CHAPTER 1

Introduction and Overview of the Book

Diana G. Pounder

Collaborative work organizations have become the focus of both research and practice in business and industry during the 1990s. This focus is appearing in research and practice in education as well. For example, the conference programs of recent American Educational Research Association (AERA) and University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) have focused on collaboration and related themes such as community, cooperation, and so forth. Some may view emphasis on collaboration (or community) in schools as the second stage of the initial "site-based management" movement initiated in the late 1980s. School organizations have begun expanding their democratic governance emphasis with teacher, parent, and community advisory councils; engaging in partnerships with other human service agencies or businesses; or redesigning educators' work to add a group or team emphasis.

Most scholars focus on only one particular type of collaborative work arrangement—such as school-business partnerships, industry-education collaboration, regular education-special education collaborations, or even schools as "learning communities." Further, they view the study of collaboration through a single conceptual or disciplinary framework or lens. For instance, personnel administration experts tend to use a social-psychological framework to study collaboration or other group efforts. Other educational administration authorities may use organizational theories, political or micropolitical lenses, economic frameworks, leadership theories, or theories of teaching and learning to understand the success (or failure) of collaborative organizational efforts. However, because collaboration may increase the complexity of organizing and

managing, a single lens, framework, or disciplinary approach is an inadequate aid to understanding such complex organizational phenomena. Further, when building collaborative schools, practicing administrators and teachers need to consider multiple factors such as: (1) What organizational structure will enhance collaborative school efforts? (2) What change processes are important in building school collaboration? (3) What are the costs (in effort, energy, time, or other resources) of collaborating with other external agencies? (4) How can teachers' work be redesigned to enhance collaboration among teachers and what are the outcomes for teachers and students? (5) How can educators (e.g., administrators, teachers, special education teachers, counselors, psychologists) overcome their separate role socializations to build collaborative work relationships within schools? and (6) What are the implications of school collaboration for teaching and learning, school leadership, and leadership preparation? Thus, this book presents chapters that discuss collaboration research and practice from multiple perspectives. Specifically, the book includes chapters which discuss each of the following:

1. The structural considerations that are critical to school collaboration; uses an organizational theory framework (Johnson, chap. 2)

2. The change processes necessary for collaborative schools; uses an organizational change and development lens (Barott & Raybould, chap. 3)

3. Collaboration between schools and other human service agencies; uses an organizational economics framework (Galvin, chap. 4)

4. Redesigning teachers' work to have a collaborative team emphasis; uses a group work design approach (Pounder, chap. 5)

5. Collaboration between and among educators in different roles (e.g., teacher, counselor, principal, special education teacher, social worker); uses a role theory and professional socialization perspective (Hart, chap. 6)

6. Implications for instruction; uses teaching-learning literature (Evans-Stout, chap. 7)

7. Implications for school leadership; uses leadership research (Crow, chap. 8)

8. Implications for preparing educational leaders; draws upon knowledge and experience from a collaborative educator preparation program (Matthews, chap. 9)

Each chapter is authored by a member of the Department of Educational Administration at the University of Utah, and, as such, is a col-

laborative work effort itself. Our interest in writing a book on school collaboration probably has a couple of sources. First, like many researchers, we perhaps had some interest in this topic due to our own professional experiences with work collaboration. We have experienced successful and not-so-successful collaborative work dynamics as well as highly collaborative and highly isolated work environments. Why has our department been able to engage in a decade or more of successful collaborative endeavors and to maintain healthy colleaguial dynamics in spite of faculty turnover and other departmental changes? And why have some other departments had to struggle to come to consensus, to share common goals, to work together successfully in spite of earnest efforts to do so? We did not have many answers to these questions. Further, as we began work on the book, we realized that little empirical work exists to address the nature of effective school collaboration; much more of the literature on school collaboration is conceptual or even ideological.

Second, our interest in collaboration was stimulated by several informal discussions between and among department faculty over lunch. As we exchanged our ideas and observations, we realized that each of us focused on collaboration through different disciplinary and experiential lenses. And, that it is the combination or integration of these multiple perspectives which may have greatest potential for explaining effective collaborative efforts.

Each chapter author has professional and scholarly expertise in a particular disciplinary area. These areas include organizational theory (Bob Johnson), organizational change and development (James Barott and Rebecca Raybould), organizational economics (Patrick Galvin), group work design and personnel administration (Diana Pounder), work roles and professional socialization (Ann Weaver Hart), instructional leadership (Karen Evans-Stout), leadership and the school principal (Gary Crow), and leadership preparation (Joseph Matthews). Thus, the book comprehensively addresses the topic of school collaboration with a multidisciplinary approach.

CHAPTER CONTENTS

The book is organized into three major sections: (1) foundations of collaboration—organizational structure and organizing change process considerations, (2) different types of school collaboration—interagency collaboration and intraschool collaboration of teachers and educators in multiple roles, and (3) implications for instruction, leadership, and educator preparation. The book progresses from more broad or abstract understandings of organizations in the early chapters to more specific

and concrete considerations and implications of restructuring for school collaboration in the later chapters. The chapters discuss conceptual issues and considerations relevant to collaboration, report research findings, and present the "promises and pitfalls" for practice in collaborative schools. The content of each specific chapter is elaborated in the chapter descriptions that follow.

In chapter 2, Bob Johnson examines the ways we organize schools—how schools divide, coordinate, and control the work done. Just as the halls in a building direct and define the flow of traffic in the building, so the structure of an organization directs and defines the flow and pattern of human interaction in the organization. Given the structure of most schools, what patterns of interaction are being defined, enhanced, or hindered by this structure? How do these patterns of interaction facilitate or inhibit collaborative efforts? Additionally, Johnson discusses the nature of the core technology of schools—teaching and learning. He argues that "form should follow function" and that because the teaching and learning function of schools has fairly high levels of ambiguity and equivocality, schools have a higher need for communication and the exchange of ideas among workers than do some organizations—thus a greater need for work collaboration. Lastly, he discusses several features of schools that should be considered in organizing for collaboration: (1) the stimulus-overload, labor-intensive nature of school environments, (2) the autonomy norm which defines the teaching profession, (3) the pupil-control theme inherent in schools, and (4) the vulnerability of public schools to their environments.

In chapter 3, Jim Barott and Rebecca Raybould examine the nature of change in organizations and the implications for organizing for school collaboration. They discuss collaborative change issues of interdependence versus professional autonomy or discretion, collaboration versus conflict, and costs versus benefits. They also address the tension between change and persistence, discussing the distinctions between first-order change and second order change. First-order change refers to change that occurs within a system and allows the basic nature of the system to persist. Changing organizational members is an example of this type of change; the people are new, but the positions and duties are the same. Second-order change transforms the system, altering the basic nature of the organizing system. This second type of change requires a change in the group's assumptions or rules of relating or interacting.

The authors further outline some of the problems, difficulties, and impasses that may result with first- and second-order changes. Lastly, they discuss some of the promises and pitfalls of changing schools into collaborative organizations.

In chapter four, Patrick Galvin, using economic theories of orga-

nization, examines the nature of interagency collaboration between schools and social service agencies. He traces the history of failure of educational and social services as well as the history of interagency collaboration dating from the 1930s. He then offers an economic explanation for the shortcomings of many collaborative efforts—largely those of costs such as coordination costs, foregone opportunity costs, information costs, and ownership/monitoring costs. He argues that the demise of some collaborative efforts may be a function of rational decision-making to reduce collaboration costs rather than of a lack of commitment to the ideology or goals of collaboration. He closes with recommendations for changing governmental incentives to encourage or allow effective collaboration between schools and other social service agencies. Galvin's conceptual analysis is especially intriguing because it uses a framework (economic) that many of us neglect in our analysis of social interactions such as those occurring in collaborative endeavors.

In chapter 5, I discuss how teachers' work can be redesigned to have a work group or team emphasis. I argue that the educational experiences of students can be less fragmented and more holistic if delivered by an interdisciplinary teacher team rather than individual teachers addressing separate subject matter and curricular areas. Addressing group structural elements including job characteristics (e.g., discretion, skill variety, feedback) and work group composition, the chapter presents a conceptual framework for effective work groups or teams. The model also addresses organizational context factors and healthy interpersonal process considerations. Using the model as an organizing framework, I review research on interdisciplinary teacher teams in schools, concluding with an analysis of the promises and pitfalls of interdisciplinary teacher teams engaging in work collaboration.

In chapter 6, Ann Weaver Hart provides a conceptual, empirical, and practical look at the functions, challenges, and outcomes of intraschool collaboration among educators holding different professional roles (e.g., school teachers, counselors, psychologists, social workers). She argues that collaboration among the professionals who work in schools marshals a more complete professional resource toward the achievement of educational goals and the solutions of educational problems and that educators need a broader understanding of one another's roles and functions and the tools of collaborative problem-solving in order to maximize their joint impacts on children and youth. The chapter is organized around four themes: (1) professional work roles in school, including role concepts, role functions, and role socialization; (2) the social structure of professional work groups; (3) conflict management; and (4) collaborative problem-solving.

In chapter 7, Karen Evans-Stout addresses the implications of collaboration for instructional practice. She (1) synthesizes what we know about instructional collaboration from past efforts, (2) discusses some of the known promises and pitfalls of collaboration for instructional improvement, (3) analyzes the changing context of education and some of the tensions of teaching and learning that have implications for instructional collaboration, and (4) offers some recommendations for those considering collaboration as a means to foster instructional improvement. In particular, she argues that recent instructional goals emphasize teaching for in-depth understanding or student-centered learning in a rich authentic context; that is, learning as knowledge construction. This type of instruction may require teachers to negotiate certain day-to-day teaching-learning interactions and tensions in ways that are more easily done privately than publicly/collaboratively. These and other contextual factors must be considered when restructuring schools for instructional collaboration.

In chapter 8, Gary Crow considers the implications of collaboration for school leadership. The chapter examines the expanding nature of leadership in collaborative schools—the quantity and spheres of leadership. He discusses the influence and systemic nature of leadership and collaboration and follows that with a review of relevant literature on the expansion of leadership roles and leadership in school reform settings. The chapter concludes with a discussion of implications of school collaboration—its promises and pitfalls—for school administrators in particular.

In chapter 9, Joseph Matthews discusses the importance of and need for training more administrators and other educators to work in more collaborative school settings. In particular, few school administrators have had any formal training and practice in teaming, collaborating and consulting. They are often ill-equipped to function with other educators, parents, and support staff in a collaborative culture. Matthews argues that those who wish to collaborate effectively must study, model, and rehearse specific methods and practices both at the pre-service level in preparation programs and at the in-service level for practicing educators. The chapter then describes a specific training program developed at the University of Utah to train administrators and other educators in different professional roles to work collaboratively with one another in school settings.

In the closing chapter, chapter 10, I offer a synthesis of the major issues and dilemmas that cut across the previous chapters. These dilemmas are framed as collaboration's "promises versus pitfalls"—or opportunities versus challenges for schools. The synthesizing issues include: (1) the need for change toward more collaborative schools versus the

tendency of schools to persist in traditional approaches to education, (2) resource gains versus costs of collaboration, (3) professional interdependence versus professional autonomy or discretion (and the related concepts of independence, privacy, and isolation), (4) shared influence (or leadership) versus shared accountability (or responsibility), and (5) balance of influence versus overcontrol or underinvolvement among collaborative parties.

INTENDED USES

We hope you find the contents of this book useful, informative, and thought provoking. Our intended audience includes education professors (especially those in educational administration, teacher preparation, and social and cultural foundations) and school practitioners (especially school administrators and teachers). In addition, district-level administrators, education policy-makers (e.g., school board members, state office of education leaders, and state legislators), professional support personnel (e.g., school counselors, psychologists, or social workers), and perhaps social service professionals or other human service professionals involved in interagency collaboration may find the book's contents relevant to their work.

For academicians, the book provides multiple disciplinary perspectives for understanding the "promises and pitfalls" of school collaboration efforts. The book may inform research by providing research findings and implications for practice from different theoretical or conceptual frameworks. The book chapters also discuss multiple types of collaboration (e.g., interagency collaboration and intraschool collaboration) that are not included in most single textbooks. Thus, the book provides a more comprehensive discussion of collaborative school efforts than any other single source we could find. It also informs cross-disciplinary teaching in colleges of education and offers specific guidance on the design of preparation programs emphasizing collaborative schools. The book has the potential to be a primary or secondary text in any number of education courses, including school restructuring, school change or organizational change and development, school leadership, teacher leadership, schools as organizations or organizational analysis, educational policy studies, educational planning, human resource administration, or a basic introductory course to educational administration.

For education practitioners, the book presents a logical organization of major considerations in school collaboration initiatives: the organizational structure, the change process, interagency and intraschool collab-

orative efforts; and implications for instruction, leadership, and leadership preparation. Further, the book provides practitioners with a concise presentation of research findings from organizational, change process, economic, social-psychological, sociocultural, instructional, and leadership literatures on school collaboration.

Whatever your interest, we hope that we have offered an array of perspectives on school collaboration that inform you and stimulate your consideration of collaborative efforts in education.