

LINKING INTEGRATED SERVICES WITH SCHOOLS:
A CASE STUDY

Eleanor H. Barnes

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education
in
Educational Administration

Joan L. Curcio, Chair
Marie C. Canny
Marilyn V. Lichtman
Harold J. McGrady
Stephen R. Parson

March 1998
Blacksburg, Virginia

Key Words: Coordinated Services, Integrated Services, School-Linked
Services

Copyright March 17, 1998, Eleanor H. Barnes

LINKING INTEGRATED SERVICES WITH SCHOOLS: A CASE STUDY

Eleanor H. Barnes

(ABSTRACT)

In 1989, a large suburban school district and a cluster of public service agencies initiated a pilot program to provide a multi-agency staffing to develop action plans for identified students. The purpose of this study was to describe the process that was involved in the establishment of this school-linked, integrated program. The research questions that guided data collection in this study were: (1) what was the impetus for initiating this interagency innovation and what resources were required? (2) who were the key players, how were they determined, and in what ways did they plan together to establish and implement this school-linked program? (3) in what ways was the initiation of the pilot program supported or impeded? and (4) what is the status of the pilot program today? The case study approach using qualitative methods of data collection was used in order to answer these questions of process and understanding. Before data collection began, permission was obtained from the study school district to proceed. Interviews were conducted with selected individuals who participated in the planning or implementation of the program. Documents generated at the time of its establishment were also reviewed. Analysis involved the organization of data into coded categories followed by a search for themes and patterns to provide a detailed and rich description of the process. The findings of the study are presented chronologically within two phases; planning and implementation, with themes that emerged discussed within this framework. The results of this study add additional information to the body of research that describes the linking process, from vision to implementation, that occurs when a school district and community agencies work together to address children's needs. Conclusions from the study are presented as well as implications for future endeavors and recommendations for further research.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

As it is with the completion of any dissertation, there are many people who provided assistance, guidance, and encouragement to me along the way to whom I would like to express my endless gratitude and appreciation:

Dr. Joan Curcio, my advisor and chairperson, who has always been available with her expertise and words of encouragement. Without her suggestions, guidance, and support, I might still be searching for a topic.

My committee members; Dr. Marie Canny, Dr. Marilyn Lichtman, Dr. Hal McGrady, and Dr. Stephen Parson, who have served with patient and professional counsel and advice.

The very special Doctoral Cohort I “book club” members, Mary Ann Hardebeck, Priscilla Hardiman, and Judy Knotts, who served as my peer reviewers and a constant source of feedback, guidance, and support.

My other colleagues in Doctoral Cohort I at Virginia Tech, who were always there for me and for each other from the very beginning.

The people who willingly agreed to be interviewed for this study and answer my seemingly endless questions.

My colleagues and friends in the school system who always remembered to ask how my research was going and to give me words of understanding and encouragement.

And most of all my family; my mother, sister, and brothers who have been examples to me and who have always thought I could do anything; my children, Leslie and Ned, who always provide me with love, inspiration, and understanding; and especially my husband, Ned, whose constant love, support and encouragement have always been there whenever I needed it.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

Page

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iii
-----------------------	-----

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	iv
------------------------	----

CHAPTER 1 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY.....	1
--------------------------------------	---

Introduction	1
Statement of the Problem.....	2
Purpose of the Study.....	3
Significance of the Study	3
Limitations of the Study.....	4
Definition of Terms	4
Overview of the Remaining Chapters.....	5

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW	6
-----------------------------------	---

Introduction	6
Approaches to Forming Interagency Organizations	6
Sites for Delivering Integrated Services	8
Examples of Interagency Organizations	9
Theoretical Perspectives on Interagency Organizations	11
Variables in Interagency Organizations.....	14
Supports and Obstacles to Service Integration	15
Summary	16

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY	17
-----------------------------	----

Introduction.....	17
Research Design.....	17
Sampling	19
Access to Subjects.....	20
Data Collection.....	20
Interviewing Procedures	20
Document Review	21
Data Analysis	22
Credibility	23

Chapter Summary	24
CHAPTER 4 RESULTS OF THE STUDY	25
Introduction	25
Overview of the Research Methods	25
Findings.....	27
Introduction	27
Phase One - Conceptualization	27
Recognition of a Need	27
Development of the Concept.....	28
Collaboration and Planning.....	28
Design of the Pilot Program.....	31
Resolution of Issues.....	32
Dynamics Among the Policy Committee Members	35
Phase Two - Implementation.....	37
The Implementers	37
School Planning.....	39
Team Building	40
Issues Arising Within the Teams.....	43
Benefits of the Multi-Agency Staffings	45
Current Status of the Policy Committee and Multi-Agency Staffings	48
Summary	53
CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS	55
Introduction	55
Study Conclusions	55
Researcher Reflections	62
Implications for Future Endeavors	62
Recommendations for Further Research.....	63
REFERENCES.....	64
APPENDICES.....	69
APPENDIX A Pilot Program	70
APPENDIX B Letters of Correspondence.....	72
APPENDIX C Interview Guides	74

APPENDIX D	Commonly Asked Questions About Special Needs Schools.....	76
APPENDIX E	Sample Permission Form for Multi-Agency Staffings	79
APPENDIX F	Guidelines for Student Selection.....	80
APPENDIX G	Initial Codes	81
APPENDIX H	Example of Color Coded Transcript	83
VITA.....		84