leadership impacted the effectiveness of the program. For the purposes of this study, a successful partnership is one in which the school and business have worked together for at least three years and have documented improvement in student achievement with programs related to the collaborative effort.

In Chapter IV, the data collected from observations, personal interviews of twelve key informants, and documents are displayed. The informants, all of whom had first hand knowledge about the school/business partnership, included administrators, teachers, parents, a guidance counselor, business volunteers, business employees, and the director of Office of Business/Industry Relations.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section contains demographic data collected from the informants. It includes information on the length of time informants had been involved with the partnership, whether they had prior or other experiences in school/business partnerships, and documentation on how they believed this partnership compared to previous partnerships in which they had been involved. These data are presented graphically and narratively.

The second section contains data on how the partnership works. This information was derived from both the review of documents obtained from the school, the business, and the administrative office for Business/Industry Relations, as well as the informants' responses to seven of the interview questions. The data are presented narratively and result from a thorough examination of documents such as minutes of meetings, contracts, grant applications, newsletters, memos, letters, newspaper articles, quarterly reports and brochures.

Section three contains information related specifically to the factors for success in establishing and maintaining a school/business partnership in the elementary school. The data in this section were derived from observations and the informants' responses to six of the interview questions. These questions were designed to cause the informants to think about why the program was working so well and to share those factors for success. A narrative and a summary table format is used to display the information. On the summary table, statements are listed on the left side of the page, on the vertical axis, with coded numbers on the right side of the page, on the horizontal axis, to indicate statements made by each informant.

Demographic Data of Informants

As part of the interview process of this study, the twelve informants shared demographic information about themselves in relation to their years of experience with the study partnership.

The years of experience in the school/business partnership ranged from two to nine years. Five of the twelve (3 school informants and 2 business informants) had been involved with the partnership since it had begun nine years earlier and were still involved to some degree. One parent informant had been involved for eight years, and another, a business volunteer, had been with the partnership for six years. An eighth informant had been involved for four years. Two informants worked with the partnership for three years, while the last two had participated for two years each. The table following this section graphically portrays the data (Table 1).

Table 1

The group of informants represented a cross section of participants. It included members who were involved with the partnership at the time of this research, as well as, members who no longer were actively involved with the partnership. Six of the informants (3 business and 3 school) served on the partnership steering committee at the time of this research. Two informants, a teacher and a parent, had been former members of the steering committee and two other informants, one teacher and one business volunteer had never been members of the steering committee. Six of the informants had held some type of leadership role either as chair of the steering committee or co-chair of one of the programs of the partnership. Two of the informants, one teacher and one business volunteer, had received an award for their outstanding contribution to the partnership.

Three of the twelve informants also had had previous experience with a school/business partnership. Of the three with prior experience, all of them thought this partnership was better than any of the partnerships they had worked with previously.

How the Partnership Works

Observations, documents, and seven of the interview questions provided a general understanding of the over all partnership. All of these sources were used to elicit information regarding the basic organizational structure of the partnership and to gather data on how the partnership worked.

Before beginning the interviews, the researcher visited the school site and observed mentors working with students, attended a steering committee meeting, and met informally with the principal. This helped the researcher start to understand some of the facets of the partnership program before beginning the actual interviews with the key informants.

Observations were also an important vehicle for gathering information during the interview process. They helped the researcher understand the culture by observing interactions of key participants and witnessing samples of partnership involvement in both the business and school environments. It was through observations during these interview sessions that the researcher discovered student artwork in various locations in the corporation. The importance of the partnership to both the school and the business became evident at these times.

After the interviews, the researcher continued to interact with the key informants. This contact often provided additional information not obtained in the interviews. For instance, the principal shared information about upcoming events involving the partnership or special projects mentors were supporting. It was during one of these informal sessions that the steering committee chair shared an additional way the mentors might begin to communicate with the teachers. They were considering using a journal that would be passed back and forth between the teachers and mentors to strengthen communications between the two groups of adults who were working with the same child but not having many opportunities to communicate.

Also, the researcher returned to the school and observed the mentors working with students after all formal interviews were completed. These observations provided opportunities to corroborate information as well as to observe the mentors with a deeper level of understanding of their role. It was during these observations that the researcher became a participatory observant. As these observations occurred, the researcher conducted informal interviews, sat in on tutoring sessions (with consent of participants), chatted with students about their "Freddies" (name fondly given to mentors) and observed interactions between mentors and mentees. These informal sessions provided a rich source of information to help develop a clearer understanding of how the partnership worked.

Seven of the interview questions were developed to gather data on the workings of the partnership. These questions were: (1) Tell me about the partnership. (2)Tell me something specifically that you can point to that is a direct result of the partnership program with Freddie Mac. (3) Who initiated the partnership or how did the program begin? (4) What is the program doing for children? (5) How is the program beneficial to you? (6) What were the steps taken in the development of the program? (7) Does the program have specific goals it is trying to accomplish and if so, how does it determine when the goals of the program have been achieved?

The informants' responses provided a general overview of the partnership. Where individual informants are quoted throughout, the citation included the informants designated number and date of the interview (see Appendix A for key).

Background

When this partnership began almost ten years ago partnerships were being established throughout the country. The study school district had established a program to facilitate partnership development between local businesses and schools. These partnerships were being created to "enhance the quality of education by involving the business community in the education process" according to a document found in the records that provided a summary of the first quarter.

In 1989 the study elementary school was located within a short driving distance of the corporation which made it easily accessible for the business volunteers to participate in the partnership. In looking at the possibility of adopting the school, it was very relevant that the elementary school qualified as a Special Needs School according to one of the business informants (#1B, 1/98). Even though the school was located in an affluent area of Northern Virginia, many of the students were from families living in a nearby low-income housing project (#2B, 1/98). According to school records summarizing the events of the first year of the partnership, the following data were collected: Over 29% of the students qualified for the free and reduced lunch program. To qualify for the program the student's family had to fall below a certain income level. Another qualifying factor in the Special Needs School category was the mobility rate of the student population. During this time the study elementary school had a mobility rate of 21% which meant that one out of five students moved during the school year. An additional qualifying factor for this elementary school was the diversity in the standardized test scores. This meant that the school had extremely high scores and extremely low scores. The final qualifier for the Special Needs designation was a high percent of minority students. In 1989, 40% of the student population was minority. The corporation had announced its desire to assist students who needed additional help academically or emotionally. Archival records provided information that helped establish this background information.

Overview of the Partnership

The school/business partnership between this large corporation (3,000 employees) and a suburban elementary school officially began in December 1989. At that time they had a formal kick-off which included signing an agreement (Appendix B) to solidify their commitment.

Prior to the kickoff, the director of the Office of Business/Industry Relations for the study school district provided training to staff members from the school and the business. The Director stated, "My role … has always been to provide support when they (school partnerships) get started so they know how to do the twelve steps (recommended by NAPE see Appendix D). I do a training workshop for the partnership team of up to six people including the principal" (#7, 3/98). This training appeared to have provided a foundation for building a strong organization. While none of the informants mentioned the training, it was apparent through observation that they were applying some of the strategies associated with NAPE (National Association of Partners in Education). Current newer members who did not receive the initial training did not seem aware of the training or the assistance the Director had provided but it was remembered by founding members and the business manager. One parent/employee stated, "It was a nice triad (school, business, director); we could talk to her and she would have ideas" (#2B, 1/98).

From the outset, a steering committee, composed of teachers, school administrators, the guidance counselor, PTA representatives, and employees of the corporation, was established to implement and oversee the partnership. The principal and human relations manager for the corporation served as advisors and active participants of the steering committee. The committee met monthly during the lunch hour of the business volunteers at the corporation. The organizational structure of the steering committee consisted of the

chairperson and people responsible for implementing the various programs or activities of the partnership (Appendix C). At the monthly meetings members would report on planned activities, review success of past activities, resolve problems, and direct future objectives.

The major thrust of the program was to provide support, tutor and mentor "at risk" students. The first year twenty-eight employees volunteered to participate. While the major focus of the partnership was a mentors program for at-risk students, the founding members soon decided they wanted the partnership to be more inclusive. So other programs, such as the pen-pal program, were established to include the general population as opposed to just "at risk" students. This decision to broaden the scope of the partnership increased the number of families who were aware of the program and helped to establish a positive image in the overall community. In the formative years, some informants sensed jealousy toward students who had mentors. One informant said, "The biggest problems have been jealously on the part of children and parents who don't have a mentor even if they weren't at risk". By deciding to give the partnership a broader base to reach a greater number of children they helped give the partnership stronger awareness and a positive image. Working only with low income at risk students could have led to a negative connotation of just working with needy children. Instead, the partnership was viewed as positive and it was recognized as an honor to have a "Freddie" (nickname for business volunteer).

The partnership had several specific programs it implemented each year. It was the responsibility of the steering committee, which included the principal, to make the decision on the various programs to be executed yearly. Each program had a chairperson or program coordinator who was responsible for the implementation of its program and who also served as a member of the steering committee. The various programs or subcommittees of the partnership were:

Mentors: The mentors program was the main focus of the partnership. Each year the business would recruit employees to go to the elementary school and work with students on an individual basis. The elementary school would provide training for the mentors and the steering committee published a newsletter on mentors. Over the years the mentors program had as many as one hundred and twenty-five mentors in the school in a year.

Career shadowing: This program was for sixth grade students only. Students would spend the day at the company where they received a tour of the facility and shadowed an employee. The business people were encouraged to emphasize the world of work and how it related to what students were learning in school, and to stress the importance of staying in school. The students were shown jobs that required college preparation and jobs that students qualified for if they finished high school. Several informants reported that this was a rich experience and an introduction to the work world in a short period of time. The organizer of the program said, "We wanted kids to be able to come to the corporate world, to see Freddie Mac and what it was, and see lots of other people at work besides their mentors. We try to make that connection… this is why you do your math … English. But also, knowing everyone will not go to college, I encourage employees to take students to the mailroom, the copy center, show them places they might be able to see themselves. The kids love this program… 'In sixth grade we get to go to Freddie Mac' its the one they look forward to throughout elementary years" (#1B, 1/98).

CEO for a Day: Each spring the partnership would conduct an essay contest for all sixth grade students in order to select a CEO of the business for the day. The winner of the contest spent the day with the Chief Executive Officer of this large corporation. "This program is to help strengthen writing skills as part of the Virginia Literacy Passport," stated the principal (#1, 1/98).

Pen Pals/E-mail Pals: This program began largely as a letter writing project between the fifth grade students and employees. Students and employees corresponded regularly as an integrated part of the language arts curriculum to strengthen students' writing skills. The program evolved to more of an e-mail correspondence. This program has been viewed as problematic by at least one of the informants. The business manager spoke of the frustration felt by some of volunteers who did not receive regular correspondence from the children as intended by the program.

Principal For A Day: The partnership always participated in this county-wide school district-sponsored program. A member of the senior management staff from the business served as principal of the day. The officer chosen was the head of the division with the most employee volunteers in the school for that year.

Junior Achievement: This was one of the newest additions to the partnership program; it was started in the 1996-97 school year. Junior Achievement, a national program designed to help students begin to make connections with the world of work, provided the curriculum for the program; the business partner provided the manpower. Volunteers from the corporation visited third grade classrooms and taught pre-planned lessons to help students relate their school experiences to the way the economy of this country works. It helped students see the relevance of their school work.

Social Skills Development: This program was being launched for the first time for the 1997-98 school year. It was designed to help students develop some of the social skills necessary to be successful in a work environment.

The steering committee also implemented a means of providing recognition to partnership participants and a way to annually evaluate the effectiveness of the program. Both the business and the elementary school recruited for new steering committee members each year as a way to bring new ideas and energy to the partnership.

Organizers of the Partnership

Since the program was in its ninth school year, many of the informants were not involved in the program at its onset and were, therefore, not sure how the program had truly begun. Several of the informants were involved in the program from its inception and responded to the question, Who initiated the partnership? (See Table 2). Initially, the principal had put an article in the school newsletter asking parents to look to their businesses to see if they wanted to start a partnership with an elementary school. That first year no one responded, according to the principal. A parent who worked at a large corporation recognized the needs of the school and began to work within the company to start a partnership with the elementary school. The parent shared information about how she had initiated the partnership. "I had read about partnerships in the newspaper and checked around the corporation, and everyone said, 'No we don't have a partnership'. So I called the community relations department, which did

all the volunteer activities for the corporation; that office was the central facilitator for community activities. I talked to the manager there and expressed to her my interest in trying to start a school/business partnership between the study school and our company. She was very enthusiastic. We talked to the principal and the school district level coordinator and that was pretty much how it got started. I think also what helped was that I was personally involved in the school" (# 1B, 1/98). This parent sought the help of a fellow co-worker who was also a parent. These two parents worked to engage the support of colleagues. In reflecting back, some informants viewed both of these parents as founders. One of the study documents (1994 Governor's Partnership In Education Awards Final Application Form) directly addressed the question:

> The elementary school was seeking a business partner; Freddie Mac was seeking to develop partnerships in the public education arena. A Freddie Mac employee who was also a parent of an elementary school student realized that the time was perfect to broach the subject of a partnership between the two. She discussed the union with the school principal and the director of community relations for the business. The principal and director met and decided to begin a school/business partnership. (1994 Governor's Partnership in Educations Award Final Application Form)

Table 2

Question: Who initiated the partnership?

	Educational Informants							Business Informants				
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**1B**	**2B**	**3B**	**4B**	**5B**
A parent who was also a business employee	x						x	x	x			
Two parents who were employees in the business		x				x						x
Not sure			x	x	x					x	x	

Specific Goals of the Partnership

Most of the informants agreed that the partnership had specific goals that it was trying to achieve. One business volunteer stated, "Our goals change as the times and needs change" (#4B, 2/98). A teacher said, "I know every year they have a series of goals they set forward and a mission statement" (#3, 2/98). According to published documents, the partnership had specific long term and short term goals with key strategies for implementing and assessing

progress. The partnership had the following mission statement and goals as reported in the partnership handbook for the mentor program.
Partnership Mission Statement:

> The Freddie Mac Foundation, employees of Freddie Mac, students and staff at Hunters Woods Elementary School will work in partnership to improve academic achievement, relationship skills, and foster positive attitudes about life-long learning.

The goals of the partnership were to:

- improve student self-esteem and confidence
- reinforce and support the educational goals of Hunters Woods Elementary
- help students feel good about themselves and their accomplishments
- improve students' social, survival and relationship skills
- provide students identification with a successful role model
- render an opportunity for Freddie Mac mentors to invest in tomorrow's leaders
- increase student motivation through positive reinforcement
- improve students' verbal communication skills
  provide mentees with models of success and success-oriented strategies
- provide an educational resource for the elementary school
- enhance a stronger school system
- promote a better prepared work force
- enhance civic cooperation
- offer Freddie Mac employees an avenue for pride through community involvement

The steering committee ensured that goals and objectives would be developed and implemented. According to the business manager, the committee actively recruited new members each year to stimulate the flow of new ideas and energize the partnership, (#5B, 3/98).

Tangible Results of the Partnership

Over the course of the nine years, there were numerous events, projects and activities that were established as a direct result of the partnership (see Table 3).

The most frequently mentioned program that was a direct result of the partnership was the mentors program. All twelve of the informants mentioned the mentors as a key aspect of the partnership.

Additionally, all of the informants mentioned funding of the Discovery Science Lab. The informants disclosed that there had been contributions from the business partner to the development of the lab. The school received a grant of almost twenty thousand dollars ($20,000) according to documents, to enhance an already existing science lab program. The funds were used to purchase equipment, materials, and devices that sparked students' interest

in science, and provided additional resources for teachers to use in their teaching of science. The Science Discovery Lab was to strengthen the science program and to introduce students to science-related careers. The information provided by informants was corroborated by the 1994 Grant Proposal to the Freddie Mac Business Foundation document and other documents analyzed by the researcher. The lab was still a part of the school's overall instructional program at the time of this research.

Several of the informants mentioned the career shadowing program as an activity specifically resulting from the partnership.

One of the parents said,

> "when my daughter was in sixth grade at the end of the year they did career shadowing day. I was really impressed with that. My daughter came home and I really felt she understood what Freddie Mac was about. I came out of it with a sense of, gee, these people work and they really work hard and she (her daughter) knew what they did. I thought that was a really good thing. And I thought that most of the children came out of the program feeling that way" (#6, 2/98).

The business informant who initiated the activity and still served as sub-committee chairperson for it at the time of this research, made this statement about the program: "We try to emphasize the work world, and how it relates to the school world." (#1B, 1/98).

The before/after-school care program was mentioned by informants. The business partner donated one hundred thousand ($100,000) dollars to be used in before and after school programs over a two year period. The program was intended to accommodate low income families in which the adults were working, attending school, or were unable to care for their children for medical reasons. The Head Start program in the school was also supported by a partnership grant and was often mentioned by informants, as well.

Several informants mentioned other projects that the business had provided funds for, such as playground equipment, books for the library, school supplies for the entire school, and other smaller projects. It was evident to the researcher that the business partner had spent large sums of money to support programs, projects and activities at the elementary school and that the informants were aware that they were direct results of that support.

Table 3
Question: Is there something specific you can point to that is a direct result of the partnership?

Tangible Results of Partnership	Educational Informants							Business Informants				
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**1B**	**2B**	**3B**	**4B**	**5B**
The mentors program	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Funding of science discovery lab	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Career Shadowing Day	x	x	x		x	x		x			x	
School Supplies for every child	x		x	x					x		x	
After school care program ($100,000 over two years)	x	x					x	x	x			
The pen-pal (e-mail) program	x				x			x			x	
The CEO for a day writing program	x	x	x		x							
Junior Achievement	x				x	x						
Head Start Kindergarten Multi-age Program	x	x						x	x			
Playground ($10,000)	x				x							
Books for library	x										x	

Intangible Results of the Partnership

All of the informants indicated their belief that the partnership was contributing to the well being of children in ways that were very difficult to measure. One of the founding volunteers said, "It's hard to quantify the true value of the partnership. I know the intangibles are there just from being a mentor myself" (#2B, 1/98). The informants shared how they felt the partnership was impacting children by discussing how children were better off as a result of the partnership. These data were grouped to show the responses (See Table 4).

Almost all of the informants felt that the mentors program helped to enhance the self esteem of the students. A summary of the sentiment expressed by most informants was that the children felt good about themselves when they knew someone cared enough to come and visit and talk with them on a regular basis. One teacher said, "I guess the basic thing it is doing for children is showing them that there's someone out there who cares. They see that all these business people actually take time to come and see them. They (children) don't have a lot of positive relationships in their life and when someone comes in every week, day-in and day-out, …its a positive experience. The more experiences they have with success, their self-esteem goes up tremendously" (#3, 1/98).

Several of the informants believed it helped the students do better with their school work to have a mentor who also tutored or showed interest in their school work. The principal made this statement: "When it comes to business people they like to see results. So what's the bottom line? What's the end result? What we found is that our kids did do better in school academically, and they did better in school socially and behaviorally. Our test scores have only been going up and up over the years since the partnership. Now there are a lot of other factors, so it is hard to tease out that because a mentor comes in once a week, test scores increase but the children are doing better" (#1, 12/98).

That mentors provided a positive role model was stated by some of the informants. One of the parent informants made this statement, "I think it gives the children an adult they can trust and also an adult who is successful. I think that is a very big plus" (# 6, 2/98). One of the mentors stated, "As much as you may not see your influence, it does make a difference (to the children) having an adult friend who spends time with them" (#4B, 2/98).

The principal felt that the partnership also helped parents feel more connected to the school because parents could see the positive impact the partnership was having on their children. She said that she often got unsolicited positive comments related to the partnership. The principal stated, "That is something that is hard to measure but when we gave our parent surveys we came up very high" (#1, 1/98).

All of the children received school supplies at the beginning of the school year. The guidance counselor felt that having materials necessary to do their school work would help the students feel better prepared for school (#4, 2/98).

Table 4

Question: What is the partnership doing for children or in what ways are children better off as a result of the partnership?

	Educational Informants							**Business Informants**				
Intangible Results of Partnership	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**1B**	**2B**	**3B**	**4B**	**5B**
*Improve self-esteem of students	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
*Help students perform better in school academically and socially	x	x	x		x	x		x		x	x	x
Help students learn about the world of work and bring relevance to school	x	x	x		x	x		x			x	
Help students be prepared for school by providing supplies	x	x		x					x		x	
Provide a positive role model	x	x	x			x				x		
Provide another support system for children			x		x	x			x			
Improve the school environment	x							x				

*Refers to mentors program for “at risk” students only.

Data Related to Success Factors

Several of the interview questions were designed specifically to provide an understanding of the factors necessary for having a successful school/ business partnership. The four questions were: (1) To what would you attribute the success of the partnership? (2) To what would you attribute its (partnership) longevity? (3) What are the factors that contribute to maintaining a successful partnership? (4) Were there any problems you had to overcome to be successful? If so, how did you resolve them? (5) Is there anything else I should know to fully understand the factors necessary for making a school/business partnership work successfully? and (6) What advice would you offer to other schools and communities that want to build a successful elementary school/business partnership? The data collected from the six interview questions were graphed under each question and then combined as themes emerged.

While all of the informants responded in the affirmative that the school/business partnership was very successful, several themes emerged from the responses of the informants to the questions related to factors for success. These emerging themes or factors were: strong steering committee, consistent open and clear communication, leadership role of the principal, adequate human and financial resources, top level leadership in the business, direct involvement with students, structured and organized format, and dedicated school staff and business volunteers.

Strong Steering Committee

Having a very strong steering committee that met monthly, reported on the status of the various sub-committees, discussed and resolved concerns and issues, and provided frequent communication between the school and business was a response mentioned to some degree by eight of the twelve informants. When asked about the factors for success, the principal stated, "There are a couple of factors, but one is a very strong steering committee. Each person has one job. They report to us each month what they are doing" (#1, 1/98). The classroom teacher said, "So much coordination goes on between those that coordinate from the business side and those coming from the administration of the school" (#2, 1/98). The work of the people who are the administrators of the program was credited with the longevity of the program. One of the business volunteers made this comment, "The program has lasted because of those involved in the administration part of the partnership … the people who keep it going" (#3B, 2/98).

Consistent Open and Clear Communication

Several informants believed that communicating consistently was a key factor to maintaining a successful partnership. The assistant principal commented, "Communication is extremely important. Also, the consistency of the communication I certainly feel that ….is a factor for maintaining a school/business partnership" (#5, 2/98). One of the business informants who was current chairperson for the steering committee at the time of this research consistently spoke of the importance of communications. The Director of the Office of Business and Industry Relations stated, "There is no doubt in my mind that communication is one of the strongest factors. If you don't have a regular meeting time set aside where you're talking about what you're doing in your partnership, how it's going, what needs to be changed, what's going well …I don't think it's going to last. I think it's the open communication between the two" (#7, 3/98). The business employee who was currently the steering committee chairperson stated, "good communication - we have a steering committee that meets once a month (#4B, 2/98)."

Leadership Role of the Principal

The leadership role of the principal was another consistent theme that several informants mentioned when discussing the success of the partnership. The involvement of the principal, who was described as "energetic" and "enthusiastic," was mentioned as a success factor by many of the informants. "I think a lot of it has to do with the principal herself, replied one informant. "Linda is very energetic and very dynamic," she continued (#7, 3/98).

Another informant, one of the business volunteers and a founding parent, stated, “The principal is one of those big picture people - she’s an idea person and she makes things happen. I was energized by her enthusiasm” (#1B, 1/98). The manager of community relations for the business made this statement, “I would credit the principal for creating a culture within the school that makes our mentors and Junior Achievement volunteers and all of the people who go over there feel extremely welcome, extremely appreciated, needed, and used effectively” (#5B, 3/98).

Adequate Human and Financial Resources

That the business partner provided adequate resources, people and funds, to make the partnership successful was mentioned by some of the informants. One of the business volunteers summarized it by saying, “to be successful, the school needs to partner with a company that is relatively stable; companies going through difficult economic times don’t have time to do a partnership; so there’s money, and there is having people who have time to do the partnership because they are part of a stable company” (#2B, 1/98). One of the teachers stated that one reason the partnership is successful is, “the head of the company is very much into giving, but it’s really the people" (#2, 1/98). The counselor responded, “Being able to give money helps; I think that’s part of the success too" (#4, 2/98).

Senior Management and Corporate Support

Another theme that emerged was the importance of the support and encouragement from top leadership in the business and a feeling that this was a priority for the company. It was mentioned as a success factor by five of the informants. One of the business employees who was a school parent initially said, “I know our chairman truly believes in helping children at risk. Now that’s probably another key component for success … to have someone at the top who thinks it (the partnership) is crucial" (#2B, 1/98). The manager of community relations for the corporation spoke of a culture in the work environment supportive of community involvement. She said, “I would attribute the success to our corporate culture at Freddie Mac. Our employee volunteer programs are supported by senior management” (#5B, 3/98).

Being Directly Involved with Students

Being directly involved with the students and establishing meaningful relationship or working and bonding with the students was mentioned as a success factor. Almost all of the business informants and several of the educational ones mentioned the importance of working with students. The employee who chaired the steering committee stated, “I think the people of Freddie Mac almost get more out of it than the children do because we enjoy it so much. I mean if you’ve had a really bad day at work or you’re feeling really stressed, and you go over with your little mentee you always leave feeling so much better. I mean just a look from them as you walk in the door makes the rest of the day look a lot less bleak”(#4B, 2/98). The counselor said, “I think the general philosophy is to be able to create a significant bond with an adult who cares. So far I’ve been here for three years and it’s been very successful” (#4, 2/98).

Structured and Organized Format

The organization of the partnership programs was given as a success factor by some of the informants. One of the informants from the school, when responding to naming the success factors said, "It seems so organized and very well coordinated and I think that's part of the success too" (#4, 2/98). One of the original business volunteers/founding parent said, "I structured the steering committee meetings…really organized the program in its early years … gave it a strong foundation. I feel that is probably my biggest contribution to the steering committee … to the partnership" (#2B, 1/98). One of the mentors also commented on the organizational structure indicating that he also felt that being well-run and organized helped the program succeed (#3B, 2/98).

Dedicated School Staff and Business Volunteers

The longevity of the program was attributed to a strong commitment from both the school and the business. The value of mutual commitment was reiterated by several school informants and business informants. This comment was made by one of the teacher informants: "I think the longevity of the partnership is attributed to the quality of the people involved from both ends (school and business); it is a true partnership" (#3, 1/98). The principal reinforced that statement with this comment, "I think it's been a commitment from my part, from the school's part and from the company's part. If any one of those things falls apart, I think you would see problems". One of the parent informants (#6, 2/98) said, "Both sides of the partnership see the need and both sides have a desire to fulfill that need." One of the teachers commented, "We have dedicated people on both sides; that's what makes the partnership successful" (#2, 1/98).

Three of the informants spoke of the support of the principal and staff. The manager of community relations for the business said, "The volunteers are energized by the school, the children, the teachers and the support of senior staff and faculty" (#5B, 3/98).

Two of the informants referred to the commitment of the business as a factor attributed to the longevity of the program. The director of the Office of Business/Industry Relations stated, "I think there is a lot of commitment from the company. I believe that the company and the CEO has a passion for education, so I think that makes a big difference. Even in their busiest times, they make sure they follow through on everything they commit to that school"(#7, 3/98).

Shared Vision and Goals

Having a shared vision was evident as the researcher interacted with the informants. The principal spoke of needing help to meet the needs of "at risk"students and the business informants spoke of the commitment of the CEO to work with "at risk" students as a means of making a contribution to the community. The founding parent/business volunteer summed it up this way, "We said to the principal we want to work with children who are 'at risk' and she agreed with that. She was very concerned about these children and saw this as a tremendous resource. So, her vision and our vision coalesced very nicely" (#1B, 1/98).

The importance of having goals was mentioned by some informants. One informant made this statement, “I think written goals tied to the school’s plan is something else that maintains a partnership. That way you get buy in from the teachers, and everyone involved in the school and the business can begin to see some accountability about why the partnership is successful" (#7, 3/98). Although, the informants seemed to understand the essence of the goals, very few could actually discuss them.

Mutually Beneficial

The partnership was established in a manner that supported the concept of school/business partnerships being mutually beneficial. The founding parent made this statement, “It shouldn’t be that the corporation comes in and does everything for you, and you just sit back and receive. First of all, you don’t get the best ideas and the best programs that way; but, also after a while as a corporation you feel like you’re just giving, giving, giving and not getting anything back” (#1B, 1998).

Based on the partnership agreement, both the school and the business were expected to make contributions to the partnership thus ensuring the partnership was mutually beneficial. Each year a partnership agreement was signed by the principal and by management from the business. This agreement publicly declared what each of the partners would do for the other. See Appendix B for the partnership agreement.

The agreement depicted the tangible benefits of the partnerships but most informants spoke of intrinsic rewards. It was obvious from talking to the informants that both sides received benefits from the partnership. Both the school and the business have been enriched by the experiences they have shared. One mentor made these statements, “It’s beneficial that I learn to interact with children. I believe children are very important to our community. I think its beneficial to know that I’m doing something good for the community. I did not do a lot of community service when I was younger, and as I’ve gotten older I’ve come to realize the importance of it. And I’m thankful this program is offered by my employer. The fact that I can do volunteering on work time, is quite a benefit. I think it’s just a good thing and I feel it in my heart” (#3B, 1/98).

Recognition of Volunteers

Three of the informants spoke of the importance of providing recognition to the volunteers for their work in the partnership. The recognition helped make the volunteers feel appreciated, they said. The 1994 Governor’s Partnerships in Education Awards Final Application Form, part of the documents collected in the data gathering stage, contained this information about recognition of volunteers. The steering committee implemented several mechanisms for formal recognition of volunteers and the partnership programs. A recognition luncheon was provided each year for all school staff and partnership volunteers. A pre-selected business volunteer and school staff member received an award for their contribution to the partnership and gifts, such as a tote bag, were provided to all attendees. A teacher who received an award made this statement, “It was nice to be recognized, as a teacher of the year, which I was nominated for by one of my students that I mentored in the mentor program. She

e-mailed a letter recommending me. It was just a wonderful thing to be recognized by the children, the mentors, and even my peers" (#3, 1/98). Additionally, the CEO sent thank you letters to all volunteers.

The business should also receive recognition according to the Director of Business/Industry Relations. "Lots of people say to me, the company just wants publicity out of this and they don't really care. I think that's wrong. I think companies do care. I believe their moral values are right on target with wanting to do something to help kids be prepared….for work. They look at this as a contribution to society, in terms of helping get kids ready. So, I think the publicity angle is good, because we do need to do that for the company, they do need the recognition" (#7, 3/98). "Linda's school does that well. They get the local newspaper out. They are persistent because they understand how important it is" (#7, 3/98).

Annual Evaluation of Partnership

Several informants spoke of the importance of annually evaluating the partnership. In summary, the business manager made the statement that the partnership was evaluated and assessed by the participants: the children, the volunteers, the staff. The feedback from surveys was used to better accommodate the needs and desires of the volunteers and to strengthen the activities and programs of the partnership (#5, 3/98). Another informant commented, "We evaluate and assess each program, and say what worked and what didn't work. We then make decisions, if we fine tune this … then next time we can do this or that "(#5, 1/98). The principal also spoke of the value of evaluating the partnership. Referring to the surveys she stated, "whatever information we receive we use that in our planning for the next year. Just a little informal piece of paper on everybody's table when they come in to the end of the year luncheon and we get ideas…what were the strengthens of the program? What would you suggest for next year?" (#1, 1/98).

The annual evaluation helped the partnership determine if it had achieved it's goals. "If you have measurable goals and objectives, it's real easy to see if you have accomplished your goals," stated the director (#7, 3/98).

Table 5
What are the factors for a successful partnership?

	Educational Informants							**Business Informants**				
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**1B**	**2B**	**3B**	**4B**	**5B**
Strong steering committee	x	x		x	x			x			x	x
Consistent, open and clear communication	x	x	x		x		x			x	x	
Leadership role of principal	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				x
Senior management and supportive corporate culture	x	x					x	x	x			x
Resources: human and financial	x	x	x	x				x	x			x
Being directly involved with students		x	x	x	x	x		x	x		x	
Structure and organization				x				x	x			
Dedicated school staff and business volunteers	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Shared vision and goals						x	x	x			x	
Mutually beneficial program		x		x					x	x	x	
Recognition for volunteers	x		x									x
Evaluations and assessments	x				x		x					

Summary of Findings

This research study addressed two main questions: how does a school/business partnership work in an elementary school and what were the factors for success? In addition there were several secondary questions that were also addressed:

Who initiated the school/business partnership?

The timing was right for the start of a school/business partnership. The principal had requested parents to ask their employers if they were interested in starting a partnership. The CEO of the company had expressed an interest in having the philanthropic endeavors of the company focus on "at risk" students. A business employee who was also a parent in the elementary school brought the two groups together by working with the corporate director of community relations, the school principal and the director of the office of Business/Industry Relations.

How does the partnership work?

The school business partnership between a large corporation and an elementary school had an official kick-off in December, 1989 at which time the corporation and the elementary school made public commitments to begin to work together in a partnership. Implementation of the program began in January, 1990.

District level support was provided to the partnership by the Director of Office of Business/Industry Relations. She provided training on how to establish a successful partnership and served as a resource to the organizers.

A steering committee composed of volunteers from the business and members from the elementary school was formed to implement the programs and activities of the partnership. The committee meetings were structured to provide maximum productivity and were held during the lunch hour of the business employees.

The major focus of the partnership was the mentors program for "at-risk" students, which the school had identified as an area needing support because of such a large population of "at risk" students. The response from the business was very positive. They began that first year with twenty-eight mentor volunteers and eventually increased to over one hundred mentors. Training of the mentors on how to work with students was provided by the school staff.

From the outset the organizers wanted to make the partnership reach as many students as possible. Several other aspects of the partnership were organized to broaden the scope of the partnership. A pen-pal program, a CEO For A Day essay contest and a classroom presenters group were all established the first year to work with as many students as possible. This philosophy of developing programs to meet the needs of all students and the same basic organizational structure were still evident at the time of this study.

What are the specific goals of the program?

The partnership had specific goals it implemented each year. The steering committee developed and implemented goals based on the current needs of the school population. The basic premise of the program was based on the established mission statement and goals. The partnership had the following mission statement and goals:

> The Freddie Mac Foundation, employees of Freddie Mac, students and staff of the study Elementary School will work in partnership to improve academic achievement, relationship skills, and foster positive attitudes about life-long learning. The goals of the partnership were to: 1) to improve student self-esteem and confidence; 2) to reinforce and support the educational goals of the elementary school; 3) to help students feel good about themselves and their accomplishments; 4) to improve students' survival and relationship skills; 5) to provide students; 6) to provide identification with a successful role model; 7) to render an opportunity for Freddie Mac mentors to invest in tomorrow's leaders; 8) to increase student motivation through positive reinforcement; 9) to improve students' verbal communication skills; 10) to provide mentees with models of success and success-oriented strategies; 11) to provide an educational resource for the elementary school; 12) to enhance a stronger school system; 13) to promote a better prepared work force; 13) to enhance civic cooperation; and 14) to offer Freddie Mac employees an avenue for pride through community involvement.

The steering committee ensured that goals and objectives were developed and implemented. The committee actively recruited new members each year to stimulate the flow of energy and ideas.

What are the factors for success of the school/business partnership in the elementary school?

Several themes emerged as factors of success for a school/business partnership in an elementary school. The informants attributed the success of the partnership to: (1) Having a strong steering committee that met on a regular basis; (2) Communicating consistently where group members and encouraging members to express themselves openly; (3) Having the principal actively participate in the partnership; (4) Securing adequate human and financial resources; (5) Gaining support from top level leadership in the business; (6) Providing opportunities for volunteers to work directly with the students; (7) Having the partnership well organized and structured for efficiency; 8) Obtaining committed and dedicated people in both the school and the business; (9) Sharing a vision with identified goals; (10) Giving recognition to volunteers, school staff and the corporation; and (11) Evaluating the partnership on a regular basis.

CHAPTER V

Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction

This chapter presents the conclusions from the study as they relate to the research questions and the literature. Implications for those interested in forming school/business partnerships are provided. This chapter culminates with recommendations for further study.

The purpose of this study was to determine how school/business partnerships work in the elementary school through a single case study approach. Specifically, the factors that make an elementary school/business partnership successful were identified through the study of one case - an elementary school in a large suburban school division in Virginia. In this study, the source of leadership within the partnership was also examined as well as how the principal's leadership impacted the effectiveness of the program. For the purposes of this study, a successful partnership was one in which the school and business had worked together for at least three years and had documented improvement in student achievement during the partnership years.

The results of this study are meant to provide information for school and/or business leaders interested in forming school/business partnerships. This study was undertaken to identify factors necessary to make a school/business partnership work in an elementary school; to provide information on how to establish, implement, and maintain a school/business partnership in an elementary school at a time when partnerships are being viewed as essential to the success of school; to help provide information for those willing to contribute funds for partnership programs as well as practitioners; to provide an example of a program that can be replicated; to provide a body of knowledge on elementary school partnerships currently not available.

Conclusions Related to Literature

Several factors for success in a school/business partnership were identified in the literature review of this study. This section contains a comparison of the success factors that appeared in the literature review with the factors for success that emerged from the interviews with the informants. Most of the findings from this study are consistent with factors that emerged from the literature review.

Top level leadership emerged as an important factor for success in a school/business partnership in the literature (Davies, 1996; Anthony, 1992; Grobe, 1993; Kalish, 1987; Otterbourg, 1986) and its importance was corroborated by the data collected from the informants. According to Grobe (1993), most partnerships that are stable and have impact receive sustained attention from the leaders. The informants in this study emphasized the importance of the elementary principal being personally and actively involved with the partnership. The involvement of the CEO was considered important but did not require hands-on involvement, but rather it required the leader to help establish a corporate culture that encouraged community service. Based on the findings from this study, successful

school/business partnerships at the elementary school level included leadership from the school administrator and the CEO of the corporation.

Having **shared vision and goals** surfaced in the literature (Atelia & Blank, 1991; Danzberger, Bodinger-deUriarte, Clark, 1996; Hopkins, 1995; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; NEA, 1991; Powe, 1996; Schwartz, 1990; Stead, 1994). and from the informants as being key to a successful partnership. "A collaborative group must develop a shared vision either when the collaboration is first planned, or just as it begins to function" (Mattessich & Monsey, 1992, p. 29). Danzbeger, Bodinger-deUriarte, Clark, (1996), concluded that "a shared vision and deep commitment among partners can overcome weaknesses in program design and implementation" (p.2). While only a few informants actually used the terms "shared vision" it was evidenced in their conversations and actions. The volunteers and the staff were committed to helping the "at risk" population at the elementary school. In conclusion, it appeared that a shared vision gave the partnership a common cause and provided direction that helped it develop and reach its goals.

Effective communication emerged as a factor for success in collaborative programs throughout the literature and was also a consistent theme from the informants. Partnerships need to have an effective means of keeping participants informed (Kalish, 1987; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; Tushnet, 1993; Paugh, 1995; Danzberger, Bodinger-deUriarte, Clark, 1996). "Successful educational partnerships communicated with all participants and the community after they have been organized. Early communications should focus on the reason for the partnership, including the problems it is designed to address "(Tushnet, 1993 p.1). It was evident that this partnership had learned to leverage the power of communication. It recognized the importance of keeping partnership participants and the community informed. The principal shared success stories and information about partnership activities to groups of parents and students at various school gatherings. The school and the business included information about the partnership in their respective newsletters and a separate quarterly newsletter was published about the partnership. Also, the steering committee established telephone trees, held meetings at regularly scheduled times, and developed relationships that allowed them to pick up the phone and call if necessary. All of these activities were an integral part of the partnership program because the steering committee recognized that this level of communication was a primary key to successfully implementing and maintaining the partnership. Therefore, it is concluded that when the school and business partners communicated regularly with their participants and their communities the school/business partnership at the elementary level was successful.

The importance of having **human and financial resources** was seen as an important factor by the informants and had also been identified in the literature (Grobe, 1993; Danzberger, Bodinger-deUriarte, Clark, 1996; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; Tushnet, 1993) as being essential. However, the critical factor expressed by the informants in this partnership was the capacity of the corporation to address the identified need of providing individual support to "at risk" students. In other words, does this corporation have enough human resources to meet the needs of the partnership? Because of the size of the company and its financial stability, enormous resources were available to the study partnership. This factor also contributed to the longevity of the partnership. With such a large employee base to choose

from, the partnership continued to bring in new members with fresh ideas and energy each year. In fact, the steering committee would recruit twice a year to ensure this revitalization occurred. Based on these findings, it is concluded that partnerships at the elementary level require adequate human and or financial resources to develop and sustain a successful partnership program.

The importance of **organizational structure and processes** was identified in the literature and recognized by the informants as significant to the success of the partnership. Successful partnerships have clearly defined operating procedures as well as clearly articulated definitions of roles and responsibilities of the various collaborators (Harrison, 1991; Grobe, 1993; Paugh, 1995; Danzberger, Bodinger-deUriarte, Clark, 1996). "Process/structure refers to the management, decision-making, and operational systems of a collaborative effort" (Mattessich & Monsey, 1992, p. 22). Tushnet (1993) suggested that in successful educational partnerships decision-making procedures actually advance the partnership as well as solve problems. In the study partnership the informants indicated that they were part of a well run organization. Project or program coordinators were responsible for ensuring that their program was successful. They, in turn, encouraged co-workers to get involved to aid in the development and implementation of their particular program. This type of organizational structure provided for layers of leadership which empowered employees and fostered ongoing involvement and commitment. In summary, identified roles and responsibilities of the partners and defined operational procedures underpin successful elementary school/business partnerships.

At the core of successful partnerships is the intrinsic feeling of making a meaningful contribution. The literature identified participation in **meaningful projects** as a factor for success (Kalish, 1987; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; Paugh, 1995; Tushnet, 1993). The informants did not use that terminology, **meaningful projects**, but rather spoke of the reward of working with children and the feeling of helping someone and an opportunity to contribute to the community. Therefore, it appeared that projects must be tied to the deeper sense of personal reward and value to be meaningful.

The term "partnership" embodies the concept of joint interest or mutual benefit. It was therefore not surprising that **mutually beneficial programs** was identified in the literature (Burke, 1986; Coble, 1988; Gray, 1989; Lacey, 1983; Merenda, 1989; Melaville & Blank, 1991) as a success factor. School/business partnerships should provide real benefits to both the school and the business according to several authors and practitioners (Burke, 1986; Coble, 1988; Gray, 1989; Lacey, 1983; Merenda, 1989; Melaville & Blank, 1991). The most successful partnerships appear to be those in which all participating partners receive some benefit from the relationship (Otterbourg, 1986). Many programs now are deemed successful only if they are mutually beneficial (Hopkins, 1995; Mann, 1984; McCormick, 1984; Schwartz, 1990). It was also evident from this study that the informants recognized that the study partnership was mutually beneficial and that that was one of the contributing factors to their success. It is therefore concluded that, both partners need to experience benefits from the partnership.

Strategic Planning and Evaluation was recognized by several authors as being critical to the success of a partnership program. Strategic planning principles should be implemented

in partnership programs (Grobe, 1993). It is important to develop an implementation plan that includes a process for monitoring ongoing progress; determining if goals have been reached; and assessing program effectiveness (Grobe, 1993; Lacey, 1983; Otterbourg, 1986). A well designed evaluation system is also required to determine whether students are benefitting from the program (Tushnet, 1993; Otterbourg, 1986). Based on the findings from this study, evaluations can be used to help make decisions about the partnership and provide input to the strategic planning phase of the partnership.

Broad and Growing Involvement was a success factor identified in the literature (Atelia & Blank, 1991, 1991; Grobe, 1993; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; Paugh, 1995) that was not identified by the informants. Based on the literature, it strengthens a partnership to have a diverse organization that is reflective of the school community it serves. When appropriate, the school/business partnership should include teachers, parents, students, business representatives and administrators in significant ways (Grobe, 1993). This factor was not mentioned by any of the informants as a factor for success. It was however, observed by the researcher as a strategy being utilized by the leadership of the partnership. The members of the steering committee represented a broad spectrum of individuals. As recommended in the literature, it included principals, teachers, guidance counselors, business volunteers from various departments within the corporation and, most recently, student members. This kind of steering committee make-up is consistent with the findings in the literature. The literature review also included information on the importance of having the make-up of the partnership reflect the community it serves. According to Mattessich & Monsey (1992), the collaborative group should include representatives from each segment of the community who will be affected by its activities. This was not evidenced in the leadership team of the partnership. The steering committee did not reflect the diversity of the community it served. There were no minority adult members on the steering committee. One of the two students was a minority. The make-up of the partnership volunteers did include a more diverse group. Several of the mentors and the pen-pal volunteers were minorities and added diversity to the partnership. In conclusion, membership diversity of the steering committee appeared to be related to successful school/business partnerships at the elementary level.

In general, the findings from these data are consistent with the information found in the literature review. Evidence of the success factors identified in the literature were also found existing in this elementary school/business partnership. The informants recognized three additional factors that they felt contributed to the success of the study school/business partnership that were not highlighted in the literature review as consistently emerging factors. The three additional factors were: obtaining committed and dedicated school staff and business volunteers, giving recognition to volunteers, school staff, and the corporation, and having a strong steering committee that met on a regular basis.

The participants in this study consistently mentioned the importance of **having committed and dedicated people** in a partnership for it to be successful. This theme emerged in all of the interview questions related to success factors. The informants spoke of the commitment to the success of the partnership demonstrated by both the business volunteers and the school staff. In summary, select people to participate who are willing to make a real

personal investment in the partnership programs and who have a strong sense of commitment to the success of the partnership.

Another factor that several informants thought contributed to the success of the partnership focused on the **recognition given to partnership participants and the corporation**. The partnership had an extensive program in place to formally recognize the volunteers and school staff who supported the program. Additionally, the school sought and received widespread recognition for the business for its contributions to the school and children. The corporation received local, state, and national recognition for contributions made to the school and community. It appeared that recognition enhanced Volunteerism and corporate support for participation in the partnership and therefore contributed to the success of the elementary school/business partnership.

The third area identified by the informants as a success factor was **a strong steering** committee. The informants consistently spoke of the work of the steering committee as being responsible for the ongoing success of the partnership. However, the term 'steering committee' did not fully describe the scope and intensity of its involvement. Rather than steering committee, the researcher has chosen to use a broader term to describe the work and responsibilities of this group and refer to it as **integrated team leadership.** The team was key to the ongoing success of the partnership. They provided leadership, reset goals, and served as a catalyst for recruiting new members. From the success of this strategy it seemed evident that, by using a team approach to manage and lead the partnership, a group can sustain and expand a school/business partnership.

While these three latter factors were not highlighted in the studies identified in the literature review, it is noteworthy to state that these factors, except having dedicated people, were taught as part of the training program provided by the Director of Business/Industry Relations for the study school district. As stated earlier, training during the formative stages of the partnership development was part of the process recommended for new school/business partnership in this school district. The Director used the NAPE (National Association of Partnerships in Education) 12 step model as the training program (see Appendix D).

The training that was provided to the partnership participants was not identified as a factor for success by the informants, or as a factor for success in the literature review. However, it is conceivable that the training provided by the study school district played a significant role in the success of this elementary school partnership. The strategies that were taught in the training were observed in the practices of the partnership.

All of the above factors for success were identified in the elementary school/business partnership examined in this case study, however, one can not conclude that all of the identified factors are necessary to establish and sustain a successful school/ business partnership in the elementary school. That determination suggests further study.

Table 6
Success Factors Related to Literature

Success factors from literature	Success factors from informants
Top level leadership and support (Davies, 1996; Blake, 1993; Anthony, 1992; Grobe, 1993; Kalish, 1987; Otterbourg, 1986)	Leadership role of principal and senior management support and corporate culture supportive of community involvement
Shared visions and goals (Atelia & Blank, 1991, 1991; Danzberger, Bodinger-deUriate, Clarke, 1996; Hopkins, 1995; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; NEA, 1991; Powe, 1996; Schwartz, 1990; Stead, 1994)	Shared vision and goals
Adequate human and financial resources (Grobe, 1993; Danzberger, Bodinger-deUriate, Clarke, 1996; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; Tushnet, 1993)	Adequate human and financial resources
Mutually beneficial program (Burke, 1986; Coble, 1988; Gray, 1989; Lacey, 1983; Merenda, 1989; Melaville & Blank, 1991)	Mutually beneficial
Effective communication (Kalish, 1987; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; Paugh, 1995; Danzberger, Bodinger-deUriate, Clarke, 1996; Tushnet, 1993)	Consistent, open and clear communication
Organizational structure and processes (Harrison, 1991; Grobe, 1993; Paugh, 1995; Danzberger, Bodinger-deUriate, Clarke, 1996)	Structured and organized partnership
Meaningful projects (Kalish, 1987; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; Paugh, 1995; Tushnet, 1993)	Direct involvement with students
Strategic planning and evaluation (Grobe, 1993; Lacey, 1983; Otterbourg, 1986)	Annual evaluation of partnership
Broad and growing involvement (Atelia & Blank, 1991, 1991; Grobe, 1993; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; Paugh, 1995)	
	Dedicated school staff and business volunteers
	Recognition of participants and corporation
	Integrated team leadership

Implications For Practice

The data were collected from interviews of key informants and from a thorough review of documents of archival material such as minutes of meetings, quarterly reports, brochures, handbooks, newsletters, videos, and newspaper articles. These implications were written to provide directions for those who may choose to participate in a school/business partnership in an elementary school. They were written based on the data collected in the study elementary school/business partnership. While some of the implications are written in a definitive manner it is not intended that all of the identified factors must exist to have a successful school/business partnership but rather, that these are the practices that were reported to have contributed to the success of the partnership examined in this case study. The following factors have implications for practice and were drawn from the findings and conclusions of this study:

- The principal was visible and actively involved in the partnership for the partnership to be successful and last for several years.
- A strong steering committee met regularly to discuss matters and concerns of the partnership is important to the success of the partnership. The committee met at least monthly on a consistent day and time. The meetings had a designated start and end time. A one hour meeting at lunch time on the premises of the corporation worked well for business and the school staff. An established agenda prepared prior to meeting contributed to the effectiveness of the meeting.
- Communications between the business and school were open and honest. The steering committee established vehicles for formal and informal communication. When possible, the telephone numbers and e-mail addresses were made available to participants to allow for informal communication. The school and business publicized activities of the partnership in their communication vehicles.
- The corporation was selected based on leadership's willingness to participate and availability of human and financial resources to support the programs or activities of the partnership.
- Partnership activities were structured in a way that provided volunteers a variety of opportunities to work directly with students at various levels of participation. Some volunteers selected activities that required weekly involvement and personal contact with students, while others chose weekly involvement with the student via E-mail, telephone, or other indirect contact. Yet, others selected an activity that only required a one day commitment annually. The availability of this kind of variety allowed for broader levels of participation and a more expansive program.
- Top level management from the business supported the partnership and established a corporate culture that was supportive of community involvement. The CEO or other top management was always present at the anniversary kick-off to sign the partnership agreement. Additional visibility included having a member of the corporate leadership team participate in the "principal for a day" activity, attend the recognition events, and periodically place messages in the newsletter.

- The school and the business sought involvement with an organization that was interested in addressing similar issues.

- The partnership was well-organized. Programs were well planned, objectives clearly established and program team leaders and members had defined roles.
- Recognition of volunteers, school staff, and the corporation was provided in the program to strengthen participation. Formal recognition events were planned as part of the partnership's annual programing. Activities such as "volunteer of the year" and "teacher most committed to the partnership goals" helped add recognition and camaraderie to the overall program.
- The partnership was evaluated on a regular basis to make decisions about the direction of the partnership. The plans for the next year's program was based on the feedback collected from the partnership participants. At the end of the year, surveys were given to various populations of the partnership: students, business participants, and school staff to get feedback about the program. This information, combined with ongoing informal assessments made at the steering committee meetings, was used to aid in establishing goals and objectives for the following year.

Recommendations for Further Study

Additional study in the area of school/business partnerships is recommended based on the findings and conclusions determined from this case study of an elementary school's partnership with a large corporation. The following recommendations are made for further study:

- A case study of an elementary school partnership that includes input from the students and parents who are recipients of the services could be compared with the results of this study.
- A quantitative study of other successful elementary school partnerships that have achieved state and/or national awards should be conducted to determine and prioritize critical success factors.
- Additional study on elementary school/business partnerships dealing with a different type of partnership such as the school-to-work model should be conducted.
- Because very few studies have examined the school/business partnership in the elementary school, additional studies replicating this study should be completed.

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APPENDIX A

CODE LIST OF KEY INFORMANTS

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CODE LIST OF KEY INFORMANTS

Assigned Number	Position	Date of Interview	# of Years with Partnership
**1	Principal	1/98	9
• 2	Teacher	1/98	9
3	Teacher	1/98	2
*4	Guidance counselor	2/98	3
*5	Assistant principal	2/98	2
• 6	Parent	2/98	8
7	Director of Office of Business/Industry Relations	3/98	9
• *1B	Founding Parent/Business Volunteer	1/98	9
• 2B	Former Parent, Business Volunteer	1/98	9
3B	Business Volunteer	1/98	3
**4B	Business Volunteer	2/98	6
*5B	Business Manager of Community Relations	3/98	4

* current members of steering committee
** chairs steering committee
• past member and/or past chair of steering committee

APPENDIX B
SAMPLES OF PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS

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SAMPLES OF PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
FREDDIE MAC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT
FIRST ANNIVERSARY

On this first day of March 1991,
School and the employees of Freddie Mac agree to continue their successful school/business partnership. Together we can better our community by improving academic achievement, exploring the world of ideas and fostering positive attitudes about learning. We will continue to provide a bond of understanding and friendship between Hunters Woods teachers, students and Freddie Mac employees.

A. Freddie Mac will:

(1) continue to provide the students with mentors and tutorial assistance.

(2) continue to provide classroom enrichment activities such as:

- o presenting a subject related to the volunteer's work which will serve to assist the students in learning about the work world and career goals;
- o assisting teachers in presenting a particular curriculum, such as a computer lesson; and/or
- o presenting a subject which is related to a particular hobby, talent or activity of interest. Example: teaching the students the different parts of a bicycle and how to change a bicycle tire; providing a cooking class; demonstrating how to make a holiday decoration; designing and printing holiday greeting cards on the computer; showing slides and discussing a vacation.

(4) provide staff development seminars.

B. Hunters Woods will:

(1) provide student art and writing for display.

(2) provide student choral/drama presentations.

(3) provide classes for Freddie Mac on trends in education, parenting and special education.

(5) provide students' published writing for Freddie Mac offices.

The partnership will include, but is not limited to, the projects listed in items A and B above. The Steering Committee will conduct periodic reviews and evaluate the program each year to determine the feasibility of continuing the program. This agreement can be modified or terminated at the discretion of either party.

Accepted and agreed to:

Freddie Mac

Principal,

PTA President

Student Body President

APPENDIX C
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART OF PARTNERSHIP STRUCTURE

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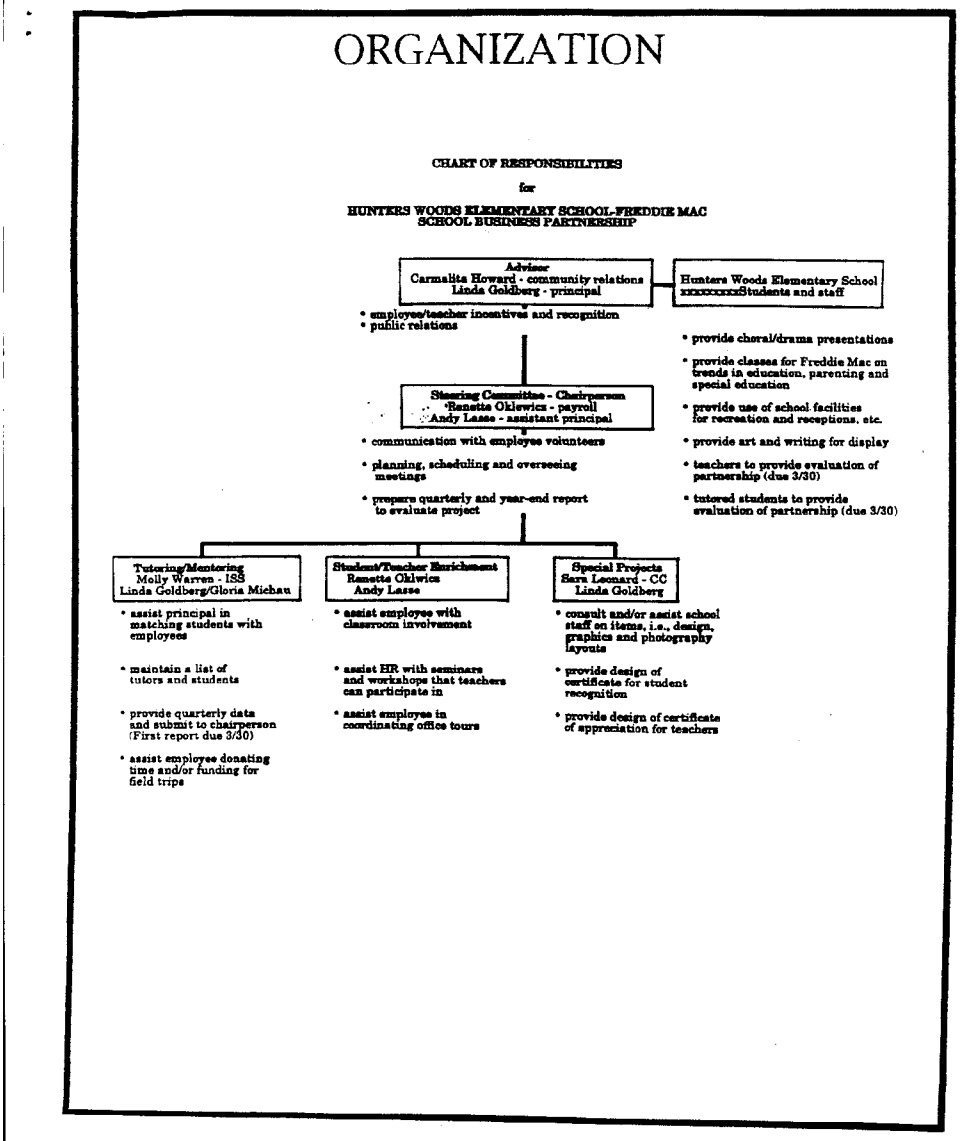
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART OF PARTNERSHIP STRUCTURE



APPENDIX D
NAPE TWELVE STEP PROGRAM

APPENDIX D
NAPE TWELVE STEP PROGRAM

1. Awareness
2. Assessment
3. Potential Resources
4. Goals and Objectives
5. Program Design
6. Partnership Management

Program Implementation:

7. Recruitment
8. Assignment
9. Orientation
10. Training
11. Retention and Recognition

Monitoring and Evaluation

VITA

I. General Information

A. Barbara Carstarphen Holley
Vienna, Va. 22182
B. Married to Howard Holley Sr. Vice President, XEROX Corporation
C. Three Children, Howard, Elesha and Jason

II. Educational Background

A. Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, August, 1996
(Educational Administration).
B Certification in Early Childhood - University of California San Diego
C. Certification in Administration - Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia, University of Virginia
D. Masters of Science Degree - Indiana, University (Reading Specialist)
E. Bachelor of Arts Degree - Stillman College, Tuscaloosa, Alabama
(Elementary Education)

III. Professional Experience

A. Principal, Sugarland Elementary, Sterling, Virginia, (1994- Present)
B. Assistant Principal, Sugarland Elementary, Sterling, Virginia, (1992 - 1994)
C. Director of San Diego School of Success, San Diego, California, (1990 - 1992)
D. Reading Specialist, Dogwood Elementary, Reston, Virginia, (1984 - 1987)
E. Reading Specialist, Classroom Teacher, Public Schools of Virginia (Alexandria, Virginia Beach, Hampton)

IV. Professional Affiliations

A. National Association of Elementary School Principals
B. Phi Delta Kappa
C. Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development