chapter six

PLACE OF SCHOOLS IN SOCIETY
More Valley students signing up for virtual schools

By RAY PARKER  
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An increasing number of Arizona’s 62,000 high-school graduates have chosen a route suited to the MP3 generation: online classes.

At Primavera Online High School, one of Arizona’s largest public high schools, about 9,000 students take classes in English literature, Spanish and calculus. They join clubs, enter science fairs, and talk one-on-one with their teachers.

No one complains about the mystery meat at the school cafeteria, and no one ever gets asked to, or snubbed at, a school dance.

More than a decade after being created by state lawmakers, the 14 Internet-based schools in Arizona have become a quiet force in the state’s education system. These full-time, tuition-free, virtual schools allow students to learn at any time and from any computer.

More than 26,000 students took online courses in 2008, and enrollment numbers are growing. An estimated 1,475 students in Arizona are graduating from virtual schools this year.

“We’ve experienced the growth because I believe kids want more flexibility in their high-school careers, and many because of the economic times, want to work . . . and our classes are available 24 hours a day,” said Primavera Online Principal Dane Van Deinse.

Kayla Gibson, 18, who will graduate this week from Primavera Online, said it was easy for her to complete schoolwork online “even though it does take a lot of self-motivation to complete the work.”

Some virtual-school students are enrolled in traditional middle and high schools but use the online courses as supplements. Others are home-school students who use virtual classes as a small or large part of their curriculum since online classes encompass grades K–12.

The Legislature in 1998 passed the Technology Assisted Project-Based Instruction (TAPBI) program to “improve pupil achievement and extend academic options beyond the four walls of the traditional classroom.”

Two school districts, Deer Valley Unified and Mesa Public Schools, and two charter schools, Sequoia Choice and Arizona Virtual Academy, have participated since the beginning, while 10 new providers have been added for a total of 14 virtual schools.

Online schools received a total of $57.4 million from the state in 2008; their funding is based on student enrollment.

TAPBI student enrollment increases each year: there were 10,800 students in 2005, 15,200 in 2006, and 24,100 in 2007.

Virtual schools set up shop in office buildings where administrators, technical workers and customer-service staff work. When signing up for a class, the student gets an introductory phone call from the teacher. Students follow detailed lesson plans and communicate with the teacher by phone or by e-mail at least once a week.

Geoffrey Wall, 17, of Tempe, will graduate this week from Arizona Connections Academy. He will enter Arizona State University in the fall as an art major.

“What I liked was the freedom because I had the ability to use my time the way I wanted to use it,” he said.

As a former ice skater, Wall spent a lot of time practicing in the rink. He said the virtual school helped him fulfill his Arizona education requirements and taught him a lot about working independently.

“If I was picking up on something really quickly, I could just keep going,” Wall said.

Taking classes outside of classrooms requires some adjustments. Art students send drawings to teachers by mail or create them on computers. Some students enter “discussions” in virtual classes that are similar to chat rooms. Science students conduct experiments in their kitchens.

The schools have tried to create extracurricular activities by forming online clubs and other programs, such as science fairs with projects posted on school Web sites.

The system works for Shawntae Swartz, 15, of Tempe. Swartz takes online classes through Primavera while enrolled in the 3-D animation program at East Valley Institute of Technology in Mesa.

“In anything there’s going to be ups and downs, but I can get credits faster and at my own pace,” she said.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. Have you ever taken online courses? How did you like them? What were the advantages and disadvantages of this mode of delivery of instruction?
2. What are some of the limitations of virtual schools like Primavera Online High School?
3. Do you have any interest in teaching in a virtual school or online courses? Why or why not?

LEARNING OUTCOMES
After reading and studying this chapter, you should be able to:
1. Understand generally accepted roles of schools and how they contribute to the socialization of children and youth.
2. Describe culture, its characteristics, and its impact in schools. (INTASC 3: Diversity)
3. Discuss characteristics of school culture that contribute to effective schools that support student learning.
4. Describe the school choices available to parents in a growing number of larger school districts.
5. Understand why schools have evolved into different groupings of students by age and grades. (INTASC 2: Learning and Development)
6. Identify some of the differences between rural, suburban, and urban schools and their impact on students.
7. Identify some of the characteristics of effective schools in which students learn at high levels.

ROLES OF SCHOOLS
Schools play many roles in society. They not only teach literacy and computation, they also reflect society’s high ideals such as universal education for all children. At the same time, they reflect society’s bad practices by sometimes contributing to racial and socioeconomic divides by, for example, tracking disproportionate numbers of students of color, low-income students, and English-language learners into special education. Schools do not always ensure that students in gifted programs and advanced placement courses match the racial and socioeconomic makeup of the students in schools. Schools in high-poverty areas are much more likely to be staffed by teachers who are inexperienced and not fully qualified.

JOURNAL FOR REFLECTION
Which of the following ideals do you think schools should mirror? Why?
- Be a model of our best hopes for society and a mechanism for remaking society in the image of those hopes.
- Adapt students to the needs of society by preparing them for specific roles and jobs.
- Serve the individual hopes and ambitions of their students and parents.

Our own philosophical and political perspectives help determine how we view the roles of schools. Should schools primarily support democratic equality, social efficiency, social mobility, or some other goal? Advocates of democratic equality view education as a public good through which all students should be exposed to a liberal arts education and learn to be productive citizens in a democracy. Proponents of social efficiency believe that schools should serve the private sector by preparing students for future jobs. People who support social mobility view education as an asset that can be accumulated and used for social competition. Credentials become very important for gaining a competitive advantage over others to secure a desirable position in society (Labaree, 1997).

School boards, educators, parents, and communities have their own beliefs and perspectives about the basic roles of schools. Their beliefs may draw on national reports calling for the reform of education. Through such reports and discussions and debates among educators, policy makers, and others, U.S. society continually refines and redefines its ideas about schools. The five roles described in the following sections are a sampling of those most often mentioned by educators and the public. Most schools address each of these roles, but in any given school or community, one goal may receive more prominence than others. Think about them as you develop your own views regarding the roles of schools in society.

Social Mobility
The movement of an individual or family up or down in social class such as moving from the lower class to middle class as one finishes college and earns a larger income.

Citizenship
Most people agree that schools should help students become good citizens. There is less agreement about the meaning of the term good citizens and how schools should go about preparing...
them. In some schools, especially elementary schools, students sometimes receive a grade or rating on their citizenship within the classroom. Students often take a civics or government course or have studied citizenship issues in social studies courses.

*America’s Civic Health Index* has identified the following categories as signs of desirable civic behavior:

- Connecting to civic and religious groups,
- Trusting other people,
- Connecting to others through family and friends,
- Giving and volunteering,
- Staying informed,
- Understanding civics and politics,
- Participating in politics,
- Trusting and feeling connected to major institutions, and

The involvement of large numbers of youth in the 2008 national elections, even though they were not old enough to vote in many cases, is a positive sign of engagement in the civic affairs of the nation. Teachers also model civic behavior and are more or less engaged in community and political activities locally, nationally, or internationally. Australian educators approach citizenship education in a similar way to U.S. educators. Their own involvement in related activities is described in the Global Perspectives feature.

### G L O B A L
**PERSPECTIVES**

How do teachers themselves practice citizenship and reflect their lived experiences in the classroom? Citizenship education in Australia has traditionally been teaching a set of knowledge. But with a rapidly changing world that is impacted by the forces of globalization, the notions of citizenship are changing, with greater emphasis being placed on diversity, globalisation, social justice, human rights, and equality. Based on the assumption that the teaching of citizenship is influenced and mediated by teachers’ own lived experiences as cultural beings, researcher Joan G. Dejaeghere examined the privilege and power that active engagement in a local, national, or international community could provide participants.

The sense of belonging was important in determining the relationships educators had with others and the communities in which they interacted. Their sense of belonging was strengthened by feeling included in the community and having “a shared identity around common values, ideals, or issues.” The educators who had privilege and power in the rights that they could enact at each level had a strong sense of belonging.

Two other factors affected the Australian educators being active citizens at some level. One depended on their access to resources and knowledge, and the second was their own personal involvement in the issues. Their access to resources was determined by their own socioeconomic status, where they lived in comparison to the sources of power in Australia, and their connections to sources of economic and political power outside of the country. Participants who lived on the east coast of Australia felt that they had greater influence because they were close to the national center of political power. Those who participated in international organizations and worked internationally felt that they had power and privilege in some global communities. All of the participants thought that they had little, if any, influence on the major issues affecting the global community such as the injustices and great gaps among people in economic stability.

The educators who participated in this study regarded citizenship as engaging with social and civic changes that include addressing “social injustices and global issues, such as the environment.” They indicated that these issues should be addressed in schools as part of citizenship education. Although students in Australia report that their classrooms are generally open to such discussions, they rarely occur. Issues around the privilege and power of citizenship were seldom addressed in the classroom, which limited students’ ability (1) to begin to think critically about the issues outlined as important in citizenship education and (2) to become active participants in a democracy.

**Questions for Reflection**

1. How did the educators participating in this study define citizenship education?
2. What advantages do you think you would experience if you became an active citizen who is involved in making the changes necessary to serve all people well?
3. How could students be taught to be active citizens? What are some projects in your community in which students might be interested? How could you help them become involved with those projects and develop their citizenship skills?

The National Council for Social Studies (NCSS) includes a standard on civic ideals and practices. The focus in citizenship education or in civics and government courses is usually on the structure of the U.S. political system and on treasured documents such as the Constitution and Bill of Rights. Patriotism and nationalism are the foundations of these courses and the school’s *hidden curriculum*, which is the implicit set of values taught by teachers. One of the limitations of citizenship education that has this focus is that students might not have the opportunity to grapple with the problems and issues that are inherent in a democratic society such as racism, sexism, and the reasons for the great gaps in income among groups. Students might learn the civic values but never be challenged to discuss inequities among groups in society.

Preparation for citizenship cannot be taught in a single course. Schools work to develop democratic citizens who respect others, believe in human dignity, are concerned about and care for others, and fight for justice, fairness, and tolerance. Students learn through practice in the classroom how to be active, involved citizens. Schools not only teach about participation in society, they also model democratic practice through the equitable participation of students in our schools.

### Workforce Readiness

Since the release of the report *A Nation at Risk* in 1983, national reports on education have expressed concern about the quality of the workforce. The emphasis on the education of workers today focuses on preparing them for jobs in a global economy. For example, a 2009 report of the National Governors Association began its report *Building a High-Quality Education Workforce* with "The long-term health of each state’s economy rests on the state’s ability to educate and eventually employ citizens who contribute to its economy by filling jobs in a variety of sectors."

Some employers complain that schools do not provide students with the basic skills and behaviors necessary to participate effectively in today’s global economy. Business owners want graduates to have the vocational skills appropriate to the job, but they also want them to have dispositions or values and attitudes such as punctuality and a good work ethic. A lack of agreement exists about the nature of the necessary skills, especially in an economy in which the greatest job growth is now in the service sector where people of color and women have disproportionately high representation (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008, Table 596). At the same time, the country’s leaders worry that not enough engineers, computer scientists, and other workers in the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) professions are being produced to meet the needs of the country. The production of U.S. students in these areas has fallen behind that of other nations.

The “real” goal of schools continues to be debated. Is it to ensure students have the knowledge and skills to keep the economy competitive in a changing world where new jobs continually emerge? Is it to help students learn a trade, learn how to learn, or learn how to take orders and follow the rules? This question is particularly important when conditions change as rapidly as they do in today’s society. The vocation for which one is prepared initially may become obsolete within a few years. The *Framework for 21st Century Learning* (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2007), which is supported by many business leaders, calls for today’s students to master the core subjects of English, reading or language arts, world languages, arts, mathematics, economics, science, geography, history, government, and civics. It expects them to develop global awareness, civic literacy, health literacy, and financial, economic, business, and entrepreneurial literacy. Students also need to be creative, be able to think critically and problem solve, and be able to communicate and collaborate with others. They must have information, media, and tech-
nology skills to work effectively in today’s workforce. They must be able to adjust to change and adapt to new occupations and life situations as they arise. Meeting all of these expectations will be a major challenge for schools.

**Academic Achievement**

Media reports of student scores on achievement tests highlight a school’s ability to offer students a strong academic background. Some school districts base their reputations on how well their students perform and how many are admitted to colleges. In some communities, parents camp out overnight to be first in line to enroll their children in a preschool that will provide the jump start needed for success on future tests to ensure later admission to prestigious colleges and universities.

Countries and their education systems are compared through student scores on international tests. When the scores of U.S. students fall below those of students in other countries, parents and policy makers demand changes. Concern about performance in reading, writing, and mathematics periodically leads to a back-to-basics movement in which the traditional academic subjects are emphasized. During these periods, frills such as the development of self-esteem, leisure activities, and anything that takes time away from academic study are condemned as a misuse of public funds. In response, many states and school districts have increased the length of the school day to provide more time to learn academic subjects.

Attention to academic achievement focuses on meeting standards in academic areas, the arts, health, and physical education. As a result, many schools have revised their curricula to be standards based. Standardized tests used by states and school districts reflect these standards. The emphasis is on testing students annually to determine if they are at grade level. Low-income students, students of color, and females are expected to learn at the higher levels historically expected of middle-class white students. School systems’ reputations and their state funding are dependent on how well students perform on these tests when a school does not make adequate yearly progress (AYP) as required under the federal No Child Left Behind Act.

**Social Development**

Schooling also provides opportunities for students to develop their social skills by interacting with others. In this process, students should learn to respect others; they also learn a set of rules for working appropriately with peers and adults. Although schools usually do not provide a course that teaches skills in social development, appropriate behavior is constantly reinforced by teachers and other school professionals in the classroom and on the playground.

Teachers can give students opportunities to work with other students from diverse racial, gender, language, religious, and ability groups; one of the by-products of these interactions is that students learn more about their similarities and differences. Teachers can encourage interactions across groups through cooperative learning activities in which students from different groups are placed together. Other team projects allow students who might not seek one another out otherwise to work together. A part of teaching is helping students learn to work together positively.

**Cultural Transmission**

Schools around the world are expected to transmit the culture of their nation to young people so they can both maintain it and pass it on to the next generation. Schools have often approached this task by teaching history with an emphasis on important events and heroes. This emphasis helps children learn the importance of patriotism and loyalty. Formal and hidden curricula reflect and reinforce the values of the national culture—the principles, standards, and qualities the culture endorses.

These national values and rules are so embedded in most aspects of schooling that most teachers and students do not realize they exist. The only exceptions may be students who do not feel a part of the common culture or whose families have recently immigrated. In these cases, students and families quickly learn that schools might not reflect or support aspects of their culture that differ from the common culture. This dissonance between schools and families is most noticeable when students are from backgrounds other than Northern and Western European or whose native language is not English. Students from religious backgrounds that have not evolved from Judeo-Christian roots may also question the culture that is being transmitted at school. The challenge for educators is to transmit the common culture while including the richness and contributions of many who are not yet accepted as an integral part of that culture. In this way, schools begin to change and expand the common culture.
CULTURE IN SCHOOLS

Culture provides a blueprint for how we think, feel, and behave in a society. It imposes rules and order to help us understand the subtleties of our shared language, nonverbal communications, and ways of thinking and knowing. No matter where we live in the world, we have the same biological and psychological needs, but the ways we meet those needs are culturally determined. The location of the group, available resources, and traditions have a great influence on how and what we eat, how we groom and dress, how we teach and learn, and how we interact with each other. The meaning and celebration of birth, marriage, old age, and death also depend on our culture. It influences all aspects of our lives.

Culture is learned, shared, adapted, and dynamic. We learn our culture through enculturation, which occurs when parents, grandparents, religious leaders, teachers, television shows, and our neighbors teach us the culture and its acceptable norms of behavior. We internalize cultural patterns so well and so early in life that we often have difficulty accepting different, but just as appropriate, ways of behaving and thinking by others, sometimes leading to miscommunications and misunderstandings in society and the classroom. When schools use a different language or linguistic pattern from that used at the home of students or when students’ behaviors have different meanings at home than at school, dissonance between schools and the home can occur (Heath, 1983). Understanding cultural differences and learning to recognize when students do not share our own cultural patterns are critical steps in the provision of an equitable learning environment.

Culture is not stagnant. It is dynamic, continually adapting to serve the needs of the group. We adapt our culture as we move from one section of the country to another or around the globe as do some of our students who are new immigrants or whose families are in the armed services. Cultures differ, in part, because of the geographic region in which we live. For example, Eskimos who live with extreme cold, snow, and ice have developed different cultural patterns than groups in the South Pacific islands with limited land and an unlimited body of water. Technological changes in the world and society also transform cultures. For example, new technologies allow robots to perform routine jobs and provide the opportunities for more people to work from home. Although technological changes and globalization are welcomed by many groups, others, especially indigenous groups such as American Indian tribes, Alaska Natives, and the Igorots of the Philippines find they are destroying their cultures and ways of life (Mander & Tauli-Corpuz, 2006).

Common Culture

The legal system, democratic elections, and middle-class values of American society, which serve as the foundation for many of our institutions and traditions, came from Western and Northern Europe. As new immigrants assimilated into society over a few generations, a common culture evolved. It is reflected in the ways most middle-class families live. These commonalities make it fairly easy for people to identify us as “American” when we are visiting other countries.

Historically, the common culture has been defined by those in power, who were primarily white, middle-class Protestants whose ancestors began immigrating from Western and Northern Europe five centuries ago. Until recently, European American men dominated the country’s political system, holding the highest government and corporate positions. In this role, they had great influence over the institutional policies and practices that maintained their power and discriminated against other groups. The Civil Rights struggles of the 1960s and 1970s opened the political and corporate worlds to a growing number of women and persons of color. During this period, legislation was passed to protect the rights of all people and promote greater equality across groups in education, housing, and other areas. Our history as a nation of many diverse groups and our experiences in struggling for equality across groups has further refined our common culture.

What are some of the characteristics of the common culture? Universal education and literacy for all citizens are valued. A job or career must be pursued for a person to be recognized as successful. Fun is usually a relief from work. Technology in all of its forms, from cell phones to the computer, has a great impact on our lives, especially those of young people. Achievement and success are highly valued and demonstrated by the accumulation of material goods such as houses, cars, boats, clothes, and vacations. Individualism and freedom are core values that undergird the common culture of the United States. Members believe that individuals should be in charge of their own destiny and success. Freedom is defined as having control of one’s own life with little or no interference by others, especially by government (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 2008).
Mass communications, which have been enhanced by technology and the Internet, influence our view of ourselves and others. They contribute to the development of a universal culture that mirrors in many ways the common culture of the United States. Some critics of this globalization worry that the positive aspects of ethnic cultures are losing ground as television and movies teach a common culture around the world.

Cultures of Families
Although we share the common culture as we interact in schools and at work, a family’s unique culture may take precedence in the homes of your students, especially if they do not feel they are full-fledged members of the common culture. Students arrive at school with the traditions, language, and behaviors of their families’ cultures. To some families, their ethnicity (for example, African American, Navajo, German American, or Korean American) most correctly defines who they are. They may speak a language other than English at home. Families also range along a continuum from poor to wealthy, which may affect students’ health and well-being and their ability to engage effectively in school. Some families continue to be greatly influenced by the discrimination they face because of their race, ethnicity, immigration status, language, or religion.

Knowing more about your students’ cultural identity can help you make schooling and the curriculum more real or authentic for them. It also shows that you respect their families and communities. How can you know more about the cultures of the various communities and your students? You could participate in community activities and celebrations that will provide an understanding of students’ cultural traditions. You could volunteer with community groups to coach, tutor, or serve food at a homeless shelter. You could actively participate in school activities in the evenings and on the weekends that provide the opportunity to interact more with other students in the school and their parents. Another approach to learning more about the cultures of your students is to take classes in ethnic studies, women’s studies, religious studies, sociology, or anthropology to build your knowledge base. Two views about diversity training are presented in the Teacher Perspectives feature.

When we meet our students for the first time, we usually identify them immediately by their gender and race and maybe their ethnicity. We may not know their religion and its importance to their families unless they are wearing a garment or jewelry associated with a specific religion. We may not know the importance of their ethnicity or language. Therefore, we need to be very careful about stereotyping them based on factors that can be easily identified. Culture is far more complex and important in students’ own identity than we can know without much more information.

Cultural Values
Although schools are expected to transmit the culture of the United States to the younger generation, educators do not always agree on whose culture should be transmitted. Is it always the common culture even though diverse racial, ethnic, language, and religious groups have their own cultures with different traditions, experiences, and histories? How can schools begin to accommodate all of these differences?

Some conservative politicians and popular talk show hosts argue that schools should ignore diversity. They believe that all students should learn the common heritage and adopt the common culture as their own. Multicultural theorists and educators present another perspective. They argue that student diversity enriches the school community. They believe in a pluralistic approach in which cultural differences are valued and integrated throughout the curriculum and all activities of the school. In this approach, teachers draw on the cultural backgrounds and experiences of students to teach academic knowledge and skills.

Parents’ choices of religious schools, home schooling, or ethnocentric schools have been based in part on the values that parents believe schooling can impart. Although schools usually do not offer a course in which values are explicitly presented and discussed, values implicitly influence the formal and hidden curriculum. Curricula usually support the common culture and the current ideological, political, and economic order of society. For example, in the common culture, individualism is much more highly regarded than the rights of groups (Bellah et al., 2008). Some believe that public schools do not value their religion. Some parents do not want their children exposed to the secular values of a public school or what they perceive to be “foul” language and disrespectful behavior by students. Although these values may not seem controversial to some readers, they can be the cause of extensive debate and emotional pleas at school board meetings and community forums.
Should Teachers Be Required to Take Diversity Training?

How can you learn about cultures different than your own, especially those that are represented in the school in which you are teaching? Many teachers, as pointed out below, have taken a course on multicultural education when they were in college, but a number of experienced teachers have not had formal training related to diversity. These two teachers present their perspectives on whether such training is needed.

YES

Mary Cartier is a Student member at Michigan State University. She is a junior studying Secondary Spanish Education with a minor in Teaching Speakers of Other Languages.

Looking around my education classes at Michigan State University, I often see only White, female students. In fact, it’s the highest demographic of teachers anywhere. Students need to know that their teachers respect and accept them, not only on an individual level, but also as members of society. If they don’t see themselves in their teachers, students want to know that at least they’re understood.

All educators will, no matter where they work, teach students from different backgrounds than their own, whether they are from a different social class, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or level of physical ability. Diversity training can help educators relate more effectively to students who are different from themselves.

In one of my very first classes at MSU, I was able to mentor a young kindergartner, whom I will call Jack. A young African-American student, Jack was unaware of the connotations of race, but he immediately noticed the difference between his own skin color and mine. I didn’t ignore his comments, but rather chose to use the occasion as an opportunity to help him understand that there are many different types of people in the world. I feel this was important for me to do because as an African-American male, Jack will soon grow up to realize that there are many real consequences in life. Ignoring that fact would have been a disservice to both of us.

Children don’t come into this world knowing how to discriminate—it’s a learned behavior that can be stopped or prevented. Kids spend many hours in schools, and if they can be in an environment that breaks stereotypes and creates unity through diversity, it can continue the progress of social justice for our next generation of children.

NO

Suzanne Emery is a Retired member who taught English and journalism in San Diego City Schools.

Of course, every September a faculty does need a “heads-up” session on the year’s groups of kids, of their home life, their homeland, and needs. The same holds true when there is an influx of students in the middle of the year, as happened after Hurricane Katrina. These sessions are necessary tools, but quite different from required diversity trainings.

Too much in-service for employed teachers can be so demeaning, dumbed down, and even insulting, that required diversity training for all teachers would merely push the scale farther and infuriate the ones most needing some enlightenment. And it is a fallacy to assume that only the traditional “majority” members could use some enlightenment. Prejudice and downright ignorance is colorblind. We reflect our backgrounds, our families, our religions, and our communities.

Additionally, at least half of the people now teaching have entered the profession in the past five years, all earning credentials which have specified, in most states, at least one course or strand in meeting the needs of a culturally diverse student population. The experienced faculty have, for the most part, been “in-serviced” almost annually in various sensitivities of their community. For San Diego, that included everything from language variations for native African-American kids, to practices of Hmong families, to ways to involve differently-abled kids in field trips, to how it is that our Muslim girls can become track stars while wearing head coverings and workout sweats.

As futile as it is to teach ethics to politicians who already know right from wrong, it is folly to believe a few mandated diversity trainings can fundamentally change classroom behavior. Teachers already recognize that their students are very diverse, but must eventually achieve similar success.


To explore both sides of this issue and think about each perspective, go to the Book Specific Resources in the MyEducationLab for your course, select your text, and then select Teacher Perspectives for Chapter 6.

Additionally, the emphasis on individualism and competition prevalent in many schools is not compatible with the cooperative patterns practiced by American Indian tribes and in many Latino and African American communities. These differences can lead to conflict between parents and schools and among groups within a community. Parents turn to the courts when they believe that schools have acted inappropriately. They may not believe that the schools use a democratic process in which they can be heard or that the community will support their petitions. School prayer, creationism, the banning of books, sex education, and segregation are among the areas that have been tested in the courts.

Because parents and other groups in a community may vehemently disagree about the values to be reinforced in schools, teachers should be aware of their own cultural values. Knowing
their own values as well as those of the families represented in the school should help teachers prepare for potential conflicts. Expectations can vary greatly from one community or school to another. When a controversial topic, program, or book is being initiated, good communications with families will be critical in making the transition smoothly.

**JOURNAL FOR REFLECTION**

How does your family describe your cultural background? What characteristics about your culture, if any, were not valued in school? What characteristics of students from different ethnic, language, or religious backgrounds than you were not valued in school?

**School Culture**

A school also has a culture, which generally reflects the nation’s common culture and the community in which it is located. A school’s culture provides meaning for the students and educators who participate in that environment. Schools have their own unwritten rules and norms for behavior including how students interact with the teacher and each other. They develop their own traditions and rituals related to athletics, extracurricular clubs, graduation exercises, school social events, and the ways teachers interact with each other and parents. They have mascots, cheerleaders, school colors, and school songs that distinguish them from another school. Over time, they have developed reputations for the academic achievement of students or the prowess of their football, basketball, or other sports team. They also develop reputations for the establishment of a safe or dangerous environment. Some schools are influenced greatly by the religions and cultures of the children’s families, others by the presence of a university or large military base. The cultural patterns that develop in a school can have a powerful impact on the academic performance of students and the ways that teachers feel about their work and students (Deal & Peterson, 1999).

Schools develop histories and memories that are transferred from generation to generation. Some students become the school leaders, fitting easily into the school culture. Some thrive in a cultural environment where they are popular and have many friends. School helps them meet their academic and social needs. Other students never seem to fit into the school culture; some because the school culture is very different than their own family’s culture and adapting to the school culture causes dissonance at home. Other students feel marginalized and alienated, which may lead to their leaving school before graduation. As a result, some graduates have very positive memories of their schools and retain lifelong feelings of pride about them. Others remember never fitting in and never being understood by their peers and teachers.

**Partnering with the Community**

Partnerships between schools and communities can help bridge the disconnect that sometimes exists between school and community cultures. They can also support academic achievement and the development of positive relationships with young people. Community partners could include local businesses, the Chamber of Commerce, charitable organizations, churches, civic groups, foundations, local government, local media, museums, military groups, nonprofit associations, senior citizens, and youth groups. They may be able to contribute time, money, people, or expertise to enrich the work of schools on behalf of students. Some partners are able to assign employees or volunteers to work with students, teachers, or administrators. Others are able to contribute equipment such as computers and other resources needed by the school.

Educators can also bring the community into the school. Parents and grandparents of your students may be willing to teach about their own traditions and histories. Immigrant parents may be willing to discuss their country of origin and the reasons they immigrated to the
SCHOOL CHOICES

In the past, parents had no say in which public school their children would attend. Children were assigned to a school based on their home address. Now increasing numbers and types of options to the traditional neighborhood public school are available. The parents of nearly one in four students have chosen a private school or a nontraditional school within the public system. The problem for many parents now is not whether they have a choice, but which school is best for their children. Many of these options are available within public school districts as well as private schools.

Public Schools

The schools that were established after Europeans began to settle the United States were private and attended by the children of the elite owners of property. By the 1830s, “common schools,” which were designed, in part, to reduce the tensions across socioeconomic groups, were being attended by students from families of different social classes. During this period, most African American, Hispanic, and American Indian students attended segregated schools if they were in school at all. In many parts of the country these students and low-income students did not attend school regularly and, when they did, it was often for only a few grades.

When immigrant Roman Catholic families expressed concerns about the Protestant bible being taught in the common schools in 1842, riots erupted in Philadelphia and New York City. When the two sides could not reach agreement on the curricula, the Roman Catholic Church established its own private schools (Spring, 2001). Over time, the curriculum of the public schools, which continued to be supported by taxes, became more secular. Many policy makers and educational leaders continue to see education as a way to reduce the social and economic inequities that exist in society.

Any student today has the right to attend the public school in his or her neighborhood; in fact, children are required to attend school until they are sixteen to eighteen years old, depending on the laws of the state in which they live. Nearly 50 million students were enrolled in public P-12 schools in 2008, and that number is projected to increase to more than 54 million by 2017 (Planty et al., 2008).

Discussions about providing parents a choice of schools that their children can attend were initiated in the 1980s when the federal government funded magnet schools. In 1990 the state of Wisconsin passed legislation to provide low-income families in Milwaukee the opportunity to use a voucher to send their children to a private school. With the passage of NCLB, parents were allowed more options for choosing a school. The Obama administration’s education policies also encourage the establishment of additional charter schools to offer more educational options to students.

Most public school options allow for increased parent and student involvement in school decision making. All represent, in some way, a break with the traditional public school. The creation of choices also causes competition between schools, which some people believe will lead to more efficiency and effectiveness. However, the research to date, though limited, does not provide clear evidence of a trend toward higher student achievement (Buckley & Schneider, 2007; U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, 2005).
MAGNET SCHOOLS. Many school districts have been pressured by citizens and ordered by the courts to equalize the proportions of students from different racial groups in each school. One response, especially by large urban school districts such as those in Houston and Kansas City, has been to develop special academic programs and custom-designed facilities that will attract all students—hence the name magnet schools. Elementary, middle, and high school magnets exist. The school might emphasize the performing and visual arts, math and science, or the liberal arts. Whatever the theme, the faculty, curriculum, and all students in the magnet school are there because of their interest in the school’s theme.

CHARTER SCHOOLS. Charter schools, which are supported by public funds, are one approach to providing families choice within the public school system. They have been started by academic institutions, nonprofit foundations, teachers, and parents for a variety of reasons. Although all charter schools are supposed to provide students with a strong academic background that meets the requirements of NCLB, some focus more directly on academics with a goal of most of their students attending and completing college. These types of schools include Montessori schools, Edison Schools, experiential learning schools, KIPP (Knowledge Is Power Program) academies, and online virtual schools. Founders of other charter schools have designed a curriculum and climate that are centered in the ethnic heritages of the students and community. Others have created schools around a particular philosophy that teachers and parents support.

Charter schools are established through a contract with either a state agency (for example, the State Department of Education) or a local school board for a specific time period, usually three to five years. The contract, or charter, lays out how the school will operate in exchange for receiving public funding. Charter schools have greater autonomy than traditional public schools and can be released from district and state regulations such as hiring licensed teachers or using the district’s textbooks. However, charter schools are still held accountable for student learning and, in most settings, having a diverse student body.

Exponential growth in the number of charter schools has occurred since the first one was established in Minnesota in 1991. As of 2007, forty states and the District of Columbia had passed legislation to permit the establishment of charter schools. States with strong charter laws have the largest number of charter schools with Arizona, California, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, and Texas having the most (Center for Education Reform, 2006). More than 4,500 charter schools, serving 1.3 million students, existed in 2008, making up 5 percent of the public schools in the country (Center for Education Reform, 2007). As you might expect with the majority of charter schools located in central cities, the percentage of African American, Hispanic, and American Indian students is higher than in other public schools. They are generally smaller than other public schools as shown in Figure 6.1, and more likely to be located in the central city.

FIGURE 6.1
Enrollment in Charter and Traditional Public Schools

Management of Education

Instruction or to manage some of the administrative functions of a school such as payroll or personnel management.

Market-oriented, for-profit businesses with whom school districts contract to manage a school and deliver instruction or to manage some of the administrative functions of a school such as payroll or personnel management.

Part IV • Sociological Foundations of Education

Legal issues related to the separation of church and state are presented in Chapter 10.

VOUCHERS. Without a doubt, the most controversial school choice option is school vouchers. At its simplest, a voucher program issues a check or a credit to parents that can be used to send their child to a private school. Generally, the argument for vouchers is based on equalizing educational opportunity for students of color and students from low-income families. Advertisements on television and the radio by groups such as the Black Alliance for Educational Opportunity and conservative groups point out to listeners that vouchers will allow them to remove their children from a failing public school to attend a private school that will provide them opportunities for future success—a very attractive proposal.

Wisconsin adopted the first law that allowed low-income families in Milwaukee to use a voucher to move their children from a public to a private school with a voucher of public funds. Ohio adopted a similar voucher plan for Cleveland families in 1996. The most expansive use of vouchers is in the District of Columbia as a result of Congress enacting a voucher program for 1,600 students in 2004 (Howell & Peterson, 2002), but the use of vouchers in the District of Columbia may be eliminated by the Obama administration. Nevertheless, vouchers have not been as popular as charter schools for providing school choice.

Most voucher programs are funded with state tax dollars. However, some voucher programs are funded by private foundations and occasionally individuals. For example, in the Edgewood Independent School District in San Antonio, Texas, a group of business executives offered $50 million over ten years for vouchers for students from low-income families to attend any private school or public schools in other school districts. The publicly financed programs have restrictions on who is eligible, as in Florida, where the state allows vouchers to be used only after the state has designated the public school as a failing school. Typically, the amount of a voucher is equivalent to the amount the public school received for each student. The debates about vouchers center on the use of public dollars to support private schools. The most serious point of contention is when the voucher funded with state education money is used to pay for a child to attend a religious school. This raises constitutional questions about the separation of church and state. Some national organizations have been active in opposition to voucher programs because they see this choice as undermining public education.

Private Schools

School choices also exist outside the public school system. These range from elite secondary schools (mainly in the Northeast), to alternative schools for high school dropouts, to faith-supported schools, to schools that are operated for profit. Although enrollment in private schools had grown to 5.3 million by 2001, it had declined to 5.1 million by 2005 (Broughman, Swaim, & Keaton, 2008).

Private schools vary greatly in purpose, organization, and size, and they serve students from all racial, religious, economic, and language backgrounds. Some are progressive and innovative; some are conservative and traditional. They are both large and small, day and boarding, single-sex and coeducational. On the average, fewer students are enrolled in private schools than in noncharter public schools. Ninety percent of private schools are at the elementary or combined elementary and secondary levels. In addition to regular elementary and secondary schools, private schools include Montessori, special education, vocational, technical, alternative, and early childhood schools (Broughman et al., 2008). Such schools have been an integral part of our nation’s educational resources since colonial times. Because each private school is free to determine and practice its own philosophy of education, the spirit and environment vary from school to school, even though schools may display similar organizational structures and educational programs.
PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS. Four of five private schools are parochial—that is, schools that are supported by religious organizations. The culture of a parochial school may have a positive impact on student achievement. Some researchers have found that students, especially African American and Hispanic students, who attend religious schools perform better on standardized tests than their public school peers (Broughman et al., 2008). Many religious groups sponsor schools, including the Amish, Muslims, Jews, Quakers, Catholics, and many Protestants. However, enrollment in different religious schools has shifted during the past fifteen years. Although enrollment in Roman Catholic schools is higher than in any other private school, it is less than in the past, as shown in Figure 6.2.

SINGLE-SEX EDUCATION. Most single-sex schools and colleges today are private with a goal of helping their students develop confidence, academic achievement, and leadership skills by building on their unique learning styles and cultural experiences. Schools or academies in some urban areas have been established for young African American men with the goal of developing their self-esteem, academic achievement, and leadership to improve their opportunities for enrolling in and being successful in college and life. Federal regulations in 2002 allowed

**FIGURE 6.2**
Religious Orientation of Private Schools

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Parochial schools are parents’ most popular choice if they choose to send their children to a private school.
public schools to experiment with single-sex education to improve the achievement of both girls and boys. As a result, some public schools have established segregated courses within a coed school.

**Home Schooling**

This rapidly growing form of schooling requires no public support; instead, children learn at home with one of their parents serving as the teacher. By spring 2007, 1.5 million students were being schooled at home. They represent 2.9 percent of the K–12 population—up from 1.7 percent in 1999 (U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Statistics, 2008). Teaching a home-schooled student requires parents to relearn subjects, organize each day’s instruction, and then teach it. One of the advantages, as well as potential weaknesses, is that in most states the subjects taught are self-determined. This can work in favor of students’ interests but may also contribute to gaps in their education.

Why do parents choose to home school their children? In a national survey of parents, three reasons were prominent. Two in three parents indicated that they taught their children at home because they were concerned about the school environment, they wanted to provide religious or moral instruction that was not available at a school, or they were dissatisfied with the academic instruction provided at a school (U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Statistics, 2008). The evidence is clear that for many students home schooling is a success. For example, home-schooled fourth graders watch less television and in high school they score an average of eighty points higher on the SAT.

**Virtual Schools: Crossing Boundaries with Technology**

The opportunities for students to meet in a classroom online is quickly becoming commonplace. Virtual schools and courses exist across the span of schooling from preschool through college and into professional development for teachers and other workers. The number of students enrolling in online courses has increased from 45,000 in 2000 to more than a million in 2008 (Christensen, Horu, & Johnson, 2008).

The most common reason for a student to participate in an online school is that the course is not available in the traditional school building (Trotter, 2008). For example, students in rural areas have taken courses in foreign language and other subjects because teachers for those subjects are not available in their schools. Advanced placement (AP) courses via technology are also popular. A growing number of high school students are using online courses for credit recovery when they have not completed core courses required for graduation (Davis, 2009). As the article that opened this chapter indicated, some students prefer the online environment. Online technologies also provide a valuable resource for students who are being home schooled.

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**JOURNAL FOR REFLECTION**

How do you feel about allowing parents to choose a school for their children? Of the choices discussed in this section, in which would you prefer to teach? Why?
### Professional Dilemma

**What Has Happened to Play?**

A new research study shows that “play is disappearing from kindergarten classrooms,” reports Edward Miller of the Alliance for Childhood. Early childhood educators, researchers, and advocates decry the fact that the country’s emphasis on academics and accountability has pushed play out of kindergarten classrooms. Perhaps the pendulum has swung too far to the side of cognitive development to the demise of other skills that are identified in the 21st Century Learning Knowledge and Skills framework: collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, and physical activity. Some advocates worry that the removal of play is contributing to mental health problems and obesity in young children. The amount of time now available for free play—games, make-believe, and artwork of their choice—has moved to the background, if it exists at all. Because recesses have been eliminated or limited in time in a number of schools, some states are considering legislation requiring recesses in pre- and elementary schools. Is it time for the pendulum to swing the other way or can educators and policy makers reach a balance that includes both ends of the continuum to develop a whole, healthy child with the appropriate cognitive knowledge and skills?


#### Questions for Reflection

1. Why does the elimination of play in early childhood programs concern some researchers and advocates of children? Do you agree with them? Why or why not?
2. What has led to the reduction of play time in so many schools?
3. How have teachers lost control of their classrooms to outside forces?
4. Who should be involved in the development of a more balanced approach to teaching preschoolers and kindergartners?

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By 1985 the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) had developed a voluntary accreditation system with standards for preschools, kindergartens, and child care centers; more than 10,000 programs are now accredited. Over time, the qualifications for preschool teachers have increased. States now require preschool teachers to hold a bachelor’s degree and be fully certified to work in public preschools and kindergartens. Many day care centers for prekindergarten children require day care workers to have completed at least an associate degree.

Some parents choose to send their children to a Montessori school in which the teacher is the facilitator of learning. The Montessori model, which was developed by medical doctor Maria Montessori, includes little or no large-group instruction, especially for three- to six-year-olds. The teacher works with one child at a time or with a small group of children. Built into every day at a Montessori school is one uninterrupted three-hour work period during which children are allowed to explore their environment without being required to attend any individual or small-group activities. The Montessori classroom must be well organized into subject-based work centers where children interact with the classroom materials. A typical classroom may have thirty to thirty-five students ranging in age from two and a half to six years old with one teacher and one nonteaching assistant. The same teacher remains with the same students while they grow through this developmental stage. Older children help teach the skills they have already learned to the younger children, allowing the teacher to observe and record the skills mastered for the child’s portfolio, which is the only form of assessment used. No grades are given, and no forms of punishment or rewards are used.

Another popular approach to early childhood education is the High Scope model that is based on the belief that children are active learners and on the child development theories of Jean Piaget. Students explore materials within structured subject-based centers where items and shelves are clearly labeled with pictures and words so children can experience environmental print and categorize materials. High Scope classrooms have a fixed daily schedule and regular classroom routines with the goal of helping children who are economically disadvantaged achieve greater school success and develop social responsibility. It is designed to provide students with language and literacy, logic and mathematics, music and movement, and creative learning activities to contribute to their cognitive, physical, and affective development. The teacher creates a portfolio with examples of each child’s work and completes developmental checklists to show growth throughout the year. High Scope teachers make regular home visits to help parents learn how to work with their children and to learn more about a student’s home culture and language to ensure that they are reflected and respected in the classroom.

The Reggio Amelia approach to early childhood education originated after the end of World War II at the Diana School in the city of Reggio Amelia in Northern Italy. It was designed to meet the social, emotional, and educational needs of all children ranging in age from birth to six years old. Children are subdivided into an infancy group for children up to three years old and into a school
group for three- to six-year-olds. A group of up to twenty-four children grows together with the same
two teachers, an assistant, and the support of parent volunteers for a three-year cycle. Teachers col-
aborate with each other, parents, children, and community members in meeting the individual needs
of each student. The curriculum is project based, allowing teachers to build on known areas of in-
terest, such as dinosaurs, shadows, and community- or family-inspired events and interests. While
working on their projects, children are encouraged to collaborate with other children to explore in-
formation and materials. A sense of community is developed in the school by having some com-
mon areas where children from all of the classes can mingle and interact. These common areas
include a small-group room, a kitchen for children to have snacks, a multiage-appropriate physical
development/tumble room, and other small play areas. The Reggio approach ensures that children, their
families, their teachers, and the entire community take an active role in the education of each child.

Typical early childhood classrooms in the United States incorporate one or more of these ap-
proaches to instruction. A school district may have both the federally funded Head Start and
prekindergarten classrooms in schools that use the same packaged curriculum, but also include
elements of the Montessori, High Scope, and Reggio Amelia approaches. Some school districts
offer specialized early childhood programs such as Montessori and language immersion pro-
grams in addition to the regular Head Start or prekindergarten classes.

Elementary Schools

One-room schools with a teacher who taught all subjects to students of all ages were built in many
rural communities in the nineteenth century as the population moved west. The first school based
on grades was established in 1848 in Boston—the city that was on the leading edge of establish-
ning the roots of our educational system. In the Quincy School, teachers worked in a classroom
with fifty-six students who sat at desks. This model was adopted across the country and changed
little throughout the twentieth century. Over time, class sizes became smaller, averaging 15.8 stu-
dents by 2005 (Planty et al., 2008) with student/teacher ratios lower in smaller rural schools and
higher in large urban schools. By the beginning of the twenty-first century, desks were no longer
bolted to the floor and in many classrooms, students sat at tables or movable desks that could be
easily moved together for group activities.

Most elementary teachers work in self-contained classrooms with twenty to thirty students
who move to the next grade with a different teacher at the end of a school year. In some schools,
teachers team teach with specialists in mathematics, science, reading, language arts, and social
studies. Some schools have resource teachers who work with classroom teachers to accommodate
students with special needs. Some schools practice looping in which teachers remain with the
same students for two to three grades.

Middle Level Education

Like early childhood education, middle schools owe their beginnings to psychologist G. Stanley Hall
who found that early adolescents were neither children nor adults. He lobbied for an education that
would better serve students between elementary and high school (Beane, 2001). The first step in this
evaluation was the establishment of junior high schools, but for reasons different than that students
are young adolescents. Because of the large influx of immigrant children and the increasing number
of students not passing to the next grade, elementary schools were overcrowded. School districts es-
tablished junior high schools, which were often attached to high schools, to relieve the overcrowded
elementary schools (Beane, 2001). The number of junior high schools peaked at 6,000 in the 1960s,
but then had declined to 632 by 2001 (McEwin, Dickinson, & Jenkins, 2003). They had become
miniature high schools that many believed were not effectively serving young adolescents.

Although middle level educators believe that early adolescents deserve an education differ-
ent from that provided in elementary and secondary schools, the early middle schools evolved
when the baby boom generation of the 1950s overwhelmed elementary schools. Rather than build-
ing more elementary schools, an option was to add a wing to the high school for students in the
fifth or sixth to ninth grades. A research report from England also assisted in the establishment of
middle schools when it reported that the average age for puberty had declined from ages twelve
to fifteen to ages ten to fourteen, which encompassed students in grades 5 or 6 through 8 (Beane,
2001). Middle schools were designed to focus on the developmental and academic needs of young
adolescents. The ideal was to have clusters of teachers and students. Middle level educators were
expected to be more affectionate and sensitive to young people.
The middle school is generally defined as “a school having at least three grades and not more than five grades, and including at least grades six and seven.” As the number of junior high schools declined, the number of middle schools grew to more than 13,000. Middle schools today usually focus on academic achievement that is provided in a positive and nurturing climate. Collaborative and cooperative learning strategies are popular. Most schools are working to eliminate the tracking of students by creating heterogeneous groups in which cultural diversity is celebrated and diverse learning styles are recognized. Many middle schools have adopted team teaching and block scheduling.

**High Schools**

After the first high school was established in Boston in 1821, the numbers grew slowly until the end of that century. They grew even more during the Great Depression of the 1930s when children were pushed out of the workforce and into high schools. Many states raised their compulsory school attendance to ages fourteen or sixteen during that period (Olson, 2000), contributing to high schools becoming an important institution in society.

High schools today are being attacked as wastelands for young people. In a number of urban schools, less than half of the African American and Hispanic students are finishing high school within four years (Swanson, 2009). Governors, businesses, and organizations have established committees to reform high schools with the goal of changing the school culture to improve student achievement and increase graduation rates. High school “reforms, [Bill] Gates and others have argued, need to focus on raising academic standards, connecting students’ studies to their lives outside of school, and addressing the anonymity of the nation’s many large, comprehensive high schools” (Toch, Jerald, & Dillon, 2007).

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has supported the development of small learning communities in high schools in numerous communities across the country. These small communities could be the high school itself with 150 to 400 students (Conchas & Rodríguez, 2008). They could be “schools within schools,” which may be organized around a theme such as medical or technical careers. Teachers in these small schools develop common visions and goals and work together to realize them. More high school reforms can be expected during the next decade.

**JOURNAL FOR REFLECTION**

Based on your own high school experience and observations in other high schools, what reforms do you think would improve high schools?

**SCHOOL LOCATIONS**

The people who share the space and place in which we live have a great influence on our culture and lives. We become comfortable with the place where we live, understanding what is expected of us and others. When we move from one area of the country to another, we may suffer some cultural shock, having to learn the culture of the new area. The same is true for students and families as they move from one district to another, especially if they have moved to a new region of the country.

Since the 1970s, many individuals and families have migrated from the Northeast and Midwest to the South and West. The aging of the population in the Northeast and Midwest has led to a decrease in school enrollments, resulting in a loss of revenues for schools and the closing or consolidation of many of them. Half of the U.S. population now lives in the South and West, compared to 48 percent in 1970. One-fourth of the population lives in California, Florida, and Texas alone. Nearly one in five Florida residents is over sixty-five years old, and 15 percent of the population in Iowa, Maine, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia is retired (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008, Table 16).
Nearly four in five people in the United States live in towns, cities, and metropolitan areas with a population of 2,500 or more (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008, Table 28). Teaching in an isolated rural area hundreds of miles from a large shopping mall is very different from teaching in a wealthy suburban area with access to a wide range of cultural and sporting events.

In 2006, there were 97,382 schools in 15,728 school districts (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008, Tables 231 and 232). The average enrollment in the nation’s schools was 521 with over half of the students attending schools with enrollments of less than 500, as shown in Figure 6.3. One in four students attends the largest 100 school districts; 43 percent of the nation’s students attend the largest 500 school districts (Dalton, Sable, & Hoffman, 2006). Students in the largest 100 school districts are ethnically, racially, and linguistically diverse with 29 percent of their students being African American, 7 percent Asian American, and 34 percent Latino. Nearly half of them are eligible for free lunch; 12 percent have one or more disabilities; and 12 percent are enrolled in English-language programs (Dalton et al., 2006). In this section we examine the characteristics of rural, urban, and suburban areas that may help you determine where you would like to teach.

**Rural Communities**

Twenty-one percent of the population lives in rural areas or in towns with fewer than 2,500 residents (Dalton et al., 2006). By urban and suburban standards, families live long distances from one another, and children may travel long distances to school. To the rural family, however, the distances are not great, and a feeling of neighborliness exists. The social structure is less stratified than in more populous geographical areas, and everyone may appear to know everyone else. Values tend to be somewhat conservative as compared to other areas.

Workers in rural areas generally are poorly paid for their work, earning about three-fourths of the wages paid in urban areas. Although housing costs may be lower, other expenses are not much different. As a result, 14 percent of the rural population lives in poverty, which is
slightly higher than the total population (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.). Poverty is disproportionately high on American Indian reservations, but also exists on the Midwestern plains, western ranches, and farms across the country. Some rural areas depend heavily on low-skilled immigrant labor, allowing large farm owners to prosper while workers earn such low wages they can hardly sustain themselves. Employment in manufacturing is limited in rural areas.

An increasing number of urban and suburban dwellers choose to live in these areas, commuting to their employment in more populous metropolitan areas. These transplants are generally young and well educated. They are fleeing the complexities of city life to acquire self-reliance and self-confidence, to return to a physically healthier environment, or simply to be able to own an affordable home. In some instances, this exodus to a rural area has caused problems for schools because the newcomers’ values sometimes clash with those of the more traditional rural community. Family living habits and expectations for school programs differ, and some newcomers demand increased social services. In many rural communities, it takes a considerable length of time for newcomers to be accepted into the social structure.

One in five students attends rural schools (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2006). These schools have a larger percentage of white and American Indian students than other areas of the country, but the Hispanic population in a number of rural areas is growing. The schools are generally smaller than ones in cities, and the student-to-teacher ratio is lower. Rural students perform better on national achievement tests than their central city peers but less well than students in most suburban schools (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2006).

Despite the pivotal role of schools in rural life, these schools face real difficulties. In some school districts, teacher shortages may result in the staffing of schools by teachers with limited academic background in the subjects they teach. Not all courses (for example, art and foreign languages) can be offered because of the limited number of teachers. Principals may be assigned to several schools, and support services may be limited because of the lack of funds. Teachers in rural areas sometimes feel isolated, especially if they are not from the area. In some rural communities, one-room schools still exist where a single teacher teaches all subjects to students in grades K–8. As ethnic diversity increases in these areas, teachers will be confronted with cultures and languages to which they may have had little or no exposure.

Rural communities cherish their small schools where all students know each other, all of the teachers, and most community members. They usually fight proposals for consolidating schools because of the long historical traditions associated with a school. In addition, they worry about consolidated schools being so far away that they cannot actively participate in their children’s and grandchildren’s education. Some students end up riding a bus for one or more hours daily to reach a new school.

**Suburban Communities**

Nearly half of the U.S. population now lives in the suburbs. The suburban population has become diverse as middle-class families of color have moved into them from cities. The suburbs are becoming even more economically, racially, ethnically, linguistically, and religiously diverse as new immigrants settle in them. Some communities actively solicit and celebrate diversity. In others, it is discouraged. Breaking past patterns of immigrants settling in their own enclaves in cities, today’s immigrants from Central America, South America, Asia, and the Middle East often bypass cities and move directly into the suburbs or rural areas.

High-tech companies have found the suburbs ideal for their development and research on software, electronics, and biotechnologies. Entrepreneurs and professionals are attracted to suburban research parks, often moving into elite housing developments near their jobs. The production of the products (for example, silicon chips) of these companies usually occurs in other places (O’Mara, 2006), guaranteeing economically segregated communities. However, the suburbs are populated not only by the upper middle class; poverty now exists there as well as in cities and rural areas. The National Center for Children in Poverty reports that 31 percent of suburban children under age eighteen live in families with incomes below the poverty level (National Center for Children in Poverty, 2008).

Families often move from cities to the suburbs to ensure that their children receive a better education. Funding for schools has traditionally been better in the suburbs than other areas. Wealthy suburbs boast beautiful school buildings, sometimes on sprawling campuses, with the latest in
technology, qualified teachers, advanced placement courses, gifted and talented programs, and numerous extracurricular activities. However, not all suburban schools are of this high quality. Students who are English-language learners, who are from low-income families, or who are from backgrounds other than European are more likely to attend the older schools in the region.

Enrollments in suburban schools are, on the average, smaller than those of urban schools, but nearly 40 percent of the high schools have nine hundred or more students (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2003). The proportion of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch is less than in other areas (Planty et al., 2008). Students outperform their rural and urban counterparts on achievement tests (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics, 2005), and more suburban students than students from other areas attend college. Safety is less of a concern for students, parents, and teachers. With changing demographics in the suburbs, however, these conditions are beginning to change—particularly in suburban areas next to major cities.

**Urban Communities**

Urban areas are usually rich in educational and entertainment resources such as libraries, museums, theaters, professional sports, colleges, and universities. People from different economic and cultural backgrounds intermingle in many parts of a city. An expensive restaurant can be on one block with a soup kitchen on the next block. Homeless people and families are more visible in urban areas as affordable housing becomes scarcer and the number of public housing units does not meet the needs of the population.

Mega-cities around the world are home to one-half of the world’s population. The largest city in the United States is New York City with a population of around 8.3 million (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008, Table 26), which grows to 18.8 million when extended into the metropolitan area that includes its suburbs (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008, Table 16). The United States has 51 metropolitan areas with over one million residents (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008, Table 16). The population’s diversity is usually greater in these metropolitan areas than in other areas of the country, often including many new immigrants from around the world. The majority of the foreign-born population in the United States lives in cities. Those in which more than one in five of its residents are foreign-born include Los Angeles (40 percent), San Jose (39 percent), New York City (37 percent), San Francisco (36 percent), Houston (28 percent), Boston (27 percent), El Paso (27 percent), Dallas (27 percent), San Diego (27 percent), Phoenix (23 percent), Las Vegas (23 percent), Chicago (22 percent), and Austin (20 percent) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008, Table 40). Almost one in five elementary and high school students has at least one foreign-born parent (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008, Table 220).

The urban population is diverse. Hispanics are the majority population in San Antonio and represent more than 25 percent of the population in Texas’s other large cities. They are a large portion of the population in many California metropolitan areas, including Los Angeles (44 percent), Riverside (45 percent), San Diego (30 percent), and San Jose (26 percent). San Jose, San Francisco, and Los Angeles are home to the largest proportion of Asian Americans in the United States. African Americans make up more than 25 percent of the population in the metropolitan areas of Memphis, New Orleans, Atlanta, Richmond, Virginia Beach, and Washington, DC (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008, Table 21). Even with this diversity, many residential areas remain segregated by race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status.

Cities provide creative energy for many of their inhabitants, but they are oppressive and dangerous for others. Many families live in safe environments with good schools, parks, and recreational facilities. Others live in toxic environments that contribute to high incidences of asthma and other diseases. Some sections of the city are scarred by gunshots and graffiti. Ambulances, police raids, and funerals for young people in these parts of the city are common occurrences.

Schools across a city look different and serve their students differently. Upper middle class parents are more able to donate funds to assist their schools when teachers of art and music have been cut from the district’s budget. When their children are not learning at the expected level, they can hire tutors. Although many low-income parents are engaged actively in their children’s education, the proportion of upper middle class parents involved is higher. They talk with teachers; they ensure that their children have the best teachers; they encourage their children to study and participate in extracurricular activities; and they monitor their children’s performance. Low-income parents lack the same *cultural capital*. Their income does not permit them to support school activities in the same way.
A school may serve as a refuge for some urban students. However, some students have less than desirable classrooms and schools that do not provide maximum conditions for learning. They sometimes meet in basement corridors or storerooms without windows as chronicled in books by Jonathan Kozol. Kozol (2000) calls on society not to provide “a narrow gate for children of the fortunate and favored. There should be one gate. It should be known to everyone. It should be wide enough so even Pineapple [a low-income student] can get in without squeezing” (p. 296). Urban schools can be difficult for both students and teachers as described in the Reflect on Diversity feature.

Urban schools can be highly centralized, authoritative, and bureaucratic. However, a growing number of urban school districts are allowing the communities to elect their own school boards. Those with reform-minded leaders are reducing the bureaucracy, becoming more decentralized, and allowing parents more choice in their schools. In a few cities such as New York City and Washington, DC, mayors have taken over the management of their schools with the goal of reforming schools and improving student learning.

Magnet schools are popular in urban areas. Six percent of the schools in the one hundred largest school districts are magnet schools, enrolling 9 percent of the students (Dalton et al., 2006). High schools are more likely to be large (that is, more than nine hundred students) in cities than in other areas of the country (U.S. Department of Education, 2003). The average student-to-teacher ratio in urban schools is only slightly higher than in suburban schools (Anderson & Summerfield, 2007). Research suggests that small class size is critical to improving learning in areas with students who are socially and economically disadvantaged (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2009).

EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

Educational reformers are calling for a break with the past. They believe that too many teachers do not believe that all children can learn, and, as a result, do little to help students in our lowest income communities to learn to read, compute, and develop the knowledge and skills necessary to be self-sufficient in the future. They believe that state and local district regulations can be obstacles to teaching all students to learn. They believe that teacher unions are part of the problem. The unions are perceived by this group as defenders of incompetent teachers who are not helping students learn. Critics charge that teacher candidates are not being prepared by colleges and universities to work with...
students from diverse populations in schools with the greatest need and the lowest academic performance. With new school leaders in cities across the country focused on reform, teachers identified as “ineffective” are being replaced with energetic, enthusiastic, and smart teachers who have generally majored in an academic area, but have no preparation in how to teach.

Effective schools first began to be studied in the 1980s to try to determine the characteristics of schools in which students had high academic performance. One of the early leaders in this movement, Ron Edmonds, focused his research on effective schools for students of color. These researchers found that the educators in these schools had a shared vision and goals for their work. They were concerned about teaching and learning, which was reflected in purposeful teaching and high expectations for their students. These schools also had strong and positive home-to-school partnerships.

It is true that effective teachers make a difference in student learning. Research shows that students who have effective teachers for at least three years in a row will perform at academically higher levels than students who were not lucky enough to have one of those teachers (Bransford, Darling-Hammond, & LePage, 2005; Sanders & Rivers, 1996). The value added to academic achievement by effective teachers has led to movements for greater accountability of educators for student learning. The No Child Left Behind Act was the federal approach to holding teachers and principals accountable by assessing student learning through state achievement tests. States are developing data systems that can track student achievement to a specific teacher. Some states and school districts are also developing plans for financially rewarding teachers who are able to improve the learning of their students as measured on state tests.

School culture also appears to have a great influence on student learning. The early research on effective schools found that they “had a climate and ethos that was purposeful and conducive to learning” (Deal & Peterson, 1999). The culture of a school can

- Foster school effectiveness and productivity;
- Improve collegial and collaborative activities that foster better communication and problem-solving practices;
- Foster successful change and improvement efforts;
- Build commitment and identification of staff, students, and administrators;
- Amplify the energy, motivation, and vitality of a school staff, students, and community; and
- Increase the focus of daily behavior and attention on what is important and valued (Deal & Peterson, 1999).

Of course, school culture can also do just the opposite of the list above. Some schools do not have a culture that supports academic learning and positive development for all students. Reformers think that these toxic schools can be turned around under their leadership with capable teachers, the removal of barriers such as teacher tenure, and more effective and efficient personnel and financial operations.

In most discussions today, effective schools are ones whose students are performing above grade level. Their curriculum is generally standards based and assessments are performance based. Teachers in these schools do not limit their teaching to preparing students to take a state standardized test. They encourage students to be problem-solvers and critical thinkers as well as ensuring that they know the subject matter. The nonprofit group Education Trust has found that the schools that teach all children to high standards have “clear goals; high expectations; rigorous coursework; extra instructional help when needed; and strong teachers who know their subject matter and how to teach it” (Education Trust, 2006). Two other important factors are explicit standards and assessments that provide teachers feedback on what students are learning. Under those conditions, African American and Hispanic students are performing at the same levels as white students (Education Trust, 2006).

**Criteria for Effective Schools**

The U.S. Department of Education annually recognizes Blue Ribbon schools that are either high-performing schools or dramatically improved public and private schools. Students in the high-performing schools must be achieving in the top 10 percent of their state on state tests. To be designated as a dramatically improved school, at least 40 percent of their students must be from disadvantaged backgrounds and have dramatically improved their performance to high levels. Since its inception in 1982, more than six thousand schools have received this recognition (U.S. Department of Education, 2009).
A number of organizations have also identified effective schools. For example, Education Trust has identified schools with large African American and Hispanic student populations in which those students are performing at high levels. The list of these schools is available at www2.edtrust.org.

LOOKING AHEAD:
GREATER ACCOUNTABILITY FOR STUDENT LEARNING

No matter which curriculum approach or school reform effort a school adopts, the bottom-line goal should be to ensure that all of its students are learning at high levels regardless of their race, ethnicity, native language, socioeconomic status, physical ability, or gender. Academic achievement will continue to be one of the primary purposes of schools. Teachers are being held accountable for their ability to improve academic achievement. School leaders will continue to examine the school cultures that support effective schools and try to duplicate that culture in a larger number of schools. The number of parents who choose charter or magnet schools may increase as they seek schools that will help their children learn at the high levels expected by states.

Because No Child Left Behind requires schools and school districts to disaggregate test data by race, language, and disability, the differences in academic performance among groups has become very public. In some schools all students are performing at high levels, but in too many schools, students of color, English-language learners, and students with disabilities are falling behind their white, able-bodied peers whose native language is English. In the next chapter, we will explore the nation’s diversity and the challenges that schools face as they build on that diversity to ensure that all students learn at high levels.

SUMMARY

ROLES OF SCHOOLS
- Schools serve many purposes, including the development of citizenship, preparation for work, the development of academic and social competence, and the transmission of the culture to another generation.

CULTURE IN SCHOOLS
- Culture determines the way we behave and think within society and its subgroups.
- A group of people who live in the same country generally share a common culture that is incorporated into the policies and institutions of society, including schools.
- Families have their own unique cultural backgrounds based on their ethnicity, native language, and religion that may be accepted positively by schools or be at dissonance with the school culture.
- Not all parents, communities, and educators agree on the values and content to be taught in schools, which can lead to the courts being called on to resolve the differences.
- Schools have their own cultures with histories and traditions that affect the way students and teachers behave.
- A school’s culture is important in supporting student learning.
- Involving the community in schools not only helps community members become better advocates for the schools, but provides needed assistance for educators and students.

SCHOOL CHOICES
- Parents have always had the option to place their children in private religious, single-sex, and independent schools.
- Parents in larger school districts have a growing number of options within the public schools as the number of magnet and charter schools increases.
- In a few school districts, parents can receive a voucher to move their children from a public to a private school at public expense.

SCHOOL LEVELS
- Schools have been divided into grades to serve students who are at the same age level.
- Governors and philanthropists are calling for the reform of high schools to prepare students for a changing world and improve graduation rates.
PART IV • SOCIOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF EDUCATION

SCHOOL LOCATIONS
- The place in which we live affects our cultural identity and lived experiences.
- Life and schools are different depending on whether we live in rural, suburban, or urban areas.
- Poverty is greater in central city and urban areas, but is growing in suburban areas.
- Schools in suburban areas, except those closest to urban areas, have greater financial support, and students perform at higher levels on achievement tests.

EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS
- Academic achievement is at the heart of effective schools, in which all students learn at high levels regardless of their race, native language, or disability.

LOOKING AHEAD: GREATER ACCOUNTABILITY FOR STUDENT LEARNING
- Teachers and schools are now being held accountable for learning by all students as measured by students’ performance on state achievement tests.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Students and families bring their cultures into the classroom. Teachers also bring to school their cultures, which may be different than that of their students. What problems can arise if teachers establish their own culture as the norm to be followed in the classroom? What cultural norms should guide a classroom in which students are culturally diverse?

2. Since the release of *A Nation at Risk* in 1983, the school curricula for early childhood education through high school have become standards based and the performance of students assessed regularly. What school purpose guided preschool to grade 12 education during this period?

3. You may be assigned to a school in which community members monitor the curriculum to ensure that their values are reflected. What curriculum content could spark debates in the community? How important will it be to keep parents and other community members informed?

4. Charter school advocates often indicate that state and district regulations are obstacles to good schools that help students learn. What regulations are they talking about? How might those regulations prevent a school from being as effective as it could be?

5. Most states match the licenses that teachers receive to a specific subject or age level of students, which in turn matches the school levels discussed in this chapter. Why are teachers not generally granted a single license to teach students across the P–12 grades? What teachers can receive a license that crosses all of the grade levels?

6. The numbers of students in central cities and rural areas are somewhat equal as is the income status of their populations. What are the obstacles to a good education that students face in these two different settings? What are the positive elements of their school locations that could contribute to a more effective education for students in those two areas?

SCHOOL-BASED OBSERVATIONS

1. Select a charter school in your area to visit. During your observations, identify characteristics of the school culture, students, teachers, and instruction that are similar to and different from the neighborhood schools that you have attended or observed. Record your observations in your journal or portfolio.

2. Visit a rural, suburban, or urban school and systematically record characteristics such as the ethnic and racial composition of the students, the income level of families, the size of the student population and teaching force, the student-to-teacher ratios, the general school climate, and other observable characteristics. What appears to be working well at the school? What appears to be problematic at the school?
PORTFOLIO DEVELOPMENT

1. To develop an understanding of school culture and its role in the establishment of effective schools, record the characteristics of schools by one of the following two approaches:
   a. When you visit a school, record the condition of the school, the characteristics of documents on the walls of the building, the type of instruction observed in classrooms, the reflection of students’ cultures in the school, the mission of the school, and generally how students and teachers feel about the school. Also record the diversity of the school population, which is usually available on the website, and how students are performing on state-required standardized tests. As you look at your observations and data, write a paper or newspaper article about how the school culture supports (or does not support) student learning.
   b. Review a selected number of the U.S. Department of Education’s Blue Ribbon schools (http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2008/09/09092008.html) or the effective schools identified by Education Trust (http://www2.edtrust.org/EdTrust/Product+Catalog/main.htm#sp). Write a report or newspaper article about the school cultures of some of the schools that appear to be serving their students well, at least in terms of improving their academic achievement.

2. Some critics of charter schools worry that the establishment of charter schools will harm public schools. Write a paper on the strengths and disadvantages of charter schools. Include in your paper an analysis of the contributions charter schools could make to public schools and whether you think their establishment is harming public schools.

PREPARING FOR CERTIFICATION

1. The PRAXIS II Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT) has a section titled “Students as Learners.” This section of the test includes reference to “understanding the influence of individual experiences, talents, and prior learning, as well as language, culture, family, and community values on students’ learning”:
   • multicultural backgrounds
   • age-appropriate knowledge and behavior
   • the student culture at school
   • family backgrounds
   • linguistic patterns and differences
   • cognitive patterns and differences
   • social and emotional issues

   Reread the elements that make up Culture in Schools. Using the descriptors above from the PRAXIS II and the elements from the text related to a school’s culture, define the culture that existed in your high school.

2. Answer the following multiple-choice question, which is similar to items in Praxis and other state certification tests. In many districts, school choices are made available to parents for a variety of reasons. Reread the opening segment of the chapter about virtual schools. Virtual schools exist in most states, and at most levels (elementary, middle school, high school). In addition, single courses can be taken at those levels, and in the colleges and universities. Several reasons are given for students taking online courses. Which of the following does NOT often justify attendance in a virtual school:
   a. Credit recovery
   b. Comfort in the virtual environment
   c. Cost
   d. Unavailability of course on home campus.

3. Answer the following short-answer question, which is similar to items in Praxis and other state certification tests. Although schools are expected to transmit the culture of the United States to the younger generation, educators do not always agree on whose culture should be transmitted. Describe what you feel would be an ideal culture for the school where you might teach. How are they similar and different?

4. Answer the following short-answer question, which is similar to items in Praxis and other state certification tests. Some school reformers believe vouchers are an effective means of improving education. Describe the purpose of vouchers and how they work. List two arguments for vouchers and two arguments against the use of vouchers in public education.

   After you’ve completed your written responses for the above questions, use the Praxis general scoring guide provided in Chapter 1 to see if you can revise your response to improve your score.
WEBSITES

www.capenet.org The Council for American Private Education (CAPE) includes facts and information about private schools, a list of blue ribbon private schools, and links to job banks.

www.edreform.com The Center for Education Reform is supportive of school choice. Its website discusses issues around choice and provides information on supportive state legislation and becoming active in school reform efforts.

www.govhs.org The Virtual High School Global Consortium is a nonprofit organization that offers online courses and professional development.

www.naesp.org The National Association for Elementary School Principals provides access to resources for elementary school teachers.

www.naeye.org The website of the National Association for the Education of Young Children provides a number of resources on teaching preschoolers and primary students from diverse racial and language groups as well as students with disabilities.

www.nassp.org The website of the National Association for Secondary School Principals is a resource for studies on middle and high schools, a list of “breakthrough schools” serving students from families in poverty, and policies affecting high schools and their students.

www.nmsa.org The National Middle School Association’s website includes professional development kits, publications on middle level education, and avenues for becoming involved in advocacy activities.

FURTHER READING

Conchas, G. Q., & Rodríguez, L. F. (2008). Small schools and urban youth: Using the power of school culture to engage students. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press. Examining the structural and cultural features of small learning communities in four schools in Oakland and Boston, the authors provide a clear, practical description of small schools that work.

Deal, T. E., & Peterson, K. D. (1999). Shaping school culture: The heart of leadership. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. Although this book is written for school leaders, it provides valuable information about school cultures that contribute to effective schools and those that have led to toxic cultures. The descriptions of school cultures that have been effective in diverse communities are helpful.

Kincheloe, J. L., & hayes, k. (Eds.). (2007). Teaching city kids: Understanding and appreciating them. New York: Peter Lang. The authors of the chapters in this book explore how marginalized students in our urban schools have the resiliency to make it through, and how teachers can assist them in overcoming the racist and classist agendas that exist in many urban schools.

Price, H. B. (2008). Mobilizing the community to help students succeed. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. This former president of the National Urban League describes strategies that teachers might use to inspire and reward academic achievement in the most challenged school districts. He promotes the use of the community to motivate students to be successful.
chapter thirteen

BECOMING A HIGH-QUALITY TEACHER IN A CHANGING WORLD
Students are asked to infuse personal experiences and tastes into their work whether it be a fork, spoon, cutting board, clock or coat rack.

The goal is to design and ultimately create what Gattonini hopes will be “something completely different from what they’re used to seeing.”

“I want the students to know they have the ability to accomplish anything they set out to do,” she said.

One of the most important aspects of the program, said Gattonini, is providing students with practical, hands-on experience that enables them to leave school with viable tools and skills that can be utilized in a number of areas.

Providing them with real-world skills aside, Gattonini said the greatest part of working with the students comes from being able to see them “light up at seeing what they’ve created,” after confronting any fears they may have had about using the tools.

“Hopefully, the skills they learn here can be something they carry with them throughout life, whether in their career, as a hobby or being able to fix something around the house,” she said.

“It truly delights me to see the reactions in students when they become confident in their abilities,” she said.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What are some of the qualities of Ms. Gattonini that make her a high-quality teacher?
2. Ms. Gattonini teaches industrial arts. To what extent are you aware of the dramatic changes in this program area in recent years?
3. What are some ways in which this program area can help all students succeed?
4. If you were a teacher in this school, how would you collaborate with Ms. Gattonini so that the students you share benefit?

Source: From Seacoastline.com (online newsletter), June 16, 2009.
LEARNING OUTCOMES

After reading and studying this chapter, you should be able to:
1. Describe how the information provided in the preceding chapters of this text come together to provide you with a solid foundation and understanding of the expectations for today's schools and teachers. (INTASC Standard 9: Reflective Practice: Professional Development)
2. Present an overview of the continuing national pressures to reform schools.
3. Describe key characteristics of high-quality schools. (INTASC Standard 9: Reflective Practice: Professional Development)
4. Clarify your philosophy of what high-quality teaching and high-quality schools are like. (INTASC Standard 1: Content Pedagogy, INTASC Standard 4: Multiple Instructional Strategies)
5. Present the case for why and how high-quality teachers use evidence. (INTASC Standard 8: Assessment)
6. Summarize key sources of support that you will have access to as a first-year teacher. (INTASC Standard 9: Reflective Practice: Professional Development)

DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES FOR VIEWING EDUCATION AND TEACHING

This text has been organized around a major theme: perspectives on education in a changing world. Two very important components of this theme are (1) the differing viewpoints about education and (2) the rapidly changing environment of education. There are many different viewpoints (or perspectives) regarding education. Some viewpoints are similar and others are diametrically opposed such as idealism versus realism or local control versus direction from central governments. The world has been, is, and will continue to change rapidly. For example, as society becomes more diverse, so do schools. Different philosophical perspectives lead to different expectations for the curriculum and for the teacher’s role.

This is an exciting and very important time during which to become a teacher. The United States has a three hundred plus year history of development of education policies, sixty plus years of findings from systematic research, and continuing development of innovative practices that offer a rich foundation for teachers to use in making a difference. From here forward, the most critical factor for you to keep in mind is that high-quality teachers are continually focused on doing those things that make a positive difference in student learning. Every effort is first and foremost aimed at improving the learning of all students.

Recent Trends in Attempts to Improve Education

As we have seen in the past several years, as economic conditions have declined schools have suffered the consequence of lower funding. As is highlighted in Table 13.1, a number of other trends have emerged that have significant implications for schools, teachers, and students. Each of these trends has an additional implication for you and your teaching career. There will be change! Much of what teachers did well in the past will not work in the future. Much of what you see as high-quality teaching today will not be what excellent teachers will be doing a decade from now.

CONTINUING PRESSURES TO REFORM SCHOOLS

In many ways, the concerns about and expectations for education and for teachers have always been based on the contemporary problems and concerns of American society. For example, when you read Chapters 2 and 3 you would have seen how societal issues of different times led to different expectations for schools. Quite often when there has been a problem in society, business, or world politics, policy makers, business leaders, and key educators have turned to the schools as a source of the problem and/or as a resource for solving the problem. This pattern of moving from crisis to school reform has happened repeatedly as discussed next.
Table 13.1 • Key Trends with Implications for Schools, Teachers, and Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trends</th>
<th>Implications for Schools, Teachers, and Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Economic recession, mortgage defaults, bankruptcies, and increased unemployment | • Reduced taxes lead to reductions in school budgets  
• Loss of extra-curriculum activities  
• Increases in class size  
• Fewer teachers being hired |
| Increased expectations for accountability           | • Annual testing as required by NCLB  
• Increased criteria for teacher licensure  
• School reform  
• School improvement plans  
• Evaluation of schools based on student performance  
• Teacher pay based on student and school performance |
| Availability of research and evaluation findings    | • Required use of evidence-based curriculum  
• Expectation that schools will use data in planning improvement efforts  
• Expectations that teachers will use data in planning instruction |
| Increasing student diversity                        | • Use of multicultural curriculum  
• Teaching limited-English-proficient students  
• Reducing the achievement gap  
• Ensuring appropriate assessment, placement, and instruction for students with special needs |
| Rapid technology developments                       | • More tools and resources to support classroom instruction  
• More tools for administration of budgets, schedules, and communication  
• Social networking |

Sixty Years of Increasing Federal Pressure to Change Schools

Figure 13.1 summarizes efforts during the past sixty plus years to change schools. The combination of world events, political leadership, economic conditions, and international competition have led policy makers at the federal level to respond with priority initiatives that are intended to improve/reform/change schools. For example, following the launch of Sputnik in 1957, national concerns arose over being competitive with the Soviet Union and that the school curriculum was out of date and in some instances inaccurate. This led to a major national push in the 1960s to develop new curriculum, especially in the sciences and mathematics. In 1982 a national report stated that the “nation was at risk” due to the poor quality of education. This led to another round of initiatives to “reform” schools. In 1989 President G. H. W. Bush held the first meeting ever between the president and all state governors to examine the problems with education. This led to President Clinton’s Goals 2000 report, which set targets such as all students being ready for school by the age of five by the year 2000. Subsequently, in 2001 President G. W. Bush signed into law the No Child Left Behind Act, which mandates that all students will be performing at grade level by the 2013–14 school year.

As you can see, an important theme that has emerged during the last half century is one of increasing federal involvement in education. A name for this theme is federalism. As explained in Chapter 10, although the U.S. Constitution is interpreted as leaving responsibility for education to the states, in the past sixty years the federal government has used the combination of legislation and money as an incentive to move from stimulating implementation of various programs to mandating particular uniform practices that all states and schools must follow. This trend is well illustrated in Figure 13.1. For example, the original 1965 version of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) offered increasing role of the national government in directing education practices and procedures at the state and/or local level.
### FIGURE 13.1
Timeline of Efforts to Change Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Range</th>
<th>Presidents</th>
<th>Crisis</th>
<th>Federal Office for Education</th>
<th>Policies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1953–61</td>
<td>Eisenhower, Johnson</td>
<td>Sputnik</td>
<td>U.S. Office of Education</td>
<td>Build state and local capacity to educate people with disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969–74</td>
<td>Ford</td>
<td>Viet Nam</td>
<td>U.S. Office of Education</td>
<td>Reauthorization of ESEA linking federal aid to students with disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977–81</td>
<td>Reagan</td>
<td>Ending the Cold War</td>
<td>U.S. Department of Education</td>
<td>Reauthorization of ESEA linking federal aid to students with disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989–93</td>
<td>Clinton</td>
<td></td>
<td>U.S. Department of Education</td>
<td>Education summit; first meeting of president and governors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993–2001</td>
<td>G. W. Bush</td>
<td>Two wars and declining economy</td>
<td>U.S. Department of Education</td>
<td>Reauthorization of ESEA; now called No Child Left Behind (NCLB), response to intervention (RTI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000s</td>
<td>Obama</td>
<td>Stimulating economic recovery</td>
<td>U.S. Department of Education</td>
<td>American Recovery and Reinvestment Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008–</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Related Reports and Publications**

- **A Nation at Risk**
- **Goals 2000**
- **Public posting of test scores for all public schools**

**Change initiatives Based on Research**

- Major curriculum development projects: science and math
- Effective teachers: direct instruction and classroom management
- Effective schools: whole school and principals
- School reform programs, school improvement, and value added
- Standards, data-driven decision making, professional learning communities (PLCs)
- Early childhood, reform and investment in K–12, restore leadership in higher education
Chapters 6, 9, and 10 provide more details about NCLB and its legal context.

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grants that states and school districts could apply for to support implementation of innovative practices and programs, rather than mandating reforms.

**Reauthorization of ESEA as No Child Left Behind**

The 2001 reauthorization of ESEA, called the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), did not simply offer grant programs that schools could apply for, but mandated various education practices that all states and public schools must do. As described in Chapter 9, NCLB prescribed that all states implement a number of actions including:

- Annual testing at most grade levels and for most subjects,
- Specifying teacher minimum qualifications
- Setting sanctions for schools and school districts that fail to reach the prescribed annual increases in the proportion of students with passing test scores.

**REFLECTING ON THE OVERALL PATTERN OF FEDERAL REFORM STRATEGIES.** One of the challenges for you as a teacher education candidate, and in your future as a teacher, is to be able to see overall patterns and themes. It is all too easy to become fully occupied with details of the moment. Each day, each class period, and each week will be filled with tasks and demands. Be sure to regularly take time to pull back and view the big picture of what is happening. Otherwise, you run the risk of not seeing professional growth in yourself and each student’s growth in learning. This is an important reason for taking time to reflect, instead of act. The metaphor of not only seeing the details of a tree but also being able to see the forest is appropriate. High-quality teachers do both. They see the details of how each of their students is doing within each lesson, and they also can see patterns of student growth across lessons, days, weeks, and months.

**DIFFERENT LEVERS FOR “FIXING” SCHOOLS.** Two scholars have done this type of reflection in relation to the trend toward increased federalism in education. Sashkin and Egermeier (1993) developed a forest view of how federal education policy has changed over the decades. They offered three perspectives for understanding a thirty plus year history of education change. Their analysis suggests that four different levers have been used with the intention of reforming education:

- **Fix the parts:** This perspective is reflective of the massive curriculum development projects of the 1960s. (Reread parts of Chapters 11 and 12.)
- **Fix the people:** Some see teacher training and professional development as the key to improving education. (Reread parts of Chapters 6, 7, and 8.)
• *Fix the school:* Implementing one of the various whole school reform models and reorganizing schools are seen as ways to change whole schools. (Reread parts of Chapters 9 and 10.)
• *Fix the system:* We now are in a time when the whole system of education is seen as needing change. (This requires consideration of all perspectives covered in the six parts of this text.)

As a teacher you will be part of many efforts to change and improve education. To help you in being reflective, you can use these four “fixes” as a way of considering the intent of future change approaches.

**A New President, A New Agenda for Education**

The arrival of President Barack Obama has spurred new initiatives to improve education. Education was seen as a key lever for addressing the economic crisis. The policy response was for Congress to pass the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act in 2009. The act included heavy investments in education. For example, $5 billion was provided for early learning programs, $77 billion for reforms to strengthen K–12 education, and $8.5 billion was to be used to encourage states to make improvements in teacher effectiveness, make progress toward college and career-ready standards, and improve achievement in low-performing schools. A key rationale was to link improving the nation’s economic competitiveness with every child receiving an education “that will enable them to succeed in a global economy that is predicated on knowledge and innovation” (*Issues: Education*, 2009).

**Findings from Education Research and Development: Another Pressure for Changes in Teaching and Schools**

Beginning with President Johnson’s Great Society initiatives, education research, like education itself, also came under the direction of the federal government. Both the 1965 and 1966 ESEA statutes included major multiyear funding for education R&D. This was unprecedented for education. Results from these efforts include many studies of what teachers do, identification of school characteristics that are correlated with student test scores, the role of principals, and the importance of teacher training and professional development. In all cases the criterion for quality and effectiveness is whether there are improvements in student learning.

**EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT.** In the 1970s researchers funded through ESEA grants identified strong correlations between student test scores and teacher behaviors. Across school years some teachers’ students always scored higher, whereas the students of other teachers always scored lower (Brophy & Good, 1974). This research has resulted in the formulation of a model called the effective teaching model. The first principle in this model is for teachers to create a classroom climate that is supportive and where students feel comfortable making mistakes.

Other researchers at that time identified important characteristics of classroom management (Emmer, Evertson, & Anderson, 1980). For example, effective teachers have a middle range number of classroom rules. Fewer than five rules means the rules are too broad, and more than ten means they are too specific.

**EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS.** In the 1980s researchers examined the characteristics of whole schools where students had higher test scores. This research led to the formulation of an effective schools model. Characteristics of these schools included a shared vision and goals, concern about teaching and learning, purposeful teaching, high expectations, and home–school partnerships. One concern to keep in mind about both the effective teaching and effective schools models is that the criterion for effectiveness is student academic achievement. Much less is known about social and affective outcomes.

**“VALUE ADDED” FOR SMALL CLASS SIZE.** In the 1990s, another approach to identification of the relationships between teachers and student learning emerged out of Tennessee. In this project, the Student/Teacher Achievement Ratio (STAR) study, students entering kindergarten were assigned at random to “small classes” (thirteen to seventeen students), a “regular class” (twenty-two to twenty-six students), or a “regular class with a full-time teacher aide” within each participating school. A total of 329 classrooms in seventy-nine schools in forty-six districts participated. The study followed the students throughout the 1990s. Findings include the following: (1) Students in small classes had superior academic performance. (2) No differences were found between teacher-aide classes and regular classes. (3) Small classes were advantageous for boys and girls, there were greater benefits for minority students and students attending inner-city schools, the small-class
advantages were found for all subjects, and students in small classes had higher engagement behaviors (Finn & Achilles, 1999).

In the 1990s these types of benefits became known as **value-added** benefits. In other words, making an investment in a particular change, such as small class size, resulted in gains above what would normally be observed. Through research, an improvement in outcomes from making a particular change or an additional investment was documented.

Today’s corollary of value-added benefits is **evidence-based practice**. The first question that is likely to be asked whenever a new practice, an innovative approach, or change in instruction is proposed is “What evidence is there that this makes a positive difference in student outcomes?” If the initiator of the change cannot provide data related to this question, there is not much likelihood that it will be adopted.

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As you can see, across the last sixty years, having evidence that documents the effectiveness of classroom practices has become increasingly important. As you become a teacher, what types of evidence will you want to be able to provide about the quality of your teaching?

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**EMERGING PRESSURES AND INDICATORS OF ACCOUNTABILITY REQUIRE CHANGE IN SCHOOLS**

As you well know, all of the problems of society and of schools have not been solved. Also, when a particular problem has been fixed, attention quickly moves to another problem that needs attention. A key part of the solution process will be establishing specific measures of accountability. The following are examples of emerging issues, problems, and pressures that are having direct implications for change in what schools and teachers are expected to do.

**Expectations for Accountability Are Increasing**

Accountability is the theme that cuts across teachers, schools, and school districts. As explained in Chapters 9 and 10, much of this movement toward increased accountability began with the 1991 Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA). The Kentucky Supreme Court had declared the state’s public education system unconstitutional. The court’s decision was based on the extreme disparities across the state in funding and in student performance. This was the first of now more than thirty-five states that have experienced law suits related to unequal funding of schools. The Kentucky legislature then had to come up with a constitutionally defendable state system of public education. KERA was the result.

As you know, the 2001 No Child Left Behind legislation raised the level of accountability for all levels of the education system. Since then the number of priority indicators for accountability has increased.

**TEST-BASED ACCOUNTABILITY.** At this time the primary accountability indicator for public education is test scores. However, instead of simply looking at the average score for the school, the focus is on disaggregation of scores by subgroups such as IEP, LEP, and free and reduced lunch. The near-term consequence is that states, districts, schools, and school staffs are consumed with analyzing standards, test prep, increasing student attendance, and making sure that all categories of students perform well on the annual state-mandated tests. It is not uncommon for two plus months of the school year to be invested in preparing students for these tests. One consequence is that all of this time on test prep becomes lost time for instruction in additional subject matter or subjects and activities that are “not on the test.” Another consequence is media preoccupation with finding what is wrong with a school based on these single test scores.

**RANKING OF SCHOOLS, DISTRICTS, AND STATES.** One use of the test scores is to rank schools and school districts. In every state the test scores for each school are published by the state education department. If you go to the website for any state you can find this information. Most states have sophisticated statistical models that compare each school to all the schools within the state. In some states, such as California and Connecticut, the comparisons go further: Schools are compared to other schools with similar social and economic demographics. These data are now used to make value-added decisions.
being used in national rankings too. For example, *U.S. News & World Report* uses test scores and other indicators to publish “America’s Best High Schools,” a ranking of the top one hundred public schools and what makes them great. Another consequence of this intense focus on accountability is that all schools are now in competition with all other schools to increase their place in the rankings.

**GRADUATION RATES.** Test scores are not the only indicator, especially for high schools. A high school’s graduation rate is increasingly being used to evaluate school, district, and state performance. It is alarming to see high school graduation rates of less than 50 percent, but this is the case for many schools. A related indicator that is receiving increased attention is the proportion of high school graduates that move on to some form of postsecondary education. In some districts attention is given to how many students attend which prestigious four-year colleges.

Although you might think calculating this indicator would be easy, it has turned out not to be that simple. For example, should the graduation rate be a simple count of how many students receive a diploma? If so, which diplomas should be counted? Do certificates of attendance count? Should the rate be a percentage of all students who entered ninth grade or just the percentage of seniors who “walk”? This statistic is problematic because many students disappear between the spring of eighth grade and the beginning of ninth grade. Maybe graduation rate should be calculated beginning with all sixth graders, but what if they move out of the district before the end of high school?

**DROPOUTS.** The number of dropouts is receiving increased attention. However, this is another indicator that is difficult to determine. The first problem is defining who is a dropout. Is it young adults who are old enough that they “should” have graduated? What about the youth who drop out before age sixteen? The U.S. Census Bureau determines a dropout to be individuals between sixteen and twenty-four years of age who are not enrolled in and have not completed high school. Within this definition 84 percent of students graduate from high school. Of the approximately 20 percent who do not complete high school on time, 63 percent return to get their diploma or earn a general education diploma (GED).

Although some may think that the dropout rate is getting worse, it actually has been declining. It declined between 1972 and 2005 from 15 percent to 9 percent. However, the dropout rate is more of a factor for certain schools and students. Black (11 percent) and Hispanic (23 percent) youth drop out at higher rates than whites (6 percent). Also, less than half of first-generation immigrants graduate. The good news is that second-generation immigrants graduate at a rate of more than 80 percent (Child Trends DataBank, 2008).

Those of you who plan to teach in middle/junior high school or elementary school may think that you will be free from the accountability pressures related to graduation rates—but that is not so. If the school district or state is aware of the related research, then teachers at all levels will be held accountable for addressing the problem. Researchers have identified risk factors that are early indicators of the potential for certain students to become future dropouts. Elementary teachers, as well as middle school and junior high school teachers, should know and be ready to respond to these factors.

In an earlier study, Roderick (1993) followed a cohort of students in a small district in Massachusetts. She discovered two subgroups of dropouts: the “early dropouts” and the “later dropouts.” The early dropouts could be predicted by low grades in elementary school. But the later dropouts could not be predicted in terms of having low grades until they entered middle or high school. Roderick also identified that “transition years” were critical turning points. The transition from elementary school to middle school and the transition to high school were critical years.

In more recent research, Neild and Balfanz (2006) have identified specific risk factors that predict 50 percent of future dropouts as early as sixth grade:

- Sixth graders with poor attendance (less than 80 percent), a failing mark for classroom behavior, a failing grade in math, or a failing grade in English had only a 10 percent chance of graduating within four years of entering high school.
- Eighth graders with poor attendance or a failing grade in math or English had less than a 25 percent chance of graduating high school within eight years.
- Ninth graders who had not exhibited eighth-grade risk factors but had poor ninth-grade attendance (less than 70 percent), who earned fewer than two credits, or did not earn promotion to tenth grade had only a one in four chance of graduating within eight years.

**graduation rate** A calculation of the proportion of high school students who fail to graduate.

**certificates of attendance** Provided to students who failed to pass tests and/or other requirements necessary for receiving a diploma.

**dropouts** Students who have left school without completing graduation requirements.

**general education diploma (GED)** An alternative equivalent to a high school diploma.

**risk factors** Characteristics that are predictive of students not succeeding.
Table 13.2 • Early Intervention Strategies That Make a Difference

- Highly personalized supports and services
- Strong relationships with adult counselors who pay a great deal of attention to students
- Systematic strategies to monitor and address “alterable” risk factors
- Formal coaching in specific problem-solving strategies
- Substantial communication with and support for parents
- Connections between schools, families, and community services, while managing to keep the primary focus on educational progress


The findings from these studies make it clear that all teachers, elementary and secondary, have a major responsibility for identifying students who are at risk of not graduating high school and for doing something about it.

**WHAT TEACHERS CAN DO TO PREVENT DROPOUTS.** In the past many teachers did not feel that they had any responsibility for, or could make any difference in, the potential of students to drop out sometime in the future. This view is no longer acceptable. If academic difficulties and disengagement are predictors of the probability for students to drop out, then these should be key target areas for early interventions. Table 13.2 summarizes steps that can be taken to help prevent students from dropping out. Devising instructional strategies that are designed to help students catch up can help. Intensive counseling with support for parents also has been found to be important. Creating smaller schools within large schools can help students feel that they belong. These strategies cannot be accomplished by a single teacher in isolation. Still, a key responsibility for you as a teacher is to create lessons and to teach in ways that are interesting, engaging, and challenging to all of your current students.

**HOW TO RECOGNIZE A HIGH-QUALITY SCHOOL**

One important outcome of the accountability movement and the pressures to reform schools is that many indicators are now available that can be used to judge the quality of schools. High-quality schools are different in a number of identifiable ways. The characteristics presented next have been selected because knowing about them is important to your success as a teacher education candidate. Chances are good that the schools where you have clinical experiences and do your student teaching will be attending to each of these indicators. When the time comes for you to seek a teaching position, these indicators will be good predictors of what being a teacher in the school would be like.

**Data-Driven Decision Making**

High-quality schools use data continually, especially in relation to student achievement. Data are used to make instructional decisions, as well as budgetary ones. These schools do not rely heavily on the annual federal- and state-mandated testing because they do not delay making decisions until these results are made available. Instead, they continually study, refer to, and use three levels of tiers data:

- **Tier 1:** standardized tests typically administered once a year by the state and/or the district.
- **Tier 2:** interim assessments that may have been developed for district-wide use or developed specifically by a school. These assessments are administered one to four times a year. They are both diagnostic and predictive. They are designed to measure the same learning outcomes as the Tier 1 tests and are scored quickly. The results are used as an early predictor of how well students will do on the Tier 1 tests. The scores from Tier 2 assessments are also diagnostic. Areas where students do not do as well can then be targeted for further instruction.
- **Tier 3:** teacher-developed measures, teacher judgment, and examples of student work. This information is used by the teacher to plan instruction daily and weekly. It also can be of use to other teachers who work with a particular student and for grade-level and department meetings.

In combination, these three tiers of evidence provide each teacher, each grade level or department, and the whole school with information to guide the next steps in instruction. Obviously, these data early interventions Actions that are taken early to reduce the possibility of students dropping out of school or not graduating on time.
School personnel, including the principal and teachers, meet regularly to review how well all students are succeeding, using teacher-developed data, teacher judgment, and examples of student work. School improvement process (SIP) The annual activities that school staff members engage in to identify and resolve shortcomings in student learning.

action steps The procedures such as teacher training and use of new assessments that are implemented to address the deficiencies identified in the school improvement plan.

school improvement plan The document produced each year that summarizes the data analyses and specifies the actions steps that will be taken.

professional learning community (PLC) A school organization culture that emphasizes collaboration and all members continuing to learn.

collegial learning Teachers learning from other teachers.

also provide indicators of how well the school is doing in terms of having all students succeed. Another indicator of the quality of a school is how it uses data in the development and implementation of its school improvement plan and process.

School Improvement Process
An important annual effort for all schools is a school improvement process (SIP). The process begins with the school reviewing data and developing a set of action steps that address areas of student learning that are deficient. The data, the action steps, and a timeline for implementation are placed in a major document, the school improvement plan. In some schools principals write the plan and teachers may not even see it. In high-quality schools a committee of teachers and administrators will lead the SIP work and at times all staff will be engaged with studying data and proposing action steps. In high-quality schools the plan will not be left on a shelf; it will be a guide for what happens across the school year, including staff development and how school resources will be allocated.

Two other important indicators of a high-quality school are the relationships and interactions among the adults, as discussed next.

Professional Learning Communities
High-quality schools have a special organizational culture that is known as a professional learning community (PLC). When you visit a PLC school you will see teachers working collaboratively. They visit each other’s classrooms and openly share plans, resources, and ideas. They also have a shared vision for the school and what teaching and learning should be like. There is mutual respect, high levels of trust, and regular introduction of innovative solutions to problems. An additional critical feature is that of collegial learning. In a PLC school there is an expectation that the adults are continually learning along with the students (Hord, 2004). A caution to note with this indicator of a high-quality school is that a PLC is not something that happens at a scheduled time: “We have PLC every Friday at 9:30.” Rather, a true PLC is an indicator of the organizational culture of the school: “This is how things are done around here.”

Parent and Community Involvement
Unfortunately, some schools seem to structure rules and activities in ways that limit parent involvement. Visits to classrooms are restricted, parent conferences are scheduled at times when most parents are still at work, and school office staff are not welcoming. In contrast to this, high-quality school staff members understand the importance of parent involvement.

High-quality schools use many strategies to involve parents in addition to the traditional PTA and parent volunteer programs. Strategies include sending frequent newsletters, using voice mail calling to homes to inform parents about student homework assignments, and holding early morning activities such as “Donuts with Dads” and “Muffins with Moms.” They hold parent meetings on different nights for different languages and sponsor school fairs and student performances specifically designed to draw in parents and community members.

Parent involvement is particularly important and challenging to achieve with immigrant families, minorities, and families with cultural differences. Parent and community involvement is also challenging in communities with a high percentage of poor families and where many of the adults have limited or no English. To address these factors, many schools employ a parent/community liaison to visit parents and facilitate communications.

Some communities have organizers who help develop parent advocacy groups. For example, in Los Angeles, a grassroots parent advocacy group called Parent U-Turn conducts surveys of parents and youth and then develops proposals for urban school reforms. As described in this
In addition to the traditional PTA and parent volunteer programs, high-quality schools use many strategies to involve parents in school life.

chapter’s Reflect on Diversity feature, finding better ways to involve parents in schooling is not just the school administrators’ jobs, it is a teacher responsibility too.

**High-Quality Schools Have Leaders That Make a Difference for Teachers and Students**

Another important characteristic of high-quality schools is leadership. Regardless of whether the students come from poor families or middle class families, and whatever the mix of ethnic groups, how the principal and teachers lead the school makes a difference. In this section some of the important characteristics of leadership in high-quality schools are described.

**REFLECT on DIVERSITY**

As the holiday season approaches, it is time for Bill to schedule his second round of parent–teacher conferences. The Red Rock school district mandates that teachers schedule a conference at the end of each report marking term. Bill’s students are diverse with the majority being Latino, and the parents are recent immigrants many of whom cannot speak English. Before the first round of conferences, he had asked other teachers how they conducted parent–teacher conferences with parents who did not speak English. Most teachers had used their students who were proficient in English to serve as translators. Bill had done this and found that the parents were not very talkative. This was discouraging since he believed that developing parent support for education was a key to preventing so many of these kids from dropping out. His first thought was that both he and the parents had self concerns (see Table 13.7). He sure knew that he was uncertain about how the conferences would go. It also made sense that parents would have self concerns about meeting with this teacher and hearing evaluations of their child. Also, in checking his class notes from his Foundations of Education class he remembered reading that for Latino parents placing children in a position of equal status can upset the traditional family relationships. So this time Bill decided to form small-group parent conferences for Latino parents who could not speak English. He scheduled parents based on their children’s academic progress and hoped that this way there would be more parent talk and dialogue. He planned to start each conference by having the students walk their parents around the classroom and show their individual work.

**Questions for Reflection**

1. Do you think having small-group parent conferences will work?
2. In what ways is this approach culturally sensitive?
3. How well do you think the idea of Self concerns, which was described in this chapter, fits this situation for Bill? For the parents?
4. What problems/challenges would you anticipate in having several sets of parents and students meeting at the same time?
5. What do you think Bill should do about issues of student confidentiality?

**myeducationlab** To respond to these questions online, go to the Book Specific Resources section, select your text in the MyEducationLab for your course and then select Reflect on Diversity for Chapter 13.
Table 13.3 • Three Principal Facilitator Styles

INITIATORS: Have clear and strongly held images for what the school should be like. They focus on what will be best for students, have a passion for the school, and support their teachers. They use data, expect teachers to be involved beyond their classrooms, and champion the school to parents, the community, and the district.

MANAGERS: Are very knowledgeable about policies, rules, and procedures. They also are skilled at obtaining and managing resources including dollars and materials. They expect teachers to follow the procedures, get lesson plans and reports in on time, and maintain a focus on instruction.

RESPONDERS: Respect their teachers and assume that they know what needs to be done. They trust teachers and others to take the lead and don’t believe principals need to monitor each classroom closely. They are friendly and always ready to chat about what is happening with teachers beyond their classrooms.

Note: For more information about principals, leadership, and school change, see Hall & Hord, 2011.

VISIONARY AND SUPPORTIVE PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP. Effective schools have principals that have a vision for what the school should be like and what will make a difference in student success. They also have high expectations for their teachers. However, not all principals are like this. Recent research can be used to illustrate some of the differences in principals and their leadership. For example, one set of researchers has identified three different leadership styles of principals. They are called initiators, managers, and responders (Hall & Hord, 2011). See Table 13.3 for a brief description of each style. If you were to interview for a teaching position with each of these types of principals, they would ask you some very different questions. Study the descriptions in Table 13.3 and then think about how you would respond to their interview questions.

Initiator-Style Principal Interview Question: What evidence do you have that you can make a difference in student learning?

You should be ready to pull from your portfolio examples of lessons you have taught and the assessments you used with the lessons. You should also be ready to explain what went well, what you would do next for any students who did not do well, and how you would do the lesson differently next time.

Manager-Style Principal Interview Question: Tell me about how you would organize your classroom and schedule for a typical day.

Be ready to draw from your portfolio—which should be well organized with tabs and nothing falling out—examples of schedules you have used in your field experiences. If you have a PDA or other form of technology be ready to show how you have used this as an organizer. Be ready to show a well-organized and clearly written plan.

Responder-Style Principal Interview Question: We have a wonderful school. I want everyone to enjoy working here. Now tell me, how would you fit in?

Yes, you will have to take more of a lead in this interview. Be ready to describe how you are prepared to teach and that you can manage your classroom well. Do not count on a lot of direct supervision or support; you will be more on your own. You also will want to indicate that you are social and friendly in your contact with colleagues.

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How do the descriptions of three principal styles compare with your experience? When you were a student and now in your field experiences which style of principal have you found to be most effective? What did the more effective principals do, that the less effective did not do?

PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP IS CORRELATED WITH TEACHER SUCCESS IN CHANGE AND STUDENT TEST SCORES. In addition to identifying these different principal styles, researchers also have found that teachers have more success with change when their principal leads with the initiator or manager.
style. Also, students have higher test scores in schools with principals who have a vision for what teaching and learning should be like (initiators) and those who are well organized (managers). A complicating factor for teachers is that initiator-style principals press teachers, students, and parents to do more and to work together, whereas responder-style principals leave teachers alone to do the teaching in their classrooms (Hall, Negroni, & George, 2008). You will discover that each principal you work with will make a major difference in the quality of the school and your quality as a teacher.

Checking a School for Indicators of High Quality

Any given school is likely to have some of the characteristics of a high-quality school, but probably not all. Table 13.4 is a sample checklist that could be used to assess the extent to which some of these characteristics are found in a school. This checklist is not intended to be used to evaluate a school. Instead the checklist is provided as one way to summarize some of the characteristics of a high-quality school.

### Table 13.4 • Checklist of Characteristics of a High-Quality School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High-Quality Characteristics</th>
<th>Indicators of High-Quality School Characteristics</th>
<th>Question to Think About or Observation to Make</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Data-Driven Decision Making | • Data about student learning are readily available.  
• Data are used by teachers, the principal, and other leaders.  
• Instructional decisions are data based.  
• Professional development strategies are data based. | • What types of data (Tier 1, 2, or 3) do teachers talk about?  
• What data are analyzed within the school improvement plan?  
• How easy is it for teachers to access evidence of student learning?  
• How often does the principal refer to data? |
| Visionary Leadership | • The principal has a strongly held vision for the school.  
• The learning needs of students come first.  
• The principal supports teachers.  
• The principal is visible in classrooms. | • What’s most important to the principal?  
• What leadership style does the principal use?  
• What leadership styles do the assistant principal(s), team leaders, and department chairs use?  
• Do the teachers talk with the principal about instruction? |
| Professional Learning Community | • Teachers are collegial.  
• Teachers share ideas about teaching.  
• Teachers own all of the students in the school (not just those in their classroom).  
• Adults are also expected to be learners. | • What do teachers talk about in the staff lounge?  
• Are opportunities to attend workshops valued?  
• Do teachers observe in other teachers’ classrooms?  
• Do teachers discuss what they see in other teachers’ classrooms? |
| Parent and Community Involvement | • Parents are participating members of the school community.  
• One or more businesses support the school. | • Are parents regularly in classrooms?  
• Are parents involved in a variety of activities?  
• Does the school have one or more business partners? |
| Continuous Refinement and Testing of New Approaches | • Evidenced-based curricula are used.  
• Emerging new approaches are tested. | • Are there changes in curriculum and instruction approaches each year?  
• Are staff informed about current research and best practices? |

HIGH-QUALITY TEACHERS PROVIDE EVIDENCE OF STUDENT LEARNING

In the end, the goals of having all students learning and graduating and having schools of high quality require that you become a high-quality teacher. As described in this chapter’s Education in the News feature about Venera Gatttonini, high-quality teachers like to teach and they do everything possible to have all their students learn and succeed. These factors will increasingly be the basis for judging your quality as a teacher.
Table 13.5 • Emerson Elliott’s Six Steps to Student Learning–Centered Teaching

- Judges prior learning: Undertakes an assessment to understand the prior P–12 student learning in the area he or she will teach.
- Plans instruction: Plans an appropriate sequence of instruction to advance P–12 student learning, based on the prior assessment.
- Teaches: Teaches P–12 students to acquire and use content knowledge in meaningful ways, engaging those who bring differing background knowledge and learning needs, and providing students with opportunities to demonstrate the use of critical and creative thinking skills.
- Assesses: Conducts a concluding objective test or alternative assessment(s).
- Analyzes: Analyzes the results of the concluding assessment(s), documenting the student learning that occurred at individual and group levels, including explanations of results from students who learned more or less than expected, and results from each subgroup of students.
- Reflects: Reflects on changes in teaching that could improve results.


What Evidence Will You Have to Show You Are a High-Quality Teacher?

As your career unfolds a key term for documenting accountability will be evidence-based practice. Your teaching and the quality of your school will be judged based on data about student performance. In the past schools were most likely to be judged in terms of the quality of facilities and the quantity of resources such as the number of books and computers. Now schools and teachers are evaluated in terms of test scores and other indicators of student success such as graduation rates. This is what evidence-based practice is about: collecting and compiling data and providing documentation related to how well students are performing. Schools as a whole must do this, and so must individual teachers. Be sure to collect evidence of how well students have performed and what they have learned as a part of every lesson you teach.

High-Quality Teachers Use Student Learning–Centered Instruction

High-quality teachers plan their lessons, manage instruction, and assess student progress. A useful general model for instruction is presented in Table 13.5. This model can be applied when you are asked to develop a lesson plan, to teach a small group, or to teach a whole class. Each of the components is well established as an important part of best practice.

High-Quality Teachers Are Reflective and Have a Stated Educational Philosophy about Teaching and Learning

Throughout this text one of the emphases has been on your becoming reflective. Reflection is an important characteristic of high-quality teachers. They reflect before teaching on what each student now knows, what they need to learn next, and what can be done in terms of instruction. High-quality teachers also are reflective during the act of teaching. They are thinking about how the lesson is going, continually checking for student understanding, and refining what they will do next. Of course, teachers are also reflective after instruction. They examine assessments for each student and
Table 13.6 • Refining Your Philosophy of Education Statement

From time to time it is important for teachers to take a half hour or so to revisit their personal framework or philosophy of education. One useful way to approach this activity is to use the parts and chapters of this textbook as a guide. Each chapter has offered a different perspective, or lens, for viewing education. Depending on your personal assumptions and beliefs, you will have a preference for some of these perspectives. If there is a perspective that you do not like, or feel less comfortable with, rather than rejecting it you probably should consider it to be a clue about a topic(s) for which you need to do more study and reflection.

As you engage in reflecting on and refining your philosophy of education statement, consider the following questions:

1. What elements of schools and teaching from the past do you see as being important to continue using today? (Review Part II, Historical Foundations of Education.)
2. Which philosophy do you think best matches your approach to teaching? (Review Part III, Philosophical Foundations of Education.)
3. What role do you think schools should have in a diverse society? (Review Part IV, Sociological Foundations of Education.)
4. Don’t forget that there are legal, financial, and organizational aspects of schools. How do these perspectives play out in your philosophy? (Review Part V, Governance, Organization, and Legal Foundations of Education.)
5. What are your views of the standards movement, curriculum, and the current focus on student learning? (Review Part VI, Curricular Foundations of Education.)
6. Given your views, what does it mean for you to be an ethical teacher?

Think through how the lesson unfolded, what they should do next, and what they will do the next time they teach that lesson.

All of this reflection is based on a personal framework or philosophy of education. As your study of the foundations of education comes to a close, you should take a half hour to update your philosophy statement. Revisit Chapter 5 and reflect on how far you have come in your thinking about what high-quality teaching entails. This is important to do for several reasons. For instance, you will be asked about what’s important to you as a teacher when you interview for that first teaching position. Key topics and questions for you to think about in refining your statement are provided in Table 13.6.

Ethics Is an Important Component of a High-Quality Teacher’s Philosophy

Not only should you continue to reflect on which philosophies will ground your point of view as a teacher, you also should be considering what is ethical. Much of what teachers should, can, and cannot do is specified by law. Statutes, case law, policies, and procedure manuals all specify what teachers can and cannot do. Ethics, however, is a more principled view of what it means to be a high-quality teacher. As you continue to reflect on your philosophy, be sure to consider the ethical component. One statement of a code of ethics for education professionals that has stood the test of time is that of the National Education Association (see Figure 13.2). In studying this statement, you will see several core principles that truly are indicative that teaching is a profession. Note, for example, that “Commitment to the Student” comes first.

High-Quality Teachers Have Three Types of Knowledge

Teacher education researchers have identified three domains of professional knowledge and skill that expert teachers possess: content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and pedagogical content knowledge (Berliner, 2001). Each is important and each is essential. You might want to think about your current level of understanding within each of these domains. Becoming a high-quality teacher requires continuing to develop knowledge and skill within each of these domains.

CONTENT KNOWLEDGE: HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW THE SUBJECT(S) YOU WILL TEACH? Needing to have knowledge about and an understanding of the subject one teaches is obvious, but difficult to achieve. This is especially challenging for elementary school teachers who may have to teach...
Preamble
The educator, believing in the worth and dignity of each human being, recognizes the supreme importance of the pursuit of truth, devotion to excellence, and the nurture of the democratic principles. Essential to these goals is the protection of freedom to learn and to teach and the guarantee of equal educational opportunity for all. The educator accepts the responsibility to adhere to the highest ethical standards.

The educator recognizes the magnitude of the responsibility inherent in the teaching process. The desire for the respect and confidence of one’s colleagues, of students, of parents, and of the members of the community provides the incentive to attain and maintain the highest possible degree of ethical conduct. The Code of Ethics of the Education Profession indicates the aspiration of all educators and provides standards by which to judge conduct.

The remedies specified by the NEA and/or its affiliates for the violation of any provision of this Code shall be exclusive and no such provision shall be enforceable in any form other than the one specifically designated by the NEA or its affiliates.

PRINCIPLE I
Commitment to the Student
The educator strives to help each student realize his or her potential as a worthy and effective member of society. The educator therefore works to stimulate the spirit of inquiry, the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, and the thoughtful formulation of worthy goals.

In fulfillment of the obligation to the student, the educator—
1. Shall not unreasonably restrain the student from independent action in the pursuit of learning.
2. Shall not unreasonably deny the student's access to varying points of view.
3. Shall not deliberately suppress or distort subject matter relevant to the student's progress.
4. Shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning or to health and safety.
5. Shall not intentionally expose the student to embarrassment or disparagement.
6. Shall not on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, national origin, marital status, political or religious beliefs, family, social or cultural background, or sexual orientation, unfairly—
   a. Exclude any student from participation in any program
   b. Deny benefits to any student
   c. Grant any advantage to any student
7. Shall not use professional relationships with students for private advantage.
8. Shall not disclose information about students obtained in the course of professional service unless disclosure serves a compelling professional purpose or is required by law.

PRINCIPLE II
Commitment to the Profession
The education profession is vested by the public with a trust and responsibility requiring the highest ideals of professional service. In the belief that the quality of the services of the education profession directly influences the nation and its citizens, the educator shall exert every effort to raise professional standards, to promote a climate that encourages the exercise of professional judgment, to achieve conditions that attract persons worthy of the trust to careers in education, and to assist in preventing the practice of the profession by unqualified persons.

In fulfillment of the obligation to the profession, the educator—
1. Shall not in an application for a professional position deliberately make a false statement or fail to disclose a material fact related to competency and qualifications.
2. Shall not misrepresent his/her professional qualifications.
3. Shall not assist any entry into the profession of a person known to be unqualified in respect to character, education, or other relevant attribute.
4. Shall not knowingly make a false statement concerning the qualifications of a candidate for a professional position.
5. Shall not assist a noneducator in the unauthorized practice of teaching.
6. Shall not disclose information about colleagues obtained in the course of professional service unless disclosure serves a compelling professional purpose or is required by law.
7. Shall not knowingly make false or malicious statements about a colleague.
8. Shall not accept any gratuity, gift, or favor that might impair or appear to influence professional decisions or action.

Adopted by the NEA 1975 Representative Assembly

as many as six different subjects. Having sufficient content knowledge also is a challenge for secondary school teachers because they need depth of understanding. At the secondary school level, if teachers do not have in-depth knowledge about a subject, they might teach inaccuracies and misconceptions.

**PEDAGOGICAL KNOWLEDGE: HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT HOW STUDENTS LEARN AND DIFFERENT TEACHING STRATEGIES?** Knowing about curriculum, instruction, and multiple ways to assess learning and understanding how students learn are other domains that expert teachers have mastered. Nearly all of the opportunities to learn in these areas will be found in the professional education courses that are part of your teacher education program. Also important within this domain is developing the actual skill of teaching, which is why clinical, field, and student teaching experiences are so important. How often have you heard a student say, “He really knows his subject, but he can’t teach it so that I can understand it”?

**PEDAGOGICAL CONTENT KNOWLEDGE: ARE YOU ABLE TO CONNECT WHAT YOU ARE TEACHING WITH THE EXPERIENCES AND BACKGROUND THAT YOUR STUDENTS BRING TO EACH LESSON?** This domain of professional knowledge has a curious name, which also can be confusing. However, this domain is probably the most important for you to develop. This is where the teacher’s content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge intersect with real students. This set of knowledge relationships is pictured in Figure 13.3. Students bring their personal level of understanding of the subject to the lesson. They also arrive in your classroom with a rich array of past experiences, cultural and social backgrounds, and attitudes toward learning.

Teachers with pedagogical content knowledge understand the knowledge that their students bring to the lesson and know how to build on that uniqueness. High-quality teachers also can anticipate the misconceptions that their students are likely to have when learning something new. These teachers are able to choose examples and metaphors that their students will understand. For example, using snow as an example with students who have always lived in the desert may not make the most sense. This is why the authors of this text have placed so much emphasis on the importance of your developing an understanding of the cultural and social, as well as academic, backgrounds of your students. With this knowledge, you can be much more successful in helping them to learn.

**FIGURE 13.3**
Intersection of Three Domains of Expert Teacher Knowledge
TEACHERS HAVE DIFFERENT KINDS OF CONCERNS ABOUT CHANGE

As you have read through this chapter you can see that teachers are being asked to make many changes. Some of these will make sense to you and reinforce things you already are doing. Some will seem foreign and will cause you concern. Some will likely be very challenging to understand and to use in your classroom. And, for many you will have no alternative but to implement the new way. You will have mixed feelings and perceptions about each of these change efforts.

Think some more about Venera Gattonini, the teacher in this chapter’s Education in the News feature. Clearly, Ms. Gattonini loves teaching. She is doing all that she can think of to provide her students with “practical, hands-on experiences.” She wants her students to leave school with skills they can use for the rest of their lives. She is delighted when her students gain confidence. She also is pressing them to do “something completely different.” It appears that Ms. Gattonini is excited about change and thinking mainly about what will benefit her students.

There is a personal side to change that is reflected in the different perceptions and feelings people have. Teachers, their students, principals—in fact, everyone—has mixed feelings about their experiences with change. There are perceptions about what the change will mean. Some will be excited, while others will dread the whole idea. Having these feelings, attitudes, and perceptions is a natural component of the change process. In fact, forty plus years of research have been conducted related to understanding people’s concerns about change (Hall & Hord, 2011).

WHAT ARE YOUR CONCERNS ABOUT BECOMING A TEACHER?

To illustrate what researchers have learned, let’s think about your concerns right now. Before reading any further, write a paragraph in Figure 13.4 about your concerns.

Use the following subsections and Table 13.7 to assess what you have written.

DIFFERENT CONCERNS AS A CHANGE PROCESS UNFOLDS. People’s concerns about change vary as they experience the process. Researchers have identified four phases or groupings of concerns: Unconcerned, Self, Task, and Impact concerns (Hall & Hord, 2011). The basic description for each of these concerns is presented in Table 13.7. Keep in mind that each of these categories of concerns is not good or bad. Instead they are characteristic of what all of us feel as we experience change.

CONCERNS BEFORE THE BEGINNING OF A CHANGE PROCESS. In addition to identifying the four types of concerns, researchers have found that as a change process unfolds some concerns will be most intense at different times. Before the change initiative begins, teachers are most likely to be Unconcerned. “I am so busy with _______ that I don’t even want to think about it right now.” Thoughts and preoccupations will be on all of the other things that they are doing already.
Concerns at the Beginning of a Change Process. As the time to actually learn about and begin using the innovation gets closer, Self concerns become most intense. Questions about one’s ability to be successful with the new approach will be raised: “I don’t know if I can do this.” Concerns may also arise about whether there will be support from supervisors to do things the new way. “What if my principal doesn’t agree?” This is a time of high uncertainty during the change process.

Concerns as Implementation of the Change Gets Under Way. When implementation of the innovation begins, Task concerns become very intense. “It is taking me hours to prepare for the next day, and still everything doesn’t go smoothly.” Concerns about time, logistics, and organizing materials can go on for months or even several years if the change is big and complex.

Concerns When Use of the Innovation Is Mastered. Ultimately, if the change process unfolds successfully and principal support for it is strong, then teachers’ Self and Task concerns will be resolved, and Impact concerns will become the most intense. “By collaborating and working together we are seeing big improvements in what our students are learning.” Impact concerns are the ideal end for a change process. However, to successfully complete a change process and experience all four areas of concern normally takes three to five years.

REFLECTING ON YOUR CONCERNS. Now, let’s check back on what you wrote in response to the question in Figure 13.4. Read what you wrote and compare it to each of the four categories of concerns using Table 13.7 as a scoring guide. Which phase(s) of concern is most intense for you at this time? Are you Unconcerned about becoming a teacher and more concerned about something else? (“I have to get a different roommate.”) Do you have more intense Self concerns? (“When I am student teaching, I hope I will know enough and can control the students.”) What about Task concerns? (“I have so much to do just to finish this course/semester.”)

What about Impact concerns? Did you write down anything related to student success? (“I want each of my students to learn all they can.”) Or, did you write anything about what you want to do to improve your effectiveness as a teacher? (“I think I will take that other methods course because it will help me work with ELL students.”)
Teacher Induction Programs Have a Long History in Australia

Concern about providing formal programs of support for beginning teachers has a long history in Australia. In fact the term induction was used in the United Kingdom and Australia long before it became a common term in the United States. There also is a history of research on teacher induction in Australia. In the 1970s Professor Richard Tisher led a research team that conducted the first major study of the experiences of beginning teachers. The researchers found that 50 percent of beginning teachers received no help with their teaching in the first week (Tisher, Fyfield, & Taylor, 1978). The researchers expressed contempt for the “cavalier treatment of new teachers.” Today there are comprehensive induction programs for all teachers in all parts of Australia. If you would like to know more about their programs, as well as find useful information for beginning teachers, check out this website: www.aussieducator.org.au/teacher_beginning.html.

Questions for Reflection
1. Do you think it would be possible to discover some useful ideas for you as a beginning teacher based on what is done in Australia? Why or why not?
2. As you think ahead to your first week of teaching, what kind of help would you like to have from a mentor or colleague?
3. What kind of support would you like to have from your principal?

SUPPORTIVE RESOURCES FOR YOUR FIRST YEAR

You are now near the end of a semester in which you have probably taken your first professional education course(s). Becoming a high-quality teacher is up to you. It will take time, study, and practice to transition from novice to expert. Still, as you know from your own experiences in schools, high-quality teachers do exist. They know more and teach in different ways than do those who are less effective. Fortunately, many resources and supports are available to help you succeed. A sampling of these resources is given next. (The Global Perspectives feature describes what has been done in Australia to better support beginning teachers.)

Table 13.7 • Four Types of Concerns That Teachers Can Have as They Experience Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IMPACT</td>
<td>The most intense focus is on how use of the change/innovation is affecting student learning. Thoughts are on how to be sure all students are “getting it,” what can be done to further improve student learning, and possibly collaborating with one or more colleagues so that together the outcomes are even better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TASK</td>
<td>Time, scheduling, organizing tasks and materials, fitting everything into the available time are of utmost concern. Attention related to implementing the innovation/change is heavily focused on time, logistics, and coordination of tasks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SELF</td>
<td>Uncertainty about what is being demanded, whether you can do it well, and whether you will be supported are key concerns. There is a need to have more information about the change, what it entails, and how it will work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNCONCERNED</td>
<td>The teacher is concerned about things other than the current innovation. This does not mean that the teacher is opposed to the change. However, for some reason, other efforts, some other initiative, or perhaps something outside of school is of more concern.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: For more information about people’s concerns regarding change, see Hall & Hord, 2011.
**Induction of New Teachers**

During the past twenty years, the thinking about and approaches to induction of beginning teachers have changed dramatically. In earlier times little or no accommodations were made for new teachers. They were assigned to a classroom, given a key, and expected to be up and functioning just as well as the veteran teachers. Now, most school districts offer a number of programs and resources to support novice teachers.

**NEW EMPLOYEE WORKSHOPS.** In early August, after you have signed your contract, you and the other newly hired teachers will be invited to a new employee workshop. These sessions are usually conducted by the district’s Human Resource Department. Typically these sessions will not address your concerns about teaching students or organizing your classroom. Instead, likely topics will include your rights and responsibilities as an employee of the district, how to sign up for health insurance, sick leave policies, how you get paid, and reminders about legal protections and responsibilities.

**NEW TEACHER ORIENTATIONS.** Larger school districts usually offer one or more meetings for all new teachers that will address many of your teaching-related questions. In smaller districts the new teacher orientation may be more informal and school based. These sessions often review classroom management techniques, the school year calendar, report cards, and the schedule for testing. If you will be teaching in a district that has teacher-friendly computer systems for scoring tests and monitoring student progress, these topics will be introduced as well.

**ASSIGNED TEACHER MENTORS.** A very important resource for new teachers is mentors. Mentors are experienced teachers from whom the novice teacher can seek advice. They are not evaluators; that is the job of the principal. In many states and most larger districts, someone will be assigned to be your mentor for at least the first year. Mentors are master teachers who can help you with the design of lessons. They can sit in your classroom when you are teaching and follow up with suggestions to help you reflect.

**COLLEAGUE TEACHER MENTORS.** Frequently beginning teachers will discover an experienced teacher who can serve as an informal mentor. This person might be another teacher at your grade level or within your department. As the school year unfolds, you will likely find yourself turning to one of these colleagues more and more often.

**SCHOOL-BASED SPECIALISTS AS NEW TEACHER RESOURCES.** Another source of support will be the various specialist teachers within the school. The special education resource teacher can be of great help to you in teaching the students with special needs in your classroom. Other specialists that might be in your school include a technology coordinator, library/media coordinator, literacy specialist, mathematics specialist, ELL coordinator, and possibly a home–school community liaison person.

**The Future of Technology for Teaching and Student Learning**

Each of the preceding chapters in this text addressed one or more forms of technology and explored connections to teaching and student learning. These descriptions have been based on what is available today. The one certainty for the future is that new forms of technology will be created and innovative applications of current forms will be developed. Any of these might be used in classrooms and schools.

The Teacher Perspectives feature outlines the dilemma for teachers. How much of and which applications should teachers be using? There is no doubt that as a teacher you will be confronted with opportunities and questions about whether or not to use various new technologies in your classroom. The following paragraphs use a sampling of some emerging technologies and applications to illustrate the dilemma. Each technology has potential benefits for teaching and learning, and each also has potential risks.
PART VI • CURRICULAR FOUNDATIONS OF EDUCATION

Should Technology Be Used in Every Classroom?

The various forms and possible uses of technology in schools seem to be never ending. Whiteboards, the web, personal computing, cell phones, and more recently various social networking applications can be made available for use by teachers and/or students in classrooms. But should they be made available? How much technology and which types do you want to use in your classroom? Two teachers offer opposing views below.

YES

Keith Parker is a history education student at Austin Peay State University in Clarksville, Tennessee.

When I begin teaching history and social studies in the fall of 2007, I’ll require students to use as much technology as I have the resources for. They’ll learn how important technology is for conducting research and how best to leverage it for that purpose. However, the students who aren’t as interested in history will still learn skills that will help them when they enter the workforce. In almost every field of work, some type of technology is used. Students must be prepared.

If we complement and reinforce our lessons with technology—from Microsoft PowerPoint to streaming media, and computer spreadsheets to podcasts—we’ll help students to be more receptive of the material and to become more familiar with the sorts of technology that have become a part of everyday life at home and in the workplace.

Finally, while students might not be familiar with workplace technologies and software, they are whizzes when it comes to Internet and telecommunications technology. By using more technology in the classroom, we’re speaking their language and teaching them a way that they might learn. Ignacio “Nacho” Estrada once said, “If a child can’t learn the way we teach, maybe we should teach the way they learn.”

NO

Timothy Kubinak teaches algebra and geography at King’s Fork Middle School in Suffolk, Virginia.

Overuse of technology has inadvertently provided students with a deck of “get out of work free” cards. As a math teacher, I’ve seen that the use of technology, such as graphing calculators, has some positive effects—students can check their work, create graphs, and work together to solve problems. But too often I see students using technology to perform basic operations that should have been mastered in elementary school.

Some of my colleagues in the English department attribute their students’ writing skills, or lack thereof, to the heavy use of instant messaging and spell check. These technologies, though useful when used as directed, can lead to a decrease in proficiency. The need for core skills development must be the first priority of the student and teacher.

Our generation learned how to read, write, and do arithmetic by learning from our teacher’s example—with pencils, paper, and our minds. True, educators have learned that our students’ needs are unique from past generations, but we remember what is truly important in our children’s education. The need to learn how to organize, apply, analyze—in essence, we’re teaching them how to learn. Yes, technology is an integral part of this process, but that does not mean it is a required component of every classroom setting.


What is your perspective on this issue?

To explore both sides of this issue and think about each perspective, go to the Book Specific Resources in the MyEducationLab for your course, select your text, and then select Teacher Perspectives for Chapter 13.

RAPID DEVELOPMENT OF NEW FORMS OF TECHNOLOGY. Older adults will reminisce about the “days before we had the web and e-mail,” while today’s students have no memory of life without cell phones. In terms of history both of these forms of technology are recent developments. They also are indicators of how fast new forms of technology are created. An additional unique characteristic of technology is that, once created, never-ending adaptations and refinements follow. For example, when watching a movie that was made ten years ago, note what cell phones were like then compared to now. They were larger and were capable only of making phone calls. Now they are multifunction devices. As another indicator of rapidly changing technology, you merely have to chart the annual evolution and increasing capacity of iPods.

This rapid creation of new forms and applications of technology has important implications for teachers:

1. Tech-savvy teachers will see interesting and useful ways to incorporate some of the new forms, yet will be uncertain about the usefulness of others.
2. Students will be early to adopt and creative in using the new forms and applications.
3. The establishment of school and district policies related to appropriate and inappropriate uses of new forms of technology will lag behind the technologies’ introduction in the classroom.

These three implications pose a dilemma for teachers in the future. Which forms and applications will you encourage, and what are your guiding principles for what will not be allowed? This is
the underlying theme of the Teacher Perspectives feature. It is likely that you will be confronted with the need to make decisions about uses in your classroom before your school or district has a rule or policy in place. You will need to be thoughtful about your reasoning and understand the legal, ethical, and instructional elements related to your decision.

**SOCIAL NETWORKING TECHNOLOGY.** The unbelievably rapid growth of websites such as FaceBook, digital photos, text messaging, and unique applications such as Twitter illustrate the dilemma for teachers and school officials. Each of these applications can be used in ways that enhance teaching and student learning, yet they also can be used to cheat. Some districts have decided to suspend students who bring cell phones or iPods to school. Others have decided that students may carry them as long as they are turned off. These policies, however, still mean that teachers must monitor the availability and uses of each.

Unfortunately, teachers also must be continually attentive to the possibility of students using technology to cheat. One indicator of the extent of the problem is found in a survey of nearly 30,000 high school students conducted by the Josephson Institute for Ethics (2008) in Los Angeles: 64 percent reported cheating on a test with 38 percent indicating they did so two or more times. As sad as it may be, teachers need to view each new form and application of technology as possibly providing a new way for students to cheat.

**PROMISING NEW APPLICATIONS.** Often forms and applications of technology that have been around for some time are merged into new systems of classroom support. This will most certainly happen in the future. A current example that is just now showing up in classrooms is based on integrating several technologies that have been around for a long time.

Microphones, speakers, and amplifiers have been around for more than one hundred years. In the early days each microphone had to have its own wire and if two were turned on at the same time, a very loud screeching noise would be heard. Now, with the addition of computer software and advances in technology, many wireless microphones can be on at the same time. What do you suppose could be done in classrooms by combining these “old” technologies?

Several vendors have created **classroom audio technology** systems. One of the stresses for teachers and students is having to talk loud enough to be heard. This effort is tiring for teachers and usually means that some students will not have heard everything. For relatively little investment, technology systems are now available that can fix this problem. In these classrooms speakers are located strategically so that all can hear. The teacher has a wireless microphone and others are available for students. Everybody can talk in normal voices and all can hear what is being said.

**INCREASING INTEGRATION OF TECHNOLOGY USES.** Teachers in the future will have even more forms and applications of technology to learn about and use. Two keys to taking advantage of this future are flexibility and imagination. Teachers need to be flexible and open to consider whether some new technology really is better. They also can be creative in thinking up new ways to use technology. A third key, and one that will be increasingly important, is to devise strategies to integrate the uses of technology.

As just described with classroom audio technology, each technology and application can be used by itself, but the high-quality classroom will integrate these uses. For example, technology makes possible differentiation according to student needs. A variety of ways should be available for each student to achieve each objective. Students in the same classroom with different needs should be able to use books on tape, writing templates, charts, and instruction in different languages to learn the same material. Connecting to the Internet to retrieve content or to communicate with students in another state or country can be another integrated practice. Teachers in the future need to think about how all of the individual technology resources can be integrated to form a whole system that supports teaching and learning.

### School-Based Administrators Can Be Important Supports for New Teachers

As described in Chapter 9, teachers have a line relationship with the principal. This is an especially important relationship because one of the principal’s responsibilities is to evaluate first-year teachers. However, do not permit the evaluation role to block out any possibility of the principal being a resource. Nearly all principals have been teachers earlier in their careers. They also know what is available around the school that can be of help.

Assistant principals also can be a resource, and in schools that have deans and department chairs they too can be important resources. An important theme cutting across all of these people...
resources is that beginning teachers should not become isolated in their classroom. When you need help, or just an opportunity to ask someone else what they think, get out of your classroom and seek out one or more of these resources. They will be pleased that you asked.

PARTICIPATING IN THE PROFESSION

One of the rewarding aspects of becoming a teacher is the opportunity to work with other well-educated and highly dedicated professionals. There are many types of professional organizations and associations that teachers can join. In most school districts, teachers are represented by a teachers’ organization or union that is responsible for negotiating contracts and setting working conditions. These organizations and associations have had a major influence on the development of national education policy; on the determination of state policies, laws, rules, and regulations related to schooling; and (at the local level) on curriculum decisions and labor contract negotiations. At all of these levels, teachers are actively involved and are responsible participants who will eventually work with the resultant policy decisions and curriculum products.

Teachers have opportunities to become involved in professional or specialty associations as well. These associations deal directly with issues such as the development of student and teacher standards, the design of curriculum, innovations in teaching, and improving instructional processes. They provide teachers with the opportunity to collaborate with other teachers who have like concerns and interests; they also enable teachers to participate in various professional leadership activities. Some specialty associations focus on teaching specific subjects, such as science, math, literature, and reading, or specific grade levels, such as middle school and early childhood education. These associations usually have national, state, and local chapters. Clearly, teachers can profit from membership and participation in both professional organizations and professional or specialty associations.

Teacher Unions

Teacher unions were organized to improve working conditions. The National Education Association (NEA) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) are the two major unions for teachers in the United States. Some teachers have chosen to join other state or local organizations that are not affiliated with the NEA or the AFT but operate similarly to a union. The unions provide a number of services for their members, leadership on a number of professional issues, and a political presence at the local, state, and national levels.

National Education Association

The National Education Association is by far the largest teachers’ organization, with 2.5 million members, including teachers, administrators, clerical and custodial employees, higher education faculty, and other school personnel. Teacher education candidates can join the NEA’s Student Program. More than a million teacher education candidates have joined the student group since it was formed in 1937. You might wish to explore the advantages of joining this organization on your campus.

The NEA is committed to advancing public education. The organization was founded in 1857 as the National Teachers’ Association (NTA). In 1870 the NTA united with the National Association of School Superintendents, organized in 1865, and the American Normal School Association, organized in 1858, to form the National Education Association. The organization was incorporated in 1886 in the District of Columbia as the National Education Association and was chartered in 1906 by an act of Congress. The charter was officially adopted at the association’s annual meeting of 1907, with the name National Education Association of the United States.

The Representative Assembly (RA) is the primary legislative and policy-making body of the NEA. NEA members of state and local affiliates elect the 9,000 RA delegates who meet annually in early July to debate issues and set policies. The president, vice president, and secretary-treasurer are elected at the annual RA. The top decision-making bodies are the board of directors and the executive committee. An executive director has the primary responsibility for implementing the policies of the association, and standing committees and ad hoc committees carry out much of the work.

Given its long history of advocacy of teaching as a profession, it should not be surprising to learn that the NEA sponsors many professional initiatives designed to disseminate best practices, facilitate teacher leadership, and empower teachers to reform schools. The NEA has organized to provide professional help in student assessment and accountability; professional preparation, state licensure, and national certification; and governance and member activities. The NEA also initiated in 1954, along
with four other associations, the accrediting body for teacher education, NCATE, and continues today to provide leadership through appointments to NCATE’s governance board and board of examiners. The examiners are practitioners who visit college campuses to apply the standards. These and other program areas offer an array of activities and initiatives to further advance teacher professionalism.

Members of the NEA receive its newsletter, NEA Today, and have access to numerous other publications and products, including publications that are available online through its professional library. Recent reports from the association address diversity, portfolios, student assessment, school safety, cooperative learning, discipline, gender, inclusion, reading and writing, and parent involvement. Handbooks published by the NEA and written by experienced teachers are helpful resources for new teachers.

American Federation of Teachers

The second largest teachers’ union is the American Federation of Teachers, with national headquarters in Washington, D.C. It was organized in 1916 by teachers in Winnetka, Illinois, to establish an organization to meet their needs and to create a strong union affiliation. The Chicago Teachers’ Federation preceded the AFT, having been established in 1897 and affiliating with the American Federation of Labor (AFL) in 1902. Since 1916, AFT membership has grown steadily. The late Albert Shanker, who was AFT president from 1974 until his death in 1997, is given much of the credit for the growth and success of the AFT, including its national involvement in political discussions related to education. In 1965, membership was at 110,500; by 2000, membership exceeded one million. The organization of the AFT includes a president, numerous vice presidents, a secretary-treasurer, and administrative staff. The membership serves on standing committees and council committees.

Since its inception, the AFT has boasted of its affiliation with the AFL, and later the AFL-CIO. AFT has stressed that organized labor was an important force in establishing our system of free public schools and that it has actively supported school improvement programs. Affiliation with organized labor gives the AFT the support of the more than fifteen million members of the AFL-CIO. Support from local labor unions has often worked to the advantage of local AFT unions in their efforts to gain better salaries and improved benefits from local boards of education.

The AFT has diverse resources available to its members. Its lobbying and political action activities support a number of professional issues, in addition to bargaining issues at the local, state, and national levels. Its publications include the journal American Educator. Jointly with the NEA, the AFT conducts the annual QUEST conference to convene the leadership of both organizations to discuss professional issues. The Educational Research and Dissemination Program helps make selected findings from recent research on classroom management and effective teaching available to teachers.

POLITICAL ACTION. Both the NEA and AFT have political action committees and government relations departments. Political action committees are engaged in actions to elect political candidates who are sympathetic to education and teachers’ issues. They monitor elected officials’ voting records on education bills and analyze the platforms of new candidates. They actively participate in the election campaigns of the president, governors, and key legislators. The state and national political action committees of the NEA and AFT have a common aim: to promote education by encouraging teachers to participate in the political life of their local, state, and national communities. These committees throughout the states are responsible for recommending political endorsements to their respective boards of directors.

Professional Associations

Teachers can join, participate in, and provide leadership for many professional associations that focus on their chosen professional interests. These associations are organized around academic disciplines and specific job assignments, such as science teaching, mathematics teaching, special education, school psychology, reading, cooperative learning, and multicultural education.

PHI DELTA KAPPA INTERNATIONAL. The professional association Phi Delta Kappa International (PDK) is one of the largest and most highly regarded organizations for educators in the world. Today it is open to all educators, although in its earlier years women were not allowed to join. It publishes excellent professional material, including the journal Phi Delta Kappan, a newsletter, Fastback booklets on timely educational topics, research reports, books, and various instructional materials. The organization also sponsors many surveys, research projects, grants, awards, conferences, training programs, and trips. Local PDK chapters bring together teacher candidates,
higher education faculty, and local teachers and administrators. You might want to consider a student membership and become involved in your local chapter.

**SPECIALTY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS.** There are more than five hundred specialty associations in education based on different academic disciplines, different types of students, and different instructional approaches. Over time, you will find those specialties that apply to your unique role in education. Participation in these associations will enable you to network with others who have similar interests and focus.

Of the specialty associations that could be described, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) is profiled here because it provides an international forum focused on all aspects of effective teaching and learning. Founded in 1943, ASCD is a non-profit, nonpartisan organization representing 175,000 educators from more than 135 countries and more than sixty affiliates. Members span the entire profession of education—superintendents, supervisors, principals, teachers, professors of education, and school board members.

ASCD offers broad, multiple perspectives in reporting key policies and practices. The association focuses on professional practice within the context of public and private schools and cites as its primary goal the building of an engaged diverse community to improve learning and teaching for each student.

**LOOKING AHEAD: BE THE BEST YOU CAN BE**

Now that you have studied the different perspectives that comprise the foundation of education, you should be ready to reflect on implications for your career as a teacher. As you have seen, our profession is rich in history and expertise and diverse in thoughts and perspectives. No matter which perspective is selected, which chapter(s) you found most interesting, or the contexts you considered, one theme stands out: Education and the profession of teaching will continue to change. The pressures to continuously find better ways to teach and to improve student learning will not cease.

The theme of continuous efforts to improve and change will be with you throughout the remainder of your teacher education program and throughout your career as a teacher. You have the responsibility of trying new approaches and providing evidence about the difference each makes in your teaching, your students, and your school.

The authors of this text represent very different perspectives and personal histories. Interestingly, regardless of their academic discipline and teaching experiences, the authors frequently observe that this is an exciting time to become a teacher. In your developing career you will continue to learn and all along you will have opportunities to make a difference in student learning and in the learning of your colleagues. We hope you, your students, and your colleagues benefit as much from the American education system as we have.

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**JOURNAL FOR REFLECTION**

The authors of this text believe that this is an exciting time to become a teacher. Do you agree? What excites you about becoming a teacher?

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We, the authors, wish you the very best in your developing career. We need many more high-quality teachers. As you now know from reading this text, there is a long and rich legacy of efforts, people, and ideas to help you grow. You will likely have moments of doubt (those Self concerns again), and you most certainly will have days where you have too much to do (Task concerns). We hope, though, that you will also move on to truly experiencing the excitement and wonderment that comes from having your students “get it.” As you know firsthand, high-quality teachers make a lasting difference in the lives of their students. High-quality teachers will have Self and Task concerns too, but what really drives them is their Impact concerns. As reported in the Education in the News feature about Venera Gattonini at the beginning of this chapter, high-quality teachers are always striving to be the best they can be and to do everything they can think of to help all of their students learn.
SUMMARY

DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES FOR VIEWING EDUCATION AND TEACHING
• Different perspectives can be applied to our understanding of education and teaching: sociological, historical, philosophical, organizational, economic, legal, and multicultural.
• The United States has a three-hundred year history of trying to improve its educational system.

CONTINUING PRESSURES TO REFORM SCHOOLS
• In recent decades the federal government has been increasingly pressuring schools to change.
• Crises in society are a catalyst for school change.
• Findings from research can lead to change.
• Evidence about student learning unveils areas of needed change.

EMERGING PRESSURES AND INDICATORS OF ACCOUNTABILITY REQUIRE CHANGE IN SCHOOLS
• Expectations for accountability are increasing.
• Test scores are being used to rank school districts as well as individual schools.
• Graduation rates are becoming an important indicator of school quality.
• Dropout rates also are becoming an important indicator of school quality.
• All teachers have an important role in reducing dropouts and increasing graduation rates.

HOW TO RECOGNIZE A HIGH-QUALITY SCHOOL
• Today’s expectations for students and for teachers are higher than in the past.
• Data are used to make instructional and budgetary decisions.
• School improvement is a process, not just a plan.
• High-quality schools have a special organizational culture called a professional learning community.
• Many strategies are employed to involve parents and community members in student learning.
• The principal has a vision for the school and provides supportive leadership.
• Accountability is centered on student learning.

HIGH-QUALITY TEACHERS PROVIDE EVIDENCE OF STUDENT LEARNING
• High-quality teachers use evidence to determine if they are making a difference in student learning.
• High-quality teachers are reflective and have a stated philosophy.
• Ethics is an important component of a high-quality teacher’s philosophy.
• High-quality teachers have depth in three types of knowledge: content, pedagogical, and pedagogical content knowledge.

BECOMING A HIGH-QUALITY TEACHER REQUIRES CHANGE
• Four categories of concerns are Unconcerned, Self, Task, and Impact concerns.
• Teacher concerns change as the teacher becomes more expert.
• Beginning teachers will have more Self concerns than other types of concerns.
• High-quality teachers have more Impact concerns than other types.
• Reflecting on your concerns can be helpful.

SUPPORTIVE RESOURCES FOR YOUR FIRST YEAR
• Induction is the first one to three years of teaching.
• Beginning teachers have many resources available to them: workshops and orientations, mentors, and professional associations.

PARTICIPATING IN THE PROFESSION
• Associations provide opportunities for teachers to work together.
• The NEA and AFT advocate for teachers’ rights.
• Professional associations provide opportunities for teachers to specialize in activities related to a particular professional interest or curriculum subject.
LOOKING AHEAD: BE THE BEST YOU CAN BE

- High-quality teachers strive to have all of their students learn.
- High-quality teachers are always looking for ways to improve their teaching and increase student learning.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What changes have you seen in your lifetime that have affected what today’s schools are like?
2. Which indicators of accountability for schools do you think are most important?
3. Do you think that the trend toward increased federal direction of public education has gone too far, or should the federal government take even more control?
4. What characteristics of high-quality schools do you agree with? Are there other characteristics that you think should be added or deleted?
5. How have your concerns about becoming a teacher changed since this academic term started? In what ways have they stayed the same?
6. For which domain of high-quality, or expert, teacher knowledge do you have the most to learn?

SCHOOL-BASED OBSERVATIONS

1. Ask a teacher about the various changes that she or he has made during their teaching career. Which of the changes turned out to be most beneficial? Which were the biggest challenge?
2. Obtain a copy of a school’s school improvement plan and see which tiers of data were used. Did the school rely solely on Tier 1 data (standardized test scores) or were other tiers also considered? (If you don’t have access to a school’s plan, check the district and state website. The school’s plan should be there.)

PORTFOLIO DEVELOPMENT

1. Keep a copy of the open-ended concerns statement that you wrote while reading this chapter. (If you didn’t do it then, go back to Figure 13.4 and do the task now.) Every six weeks or so as you move on in becoming a teacher take time to write out your concerns. You can score them using the general definitions provided in Table 13.7. As you continue to do this you should see a developing pattern and several trends in relation to your becoming a teacher.
2. Now would be a good time for you to use the student learning–centered teaching model (Table 13.5) to sketch out a lesson plan for a topic you would like to teach. Be sure to think about what your students might know already and what you would do to incorporate their background and past experiences into the lesson. This is what pedagogical content knowledge is about.

PREPARING FOR CERTIFICATION

1. A topic in the Praxis II Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT) test related to the teacher’s role and school effectiveness is “ongoing personal reflection on teaching and learning practices as a basis for making professional decisions [including]
- code of Ethics
- advocacy for learners.”

The authors cite information about the four different levers used with the intention of reforming education:
(1) fix the parts, (2) fix the people, (3) fix the school, and (4) fix the system. Thinking about today’s schools, describe something you feel needs to be fixed. Identify which of the above levers you think might be the most successful, and describe why.
2. Answer the following multiple-choice question, which is similar to items in Praxis and other state certification tests.

Many students drop out of school for one reason or another. Several risk factors have been identified and occur at various grade levels. Which of the following
are not listed as risk factors for students in sixth, eighth, or ninth grades.

a. poor attendance
b. poor grades in the sciences
c. poor behavior
d. earned fewer than two credits in ninth grade

3. Answer the following short-answer question, which is similar to items in Praxis and other state certification tests. The authors define many ways that partnerships exist in schools. Some include shared ownership, some require shared decision making, and some include respectful/reciprocal communication. Identify two of these partnerships from your reading. Compare and contrast them. Identify the one you think would be the most successful in your community and explain why.

After you’ve completed your written responses for the above questions, use the Praxis general scoring guide provided in Chapter 1 to see if you can revise your response to improve your score.

### WEBSITES

- [www.howtogetyourged.org](http://www.howtogetyourged.org) This is a site for you and students to learn about what is entailed in earning a GED.
- [www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/index.html) This is the official U.S. Department of Education website for P.L. 107–110, which is better known as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. The site describes the various parts of the statute and provides links to related government documents and departments.

### FURTHER READING


- **Good, T., & Brophy, J. (2007). Looking in classrooms (10th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.** This book is a useful resource for looking at instruction. The practices described in this volume are evidence based. The authors are the lead researchers who developed the Effective Teaching model.

- **Kottler, E. I., & Gallavan, N. P. (2007). Secrets to success for beginning elementary school teachers. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.** The authors take a practical approach to being a first-year teacher. There are many useful tips for organizing your classroom, valuing cultural diversity, and using technology. There also is a chapter advising the beginning teacher about “learning your way around the school.”

- **Schell, L. M. (2008). Countdown to the first day of school: A K–12 get-ready checklist for beginning teachers, teacher transfers, student/preservice teachers, mentors and more! Washington, DC: NEA.** Here is a useful guide for all teachers as they prepare for that first day and for the first months of teaching.
