

## CHAPTER 2

### Review of the Literature

The purpose of this chapter is to present a review of the literature relevant to the study of the Current Status of Public School /Business Collaborative Activities in Virginia. The review of the literature is divided into three parts. Part one: A historical perspective of school/business collaborative activities. Part two: A current status of school/business collaborative activities 1980 - present. Part III: The components of establishing school/business collaborative activities.

Business and industry has been involved in meaningful ways in American schools since the end of the 19th century. In the late 1800's and the early part of the 20th century, schools were located in predominately rural areas and were considered by many as both ineffective and in great need of reform. Many people shared the thoughts of Ellwood P. Cubberly who wrote in 1914:

Because the rural school is today in a state of arrested development, burdened by educational traditions, lacking in effective supervision, controlled largely by rural people, who too often, do not realize either their own needs or the possibilities of rural education, and taught by teachers who, generally speaking, have but little comprehension of the rural-life problem the task of reorganizing and redirecting rural education is difficult, and will necessarily be slow (As cited in Tyack, 1976,p.21).

Schools became more and more urban during the first part of the new century. As they became more urban they continued to try to maintain local control by

setting up ward schools. However, ward schools faced the same criticisms that rural schools had encountered.

As a result of this increasing questioning of the educational system and the urbanizing of America reformers began to emerge and different education philosophies began to be touted. The ward system or the system of control at the local level began to be questioned as corrupt.

“Defenders of the ward system argued that grass-roots interest in the schools and widespread participation in school politics was healthy, indeed necessary, in large cities, but centralizers saw in decentralization only corruption, parochialism, and vestiges of an outmoded village mentality” (Tyack, 1976, p.127).

One of the philosophies that gained popularity around the turn of the century was that schools needed to take a more businesslike approach. Therefore, schools began a shift from schools dominated by the needs of a particular community to schools that took on a more central interest. With this interest business and professional men began to become more involved in urban schools. “School boards began to be overwhelmingly composed of business and professional men” (Tyack, 1976, p.127). As business professionals became more predominate on school boards the interests of business became more prevalent. “During this time period came the development of vocational education, testing, ability grouping, and the adoption of scientific management in schools were all supported by business interests” (Phillips, 1992, p.20).

During this period, it became a widely held belief by educators and business leaders that an important objective of education was to prepare students for a productive worklife (Timpane, 1985). However, direct involvement in schools by business was limited from the 1930's through the 1950's. The mid to late 1960's saw even less corporate involvement in local schools. The years from the mid-1960's to the late 1970's saw business leaders as distant from the schools (Timpane, 1985). In fact many business leaders during these years were critical of public education because the postwar baby boom and women re-entering the job market gave them an ample supply of entry-level employees (Timpane, 1985). Business leaders became dissatisfied with public education as schools in the industrialized urban centers began to fail. As a result business shifted its attention to the institutions of higher education where it hoped to influence the development of a continuing supply of corporate managers and technical experts to maintain the nation's competitive edge in the world market place (Petracco, 1993). "In a few years the corporate influence had been eclipsed and corporate representatives withdrew from the deliberations over local educational policy" (Kalish, 1987, p.12).

Educational policy-making changed swiftly in the mid to late 1960's. New issues of educational equity, due process, and political power developed in every community in the United States. These new issues brought new agents into the schools parent groups, organized teachers, advocates of previously neglected groups of students, lawyers, judges, and federal and state program managers. Within a few years the business influence had

been significantly reduced as its representatives were excluded or withdrew from deliberations over local educational policy (Phillips, 1992, p.21).

However, educational policies were influenced by business indirectly through the substantial small business representation on local school boards (Useem, 1986).

While business and industry were becoming less involved in schools a new sector of the economy was beginning to emerge in the 1960's and 1970's, known as volunteerism. According to Zeleny, (1996) "Volunteering has always been a part of American Society, and volunteerism is emerging into a new maturity" (p.10). "Some have called it the Independent Sector along with the Public and Private sectors" (Vineyard, 1993, p.5). Volunteerism also has been described as "the pathway to a new world development" (Jedlicka, 1990, p.169). According to Jedlicka, government-controlled bureaucracies did not justly serve the people to whom they were responsible. As Zeleny summarizes, "At the core of Jedlicka's argument was a belief that free and effective societies exist in direct proportion to their degree of citizen participation and influence" (Zeleny, 1996,p.11). Therefore, it was only natural that volunteerism would become a part of the American educational system.

### **Current Status of School Business Partnerships: 1980's - Present**

While direct involvement in schools by business had waned in the 1960's and 1970's a resurgence was seen beginning in the 1980's. Bettina Lankard, observes that "initially, educational partnerships were created by school system

staff to foster school-community cooperation, provide incentives for students, supplement curriculum and staff and obtain equipment” (Lankard, 1995,p.1).

In the mid 1980's highly publicized calls for closer collaboration between public and private policy-makers were heard. President Ronald Reagan spoke strongly on behalf of corporate involvement in public schools as a way of compensating for diminished public financial support. Other groups stressed corporate support as well. For example, in 1983 the blue-ribbon Task Force on Education for Economic Growth, a group of educators and business leaders, recommended a whole series of partnerships between business and schools. Many states set up special commissions, which included business representation, to study and make recommendations for statewide school reform (Phillips,1992 p.21).

A series of disturbing national reports most notably, *A Nation at Risk* in 1983 publicized certain problems in the education system, which convinced business leaders that the economic future of the country depended in part on business and industry getting more involved in helping to improve public education (Rigden, 1991) Following the release of *A Nation At Risk*, President Ronald Reagan proclaimed 1984 as the year of “Partnerships in Education”. Since that time partnerships between business and schools have dramatically increased. In 1984 the U. S. Department of Education counted 46,338 business education partnerships in 4,000 (25 percent) of the nations school districts. Also, in 1984 state-level task forces for business/education plans were initiated by 46 governors. By the following year, states had started implementing their plans.

“From 1983 to 1988, total partnerships between businesses and school sites increased from 40,000 to 140,000” (Zeleny, 1996, p.2). This upward trend has continued in the nation and in Virginia. “In 1991, more than 80 percent of the school divisions in Virginia reported partnership activities with business” (Phillips, 1992,p.156).

In 1992 Patricia Petracco, Associate Director of the New Jersey Small Business Administration Policy and Information Services Department, said “Business involvement in education is experiencing what might be called a renaissance as we move toward the 21st century” (Petracco, 1993, p.2). “Partnerships were being encouraged by government leaders, CEO’s of major corporations, corporate alliances and education reformists who believed that support by business was essential to reform“(Petracco, 1993, p.2).

Lester Thurow, an economist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology puts the challenge of our education system into perspective with the global marketplace. He points out that America does well in educating the top 25 percent of the labor force, which is the group that will invent the new products of tomorrow. However, it doesn’t really matter if someone can invent products if others can’t produce them. Consequently, the real route to success, Thurow points out, “is not in educating the majority of the population who will be the producers” (Thurow, 1996 p.2.). Businesses must become directly involved in partnerships to address necessary changes in education.

Of all the recent education reform efforts, one stands out from the rest as the greatest chance of becoming a truly collaborative partnership among

educators, labor, government and business and industry. This program is Tech Prep (Dykman, 1996). Tech prep programs allow students to take applied academic courses along with technical skills classes in high school and receive credit toward the completion of associate's degrees at community colleges. Most proponents of Tech Prep Programs believe that tech prep will have profound and long-range impact on schools, colleges and industry. This vision can only be achieved with the help of business partners as was pointed out by Frank Shrontz, Chairman of The Boeing Company. "There are no quick fixes for the problems that affect our schools. The challenge is simply too big for any one sector of society to tackle alone. The solution is partnerships that bring together individual citizens and groups in the both the public and private sectors" (Dykman, 1996, p.2).

### **What are school/business collaborative activities?**

Over the years there have been many definitions of school/business collaborative activities promulgated. They range from simple to complex depending on the individual or group who is defining the partnership. In fact, the type and nature of business/education collaborative activities vary depending upon the need the partnership is created to serve. However, the National Association of Partners in Education (NAPE 1997) classifies partnerships or collaborative activities into four categories:

1. Direct student support: focused on supporting, enriching, and improving existing school activities. Much of the volunteer activity involves one-on-one assistance to individual students, small group instruction, or working

with an entire classroom. Common types of activity are tutoring, mentoring, delivery of career awareness programs, implementation of scholarship and incentive programs, and provision of in-kind materials and financial resources to enhance what is currently being done.

2. Programmatic support is focused on developing new program initiatives that will help the school achieve district goals and objectives for instruction and learning. Partner organizations work with the schools and sometimes central office administrators to develop programs that target specific curriculum and or student and teacher needs. Activities may include developing programs focusing on dropout prevention; attendance; student achievement in specific content areas; technology skills of students and teachers; curriculum development; teacher development in a variety of areas; and parent involvement.

3. Compacts, alliances and collaborative efforts: this level of involvement is created through joint efforts among several business and/or community organizations and one or several schools/school districts within a region. These efforts focus on the coordination of resources and/or major school restructuring efforts in such areas as curriculum, school administration, and the management and delivery of instruction. Such collaborative efforts may center on a major reform strategy such as developing a school-to-career system with area businesses. These activities are most likely to be carried out at the school district level, although they sometimes reach out across a state or even a larger geographic region.

4. Policy change: This level of involvement focuses on developing and advocating policy changes which are planned and implemented as business leaders, educators, and members of community organizations work together to reduce bureaucratic rules and regulations; advocate proposed policy changes at the legislative level; and follow through on these efforts to ensure that these changes are supported through adequate financing and programs. These activities usually take place at the community or regional level and sometimes extend to the state or national level policy arenas (NAPE, 1997, p.2)

One of the first and most successful school business collaboration activities was started in Boston, Massachusetts in 1982, which became known as The Boston Compact. The compact addressed a crisis in the public schools that followed desegregation in the 1970's. "The consequences of that struggle were depressed enrollments in the public schools, increased dropout rates of 40 to 50 percent, and flight from the city to the suburbs, leaving the city schools with a weak constituency" (National Alliance of Business, 1989, p.2). Business leaders realized that it was time to work with education leaders to improve the quality of education thus improving the economic viability of the city.

The core of the Compact was a written agreement between the schools and the business community. In return for measurable gains by the high schools in basic skills competency, student retention, and college or job placements, the business community would provide jobs to graduates of the Boston public schools (National Alliance of Business, 1989, p.2). The initial compact

agreement was written as a five year agreement. After five years there were numerous successes to include: the forging of a strong alliance, the creation of more jobs for graduates than anticipated, \$25 million in business financed initiatives to the schools, improvements in facilities, increased daily attendance, and establishments of reading and math standards (National Alliance of Business, 1989).

Despite these early successes when it came time to renew the Compact businesses were reluctant to sign on for another five years because they felt the schools had not been as successful as they should have been. Overall school achievement levels were still low and dropout rates were high. Business wanted assurances that every high school would provide an improved education for all students. Nonetheless after much rancor the Compact Steering Committee agreed to adopt new goals which addressed key issues facing the education community. The goals were clearly stated along with the measures that would be used to judge the successes. The goals were:

- (a) to improve the quality of education by enabling each school to be responsible for the quality of education it provides.
- (b) to increase Boston Public schools parents' involvement in the education of their children.
- (c) to create a comprehensive follow-up program that assists students for up to four years after graduation.
- (d) to cut in half the number of students who drop out of the Boston Public Schools.

(e) to ensure that Boston students have the academic skills needed to achieve their potential in our competitive society (National Alliance of Business, 1989, p.4).

As a result of this compact many other cities established compacts. Compacts were started in Albuquerque New Mexico, Cincinnati, Ohio, Detroit, Michigan, Indianapolis, Indiana, Louisville, Kentucky, Memphis, Tennessee, Miami, Florida, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Providence, Rhode Island, Rochester, New York, San Diego, California, and Seattle, Washington.

Many states have developed statewide initiatives to foster collaboration, between business, education, and government. One example, of a statewide effort to encourage partnerships can be found in the Utah Partnership for Educational and Economic Development, Inc. which was formed in 1990. The partnership was a collaborative effort on the part of business, education and government to strengthen the state's economy through education, training and research. The five objectives of the Utah partnership are indicative of other statewide initiatives:

1. Facilitate the development of partnerships among businesses, education and government in every school in Utah.
2. Identify the education and training needs of business and articulate these to education.
3. Create awareness on the part of business, education, government, and the general public of the positive benefits of partnerships which strengthen the state.

4. Promote research partnerships between business and Utah's major universities to support expansion of high technology industries.
5. Facilitate effective use of all educational resources to strengthen Utah's economy (Utah Department of Education, 1995, p.1).

The results of a study entitled **Survey of Utah Partnerships** were published in 1994. The results of the study showed more than 7,000 collaborative efforts taking place in the state. All post-secondary institutions and 77% of the public school districts reported partnerships. The total number of partnerships increased from 1,400 to 5,358. (Utah Department of Education, 1995). The results showed partnerships in the following categories: mentoring, tutoring, scholarships, internships, special awards, career awareness, executive on loan, customized training, incentives/recognition, curriculum planning, guest speakers, special events, tours/field trips, donations and research.

While statewide initiatives have proven to be the catalyst for many partnership activities throughout the country many more have sprung from local efforts. One such effort occurred in the Lehigh Valley of Pennsylvania. A diverse community located fifty miles north of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The area includes the three cities of Allentown, Bethlehem and Easton, as well as a large number of rural areas. It has a population of 630,000 and is the home to several national and international companies (Moe,1995). The seeds of the partnership can be traced back to the early 1980;s however, the partnership was actually formed in November, 1989 at about the same time that President George Bush's administration was announcing the America 2000 goals.

The Lehigh Valley 2000: Business-Education Partnership as it came to be called was made up of 160 individuals who represented many different constituencies to include business and industry representatives, school boards, administrators, teachers, parents, colleges, unions, and others. In this group were several school superintendents, and top level executives from businesses and industries in the community. The partnership established seven areas of concern: the learning environment, the teaching environment, state regulations, curriculum, at risk youth, education for employment, and basic education/higher education cooperation (Moe, 1995).

“By the fall of 1992 it was apparent that the partnership was going to survive” (Moe, 1995 p.36). Accomplishments of the partnership include structural things such as securing funding for an office and an executive director. But more important, things such as the Community Report Card which gathered information on the community’s awareness of educational practices; the Superintendent’s Resolution which promoted economic prosperity and school reform; the Career Planning Handbook which provides information on career and post-secondary opportunities; Roads to Success which describes seventy enrichment opportunities available to youth; Handbook on Strategic Planning to help school districts complete state mandated strategic plans; The Fall Showcase an exhibit of current technology; Summer Teacher Interns that allow educators an opportunity to spend time in businesses and industries; and Professional Development Academies for teachers, administrators business people, school board members and other business communities. It was so

successful that it became the springboard for a statewide initiative known as Pennsylvania 2000. (Moe, 1995).

While state and regional or multi-district partnerships have sprung up around the country the typical partnership is found at the school level. Schools throughout the nation participate in school business partnerships. The National Association of Partners in Education, Inc. conducted a national school district partnership survey in 1991 (NAPE.1991). The survey netted the following findings:

1. In the 1989-90 school year 51 percent of America's school districts had active partnership programs.
2. 2.6 million volunteers participated in partnership programs.
3. An estimated 29.7 million students, or 65 percent of the total number of students in American Schools, attended schools that had active partnerships.
4. Partnership programs are more prevalent in urban areas, but the number of volunteers involved is considerably higher in suburban areas.
5. The combined value of the goods and services contributed in 1989-90 by partners was nearly one billion dollars.
6. Parent groups and small businesses were the most common partners with schools.

7. Sixty five percent of districts with partnerships included the improvement of achievement as an objective of their programs at the elementary level.
8. Thirty seven percent of districts with partnerships included improved career awareness as an objective at the high school and thirty nine percent included career related activities such as job shadowing and career day programs.
9. Forty one percent of all districts with partnership programs provided tutoring to students as one of their activities at the elementary level.

In 1996 U.S. business leaders made a commitment during the 1996 Education Summit with the nation's governors to help raise academic standards. In September of that year the Business Roundtable, the National Alliance of Business and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce unveiled a common agenda to assist educators and policymakers establish stringent academic standards that apply to every student in every school. In addition, these standards would be used to assess student and school system performance. "These business groups hoped to improve schools and create a system of accountability, including rewards for success and consequences for failure" (Augustine, 1997, p.61).

The three organizations further agreed to encourage employers to request information on student achievement in hiring decisions; consider a state's commitment to high academic standards when making business location decisions; and to direct their education related philanthropy toward raising academic standards and improving student achievement (Augustine, 1997, p.61).

In an unpublished dissertation Jane Arthur outlined nine studies that examined the factors for success in partnerships. These studies were Lacey 1983, Kalish 1987, Anthony 1992, Grobe 1993, Mattessich and Monsey 1992, Tushnet 1993, Paugh 1995, Hopkins 1995, Danzberger, Bodinger-deuriarte, and Clark 1996. In this section I will summarize findings of seven of those summaries for success with one other study, Zeleny 1996.

### **Lacey 1983**

This case study was part of a research report that studied Memphis A-Adopt School Programs. Lacey (1983) found three major themes in successful partnerships:

1. Personal involvement from top executives in business and top level administrators in schools.
2. Communication at all levels of the school and business is important.  
As partnerships evolve partners become more comfortable with each other and the environments become more conducive to exchanging ideas that flourish into meaningful projects.
3. There is a mechanism allowing for systematic management of program planning.

### **Kalish 1987**

This case study of the Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS), in Virginia was conducted by Judith Kalish (1987). She found the following major factors in determining the success of a school business partnership (Kalish, p.82).

1. Top level administrative support of the partnership from both the school system and business/industry.
2. The need for partnership projects to be of major proportion to be shared by all schools and to keep people actively involved in the partnership.
3. CEO's must feel they are making a difference.
4. The support of the school board and local governing body is important.
5. The business/industry must be representative of the businesses of the community.

**Anthony 1992**

A case study of the New Horizons Project in Richmond, Virginia conducted by M. E. Anthony in 1992 found the following factors related to success of partnerships.

1. The superintendent and his staff must support the partnership.
2. CEO's must be directly involved in the partnership in order for their support to continue. The program was most successful when the CEO's were involved.
3. The business/corporate community needs to see success along the way.
4. Cooperation by all parties is essential.
5. Advisory boards of key decision-makers are needed.
6. Evaluation of the partnership should be ongoing.

## **Grobe 1993**

This study sponsored by the United States Office of Educational Research and Improvement, Grobe (1993) analyzed available information on the elements of successful educational partnerships. Grobe found the following elements in successful partnerships.

1. Leadership from the top echelons of business and schools must be evident.
2. The needs of the community were evident in the partnerships.
3. Effective public relations were in place.
4. Roles and responsibilities were clearly delineated.
5. Involvement from varied racial and ethnic groups.
6. Strategic planning was used.
7. Sufficient management and staffing structure were evident.
8. Shared decision making and interagency ownership was implored.
9. Members of the partnership shared recognition and credit.
10. Resources are available at the appropriate time.
11. Technical assistance was sought when necessary.
12. Agreements were formal and used as a basis for the partnership.
13. Many actions took place, which allowed for frequent success.
14. The process took patience and vigilance.
15. Local ownership was evident.

## **Mattessich and Monsey 1992**

Factors that influence the success of collaboration were the topic of a study conducted by Mattessich and Monsey (1992). In this study the researchers did a meta-analysis of previously completed studies to identify factors which influence the successes of collaborative activities. In their study they reported the following:

### 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 visions.
- C. Unique purposes.

## 6. Factors Related to Resources

- A. Sufficient funds
- B. Skilled convener.

### **Tushnet 1993**

This study sponsored by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement of the U. S. Department of Education. Tushnet (1993) found the following steps helpful in developing successful partnerships.

1. The partnership should address real problems.
2. The organization of the partnership should be appropriate to the needs being addressed.
3. All stakeholders should have discussions about the partnership.
4. Partnerships should communicate with all participants and the community.
5. Strong leadership is essential. It can be shared or assumed by one group or individual.
6. Resources and technical resources are available.
7. Evaluation and adaptive planning are essential.
8. Problems should be acknowledged and confronted.

### **Danzberger, Bodinger-deuriarte, and Clark 1996**

As a result of a study sponsored by the office of Educational Research and Improvement Danzberger, Bodinger-deuriarte and Clark (1996) published A Guide To Promising Practices in Educational Partnerships. The following findings are cogent to this work.

1. Outside funding stimulates action.
2. Policies and procedures must accommodate the process.
3. Partnership activities should reflect the needs of the community.
4. There should be a shared vision for the partnership.
5. Leadership is critical to the process.
6. Identifying and solving problems is critical for success.
7. The more complicated the partnership the more need there is for it to be broken down into smaller components.
8. Evaluation and feedback must be received regularly.

### **Zeleny 1996**

Zeleny (1996) conducted a study on expectations of business partners in business/education partnerships. In this work she reported the following findings as to what made the partnerships successful that she studied:

1. A strong support and encouragement of the local CEO. The CEO's shared a commitment to public education and a vision of how their business would be involved.
2. Each business had a project coordinator working with the schools.
3. Employees were encouraged to be a part of the partnership.

4. Consistency in top level management.
5. Partnership training for business and school participants.
6. Rewards and benefits were evident for the business and the school.

The partnerships were believed to provide a better-trained future work force. The companies perceived their public image to be enhanced.

### **Steps to Forming a Partnership**

Successful partnerships between business and education do not just happen they must be carefully planned and nurtured from inception to fruition. Much research has been done on the steps needed to implement successful partnerships. The author has read many versions of the process but they all contain basically the same elements. For the purpose of this study I will outline the process that the San Francisco School Volunteers Program advocates (San Francisco School Volunteers, 1999). This process is used as model for implementing a successful partnership and is used only as one example there are many more models that could be followed successfully.

#### Steps to Forming A Partnership

##### Step1: Getting To Know Each Other

- A. Share interests in youth, resources and expectations.
- B. Discuss why each partner wants to build a partnership.
- C. Familiarize yourself with culture of each partner.

## Step 2: Getting Started, Developing Common Goals

- A. Based on common interests and needs of each partner, design a purpose statement.
- B. Build support through formation of a committee at school site and business site. Decide on a contact person for each partner.
- C. Create process for appropriate communication.

## Step 3: Building a Strong Foundation

- A. Develop clear and realistic goals for the school year. Design benchmarks for measuring progress.
- B. Create projects and or activities. Focus on using resources of each partner.
- C. Create opportunities for student input. Be creative and flexible.

## Step 4: Making it Real – Implementation

- A. Focus on improving student learning.
- B. Utilize expertise of business and school partners.
- C. Partnership kick-off ceremony.

## Step 5: Checking-In and Making Adjustments

- A. Communicate the successes and obstacles.
- B. Assess how the partnership is working. Are expectations being met?
- C. Make adjustments if needed.
- D. Each partner's needs and interests may change over time.

#### Step 6: Measuring Progress

- A. Evaluate partnership impact on student learning. Revisit goals set in the beginning.
- B. Create opportunities for everyone involved to provide input.
- C. Identify what areas are working and the areas for improvement.  
Redefine goals if necessary.

#### Step 7: Celebrating and Recognizing Success

- A. Appreciate the contributions of everyone involved.
- B. Create opportunities for partners to celebrate.
- C. Share success with the larger community.

### **Benefits of Partnerships**

In order for a partnership to flourish all partners in the partnership must benefit from the collaborative effort. Many articles and studies have been published on the potential benefits of partnerships for members of the partnership. These works include but are not limited to the following: NAPE 1997, Lacey 1983, Anthony 1992, Grobe 1993, Mattessich and Monsey 1992, Tushnet 1993, Danzberger et al 1996, Zeleny 1996, Dykman 1996, and Murnane and Levy 1997. Concurrent themes reoccur throughout these works pertaining to partnership benefits for all partners. For the purpose of this study I will summarize themes that have been identified by the authors previously mentioned.

#### Benefits to students:

1. increased exposure to occupations and educational opportunities

2. opportunities for work experiences while going to school
3. improved achievement, attitudes and behaviors
4. enhanced self-confidence from success at school and work
5. increased opportunity for quality jobs after graduation
6. more access to post-secondary education and training.

Benefits to educators:

1. increased support from the community for educational objectives
2. opportunity for reduced dropout rates, improved attendance rates
3. better understanding of real-world applications of academic knowledge
4. increased professional development opportunities
5. increased college placement and employment rates of graduates
6. technical assistance and use of state of the art technology

Benefits to school divisions

1. increased support for schools among partners
2. support to curriculum development
3. a better understanding of the economic needs and social pressures of the division by participating partners
4. acquisition of new technology and other equipment
5. expanded educational opportunities for students
6. increased access to experts for special courses and projects

Benefits to business

1. access to an expanded pool of applicants
2. ability to influence student development to meet industry requirements

3. improved quality of life in the community
4. better understanding by students and educators of the needs, expectations, and requirements in the workplace
5. greater awareness by educators of skills that job applicants lack
6. increased visibility for business in the community
7. opportunity to use school facilities and educators to help with training needs of the business
8. improved efficiency and effectiveness of school systems
9. improved communication to educators, students, and parents about the needs of business and industry

#### Benefits to parents

1. increased educational and occupational opportunities for their children
2. increased pride from having children motivated about school and having opportunities to succeed in the workplace
3. increased levels of maturity and independence for their children

#### Benefits to Government and Community

1. Development of a skilled workforce
2. Enhanced employability of all youth
3. Economic growth through an expanded workforce and taxpayer base.

#### **Cautions**

As the author has shown in this review of literature, school/business collaborative activities can be very beneficial to schools when approached with the proper goals in mind. The author must also make the point that a partnership

arrangement should be looked at objectively to determine if the partnership is in the best interests of students. Commercialism should not be tolerated for the sake of forging a relationship with business. One example of commercialism is illustrated in an article by Marlene Lozada that appeared in the April 1999 Techniques Magazine "School Friend or Foe". In the article Ms. Lozada describes a contract entered into by some schools to promote a product to the exclusion of like products. In this particular instance she described two major cola companies who were bidding to be the exclusive provider of soft drinks for a school. Both companies offered huge cash incentives for this right. She argues that "there's no educational value in selling one bottling company exclusive vending machine rights to a school. The same goes for selling the side of a bus to Burger King as a billboard" (Lozada, 1999, p.18).

This argument is timely and has supporters on both sides of the issue and is much too broad to be discussed in detail in this work. However, it is necessary for the writer as a practitioner to address the central issue. Educators must consider the educational value of all relationships entered into with the business community. Before entering into a relationship with business the educator must consider the goals of the business. This sounds like an easy task but in today's competitive society businesses are not always up front with their motives when offering to enter the educational arena. The partnership should impact academics favorably. If after careful consideration, the goals of the businesses are not beneficial to the student and the school the relationship should be severed.

## **Summary**

This literature review highlights the widespread use of school/business collaborative activities. Successful partnerships are evident throughout the literature however; there is no current research on school/business collaborative activities in the Commonwealth of Virginia. This study is designed to meet this need and to make available current information that will assist school divisions to forge successful business partnerships that address the needs of students and schools.