Role Changes, Learning Enhancements and Professional Development Through a University-School Collaborative

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Children and families in poverty face great challenges in acquiring social and economic support to advance the quality of their lives. The US Census (2000) indicates that of those in poverty, over 35 percent are children. Many impoverished children are enrolled in schools that lack the resources and programs to equip them to become successful adults (Children's Defense Fund, January 2004). Fewer than half of children are reported to graduate from high school (Children's Defense Fund, June 2004). In recognition of the need for more outcome accountability among public schools serving low income and poor children, the federal government enacted the public law: No Child Left Behind. However, as an unfunded mandate, school districts have been burdened with trying to meet the law's requirements without requisite financial resources. Despite the fiscal shortfalls in public education, parents and school officials are collaborating to introduce supportive new services to enhance the school environment. These services contribute to "full service schools." They address learning barriers and create a supportive learning environment for children. Full service schools integrate a range of programs that include mental health and health programs, after school services, and preventive child protective services to enhance the school environment so that learning can be optimized (Dryfoos, 2002). In such settings the roles of principals, teachers, school social workers and other school personnel may change (Briar-Lawson & Lawson, 1997).

The development of a full service school connects students, families, schools and community social services in a network that enhances social service delivery while strengthening collaborative relationships among parents, the community, the school and services (Allen-Meares,1996; Allen-Meares, Washington, & Welsh, 1986). The full service school has the capacity to reshape the school environment into a child centered and family supportive environment to improve academic achievement (Dryfoos, 2002). Just as new services may change the roles and practices of public school personnel, so too may a University assisted full service school alter some of the programs and learning opportunities in a partner University.

This article presents a case study of a collaborative involving a neighboring elementary school and a school of social work. We report preliminary findings resulting from this collaborative, which sought to improve well-being and educational outcomes for children and their families. We present how social work students collaborated with families as they engaged with elementary school personnel to improve the children's learning environment. Enhanced university faculty and staff roles and programs are also described. We also report on how professional social workers and teachers adopted new skills and knowledge and how the collaboration fostered simultaneous professional development in the elementary school and the University at Albany's School of Social Welfare (SSW). Professional development became a key design feature of the collaboration.

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Theoretical Foundations

Theoretical foundations grounded in parent empowerment, rather than parent involvement, on social capital formation (Briar-Lawson & Lawson, 1997) and in capacity building (Sherraden, 1991) framed this work partnership work. These are also theoretical frameworks offered to students in community building classes in the SSW.

Adult learning theory reminds us that adults bring a history of previous learning and knowledge to any professional development activity (Knowles, 1998). Prior learning and beliefs will shape how professionals engage with others around them. Some who might have blamed parents for children's failure in school might now see them as resources with indigenous expertise. Thus, a key feature of this theory-based strategy involved the positioning of parents as leaders and experts in capacity and community building work.

Partnerships involving schools of social work have traditionally involved professionals and their organizations rather than community residents and neighbors. When such residents and neighbors represent different experiences than many that undergird the lives of social work students and faculty, they offer new expertise. Much of their wisdom and expertise is not found in the textbooks. Finding ways to tap this expertise and to be guided by it became one of the main goals and challenges of this collaborative initiative. Parents may know best why their children are not succeeding, why some parents are uninvolved with their children's schooling, and why some youth are angry and explosive. Problems like crime in the neighborhood or children's school failure may be less effectively addressed with traditional approaches that rely solely on professional expertise or models such as the PTA that often are associated with middle-income parents. Those who are closest to problems and the barriers in solving them may have critical insights into how to tackle them differently. Finding ways to infuse indigenous knowledge into University-public school-community problem solving became one of the key goals of the collaborative and fit with the theoretical

underpinnings of the classes in community building in our SSW.

Experiential approaches to professional development can be an effective method to enhance the knowledge and skills of social work students and to facilitate role changes (Tsang 1993; Vanderwoerd, Muthengi, & Mullenburg, 2004; Johnson, 2000; & Weaver, 1998;). In addition, children who are poor cannot be "serviced out of poverty" (Schorr, 1997). Thus traditional service oriented social work approaches may need to be augmented with asset enhancing strategies. Thus, this partnership model is based on the social capital framework that promotes asset enhancement.

In addition, experiential learning has become central to the work of engaged universities through the Campus Compact and related University-community partnership initiatives. Experiential learning that doubles as civic engagement and community building helps university students and the communities that they are serving (Torres, 2000). Thus, the benefits can be simultaneously beneficial.

Mutually beneficial collaboratives

Collaborative challenges involving such partnerships involve having sufficient resources and personnel to deliver on the programmatic and service plans, having sufficient philosophical agreement among all parties, the ability to keep one's eye on the prize (improved outcomes for children and families) and to set differences aside in service of these goals, to be inventive and to treat each barrier as the next sub goal to be addressed.

According to Mattessich, Murray-Close, & Monsey (2001) collaborations are "mutually beneficial and well-defined relationships entered into by two or more organizations to achieve common goals. The relationship includes a commitment to mutual relationships and goals; a jointly developed structure and shared responsibility; mutual authority and accountability for success and sharing of resources and rewards" (p. 4). They argue that successful collaborations involve a number of factors: environment, membership characteristics, process

and structures, communication, purpose and resources (Mattessiech et al., 2001). These factors played a key role in both the success as well as some of the obstacles that had to be overcome to foster this University-public school collaborative. For example, in the case study that follows several key issues emerged involving resources, training and capacity building for the parents, and communication.

The School of Social Work and Community Building

Schools of Social Work have long depended on social service agencies to provide experiential education for students through fieldwork internships. For many schools of social work, including the SSW, community contributions have often been defined by the nature and type of fieldwork services and the hours provided to clients, organizations and neighborhoods each year. Such field partnerships have been expanded to include new service developments, research and demonstration projects and community building involving cross agency and cross-institutional collaboratives.

University-community collaborations position schools of social work to become directly involved in community building (Austin et al., 1999; Cook, Bond, Jones, & Greif, 2002; Cousins, 1998; Powell et al.,1999). The University of Texas at Austin collaborated with a youth development organization to assist a local community to address its crime problems (Cook et al., 2002). The University of Pittsburgh Community Enhancement Research Network gathered data from a community to assist residents in addressing their needs (Cook et al., 2002).

Findings suggest that such collaborations require a different set of skills for faculty, expanding beyond those of research and teaching. Faculty can assume the role of a community partner, accepting residents as experts regarding their problems (Ishisaka, Sohng, Farwell, & Uehara, 2004). As community partners, faculty collaborate in grant writing and action research, directly interfacing with community residents with the goal of enhanc-

ing community well being as determined by community residents. Professional development to advance collaboration is often a by-product of formal strategic planning sessions, which may also serve as a form of in service training (Garet, Porter, Desimonte, Birman, & Yoon, 2001). Often professional development and change involving a collaborative become embedded in the partnership process as consensus is sought and rules, norms and plans are laid.

At the time this collaborative began, our SSW had formed partnerships with many state and community agencies. Of note involving collaborative practices and model building was the Internship in Aging Program (IAP) which was being implemented with community partners. IAP was also a capacity building resource, positioning students to be leaders in the development of aging services and creating new cross agency partnerships in support of field work rotations and other professional development experiences. Direct neighborhood engagement had not occurred. Because of the SSW's social justice commitments, rising concerns about poverty and related risk factors involving children and families in the neighborhood, representatives from the SSW would embark on a collaborative with the adjacent elementary school in an effort to address shared concerns about improving the learning environment for the children. This collaborative engagement would foster a more altruistic and mutually beneficial partnership (Maurrasse, 2001).

Joining Forces

In our collaborative work we draw heavily on University partnerships with schools in Florida, Ohio, Utah and elsewhere in which parents deliver peer services through Family Resource Centers and foster key, creative trial and error improvements in the school-community (Briar- Lawson, 2000). Such parent based, peer services are reinforced by research that asserts that family involvement is a key facet of children's academic success (Epstein, 2001). A key characteristic of effective collaboration and

essential for work with parents is that there is understanding and mutual respect among the collaborative members (Mattessich, et al., 2001). Thus, parent involvement, found in traditional approaches in public schools, was replaced with parent empowerment. This empowerment and capacity building focus changed the role parents were to play in fostering improvement and thus to potentially advance this collaborative.

The SSW began its outreach with the adjacent elementary school, Philip Schuyler, in Albany, New York in February 2000. Prior to that time, one or two students from the SSW had been placed in internships each year and a pilot had tested family centered practices with students and parents. Beyond this, there had been no formal and sustained partnership or engagement agenda between the SSW and this adjacent elementary school.

Meeting the Challenges of an Urban School Neighbor

Most of the children attending Philip Schuyler Elementary School reside in Arbor Hill, an inner city community in Albany New York. Philip Schuyler Elementary School was one of the largest elementary schools in New York State (excluding New York City) with an enrollment of nearly 1000 students serving children from pre-kindergarten through sixth grade. The student population was comprised of 80 percent African American, 8.6 percent Hispanic, 8 percent white (non-Hispanic), and 3.7 percent Asian children. Of these students, 91 percent were eligible for a free or reduced lunch, 81–90 percent receive some form of public assistance (NYSDE, 2003). Many of these students were at-risk of low achievement.

Philip Schuyler Elementary School was considered by the State Education Department of Education as one of a group of schools having higher student needs and requiring greater resources than other elementary schools in the district (NYSDE, 2000). In 1999–2000 this elementary school was seen as underperforming with
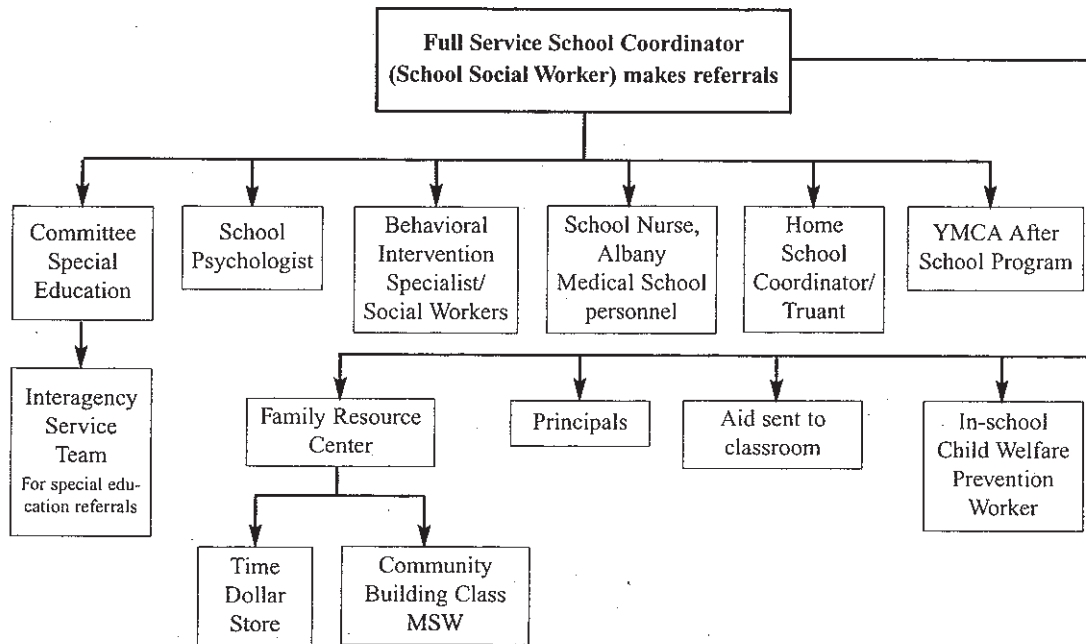
89 percent of the students eligible for Title 1 remedial reading and math. In 1999–2000, the standardized tests of 4th grade performance in English Language Arts, Mathematics and Science indicated that the school failed to meet competency levels and tested lower than other high need schools in New York (NYSDE, 2003). In 1999–2000, the school was 33 points below the state standard of fourth-grade students in English Language Arts Performance. Poor academic performance was accompanied by behavior problems involving a suspension rate of 11.4 percent and absentee rate of 10 percent. Other indices of educational challenges involved reports that school suspensions (of up to five days) were high, as noted by the Director of Pupil Personnel Services (S. Ferlazzo, personal communication, June 12, 2003). Additionally, the school had, on the average, about the standard number of four referrals per semester to a citywide alternative special education program for those children with severe behavioral problems.

Philip Schuyler School had two principals whose offices received an average of 40 referrals a day for fighting and other problematic behavior requiring disciplinary action. Managing this many disciplinary problems impeded the principals' ability to focus more on educational goals.

Collaborative Design of the Full Service School

A new dean of the adjacent SSW had arrived at about the time that these needs at this elementary school were becoming pronounced. At the same time heavy snows and a cold snap had hit the area. The partnership was triggered when the principals called the Retired Senior Volunteer Program, operated by the SSW, requesting crocheted and knitted woolens for the children who were unprepared for the freezing and harsh weather. Seeking to foster a more institutional level partnership, the new Dean met with the principals in February 2000 and offered to build programs that would respond to the needs of the children and families. The elementary school's other collaborator was Leslie College,

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Figure 1: Philip Schuyler Elementary School 911 Classroom/Student Need Response Procedure

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                    │ Full Service School Coordinator │
                    │ (School Social Worker) makes referrals │
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| Committee Special Education | School Psychologist | Behavioral Intervention Specialist/ Social Workers | School Nurse, Albany Medical School personnel | Home School Coordinator/ Truant | YMCA After School Program |

| Interagency Service Team For special education referrals | | Family Resource Center | Principals | Aid sent to classroom | In-school Child Welfare Prevention Worker |

| Time Dollar Store | Community Building Class MSW |

offering professional development for teachers with an innovative reading program. While academic achievement was to be enhanced with the new reading initiative, the school climate was not seen as effective for learning due to fights, a climate described as "potentially explosive", and poor parent involvement. During 2000–2001, meetings were held with teachers and administrators at the elementary school to determine what would be most helpful. Teachers, principals and the school social worker helped design a "911 system" involving immediate responses from service providers to problem students (See Figure 1).

This 911 system was designed to free teachers to use their new skills and strategies derived from the Leslie College reading program (Cohen & Hill, 2000; Garet et al. 2001). If a high need child in the classroom required a behavioral intervention the goal was to have the school social worker

provide an immediate assessment and make a referral to an in house service provider collocated at the school.

This full service school model was implemented with the school social worker (alumna) leading the process. Reinforcing this work was the fact that the University Provost sent a "delegation" from the school district to a University-Community Partnership Conference at the University of Pennsylvania. The delegation included one of the two principals, the SSW Dean and another faculty member and potential supporters of the initiative. This conference was one of the professional development milestones that helped reinforce some of the ideas being introduced and developed at this elementary school.

An assistant dean for outreach and community partnerships from SSW was appointed to help with such initiatives. One of his first accomplishments

involved successful funding of an AmeriCorps *Vista grant. This provided stipends to parents and grandparents in the neighborhood to be leaders in capacity building in the school. The parents, as AmeriCorps*VISTA members, served as the nucleus of a group of parents who developed the school's new Family Resource Center. Complementing this AmeriCorps*Vista grant was another secured by a SSW faculty member to provide behavioral intervention specialists. This second grant emerged when a local agency sought to partner with and to support the elementary school and its full service school goals. The grant fortified the 911 model as it funded specialized social workers to assist with a rapid response to teachers with special needs or disruptive children in the classroom. The 911 response system ensured that when children presented special needs in the classroom which stretched the capacity of the teacher to focus on the other children, that an immediate referral to the school social worker would be made who in turn would mobilize appropriate services. This 911 rapid response to special needs children also engaged the Family Resource Center whose members were able to assist as appropriate.

Collaboration involved capacity building not just in the elementary school but also simultaneously in the SSW. In the SSW, this required: 1) positioning the assistant dean for outreach to be freed up to be centrally involved in the launch and oversight of the collaborative, 2) forming a wider community consortium of key stakeholders who could support the work and provide related services at the elementary school as needed, 3) capacity building supports and training for the parents, 4) successful grant writing to bring new resources to the public school.

Parent-Led Services

The parent-led Family Resource Center located in the elementary school was heralded by parents, principals, and students as a way to foster a more effective relationship with families whose engagement with the academic achievement of their children was seen to be pivotal to the success of all. In

fact, the development of an improved relationship with parents was expected to be one key link to academic improvement (Briar-Lawson, 1998; Briar-Lawson & Lawson, 1997). Positioning parents as assets and resources helped to showcase them as potential co-leaders in developing needed services to address the behavioral and learning barriers of children. The AmeriCorps*VISTA parents developed and maintained the Family Resource Center. Parents organized breakfast workshops to provide peer supports, professional development for other parents and promote new programs and services. The goals of the Family Resource Center were to provide services and supports for parents involving occupational, educational and economic ladders and related supports to children in the school addressing barriers to academic performance. Parents identified the fact that some of the children did not have school supplies to do homework. Since collaboration success depends on effective communication (Mattessich et al., 2001), open and honest communication was needed to advance the collaborative process. Prizing parent's agendas and perspectives became essential to the collaborative.

With the help of SSW faculty and administrators, parents instituted a Time Dollar project through the creation of a school store. This Time Dollar initiative empowers people to convert their personal skills, talents, and volunteer time into purchasing power by helping others, rebuilding the social capital of the school-community (Cahn, 2000). Every hour of volunteering is worth one Time Dollar. The teachers and parents determined what items would be stocked in the school store and what student activities would earn Time Dollars. Parents and children were able to redeem their Time Dollars for items such as refurbished computers, bicycles and school supplies. The success of the Time Dollar store was unanticipated by SSW, as parents and children earned Time Dollars faster than SSW could find donations to stock the store. This was resolved when some of the SSW students located new community donors from

neighborhood churches. Later, the school's Time Dollar store was temporarily disrupted as the United Way, SSW and the City of Albany attempted to replicate the Time Dollar Store in a collaborative in a nearby city employment services center. The recognition of the need to develop better replication and scale up plans resulted in the restoration of the Time Dollar store at the school. Further, this set back helped all the parties to better understand how running the Time Dollar Store was like running a small business requiring strict accountability and oversight of the earned time dollars.

The Family Resource Center faced internal and external challenges. One internal challenge was ensuring that parent leaders developed the requisite skills to effectively administer the center. The assistant dean for outreach facilitated parent capacity building and team building to foster the needed skills. Some of these skills involved parent's learning how to collaborate with one another and how to be more empathetic with parents who were seen as unmotivated and, thus, unable to address their own " problems." Changing attitudes among parents toward one another was an essential component in successful capacity building and parental outreach.

Key external challenges involved the funding agency. For a period of time AmeriCorps*Vista required that college graduates be considered for the Family Resource Center positions. SSW worked with the funders to address this programmatic change and to ensure that parents could continue to be hired.

Service learning with SSW students

Macro graduate students in the adjacent SSW enrolled in a community-building class were involved in several service learning projects with parents of the Family Resource Center. A macro student task group focused on fund raising. This included aiding parents in identifying a donor database and facilitating the development of solicitation letters. SSW students learned that capacity building

with parents fostered parental empowerment as they assumed ownership of the process and the project's product.

Another macro SSW student group collaborated on a needs assessment instrument that the Family Resource Center parents could administer to other parents. The SSW students learned to be cognizant of the educational level of the parents and collaborated on developing a survey instrument that was easy to read, and useful to the parents. This was a new professional development opportunity for some SSW students; they learned the importance of being "parent guided." They acknowledged the sensitivity and skill it required to collaborate and value parent goals. A small university approved study was conducted with the macro students at the end of the class to determine if learning of community building skills was facilitated by involvement in the Family Resource Center. Among the 24 students who responded, two-thirds (n=16) reported that the community residents gave them an appreciation of what is required to collaborate with parents. Paralleling the work of the macro class, faculty and students in micro classes created a colloquium where families shared the importance of receiving services that embraced an intergenerational practice perspective. Grandparents, parents and children presented their views to the micro class students and faculty. From this a video was produced on intergenerational practice perspectives. Parents, grandparents and children helped to engage graduate students in new practice concepts focused on being more inclusive of all generations and advancing more culturally competent practices.

SSW students' interactions with parents and with grandparents provided unique, experiential professional development opportunities on ways to collaborate and be guided by community residents. Moreover, these SSW students learned to recognize and value as assets the parental expertise that was offered, including indigenous knowledge of the community, perspectives on barriers to school achievement and to parental success.

Faculty and student involvement with the elementary school piqued the interest of others in the SSW. Staff from SSW began volunteering during lunch hours to help with the Family Resource Center and Time Dollar store. A faculty member helped with a "school" beautification project. This resulted in children's art contests, which adorned a bulletin board of the SSW. A SSW faculty member assisted with the elementary school garden, which was planted on the adjacent University campus. SSW macro students wrote the grant to fund the garden. Elementary students learned how to grow food. In an effort to support the children and parents, where appropriate, the SSW purchased products that were made by parents and children from Philip Schuyler Elementary School. For example, SSW purchases of holiday cards came from a newly established parent micro enterprise.

Increasingly selective SSW students and faculty who may have not have had much involvement with the neighborhood initially found ways to engage in successes with children and parents. Instead of the children and families being anonymous neighbors, they increasingly became part of the SSW community. The following two vignettes are illustrative of faculty members' involvement with children and their families.

Upon leaving the school one evening, a SSW faculty member became involved in advocating for several neighborhood boys. She witnessed police officers questioning several latency age boys who had been loitering in the university's hallway. There had been some question over whether they had stolen a stapler. The boys were refusing to give their last names. The police threatened to take them to juvenile detention if they did not cooperate with the police. This faculty member intervened and requested that police turn the young boys over to her custody and assured them that she would assume responsibility for contacting their parents and escorting them home safely. She also said that she would meet with each

boy at Philip Schuyler Elementary School the next day.

This vignette is representative of several poignant stories in which the SSW community expanded to include the Philip Schuyler Elementary School children, families and staff. In another case we show how some reconciliation occurred after a disturbing encounter.

Prior to the development of the partnership between the elementary school and SSW, a professor had been thrown to the ground in the University parking lot by youth from the elementary school. Several years later this faculty member led an award ceremony at the elementary school. She awarded the first computer that had been earned by a child and his mother using Time Dollars. She recognized at this ceremony that each Time Dollar earned reflected community building work on the part of the children and their parents. As they earned their Time Dollars, someone else was helped or made better off.

Such engagement of the SSW faculty, staff and students with the adjacent elementary school, according to the principals and other educational officials, has been a factor in improving the learning environment in the school. When a child who had been labeled a "delinquent" in the school earned 100 Time Dollars for a computer he was no longer seen as a problem child. His Time Dollar projects left others better off and his image changed along with his capacity to achieve some modest goals such as to acquire a computer. School improvements increasingly became evident.

Improved Behavioral and Academic Outcomes for Children

The principals reported several types of improvements in the school. These included improvements in atmosphere and climate. There were reductions in suspensions, behavioral problems, special education referrals and an increase in parents' presence in the school. Because of a

"service" rather than a "disciplinary" approach to "suspensionable behavior problems" among the children, there was a sharp decrease in the referrals to the principals office and to the school district (S. Ferlazzo, personal communication, June 12, 2003). In addition there was decreased reliance on in-school suspension. Instead of 40 students, on the average, each day being sent for behavioral problems to the principal's office, they received only a few referrals each day. During 1999-2000 the number of students referred for in school suspensions was 159, in 2000–2001 it was 169, 2001–2002 it was 143 and in 2002–2003 it was 130 (S. Ferlazzo, September 1, 2004). The District Director of Pupil Personnel along with the principals attribute this decrease in disciplinary action to the implementation of the 911 service response service system and the development of a school climate that encouraged cooperation rather conflict in the school environment (S. Ferlazzo, personal communication, September 1, 2004). During the same period, referrals to the district's Special Education Services went from 36 in 1999–2000, to 32 in 2000–2001,10 in 2001–2002 and 31 in 2002–2003 (S. Ferlazzo, personal communication, September 1, 2004).

A report by the Behavioral Intervention Specialists indicated that referrals to the Committee on Special Education dropped from nine per month to 3.4 referrals per month (Schimmer, personal communication, January 10, 2003). The behavioral interventions undertaken by the special education social workers contributed to the decrease in referrals. School district representatives noted that the school reduced its referrals to the district wide Special Education School (S. Ferlazzo, personal communication, June 12, 2003). Instead of sending four students per semester before the full service programs were instituted, the elementary school may have only sent one per semester. Teachers requested that those children sent out of the school be returned quickly within the semester because they wanted to re-establish relationships back in the classroom.

School climate is reported to have improved markedly since the advent of the full service school and the inception of the Family Resource Room and the Time Dollar Store. School atmosphere improvements were reflected in the presence of parents who visited the Family Resource Center, a classroom or the Time Dollar Store. Principals reported that parents appeared comfortable walking around the school, engaging with the teachers, stopping by the Family Resource Center, and dropping in to see a co-located service provider or school social worker. Parental advancements were made possible with educational and career ladders. Several began to make plans to matriculate at the university using Time Dollars. This includes access to the University through the use of Time Dollars for tuition and related supports.

Leslie College's professional development for teachers on reading improvements among children had a positive impact on the students' test scores (Leslie University Literacy Collaborative, 2003). The state Department of Education and the school established specific targets for the English Language Arts, Mathematics and Science tests administered to fourth graders (NYSDE, 2003). Since 1999-2000, the fourth-grade language arts tests have shown a steady improvement. As a result, there was a decline among students who needed extra help, dropping from 48 percent to 41 percent in 2000–2001, and 41 percent in 2001–2002 (NYSDE, 2003). During the same period, those students meeting the standard rose steadily moving from 28 percent in 1999–2000, to 37 percent in 2000–01 and 39 percent in 2001–02 (NYSDE, 2003). In fact, in 2002, the school board cited the elementary school as being the best-improved school in the school district.

Partnership Challenges and Opportunities

This complex change initiative and collaborative is still in developmental stages. Because of reported success, six additional principals in the school district have asked for assistance from the SSW to

build comparable programs in their schools. In three of these cases, these schools were cited on an "at risk" list of under performing schools.

While partnerships such as the SSW and the adjacent elementary school demonstrate, on a preliminary basis, that change is possible, there is often a tendency to rush for replication and scale up to other public schools before a full-fledged evaluation has been conducted. While we have only beginning indices of success with behavior and academic improvements (especially linked to the Leslie University Literacy Collaborative), we lack specificity as to what key interventions account for which improvements. Funding will be sought for evaluative research in the near future. In addition we seek to more strategically assess how school improvement in academic achievement is linked to services in the school. For example, the principals report that Time Dollars help to motivate children to learn.

One Year Later

In 2003, plans to separate the large student body of Philip Schuyler Elementary School into two smaller elementary schools were operationalized. As full partners in the planning procedure, the two principals from Philip Schuyler visited other well established full service schools, including PS 218 and PS 5 in New York City. These are model schools operated in collaboration with the Children's Aid Society. With their positive experiences of a full service school model, and the concepts developed from their visits, they worked with their architects and designed a full service school suite in each of the new schools. Each suite includes the school social worker (s), the school psychologist, behavioral intervention social workers, the school nurse, a part time child welfare prevention worker, and space for a dentist and physician. In addition, each suite includes a Family Resource Center, which is easily accessible to parents, and a separate Time Dollar Store.

Based on the beginning success of the full service school model with its Family Resource Centers and Time Dollar projects, two significant results were realized. First is the adoption of these projects by United Way of Northeastern New York through its Family Support Network. The Family Support Network is comprised of over fifty United Way member agencies. The Family Support Network is actively supporting the maintenance and development of Family Resource Centers/Time Dollar projects in eleven sites. Of the eleven sites, three (including the two new Philip Schuyler schools) are based in elementary schools in the inner city of Albany, three are rural sites, one is in a large inner city child care center, and the rest are social service agencies in the inner city of Albany. Financial support for the projects has been obtained through several grants. Currently, a new United Way grant will increase the number of sites and funding for them. The SSW continues to collaborate with United Way on this scale up process, on shared staff to support the replication initiative as well as to provide special outreach to the two elementary schools.

Discussion

Over a five-year period, collaboration has fostered simultaneous changes in the public school and the SSW. The roles of many of key stakeholders in Philip Schuyler Elementary School changed. Role changes (see Figure 2) have been intertwined with a form of professional development that was embedded in the change strategy.

For example, once the teachers designed the 911 response system with the school social worker, they and the principals no longer spent inordinate amounts of time managing the behavioral problems of children but instead focused more on academic needs. Some of these role changes were problematic at first. One principal reported feeling conflicted when the disciplinary referrals all went to the school social worker with the new 911 model. He thought that perhaps he was not doing his job or that his role had been preempted as he no longer spent a great deal of his day with suspensions and

Figure 2 Enhancements in Roles and Tasks

Roles and Tasks	Professional Task: Pre University-School Partnership	Professional Task: Post University-School Partnership
Teachers	• Address learning barriers of students • Address the disciplinary needs of children	• Improved ability to address students' learning barriers • Refer students to 911 service • Reintegrate special education students back into class or divert their removal
Principals	• Manage student disciplinary problems	• Enhance the school environment in order to meet student's educational needs • Focus primarily on academic achievement goals
School Social Worker	• Conduct behavioral interventions with students • Work with parents as part of treatment goals for children behavioral problems	• Mobilize and coordinate delivery of social services to foster rapid response to teachers with children who require tailored services • Support and supervise parents' involvement with Family Resource Center
SSW Dean and Administration	• Ensure BSW & MSW students obtain high quality social work education • Support field work partnerships with local social work service providers	• Develop university partnership with adjacent elementary school and other Albany schools • Engage agencies and the United Way to collaborate with public schools to improve learning environments • Enhanced role as community builder involving select initiatives
SSW Faculty: Micro faculty and select Macro faculty	• Teach required courses in micro and macro content • Use case examples that may be derived from stimulations	• Foster new experiential and parent guided learning frameworks • Develop intergenerational service delivery emphasis on parents/grandparents as experts about communities' needs and barriers • Value asset based assessment and enhancement of communities • Value the skills and knowledge of community residents in planning macro service needs
Parents	• Foster own child's development • Navigate schools and service systems to meet needs of child and other family members	• Lead new services for other parents and children, engage in professional development and asset enhancing activities in child's school • Foster new supports that attend to the needs of all children • Demonstrate new assets and innovations through community building projects, micro enterprises
Children	• Focus on school requirements • Try to overcome learning and performance barriers	• Focus on ways earning power can be enhanced though volunteering projects and time dollars • Use asset opportunities to become more engaged with school achievement goals and school projects

problem students. He then realized that, like teachers, he could now focus on the academic achievement in his school and be more of an academic leader. His role of disciplinarian receded as the school social worker referred students with problems to behavioral intervention specialists, other service providers or handled them herself.

In some cases what occurred was role change and role release. Additional service providers along with parents in the Family Resource Center, who addressed children's social and psychological barriers, helped to foster this shift. Parents, in turn, changed from a singular focus on their own child to one in which they focused on the collective needs of children and their families in the elementary school.

Through the Family Resource Center and the development of the Time Dollar Store, parents were able to develop programs to address some of the acute economic barriers through projects that encouraged continuing education to enhance employment opportunities and the development of micro enterprise projects. The school social worker's roles shifted from a focus on treating individual behavioral problems to that of a coordinator of rapid and tailored responses to children in classrooms. Her orientation shifted from treatment of challenged children to that of capacity builder and mobilizer of external social service providers who had co-located on site. Additionally, the school social worker provided supports to parents as they developed the Family Resource Center.

This case study suggests that professional development can occur as an embedded component of a change and improvement process. Rather than a series of formal workshops or training sessions often associated with professional development, this collaborative fostered professional development through role change. Moreover, this case study illustrates how professional development can be accountable to the needs of a specific school environment (Newman, King & Ridgon, 1997). Further, this case study suggests that working to eliminate barriers to learning in urban schools

requires more than interprofessional and cross site collaboration. When parent-led initiatives are integral to the change process, indigenous knowledge of barriers and solutions may emerge. Thus, professional development of parents to position them as leaders becomes integral to the change process and expands inter-professional practice to become more parent-guided.

Parent capacity building was essential to the role enhancement and change process. Such capacity building included parental development of a mission statement and a set of norms for the Family Resource Center. It included regularly scheduled team meetings and facilitated problem solving, led by the assistant dean for outreach. Onsite supervision and supports came from the school social worker and related social workers providing behavioral interventions with children. Capacity building was an ongoing part of the interactions that parent leaders had with the principals and other school personnel. Specialized training was also made available through the emerging Family Support Network. The parents attended mini-summits on family-centered practice, time dollar programs, family team facilitation and related practice innovations.

A parallel change process occurred in the SSW. As indigenous parent and grandparent knowledge became prized, new practice frameworks (such as family views on the importance of intergenerational practice) were enhanced. Just as micro students and faculty were impacted so were macro students and faculty involved at the Elementary School. Through their service learning projects, SSW students were exposed to parents' indigenous knowledge and ideas and were able in turn to build on them with new tools such as grant writing assistance.

Traditionally, schools of social work have not uniformly engaged in community building projects. University-agency partnerships may have focused primarily on field placements rather then on complex change initiatives. This case study illustrates how one school of social work's goal to be a more responsible neighbor in turn resulted in its own key

institutional changes. The SSW has moved from a partner in fostering agency field placements to becoming now more of an active community building force involving selective initiatives. These include community building collaboratives for an aging friendly community. Moreover, the SSW's role as a community builder has been fortified as United Way projects and scale up initiatives formally recognize the leadership contributions of the school.

Conclusion

As demands increase for universities to become more relevant to the needs of their communities, the roles of schools of social work will expand as potential forces for improved outcomes. The

"engaged" university will rely on key departments and schools to ensure that community development and improvement opportunities for the historically disenfranchised are part of the university partnership agenda. Universities have major roles to play in enhancing the indigenous knowledge-base and leadership roles of representatives of local communities through well-defined initiatives and high impact collaboratives. This case example suggests that professional development can be a tool that enhances the impacts of parents and other community representatives. As they increase their skills, roles and impacts, the professionals and institutions with which they interact also change and benefit along with those being served.

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