

## Introduction

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This book is about school as “community”—an appealing image for schools that has been the subject of a growing body of educational research and literature in recent years. The concept of community in education is not new. It has historical threads going back to John Dewey’s work, particularly his writing in *The School and Society* (1899/1990), and was the subject of continual scholarship throughout the twentieth century (Willie, 2000). However, most writers agree that the more current surge of interest in community began in the late 1980s and early 1990s, signaled by Thomas J. Sergiovanni’s 1993 speech at the American Educational Research Association conference calling for a different “metaphor” for schools. Sergiovanni argued that changing the metaphor for schools from “organization” to “community” would lead to important changes in how schools are run, “what motivates teachers and students, and . . . what leadership is” (p. 4). Central to this argument for community is that *relationships* become the core focus in schools when they are thought of as communities rather than as organizations. Sergiovanni repeated his arguments in several publications, including his widely read book, *Building Community in Schools* (1994), in which he makes this claim about the importance of community:

Though most principals, superintendents, and teachers have a desire to do better and are working as hard as they can to provide a quality education to every student they serve, the road is rough and the going is slow. The lead villain in this frustrating drama is the loss of community in our schools and in society itself. . . . Community building must become the heart of any school improvement effort. (p. xi)

While other writers and educators may disagree with Sergiovanni’s casting of the “lead villain” in this drama, and Sergiovanni’s ideas for building school

community have been criticized (e.g., Merz & Furman, 1997), there is an almost universal and unquestioned assumption in the ensuing education literature that “community” is a good thing—that increasing the sense of community in schools holds promise for school improvement. Potential positive impacts are claimed for students, teachers and parents and are articulated in various ways. For example, in regard to students, the claimed benefits of community cluster around three key themes—*belonging, achievement, and democracy*:

- It is claimed that a sense of community or “belonging” (Mitchell, 1990a, p. 40) can remedy the alienation experienced by many youth in schools. A heightened sense of belonging is valuable not only as an end in itself but also might counterbalance tendencies toward the “substitute community” of gang identity and violence (Sergiovanni, 1994). As Mitchell (1990b) states, “Time in prison and unwed parenthood should not be the rituals of belonging for large numbers of adolescent Americans” (p. 67).
- It is claimed that, when the school or classroom is a “learning community” (Calderwood, 2000) or exhibits a “communitarian climate” (Bryk & Driscoll, 1988), academic achievement improves.
- It is claimed that the practice in schools of “democratic community” (Apple & Beane, 1995; Kahne, 1996) or “discursive community” (Smyth, 1996; Strike, 1993) teaches students how to live in a multicultural, democratic society.

While a few research studies provide support for these “promises” of community (e.g., Bryk & Driscoll, 1988; Shouse, 1996), the research base on the impact of “a sense of community” in schools is thin.

As the editor of this volume, I want to disclose up front my “stance” toward the school as community concept. First, I am an advocate for the creation of community in schools. Along with Brad Mitchell (1990a, 1990b) and others, I think that a focus on “belonging” and relationships should be at the center of school improvement efforts. I believe that this focus is absolutely essential to counterbalance the obsessive focus on measurable student achievement that characterizes most reform efforts and that objectifies and alienates students as “performers,” especially when high-stakes accountability mechanisms are implemented. However, my belief in the “promise” of community is not *carte blanche* and, I hope, not naive. In the spirit of the “ethic of critique” (Starratt, 1994), I believe that calls for community in schools and the ways in which the concept has been developed and researched in the education literature need to be critically examined.

Second, I continue to be intellectually fascinated with the knotty conceptual and practical issues associated with the idea of “creating community in schools.” For example, one particularly challenging issue addressed in my

recent work (Furman, 1998) and by others (e.g., Calderwood, 2000; Shields & Seltzer, 1997; Strike, 1999) is the tension between inclusivity and exclusivity of communities in a diverse society. In other words, it is assumed in much of the sociological and educational work on community that communities require *commonalities* among members to create a sense of belonging or inclusion, and, relatedly, that communities require *boundaries* that differentiate those who are included and those who are excluded. As Calderwood (2000) states,

The symbolic construction of community is accomplished by ensuring that the group is apart from and different from other social groups through the establishment of a group identity recognizable from within and outside the group . . . community has symbolic boundaries and symbolic borders, which demarcate the inclusion or exclusion of what and who constitute the frame of reference for this construction of identity. (p. 12)

But, as Calderwood goes on to recognize, when communities exclude those who are different, social justice becomes an issue: "Because differences can, and often are, created or utilized to justify and carry out social injustices, they are seemingly incompatible with the democratic ideals of equality and justice" (p. 14). Needless to say, this inclusion/exclusion dilemma "demands thoughtful consideration" (p. 14) when the community concept is applied to public schools.

Finally, I am convinced that "community" is not another fad or "hot topic" in education. Rather, the interest in community is more like a sea change in how we think about schools and their place in society. In this regard, the interest in community is similar to the focus in recent years on coordinated services for children. Both address fundamental issues in American society and schools, including, (1) the issue of social cohesion and the nature of our responsibilities and relationships in a society increasingly characterized by disintegration of families and local neighborhoods (Mitchell & Cunningham, 1990); rampant individualism and a lack of civic commitment (Bellah et al., 1985); and (2) the issue of the appropriate role for public schools in such a society (Merz & Furman, 1997; Strike, 1999).

Proceeding from this "stance" in regard to community, this book is intended to further our understanding of the promise of school community and of the issues associated with it, and to lead to some concrete implications for practice. The contributing authors look at school community from a variety of angles. Each draws on a rich background of research and thought about community in schools to offer a unique perspective. In the first section, the chapters explore the theoretical meaning of community as applied to education; in the remaining sections, the chapters present the findings of recent studies on community among teachers and students and on the dynamic relationship

between schools and their surrounding communities. These chapters are only a *sample* of the scholarship on community in education; however, it is a purposeful sample chosen to fit within these parameters: The focus here is on *K-12 public schools*; the primary concern is the creation of a *sense of community within the school itself* as an institution; and an implicit interest throughout these chapters is toward the *implications for practice in regard to administration and leadership*. More will be said shortly about these parameters for the discussion of community in this book.

Before considering what each chapter offers, I want to frame in more detail the topic of “school as community” as it will be presented in this book. This is very important to do, as the term *community* has been used in multiple ways in education. Some writers speak of a “community of learners,” others of “professional community,” and still others of “democratic community” or of a “community of difference.” In addition, the *sense of community* in schools, whether among students or teachers, has been operationalized in a variety of ways in quantitative studies that have sought to explore its correlation to other variables, such as student achievement outcomes (e.g., Battistich et al., 1995; Lee & Smith, 1995; Oxley, 1997; Phillips, 1997; Shouse, 1996). To frame the topic, then, this introduction will consider a brief history of school community in education, the current “terrain” of school community literature, and the parameters for the discussion of school community in this book. The introduction concludes with a brief overview of the chapters to follow.

#### A BRIEF HISTORY OF SCHOOL COMMUNITY

History is, of course, an interpretive act. It is composed from the stance of the historian and reflects the historian’s own history of coming to know a particular topic. Thus with this brief sketch of community in education. Much could be said here about the roots of community theory in education extending back to Dewey’s work (1899/1990). Likewise, developments in sociological and political theory that are relevant to the educational focus on community and that help us to understand it could be profitably sketched. But this in-depth treatment of the broader social context and history of the current interest in community is not the purpose here, and these topics have been usefully explored elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> Here I want to respond to the more limited question, What is behind the current interest in community in education?

What is clear from my own work on community over the last several years (e.g., Furman, 1998; Furman & Merz, 1996; Merz & Furman, 1997) and from the analyses of others (e.g., Beck & Foster, 1999) is that “community” began to emerge as a major topic in education in the early 1990s about the time that Sergiovanni popularized the topic, as already mentioned. A tidal wave of conference papers, articles, and books devoted to community in edu-

cation soon followed. While this fast-track ascendancy in the literature is the earmark of a "hot topic," there are other signals that the interest in community is more enduring. Within the field of educational leadership, for example, prominent scholars writing for the "knowledge base" project of the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) decided that "community" should be included as one of the fundamental "values" in American education, along with quality, equity, efficiency, and choice (Mitchell, Boyd, Cooper, Malen, & Marshall, 1994). Similarly, editors of the latest edition of the *Handbook of Research on Educational Administration* (Murphy & Louis, 1999) included a chapter on community and administration by Lynn G. Beck and William P. Foster (1999), indicating its growing status as a major focus of study. In addition, Joseph Murphy (1999), one of the prominent voices in delineating current issues in the field of educational leadership, recently identified "democratic community" as one of three "powerful synthetic paradigms" for the field (p. 54).

We can identify some of the recent trends in education that seem to have contributed to the ascendancy of community as a major theme, and we will do so in the next section. However, ultimately the emergence of interest in community is best explained as the reemergence of a concept whose time had finally come. Borrowing the language of Reynolds and Norman (1988) as they discussed the work of Bellah and his colleagues (1985) on commitment in American society, the earlier writings of Sergiovanni and others on community represented "the kind of scholarship that periodically kindles broad public interest because it catches and focuses something out there ready to be kindled, a widely shared but not yet fully articulated sense that something urgent and important requires attention" (p. 1). Thus, the interest in community can be viewed as a natural and needed development in the "great conversation" about public education in America. Indeed, according to Phillips (1997), the "communitarian" approach is now one of "two competing theories about which intraschool processes matter most" for student outcomes (p. 634, emphasis added), the other theory being "academic press" (p. 634).

Why had the "time come" for the reemergence of community? Why did the idea of community in schools "catch and focus something out there ready to be kindled," while Dewey's (1899/1990) arguments for community lay dormant for almost a century? An answer is suggested by looking at some of the historical trends in education over the last 150 years.<sup>2</sup>

In the early years of American public education, the sense of community in schools was not an issue because it was a *given*—a product of the close ties that existed between the schools and their surrounding communities, both in rural villages and in the relatively homogeneous political "wards" in cities. Schools reflected the culture and values of the relatively homogeneous communities they served, and, in turn, served as a "center" for the community. The

community nature of schools was simply taken for granted. As Tyack (1974) states, “school and community were organically related in a tightly knit group in which people met face to face and knew each other’s affairs” (p. 17).

Throughout the late 19th and early 20th centuries, however, this organic relationship slowly changed. In response to several factors—huge waves of immigration in the cities, technological advances and the expansion of industry, and a growing national identity associated with the success of capitalism—progressive school reformers sought to create a common school system that would both control social unrest through the Americanization of immigrants and serve the needs of the expanding industrial economy. As Tyack (1974) states, school leaders were expected to “reshape schools to fit the new economic and social conditions of an urban-industrial society” (p. 126). Centralization, standardization, a “scientific” approach to classifying and evaluating students, and “taking the schools out of politics” were the chosen tools for reshaping schools. Gradually, the purpose of public schools shifted away from preparing children for life within their local communities to preparing children to be productive citizens in the broader, industrialized American society. Governance of schools shifted to professionals and to small “elite” school boards, and schools began to emulate the highly respected hierarchical structures and “scientific management” practices being used in industrial organizations. Efficient “sorting” mechanisms assigned students to “grades” and required them to compete for academic success as determined by standardized tests. In short, schools became more bureaucratic, depersonalized, and disconnected from local values and culture, and learning became more competitive for students. In the face of the apparent success of scientific management and industrial organizations, Dewey’s prescient arguments in the early 1900s about the negative impacts of an education aimed solely at preparing children for the workforce along with his calls for community were largely ignored.

Throughout the 20th century, the public schools’ “drift to *Gesellschaft*”<sup>3</sup> (Merz & Furman, 1997, p. 34) continued, and by midcentury the characteristics of bureaucratic organization were firmly entrenched in American public schools, along with the values of individualism and competition. While reform efforts during the 1990s often included “decentralization” as a theme, the forces for centralization and standardization continued unabated in the form of proposed national standards, state-prescribed learning goals and high-stakes accountability systems. At the end of the 20th century, the American public school system was, as it continues to be, firmly based in a rational/technical/instrumental set of assumptions about schooling and learning, assumptions that are so embedded in the public rhetoric about schools that they are largely unquestioned and unchallenged. These assumptions are as follows:

- The purpose of schools is *instrumental*—to serve national economic interests by preparing students for the workforce.
- The success of schools in achieving this instrumental purpose can be rationally determined by *measurable student achievement*.
- The individual's motivation for learning in schools is *instrumental*—to succeed on individual measures of student achievement, in competition with other students, to secure future financial prosperity.
- Teaching is a *technical* problem and teachers/schools can be held *accountable* for measurable student achievement.

Many critics have noted the “unhappy results” (Sergiovani, 1994, p. 14) associated with this dominant model of public schooling, including the social alienation of youth and a superficial education that lacks meaning and purpose (Starratt, 1994). The widespread disenchantment with “bureaucracy” in the late 20th century set the stage for calls for more “communal” models for schools.

At the same time that schools were “drifting to *Gesellschaft*” in the latter half of the 20th century, social cohesion within the larger society was crumbling, according to many analysts.<sup>4</sup> Local communities, neighborhoods, churches, synagogues, and even families no longer served the important social roles they once did. Increased mobility means we have little common history with our neighbors, and changing family structures provide less stability and support than they once did. In short, we have less community in our lives. Schools are seen as a venue for re-creating this sense of community in our lives. As Phillips (1997) states, “Communitarian theories suggest that teachers’ disaffection and students’ school failure arise from a lack of strong affective ties to both places and people; a void that communally organized schools may fill” (p. 635). Thus, by the late 1980s, the time had come for a reemergence of the community concept for schools. School as community was intended not only to correct the overly bureaucratic, impersonal character of schools as organizations, but also to create new places of belonging in the midst of disintegrating social ties within families and neighborhoods.

Turning to specific developments in educational research and theory that helped to fuel and justify the reemergence of community, three trends have been cited most often (Beck & Foster, 1999; Merz & Furman, 1997; Phillips, 1997). First, growing out of the school effectiveness research of the early 1980s, research began to identify “communitarian climate” as a school factor associated with higher achievement, higher motivation, and better attendance in high schools (Bryk & Driscoll, 1988; Bryk, Lee, & Holland, 1993; Shouse, 1996). Bryk and Driscoll (1988), for example, reexamined data from the High

School and Beyond Study and identified three core components of school community that correlated with achievement and attendance: shared values, a common agenda of activities, and relationships that are caring and supportive. Though “communitarian climate” is defined differently across these and subsequent studies, the components identified by Bryk and Driscoll are quite typical.

The second trend emerged from the study of teachers’ work lives in which schools were reported to be lonely, overly bureaucratic, and isolating for teachers (e.g., Jackson, 1968; Lortie, 1975). In response to these concerns, several writers began to call for more collegiality or “professional community” among teachers and to investigate the impact of collaboration and collegiality on teachers’ work (Little, 1993; Louis & Kruse, 1995; McLaughlin, 1993; McLaughlin & Talbert, 1990). Research has linked collegiality to increased feelings of efficacy, a sense of collective responsibility, and greater accountability for student outcomes, among other factors (Louis & Kruse, 1995).

Third, growing out of increased concerns with social justice in schools, the “ethic of care” surfaced as a major topic in the 1980s and 1990s. Following Carol Gilligan’s (1982) groundbreaking work on women’s psychology, Noddings (1984, 1992), Beck (1994), Starratt (1994), and others have developed the “ethic of care” concept in education in ways that are compatible with notions of community (Sergiovanni, 1994).

As this surge of interest in community has played out over the last ten years, several distinct strands have developed in the literature. The next section maps the terrain of the current literature on community in education.

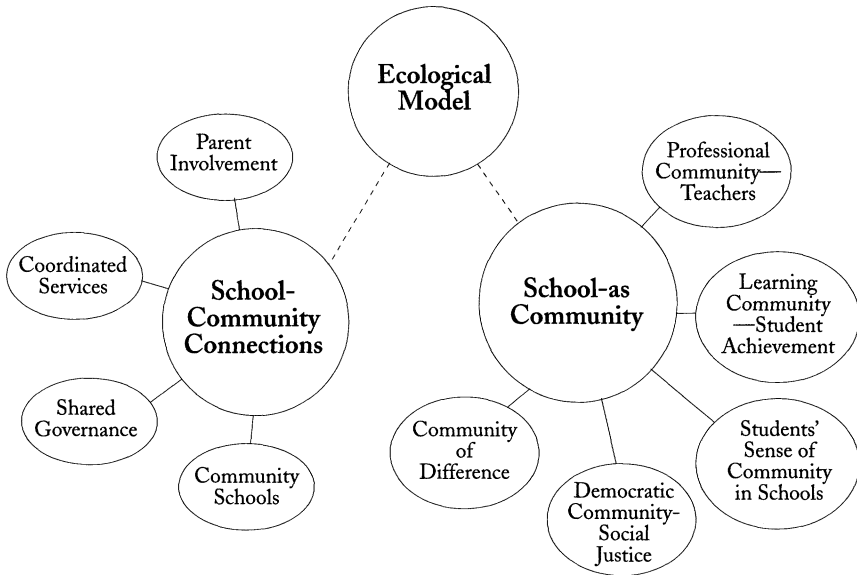
#### THE TERRAIN OF SCHOOL COMMUNITY<sup>5</sup>

The terrain of school community literature is represented graphically in figure 1. Two major, distinct strands have developed in this literature—“school-community connections” and “school-as-community”—with a number of substrands under each. In addition, a third strand is just appearing—which I label the *ecological model*—as a sort of bridge between the other two. Though this book is concerned primarily with school-as-community, it is helpful to note the distinctions among these various strands to clarify the often confusing use of the term *community* in the literature.

The major strand of “school-community connections” is concerned with the relationship between the school as organization/institution and the surrounding civic community. Included in this strand are the various “community connections experiments” (Crowson & Boyd, 1993) that have received much attention over the last ten years. These include parent involvement in schools (Epstein, 1992; Henry, 1996; Swap, 1993); coordinated services for children (Adler & Gardner, 1994; Cibulka & Kritek, 1996); shared governance structures that involve community members (e.g., some forms of school-based man-



**Fig. 1. The Terrain of School Community Literature**



agement) (Hess, 1995; Murphy & Beck, 1995); and the concept of “community schools” that are both open to community use and strive to provide “service” to the community (Skinner & Chapman, 1999).

Two points can be noted about these “school-community connections” substrands. First, while they are clearly interrelated, the writing and research under each has proceeded more or less independently; very little work has examined the conceptual and practical linkages across these strands. Second, taken together, the work across these substrands reflects a sense of the school as quite separate from the community, to the extent that connections have to be built proactively and intentionally. As noted earlier, this sense of separateness developed slowly throughout the 20th century as schools became bureaucratized, centralized, and professionalized. These various community connections experiments seem to be an effort to remedy this perceived distance between school and community.

The second major strand—“school-as-community”—focuses more on the school as a community unto itself, with most of the writings in this strand again treating the school as if it were insulated from the surrounding community. This second major strand is also divided into a number of distinct substrands. Scholars concerned with teachers’ work lives have developed a rich body of literature around “professional community” in schools (Kruse & Louis, 1997; Louis & Kruse, 1995; Scribner et al., 1999; Westheimer, 1998).

Other researchers concerned primarily with students' academic achievement focus on building "learning community" or a "community of learners" (Calderwood, 2000). Mitchell and Sackney (2000), for example, state that a learning community is "a context within which school capacity to enhance learning conditions for students are [*sic*] improved," which may be created when "educators collaboratively analyze current practices, experiment with new practices, and assess the relationship between practice and the effects of practice" (p. 1). In other substrands, researchers have explored students' "sense of community" in schools more or less for its own sake (Shields, 1999), while others attempt to correlate this sense of community—operationalized in various ways—with student outcomes including achievement (Battistich, Solomon, Kim, Watson & Schaps, 1995; Lee & Smith, 1995; Phillips, 1997; Shouse, 1996). Still other scholars have developed the idea of "democratic community" in schools (Apple, 1993; Apple & Beane, 1995; Crow & Slater, 1996; Furman & Starratt, 2002; Putnam & Putnam, 1993; Sodor, 1996; Strike, 1993), which is concerned primarily with "deliberative processes" that promote "the freedom to be heard, to share knowledge/power, and to participate in a discourse community" (Johnston, 1994, p. 128). A final substrand takes in mostly theoretical work that considers community-building in "postmodern" contexts of diversity and difference (Fine, Weiss, & Powell, 1997; Furman, 1998; Shields & Seltzer, 1997).

Again, the distinctions among these substrands are somewhat artificial; it is hard to imagine a school in which teachers felt a strong sense of community but students did not, and it is hard to imagine an authentic professional community that was not also democratic. Yet, much of the writing within these substrands has been approached in this artificially narrow way, reflecting more than anything else the "boundaries" between our own scholarly communities.

The emerging third major strand—the "ecological model"—takes the community literature in a new direction and begins to bridge the rather artificial gap between school-as-community and school-community connections. This new direction assumes that schools are inextricably embedded in the "microecology" of the local community to the extent that they contribute to the *creation* of local community (Driscoll & Kerchner, 1999; Mawhinney, 1996; Mawhinney & Kerchner, 1997). In other words, the relationship between school and community is so organically intertwined and reciprocal that it is specious to consider "school community" without also considering these linkages.

#### THE PARAMETERS IN THIS BOOK

The "map" just presented helps to clarify the parameters of this book. In terms of this framework, the chapters in this book focus primarily on the "school-as-

community” strand, with a shorter section devoted to the “ecological model.” Though diverging widely in content and specific focus, most of these chapters are concerned with how the public school as an entity (whether viewed as an organization or institution) can manifest a sense of community among teachers and among students. Thus, two major sections of the book address respectively “Teacher Community” and “Student Community,” while the “Community Theory” section explores school community conceptually. The “ecological model” strand is also concerned with a sense of community in schools, though in a more peripheral way. Here, the underlying assumption is that schools cannot manifest an authentic sense of community unless their cultural and economic embeddedness in the “microecology” of the surrounding community is recognized and promoted.

This book does not attempt to include the school-community connections strand, both because it would be unwieldy to do so, and because, in my view, the ecological approach is a far more promising direction for thinking about school-community connections than the rather limited, sometimes shallow, and/or bureaucratic approaches represented in the school-community connections substrands (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1998; Furman & Merz, 1996; Merz & Furman, 1997).

Earlier, I mentioned three parameters for the contents of this book. It is appropriate at this point to explain these in a bit more detail. First, the focus here is on community in *K-12 public schools*. As research has clearly indicated (e.g., Bryk, Lee, & Holland, 1993; Coleman & Hoffer, 1987), the issues of community-building in private schools differ from those in public schools. Private school student populations are likely to be more homogeneous than in public schools, because attendance is voluntary. Parents select private schools for their children, typically because the schools reflect their religious or other important social values. Thus, private schools generally are instances of “gathered” or “valuational” communities (Strike, 1993) of “the mind” (Tönnies, 1887/1957). In this book, the interest and concern is with the prospects for community amid the diversity experienced in public schools. This is an important concern because public schools are mirrors of our increasingly diverse society.

The second parameter is that this book is concerned with the creation of a *sense of community within schools*. All discussions of school community boil down to this fact: “Community” is an affective experience or psychological state. As Tönnies (1887/1957) originally defined it, community is a “social experience” based in natural will and trust, rather than a specific social structure. This social experience tends to create feelings of belonging, of safety, of stability, and so on. While factors associated with community (e.g., shared values, common work goals, and level of communication and collaboration) may often be the focus of study in regard to community in schools, these factors

are merely facilitating conditions or symptoms of community. If the school's students and teachers do not *experience* the psychological/affective sense of community, then a community is not present. All of the "promises" of school community are related to the possibilities for this sense of community to be created and maintained in schools.

The third parameter is that this book is concerned *with implications for leadership practice*. This is important, given the multiple barriers to community, which require proactive, intentional leadership to overcome. This is particularly important in public schools with diverse populations. While the idea of community has received a great deal of attention in the leadership literature, to date there is little research-based guidance for leadership in the creation of the type of "democratic" community appropriate for diverse contexts (Furman & Starratt, 2002).

In sum, this book is concerned primarily with *creating a sense of community in public schools with diverse populations*, and relatedly with *implications for leadership practice*.

## THE CHAPTERS

Section I—"The School as Community: Extending Our Conceptual Understanding"—focuses on conceptual and theoretical considerations in regard to school community. The chapters in this section serve to enhance our understanding of the concept of community, some of the issues of applying community theory to schools, and some of the theoretical linkages between community and other concepts in education. In chapter 1, Lynn G. Beck provides a textual analysis of the "images" of community that appear in the education literature. She analyzes the multilevel complexity of community images, at the same time finding an underlying coherence in the various uses of the concept. Her identification of the categories of images that recur across the literature provides, in my view, a promising theoretical framework for future research. Chapter 2 presents my analysis of the relationship between postmodernism and the concept of community as it is applied to schools. My overall concern in this chapter is the possibility for creating of a sense of community amid the diversity of the school in postmodern society. The analysis offers a framework for postmodernism and a nested model for community possibilities in postmodern times, and explores the idea of "community of otherness" for schools. In Chapter 3, Colleen A. Capper, Maureen W. Keyes, and Madeline M. Hafner explore the relationships between community and two other concepts that are important, current themes in education—spirituality and social justice. They analyze the uses of "community" in the spirituality and leadership literature and consider whether these uses of community reflect "mod-

ernist” notions of community or poststructural/feminist notions that are more in tune with social justice.

Section II—“Research on School Community: Focus on Teachers”—includes three chapters that report recent research on “professional community” among teachers. In chapter 4, Paul Goldman and Gerald Tindal present a case study of a strong “minicommunity” among the primary teachers in an elementary school. Their study points up a number of contradictions or “paradoxes” of community-building in individual schools, including the increasing isolation of grade level subcommunities as they develop their own strong values and ways of relating. Goldman and Tindal consider the role of leadership in overcoming this paradox. In chapter 5, Ulrich C. Reitzug and Mary John O’Hair turn our attention to the idea of democratic community and examine the role of a school renewal network in promoting democratic community in six elementary schools. They probe the successes and relative failures across the schools, including the struggles of school principals to share real power with teachers. Their findings reinforce the notion that democratic community is a *process* rather than an end product. Chapter 6, by Carolyn M. Shields, focuses on the idea of “communities of difference”—inclusive school communities in which diversity is embraced rather than “homogenized.” Shields draws on the experiences and insights of a diverse set of Canadian teachers to propose a framework for examining whether schools are moving toward being communities of difference.

In Section III—“Research on School Community: Focus on Students”—three chapters present recent research related to sense of community among students. In chapter 7, Karen Osterman reviews the literature on community among students to explore the importance of community for students, the extent to which students *do* experience a sense of community in schools, and the ways in which schools influence students’ sense of community. Finding that many, if not most, students do not experience their schools as communities, Osterman’s review points up the importance of community building as part of the school reform agenda. In chapter 8, Carolyn M. Shields again considers “community of difference,” but this time from the perspective of students. She allows students from a predominantly Navajo high school to “speak for themselves” about their culture, their schooling, and their aspirations, contrasting their voices to the sometimes erroneous assumptions of educators. Her findings suggest that, to build community of difference, educators need to create an appropriate school climate, need to know their students better, and need to focus on interpersonal relationships as well as academics. Concluding section III, in chapter 9 Charles A. Peck, Chrysan Galluci, and Debbie Staub consider a neglected topic in school community literature, the issue of the inclusion of special education students in classrooms and school community. Their action research in an inclusive elementary classroom explores the

meanings that nondisabled students and their teachers construct from their experiences with “vulnerable” children, and the opportunities that arise for creating inclusive communities.

Section IV—“Research on School Community: The Ecological Perspective”—takes us into a developing strand of literature that is beginning to bridge the gap between “school-as-community” and “school-community connections.” Where much of the literature on school community seems to assume that schools are “insular,” or disengaged from their surrounding communities, the ecological perspective assumes that schools are fundamentally embedded in their surrounding communities through social relationships, and that these relationships create flows of “social capital” that are reciprocal. In chapter 10, Hanne B. Mawhinney uses a case study of a high school in an economically depressed region to show that schools can function as “basic industries” that provide communities with tangible supports to enhance quality of life. In chapter 11, Robert G. Croninger and Barbara Finkelstein draw from a study of school reform in a large metropolitan school district to further illustrate the ecological perspective. They call for an expanded notion of community that takes in the larger “ecology” of multiple communities in which children live and learn and schools are embedded. They argue that, for successful collaboration, schools must engage in a “politics of collaboration” across these communities.

Finally, in the concluding chapter of this book, I will consider the lessons provided by these chapters for the practice of community in public schools, with particular attention to implications for leadership practice.

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#### NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

1. For comprehensive discussions of the liberal-communitarian tensions in American life see Selznick (1991), Kirkpatrick (1986) and Beck and Foster (1999). Additionally, Westheimer (1998) has fruitfully applied the liberal-communitarian framework to a study of community in two schools. For a comprehensive discussion of the individualism versus communitarianism tension in American society see the two books by Bellah and his associates (1985, 1991), along with Reynolds and Norman's (1988) edited collection of essays responding to Bellah's work.

2. In this discussion of historical trends, I draw from Beck and Foster (1999), Callahan (1962), Merz and Furman (1997), and Tyack (1974).

3. In his seminal sociological work on community, Tönnies contrasts *Gemeinschaft* (community) with *Gesellschaft* (society), in which relationships are contractual and rational.

4. The 1990 Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education (Mitchell & Cunningham, 1990) provides an in-depth analysis of the changing social context for education in the late 20th century.

5. This section is adapted from my foreword to the special issue of *Educational Administration Quarterly* on School as Community (February, 1999).