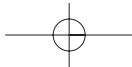
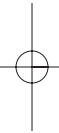
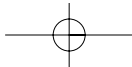
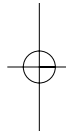
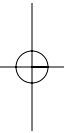
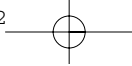




PART ONE

Introduction





CHAPTER ONE

Our Changing World and Schools

The Need for a Learning Community

It is not news to hear that our world is changing. Unless you are a hermit who has absolutely no contact with the outside world, the change in American culture comes as no surprise. Society is becoming increasingly diverse in race, culture, and language. The hard-and-fast rules that once applied to gender are no more. This is particularly evident in the home and the workplace. The stereotypical two-parent household of a generation ago has steadily eroded. In the past, parents' traditional roles were for the father to go to work to support the family while the mother stayed home, taking care of the children and the household.

In many homes, that image no longer exists. As more mothers work outside the home, latchkey children are quickly becoming the norm. Two-parent households are only a dream for many children. The longitudinal effects of basic family changes like these and their impact on children and schools have yet to be thoroughly studied and communicated. Even if they had been, with the changing mores in the United States today, we have no data-driven conclusions as to what effect, if any, the long-term results would have.

Our schools are microcosms of this changing social order. Things that are happening in urban, suburban, and rural settings obviously manifest themselves in classrooms. Schools no longer, if ever they did,

4 INTRODUCTION

operate independently of the communities in which they exist. The true issue becomes this: How do we as educational leaders address these changes and their effects on the children we serve? This is the focus of the “learning community” or “school community” concept. The days when schools could even think about operating in isolation are long gone. Schools and communities must work together, hand in hand, to meet the staggering academic, physical, and emotional needs of all students. Collaborative development, implementation, nurturance, and stewardship of the school as a “community” are essential to the overall success of students, families, and society.

THE ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL

The role of the principal has also changed. In past generations, the primary function of the principal evolved from “principal teacher,” as a master teacher who also tended to the limited duties required to keep the school organized and operating efficiently, to the principal as the chief executive officer of the campus. The primary emphasis has shifted from one in which the principal truly was a master teacher, a recognized leader in instruction, to one in which the principal is a manager of the school facility. Bureaucracy has grown. Policies, rules, and paperwork have flourished. Societal problems have evolved. The seesaw of responsibility has shifted from curriculum and instruction to management and operations. A transition took place in which the principal became responsible for holding together the walls of the school and ensuring that it runs smoothly. The “principal teacher” thus became the school’s organizational manager.

While this was happening, society as a whole continued to evolve. When the United States was primarily agrarian, students left school early to work in the fields. During the Industrial Age, they dropped out of school to fill positions in the lucrative job market. Educators were not particularly worried about these “dropouts.” Schools did not spend undue time or effort trying to bring them back to graduate. The casual acceptance of students leaving school early to go to work was symptomatic of the culture of the day.

Times have changed. Particularly with the impact of *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983), the effective schools of research of Ron Edmonds and others, and the accountability movement (Haertel, 1999; Lashway, 2001; McNeil, 2000; Smith, Heinecke, & Noble, 1999; Wellstone, 2000), a renewed interest and focus has been placed on ensuring that every student has access to free and appropriate learning opportunities. The emphasis on high-stakes testing in particular has had an impact on schools attempting to individualize their approaches according to the unique needs of every learner. Focused attempts are made to see that at-risk students can and do pass these tests.

With this increased focus on accountability and student success, another transition has occurred in school leadership. The role of the principal has transitioned again from school manager to the school catalyst for success for all stakeholders. When looking at the campus as a single element rather than the only element within the community, the role of the principal becomes that of school liaison for all community resources including parents and other caregivers, neighbors, businesses, churches, civic clubs, and other community service agencies. The role of the principal becomes the primary voice of the school, the champion of free and appropriate education for all students, and the chief proponent of the value of education in a democratic society. In other words, the principal becomes the main educational facilitator of the learning community.

EXPECTATIONS

Has the job become one with such high expectations that no one can accomplish them? There are those who think so. Many principals are retiring or leaving the field for a myriad of reasons. Some are tired and battle scarred from leading the crusade for so long. Others have begun to think the gains are not worth the bruises. Still others realize they can make more money elsewhere and choose to do so. There is a documented and growing shortage of people prepared to meet the increased demands and responsibilities that weigh so heavily on the principal's shoulders (Fenwick & Pierce, 2001; Million, 1998;

6 INTRODUCTION

Potter, 2001; Richardson, 1999; “Study Warns,” 1998; U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2000–2001).

For many educators—thank goodness—all the trials and tribulations that go with being a principal do not outweigh the joys and triumphs of trying to make a difference in the lives of young people every day. Is this a calling? Yes, it is. It requires a personal mission. Are there people occupying these positions who do not feel the calling, yet have the jobs anyway? Disappointingly, yes, there are. Stephen Covey (1990b), Kenneth Blanchard and Spencer Johnson (1982), Valorie Burton (1999), and many others have pointed to the importance of each person reflecting seriously to identify their own mission and then subsequently developing a personal mission statement. Only when we know ourselves and our unique calling can we most prudently plan exactly what we are going to do to achieve it. We are never as effective working outside our individual calling as we could be if we were heeding the intrinsic yearnings of our own hearts.

IS THIS BOOK FOR YOU?

This book is for many kinds of people. It is for today’s principals seeking diligently to find the best ways to benefit the lives of everyone involved in their school communities. It is also for future educational leaders—the countless teachers, coaches, counselors, diagnosticians, paraprofessionals, and others who feel the calling and are either uncertain if the principalship is truly for them or simply do not know how to integrate the idealism of the way schools should be into the reality of the way they actually are. It is also for university faculty seeking to integrate the new joint National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)–Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards for educational leaders into coursework. This book provides ways to do just that in a practical, easy-to-read manner, using real-life case studies, applications, and reflective open-ended questions that students can relate to and benefit from.

This is a “how-to” book for anyone interested in making a difference in the lives of students, faculty, staff, families, and the entire

learning community. It is based on years of research generously provided by such groups as the National Policy Board for Educational Administration, NCATE, ISLLC, Educational Leadership Constituent Council, Council of Chief State School Officers, and virtually all the professional educator associations. For years each group and many states have had their own set of “standards,” “proficiencies,” or “domains” by which they believe schools should be led. Only now have the professional entities come together, through intense collaboration, dialogue, and discourse, to adopt a common set of standards to facilitate improved school leadership and school leadership preparation.

THE ELCC STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

This new framework is commonly called the Educational Leadership Constituent Council standards, or the ELCC standards. The standards will be used both to strengthen leadership preparation programs and to serve as a cornerstone for the professional development of existing administrators (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996; McCown, Arnold, Miles, & Hargadine, 2000; Murphy & Shipman, 1998; Murphy, Shipman, & Pearlman, 1997; Murphy, Yff, & Shipman, 2000; Shipman, Topps, & Murphy, 1998; Van Meter & Murphy, 1997). This book is for you or your students if you are committed to making things better; to accepting and addressing high standards based on theory, knowledge, and best practice; and to learning how to make the standards relevant. This is the place to take that first, proactive step toward integrating theory with practice and crossing that huge mountain that exists between idealism and realism. If you are ready to begin that tremendous journey, read on. Invite friends and colleagues to come with you. Together, in critical mass, we will make a difference. Let's begin.