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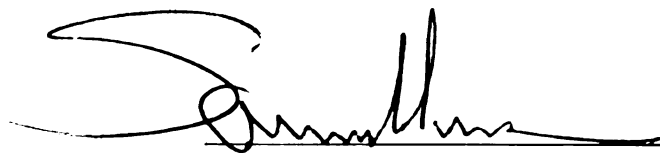
THE FORMATION OF SUPPORTIVE SCHOOL COMMUNITIES FROM
DIVERSE AND INTERNATIONAL GROUPS OF PARENTS IN
THREE AMERICAN-SPONSORED OVERSEAS SCHOOLS

presented by

James Rudolf Cope

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

Ph.D. degree in Educational Administration



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THE FORMATION OF SUPPORTIVE SCHOOL COMMUNITIES FROM
DIVERSE AND INTERNATIONAL GROUPS OF PARENTS IN
THREE AMERICAN-SPONSORED OVERSEAS SCHOOLS

By

James Rudolf Cope

A DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

THE FORMATION OF SUPPORTIVE SCHOOL COMMUNITIES FROM DIVERSE AND INTERNATIONAL GROUPS OF PARENTS IN THREE AMERICAN-SPONSORED OVERSEAS SCHOOLS

By

James Rudolf Cope

The researcher's purpose in this study was to describe and explain the role of the chief school administrator of a small American-sponsored overseas school in pulling together diverse and international groups of parents into a supportive school community. A participant observation recall approach was used in this historical descriptive study of three different schools. Through the use of historical research methodology, the researcher sought to learn one school administrator's personal view of experienced reality with groups of individuals at those three sites.

The chapter summaries were used to develop a questionnaire, which was sent to a normative group of 36 administrators of American overseas schools. The purpose of the survey was to learn the reactions of other overseas administrators to the findings, and to collect practical suggestions regarding community building.

On the basis of data obtained from the research methodologies, certain aspects of the administrator's work in forming supportive communities were described and analyzed. Because this historical

James Rudolf Cope

descriptive study was exploratory, the conclusions drawn on the three schools must be regarded as tentative; generalizations should not be made without study and conscious adaptation to the specific overseas school setting. Some of the salient findings are:

1. The American overseas school superintendent needs to be enthusiastic and highly personal in school community relations.

2. The superintendent's human-relations skills need to be highly developed and sensitive to individual differences and fears, cultural diversities, and educational needs.

3. The superintendent needs to be seen as the caring friend of all, the facilitator, the educator and school leader, but not as a partisan member of any part of the school community.

4. The superintendent needs to see that the verbal and visible details of the school's orientation process express a warm welcome of acknowledged personal worth.

5. The superintendent's encouragement and welcome of adult groups' use of the school campus help adults join into a supportive school community.

6. The superintendent needs to be actively involved in seeing that regular communications are sent to all individuals in the school community.

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PREFACE

The participant observation approach was the research methodology used in this dissertation. The reader will view "truth" as seen by one individual, the school administrator and writer of this paper. Someone standing next to that administrator during the 12 years he lived and worked in three different American overseas schools in three separate countries might well have written another view of "truth." Each view, nevertheless, is an aspect of reality. Each individual brings his/her own perspective to a situation and views reality through those tinted glasses colored from life's previous experiences.

The researcher invites the reader to try to set aside his/her own perspective and step into the mind of the writer and view truth through his eyes. Only then might the reader be able to experience more fully the writer's mind-set and view of reality. John Erskine beautifully expressed this idea as follows:

The body travels more easily than the mind, and until we have limbered up our imagination, we continue to think as though we had stayed at home. We have not really budged a step until we take up residence in someone else's point of view.

The reader is invited to leave "home" and "take up residence" in this researcher's point of view--to "limber up" his/her imagination and enjoy the administrator's reality as he worked and lived in Cairo, Egypt; in Accra, Ghana; and in Tunis, Tunisia. May

the findings of this research open up insights of new possibilities in the reader's mind regarding the role he/she might play in the formation of a supportive community around an American school overseas.

CHAPTER I

THE STUDY

Purpose

The writer's purpose in this research project was to describe and explain the role of the chief school administrator of a small American-sponsored overseas school in facilitating the pulling together of diverse and international groups of parents into a supportive school community. Three different overseas school sites were studied for this purpose.

The components of the exploratory research of each of the three sites were:

1. To describe the national historical setting, the campus facilities, and the characteristics of the school population, and to analyze each in the community-formation process.
2. To describe and explain the formal and informal relationships among parent groups and between them and the chief administrator.
3. To analyze how these relationships affect the community-governed overseas school.
4. To identify and describe salient characteristics of the chief school administrator's role and specific activities that help

facilitate the joining and maintaining of a supportive school community from diverse international groups of parents.

The summary of findings from this three-site study was then used to develop a questionnaire that was used to survey the reactions and learn further ideas and school-community-building suggestions from a selected group of overseas school administrators. Size of school, different areas of the world, and years of overseas administrative experience were used to determine a normative group to be surveyed.

The final component of this study provides a summary of experiential insights and specific suggestions as to overseas school community building and the role of the chief school administrator in that process.

Anticipated Findings

The anticipated findings of this study will provide insight and an additional dimension to the traditional role of the school administrator located in an overseas setting. Specifically, the writer intended to answer the following questions:

1. What is the third-culture concept, and how can it be used to assist in community building?
2. How might the physical plant and grounds of the school serve as a center and aid in the formation of a supportive school community?
3. What is the role of the administrator in the formation of a supportive school community?

4. How do hosting skills and the ability to communicate genuine caring and shared concern aid in the process?

5. What are the factors and activities that would help new arrivals begin to feel a belonging to the community?

6. What are some steps that can be taken to initiate the community-building process, and what groups could be used as the nucleus?

7. What are some specific planning strategies, activities, and communications that would help diverse groups of parents develop a school community focus?

8. How can adults from the different groups in an overseas setting be drawn into the community-formation process?

Background

Americans and other nationals living in locations other than their home countries face many problems that are unique to the overseas setting. The greatest of these problems may be the education of their children. Useem (1966) expressed this concern in her research on the American family in India:

The process of maintaining a style of living, good relationships with servants, and health pose important but resolvable problems. The area of greatest concern, because it is least subject to individual resolution or even the action of a single organization, is the education of children. (p. 132)

Families often have to depend on whatever schooling is available at that location. However, when enough families of a particular nationality arrive, a small national school is usually established. The enrolling of children of other nationalities in

these national schools is not uncommon, and if that school grows and becomes admired for one reason or another, the children of the host country also might wish to attend. The British, Germans, Italians, French, Americans, and Japanese are a few of the national groups who have established such schools located around the world. Many of those schools include only the elementary grades, while others provide a college-preparatory education through high school graduation.

Americans living overseas are educated in many different types of schools. The majority of the American children, however, are educated in two major networks of American schools overseas. The larger of the two is the Department of Defense Dependents Schools (DODDS). There are 144,429 students enrolled in the 271 schools of that system (DODDS, 1984). These schools are operated to address the educational needs of dependents of American military personnel stationed outside of the United States.

The second major network is known as the American-Sponsored Overseas Schools (A/OS). These schools are sponsored by the Department of State's Office of Overseas Schools. This loosely linked system is made up of 175 schools located in some 101 countries around the world. The 90,922 students enrolled in these schools are divided into two major count groups: 26,123 Americans and 64,799 children from host countries and from approximately 90 other countries. Most of these organizations are "non-profit, non-denominational, independent schools established on a cooperative

basis of American citizens residing in the foreign communities" (Department of State Overseas Schools Advisory Council, 1985-86).

The A/OS schools vary greatly in size and appearance from location to location, but they all share the following purposes:

(a) to provide the educational opportunities for American and other children generally comparable to those available in schools in the United States, and (b) to demonstrate American educational philosophy and practice abroad in order to help further international understanding. The schools are not operated or controlled by the U.S. government. Ownership and policy control are typically in the hands of associations of parents of the children enrolled, who elect a school board to supervise the superintendent or chief administrator whom the board chooses to administer the school. (Department of State Overseas Schools Advisory Council, 1985-86)

The present writer was concerned with three of those American-sponsored overseas schools and the formation of a school community for each of those A/OS organizations.

In the formation of a parent community, the difficulty one may encounter is that there may very well be 30 or more nationalities involved. Each parent has his/her own cultural expectations and may or may not speak English as a second language in the home. The parent will often hold different political and religious views and may have difficulty in trusting other parents as well as the American director of the school. The American educational program likely does not prepare their child for transition back into their national education system, and yet many of these parents may feel that the American overseas schools are their only choice. These parents often feel like outsiders or like guests in these schools, and yet they maintain polite and happy faces, which do not allow the

school personnel to learn their true feelings that separate them from a school community.

Included within this international body of parents is a group referred to as host-country nationals. These host-country parents are living in their home countries. They are members of extended families, neighborhoods, social circles, and social levels. In short, these parents are at home and are rooted in the host community. At times a host-country parent might have an active interest in meeting other parents in the A/OS school community; however, the local host culture may or may not permit only limited mixing outside of their own national or religious group. Those local host nationals who have in the past made friends within the school's international community have seen so many friends come and then go that ambivalence often results concerning the latest arriving temporary residents. Maintaining a polite distance from the school community often is the result.

One would expect that the American group would be the uniting core around which to build an international school community. However, contrary to that expectation is the fact that the American parents are themselves divided into many smaller, sometimes hostile, units. One of the causes for this disunity is that American families typically come overseas through the sponsorship of some agency. Some of these agencies include the U.S. Embassy, Agency for International Development (AID) missions, Peace Corps, branches of the military, private business, oil companies, missionary groups, the American school, and many others, depending on the country in

which the school is located. Besides the point that each sponsoring agency often becomes the dependent lifeline to the outside world, these sponsoring agencies indirectly develop definite social levels of acceptance, both between and within different agencies. If the added fact of the sponsor's contract is considered, which often includes the covering of the cost of overseas schooling, then one can possibly understand the parental attitude that the sponsoring agency, rather than the parent, is responsible for the education provided in the school. Considering the above points, the picture of a fractured rather than a united group of American parents becomes self-evident.

As if the divisional aspects of the above three major parent groups were not enough, the disturbing fact must also be considered that there is a yearly 30% to 40% turnover in an American-sponsored school community. In sum, an overseas school community may realize a new population every three to four years.

Cohen (1977) listed some of the common characteristics of the expatriate communities in his article entitled "Expatriate Communities." Points relevant to the present research are as follows:

1. Expatriates in the post-colonial world are less and less merely private persons abroad, and are increasingly the representatives of governments, governmental agencies, and other organizations: their organizational attachments are a major influence on their behavior, and on their ecological, institutional and social accommodation abroad. While their privileged position enables them to mold their environment according to their needs and predilections, their representative roles often constrain them to adopt segregated and often exclusive life styles, and militate

- against the adoption of local customs and values, even if these were agreeable to them (which they mostly are not).
2. Expatriate communities carve out for themselves--or have carved out for them--an ecological sub-system of their own which, though it is not necessarily a geographically separate area, still served to segregate the expatriate community from the host society.
 5. Expatriate communities tend to be socially closed and exclusive. The social relations of the members are largely limited to co-nations--the community supplies the major frame of references for the social aspirations of its members. Nevertheless, expatriate communities are not ordinarily highly cohesive and solitary. Hence, the increased importance of the clique of friendship circles and the family as the principal social props of the individual.
 7. Members of national expatriate communities interact across community boundaries primarily with other expatriates and with local elites. Much of their extra-community contacts are official and borne primarily by their highest status members. Informal social interaction with non-elite natives is generally rare. (pp. 77-78)

The concern for pulling together individual parents of diverse cultural backgrounds into a supportive community for these community-governed A/OS schools is one of the responsibilities of the chief school administrator. Three reasons for this responsibility are as follows:

1. The U.S. government grants awarded to these schools designate that the schools be demonstration centers of American public school education. This includes a community that elects a board of directors to govern the school.
2. Broad community support is often necessary for many of the capital projects needed for an improved school program.
3. Finally, and perhaps most important, the feeling of belonging to a community helps reassure individual worth, human value, and

sharing, all of which facilitate a stronger educational experience for everyone connected to the school.

An administrator's knowledge of some of the keys that might give access beyond the doors to those private and separate lives would be helpful in those efforts to help cause a central school focus and thus facilitate a united and supportive school community. The role of the chief school administrator is essential in this process, and, for that reason, it is worthy of study.

Methodology

The research methodology used in this exploratory study can be classified as historical descriptive. This approach was used in recording three overseas school sites. An analysis of the community-building components followed the study of each site. The general summary of salient findings from the three sites was then used in the formation of a questionnaire to survey reactions of other overseas school administrators as to the broader applicability of the findings, as well as to learn further overseas community-building suggestions and insights.

The problem studied in this research project clearly centered on the role of the school administrator in the community-building process in an overseas community. The recorded facts were analyzed with respect to causes connected with the above central problem. Postan (1971) expressed the need for this accordingly: "Historians study problems. . . . To a historian facts are of little value

unless they are causes, or parts of causes, or the cause of causes, of the phenomena which he studies" (p. 25).

With the preceding purpose in mind, the researcher recorded and analyzed the historical description of the overseas school sites. Lewis (1975) wrote that "There are many ways of defining and subdividing history; . . . ideologically, by function and purpose-- of the historian more than of the history" (p. 11).

The participant-recall approach was used as the primary source procedure in the recording of the three historical descriptive accounts. Lewis wrote that there are three types of history: remembered, recovered, and invented history. Lewis would include the participant-recall approach in remembered history, which "consists of statements about the past . . . and ranges from the personal recollections" (p. 11).

The events during the researcher's four-year stay at each site were recalled in relation to the central problem. Benson (1972) wrote the following in the recording of events:

Three main types of events (broadly defined) that can be combined to construct a narrative framework for any historical opinion study: (a) sequence of relevant . . . decisions, (b) actions . . . taken by agents to form opinion; and (c) events contributing to significant changes in the historical situation. (p. 142)

Through the use of a historical research methodology, the researcher sought to learn one school administrator's personal view of experienced reality with different groups of individuals at three different overseas sites. A picture of reality can be drawn first, accepting the fact that reality is multifaceted. This study dealt

with the facet of reality experienced by the overseas school administrator.

The groups in these three separate realities are important as a social framework for the members in each setting, since individuals act and are acted upon by and within a social framework. Mead (1934) wrote to this point accordingly:

Individual actions take shape as the person attempts to mesh what he does and what others around him are doing, so that the nature of the collective action . . . becomes a major explanation of what he does.

Further to this point, Becker, Greer, and Hughes (1968) wrote that "collective action is thus a function both of the desires, individual and shared, of the actors and the conditions under which they act" (p. 5).

In short, meaningful data must be firmly set and analyzed within the context in which they took place. The historian, Lee Benson (1972), stated,

Quantitative data are meaningless when isolated from either spatial or chronological contexts. Presented in a historical fashion, such data might seem to have one meaning; in historical context they may have entirely opposite meanings. (p. 62)

The participant-recall method enabled the researcher both to record the events and to add the administrator's view of reality to the social context of the site. This approach was supported by Blumer (1969) when he wrote that the goal of a scientific study was to get behind a behavior to the behavior's real meaning within the social setting. Blumer expanded this accordingly:

The task of scientific study is to lift the veils that cover the area of group life that one proposes to study. . . . The veils are lifted by getting close to the area and by digging deep into it through careful study. (p. 32)

The need for viewing an action through the perspective of the social setting was also supported by Cusick (1984) when he wrote:

The procedure suitable for studying a dynamic social situation is to approach the study of the group activity through the eyes and experiences of people who have developed the activity. Hence, it necessarily requires an intimate familiarity with the experience and with the scenes of its operation.

The actions and communications of individuals are symbolic, not only of their feelings but also of how others may read meaning into those communications. People interpret, therefore, each other's actions as a basis for acting and reacting to one another. In short, since a person's actions can be seen as having multifaceted realities, the behavior of an individual must be linked to the symbolic interaction that that particular behavior communicated to others in the social setting. Denzin (1970) expressed this thought as follows: "The investigator must simultaneously link man's symbols and concepts of self with the social circles and relationships that furnish him with those symbols and concepts" (p. 60).

Individuals move and have meaning within a social setting. This aspect of understanding their actions needs to be taken into consideration in the historical descriptive account of each school site. Denzin stated,

Research methods must therefore consider the "situated aspects" of human conduct. . . . Social selves, I am suggesting, are situated objects that reflect ongoing definitions of social situations. (p. 60)

The participant-recall approach enabled the researcher the possibility of being able to dig deeply into the reality of the time, place, and setting, and thus add some perspective of that social group in order to determine the symbolic meanings communicated to the school administrator by individuals and their group actions.

The validity of the researcher's findings rests on the conceptual framework of the study. Rather than proving validity as such, the researcher substitutes plausibility. The plausibility of the findings rests in the mind of the reader of the study. To accomplish this, the researcher must carry, in narrative form, the reader, step by step, through the different stages of the study. That is, the reader should be able to gain the perspective of the members in their own social setting, so as to be able to recall from the reading those recorded observations that support the conclusion of the researcher. The burden of proof rests on the individual who would disprove the findings.

The specific form of research used in this study was historical descriptive. In the three cases studied, the researcher was the chief school administrator. Those three sites were living, working assignments totaling a period of 12 years. To help in the recall of those 12 years, all available secondary sources were reviewed. School documents, photographs, school yearbooks, letters, and personal interviews with former members of those three communities

were used to aid participant recall in the development of a written narrative for each site.

The summary of findings and conclusions resulting from the written narrative study of the three sites was then used to formulate a survey instrument that was given to a normative selection of overseas school administrators. The findings from the questionnaire provided the representative group's reactions to the researcher's conclusions and added further suggestions and insights to the community-building efforts of a school administrator in an overseas setting.

The Population

Three American-sponsored overseas schools located in different African countries were studied and recounted so as to present three different "slices of recorded reality." Each study revealed its own life perspective of the members in that particular social setting. Of course, the names of all members were changed to protect the privacy of the individuals involved. The purpose of including three sites was not to find an average sum total, the total picture of which is an average, but may not fit any particular social setting. One site's reality does not negate the perceived reality of another site. The purpose, however, since the chief school administrator was the same individual in each of the subsequent sites studied, was to learn with that school administrator the role played in facilitating the formation of a school community at each site.

The field study approach of participant recall was used on the following three sites:

1. Cairo American College of Cairo, Egypt, from 1969 to 1973.
2. Lincoln Community School of Accra, Ghana, from 1973 to 1977.
3. American Cooperative School of Tunis, Tunisia, from 1978 to 1983.

The three sites listed were selected because (a) the researcher was the chief school administrator at each during the stated school years, (b) each was an American-sponsored overseas school with an international parent community, and (c) since each job followed the other, there was a progressive awareness by the administrator of his role in community building.

The following three factors were considered in determining the representative group of overseas school administrators:

1. The number of years of overseas administrative experience needed to include both new arrivals and long-tenured chief school administrators.
2. The different sizes of overseas schools administered needed to be considered.
3. The different areas of the world where overseas schools are located needed to be represented.

The names of the administrators surveyed were not included in the study.

Research Questions

The study of each site covered a four-year span. Within those four years there was a broad rhythmic flow that was similar in each site, and although the rhythm of activities often overlapped and continued throughout the four-year period, there was a major concern for the school administrator's role for each of those years. The administrator's role for the first year was the willingness to listen, to observe, and to learn. There must have been a gracious acceptance of the offers of others to help him get settled in a new home, school, and country. During the second year the administrator took hold. Often this second year on the job was the first opportunity the new administrator had to determine school schedules, curriculum, calendars, budget, and selection of new faculty members. During the third year, the administrator further refined the school program and assumed the role of host to the new arrivals in the community. Finally, the fourth-year rhythm was that of the administrator confidently continuing to pull the school program and the community together, of enjoying the faculty teamwork within the school and the success of community support groups toward school/community goals. This fourth and last year was also the year in which the administrator prepared to leave and search for a new school challenge.

Throughout this four-year rhythmic flow was the broad overriding question of:

What is the role of the administrator in helping pull together a supportive overseas school community?

With that broad question as the primary focus of the study, more specific questions needed to be determined and answered in order to gain an understanding of this part of the administrator's role within those overseas school settings. These questions were:

1. What were the inherited circumstances of each setting regarding:

a. relevant history, politics, and culture of the host country?

b. location, facilities, and setting of the school in relation to the homes of the school community?

c. the national make-up of the faculty and student body?

d. the past and the ongoing struggles between the administration, faculty, board, and community?

e. the community perceptions and attitudes toward the school and its administrator?

2. What procedures involved in recruitment, orientation, introduction, and reception served to determine the platform for the new administrator within the community?

3. What activities in the school and in the community aided the orientation of the administrator?

4. How did the third-culture phenomenon aid in the community development?

5. How did the administrator begin to determine who were the valuable and trustworthy among the natural and the job-positional leaders in the community, in the faculty, and among the parents?

6. What were the beginning communications and activities through which the administrator began to project his own leadership, newness, improvement possibilities, and movement?

7. What actions helped establish the administrator's leadership role in the community through his involvement in social, school planning, recruitment, financial management, and community projects?

8. What administrator activities helped develop and maintain a school-focused community among the faculty, student body, and parents?

9. How did the administrator develop and share the vision of school needs so that they could become community-supported projects?

10. What factors already existing in the overseas setting helped the school and its administrator become a central focal point of the community?

11. What activities helped the parents as well as nonparent members in the international community to feel part ownership and responsibility for the success of the school and its goals?

The preceding questions helped form a basis for the starting point of this study. However, as the study progressed, new questions were formulated while some of the above questions were refined or even dropped.

Operational Definitions

AID mission. The U.S. government agency in charge of aid for international development.

A/OS. U.S. Department of State's Office for Overseas Schools.

American-sponsored overseas schools. American schools overseas that are sponsored by the American government.

Host-country nationals. The citizens of the foreign country in which the overseas American school is located.

Expatriate community. Citizens who have left their own country and are living in a host country.

Third-country nationals. Foreign citizens other than Americans and host-country nationals who are residing in the host country.

Third culture. Individuals who are no longer "home" culture oriented, nor do they become "host" culture oriented; rather, they become part of a third culture that is "a part of" and "apart from" whatever situation they are in.

TCK. Third-culture kids who relate better with each other than with relatives back home.

REO. Regional education officer of the U.S. State Department's Office of Overseas Schools.

Overview

The general format of this dissertation begins with the expected introductory chapter. The background, the problem, and the methodology used to study the central topic of this research are included here. In the second chapter, selected and related literature is reviewed on the American-sponsored overseas schools, on the third-culture concept, and on community building.

Then the settings, people, and activities of each of the three sites are narratively recounted in the next three chapters. A similar approach was used in Street Corner Society by Whyte (1949), who, living as a member of an Italian street-corner gang, described the processes carried on within the gang. In this study the researcher, who was the chief administrator in each of the three schools, relates each site's setting and activities through the perspective of the chief school administrator. Based on these narrative descriptions and summaries, the reader should be able to draw similar insights and conclusions along with the researcher.

The questionnaire and the survey findings are analyzed in the sixth chapter. The final chapter includes the analysis and discussion of the selected findings and conclusions, as well as recommendations and reflections resulting from this study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

The review of literature is divided into four sections. The first deals with certain basic characteristics that are inherent in the formation and maintenance of a community, regardless of the location of that community. The second segment concerns the third-culture phenomenon, as it relates to the formation of an overseas community. In the third section the writer points out the essential role of and the need for basic human-relations skills on the part of the school administrator. Section three is followed by the chapter summary.

Community Characteristics

Max Tudor (1986), superintendent of the American School of Madrid, recently wrote in the International Quarterly that "to be successful, school administrators must have the support of the entire community" (p. 26). That community overseas is more often than not made up of groups of individuals coming from 20 to 35 communities, Americans belonging to assorted government agencies or business-sponsored groups, and citizens from the host country in which the school is located. One of the jobs of a successful

overseas school administrator is to pull together those diverse groups into a supportive school community.

A logical question that follows asks just what characteristics go into formulating a community--a community, by the way, that takes on an elevated minority status in most overseas settings. One of those basic characteristics of a community is the feeling of belonging. Cole (1920) made this point paramount in his book Social Theory, in which he stated that the community "is essentially a center of feeling" (p. 25).

The American overseas school can, and often does, serve as that "center of feeling." Since the American school is at times the only ongoing educational program for families moving from country to country, the potential for identifying with that American school in the new location as their "center of feeling" is ready made. In short, the American schools overseas become "home" to transferring students and families, no matter in which overseas country that particular school is located. The very fact that these American schools are located in different overseas settings allows them to become gathering points of common interests, past experiences, and future expectations. Therefore, two of the basic characteristics that aid in overseas community development are the "center of feeling" and the overseas locations of those schools. The second complements and intensifies the first in such a way that the American school appears as "home" to overseas students and parents as families are transferred from country to country. MacIver and Page (1961) stated this in their book Society: Primary Concepts,

accordingly: "The bases of community are locality and community sentiment" (p. 27).

The American school in the overseas setting then becomes that common and shared "home" ground that students of all nationalities use as their anchor for daily activities. Parsons (1951) also expressed this thought in The Social System as follows: "A community is that collectivity the members of which share a common territorial area as their base of operations for daily activities" (p. 91).

Another important community characteristic is that the members of a community know each other. Lowie (1948), in Social Organization, wrote that "community in the fullest sense is connected with a narrow circle of kindred and neighbors" (p. 15). Brownell (1950) made the same observation in The Human Community accordingly: A community is a group of neighbors who know one another face to face" (p. 198).

In addition to this need to visibly know one another in a community, there needs to be a thinking in common and a sharing of desires. Moore (1975/1976) expressed this idea as follows:

A key for those desiring to form coalitions to gain influence and power in decision making, lies with their reducing attention to differences among themselves, while heightening their sensitivity to evidence of likemindedness and similarity of desires. (p. 186)

This need for shared information in the group (community) formation process was expressed by Wilder and Allen (1976) in a

paper they presented at the annual convention of the Midwestern Psychological Association:

When categorized into one of two groups, subjects preferred information indicating ingroup similarity and outgroup dissimilarity. When categorized into a single group, subjects preferred maximum information about others regardless of content. Thus, preferred information maintained the initial group structure . . . accenting differences between while minimizing differences within groups. (p. 2)

The 175 American schools located in almost every capital of the world are all part of a network of many different sizes, shapes, and kinds of school buildings, each attempting to recreate in its own overseas setting an American public school educational program with all its particular cultural values and expectations. Therefore, the sojourners, no matter what their nationalities, find similarities and continuity in the American schools, regardless of whether the school is located in Paris, Katmandu, or Burkina Faso. This trait of sameness is also one of those characteristics needed in the broader worldwide community-formation process around the American schools network. Wolf (1969) stated in Garrison Community: "The principal processes operative . . . in the formation of a community are those of stabilization, consistency, and completeness" (p. 13). Similarly, the multinational parents of students enrolled in an American school find stability, consistency, and completeness in the American educational program that is available, regardless of the location of the particular school in the overseas network.

The multinational parents and students belong to separate, small ethnic interest groups while they live in a host country. One of the common grounds for those separate ethnic families is the

American school with its familiar educational program. The school, then, serves as the vehicle for forming a larger third culture "ethnic/minority community" at the overseas setting. This point was made by Mucha (1980) in a paper titled "Ethnic Conflict and Adaptation: Conflict Analysis of Multiethnic Nations Formation":

The educational system . . . reduces the isolation of ethnic groups' members and incorporates them in the general political system. . . . A common factor of all groups considered as ethnic, is the development of a "sense of peoplehood." (pp. 3-4)

This "sense of peoplehood" develops not only from the American educational program offered in the network of American schools, but also from the perceived threat felt by the multinational parents and students toward the different--the unknown--with new values, language, dress, actions, religions, and so on, that may exist in the host country.

Wolf (1969) wrote that:

[The] secondary processes arising from the intersection of these processes are those of closure and innovation. . . . From the coalescent action of the principles of stability and consistency, community closure is manifested as a response to external threat and internal dissension. (p. 26)

Community closure, within and around an American overseas school, often happens unnoticed. Nevertheless, the school serves as the magnet that draws together the students and parents coming from different backgrounds. The inside group versus the "outsiders" forms indiscernibly as the members become more isolated from the host country; at the same time they become more alike. Martindale (1963) expressed this idea in Community, Character and Civilization:

The shell that a community forms around itself operates like a field force: it preserves its members in and excludes the outsider. The more completely developed a community, the more it operates like a kind of pressure cooker, making its members in some special ways more alike and isolating them as a whole from outside influences. (p. 116)

Leach (1969) wrote the following concerning the isolation of these American international schools: "Many of these schools are insulated . . . by 'cellophane walls' from the national community in which they are located" (p. 9).

The American school offers an answer to the pressing need of families for the continuing education of their children. The school then immediately becomes a common ground for families of different ethnic, religious, racial, political, and social-level backgrounds. The American school located overseas sits as a natural drawing focus, a center of feeling, a base for daily activities, a sharing ground of communication, a place offering the same educational program that helps meet expectations, thus offering security, comfort, and a sense of peoplehood insulated by cellophane walls. Clearly, the community-formation process draws quite naturally around the overseas American school. The superintendent of such a school would have to make determined and continued negative gestures in order to turn around this process. With some of this knowledge, along with encouraging actions in support of the community-formation process, the superintendent should be well on the way to achieving and gaining that supportive community that Tudor (1986) stated a successful school administrator must have.

Third Culture

The second section of this chapter deals with a particular identity change that takes place in international sojourners. This change is commonly called the "third culture," meaning the individuals are no longer "home"-culture oriented, nor do they become host-country oriented; rather they become part of a third culture.

The words of Bojer in The Emigrants are as real and alive today as when he wrote them in 1925. They express the longing that becomes part of the third-culture traveler.

If you came back, you wanted to leave again, if you went away, you longed to come back. Wherever you were, you could hear the call of the home-land, like the note of a herdsman's horn far away in the hills. You were an alien in both places. Your true abiding-place was the vision of something very far off, and your soul was like the waves, always restless, forever in motion. (p. 351)

In an article in the Richmond News Leader, titled "Missionary Child Lives in 'Third Culture,'" Stewart (1970) stated that:

In most cases the child overseas has not readily identified with the foreign culture, has had a second-hand identification with the American culture and has grown up in a "third culture" of his own. (p. 3)

Useem and Downie (1976) wrote in their article, "Third Culture Kids," that these TCKs, regardless of their country of citizenship, do not feel at home in their country of origin, but that "where they feel most like themselves is in that interstitial culture, the third culture, which is created, shared, and carried by persons who are relating societies, or sections thereof, to each other" (p. 103). Useem and Downie went on to point out a unique characteristic that

seems to develop and be part of the TCKs: "The reported experience of these youths (TCKs) suggests that they cope rather than adjust, . . . they become 'a part of' and 'apart from' whatever situation they are in" (p. 105).

Probably the most detailed and pointedly clear description of the characteristics was written by Lykins (1986) in his article, "Children of the 'Third Culture.'"

A third culture person is identified as one who lives and works in a culture not of his/her own and does not intend to become a part of the host culture.

1. Third culture people are well traveled. . . .
2. Third culture people can usually speak and understand a second language.
3. Third culture people are very tolerant of other lifestyles.
4. In the third culture there is a strong nuclear family.
5. Third culture families are dependent upon the sponsor.
6. Social problems are less severe in the third culture.
7. While third culture communities are fairly stable, the members of the community are constantly changing. . . . This transient life leads to a feeling of impermanence and, in many cases, a lack of identity.
8. Perhaps the most amazing characteristic is the tendency of the students to return to the third culture setting. Dr. Useem discovered that fully 70% of the third culture kids (TCK) return to the third culture upon completion of advanced studies if they have spent their high school years overseas.

Third culture people, no matter what their first culture, will relate better with each other than with their own relatives "back home." (pp. 39-40)

Further, Useem, Donoghue, and Useem (1963) wrote:

The third culture is not merely the accommodation or fusion of two or more separate, juxtaposed cultures. As persons continue to associate across societies while engaged in common enterprises, they incorporate into the ethos of their ingroups, standards for interpersonal behavior, work-related norms, codes of reciprocity, styles of life, networks of communications, institutional arrangements, world views, and on the individual level, new types of selves. (p. 174)

The preceding citations serve to point out the fact that there is a revolving international group of individuals who identify, perhaps unwittingly, with that "third culture," and that group makes up the large majority of the students and families connected to the American school overseas. The point to be made is that those individuals not only share a third culture, but that they also share a common fate. The sharing of a third culture and a common fate aids in the community-formation process around an American overseas school. Larsen (1978) made this observation when he wrote:

When people experience common fate as a result of belonging to a particular group, the result is favorable attitudes toward other members of that group and less favorable attitudes toward members of other groups. . . . If members of groups . . . are told they belong to a common third group and/or experience a sense of common fate, the result may be a more favorable reaction by the respondents. The experience of common fate serves to elicit an assimilation effect with the result that members of one group develop more favorable attitudes toward members of the other group (and any of their attitudes). (pp. 4-5)

The "common fate" theme would appear to be one of the major factors that facilitates the willingness of multinational families to join into a supportive community of an American school overseas.

The documental reality of a third-culture set of particular characteristics with which the international sojourner can identify, along with the phenomenon of a common fate, provides a ready-made mutual point of reference among the families living overseas. A superintendent's knowledge of and reference to this can and should be used in the community-formation process of an American overseas school.

Human-Relations Skills

So many positive characteristics already exist for the formation of a community around the overseas American school that one is led to ask just what are the talents or skills needed by the superintendent to help facilitate the community-formation process and perhaps to be able to disarm those suspicious and hesitant new arrivals to the school community.

Just how important is the role of the school head in the process? Researchers on effective schools have stated that the principal is the singularly important and essential person if any change is to be successful in a school. Lezotte, Hathaway, Miller, Passalacqua, and Brookover (1980) revealed this idea in their research:

Principals have an important role in the school generally, and they have an especially important role in clarifying and changing a school's learning climate and the resulting instructional effectiveness.

... The research on effective schools, effective educational innovations, and effective strategies for planning change all point to the principal as a singularly important person in the successful school system. (p. 93)

Reference is made here to effective-schools research in order to emphasize the importance of the school director's role in the total school operations, one of which is the need for the school leader to develop a supportive school community in the overseas location. Orr and Beach (1985) went so far as to define the job of the overseas principal as that of an ambassador: "The principal serves as an ambassador of the American educational system, a

position that sometimes requires unusual extracurricular activity" (p. 30).

As mentioned previously, the majority of American overseas schools are modeled on the American public school educational system. One of the clear jobs of the school head in the public educational system is winning public/community commitment to education. An article published by the National Association of Elementary School Principals ("Effective School P.R.," 1982) stated:

Public schools depend on public commitment to education. Winning that commitment is the responsibility of every educator, but it is the principal who must take the lead in building public support for the school's total educational program. (p. 3)

For principals to accomplish this public support in an international community, they must be able to "take up residence" in the minds of others different from themselves; they must be sensitive to the different mind-sets of those individuals from around the world whom they would like to join together and be a supportive school community. The fact that an individual is living in an international community does not guarantee there is a needed understanding of others that will facilitate community development.

Moore (1981) wrote of this as follows:

A cross-cultural comparative awareness for administrators is not easily obtained unless you put yourself into the head of a person from an utterly different culture. Contact alone will not do. Even sustained contact is an insufficient condition. The administrator must be ready to respect, accept and have the capacity to participate. The administrator must have some plasticity. . . . The ability to learn and change is crucial. (p. 9)

Because this "taking residence" in another person's head may be difficult or even impossible for some school administrators, the following action guidelines from the article "Effective School PR and How to Get It" would seem to be most useful: "Pay attention to first impressions, your own and your school's. Make sure visitors are treated like VIPs, not intruders. Be welcoming and receptive, no matter how rushed you are" (p. 4).

In his article, "Skills of an Effective Administrator," Katz (1974) broke down these personal skills into manageable steps that will help an administrator gain that sensitivity to others, sometimes called "human skills," that is needed:

To be effective, he must develop his own personal point of view toward human activity, so that he will (a) recognize the feelings and sentiments which he brings to a situation; (b) have an attitude about his own experiences which will enable him to re-evaluate and learn from them; (c) develop ability in understanding what others, by their actions and words (explicit or implicit), are trying to communicate to him; and (d) develop ability in successfully communicating his ideas and attitudes to others. (p. 100)

Perhaps of even more pointed importance for the overseas school administrator are the 1984 research findings of Droppert, as reported in her doctoral dissertation, "A Study of Administrators', Teachers' and Parents' Perceptions of the Role of an International School Administrator." Some of her findings were as follows:

There is consensus (parents, teachers, administrators) that the most important qualities of an effective administrator are the qualities of interpersonal skills, energetic, adaptable and flexible. (p. 251)

Administrators and teachers find a participative leader with interpersonal skills to be more effective as an international school administrator. (p. 252)

The necessity to have human relation skills and the need to be emotionally secure and stable in one's own personality and professional role, is seen to be vital. The necessity for these qualities of leadership is heightened by the transient nature of school personnel and the composition of the expatriate community. These qualities are, therefore, identified as being of greater importance for effective administration in an overseas situation than in the administration of schools in the U.S.A. or the U.K. (p. 270)

The importance of human relations in the entire overseas community was further emphasized in a study of repatriation of overseas personnel, who had learned a certain type of interaction while overseas, back into the home-company offices in the United States. In that study Mattox, Sanchez, Ulsh, and Valero (1982) reported that "expatriates preferred an orientation program with a humanistic orientation, as opposed to a practical, job-oriented program."

The human-relations orientation and skills of overseas administrators are an essential part of their participative leadership. The principals need to pay attention to first impressions and become sensitive to the different mind-sets of individuals within the international parent and student bodies. For principals to develop this openness and sensitivity to the ideas of others, 30% of whom are replaced each school year, they must be emotionally secure and comfortable in their own personalities, lives, and professional roles. If administrators have not developed a mind-set of learning to recognize their own feelings and sentiments, of being able to reflect and learn from their own actions, of tuning in to both verbal and nonverbal communications, how then can there be a successful communication of their own ideas

and attitudes to others? How then can a supportive community be developed in an overseas setting?

Summary

The research reported in this chapter was focused on three basic areas that relate to the role of the overseas administrator in helping pull together a supportive school community. The first area dealt with some of those characteristics that go into making a community a reality. A community's need for a center of feeling--a homeground--fits perfectly around the small American school located in a host country. The need for individuals to get to know each other face to face and to develop a thinking in common with shared desires, as well as a need for shared information, are all clear directions for an administrator who wishes to pull together a school community. A regular central office communication, at least monthly, but preferably every week or two, is a must. Also, monthly meetings and events at the school revolving around common concerns, but incorporating the social face-to-face aspect, need to be some of the foundation steps in a superintendent's yearly planning. The fact that the overseas network of American schools helps create a world-wide support group of parents needing the ongoing services of one kind of educational program is a ready-made aid in the superintendent's efforts in community formation. A loose sense of peoplehood, then, has been formed among those families who are sharing that network of American schools.

The last point under this section concerns the perceived threat for the new and unexperienced location and environment that individuals often feel upon arrival in a new host country. The American school in that situation often serves as the only comfortable and nonthreatening base where known expectations, which were developed from past experiences in American schools elsewhere, exist. In short, it may be the only "home" feeling of security that one can experience in a new setting. Administrators should realize and capitalize on this "home welcome" need; immediate, warm, family-type reception and hospitality are in store here. That first positive impression and reception credit is seldom ever depleted as future calls for understanding, perhaps even forgiveness, are needed as the school year progresses.

The second area of reported research dealt with the phenomenon called the third culture; this included the common-fate theme. The third culture exists! It is real! It is a valued part of the feeling and thinking of the individual who lives overseas. The clear implication here for the school administrator is to recognize the characteristics of the third culture and share these, as called for, with individuals.

When people realize they are not alone with their feelings, there develops a camaraderie and willingness to accept others who have shared that same coping experience overseas. There is the possibility of developing a school community based on the shared experiences of the third culture where individuals may not have anything else in common other than the need for the American school

educational program. This is important knowledge to be used by the administrator of an overseas school.

Finally, the third area of reported research dealt with the indisputable role of the school administrator with a keen sensitivity to the different mind-sets within the group of international parents and students participating in the American school. In short, his human-relations skills must be highly developed. These human-relations skills are needed for any job, but they are absolutely essential as the central focus point of the administrator's role in an American school located overseas.

CHAPTER III

CAIRO AMERICAN COLLEGE OF CAIRO, EGYPT, FROM 1969 TO 1973

Introduction

The historical descriptive account in this chapter deals with four school years, 1969 to 1973, at the Cairo American College (CAC) located in Maadi/Cairo, Egypt, during which time this writer served as superintendent of that school. The study of this site is divided into six sections. The first deals with the interview, recruitment, orientation, and on-site arrival. The second section contains a description of the school and its national, historical setting during those reported four years. The third section includes a four-year overview of the researcher's participative-recall perspective of school life during those four years. In the fourth section, relationships between different parent groups and the school administrator are examined. The summary includes the characteristics of the school administrator and the school activities that aided school community formation. Specifically, the summary covers the observations of this site which helped form a school community around the Cairo American College.

Interview, Recruitment, Orientation, and Arrival

The International Schools Services (ISS) of Princeton, New Jersey, with which the superintendent had registered for overseas job opportunities, notified him of an interview that was to be held at the Detroit Airport Hotel with the Chairman of the CAC school board. This March dinner interview consisted mainly of Mr. Vander and the superintendent getting acquainted and learning to like each other. Most of their conversation was based on drawing out each other's interest and overseas travel experiences, as well as on concrete information concerning living and working in Cairo and in the school. Little was mentioned or questioned about educational philosophy. Each of them was sizing up the other, and both liked what they felt about working together. Within a week he offered the superintendent's position. The superintendent was at that time a young administrator who was just completing a master's degree and had only four years of administrative experience; he accepted the job based on his positive reaction to this extraordinary man. Mr. Vander was to him a "bigger than life," Hemingway type, and bluntly honest man. His acceptance was in spite of his negative image of Abdel Nasser and his Egypt, an army and air force that had just been defeated, and a country that was still being bombed every week or so by the Israeli air force.

Mr. Vander's comment over the phone was, "Well, do you want the job or not?" The superintendent replied, "Well, I'm not sure how long I'd have the job!" He laughed at Mr. Vander's reply, "Hell! They've been fighting for a thousand years!" Under this man's

forceful, straightforward charm that he enjoyed and trusted, he accepted the job as the new superintendent of the Cairo American College.

A few weeks later, CAC sent the superintendent to Austin, Texas, to visit with Mr. Basis, who was the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum of the Austin City Public Schools. Austin City Public Schools had a school-to-school partnership with the Cairo American College, and Mr. Basis was the contact man for Austin. He had visited Cairo several times and knew well the Cairo American College, its history, problems, and needs. During this visit of a couple of days, he showed the new CAC superintendent around and gave introductions to central office administrators. The most important help he gave him, however, was showing slides that Mr. Basis had taken of Maadi, Cairo, and the school facilities. These included the old campus, which was located in an old palace with rooms surrounding a large central patio. Mr. Basis also showed photographs of the new campus of newly constructed red brick buildings with white domes, located in the middle of beautiful flower gardens and playing fields. Other slides included faces of people at CAC whom he would soon get to know. There also must have been pictures of the pyramids, the Sahara Desert, and the River Nile, but the lasting impressions were the photographs of the handsome new, yet unfinished, campus and of beautiful flowers and gardens. Those few days in Austin were a great help in beginning

the orientation of further cementing his commitment toward the new assignment in Cairo, Egypt.

The second action, which was an invaluable help in beginning an orientation to the strange, different life in this Middle East, Moslem country, was the invitation from the CAC board of governors to pay him to come early in May of that school year so as to have an overlap period with the departing administrator. He has always suspected this invitation was at the wise suggestion of the departing superintendent. At any rate, this time with the then CAC superintendent was an unforgettable period of orientation which provided an excellent foundation and beginning understanding of the job and country. Perhaps of even more importance, this man and his family transformed the strangeness of Cairo into an exciting, adventure-filled place to live. During the hosting, they cemented a very special friendship, which has lasted through the years.

School and Site

The Cairo American College in 1969 was housed in an old palace in the garden suburb of Cairo, called Maadi. This quiet, dusty community was located about seven miles south up the Nile from the blaring horns and confused jungle of traffic among the massed humanity of Cairo, Egypt. Cairo's population at that time was over three and a half million inhabitants. The busy streets were full of people dressed in both western fashion and in the long Egyptian gown called galebeah. The tangle of traffic was made up of anything and everything, from herds of sheep, goats, or camels being driven to

market, to donkey-drawn carts full of farm produce, to Mercedes Benz and Bentleys. The double-trailer buses were so overloaded with the weight of people hanging from the windows and entrance doors, that the springs were usually worn out on one side, resulting in buses leaning to the right. The teeming, fatalistic humanity, squashed in the dusty, dirty streets of Cairo, was in stark contrast to the quiet, tree-lined streets and beautiful gardens of the homes in Maadi. The American community was located mainly in Maadi; the international community, however, was scattered between the two areas of Giza and Heliopolis, which are parts of Cairo.

The old palace in which CAC was located was a collection of rooms around a large patio with shrubs and a fountain. This charming patio was used as a location for a student lounge and lockers, as well as a place where several student plays and musicals were held. The "highlight" of a visitor's tour of the palace-school was the fun of showing the fourth grade's large alabaster bathroom with its sunken tub. The adaptation of this old palace for the needs of the American school provided an interesting set of special classroom memories for the students and staff of CAC. These particular palace memories, unfortunately, were lost when the school was moved during the 1969 Christmas break to the ultra-modern, new Digla campus just a mile further into the desert. New memories, new student paths, and the development of a new personal ownership on the part of students, teachers, and staff had to be formed upon returning to school that year after winter vacation.

To put Cairo, Egypt, in perspective, one should recall that Egypt had had its air force destroyed and army defeated during the 1967 war (or confrontation, as it was often called) with Israel. The defeat of Nasser, one of the leaders of third-world politics, by the small and relatively new country of Israel was a demoralizing blow to Egyptian manhood and to the national pride of this revolutionary third-world leader and to the Arab world. Windows of public buildings were taped. The street and car lights, and the windows of buildings, were painted a depressing blue in an effort to mislead night air bombings. Protective walls were built on the sidewalks in front of most public-building entrances, and once-beautiful parks had trenches and underground bomb shelters dug into them. Cairo, in 1969, was a city under air siege, expecting that almost anything could happen at any time. Cairo people in those days expected a further advance of the Israeli army. In fact, some individuals even went so far as to say that Israel believed its southern border should go as far as the Nile.

In 1967, at the time of the "confrontation," the Cairo American College was closed due to the evacuation of most of the American and international families. The CAC superintendent, along with many other families, spent several months in Athens, Greece, before some of those same families began to return to Cairo and reopen the school. The American school student body, from then up to 1969, consisted mostly of children of Amoco Oil Company employees and a few children of professors at the American University of Cairo and

of American diplomats. The rest of the students came from the international diplomatic community.

Four-Year Overview

The first year at the Cairo American College was consumed mostly with cautious movement, taking charge with care, all the while getting to know the faculty, the student body, and parents, and the needs that were particular to the Cairo American College. The month and a half overlap with the previous school director greatly facilitated and helped speed up this essential first-year process. His inclusion of the new superintendent in everything from dinner parties, trips to meet his special merchant friends, to horseback-riding outings at the pyramids with small groups of teachers, to sitting at his table during the senior-class dance on a boat trip on the Nile, and finally including him into his family, was an invaluable beginning orientation. He personally stood at his side along with the board chairman, Mr. Vander, during an entire evening garden reception, which the board hosted to introduce him to the parents of students as well as to others in the American community with an interest in the school. The superintendent also helped him join the Maadi Sports Club, which served more as a retreat during his four-year stay rather than a social gathering place with others of the school community. The Maadi Sports Club, formally founded by the British during colonial years, had become, by 1969, an Egyptian Society Club. Since Egyptians did not then study at CAC, it became an escape to relaxation rather than an

extension of school community work with parents and students. The most important introduction the former school director gave him, however, was a positive attitude toward the CAC teachers, janitors, students, and parents, as well as toward the fun and adventure of living in the exotic, desert country of Cairo, Egypt. This type of introduction was an invaluable mind-set that continued throughout the four years he lived and worked in Egypt.

Also of great help in this orientation process was the wife of the school board chairman, who introduced him to members of the oil community during many small dinner parties hosted at their home. Since her husband was traveling much of that year out of the country, she regularly included the superintendent as her dinner partner. She, her husband, and the superintendent still remain friends, and strangely enough the new superintendent still looks to his confirmation, even after 19 years, as to whether he is developing and living up to his expectations first made during the Detroit Airport Hotel interview.

The international student body of CAC, from more than 30 different countries, came mostly from diplomatic families. And since almost every country had at least one national holiday, plus a few other special commemorative events, invitations to the superintendent of their children's school were extended regularly. At least three nights a week invitations were accepted into that international network of diplomats. Those invitations provided a significant introduction to that part of the school constituency. These events also provided the opportunity to represent the school

to others in the "cocktail circuit." The fashion during those days was to have a picture taken of your guests in the reception line as you met the ambassador. This resulted in a stack of formal pictures, which remain as interesting reminders of those busy entertainment days of orientation to the community. This string of receptions continued until January of the second school year, at which time the death and subsequent mourning of Abdel Nasser occurred.

The Maadi English-Speaking Community Church was also a common meeting ground for parents of different Protestant groups. A few parents drove into Cairo to attend the large First Presbyterian Church near the Nile/Hilton Hotel, but most families visited the Maadi Community Church. Attendance presented a personal introduction to many families attending CAC.

School-sponsored dances, festivals, Halloween parties, and the school musical, Oliver, all served as gathering events for parents, students, and teachers to meet face to face at the school. These activities also presented opportunities to meet more parents and to learn other than classroom expectations for the school year at the Cairo American College.

During the Christmas vacation of that first year, the janitors, the business manager, and the superintendent moved the entire school, on the trailer beds of donkey carts, to the new Digla campus. Those wonderful, dedicated men were still working right through the night up to the morning hours of the first day of

classes after the winter holidays. The teachers and students were also very patient and understanding as classes on the new campus began with all types of workmen still completing jobs around the school. No one seemed to mind the interruptions as all had agreed to make the move in order to push the workmen to complete their contracts. Getting that half-year head start on the uncompleted campus was an eye opener and allowed the staff to begin their planning for the needs of an expanded educational program for the coming school year's increased student enrollment.

The beautiful new campus, with its green-grassed field in the middle of a half-mile cinder track, was separated from the dry, tan desert sands by a stone wall. This oasis-type, peaceful retreat immediately began to attract the adult community's interest. Since the superintendent had grown up in the schools around Flint, Michigan, where the Mott Foundation financed evening adult community center activities in the public school buildings, he immediately encouraged the use of the school facilities by those adults connected to the school. Before his four years in Cairo were over, the school campus became the community center and was regularly used by joggers, kite flyers, softball, square dancing, or even those running their dogs. The campus was a safe place with beautiful gardens to which people often came just to relax. The campus during the days was a school for children, but in the evenings and on weekends it increasingly became a community center for school parents and children.

The second school year began with the same demanding number of evening receptions. The superintendent tried to divide up those invitations between his new administrative assistant and himself. But the first time that he sent his assistant and was able to stay home, it caused the students from the Yugoslavian Embassy to ask why he did not come to their National Day reception. Didn't he like them any more? He missed no more! School representation was not the question, as invitations were personal, expecting an individual personal response. This heavy night schedule of invitations stopped around mid school year with the death and mourning of Abdel Nasser. For some reason, this busy schedule never did return to the pressing number of evening invitations of the previous year. He was pleased to now have most of his evenings for himself; however, that year and a half of social events offered exposure for him to represent the school as well as to provide him with an insight into the international parents' world of formal entertainment.

Since the student enrollment had increased during the previous year and the projection was for continued growth, the school's educational program could be expanded and strengthened with additional course offerings making a fuller program. In fact, one of the most difficult parts of each year, knowing what could be added, was that the students in the graduating senior class would miss that enrichment. Seniors would say that we should have such and such, to which he would agree, but could not offer until the following school year when new schedules could be set, facilities provided, and new faculty hired to lead those new programs. This

sadness over the fact that the senior students each year would not be able to enjoy the fruits of development was a strange twist in the otherwise excitement over the yearly improvements that could be made in the educational program planned for returning students.

This second school year offered the superintendent the first opportunity to be able to personally interview, contract, and bring to Cairo new U.S.-hire teachers to join the faculty. During the previous summer, he personally saw to the repainting of the teachers' apartments and renovation of existing furniture. He personally met these new arrivals at the Cairo airport and took them to their apartments, where flowers of welcome and a full refrigerator awaited them. Since most U.S.-hire teachers lived in the school apartment building that year, there always seemed to be a party or some other activity going on. Those parties ran anywhere from a house invitation to horseback riding out to a tent party in the Sahara, or to an evening sailboat ride with chicken dinner on the Nile. The sharing of the same apartment building may, at times, have been compound-like living, but those same close living quarters served as a secure community from which teachers could venture into the Moslem culture of Egypt. A new teacher immediately had an adoptive group family to which he belonged upon arrival in Maadi.

The community-center concept for the evening use of the school campus continued to expand during this second year. Adult square dance groups, as well as a community theater group, regularly used the school facilities. Even a small group of sports enthusiasts

came on Wednesday evenings to view the latest black-and-white video tapes of games taken from U.S. television. Those evenings, with chocolate and popcorn, were an enjoyable touch with back home and with the professional sports programs televised there. Often the same video tapes would be viewed if others had not yet arrived in the oil company mail pouch that week. The community church--definitely more community than church--during its social events, also used the campus when it would hold "dinner on the grounds" potlucks, to which everyone was invited. The track and grassed field were increasingly being used by more and more school-connected adults. The school campus increasingly became the center of the adult community.

The students, too, began to make greater use of the school grounds, particularly with the expansion of the after-school activities program. Fortunately, the superintendent was able to attract and hire a highly talented and dedicated young man to develop the new program. The full intramural program that resulted included groups of all types of mixtures. For example, when there were not enough players, the program was expanded to include such new groups as a mother-daughter softball team. A fun competition newsletter even developed around these games through the pointed wit of a talented participator and news writer. These intramurals added a community-wide enthusiasm and excitement among students, teachers, and parents. In fact, the community enthusiasm toward the school's and community center's program caused talk and planning to begin that year for the construction of a swimming pool. The idea was to

finance the construction mainly from community club membership fees of those who would use the pool facilities after the school day and on weekends. The fact that a growing community of foreigners was causing the Maadi Sports Club to begin discouraging further memberships helped support the swimming pool idea. That year there continued to be the traditional school musicals, plays, sports competitions, and an Olympic Sports Day where flags from all the countries represented in the student body were paraded.

The highlight of this second year was the unforgettable International Fair, organized by a master educator of the school. This event involved not only our music department in international songs and dances, but also mothers and dads, and students in national dress representing every country that had children enrolled in the Cairo American College. Each national group seemed to be in full competition that day in sharing its pride of its own national food, arts, crafts, and other accomplishments. The festival was an outstanding memory. The main complaint was that one day was not enough time to be able to fully enjoy and absorb all the richness that was present. For the amount of work involved and the subsequent enjoyment, at least a two-day fair should have been planned. This type of international sharing on the campus of the Cairo American College provided a vehicle through which students, along with the support of their parents, could present with pride their differences and individual national richness. Too often this sharing is not done. Third-national parents often feel as visitors

in the American school, not always fully understanding the educational program, customs, and social expectations of an American school. Their children typically want to fit in and be "like" the American students. Pointing out differences between themselves, unless there is a large enough minority grouping of one nationality, is not readily offered. This International Fair highlighted, within the safety of family and national pride, the rich differences within the student/parent community.

For several years the United States did not have an American Embassy in Cairo; rather, the American government had what was called an Interest Section. This was part of and under the protective umbrella of the Spanish Embassy. The head of the American Interest Section was on the board of directors of CAC. Because this man probably had few U.S.-government-supported projects to show, and because he was a full supporter of the Cairo American College, visiting U.S. congressmen, senators, and other official investigating committees were brought by to see the striking new campus of the American school. One senator was even included in a sports awards night, which happened to be scheduled during his visit to Cairo. The real payoff for the school, however, was the fact-finding committee of five congressmen who were brought by to see the school. Two of them happened to be on the U.S. government's Appropriations Committee. The superintendent led the guided tour of the beautiful but unfinished campus. The last stop of that tour was the teachers' lounge, where he pointed out the scale model of what the completed campus was at that time envisioned to become. During

that stop he stressed how the school was lacking in proper science laboratories and high school math rooms, and that the ones we had were temporarily set up in the prefab huts on the backside of the campus. Also mentioned were the millions of dollars worth of blocked Egyptian pounds belonging to the U.S. government, not even the interest on which was being used. These millions of dollars worth of local currency, resulting from previous PL480 grain sales to Egypt, were just sitting in Egyptian banks, being eaten up by inflation. Please recall that the strengthening of math and science programs was a political priority in the U.S. at that time. Also note that the U.S. government, in 1970, needed to announce publicly a bit more balanced foreign-aid program between Israel and the Arab world. Jordan was the only Arab country receiving substantial U.S. government aid up to this point. Increased aid to Egypt during the transition time after Nasser's death and the beginning months of Sadat, which could be tied to the Cairo American College and the American University of Cairo, was a palatable beginning visible solution to the imbalance of the millions that were given yearly to Israel.

At any rate, all this brought forth an immediate question from several members of that committee. "How much would you need?" was asked. Caught by surprise with the success of his own sales pitch, the superintendent answered that he would meet with the architects and get the figure. Their departing comments to him and among themselves were that they thought they could help with the project

and even pointed out the path he would need to take in Washington in order to bypass normal bureaucratic channels and get the request included yet that year in the Foreign Aid Bill.

Since the door to U.S. government funds in Egypt was now open, he presented a documented request for a million dollars worth of Egyptian pounds. This was thought to be the amount needed to complete the total campus projection, and not just the construction cost of new science and math laboratories.

Even though the request was late and did not go through the normal bureaucratic channels, the million dollars worth of PL480 Egyptian pounds was included in that year's Foreign Aid Bill that passed the United States Congress. Unfortunately, however, that bill was vetoed by the President of the United States. The original amount of the bill was, nevertheless, eventually resubmitted and signed, but some other project or country got the million dollars as no PL480 money was included in the second bill signed by the President.

The next year the superintendent applied again. This time the formal channels were used. He wanted to go for two million dollars because what had first been estimated was much too low to complete the campus construction. The American Interest Section representative, who later became a board member and finally a difficult chairman, would agree to only one million three hundred thousand dollars. This was the requested amount granted to CAC during the summer of the year that the superintendent left the school.

Toward the end of this second school year, an official grand opening ceremony was planned for the new campus of the Cairo American College. Moms, dads, students, and most of the official diplomatic corps were present. The speaker for the event was the oldest living American citizen residing in Cairo. This wonderful man had been the president of the International Courts during the last years of King Farouk's reign, before Nasser's popular revolution took control of Egypt. The international character of the school's student body was again emphasized during this ceremony. The young students dressed in their national costumes in anticipation of being able to take the guests around the school and to show them, in particular, their own classrooms. Unfortunately, almost at the moment the formal assembly program was completed, and when the late evening caused a need for lights, all the electricity in the area went out and never did come back until morning. The next day one ambassador wrote an encouraging note: "Don't be bothered, I think Open House by candlelight was quite charming." The superintendent heard later that a young student had insisted on showing him her room and displayed student work by the light of his cigarette lighter.

The student population continued to grow during the third school year. This growth allowed further expansion of the education program, for which more U.S. teachers were added to the faculty. To help these new arrivals with their adjustments to Cairo, Egypt, the superintendent asked some American families, who were friends and

supporters of his efforts in the school, to host different new teachers. Personally meeting the new teachers at the airport and bringing them to their apartments continued as in past years. Periodic welcoming dinners and invitations were extended from both the American and Egyptian members of the CAC staff. Some of these successful host families were school board members. This is mentioned because one of the new teachers did not complete his contract and heavily laid his and his wife's unhappiness on his host family. This was a natural release to his trusted host family. The problem, however, was that their host also happened to be a board member. This role put the board member in a hard spot and compromised him in his board position. In subsequent years the superintendent continued to use the host-family approach to help wean new teachers away from arrival loneliness, but he never again asked board members to serve the school in the role of personal host.

Several incidents with students that year stand out in the superintendent's memory. One was the day that a Japanese father showed up on the campus with his obviously ill daughter to take a picture of her with the superintendent in front of the school office. She had been a student in CAC the year he arrived but had returned to Japan, where her illness was diagnosed as cancer. She and her father had traveled back to Egypt to visit the CAC and to take a photograph in the place she had studied and had happy memories. Mind you, her memories of her student life in CAC were not connected with that superintendent, as most of her school days

in Cairo had taken place before he had arrived. Later that photo was sent to him by her father with the news of his daughter's death.

The second clear memory was experiencing the development of a minority pressure group at CAC. That year a late bus was added for transportation to Cairo in order to be sure that the third-national students were included in the growing after-school program. What had happened, however, in the student population breakdown over the preceding two years was the steady increase in the number of students from Yugoslavia. This increase, combined with the arrival of some strong student leadership in the group, made a minority formation a reality. Out of working with these students and their insistence on visibility came a new sport to the CAC program. Soccer was that popular addition and has continued as a major school sport to the present in the Cairo American College. Fortunately, an American-hire math teacher was also a big supporter of soccer; he became the coach of that team. This immediately brought the Yugoslav students' initiative and addition to the CAC program under the guidance of one of the American teachers.

This was also the year that the student unrest/anti-establishment movement in the U.S. finally made its way to the CAC campus. This student unrest had been going strong in the United States for several years. Cairo, however, was out of the mainstream of direct flow and exchange of ideas with summer touring students from the U.S. Also a factor in this delay of the student movement to Cairo was the fact that the majority of the American students in

Cairo came from more conservative southwestern families. Nevertheless, a combination of a bright but emotionally disturbed student in a leadership position, plus a teaching couple the superintendent had hired out of California who perhaps unwittingly gave sympathetic encouragement, plus the right student situation in the school, all combined to make a most difficult year. The superintendent learned never again to hire a teaching couple where one was put in charge of the student council while the other was the faculty advisor in charge of the student newspaper and school yearbook. Their quiet, unassuming support of the student-unrest movement was a shock to him. After this teaching couple was paid off and had left CAC in early May, the student body calmed down within a week's time. This was the strangest thing he had ever experienced, as no one could offer specific teachings or words said by this couple, and yet the unrest was clearly connected to them and one emotionally disturbed student.

The final act of that school year unfortunately was the last-minute removal of the salutatorian address from the graduation program. The school was having no more anti-establishment expressions that year, and the young salutatorian would not rewrite his speech into positive expressions. Since the school yearbook had already been given to the printers, there was nothing that could be done to balance out that visual communication.

Perhaps needless to write, the interaction between students and staff became extremely difficult that year. Out of this negative tension came the positive idea that everybody needed to learn to

laugh at themselves and loosen up. As a result, a student-teacher fun night was organized, where each group presented different satirical skits, mimicking individuals in the opposite group. Of course there was a teacher working with the students supervising the creation and rehearsals of their skits. Although this fun night, viewed by the entire school community, did "sting" at times, it proved to be so popular that the tradition was carried on for years at CAC.

The designs and Egyptian government's permission for a new CAC swimming pool were finally completed during this third school year. All of the U.S. equipment needed, plus chemicals, underwater lights, and so on, were ordered and brought into Egypt by way of oil company ships. Government permission for cement was secured, but this still did not guarantee that the factories would not inform us that their short supply was finished. Therefore, a friend of the school, to whom the cement factory management owed considerable favors, was contacted and ready to see that materials were delivered when the government permissions were presented to the factory's front office. Since supplies of iron rods were also in short supply, the oil company loaned and even delivered to the CAC campus enough for the work to get underway. Then the planning of two years was abruptly stopped by a change in board leadership. The technique of this new chairman was never to say "No" or move to cancel a previous plan, but rather to postpone. Several months went by before the superintendent caught on to the nonconfrontation techniques of an

American diplomat and learned that to postpone meant to cancel. Such a waste! All that time and money! Even an extra room had to be constructed to store the pool materials. New educational leadership was clearly needed for the school. Postponement, wait and see, and a hesitant lack of confidence in the school's growth future were luxuries the superintendent thought the school could not afford. The continuing growth in the student body, plus the lead time needed to plan room for that growth, meant that planning could not stop, could not be postponed. He left at the end of his fourth school year with the Cairo American College.

The third school year ended with a grand garden party in the superintendent's backyard. A dance floor was put down, a dance band hired, and food and drinks were provided for everyone into the late hours of the night. Besides a year-end wrap-up, the party served as a good-bye send-off to departing teachers under the directing hand and leadership hosting of the superintendent. The entire CAC staff, along with much of the American community in Maadi, attended.

The student population, by the fourth school year, had almost doubled to an approximate count of 450 students. More students meant more teachers and program-expansion possibilities. A full-time principal, as well as a full-time guidance counselor, were added to the administrative staff. Also that year an exceptional young teacher was hired to begin a new band/music program. This young man not only was able to start a band from zero, but he was also able to hold a Christmas concert and present a quality, beginning school band concert by the end of that school year. This

activity rounded out the student enrichment program of sports, drama, student publications, and musical productions, with the opportunity to learn a band instrument.

Again, hosting new teachers and being sure that every element of the American school--faculty, staff, and parents--was involved in some way in including the new teachers into the school community were carefully planned. This priority was shared by even more friends of the school that year.

That last school year, just as the previous three, began with invitations to parents to visit student classrooms, meet teachers, and get acquainted with each other. These were usually busy nights with little time really to begin friendships, but they did offer some of the first visual contacts and polite exchanges of words between families of the school community.

This final year in the school was a time of mixed feelings. Leaving friends, four years of one's life and work, in addition to leaving a familiar life style that had been adjusted to the local setting, were all upsetting enough. However, the anxieties of the search for a new position added further strain to that year. One must take time during the last year in a position to pursue actively one's own personal future needs, write letters, seek interviews, and go through all the self-searching of personal worth with the examining boards of new schools. The offer of a new challenge in administration came during the second semester from the American

school of Accra, Ghana. This offer, interview trip, and acceptance are reported in the fourth chapter.

The superintendent's last school year in Cairo also ended in a large garden party with a band in his backyard, similar to the previous year. This time the good-bye was for him and a few other teachers. Thus ended the four-year period of his life in Cairo; it had been the most rewarding educational experience of his career. Each position since then has offered growth opportunities, but none has yet presented the challenges and personal satisfaction of that single four-year experience in Cairo, Egypt.

Relationships

Already mentioned was the formation of a vocal minority group of Yugoslav students and the program addition that resulted from that pressure group. One would like to think that the headmaster could be tuned into program-enrichment possibilities existing in an international student body without the need for a minority pressure group. At any rate, one would hope always to be able to turn such a group's interests and energy into a positive force for the entire school.

One of the unfortunate side effects the superintendent witnessed over those four years, however, was the change of a young Yugoslav boy from an outgoing youth who seemed to make friends with all students, regardless of nationality, into a quiet member of that minority. As more and more fellow-country students enrolled and the Yugoslav minority grouping became stronger, his friendships around

school narrowed down to his national group, with only quiet, polite gestures extended to former fellow friendships. Although his pull away might have been predictable, the potential richness of that broad, previous social group of international friendships was his personal loss.

The observation of the change in this student caused the superintendent to see that the potential for the richest educational experience in an overseas American school is available to third-national students. American students in such schools often are the majority; certainly the school is "their" school, their American program with familiar expectations and culture. American students usually live in the host country with limited outside contact and study in an international student body, but they are secure in their own large grouping in "their" American school. The host-country nationals, however, live and move in their own culture, upon which is then added the American school day, culture, and friendships. The potential richness for host-country students is double that of students from the U.S. The richest potential experience of all, however, is available mostly to third-national groups who learn the language, culture, and information from an American educational viewpoint and make friendships among many national groups. They have no national group to which to be responsible and are therefore forced to mix, share, and make friends, regardless of nationality. Third-national students who continue their own national culture and language in their families are also more apt to live within the host-national communities rather than in ethnic ghettos and,

therefore, often learn more of the language and culture of the host country.

There were four major groups of CAC parents. One group was made up of third-national parents belonging mostly to the diplomatic corps. Since there were no Egyptian students in the school, no host-family grouping existed in CAC. The parents in the third-national diplomatic corps were highly supportive and expressed appreciation for the educational program offered at the Cairo American College. Comments were made, as might be expected, by those parents from Communist countries about the anti-Communist chapters in the required American history course. They insisted, of course, that their national history courses reported only facts and were not politically biased as was the school's. The efforts of CAC's program to include third-national groups of individuals and to make the school not just welcoming but also theirs, not only helped tie them to the school but greatly enriched the potential experience and international understanding of all students in the school. Since this group lived mainly outside the Maadi suburb where the school was located and most of the American community lived, a concerted effort was needed to be sure they were brought to and from the school campus gatherings. The superintendent's acceptance of invitations and his leaving the school compound to visit their homes and embassies, plus the school's efforts at purposely including the third-national group in planning as well as in participating in school events, helped facilitate this school

community development. To make sure third-national students were always included in the expanding after-school activity programs, a late town bus was added to the transportation schedule so that students participating in after-school activities had rides back to their homes in Cairo. These efforts to create a "belonging" were so successful that the student body eventually was made up of 60% third-country nationals.

The next three major groupings of parents were within the American community. Expectedly, these groupings were determined by the family's employer or reason for being in Cairo. One group was made up of faculty members working at the American University of Cairo (AUC). So many of the AUC faculty members during those years were so problematic, insensitive to the Arab host culture, so far-out liberal in their thinking, and seemingly so full of themselves as intellectual "would-be's" that, in retrospect, that group was mostly put up with and possibly even ignored. In after thought, the superintendent of the school should have made greater efforts to understand them and see that they were better included in the school community. However, in balance, the fact was that these families made little to no effort to reach outside their own group. Only one family from the American University ever extended invitations to the superintendent, and that was due to the fellowship developed through attendance at the Union Community Church.

The largest division of Americans living in Cairo at that time belonged to the Amoco Oil Exploration Company and to its subsidiary support companies. This group of engineer-level, highly

competitive, family oriented southwesterners set the basic personality of the school student body, as well as the type of interaction between parents and among the directors of the CAC board.

The third group of Americans connected to the school was made up of families from the American Interest Section of the Spanish Embassy. The head of this mission was on the board when the superintendent was hired. His personality, way of doing things, and high self-confidence fit in perfectly with the oil company leadership members on the board. Others who followed this exceptional man, however, seemed to harbor feelings that they, as American government employees, should have been running the school. Actually, their complex had a basis. The American government employees in Cairo were not highly respected by other Americans living there. The comments of oil company employees toward the employees of the American Interest Section could have been summed up as follows: "They don't know what the hell's going on in the country--not politically or economically--they're paper-pushing, worthless U.S. government bureaucrats." To put this summation in perspective, one must realize that those U.S. government employees came to Egypt under the cover of the Spanish Embassy, while employees of the oil exploration companies were welcomed by Egypt as helpful and needed guests with all the import privileges usually enjoyed in other countries only by U.S. Embassy employees. This, plus the fact that the head of the Amoco Oil Company in Egypt, the

man who interviewed and brought the new superintendent to CAC, was given by Abdel Nasser the highest honor that could be awarded to a foreigner in Egypt, greatly contrasted with the limited work possible of the American Interest Section. This visibility and success caused several in the small American diplomatic community to feel like second-class citizens.

These past years have provided the distance from CAC needed to enable the superintendent to analyze objectively that situation and to realize that he, as school head, was naturally concerned about seeing that third-national groups were included but had done nothing to draw together the American groups into one American school community. In particular, there were two "little men" from the Interest Section who seemingly felt not included within the school community and school board. Certainly, recognition of their possible future role and self-esteem was given little note. Not seeing this need for personally building a full participation of community on the school board eventually led to board problems affecting long-range school plans as well as the superintendent's professional future with that school. The divisional relationships over several years between the employees of the Amoco Oil Company and the American Interest Section within the larger American community affected the board of governors and thus the running of the school as well as its superintendent.

For the reader to gain this writer's perspective, there needs to be briefly included some of the history of the closing of the school during the 1967 war and the subsequent evacuation of the

school community. The superintendent was told that during that evacuation, board members met and dissolved the CAC board of directors as it then existed as a school/community-elected governing board. The two board members representing the American oil companies and the American Interest Section were leaders in that special meeting of the Cairo American College school board. In the place of the school/community-elected board of directors, an appointed board, representing major American interest groups located in Cairo, was installed. The president of Amoco Egypt was then appointed chairman of the school board. This was the same man, Mr. Vander, who had hired the superintendent for the Cairo American College.

When the new superintendent arrived at CAC, this new, self-perpetuating school board was made up of seven Americans: the president and treasurer of Amoco-Egypt, the chief of mission and the finance officer of the American Interest Section, the president and one professor of the American University of Cairo, and the director of the U.S. Navy Medical Research Center.

Within that school year the board began appointing replacements as members left the board, usually due to job transfers. The director of the Navy Medical Research Center was replaced by an American University professor who had a large family of children. The financial officer of the American Interest Section was then replaced by Mr. Bover, a lower-level diplomat who worked in the Political Section. Mr. Bover was a well-educated man, but he was

insecure and socially inept. This "little" man was thrown into a board of powerful personalities, all of whom were successful leaders. The superintendent does not remember Mr. Bover's ever having said anything during those board meetings.

Unfortunately, the president of Amoco-Egypt, Mr. Vander, chairman of the CAC board, was also transferred from Cairo. His company's replacement was immediately appointed to the school board and elected as its new chairman. The new chairman, Mr. Walnut, was a highly competitive man who was blunt, decisive, and action oriented. Present the facts, make the decision, and get on with it! His leadership style was not much different from Mr. Vander's; however, something very important was missing. Mr. Walnut failed to communicate the heartbeat of personal caring that Mr. Vander somehow included in his competitive style. This abruptness caused two board members to feel that their ideas were not solicited or considered. Put a Mr. Bover alongside a Mr. Walnut on a school board, and one can imagine the results. The superintendent recalls one night after a board meeting, while wrapping up a point with Mr. Walnut, he looked over Mr. Walnut's shoulder to see the hurt, suspicious expression on Mr. Bover's face as he was leaving to return home. The superintendent wondered at that time why he looked so upset.

Mr. Bover worked in the Political Section of the American Interest Section for a Mr. Wilder, who was later to take Mr. Bover's place on the school board. Based on Mr. Wilder's subsequent negative actions and words, the superintendent felt much of Mr. Bover's feeling of believing he was shut out from board discussions

was carried back to his own office, where he shared his frustrations with Mr. Wilder. The full cost of not making sure that Mr. Bover felt, and in fact was, included in the board community was to come home to this superintendent during his fourth and last year at CAC. At the end of his third year, Mr. Wilder was elected to replace the transferred Mr. Walnut as board chairman. Mr. Wilder never openly confronted the board's long-range plans, which had been in process for two years; he simply led the board to postpone these plans for later. The superintendent was soon to learn that "later" meant canceled. After three years of dealing with two upfront, straightforward chairmen, this side-stepping, twisted approach was disconcerting. The result was a need for renewed commitment to new educational leadership in the school.

In an effort to analyze work situations so as to learn and to be prepared for similar future challenges, the superintendent has tried to understand how one can work successfully with such powerful chairmen and yet maintain one's own identity so that if or when they are no longer on the board, the superintendent does not inherit their enemies. One answer is to be sure that as one works hand in hand with such powerful personalities, all other board members realize that they are always full community members privy to all information. This incident in the superintendent's career emphasized the need in his work as school superintendent to be an active community developer, not only among school parents but also among those individuals serving on a school board. The

superintendent needs to develop a sensitivity to those personal inadequacies felt by members that hinder those individuals from feeling included. The superintendent, or another person at his instigation, should make sure compensatory actions, words, information, and other inclusive gestures are made in order that all persons realize full membership as well as personal worth as they take part in the school board community.

Summary

The initial interview, welcome, and orientation period of new arrivals to an overseas position is an invaluable time to develop deep friendships, personal commitments, and a positive mind-set toward the host country, the school, and the school's superintendent. In short, this is the time to develop identity with the heartbeat and values of the school community. The personal way in which the superintendent was accepted by Mr. Vander and his wife, and by the departing administrator and his family, set the pattern that he, in turn, received all new teachers as they arrived in Cairo. This time sets, in the minds of new arrivals, the community value of the fun, adventure, and caring with which personal interactions are made in the school community. The new teachers, in turn, pick up the hosting pattern of the community and help extend it to others. These yearly new arrivals become the "spokes of the wheel," the extension of the superintendent's welcome and mind-set into the classrooms and out into the parent community. Great personal attention, care to details, and time need to be given by

the superintendent to these new teachers. They usually arrive as "babes" to the new culture and location and are open, receptive, and highly appreciative to those who reach out a hand with invitations to help them get started. The careful inclusion of parents and teachers in this welcoming process helps newcomers to immediately develop points of community reference and thus begin their identity with the school community.

This process starts during the very first time prospective teachers are met during interviews. The letters and phone calls that follow, the airport meetings, preparations of welcome gestures in their new homes, and initial invitations to the superintendent's home and out to specific host-country contacts and experiences all help tie the new arrivals to the head of the school community. Teachers make up the first foundation circle of security in an overseas school community. Once the teachers feel secure in the inner circle, they become the radiating conduits reaching out into the school staff and student and parent community, which, in turn, further brings others into the ever-widening circles of the community. The superintendent's actions in helping to improve salaries, retirement programs, and other work-related benefits are fine and correct in themselves. However, taking the time personally to see that the new U.S.-hire teachers are personally welcomed, introduced, and included in the school creates invaluable and secure links and friendships for future working relationships.

The strangeness of the Egyptian language and Moslem culture also helped in the community-formation process around the school.

The perceived threat of being in a country as visibly different from other non-Moslem cultures helped the foreigners in the Cairo American College overlook their own differences and focus on their similarities. Also, the fact that Israel was still bombing around Cairo every week or so during the first year and a half provided some unique shared experiences that helped join the community.

The physical location of the new school campus was within walking distance of the majority of the students, and since there were no "hangouts" where these foreign students felt at home, the school campus became their social center as well as their school during the day. Because the campus was located in the desert, the green expanse of lawns and flower gardens became a natural drawing place for students, parents, and other foreigners around the school. The late bus service for students who lived in Cairo was an essential part in tying the third-national students into the school community. The school campus was the natural and safe oasis for American and third nationals from the dusty desert as well as from the noisy, crowded streets of Cairo. In short, the campus itself was an invaluable aid to the superintendent's efforts in school community formation.

The heavy invitation schedule and resulting social circle that developed, particularly during the first year and a half after the superintendent's arrival, not only introduced him to the adult communities but also presented him with the opportunity to become a focal point for the Cairo American College. There is something very

special in allowing others, by accepting invitations, to welcome and help one get started in a new location. Even though one is the host to the new arrivals, the social ties and the commitments that result are connected equally at both ends and can be called upon in a superintendent's later efforts in the school.

The superintendent's previous educational experiences in the after-school use of the school campus as a community center for both young people and adults was the stimulus that caused him to look for opportunities to actively encourage adult group activities on the campus. The adult English-speaking drama group, the weekly square dances, Community Union Church potluck suppers, and television sports nights were some examples of this. Also, the school activities when parents were included in student teams are examples of actively drawing adults into the school community. Parents are usually supportive anyway when they understand what is needed to improve the school for their children, but when they began to use the campus for their own activities as well, an even more personal commitment resulted in supporting campus-improvement needs. In effect, the school campus became the vehicle through which face-to-face contacts, friendships, and sharing opportunities took place in the community-formation process. The use and security of the campus facilities for parent groups immediately made the school more than a place their children went during the school day. The campus became also theirs, with personal interest in its welfare.

Development of a full intramural after-school activity program did much to make students feel the school was theirs. Classes young

people are obliged to take and school attendance are work-type enforcements. After-school activities, however, are choices of free will and are the rounding out of a needed energy and socially consuming part of young people's school life. Reaching out to third-national parents seemed a natural and correct gesture. As an American director in an American school, the superintendent felt he should actively host and include visitors from other countries so that they could feel relaxed and included in the American community. The use of national flags, food, music, dress, and sports in school events were effective methods of drawing third nationals closer to the American school community. An international fair involving parents, embassies, and students resulted in a school-wide enriching event through which an interchange on equal levels was realized. The point is that the inclusion of all national groups into the school community needs to be seen by the superintendent as a valuable asset for the entire community.

One of the lessons to be learned from the Cairo experience was that American parents also need to be drawn into the school community. They come to an overseas location under the sponsorship of a particular company around which they unite and identify. Rivalry and jealousy can often exist between these American groups. The superintendent cannot take for granted that because they are Americans they are already part of the larger American school community. Being caught in the interplay between the oil company and the American Interest Section diplomats remains a bitter memory

and lesson from Cairo days. The superintendent learned that he must be seen as the friend of all, the facilitator, the educator, and school leader, but not as a partisan member of any one part of the American community. In short, the superintendent must be a "man of all seasons" who hosts, welcomes, and includes all individuals connected to the school into its community. The superintendent is the focal point of the school's educational program. So, too, is he the logical reference point of hosting responsibilities around which the school community forms.

CHAPTER IV

LINCOLN COMMUNITY SCHOOL OF ACCRA, GHANA, FROM 1973 TO 1977

Introduction

Chapter IV deals with the historical descriptive account of the four school years, 1973 to 1977, at the Lincoln Community School of Accra, Ghana, West Africa. During those four years the researcher served as superintendent of that school. The story of this site is divided into five sections. The first deals with the recruitment and interview trip to Ghana. The second describes the national and historical setting of the school during those four years, while the third concentrates on the school buildings and campus. The fourth and major section of this chapter contains the four-year overview of the researcher's participative-recall observations of school life during those four years. In the summary, the writer examines and highlights those observations of this site that helped with the formation of a school community around the Lincoln Community School.

Recruitment and Interview Visit

During the superintendent's last school year in Cairo, Egypt, 1972/73, he began to search for another overseas position. Asia was his preferred area of the world, but as luck would have it, an offer came to become the new superintendent of the Lincoln Community

School of Accra, Ghana. When he received the offer he insisted that he and the Accra school board meet each other before making that decision. The school board then invited him to come to Accra to preview the school if he accepted the job in advance. He accepted, and even though the preview trip and meeting had then lost its intended purpose, he thought a live interview and commitment on a personal level were needed on both sides.

The invitation date to come to Accra was set, but when he went to the Ghanaian Embassy for a visa he was informed that a two-week waiting period was necessary before a visa could be granted. Since this delay would cause him to miss the reception and dinner parties planned for the original arrival date, he was concerned to see if there was a way around this delay. The South Korean ambassador, who was a friend, thought his personal letter to the Ghanaian ambassador asking him to make an exception would resolve this problem. Over the phone the Ghanaian ambassador agreed to give this special assistance. However, when the superintendent arrived at the Embassy he was received by the ambassador and the consul in the consul's office, where he was informed that he would have to wait the required time. The superintendent was, of course, disappointed, but the big surprise was that the meeting was not held in the ambassador's office. Why would the head of mission come down to the office of his second? Years later this incident would have meaning. At any rate, since nothing could be done, the Accra school board was notified of this delay and of when the new superintendent would be able to arrive.

When the superintendent finally arrived in Ghana and was met at the international airport by the departing school head, Mr. Sawyer, he was driven to the hotel, where he checked in and saw his suitcases to his room. He was then driven directly to the home of the school board chairman to sign the contract. Mr. Sawyer had been instructed to bring the new man directly to his home to sign before anything could happen.

Mr. Sawyer later drove us by the home rented for the superintendent and then on to the home of Mr. and Mrs. East. Mr. East was the director of the USAID Mission in Ghana. Mrs. East was a school board member, who was soon to become the board president. They were the hosts for a small reception and a fine dinner that lasted late into the night. Mr. Sawyer then took the new superintendent back to his hotel around 11:00 p.m.

The heavy tropical smells of decay, extreme heat, and humidity were suffocating. The flight to Ghana, the tension of meeting a new board, and a new job were exhausting, and the superintendent looked forward to being alone and able to rest in his air-conditioned hotel room. This enjoyment of the cool room lasted only about five minutes before there was a knock on the door. Three young black men were there, one of whom the superintendent recognized from the airport immigration.

These men asked to see the superintendent's passport. When they had it, they said he would have to come with them to answer a few questions. Then when he agreed to come with them, they

mentioned that he should bring his suitcases. Although he felt strange about this unusual request, he foolishly followed them out of the hotel after telling the hotel desk clerk about what was happening.

One of these three men had to be held up in the truck seat between the other two; it seems they had been waiting all that evening for the superintendent to return to the hotel and so had passed the hours casually drinking beer. These men took the new superintendent to a small office, where he was informed that the "bossman" who had the questions had returned to his home and that they would have to lock him up until morning, at which time the questions could be asked.

If the superintendent had been nervous before, he was now a bit frantic as to what was going on. He had no phone numbers of any of the school people he had met that afternoon. Nevertheless, he insisted on calling the Marine guard on duty at the U.S. Embassy. Since the superintendent had no idea where he was being held, he told the Marine guard who he was and why he was in Accra and finally said three men were getting ready to lock him up in a jail cell. This last statement caused one of the men to pull the phone from his hand, thus ending his call.

The superintendent was informed that he must give them his clothes and jewelry and then be locked up. So instead of his air-conditioned hotel room, he spent his first night in Ghana locked behind bars in a traffic jail cell. One does not sleep late under

those circumstances. Rather, the black crow on the tin roof has one awake and waiting on the edge of the cell cot just about sunrise.

Next morning the superintendent dressed and was taken to answer a few simple questions of the "bossman" and then returned to his hotel. He had managed to get some sleep in his cell that night. However, his hosts, Mr. and Mrs. East, the deputy chief of mission (DCM) of the American Embassy, and who knows who else, were reportedly up most of that night calling the jails and searching for the new superintendent. They had no success.

When the superintendent arrived at the hotel that morning, the DCM and Mr. and Mrs. East were there waiting, thinking for sure they had just lost their new school head and that the board would again have to reopen its search for a replacement. The board chairman was indeed very wise, after all, to insist on coming directly to his home to sign the contract.

The superintendent stated that he would need an apology before coming to live in Ghana. The DCM politically replied that he would get an explanation. This, by the way, he never followed through on. At any rate, the superintendent returned to Cairo the next day, and when he returned to Accra in August he became busy with the demands of the new job at the Lincoln Community School. After four years of living in Ghana, however, and hearing a bit of the politics, he learned the explanation for himself.

In brief, this explanation was that the Ghanaian ambassador had been a military leader who was sent out of the country by the military men who had taken over the government in Ghana. His

assistant in the Ghana Embassy, the consul, had really been the secret police put there to keep an eye on the ambassador. Therefore, when the superintendent tried to go over the head of the consul, it had offended him. Word was sent to a friend in Ghana, who then planned the reception of the superintendent's first night in a Ghana cell.

The last day of the superintendent's visit in Ghana was filled with a drive through the tropical, disorganized-looking, once-grand capital of the country that had led the black independence movement in Africa. After a tour of the school campus buildings there followed a dinner at the home of the treasurer of the school board. Mr. Wilmont, an American black man, was the financial officer of the USAID Mission. This kind gentleman became one of the two men the superintendent looked to for guidance, personal friendship, and help as long as they remained in Ghana. Mr. Wilmont became a true friend and trusted security anchor during those first adjustment years in Accra. On the third day the superintendent returned to his job in Cairo, Egypt, where his "heart and allegiance" waited.

Setting

The American overseas school in Ghana, called the Lincoln Community School, had only about a hundred students in kindergarten through ninth grade. The small campus was located in Accra, the capital of this West African nation. This country, under the charismatic leadership of Nkrumah, became the first black African country to gain independence from Great Britain. The national

symbol of the new country became the black star. The enthusiastic beginning of this new nation was with a strong financial base and a large percentage of educated citizens. Even some American blacks were caught up in the development of Ghana as a showplace of black pride and capability. A few of those Afro-American professionals still remained in Ghana when the superintendent arrived in 1973, long after the dream had faded and survival reality had set in.

Nyccrumah's visionary ambition included the eventual leadership of all black Africa. He lavishly spent his country's reserves to construct a large government office complex where he hoped the Organization of African States (OAS) central government offices would be located. Even the development of a nuclear power plant was under way when an army revolt drove him from Ghana.

When the superintendent arrived in Ghana, only the grandiose construction projects survived the Nyccrumah years. Ghana itself was left in financial ruin, disrepair, and no longer even able to feed itself. The government was under the military leadership of the Supreme Military Council led by Colonel Acheampong.

In response to the government's patriotic calls for Ghana to feed itself, almost every family had a small "victory" garden in their yard or alongside the road in front of their house. This type of self-help program with individual participation often was the government's attempted solution to other Ghanaian problems as well.

Accra is located on the Atlantic Ocean. This tropical capital, with its open gutters, overgrown vegetation, and heavy seasonal

rains, seemed to be hidden among the trees and undergrowth. Most commercial buildings in the downtown area were only two, three, or four stories high. The only buildings that stood out above the trees were those constructed by Nycrumah during his days of free-wheeling spending.

Walking on the sidewalks and alongside the city streets were Ghanaians in highly colorful prints, usually with some kind of package carried on their heads. Women always seemed to have a baby wrapped to their backs with a cloth of the same colorful prints. Those citizens were a gracefully moving, quietly polite people who were always ready to greet others with a beautiful smile. The new school director had been told before his arrival in Ghana that Ghanaians were the nicest people in West Africa. In spite of spending the first night in jail, these people did live up to that high standard during the daily contacts of his four-year stay.

There were a few cultural shocks and adjustments which all newcomers had to resolve in their own ways. The constant confrontation with the sight of black naked flesh was one of the first strong impressions. The fact seemed apparent that clothing was used as a decorative wrap for the body rather than to cover nudity. Body urinary functions were dispatched whenever and wherever nature called by both men and women. Most women usually seemed to find some kind of privacy, while men were open about what were natural functions of the body. Discretion and the giving of privacy in publicly open areas seemed to be the responsibility of the passer-by.

Since harmless crazies seemed to have free movement in Accra, complete nudity could often be just around the next corner. Driving by such individuals in a car became acceptable, but one was never quite prepared when walking down the sidewalk of the shopping area of Accra. Besides hurrying by as quickly as possible, does one take off his hat in greeting?

After living in Ghana for a couple of years, the articles on "streakers" in the U.S., which were fashionable at the time, seemed strange. First, what was unusual about nude streakers? Second, why the excited reaction to them in the news? The cosmetic approach of most cultures to beauty and the cover-up of human functions were not part of Ghana's general public concern or behavior. Nature was natural, and all aspects of it were to be accepted.

School Campus

The Lincoln Community School, housed in two separate buildings about a block apart, was located in the Asylum Down area of Accra, and since there were always too many patients for the workers, the doors of the asylum were reportedly left open. The ones who stayed were looked after.

All types of harmless crazies on the street outside the school gates were a common experience for individuals connected with the school. One little girl studying in the school once came into the superintendent's office to inform him that a naked man was outside the gates. "What's he doing?" asked the superintendent. "He's sleeping," replied the child. His nonchalant response was that "He

will be all right. Just let him sleep. You go on to class." Of course, when someone in the office checked outside the gate, the naked man had already wandered off.

The main school building was a large, two-story house with spacious grounds. The building was owned and had been the showplace home of a former government minister under Nycrumah. The story was told that Louis Armstrong had once given a concert in the garden from the gazebo near the small swimming pool. The gazebo, by the way, later became the school art room. This same minister was later written up in Newsweek magazine as an example of Nycrumah's corrupt government. The mention of the minister's gold bed in the article made him famous before the superintendent ever arrived in Ghana.

The second school building was a smaller home located down the rain-rutted dirt road, which had no sidewalks or other houses. Several of the middle school classes were held in this house. The discipline problems involved with this age group's wandering up and down the street had just about finished the school by the time the new superintendent arrived. Reportedly, one of the students once made a remark to a driver of a car who was trying to pass students walking down the middle of the road. This confrontation resulted in the driver pulling a gun on the student.

There was not a neighborhood of houses around the school in which lived families of students in the school. Accra was not a large city with heavy traffic. Nevertheless, most parents had to drive 20 to 30 minutes in from all over the Accra area to bring

their children to the school. Since most students were transported to school by way of family cars, most activities and programs were held during the school-day hours. Also, because the oldest children were only middle school age, there was not the freedom of movement that older high school students have. The point to be made is that the scattered locations of students' homes, the need for family transportation to the school, and the young age of the students all hindered the natural community center development that was experienced in the Cairo American College.

Four-Year Overview

Before the 1973-74 school year began, several changes needed to be made during the summer vacation in order to address some major problems that were obvious as well as some that were learned from different parent conversations. In fact, during the very first week on the job, several missionary parents stopped by the school to check out the new superintendent. This visit presented one of the first opportunities to directly sell the new superintendent's caring and educational focus on children, changes to be made, and improvement projections for the future of the Lincoln Community School. As was the superintendent's practice wherever possible, he tried to immediately establish a common ground of interests and experiences when meeting new parents. Since these parents were missionary parents, he spoke of his education in the religious institution of Bob Jones University and of different missionary friends he had met during his work overseas. Usually one needs only

to touch a base of common interest in order to establish a beginning credibility and willingness to listen. When this openness is established, one can go to the business at hand, which in this instance was the school. In short, the missionary parents decided to give the new man and his vision of what the school would be a try.

The first project before classes began was to move the superintendent's office from the second floor at the back of the house down to the main entrance of the house, right next to the business office. This move allowed the superintendent to be right on top of the business office, in the middle of student movement, and to meet every parent and visitor who came into the school. From this vantage point, new students and parents were interviewed, enthusiastically welcomed, and personally helped by the school head. At any rate, the "boss," the disciplinarian, the public-relations manager, the student counselor, the "new heartbeat" who was to determine much of the atmosphere of this small school was now located right in the middle of the flow.

From this central location, every student and parent knew who was the central focus of the school. This focus on the superintendent as the chief educator of the school was particularly important in the Lincoln Community School because all teachers had to be hired in Ghana. Sometimes a dedicated and talented teacher would happen by, but more often than not these teachers were not strong educators or even able to handle their students. Maintaining a central focus was necessary.

The second major problem needing attention concerned the school annex located a block away. The annex was used by the middle school teachers. Students this age need the most structure, corrective guidance, and understanding, yet they were housed part of every day away from the main office's control. To make matters even worse, their class schedules moved them up and down the road between the two buildings. To complicate the problem further, there was no sidewalk for the students to use. This arrangement not only was unsafe, it was clearly unacceptable and could easily be remedied. Therefore, the second major change that summer was to move all middle school classes onto the main campus, where the school director could give them closer supervision and change unacceptable behavior patterns.

Kindergarten and first-grade classes were moved down to the annex. These self-contained units under the leadership of their teachers were a workable substitute. Parents and teachers, who had heard of the annex problems, needed to be sold one by one on this location change. Security of this known but unexperienced area was their main concern. To help alleviate this anxiety, a male guard was put on the gate, a direct phone communication to the main campus was in operation, and a dirt walking path off the road was cleared and leveled between the two school buildings. This change worked beautifully both for the little ones, who had their classrooms moved to the annex, and for the middle school students, who were now on the main campus under the direct and watchful eye of the

superintendent. A split campus caused problems, but this was the best solution until all classes could be housed on one campus.

As soon as September classes had begun, a major financial crisis demanded much of the superintendent's time and creative problem-solving skills. The former school director had overhired for the low student enrollment that showed up that September, and the Lincoln Community School had no reserve cushion or credit with which to absorb such a loss.

The finance committee studied several possible solutions and finally adopted the plan the superintendent had presented. This plan lived up to the contracts signed with teachers and spread the financial pinch throughout the faculty. Each teacher was given the contracted three months' notice of termination and then rehired on various part-time, new contracts. To accommodate this change, the entire school program and scheduling of second-semester classes had to be redesigned. This approach was inconvenient and created certain built-in problems, but the guarding of the faculty's morale and team protective job security where all shared in the school's financial crisis was considered to be of prime importance. Since all teachers had to be hired locally from a very small pool of American-trained educators, team morale and job security were of utmost importance.

In addition to reducing the cost of the school, the income side also needed to be increased. The financial crises of the school, along with a proposed tuition increase, were presented and accepted during the school's fall assembly of parents.

These formal evening reunions of parents were held in the open on the tennis court. The stringing of lights and setting up of folding chairs were accompanied by prayers for no rain in preparation for such open-air meetings. The school had no covered room large enough for such meetings, and Ghana's cool evenings after hot and humid days were a refreshing relief.

Part of the plan to increase the school's income was to prepare a request for an emergency grant from the Office of Overseas Schools of Washington, D.C. When the young substitute representative from that office visited in the fall, a pressure picture of potential doom was laid heavily on his head; he promised to help. Since this man had committed himself to helping, the regular regional education officer (REO) felt obliged to support his substitute's verbal promises. Later the REO remarked how we had "done a number" on his representative. By the end of that school year, the school population had begun to increase, and the Lincoln Community School was well on its way to financial recovery.

In an effort to rebuild the confidence of parents in the viable future of the school and in the educational leadership of the superintendent, the board chairperson, Mrs. East, suggested that a series of evening meetings be held in different homes around Accra. These were coffee socials where parents could share concerns and needs for the education of their children. Each host invited those parents who lived in his vicinity. The superintendent, of course,

attended all the meetings along with a different representative from the school board.

These September meetings presented informal platforms for the superintendent to listen and to sell renewed confidence in the unknown future of the Lincoln Community School. These planned evening socials made an immediate impact on pulling the different parents together into a supporting unit behind the school and the new superintendent. In retrospect, the one flaw was not having had someone take notes and compile the suggestions and concerns so that one shared report could have tied all the different small meetings together into a larger school community. That interest and need for information beyond a single home meeting was mentioned by one parent at the end of the series.

In addition to the school's pressing needs and to the tensions and excitement of getting acquainted in a new country, overseas community, and school, there was the necessity of the superintendent to change residences three times within the first three months of his arrival. The original house for the superintendent was returned to the owner, who was retiring as Minister of Health for Ghana. The second was a stop-gap home until an acceptable new place could be found. The third move was into an apartment complex that had been one of those big spending projects of Nycrumah's government. The large eighth-floor apartment had four bedrooms, a huge living room/dining room/veranda entertainment area, and an open view of the tropics with excellent security. Finally, a home base could be established. One needs this womb of security out from which he can

adventure and enjoy the unusual and exotic aspects of a new culture. This establishment of a home, a retreat, a place to recharge oneself is absolutely essential in the process of adjusting, surviving, and being effective in one's work and life in a new culture.

During this urgency of searching for a place to live, two men were there ready to help when most needed. Because of this personal kindness and willingness to give time when personal settling-in demands were greatest, they became the emotional focus toward which the superintendent worked and looked for approval of his effort in the school. In short, these two men became the superintendent's admired leaders of the school community. This process was self-imposed due to that early friendship and loyalty which grew from their support and helpfulness during those beginning months at a new job in a new and strange cultural location.

One of the men, a black American, was the treasurer of the Lincoln Community School board of directors and worked as the financial controller of the USAID Mission in Ghana. This gentleman's name was Mr. Wilton. He not only personally opened up his home with family dinners, rather than with large impersonal cocktail receptions, but he also was ready to help in the superintendent's search for a place to call home. In addition to his aid in personal orientation and adjustments, Mr. Wilton was willing to spend long hours of supportive time with the superintendent in an effort to work out a solution to the financial crises of the school.

The second man, Mr. Bugla, was an older Ghanaian educator, former board member, and parent of children who had been enrolled in the school. Mr. Bugla's former students had since become tribal chiefs as well as leaders in other areas of Ghana's society. At that time, Mr. Bugla was working with the U.S. Peace Corps in Ghana but maintained an active interest in the affairs of the Lincoln Community School. Almost immediately upon the arrival of the superintendent, Mr. Bugla expressed a personal interest in helping with his orientation to Ghana and the school and even with the guidance of finding an acceptable new home for the superintendent. Several personal family invitations were given and enough conversations were exchanged to be assured that Mr. Bugla would be there with support whenever needed. And during those four years in Ghana his contacts and aid were often called upon; he never failed in those different moments of urgency.

During those conversations, in addition to his genuine interest in the superintendent's welfare, he revealed a feeling of former humiliation connected with the school board, and he wanted the new superintendent to believe in his ability and contacts to get things done in Ghana for the school. According to conversations and to the previous school board minutes, Mr. Bugla had been involved with the board's previous attempt to secure property for the school.

Property ownership in Ghana is often vague, and the particular piece of land for which the school had negotiated and thought it had purchased soon became contested and lost. The board minutes were unique and even funny for a newcomer to read as they reported the

cultural confusion and apparent con-artist attempts of a local chief and his friends to sell land that they did not own. The minutes stated that along with a deposit there was a case of gin that was required in the transaction. Offering libations to one's ancestors is a common, necessary practice at almost every occasion, whether social or official. The case of gin was obviously meant to serve this purpose. When the land purchase was contested, the minutes recorded that the deposit was returned but that the gin had been consumed and could not be returned.

Mr. Bugla's talk of contact promises and what he could do fell back in his face and into the board's lap. He was humiliated and determined to continue to be of service and to show the board by eventually getting free land for the school. What proved to be a fact with Mr. Bugla was that his promises and his contacts were real, indeed. The problem was that he could not deliver them on an American time schedule.

The heartbeat of Ghanaian timing, contacts, and the right opportunity had to be observed. First, Mr. Bugla would listen to the question or need, and then he would study the total social situation. Often his influence on a certain man or problem would need to come through, for example, learning what tribe that man belonged to and then approaching that man's chief, who had been a former student of Mr. Bugla. More often than not, when he explained how he helped, it was not a direct contact with the source of the conflict.

The superintendent listened and understood that Mr. Bugla needed to be believed in and given the opportunity of helping whenever he could. This was an early and important contact into the Ghanaian society that was invaluable for an outsider if one could just slow down and be patient. Realizing this valuable offer, the superintendent asked that the board grant Mr. Bugla an unofficial, nonvoting, honorary membership on the board.

The free granting of a large piece of land to the school several years later was due to Mr. Bugla's continuing interest and efforts. This land in a new government development was gained through a conversation of interest with the right people; then followed a verbal promise, then an unofficial memorandum, then a secretary's typed letter of intent, and finally the fencing in of the land, which established ownership. This vague, strange procedure following both the Ghanaian culture pattern and timing took more than a year of personal informal contacts on the part of Mr. Bugla.

About three weeks into the school year, one parent asked the new superintendent please to start sending a weekly bulletin as they had been used to with the previous director. Although the superintendent thought there could not be enough information to warrant a weekly news sheet on that small school, he soon discovered that his "Dear parents" letters became an invaluable communication vehicle for keeping in touch. It also served as a follow-through of the personal welcome and interview conversations he had had with each new parent. Granted, these were one-way communications, but

they kept the focus on the superintendent's view of the total school's activities and educational program. Whether he knew the parents or not, the parents felt they knew the superintendent's feelings for their children, what were his educational priorities, and what was happening in the school. These personal letters provided a weekly flow of positive information that helped balance out the negative comments that always circulate around an overseas school. By way of "Dear parents," all families shared the same body of information, which the research reported in Chapter II pointed out was one of the essential factors in community formation.

In addition to this important communication tool of community formation, a few parents just came in, organized, and held twice-yearly social eating events. Barbecue pits were dug and fired the night before those events, and the barbecuing began. During the four years the superintendent was in Ghana, pork, chicken, and fish were all grilled and enjoyed. Corn meal "hush puppies" always accompanied whatever was served. Beer and soft drinks were sold during those community-gathering socials.

Also included in the regular-school-year schedule were the back-to-school nights and the twice-yearly school association meetings, when reports were presented and new board members elected. The social part of these events was thought to be at least as important, in most cases, as the business at hand. Coffee and sweets, sometimes even potlucks, were always part of such gatherings to encourage parents to talk and meet one another. In summary, the

parent home meetings, the weekly letter from the superintendent, and the social and business gatherings at the school all provided common experiences and information that helped create and sustain a supportive school community.

The school building itself was dreary. Little had been done to brighten it with color, order modern colorful American school furniture, or even see to the details of each room so that bulletin and chalk boards were hung straight and/or artistically placed on the walls. And since this large house was built with slant jalousie windows to provide for tropical airflow when opened and for privacy when closed, all glass blades were translucent. When the school moved into the building, all rooms were air-conditioned. This meant the nontransparent window blades were always kept shut, resulting in no view of the outside. Teaching in these closed-up rooms was like holding classes in large bathrooms.

The appearance of the building and grounds around the school gave the general impression of a run-down house with tropical gardens that had gone wild and taken over. In fact, right in front of the main entrance was a five-foot-tall termite hill next to the front garden wall. The visual message to new parents was one of sloppy maintenance, of which the environment had taken over and man was no longer in control. The implications to the yet-to-be-experienced educational program available for their children were clearly not positive or reassuring.

Since all teachers had to be hired locally, regardless of whether they were well trained or capable, the school program needed

every positive support that could be provided. The appearance of the building was an important first impression. This appearance was followed by the reception of the front-office staff and the superintendent's personal welcome, followed by his weekly personal letter communications and finally the appearance of the classrooms. The kinds of educational materials used and the skills of the teachers completed the picture for new parents, who more than likely were transferring from a traditional-looking elementary school building. Enrolling their children for the first time in a school program housed in a makeshift old house with overgrown gardens caused no small anxiety. Therefore, creating a positive first impression could and needed to be addressed.

During that first year, the superintendent began plans to transform the place in order to maximize the adaptation of the house for an American educational program. Because of the financial limitations of the school's budget, the changes were scattered over the summers of a two-year period.

First, the former garage was enlarged and adapted for kindergarten classes. One large garden gazebo near the school was renovated for art classes. Interior walls between small rooms were knocked down and ceilings reinforced so that three more classrooms were added to the main campus. Also, a corner of a large porch area was changed and made into an outside stage for assemblies and student programs. Those school programs were always held in the afternoon, with parents sitting in the shade of a large tree. The

"shade tree auditorium" worked quite well for the assemblies and middle school dramas as long as there was no rain. With all these changes, the annex school building located down the road was closed, and all classes were moved into the main campus beginning the second year.

The entire school's halls and classrooms were painted in bright sunshine colors, inexpensive indoor/outdoor orange area carpets were taped down in each classroom, and brightly colored new chairs and desks were ordered to replace the old wooden furniture that had been constructed locally. The old gray teachers' desks were spray painted with gay colors, and the dirty gray rubber tops were replaced with wood-grained vinyl. All in all, the appearance of the old place was transformed and became alive and inviting.

During the second summer, the gardens were completely changed. The large turn-around drive and the overgrown shrubs in the middle of the large lawn area were removed and replaced by a large green lawn area. This provided more open grounds for sports and play areas. The termite hill was removed, and an organized play area under a huge mango tree was set aside for kindergartners. A second gate was knocked through the outside wall, and a small round, open driveway was constructed, and flowers and new shrubs were planted. This round drive up to the main entrance allowed direct loading of children into family cars during heavy tropical rains. Finally, all translucent glass blades were exchanged for clear glass windows in all classrooms, thus allowing all rooms to become bright with

sunlight and with views of the beautiful new gardens around the school.

The success of these attempts to adapt the old house to better fit the needs of an American educational program was expressed in a compliment of the visiting regional education officer from Washington, D.C. He stated that this house and grounds had been better adapted for school use than any other he had seen overseas. He was so impressed, in fact, that it caused him to drag his feet in granting financial support toward the construction of the new school, which was planned during the third and fourth years of the superintendent's stay in Ghana.

One of the results of the detailed financial study of the school was that the teachers were not all paid the same way. Apparently the thinking of previous boards was that each position should cost a certain total figure. If extra charges, such as local social security payments, were required for Ghanaian teachers by law, then that cost was deducted from the total salary figure of that particular teacher. The approach was clearly illegal, unfair, and a disruptive factor in developing a faculty team. Therefore, when all the terminated teachers were recontracted for the second semester of that first year, those extra required charges were covered by the school.

Connected with this same issue, a Ghanaian requirement was uncovered, which stated that all the school's employees, regardless of nationality and residence, must be included in the national security system. This gave the momentum to get board approval for a

retirement program for all non-Ghanaian faculty members to match the national system required for the Ghanaian teachers. The proposed retirement program was presented to the Ghanaian authorities and accepted as an alternative program. This salary benefit went into effect at the beginning of the second year and for the first time provided non-Ghanaian teachers with their own private retirement program in dollars.

As previously mentioned, all teachers had to be hired locally, and available educational talents were often limited. One of the best educators in the area was the wife of a Southern Baptist missionary. She loved to teach and wanted to teach, but the missionary board would not allow her to earn a salary from the school. The school did, however, provide her with a free car to use and a few other extras, but this was the first time the superintendent had experienced working with someone who had nothing to lose by up and quitting when she liked. She never did that, but rather careful stroking was given and a friendship maintained that needed to be kept in balance with that given to other faculty members. This was a new and interesting experience in faculty team developing.

One year the school did not have a first-grade teacher with whom to start school in September. There was, in Accra, however, an English woman with a rather high image of her own brilliance and intellectual importance. She was reportedly a trained and capable lower-elementary teacher. The superintendent made several visits to

her home, where tea was enjoyed on the veranda while she elaborated on the book she thought she might write. She was convinced to substitute for a couple of weeks to start the school year until a replacement could be found. The superintendent's thinking was to get her in the classroom for a couple of weeks, extend the time a week at a time, and then if no teacher could be found he hoped that the educator's love for her students would hook her for at least a semester. As luck would have it, a trained lower-elementary teacher from the United States showed up in Ghana in September and saved the day and the year for the first-grade students and the "hide" of the superintendent.

A yearly fund raising for school needs was begun toward the end of the first year. This program provided a way for individual companies represented in the school to help with the financial support needed in order to support and to enrich the educational program offered to the children of company employees. Years before, the Office of Overseas Schools had had an ongoing program to enlist the financial support of businesses with international interest. This program, called "Your Fair Share," raised millions for overseas schools. When this effort had run its course, it was terminated as a formal fund-raising program by the Department of State Office of Overseas Schools.

Although the program had been discontinued, the companies were accustomed to the idea and terminology, so a local adaptation of this fund-raising procedure was used in Ghana. This program not only added badly needed funds, but it also provided an acceptable

way by which local parents and heads of companies could help join in supporting the Lincoln Community School. A great need along with a way for individuals to help resolve that need aided in pulling together a school community.

Only one company manager would not support this fund-raising program. This man had a large family of five children enrolled in the school, and it was thought that he probably did not want to draw attention to the cost of keeping his family in Ghana as head of Texaco. Although he did not support this fund-raising program, he was still sent the yearly "Your Fair Share" requests along with the other companies, but he was not pressured. By the second year, the fact was clear that he was one of the original founders of the school and a long-term resident of Ghana who wanted a new building and would be able to see through the construction phase of that school. Because of this shared dream, this rather volatile leader was brought fully into the school community movement.

Besides the physical improvements to the school buildings and campus and the financial restructuring, the entire educational program was studied that first year. New books were ordered for every classroom and for the expansion of the school library. The class schedule was completely changed for the second year with a middle school philosophy put into practice for grades six through nine. All class periods for those grades were shortened, thus creating an extra class period at the end of the day. Exploratory

interests were then solicited from the students and teachers involved.

Depending on the activity, some met three days a week on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, whereas others met on Tuesdays and Thursdays. These offerings were evaluated by the students at the end of a quarter, at which time they were also asked to list new interests to be included in the next quarter. This quarterly choice system was changed to just three times a year after this trial run because many activities needed more time to complete projects.

Another change in scheduling was the setting of a weekly teachers' meeting for Wednesdays. Teachers were used to running into their classes with their students in the morning and leaving with them at the end of the day. The obvious result was that there was no regular reunion time for team development and little opportunity to have professional input and the responsibility that entails for the resulting decisions and improvements in the educational program. Expectedly, some "dragged their feet" at this new contract obligation, but the result was that a team effort began to emerge with shared responsibility and ownership for the school's program strengths and admitted limitations.

One of the first projects completed during these Wednesday meetings was a simple curriculum guide that was made up of the individual one- or two-page write-ups on each course. The first purpose of these course outlines with expectations was for use with parents during "back to school" nights. In this way, no matter what the particular level of skills a teacher might have in explaining a

course to parents, the parent always had a concise, professionally prepared information sheet of course expectations in hand to carry home and review. These curriculum course information sheets were also used to help sell the school's program to those who arrived during the school year. These same one- to two-page course outlines were then organized according to grade level and by cross-school subjects and then bound for use with official reports and for companies to use in their home-office recruitments. The mileage from such a multiuse tool was extensive in gaining greater acceptance and allaying fears about the professional nature of the Lincoln Community School.

To help with the strengthening of the school's curriculum, the school-to-school program with Trenton Public Schools, New Jersey, was reactivated in the direction of bringing in outside specialists to help with teacher in-service at the Lincoln Community School. Limited funds for this permitted the bringing over of one master teacher a year to conduct in-service programs for the staff on a particular educational need. This program began during the second year of the new superintendent's contract.

At the end of the second year, the school board decided that, in spite of the difficulty in hiring teachers locally, it had had enough of three particularly difficult and weak teachers on the faculty. One was an American black woman married to a Ghanaian, who had been with the school from its beginning some six years before. The second teacher was a French Canadian woman who was also married to a Ghanaian. The third was a Ghanaian society woman, who

fortunately moved to another job that year and did not have to be dismissed.

At the beginning of the third year, the whole Ghanaian government seemed to come down on the school, in short, on the head of the school's director. First, the Ministry of Education made an inspection, which was followed by the Department of Labor and also the Social Security. Fortunately, the double-salary standard had already been corrected, and the school was well on its way to regularizing all its other legal responsibilities. The school was challenged in the process to prove its policies were not racist. This accusation was cleared, but the result of the accusation made the local hiring of qualified teachers even more difficult. The school needed to fill new positions only with blacks to further clear up any possible racial connotations in the hiring practices of the school. After these governmental departments were satisfied, there came a plainclothes secret policeman, who thought he was so important he did not have to show his identification. Every other morning he was waiting in the superintendent's office to ask the same questions repeatedly. The American Embassy was called, and their security officer came with photographs to identify this man. It turned out this secret policeman worked directly out of the office of the head of state in the palace. Reportedly, the French Canadian woman's brother-in-law, who had recently returned from studies in Poland, worked in the palace and therefore used his connections. At any rate, the school and its director were finally cleared and the harassment ended.

By the third year, most of the major changes had been completed and the basics of education were in place. The exceptions to this were the weak educators in the classrooms. This inherent weakness was a fact with which the superintendent would have to live.

Also the third year, with its own "house" in order, the school began to reach out to other schools in Ghana and to share some of its educational practice as well as learn from the Ghanaian culture. Groups of students between schools went on exchange visits. One particular group of children came and taught Ghanaian rhythm games and round dances to the fascinated students. Whenever there were in-service programs, teachers from other local schools were invited to attend and share with the Lincoln Community School teachers. In an effort to enrich the school's program by including more local culture, outside craftsmen and local dance and drumming groups were brought in for demonstration assemblies at the school.

During one of these dance assemblies, the wrap-around dress top of a young girl came loose and fell down, exposing her breasts. She nonchalantly pulled up the cloth and tucked it in the dress band while continuing with her dance. The student audience's attention was 100% for the rest of the program.

By luck, an American couple showed up at the school; both were music majors. They had come to Ghana due to the husband's doctoral research on West African drumming. The wife was hired as the school's music teacher, and the husband was hired part time to teach African drumming to the middle school students.

Again by luck, another young man with the Peace Corps stopped by the school to get acquainted and explain a plan he would like to put into effect if the superintendent would agree. The proposal was to organize the community and interested children into softball teams. He hoped to begin little league softball without the negative parental pressure and tough competition that too often go along with this activity for children. Since there was little for parents and their sons and daughters to do in Ghana outside the school and since the school's physical education program was extremely limited due to student ages, the lack of trained physical education teachers, and the limited space in the school garden, the weekly Saturday softball games became active community drawing events. The American Embassy softball field became a popular gathering place and a Saturday extension of the Lincoln Community School campus. At times, depending mostly on the personalities of the parents involved, the negative aspects of adult competitive pressure on the children did appear, but there were continuing efforts to control this negative secondary aspect of the program. At no cost to the school and taking advantage of offered local organizing talent, the enthusiasm for this highly popular Saturday activity spilled over into the school's entire educational program.

All school assemblies were held at the outdoor shade-tree auditorium. One summer, however, the school had some bad luck with this assembly-hall adaptation. Before leaving for summer vacation, the superintendent told the gardener to trim up some of the branches that were hanging too low. The gardener was shown exactly where to

cut the branches, to no avail. When the superintendent returned from vacation, he found that the gardener had cut off the branches back to the tree trunk and had wiped out one-fourth of the tree-shaded sitting area.

During the third year, one of the two yearly cookouts was changed to a potluck supper. For some of the international parents this was a new experience and a particularly enjoyable way to get acquainted with the parents in the school community.

The weekly "Dear parents" letters continued to be popular. In fact, they became more and more used by the parents to get out information and announcements about upcoming events. This weekly letter, although a lot of time was needed to prepare it, proved to be the single most important tool in pulling parents closer to the Lincoln Community School.

Also this year the first local Lebanese child was enrolled. When the father came to enroll his son, he was welcomed, interviewed, and encouraged by the superintendent, who established a kinship with this Arab gentleman based on his years in Cairo and visits to Lebanon. A few Arabic words of greeting were exchanged, and a solid beginning was started with this man and the whole Lebanese colony living in Accra. In substance, this was the start of attracting other members of the Lebanese community into the school's community. This initial attraction has continued to the present. Reportedly, the Lebanese now make up the largest minority group and help keep the small Lincoln Community School operating.

Around the middle of the third year the school was granted a large piece of land. A local architect was contracted to begin the study and plans for the construction of a new school. Everything seemed to be on a "roll." As was mentioned previously, credit for the success of getting this land for the school goes entirely to Mr. Bugla, the Ghanaian friend of the superintendent.

About this same time, a volatile Irish-American man was elected to the school's board of directors. He had been one of the founding directors of the school but had quit the board when he became angry over a decision. Shortly after his re-election, he again quit in a huff over a decision. The other board members were fed up and willing to let him go. However, the superintendent thought he was a valuable man to keep active in school business. This man was a long-term resident, and he alone might be able to see the construction phase of the new school to completion. In addition, the superintendent wanted to maintain consensus among board members who represented and had influence with other members in the school community.

For these reasons, the superintendent went to this board member's home and did some stroking and reassuring of both the school's and the superintendent's need for his talents to continue on the board. In short, this man's angry departure could have become a divisive factor in the community and thus distract or even destroy the ongoing efforts at forming and maintaining a supportive community. On a more personal level, the superintendent had learned from Cairo that such a person feeling isolated and nonvalued on the

school board could eventually return to haunt and threaten the position of the superintendent, who could very well be the only remaining member of that opposition board.

So, to keep active a valuable member of the community for the long-term construction project, to maintain a consensus of the board, and to safeguard against the growth of a possible divisional factor within the community that could shorten the superintendent's tenure in Ghana, the superintendent made a "down-home," personal friendship visit to this self-isolated board member's home. The superintendent informed him that he would not accept his resignation; both he and the school needed his continued input and leadership on the board. This personal stroking and reassuring of the need for his talents easily brought him around. The man agreed and returned to full participation on the school board. Of no small importance, the superintendent replaced a potential future antagonist with a highly supportive friend.

The fourth and last year of the superintendent's term with the Lincoln Community School was involved with the maintenance of the ongoing educational system and of community support. And since approximately 30% of the community was replaced each school year, careful attention had to be given to making sure each new parent was personally welcomed and enthusiastically included and needed in the school's remaining community. Part of this procedure was to lay out the educational strengths of what the school could offer, as well as clearly to define the program's limitations.

This insisting that new parents understand the school's present limitations along with its continuing interest and determination to grow and improve came to a head during an interview with an American mother who had just been transferred from the American Embassy in Mexico City. The demands on her adjustment skills had been considerable: Coming from one of the largest capitals in the world to one of the smallest, from a place of elegantly dressed and groomed women to a tropical culture where most inhabitants were in barefoot sandals with a morning bath for beauty, from a city where there are well-developed school programs on beautiful campuses to the limited educational program in an old house in Ghana. Nevertheless, her constantly negative response to every comment as we talked and walked around the school caused the superintendent to reply that she was indeed lucky in Ghana as there was another English-speaking school to which she could send her young son. She would not have to send him to the Lincoln Community School.

That evening the superintendent phoned the woman who had brought the mother to the school in order to apologize for his short reply at the end of their visit. She replied that she understood perfectly and that no apology was needed. That mother did, after all, send her son to the kindergarten and became a supportive and dedicated parent through the efforts of the school staff.

Due to the architectural planning for the new school plant, much of this school year was spent in defining the school's educational program and transferring it into a design for construction. The design of the total campus of buildings was

beautiful, adequate, and workable. The mistake, in retrospect, since limited funds allowed only part of the structures to be constructed, was not to have designed each pod as a self-sustaining unit.

After the architectural designs were completed and after long-range financial planning, including bank loans and payments, had been determined, the superintendent approached the Office of Overseas Schools for a grant to help with the construction costs of the new school. By the end of that school year, after much huffing, puffing, and complaining about no available money, a grant of one hundred thousand dollars was given for the project.

Another highlight and outside stimulus for this school year was planning for the annual conference of the American Association of International Schools in Africa. The Lincoln Community School had been selected that year to be the host. The theme was to be the need for and the ways of enriching the educational program by including aspects of the local culture of the host countries. Since the Lincoln School's local culture program was in full swing, this was a natural for the school. This honor for the school, as well as the demand for a lot of footwork planning on the part of the school director, added community focus to the value of the school's program. The school community involvement in hosting these guests and educators from all over Africa added stimulation and renewal to the identity of the school community. The unfortunate aspect of this hosting on the part of the superintendent was that he fell sick

with a debilitating case of hepatitis and could not attend. In fact, he barely had enough energy during the conference to move from the bedroom to the living-room couch. Nevertheless, a large reception dinner was given in his apartment for all who felt it was safe to come. Most came and enjoyed the evening.

Around mid-year the superintendent informed the school board of his intention to leave Ghana at the end of that year. The board offered him a new contract, but he thought he had had enough of Ghana and needed a change. When one man asked him, "Don't you like Ghana?" he replied, "Ghana is like soaking in a nice hot tub; it is not unpleasant, but the longer you stay in the tub the less energy you have to get out of it." Perhaps due to his continuing interest in Asia, his bout with hepatitis, and the felt encroaching of the negative aspects of Ghanaian culture with its superstition into his personality, the superintendent had had his stay and felt it was time to leave.

One of the last major efforts of the superintendent was to work with the board in preparation of its announcement, determination of the school leadership needs, and the resulting definition of the job. After this, the process and choice were left up to the board of directors.

At the end of this fourth school year, the community prepared a party at the school for the departing superintendent, during which time many beautiful handicraft gifts from Ghana were presented. The superintendent's departure from Accra was with a feeling of appreciation from the community for his part in the success and

programs the school had accomplished over the past four years. The school's enrollment had increased by 50%, and it had moved from an institution facing financial disaster and possible closing to one not only in a strong financial position but one looking forward to the construction of its own permanent new campus.

Summary

In summarizing the four years, 1973 to 1977, of the superintendent's perception of his work at the Lincoln Community School in Accra, Ghana, particularly in light of his role in the community-formation process, seven major points emerge.

First, the arrival year of a new superintendent often contains little of his personal input; rather it is a year of listening, learning, and mostly maintaining the former plans of others resulting in the immediate past history of the school. For this reason the new superintendent needs a vehicle through which he can immediately make his enthusiasm and personality felt in the school and its community. A year is too long to wait before he begins to set his own tone, direction, and heartbeat in the school. This does not mean he is to come in with set answers to turn upside down an existing educational program before he has gained the time needed for his acceptance and belonging in the school community. What it does mean is there needs to be some type of immediate visual beginning, a reference point that will begin community conversations of renewed enthusiasm associated with the arrival of the new superintendent.

The organization of the small-group meetings in parents' homes was a perfect solution in Ghana to help create the image of immediate change and forward movement. These movements served at least three purposes. First, they introduced the new superintendent to the concerns and suggestions of the school community. Second, they provided openings into the community on an intimate, one-on-one, personal basis for the superintendent to communicate his openness, his shared concern for the improvement of the educational program available for these children, and his enthusiasm and optimism for forward movement of the school. Finally, these small socials in different homes around the city served to pull together small neighborhoods of parents who had the school as a common interest. The point to be made here is that the superintendent needs to be flexible and to maximize on the opportunities that fit in a particular overseas school community. Parent gatherings in private homes worked in Ghana, whereas some other vehicle of focus on the school and its new superintendent may be more effective in another overseas community.

The second major point to be learned from those four years was the need for ongoing communications from the school's director to the parents. The "Dear parents" letters were written in a highly personal conversational style. They included activities at school, promotion details on a teacher or other individuals connected to the school, announcements from community groups, and other such school/community information. This type of information was held in common

by parents, students, and teachers and helped in the formation of community thinking. Several times individuals other than those with children in the school also asked to be sent these weekly letters. Some parents even kept every letter as part of the history of their child's years in the Lincoln Community School. Regularly shared information was an essential part of the administrator's role in forming a supportive community around the school in Ghana.

The weekly faculty gatherings were also a factor in community formation. During those meetings ideas were exchanged and joint input and responsibility were learned and shared for the school's total educational program. Where before the teacher felt responsibility just for her classroom assignment, by these weekly meetings she was brought into the total information sharing on the school. A strong center core, a closer openness of mind, resulted from these regularly held meetings.

The act of putting ideas and curriculum outlines into professionally printed pages also helped sell the parents on the school's professionalism. Regardless of the verbal presentation skills of a teacher, having the plans, course outlines, and other information ready in print to be carried home added substance to the meeting and importance to the message.

The third point of reference based on those four years was the school community's social barbecue and potluck events planned and carried out by parents. These were great mixers and shared occasions of reference to the school, regardless of nationality, religion, race, or company sponsor in Ghana. A school year's plans

should include some type of monthly school-gathering focus for the community. Besides barbecues and potlucks, these could include back-to-school nights, Halloween parties, assemblies, Christmas and Hanukkah music festivals, drama productions, and competition events of all types. As with the weekly gatherings of the teachers, planned monthly gatherings of parents help form a common bond among parents around a school.

The fourth point of reference has to do with getting a head start with new parents by creating the most positive first impression possible in a school site. Often the need is not so much in gaining immediate, active support of parents as it is in disarming them of those negative and defensive feelings that prohibit their acceptance of the school's efforts. Among other things, careful attention to the details of the entire physical plant and grounds needs to be given. The buildings and grounds must communicate the likewise organized quality of the yet unseen and unexperienced educational program. In short, the clear message should be that the "house is in order" and so is the education provided to the children.

Of course, a school must deliver, but a positive first impression allows new parents to be open in their feelings about joining the school community efforts in supporting both where the school program is and where it would like to go.

The fifth summary point to be highlighted is the need for the superintendent to be enthusiastic and yet open and willing to

maximize on the new talents and offers for help that often appear in an overseas community. Examples in Ghana were the music couple who brought in their interest and skills in West African cultural drumming, the Peace Corps young man who organized the little league, and let's not forget Mr. Bugla's need and offer to help the school acquire the free-land grant from the Ghanaian government. All of these enriched the school's program and helped draw individuals closer to the school as a center focus of the community.

In this same area, the superintendent needs to actively share the school's needs and, where possible, provide a way for individuals to help participate toward resolving those needs. The "Your Fair Share" fund-raising presentations provided leaders of local companies a way to help with that support. This support in itself ties individuals closer to the school center and thus brings into the school community some of the leaders of smaller factions within the overseas groups.

Maintaining and building school board consensus is the sixth point to be included in the summary. This realized need was a direct result of the personal-growth experiences learned by the superintendent from his years in Cairo. In the place of a possible future disenchanted board member, who could block board plans, that member became the individual who followed through with the long-term planning and construction of the new Lincoln Community School of Accra, Ghana.

Finally, the seventh point emerging from the superintendent's four years of experiences in Ghana, which relate to his role in the

community-formation process, concerns his active participation in personally selling each individual on the school's program, in making sure that newcomers were welcomed and knew they were needed in the school's community. In the larger school community of Cairo, the superintendent saw to the personal nurturing, stroking, and community acceptance of new teacher arrivals to Egypt. These became his radiating spokes into the larger community. In Ghana, since all teachers were already residents and already had their social circles away from the school, the superintendent turned this same concern and enthusiasm toward each newly arriving parent and student. He personally sold the school's program and its immediate needs for their talents in the school community. To be immediately accepted, found worthy, and needed in the joint effort of educating their own children was a strong message for every parent to join the Lincoln School community.

No one single point accomplished the whole community-formation process, nor will every location need exactly the same combination of procedures as those used in Ghana. However, in all cases the superintendent needs to be aware of the possible use of each and of the necessity of his active participation and leadership in the community-formation process.

CHAPTER V

AMERICAN COOPERATIVE SCHOOL OF TUNIS, TUNISIA, FROM 1978 TO 1972

Introduction

The historical descriptive accounts of the four school years, 1978 to 1982, at the American Cooperative School of Tunis, Tunisia, are dealt with in Chapter V. During those four years the researcher served as superintendent of that school. This chapter is divided into nine sections. The first, after the introduction, deals with the background information leading up to accepting this position. The second covers the orientation during the previsit. The next two sections include descriptive information on the school site and on the superintendent's arrival as well as settling-in procedures. The following four divisions are based on the superintendent's four-year-cycle thinking and planning for the American School of Tunis. The summary section highlights the four years of the superintendent's planned development of a supportive school community.

Background

During the in-between school year, 1977-1978, before the Tunisian experience, the superintendent took a year off for a self-paid sabbatical. He had always wanted to visit the Far East, and he

thought he also needed some time back with his family and in the educational scene in the United States.

The superintendent had spent four years in Cairo and then served the next four years in Accra. Of course, there were vacations and conferences back in the United States during those years, but there was no extended length of time to be able to get back into the American public schools and get a first-hand feel and knowledge of what was happening in schools in the U.S. And since a superintendent is hired by an overseas school board to recreate in a foreign setting, often with a foreign staff, an American school, he/she needs to keep sight of educational standards and expectations in the U.S. The superintendent learned to suspect that when the overseas job began to be easy and "sane," it probably meant too much adjustment to the host-country culture had been made. The time then had come to re-energize himself to be attuned with the high expectations of affluent Americans for the best in U.S. public schools. This was a "measuring stick" standard the superintendent had self-imposed. However, school boards should and usually do consider recent stateside experience as well as overseas experience when hiring a new superintendent.

In July 1978, the superintendent left Ghana to visit old friends at the Cairo American College in Cairo, Egypt. From there he toured Israel, India, Nepal, Burma, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, and then stopped for a month's stay in Hong Kong. During the Asian Conference of American Schools in East Asia, he learned of the job opening in Tunis, Tunisia. He mailed an application for the

superintendent's position while he was still in Hong Kong. Then, before returning to the United States, he visited the Philippines, Taiwan, and Japan.

In early January he received a phone call from the International Schools Services (ISS) in Princeton, New Jersey, asking him to come help with their recruitment and placement services of professional educators in overseas schools. This work at ISS continued until May, when the Tunisian job offer came.

Previsit Orientation

The superintendent accepted the school's offer with the provision that an orientation visit to the school and the Tunisian community be included. This was agreed. His visit to the American Cooperative School took place in early June 1978. He was met at the modern Tunis airport by the departing director and shown the small American school campus, where he had his first chance to meet and exchange a few greetings with teachers and students.

After this brief introduction to the school, they drove to La Marsa to visit the director's home, which was located right on a beach of the Mediterranean Sea. The beauty of this location proved to be a bit deceiving and did not forecast the security problems of living in such a site, where many of the vacation homes became vacant during the winter months. Nevertheless, the home and location were choice. How often does a school director have a home furnished on a resort beach of the Mediterranean?

That afternoon the school provided lunch at an outdoor cafe located high on a cliff overlooking the sea. Also at the luncheon was the school-to-school partner's chief school administrator from Ridgewood, New Jersey. The new superintendent's visit to Tunis had been planned to overlap the stateside partner's. This meeting was a helpful introduction to part of the school's support structure and proved to be a valuable part of the superintendent's orientation.

That evening a school board member extended an invitation to his home, where the superintendent had the opportunity to meet a few of the students as well as one teacher of the school. The evening was low key, highly personal, and a perfect chance to get to know the family of this respected and influential board member. As in the past two school sites reported in this study, this introductory invitation into the home of a member of the school community resulted in the superintendent's attachment and ongoing loyalty to this kind and gracious board member.

As reported in both Cairo and Accra, the extension of a warm welcome, personal kindness, and hospitality to a new arrival in a new overseas site, when one is most anxious and vulnerable, helps build ties and loyalties that continue through the stay of individuals in an overseas site and often throughout life, regardless of future home locations.

The next morning the school director picked up the new superintendent from the Hilton and showed him some parts of the new and old Arab city of Tunis. They also visited the U.S. Embassy, where introductions were made with the U.S. ambassador and several

other key individuals. After lunch at the embassy snack bar, the superintendent was driven to the airport to catch his return flight to the United States.

The next month and a half in the U.S. were used in preparing to move to Tunis. Since the superintendent's entire household shipment from Ghana had been stolen, he needed to purchase all the things necessary to set up a household. The school's house for the director was furnished with basic furniture; however, much was needed to make it a home and to enable the superintendent to entertain. Finally, the shipment of his personal effects was prepared and air freighted to Tunis.

In the meantime the superintendent purchased through the mail a new car to be delivered in Paris, from where he planned to drive to Marseilles. There he caught a new ferry named "Habib Bourgiba," the name of the "President for Life" of Tunisia. This man was the leader of the political movement that gained Tunisian independence from France, after which he became the first and only president of that new country up to and during the time of the superintendent's stay in Tunisia.

The sight of La Marsa, Sidi Bou Said, and Tunis from the sea was both beautiful and exciting in anticipation. The hillsides covered with white cement houses trimmed in sky blue seemed to sparkle in the bright late-morning sunshine. When the ferry docked, a Tunisian man from the U.S. Embassy was waiting to help facilitate customs clearance. The superintendent then drove behind that man to

his La Marsa home, which had been set up with a welcome kit of utensils and food to help the new arrival get started.

School Site and Description

The American Cooperative School of Tunis (ACS) was located half way on the busy 14-kilometer, four-lane agricultural road connecting the beach community of La Marsa and the capital of the country. The only houses in the immediate area of the school were one-story, Arab-style, cement-block ones with flat roofs. The area was flat, open agricultural land upon which water would stand during the rainy seasons. Not far away over these low lands were the ancient ruins as well as the modern town of Carthage. Although the school now sat in empty land, the area once had been on the edge of rich history and one of the great cities of ancient times. In fact, students who looked periodically found on the school's dirt playground ancient coins, which showed up after rains. A visiting archaeologist pointed out to the superintendent one day that those troublesome "rocks" on the playgrounds were actually a combination of ancient tile and other broken pieces of destroyed buildings of the past.

The American Cooperative School began in 1958 on a ten-acre farm, which had a cement-block, two-story farm house and barn. One of the founding parents visited the superintendent and related with fondness how they themselves had removed the cow stalls, cleaned and painted the place, and transformed the barn into a usable school space. She expressed relief that the "cooperative" part of the

school's name had not been changed as the cooperation of parents was an important part of the historical beginning of the school.

When the new superintendent arrived in Tunis some 20 years later in 1978, the house and barn had been connected with a T-shaped row of classrooms. The short, top cross bar of the T connected the house and barn. The buildings were painted white and trimmed in sky blue, as was the Tunisian custom. Little to no recent effort was apparent in trying to make the entrance attractive or appealing as a first impression of the school. The black-top circular entrance drive and parking went right up to the walls of the building, giving one the impression of being in a factory area.

The front door and office of the school was a hall-looking area cluttered with a desk, assorted gray colors of used file cabinets, and a few pieces of worn, discolored, and broken furniture. A large wooden storage closet sat right in front of the door, partially blocking the entrance. The director's office off this glorified hallway looked no better, perhaps even worse. The total first impression was neglected chaos in bad taste. Fortunately, these negative first impressions were not an accurate reflection of the education program that existed in the school.

The gravel playground behind the school had a pipe jungle gym, a few swings, and teeter-totters. The asphalt surface of the basketball court directly next to the back of the school buildings had holes and uplifted mounds in it caused by tree roots. The screens on most of the windows had long since been torn; a few had

been replaced by stapling irregularly cut pieces of blue or green baggy plastic screen onto the window frames.

Behind this playground area were eight more acres lined up in a long, narrow strip of land that the school's founding fathers had tried to isolate from the Arab houses along one side by a thistle-bush hedge. Next to these bushes ran an oblong circular dirt track, both sides of which had been planted with pine trees. Within the oblong track were located a softball area and a soccer field. This entire play area, which was green with wild grass in spring, became rocky, dry, and dusty during the remainder of the year.

The thistle bushes gave a dimension to the property and a look of privacy but did not in fact make the land private. People in the area constantly walked across it, shepherds brought in their sheep, and school janitors regularly had to be on the fields during student recess and lunch to be sure the neighbors stayed out. And always when young students returned to classes the workers made their rounds of the fields to pick up forgotten sweaters, jackets, and balls. The items would not have been there when the students remembered and went back out to find them. It seemed like the school rented the buildings but shared the grounds. In fact, the far back right corner of the property had been taken over some years before by a local group, who had built a small shrine to some venerated Moslem holy man.

This rented property for the school was located in a semi-deserted-looking section of the four-lane highway upon which high-speed traffic had reportedly made it the most deadly stretch of road

in Tunisia. The capital of Tunisia was located some seven kilometers on up the road at the end of the highway.

The capital was really a combination of two cities. The old Arab walled city of Tunis was made up of narrow streets which had become walking lanes for people and animals rather than for cars. Outside the old main entrance gates once was the seaport itself. Now on land fill, along the wide, tree-lined boulevard was built the modern French colonial city. Flower markets and sidewalk cafes made this street a popular walking area of Tunis. The story was told that, after independence, trucks with loudspeakers drove through the streets exhorting the citizens to come out of the walled city, that the former French city was now also theirs.

The "President for Life," leader of Tunisia, was Bourguiba, who was popularly called Habib. Habib was a word of endearment, such as darling or babe. This leader of the independence movement was the George Washington of independent Tunisia. He led his people toward European, western thinking, away from the restrictive ways of conservative Moslem orthodoxy. The dress and appearance of the people on the streets were European. Free public schools were provided and well attended. Tunisian Arabic-speaking students studied their education in the French language. Often the language of young people exchanged among themselves and in school was not the language spoken or understood by their parents in their homes. Therefore, the western-looking, French-speaking young people on the streets and beaches were laid on top of the emotional home-culture

foundation of an agrarian shepherd, Tunisian Arabic-speaking mentality. Many times the superintendent witnessed a young person with smooth Arab politeness combined with refined French manners, immediately change into a rough and threatening personality when he was not successful in getting what he wanted. The thin veneer of those two cultures was used to try to manipulate a positive response; when that failed, a rugged and unpleasant reaction was often experienced.

The history of the country itself was bloody and hard. First there was the recorded history of ancient Carthage, then Roman, then Byzantine Christian, then Arab Moslem invasions, then Turkish, then a French colonial period, then German occupation during World War II, and then finally there emerged the new independent country of Tunisia.

The country was rich in archaeological ruins, with particularly beautiful stone mosaic floors which had been uncovered from ancient times. Blue skies, beautiful beaches, cork-forest-covered mountains in the North, and miles of rolling wheat fields, to the desert dunes in the South were all included in this small North African country. Black Africans to tan Roman Mediterranean types, long, angular-faced Arabs to round-faced, blond, curly haired, blue-eyed Berbers: All these racial groups were Tunisians. Ancient walled cities to modern semi-nudity at the Club Med resorts were there. All seemed to be there within the boundaries of this small country. Logically, considering the diversity plus the closeness of Tunisia to Europe, the main hard currency earner or "cash cow" was from tourism. This

was the colorful setting of the new home and work of the superintendent.

Arrival and Settling In

The superintendent left Michigan for his new assignment toward the middle of July. He flew to Paris, picked up his new car, and drove to Marseilles to board the ferry for Tunis. After an American Embassy local hire helped him clear customs, he drove to his La Marsa home.

Much of the superintendent's first year in a new school location was occupied extensively in getting acquainted with the new home, country, and school. He had learned from Cairo and Accra that time was needed to gain acceptance, belonging, and visual acknowledgment of himself as the school head, beyond the recognition of him as the "new superintendent." People are usually polite but cautious and a bit distant with the "new." The degree of distance is often determined by the type of leadership personality of the previous school director. Regardless of whether that relationship was negative or positive, the mind-set of those connected to the school has been predetermined. Time is always needed to begin to establish a new superintendent's legitimacy. Then the superintendent can lead from within as a full member of the school community.

With this in mind, the first thing the superintendent did that next day in July was to go visit the school and then to continue on to the American Embassy. The school's connection with the American

Embassy was particularly important in Tunis as the school's history had close and continuing connections with it. The school and its American-hire employees were directly and yet indirectly connected to the U.S. Mission. The commissary, snack bar, and health unit and doctor, along with other benefits, were extended to the American-hire staff.

The problem with this is that when there is a "free ticket," the giver has a lot to say as to where the "ticket" takes one. Nevertheless, the relationship was an important plus for this school. Developing good relations with the U.S. Embassy was a must for the superintendent in Tunisia. Positive relationships do not happen with one or two visits, but rather with frequent drop-by's when both visual and verbal contacts are exchanged.

The first step the superintendent has always made in each overseas location is to organize his immediate within-reach and usually manageable small private world. This small world first involves his getting settled comfortably in a new house, which in time will become his home of retreat, of security. Sometimes this can only begin while he waits for the arrival of his shipment of personal effects. With this shipment he then can begin to put his mark of belonging on the new house.

During these same beginning months the superintendent began to organize his own office and the immediate entrance front office area. This smaller world can be changed immediately without resistance or "stepping on toes." In fact, the home base of

security must be made comfortable, organized, and clearly speak of his/her own personality. From this organized base he can then begin to exert his own leadership and make his own views felt within the larger world of the entire school.

With this in mind, the superintendent had the office painted, office curtains made, the broken and dirty sofa repaired and upholstered, a donated carpet put down in his office, and furniture designed for the reception office. He learned from a board member where he could buy inexpensively a beautiful wood desk and four wood file cabinets. These dressed up the office area. The air-conditioners, which were needed during the summer months, were not purchased until the following summer.

The changes in the office areas made the expected immediate positive impression on everyone who came through the school offices. To continue the visible change, which did not invade the classroom domain of teachers, a volunteer group of students and two of the new U.S.-hire teachers began to paint a three-color diagonal stripe of bright yellow, brown, and aqua up across the white wall that could be seen through the office windows. There was no time to do much more than this before the new school year began. Nevertheless, these beginning steps were enough to cause the parent and student community to buzz with positive expectations.

These visible beginning gestures of the new leadership were added to what already existed in the school. The new superintendent was just that--new; he was not yet part of the community. Becoming so would take time along with acceptable beginning-leadership moves.

First Year--Getting Acquainted

The beginning weeks and months of the first year in a new school are mostly a time of asking questions and learning from the school staff, board, students, and parents. As the superintendent studies the school's program and budget and asks questions, he also begins to exchange some of his own views and values. Sometimes these are firmly presented and sometimes they are simply shared with an eye to bringing the thinking of others around in the future.

Typically the budget, tuition income, and financial thinking of board members have already been determined by the previous school director. Within this financial framework the new superintendent often must begin his work during the first year. Tunis was no exception. The previous school director had inherited the school, which was financially destitute. Therefore, during his three-year stay his main concern had been to keep down school expenses and to build up a reserve. He accomplished this; however, one of the results was the formation of a board thinking that was extremely tight and felt tuitions had to be held down. This was a board reality within which the new superintendent had to work while slowly moving that thinking toward accepting the repairs and the staff and program improvements needed to bring the school up to a higher standard. The basic flaw in the board's earlier thinking was that tuitions needed to be held low. The vast majority of the families connected to the school in Tunis did not pay tuitions from their own pockets; rather, the sponsoring companies of these families paid the

tuition costs for their children. Therefore, higher tuitions to cover improvements in the total educational program meant that families received more salary benefits for their children's education. This change in finance approach took about two years of slowly changing the thinking of board members and parents as school improvements could be delivered as tuition costs went up. In several instances there were changes in board members with different mind-sets rather than individuals changing their thinking.

By the third and fourth years the superintendent's concern was to be able to deliver on the improvements and increased expectation which the board sometimes seemed too ready to finance. In a small school with a small staff, a superintendent has to do most of what is needed by himself; he has no administrative team, other than teachers, with whom to share the directing and absorbing of change in a school.

The superintendent's "getting to know you" actions during his first year were focused toward four main school groups: board members, teachers, students, and parents. Several board members extended dinner invitations to him, which helped open an understanding of their homes, values, and personalities. Each month the preparation for board meetings was carefully planned with the school board treasurer and the president. Much behind-the-scenes leadership was exerted through the existing leadership rather than through active leadership attempts by the new superintendent.

During that summer, teachers began to stop by the office one by one, and general welcomes and smiles were exchanged. The preschool

teachers' workshop at the end of August was used primarily for individual-room-time work, but twice a day the total staff met over coffee and sweets to begin to share its thinking. These short meetings were at first a bit strained due to the faculty's reaction to differences between the leadership styles of the former and the new superintendent. The staff was used to the authoritative style previously experienced and were uneasy with the open, probing, and shared-decision-making approach being used with them by the new man. The shared responsibility that goes along with this made teachers cautious as they did not yet know the day-to-day personality of the superintendent. Slowly this willingness to change began to take place. A weekly meeting time was set, when all staff were expected to remain an hour longer for joint in-service experiences. A regularly shared time planned for the staff is a must if one is to pull subject area/grade teachers together around the support of the entire school program. One hour a week was not enough, but it helped get community building started with the staff. The major corrective adjustment in scheduling for the superintendent's third year had to wait until the time was right for board support.

The "right time" is a major factor in gaining board and community support for a major change, such as significantly altering the accustomed school day hours during the week. The end of the first year was felt to be too soon; however, by the end of the second year sufficient trust and accepted leadership had been established to propose such a schedule change. Of course, the board

had been prepared during the monthly meetings during the year as to the need for curriculum planning and in-service time. The superintendent's proposed solution for that need was first "field tested" and sold on a one-to-one basis to individual board leaders, then to the entire board, and then to the parent community.

A caution should be made here for the superintendent whose proposal may not be accepted. He/she should not get caught up in a "vote of confidence" mentality. The time probably was not right for the proposal as presented, so consider that the presentation was an introduction of the subject, to be followed up by further study and background preparation for the board. The superintendent should not get so emotionally committed that the board action for a proposal must either be supportive or he/she quits. That is a childish reaction!

A united school staff was to become for the superintendent the supportive nucleus around which the larger school community would be built. When the center nucleus falls apart and mixed signals of information go out into the larger parent community, the building and maintaining of a supportive school community are hindered.

Factors that fragmented the faculty in Tunis were the different salary scales under which teachers were hired. Even stateside hires were on two levels, with the man hired with a stateside salary and his wife contracted on a local-hire scale. There are acceptable ways for covering the exceptional costs involved in a teacher's leaving home, car, and security in the U.S.; however, the monthly

take-home salary under which all teachers are hired should be based on one salary scale.

Another major need in building a long-term faculty unit was to see that there was a good dollar retirement fund set up. The first year was not the time in this school for the superintendent to push such a program. Even a unified salary scale approach was not possible until the second year. The retirement program had to wait until the third year.

The superintendent's year-long plan for faculty unity included a welcome-back reception for the teachers, hosted by the school board. A Christmas dinner party was hosted in the home of the superintendent. Teachers and board members, along with their spouses and specific friends of the superintendent, were invited. This yearly event with its "bring a gift" game became one of the highlights of conversation of the school year. Janitors were also personally entertained as a group during the holidays, when special local favorite foods were prepared. Then at the end of the school year a potluck dinner for teachers was planned. The first year this outing was held at the superintendent's house; the following three years these outings were hosted in the homes of different teachers.

On a more personal level, the superintendent was regularly in and out of the classrooms expressing his personal interest in the teachers' work, their rooms, and their students' progress. The birthdays of all employees were noted on a planning calendar so that each received a card and flowers in his/her classroom on that day.

In contrast to the daily informal, personal approach in a small school, the superintendent used a formal written notice to communicate announcements, and so on, to all teachers. This was purposely done to insure that all teachers were informed equally at the same time by the superintendent. This formal procedure was instituted to guard against the perception that some teachers were favorites and were privy to the inside information. The very informality of a small school necessitates the use of some formal business procedures, such as typed communications to the faculty. The same formality of following correct procedures was also taught and insisted upon with communications between teachers and board, and between teachers when one was a parent of a student needing a conference.

The third main group the superintendent targeted with which to become better acquainted was the student body of this kindergarten through ninth-grade school. For the superintendent to make known his personality and to set the tone for what he believed the school atmosphere should be, there needed to be daily shared moments between him and the students. Besides the one-on-one contacts, the easiest and quickest way to make his own imprint on the student body was to meet them as a group. This usually took place three times a day.

Since most of the students were transported in three school buses, the first daily contact was at the doors of each bus as it arrived. In this way he could train the students to stay seated

until he came to the bus, thus stopping the rush to stand up and move to the front of the bus while the bus was turning into the school drive. Then as students exited from the front door he was able to greet each with a smile, welcome, and often a personal tease or compliment.

Usually the second visual contact time was when the students lined up on the playground at the morning bell to wait for their teachers to bring them into the school building. The superintendent's presence, greeting, admonition, and welcome constituted a total group shared morning experience.

The third meeting time was at the end of the day. At the closing of each school day, after the superintendent made a check to see that the building was empty of students, he then stepped onto each bus to bid them a safe trip home. At this same time, announcements, concerns for safety, regards for happy holidays or weekends, or the telling of a young person's joke would be shared in the good-bye dismissals. One sweet memory of this time was from a little English girl in second grade who gave the superintendent a child's joke book when her family left Tunisia. She thought he would enjoy the jokes and could use them with his bus meetings. Often the superintendent would also appear at recess and lunch times, but the daily planned times with students were those three mentioned above.

The superintendent believed the students should love coming to school and that it should be a place to enjoy living and learning. There was a time to play and a time to get back to studies. Both

the communication of personal interest and caring, as well as the seriousness of his words of correction, needed to be equally understood by the students. Typically, during the first few weeks in a new school, a few students would have to try out the new superintendent. Tunis was no exception. One incident involved a young man in seventh grade who had to be corrected. The parents strongly disagreed with the manner of correction. Of course, the unexpected lack of support from the parents caused the desired change in the boy's behavior to fail.

One of the problems of a new superintendent having to handle disciplinary and other difficult situations during the first few months is that he has not yet had time to catch the heartbeat and strong feelings of the individuals involved. At any rate the boy, within a couple of weeks, was back in the office for kicking a classmate in her chest during a temper tantrum. This time the parents were called to come and get him and keep him home until they could assure that a definite change of behavior had taken place. There were no more problems with that student.

Once the patterns of acceptable interactions within a student body are set, new students will fit into the group's heartbeat of expectations. In addition to the above, the superintendent had learned in Ghana to personally interview each new student with parents and make sure each received a V.I.P. treatment with a personal follow-through with fellow classmates and teachers. The end objective was to impress on the new students that the

superintendent was a friend ready to help them get settled in their new school and that the school director cared, had a clear standard of expectations, and intended to help students maintain those standards.

The fourth group to be targeted by the superintendent was the parents. The point should be made here that new parents are not targeted and then ignored. Developing support and trust is something that needs continual individual nurturing like a good "love" or plant. Both will die without stroking, "watering, and sunshine." Trust is a growth process, not a "state of being." Particularly for insecure individuals, who may constitute a larger percentage than known, there is a need for continual reassuring that their trust was correctly given. The greater the trust requested, the greater is the feeling of vulnerability of the giver. Both the giver and the receiver need periodic growth references. Therefore, an ongoing maintenance program must be set in place, not only for the 30% family turnovers, which is typical in such American overseas schools, but also for those long-term families.

The "Dear parents" weekly letter, which the superintendent had learned in Ghana, was immediately started during the first week of school. The letter was not an academically worded communication; rather it was highly personal, written in a conversational style, using an uncomplicated vocabulary, dealing with children, teachers, and school community activities. This was a perfect community-building and maintenance vehicle. In just a few weeks, parents stopped by to compliment the superintendent on those weekly

newsletters. Not only did the letters become an effective weekly communication tool to draw together a school community, they became also a school record for several parents who saved each letter in their child's file. Other than the American Embassy bulletins, which were sent to employees of the American Embassy, these "Dear parents" letters were the only regular community communication effort tying together the different nationalities who attended the school in Tunis.

In addition to the one-way weekly communication with the superintendent, a year-long program of activities was planned that would draw together parents at the school. The school community of parents and teachers needed regularly shared experiences in order to begin to feel as a unit around the school. These social events included such activities as back-to-school open house nights, Halloween costume parade and party night, individual parent-teacher conferences, the Christmas musical, two parents' association meetings where slide shows of students were sometimes used while parents voted on new board members and enjoyed coffee and food, the spring play or musical, the science fair, the international fair day, and May sports day. Practically every month there was a parent gathering at the school.

Cairo had taught the superintendent the value of having the parents use the school as a community center for their own activities. However, in Tunis the superintendent did not need to invite parent groups to use the school grounds as every Sunday

families came to enjoy softball games and picnics on the field behind the school. As the school year got under way, parents also began to use the primitive but secure track behind the school. Any other place in Tunis, a person jogging alone was apt to run into uninvited harassment or some other type of unpleasant experience.

By January of the first year, the superintendent began to know more about the inner workings of the teachers, parents, and board members and could begin to exert some leadership as a member of the community. Budget planning, new tuitions, increasing teachers' salaries, recruiting and contracting new U.S.-hire teachers, and calendar planning by this time came directly under his leadership. This does not mean that all board members were ready to support the superintendent's full value system. Most members of the board were still those trained by the previous school director. However, most suggestions were accepted, or at least thought over, while some suggestions were presented and then tabled for further consideration.

Often, depending on the thinking of the leaders on the board and on the particular school situation, the new superintendent must be ready to present and withdraw suggestions in order to start the members thinking in different directions. These beginning months are not the time to be "the leader" or "I quit!" Patience is needed for people to change their thinking, especially if they were strong supporters of the previous school director, and time is needed for new members to be elected and take their places as full members on the board. In Tunis two parents twice a year were elected to the

board, and sometimes there were also mid-term transfers, which meant that other new members were appointed to the board. Almost the entire board would be changed in a two-year period. Obviously, this rapid turnover presented weaknesses as well as possibilities for the superintendent.

The board agreed to bring in more U.S.-hire teachers. With this the superintendent was able to attract to Tunis several top-notch professional educators to complement the excellent teachers who had been hired locally, some of whom were long tenured with the school.

The overall goals within the educational philosophy of the superintendent included the following overlapping areas. First, hire the best teachers available for the classroom. This usually can be accomplished in steps as often the salary scale must be made competitive with other similar overseas schools. For this to take place, a board must be convinced and tuition income increased to support such a change.

When these new educators of the superintendent's choosing are in place, they are used as the professionals that they are and are encouraged to make their classroom needs known. The superintendent did not give a budgeted amount to be spent; rather these teachers were instructed to present their orders of what they needed in order to do the very best job they knew how to do at that time. Only one teacher ever misused this invitation; her list of needs had to be cut back to a more realistic perspective.

When excellent teachers have what they know they need as classroom supports, the superintendent can concentrate more on the construction, adaptation, and changes in the physical structure of rooms and school grounds. This process is usually not a clear one-, two-, three-step change as they overlap, and the superintendent must adapt, depending on the school facilities and location particulars. Then finally, with teachers, educational support materials, and physical structures in place to support the overall program, the gardens and physical beauty of a school need to be enhanced. Sometimes this beautification must begin from scratch. Nevertheless, gardens with flowers and beauty need to be part of a child's surroundings as he/she lives, learns the formal lessons, and absorbs informally the total learning atmosphere of aesthetic values.

With these long-range objectives in mind, the superintendent moved toward attaining them over the next four years. Good or bad, the total end goals were not shared with the board; each step was presented as apparent needs could be agreed upon by the board. Sometimes the actions toward the goals were immediately accepted, whereas at other times the superintendent presented the idea and then waited for another opportunity to come again to the board for the supportive decision.

The main project the superintendent had the teachers complete, besides their regular classroom responsibilities, was the writing of a curriculum sheet for each subject taught. These were not detailed academic profiles, but rather practical information sheets

containing information on the text used, information on topics to be covered, the objectives of the course, and the teacher expectations for the students. These printed information sheets were used by teachers during parent back-to-school nights, as a communication of contractual expectation. This printed information also supported the different teacher personalities with professionally organized educational information to be carried home.

These same curriculum outlines also were used for two other purposes. The outlines were organized by grade level so that parents and visitors could either have a complete grade-level handout or a bound, total school curriculum. These same write-ups were also organized by subjects across grade levels and bound into large curriculum books. Therefore, the class outlines, written in easily understood vocabulary, were used for several supportive purposes for teachers and for the entire school program. In fact, these plus the other supportive community efforts were so successful that when a visiting State Department education officer arrived with a pitch for accreditation for the school, he was told quite definitely that that was not necessary for the American School of Tunis.

To help draw attention to the international character of the school population, the large, barnlike auditorium was decorated with the different national flags hung from the ceiling supports. The importance of the use of international flags in school programs the

superintendent picked up from the international sports day in the Cairo American College.

One incident clearly underlined the importance these visual symbols had for the school's international community. First, parents saw that the school had a flag representing their country when they noticed theirs was missing. Second, and the incident that emphasized the importance of this gesture, involved the Pakistani flag, which had been removed with a few others due to their blocking the visual use of the stage by the American women's use of the auditorium for their Christmas charity bazaar. The absence of this flag was noted, and several months later it was communicated to the superintendent that he must be upset with the Pakistanis. Fortunately, these feelings were communicated and the superintendent could reassure those families and learn the full importance of the use of these emotional symbols in an international school. In the future, all flags were used at once, or else all were removed for different program purposes.

By the end of the first school year, the board was ready to support several changes, which took place over the summer months. The classrooms and halls were all painted, and used carpets from the American Embassy were put down in all the elementary classrooms. The two small classrooms across the front of the building near the highway were noisy and awkwardly long, narrow teaching rooms. The walls of these two rooms were knocked down to make the school's library all across the front of the school. The previous side wing of the library away from the highway was then closed off to become

an excellent supportive classroom for a teacher's efforts in educating children. The barnlike multipurpose room had no stage, so a four-part sectional movable stage was designed and built. Through the years that followed, these sections were organized in different shapes in different areas of that large room according to the program and creative needs of the teachers. And since the heat during the summer months made office work nearly impossible to complete, two air-conditioners were purchased and installed.

In addition to seeing that the U.S.-hire teachers' apartments were painted and the furniture reupholstered, the superintendent replanned the academic schedule of the entire school. The major addition and change was creating an end-of-the-day creative-activity period for the middle school students in sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth grades. These activity suggestions were based on student surveys of interest and on teachers' ideas. At the end of each activity a formal evaluation by each student was conducted. With these suggested improvements and new ideas, new activity offerings were planned. Some of these activities met three days a week, whereas others were for just two days. These last-period-of-the-day activities were then changed three times a year and greatly added to the basic academic program for this age group as the program began to touch on interests that could not be handled in the regular classroom. Parents, teachers, and students of the middle school received this change with enthusiasm.

Second Year--Take Hold and Plan

The second school year was no longer one in which the superintendent was new, an outsider, and in the process of initial acceptance. The superintendent was now the person fully in charge of welcoming teachers, parents, and students. The main concern this year was not working into a place in the existing community, but rather seeing that new arrivals were enthusiastically welcomed and included in the community and classrooms as valuable additions. This value system had to be mutually accepted by all school staff for it to work successfully.

The initial responsibility for setting this value system and for enthusiastically communicating it, the superintendent felt was his own. He, as leader, set the tone of the school. In a small school the superintendent can almost immediately determine the tone of the organization. In a large school community, more time is needed to accomplish a warm acceptance and openness for new arrivals. Since an American overseas school community often has a 25% population turnover each year with an average two and a half to three-year stay, the immediate, active inclusion of new arrivals in the school community is a "must" priority if for no other reason than to learn the new talents available to the school before their last year at that overseas location.

The summer-vacation months for students and teachers were the busiest for the superintendent. In addition to the school construction, painting, planning, and other program, new apartments

needed to be contracted and furnished from used U.S. Embassy furniture for the additional U.S.-hire teachers who would arrive in August. The lessons learned from Cairo, Egypt, made the preparations for the arrival of new teachers a summer priority, which began with interviews in the U.S. and preparation of contracts, followed by a call and general information on Tunis in school letters from both the superintendent and one of the appropriate teachers. Apartments were prepared with food in the refrigerator, sheets on the bed, and welcome flowers with a personal note. Someone always met the new teachers at the airport and took them to their new homes.

Because there is loneliness associated with a new apartment, new city, and new country location, the superintendent personally planned breaks in this arrival loneliness. Each new arrival must eventually learn to deal and make his/her own peace with loneliness; however, the beginning days and weeks are crucial to the final acceptance of a teacher's decision to come to a new country and school. Dealing with the loneliness of a new setting the superintendent had learned from his own feelings in both Cairo and Accra. He recalled how much invitations to eat out or just go with someone for a drive to a market or to shop meant in balancing out these beginning weeks of loneliness. Nevertheless, a new arrival must have blocks of loneliness time to deal with as well, in order to assume adult independence in a new location. Too much "hand-holding" can make the new person dependent. The goal was to make the new arrivals independently comfortable and functional as soon as

possible. If a new teacher arrived around mid-day, the superintendent or someone else always took him/her to dinner and for a drive that evening. If the arrival was late at night, someone came to his/her apartment by mid-morning to go someplace for lunch and to shop.

These periods of learning to adjust to loneliness, to becoming an observer rather than a belonging member of the culture, would be purposely broken periodically by fellow staff members picking them up to go here and there, for a picnic lunch at the superintendent's home on the beach, to a formal welcome reception with other teachers at a board member's home, and so on. If a teacher did not bring a car, someone would go with them to learn how to use the public transportation services. Where to shop near their new home, of what to be careful, and how to deal with the attention of the boys and men on the street, buses, and the beach were all items of adjustment provided by one school friend or another during the first few weeks upon arrival in Tunis. These beginning days are vulnerable ones, when a new arrival's needs are the greatest. The superintendent had learned in the two previous countries that important and lasting friendships begin during those first few weeks which immediately tie newcomers to other members of the school community.

The teachers' preschool in-service of the second year followed the same pattern as that of the first year, with twice-daily short social gatherings where general directives and questions were discussed over coffee and donuts. Introductions were exchanged and

special efforts were made to see that new teachers were received and accepted into the faculty. One new teacher's method was to spend much of that week's work time visiting other teachers and helping them in their rooms. His class preparations he completed later in the evening. He not only was immediately accepted but became the instant, soft-spoken leader among the teachers. This same charm and attention to people quickly won over students and parents alike. He remains the most outstanding teacher, team member, and leader that the superintendent has yet worked with in education.

The teachers this year came up with many suggestions and solutions to educational needs in the school. They obviously had grown to trust and become more comfortable with the new superintendent's open style and group-discussion approach to leadership.

During that second year the board agreed that all teachers hired from the United States would be classified as U.S.-hire contracts. In the past, a teaching couple from the U.S. had been hired with one on each scale. When this decision was finally made, the previous contracting of a U.S.-hire teaching couple was corrected and made retroactive to September of that year. Another salary aspect that caused division among the staff was the two salary scales for teachers. However, since the local-hire staff was receiving higher yearly raises based on the American Embassy local-hire salary studies, no immediate change was made in that two-scale catch-up process. Within another year or two, the salary scales were projected to become one level. The need for a dollar

retirement program for teachers and office staff was first proposed to the board that second year. The board accepted the need and the concept; however, that year passed before the board voted in a plan that had been presented by the superintendent and studied by the staff. That third year, two presentations were necessary before the board voted in the plan, which also provided for individual alternatives for those who were not U.S. citizens.

That same year the discussion of the need for a board policy manual was initiated and agreed on. The completion of this task took two school years, hours of work, and the leadership push on the part of a talented board president.

The preceding points are mentioned to emphasize that change and new ideas were often not accepted immediately, no matter who presented them. An incubation period is often necessary for the members of a board to absorb, accept, and make the idea their own. The ego of the superintendent must not be based on the immediate acceptance of his/her ideas and recommendations.

Toward the middle of the second year, the "tight purse strings" of previous boards in relation to upkeep costs of the building began to become apparent. First the motor had to be replaced on the water-circulation unit of the heating system. Next the large roof area of the barn wing housing the multipurpose room and French classrooms began to leak. And then the greater circulation force of the new furnace motor began to break the old underground rusty water pipe system. This last repair was a major inconvenience, with new

pipes being installed each day after school, causing cement dust from the new holes in the walls to settle over all the classrooms. Even after daily cleanups the school was always a mess during those weeks. This was the only time the superintendent witnessed students and teachers attending classes with wool coats, hats, and gloves in order to continue with their studies. Since there was no alternative and progress was being made to restore heat to the classrooms, the teachers made jokes of it and passed off this hardship with good humor. The team spirit of togetherness was a great support during those weeks and helped everyone continue to make the best of the situation.

The false savings of ignoring upkeep costs, which should have been projected in the yearly tuition increase, was solidly brought home to the board. Not much needed to be said by the superintendent. From this point on, the board began to develop a different way of thinking about financial cost improvements, growth, and tuition increases.

The final "nail in the coffin" to previous budget thinking was when the superintendent encouraged one "big talker" oil man to begin promoting a fund-raising campaign for the school. The local international businessmen responded that the school should first raise tuitions enough to pay its own way, "get its house in order," and then they would consider donations for projects. By the third school year, the board's thinking toward the raising of tuitions had changed so completely that the superintendent needed to lead conservatively due to the limited absorption rate possible in that

small school, which had an administrative team of one--the superintendent. Expectations of improvements from increased income had to be delivered within the limitations of the school's supportive structure.

For example, the quality, as well as the perception thereof, and their performance needed to be up to the level of community expectations when the "reward" of both a higher salary scale and a 15% matching retirement program were granted during one school year. Also, for example, when a new classroom was financed and constructed, the school program of arts and music was immediately increased for all students in the school. When the school was finally enclosed by a cement-block wall allowing controlled access, then the softball field and later the soccer field were planted in grass. Besides the improvement this offered for students during the day, this was an immediate visual improvement for the parents who played softball every Sunday. This project took considerable time of the superintendent as the grass hauled in his car trunk had to be purchased in allotments that could be stored in water while a crew of bedouin women planted the grass piece by piece. One of the next projects that needed to be addressed concerned the upgrading and enlarging of the multipurpose room. Modifications would have done the job and have been within the financial reach of the school. However, a woman board member, who was caught up in the perception that "money flows," tried to promote a totally new construction of a large multipurpose room. This large project would need to be taken

on by someone else as the superintendent was already occupied making plans to leave. The interesting point to note here was the change in thinking of board members over a four-year period from little concern even with the upkeep of the school building to initiating on their own the idea of such a large construction project. All of these extra projects and changes were in addition to the daily demands of running the school program. And when the administration of a small overseas school is made up of just one person, the superintendent, then such extra projects must be considered in light of the energy level and demands on that energy of the school head, who generally must see to all the details.

Each year major construction projects were completed, which enabled improvements to be made in the educational program offered to students. The summer between the second and third years, a new kindergarten room with its own private playground under the shade of a small orchard of fruit trees was constructed. The parents and kindergartners were provided with their own security-gate entrance and flower gardens. This new classroom released areas for the development of stronger art and music programs.

Third Year--Off to a Run

As mentioned before, there was a definite limitation as to how much a one-superintendent administrative staff could do and a small school program could absorb during each school year. Fortunately, a Tunisian businessman, a building contractor and self-made millionaire, became a personal supporter of the superintendent's

efforts toward school improvements. He took charge of the construction projects. This member of the school community, Mr. Bismoot, was an invaluable partner in all the superintendent's efforts to provide improved campus facilities. Mr. Bismoot remains a close personal friend to this day.

Another helpful member of the school community was the American head of one of the oil-exploration companies. This man took over from the "big talker" oil man and quietly went about getting results from the fund-raising efforts. The businessmen now accepted the fact that the school had raised its tuitions enough so that every parent was involved in helping the school "pay its own way." With this thinking in place and with the personal skills of the new fund-raising chairman, proposed major capital projects were enthusiastically endorsed and financially supported by outside company grants.

The beauty of this community fund-raising effort was that all groups wanted to help. Each would guide us as to how best to gain financial support from his company. One had money locally, while others needed to support the school's requests through company foundations. Others had no funds but could support extra tuitions. The Hilton Hotel had no cash but provided its ballroom free with an at-cost dinner party with band. Others provided free airplane tickets, restaurant dinners, vacation nights in different hotels, and so on.

The yearly fund-raiser dinner/dance at the Hilton Hotel was not only a great school community gathering but also a highly effective

bridge for the school to reach the young parents who liked to party and dance. Inevitably, the kindergarten class would enroll new students whose parents knew of the school from the Hilton dinner/dance party.

During the summers of the superintendent's four years in Tunis, several more major construction projects were undertaken. A new science lab classroom was built on the second floor; also rooms for English as a second language and for computers were set up. Finally, a cement-block security wall around the ten-acre campus was constructed. With this in place, new entrance control gates were installed. With the campus area now having controlled access, the superintendent designed and had constructed a new round entrance drive and planted the new front gardens with flowers. Whole walls became covered with climbing roses and other flowering plants. The back softball and soccer fields were then planted with grass and watered during the dry season. The planting of the grass was quite a project, resulting in the superintendent's car trunk being filled every couple of weeks with a certain type of grass cuttings from a nursery. These cuttings were then transported to school, where they were then kept in water until they were planted piece by piece by a group of Arab women hired by the school for this purpose. The last major construction project of a new classroom planned by the superintendent was completed during the summer months of his last year.

All these efforts were worth the time, however, not only for the students, but also for the weekly Sunday softball activities of the school's adult community. The enclosed security area containing the softball field, now beautifully grassed and maintained with sand runways to the bases, became an immediate, tangible, and visible result of community fund-raising projects.

The superintendent's practice of accepting the existing school plant in a new location and then immediately looking for ways to improve on it to better fit the desired educational program needs for the students was a carry-over from his Ghana days, when he had had to make do with an old house turned school.

Toward the end of the second year, a new school-week schedule to begin during the third school year was accepted by the board. The new schedule extended the school days on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays so as to be able to shorten the Wednesday school day to 12:00 noon. Parents also needed to be sold on the Wednesday afternoon possibilities that they could then provide for their children outside of the regular school program. Private music lessons, ballet, horseback riding, swimming classes, and scouting were a few of those choices. After the third school year was under way, all seemed happy with the change. However, this change was accepted mainly on the trust the superintendent had built up during his first two years in Tunis.

This change in the school day and week during the third year provided three hours on Wednesday for teacher curriculum work. With this concentrated time, the team sharing and planning efforts

got into full swing. All part-time teachers were also contracted for these extra three hours. This block of time was divided into three one-hour blocks, with the first hour used for individual classroom preparations and the second hour for team meetings. The three teams were made up of kindergarten, first-, and second-grade teachers, and then third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade teachers, while the last team was composed of subject teachers of students in grades six through nine. Each team had a leader; this position was to be passed to another teacher the second semester. The last hour of these Wednesday afternoons was reserved for a faculty meeting, during which the team leaders reported on their groups' plans and shared their concerns with the entire staff. Typical of such a change, the productive use of these weekly planning times started off slowly, and then, after some months, teachers began to complain that they did not have enough time to plan what was needed. Wednesday afternoons provided valuable joint planning time and an important sharing and academic fellowship for the staff community. One teacher's comment made toward the end of the fourth school year probably best expressed the gain made from the Wednesday afternoon planning times. When the superintendent stated that perhaps Wednesdays should be changed back, she enthusiastically exclaimed, "No, don't do that! Before we just came running in, taught our classes, and ran out; now we are part of the whole school!"

During the third year, the board acted on providing a matching retirement program up to 15% of salary for all ACS staff. This plus

the voting for a one-salary scale for all teachers, regardless of local- or U.S.-hire classification, resulted in a substantial financial commitment and a vote of full confidence for the abilities and dedication of the staff.

Fourth Year--Running Smooth and Looking to Move

The fourth school year began much like the other three except that it was much easier since the basic organizational procedures were now in place regarding the preparation for new teachers, new students, parents, and board members. When the overseas school job demands begin to be sane and the needs seem to begin to be within reach, this is the time the superintendent begins to get the "itch" to move on to another school and new country challenge.

The superintendent continued with his practice of giving special attention to the details of the inclusion of new teachers in the faculty team. This he had learned from Cairo. He also continued with the special attention of personally interviewing and welcoming new students and parents so that they became a needed part of the school, student, and adult community. This practice he had developed in the school's front office in Ghana. Since there were no U.S.-hire teachers in Ghana, he had directed that same attention he had formerly given to new U.S.-hire teachers in Cairo toward new parents and students in Accra so that they felt an immediate and personal attachment to the superintendent. And then, due to the weakness of many of the local-hire teachers available in Accra, the superintendent had to become more actively involved and directive

with teachers and to formalize the professional communications between the school and the parent community. This he did by way of the "Dear parents" letters and the typed class-subject educational goals and programs. The superintendent also learned in Accra the need to order the best supportive educational materials available and to adapt the school campus so that the best possible teaching atmosphere and facilities were made available to gain the maximum teaching potential under the circumstances.

All of the above was then carried with the superintendent and purposely used to create the strongest supportive school community and education program then possible for the American Cooperative School of Tunis.

The superintendent's fourth year in Tunis was highly successful, and an evident supportive community helped make it a success. The teachers were set into team patterns of sharing and working together. In fact, the spirit was so united that when one of the new teachers turned out to be excellent in the classroom but impossible to work with in adult groups, the team simply adjusted the amount of group time involving this woman and went about what needed attention. Therefore, in a strong sort of backward way, the new, difficult teacher was accepted into the team while still making allowances for her unique personality needs and limitations.

Since there was also rapid turnover among board members, plans were made to help new members become full board participants. The new board policy was a great help in this process. Newly elected members immediately became visiting members for two meetings before

their voting tenure began. Receptions and small orientation sessions were scheduled with the board to explain long-range goals and directions. These activities were some of the efforts that helped maintain an ongoing united board community.

That year several events took place in Tunis that began to affect the general safety of the staff on the streets and in their homes. First, the Arab League moved its central offices from Cairo to the small capital of Tunisia. And months later the Palestinian army was evacuated from Beirut to Tunis. These two groups added to the balancing acts and power moves of political factions in Tunisia who were jockeying for more power as the old "President for Life" seemed to be nearing the end of his controls. The rugged, sometimes dangerous side of many in the Tunisian population seemed to have been turned loose. Robberies and street assaults became more common and dangerous.

The fourth year ended with one of the fine U.S.-hire teachers, who had developed excellent rapport with Tunisians, being stabbed several times in the upper back by a robber in his home. The stabbing caused this young man to become paralyzed and hospitalized the rest of the school year. He did regain partial movement in his legs after months of physical therapy. The robber and would-be killer was caught the same night and months later was released due to obvious family connections and the fact that the victim was not a Tunisian. When this teacher was able in July to move a bit on crutches, the superintendent took him back to his brother's home in

Minneapolis, where he remained for a year under intensive physical therapy. The board agreed to continue paying him 80% of his salary and to continue paying his accident insurance during that next year. This action was testimony not only to the excellent teaching he had done in Tunis but also to the community support for one of its members.

Even with these supportive gestures, this was not the pleasant note upon which the superintendent would like to have completed four years at the American Cooperative School of Tunis. Nevertheless, a good feeling of accomplishment was felt in reviewing the progress made during the four-year period of the superintendent's efforts in strengthening the educational program of the American school in Tunis. The creation of a supportive school community was greatly responsible for the successes the superintendent was able to realize during his stay.

Summary

During the superintendent's four years in Tunis there were many other worthwhile activities, such as an active school-to-school program with Ridgewood, New Jersey, the hosting of the annual Maghreb Association Conference in 1979, the rapid success of the English-language acquisition of non-English-speaking students, a ninetieth percentile school average ranking during the last two years on the results of the California Achievement Test, and more. However, the focus of this chapter was on the community-formation process learned during the past eight years in Cairo and Accra,

which was purposely applied during the four years at the American Cooperative School of Tunis.

The chapter was written in a four-year rhythm based on the following themes. The first year in Tunis was spent mostly in getting acquainted, asking, listening, and spending the time necessary to earn acceptance as part of the school community, of belonging. By the second year in Tunis, the superintendent had begun to make his own mark on the school program, selection of teachers, and beginning inroads into the board's thinking and values for the school. The third year dealt basically with when the school and community were organized and supportive of the superintendent's directive values for the school's educational program. The third year was a year of further refinement. The fourth year was smooth, orchestrated, and beginning to become too easy: It was a time when the superintendent began looking for a new school challenge and another international adventure. In each small overseas school the superintendent experienced a repetition of this same four-year pattern.

The energies and skills of the superintendent were directed toward getting acquainted, being accepted, and then leading the four major groups in the school. The first group was the governing board of the school. The process here involved becoming sensitive to the recent history of the school and to the mind-sets of the members. This was a time to ask questions and to listen to people. When the superintendent learned the thinking starting point of each member, he could lead from that foundation reference point. The

superintendent's remaining concern over the four years was then to see that new members were oriented to the board's goals for the school; a written board policy was part of this process. Orientation meetings for new members and making sure they felt an immediate part of the board were important objectives of the superintendent's seeing that the board chairman received the new members as needed additions to the board as social equals. Every board member, whether new or old, must feel full membership with total access to all board information. This community-building need was learned the hard way from Cairo, Egypt.

The second group to which the superintendent directed his attention and skills was the faculty. He saw the faculty as the core around which was to be built the greater school community. The teachers became the communicative spokes into the student body, board, and parent groups. The superintendent had experienced this in Cairo and to a limited extent in Accra, due to the fact that local-hire teachers in Ghana were not socially active in the parent group. The role of teachers in community formation was actively sought and nurtured by the superintendent in Tunis. For the teachers to become a positive, effective force in this process, they must first feel a needed part of the total staff and realize part ownership in the school's mission and goals.

Specifically planned stroking of the faculty by the superintendent was part of that procedure. First, there was the group sharing and input into educational planning, the

acknowledgment of excellence along with the fair correcting of error, the personal recognition of birthdays, the concern with them for a fair remuneration in salary, the need for a dollar retirement program, the furnishing of requested educational class material, the construction of improved facilities, and finally the weekly time provided for teachers to meet and plan. Second, there was the concern that new teachers to the school were immediately brought into the group as full and equal partners. This process involved detailed communications, actions, and social involvement from day-one interview, apartment preparation, to airport meeting, to programmed loneliness breaks, to initial contacts into the board, faculty, and parent groups, and finally to a year-long nurturing by way of periodic social gatherings.

The third group of concern for the superintendent was the student body. There were 130 students when he arrived at the school, and he wanted to quickly get to know them and begin to communicate his values and to express his concern for each individual student. The sooner they knew him as a friend who insisted on responsible behavior and self-discipline, the sooner being sent to the office meant disappointing a friend who must fairly discipline.

One or two students always seemed to need to try out the new superintendent. After those students were satisfied that fair, firm, and constant discipline would be given, then the group's expectations helped students practice self-discipline. When the

heartbeat of interaction was established, the new arrivals quickly adjusted to the school atmosphere.

To accomplish this common atmosphere of expectations, the superintendent set up daily contact times, when he had a chance to meet students in three small bus groups where he could greet each one personally as he/she got off the bus in the mornings. Then during the morning student line-up time just before entering the building, he could make a visible leadership presence rather than a verbal directive. The superintendent had learned from Ghana that the personal interview and welcome of each new student established a personal relationship at the time when the youngster had no friends and was most vulnerable. Personally seeing to this orientation of a student into a classroom and to introductions to fellow classmates immediately helped the new student get started in the student community. The buses at the close of each school day were again the superintendent's regular contact time with the students. Greeting and helping students get started with a smile each day and then for the students to be able to leave each day with a pleasant personal send-off were important values upon which the superintendent acted each school day of the year.

The fourth group, although none of the four is necessarily mentioned in order of importance, was the parents. The superintendent wanted to draw parents in close to the school for reasons other than just that their children studied there. He was determined that the school become an important focus in their lives while living in Tunis. Monthly gatherings were planned, which drew

them together in the school for which they would learn in time to feel ownership and be comfortable. As important as meeting their child's teacher, seeing their child perform in a musical or sports competition, or voting for a new board member was the action of parents getting together and becoming acquainted with each other in the process. The encouraged use of the school as the total family's community center was a value the superintendent had learned at the Cairo American College.

The personal interview and shared concern for their child's educational needs were important parts of the process of including new parents in the community circle around the superintendent and the school. However, one of the most important community-formation tools was learned at the Lincoln Community School of Ghana. This tool was the writing of the weekly communication called "Dear parents." Even though these were one-way communications from the superintendent, they served to focus the parents on him as a community point of reference. Parents felt they knew the superintendent personally due to his shared weekly thoughts and directives. Writing these letters took a lot of time each week. However, every parent, regardless of nationality, social group, or sponsoring company, was privy to the same shared information about the school. All parents were equal partners and important participants in the school community.

The Tunisian school experience allowed the superintendent to combine the community-formation processes that he had learned from

both Cairo and Ghana. This was the first time he felt he was orchestrating all elements in a school community and was able to purposely pull together all the nationalities and different American groups into a supportive school community. The realization and satisfaction as superintendent of being able personally to join together a community was quietly rewarding. To learn how one individual can have the potential for manipulative power around a small overseas school was a new reality and satisfaction for the superintendent of the American Cooperative School of Tunis.

CHAPTER VI

REPORT ON THE SURVEY

Introduction

The researcher's purpose in conducting the survey reported in this chapter was stated in the first chapter of this historical descriptive study. The writer believed that the results from the questionnaire would both provide the representative group's reactions to the researcher's findings as expressed in the study conclusions and add suggestions and insights into the community-building efforts of other administrators in overseas American schools.

This chapter is organized under the following headings: Preparation of the Questionnaire, Determination of the Population Surveyed, Results of the Survey Regarding the Superintendent's Role in the Formation of a Supportive Community Around an American Overseas School, Interpretation of Results, Conclusions, Suggested Experiences or Strategies, and Summary.

Preparation of the Questionnaire

The survey instrument was organized in three sections. The first section was directed at gathering background information on each of the superintendents and his/her overseas school. The researcher was interested to learn whether the number of years of

administrative experience overseas or previous administrative experience in the United States would make a difference in the survey results. The age of the administrator and the degree of thought and attention given to the topic were also recorded separately. The researcher's interest in the type of overseas school was narrowed to size, grades included, area of the world, and finally the location of the school in relation to the homes of its students. The survey results were then tabulated under each of these headings to learn if there would be a difference between each category's group response.

The second section of the survey included 27 statements that were directly based on the chapter summaries and the conclusions of this researcher. The five responses listed after each statement were: (a) strongly agree, (b) agree, (c) no opinion, (d) disagree, and (e) strongly disagree. The superintendents surveyed were instructed to encircle the letter of the response that best represented their thinking.

The survey responses were then separately tabulated according to answers concerning the background information on the superintendents and their schools. The responses to the 27 categories were then tallied so as to determine a mean score for each of the items. The mean scores were computed by multiplying the frequency of each category times the category value, then adding these products and dividing by the total number of responses. The category values were as follows: a = 5 points, b = 4, c = 3, d = 2, and e = 1.

The item mean scores that are included in the statistical results section can be interpreted on the following scale: a mean score of 5 = very favorable, 4 = favorable, 3 = neutral, 2 = unfavorable, and 1 = very unfavorable.

In the third major section of the survey, superintendents were asked to write down those personal experiences or strategies that they had found helpful in pulling together a supportive community around an overseas school. Appendix A contains a copy of the survey instrument.

Determination of the Population Surveyed

A representative group of overseas American school administrators was selected from the United States Department of State's Office of Overseas School's booklet titled Overseas American-Sponsored Elementary and Secondary Schools Assisted by the U.S. Department of State (June 1987). Out of 176 schools listed in that publication, 36 were randomly selected for the purpose of this study. Twenty-six administrators (70%) responded to the survey. The results reported in this chapter are based on that group.

The original plan was to conduct this survey during the 1988 conference of the Association of American International Education in San Diego, California. Twenty-five questionnaires were distributed during that conference, and the balance had to be mailed to administrators' overseas addresses.

Results of the Survey Regarding the Superintendent's Role
in the Formation of a Supportive Community Around an
American Overseas School

<u>Item</u>	<u>No. & % for Total Survey</u>
1. How many years were you a chief school administrator in the U.S.?	
a. 0 years	19/75%
b/c. 1 to 10 years	7/25%
2. How recent was that U.S. administrative experience?	
a. 0 years	18/69%
b/c. 1 to 4 years	5/19%
d/e. 5 or beyond	3/12%
3. How many years have you been a chief school administrator in an American overseas school?	
a. 1 to 4 years	12/48%
b. 5 to 10 years	4/16%
c/d. 11 or beyond	9/36%
4. Your age falls within the following category:	
b. 31 to 40 years old	8/31%
c. 41 to 50 years old	9/35%
d. 51 or beyond	9/35%
5. What degree of thought and attention have you given to your role in the community-formation process?	
(1) Actively involved	10/38%
(2) Involved	4/15%
(3-5) Sometimes to never thought of it	12/44%
6. Where is the location of your present school in the A/OS world?	
a. Europe	8/31%
b. Near E/S Asia	2/ 8%
c. East Asia	3/12%
d. American Rep.	10/38%
e. Africa	3/12%
7. What is the size of your school?	
a/b. 50 to 300 students	12/46%
c. 301 to 600 students	6/23%
d/e/f. 601 or beyond	8/31%
8. What are the levels included in your school?	
b. Grades K to 8	6/23%
c. Grades K to 12	20/77%
9. Where is the location of your school in relation to the school community?	
a. Located in middle of community where many of the students can walk to school	3/12%
b. Located in town but about 15 to 20 minutes by family car	9/36%
c. Located far from the living areas of most parents in the city. School buses and private cars must be used to transport students to school.	13/52%

ITEM	ITEM												
	1-a	1-b/c	2-a	2-b/c	2-d/e	3-a	3-b	3-c/d	4-b	4-c	4-d	5-(1)	5-(2)
1-a	18		18	0	1	10	4	5	8	5	6	7	3
1-b/c		7	7	5	2	3	0	4	0	4	3	3	1
2-a	17	0	17	0	0	10	3	5	8	4	6	7	2
2-b/c	0	5	0	5	0	3	0	2	0	2	3	1	1
2-d/e	1	2	1	0	3	0	1	2	0	3	0	2	1
3-a	17	3	17	3	0	13	0	0	6	5	2	3	1
3-b	4	0	4	0	1	0	4	0	2	2	1	2	1
3-c/d	5	4	5	2	2	0	0	9	0	2	5	5	2
4-b	8	0	8	0	0	6	1	1	8	0	0	3	1
4-c	5	4	5	2	3	5	2	2	0	9	0	3	1
4-d	6	3	6	3	0	2	1	7	0	0	9	4	2
5-(1)	7	3	7	1	2	3	2	5	3	3	4	10	0
5-(2)	3	1	3	1	1	1	1	2	3	1	2	0	4
5-(3-5)	8	3	8	3	0	8	1	2	1	5	3	0	0
6-a	6	2	6	1	2	4	2	2	1	5	2	5	1
6-b	3		3	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0
6-c	2	1	2	1	0	2	0	1	3	0	1	0	1
6-d	6	3	6	2	1	4	2	4	3	2	4	5	1
6-e	2	1	2	1	0	2	0	1	1	1	1	0	1
7-a/b	10	2	10	1	2	7	1	4	5	4	3	4	3
7-c	5	1	5	0	1	2	2	2	3	1	2	3	0
7-d/f	4	1	4	3	0	4	1	3	0	4	4	3	1
8-b	4	2	4	1	1	5	0	1	2	3	1	3	0
8-c	16	5	16	4	2	8	4	8	6	6	8	7	4
9-a	2	1	2	1	0	2	0	1	1	2	0	1	0
9-b	6	3	6	2	1	8	0	2	4	3	2	2	0
9-c	11	3	11	2	2	4	4	5	3	4	6	6	4

ITEM	ITEM													
	5-(3-5)	6-a	6-b	6-c	6-d	6-e	7-a/b	7-c	7-d/f	8-b	8-c	9-a	9-b	9-c
1-a	8	6	2	1	7	2	10	5	4	4	16	2	6	10
1-b/c	3	2	0	1	3	1	2	1	4	2	6	k	3	3
2-a	8	5	2	2	7	2	9	5	4	4	15	2	6	8
2-b/c	3	1	0	1	2	1	1	0	4	1	4	1	2	2
2-d/e	0	2	0	0	1	0	2	1	0	1	2	0	1	2
3-a	8	4	1	2	4	2	7	2	4	5	8	2	7	5
3-b	1	2	0	0	2	0	1	2	1	0	5	0	0	4
3-c/d	2	2	1	1	4	1	4	2	3	1	8	1	2	5
4-b	3	1	0	2	4	1	5	3	0	2	8	1	4	3
4-c	5	5	1	0	2	1	4	1	7	2	5	2	3	4
4-d	3	2	1	1	4	1	3	1	4	1	8	0	2	6
5-(1)	0	5	0	0	5	0	4	3	3	3	7	1	2	6
5-(2)	0	1	0	1	1	1	3	0	1	0	5	0	0	4
5-(3-5)	1	2	2	2	3	2	5	2	4	3	8	2	6	3
6-a	2	8	0	0	0	0	5	0	3	3	5	0	3	5
6-b	2	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1
6-c	2	0	0	3	0	0	2	0	1	1	2	0	1	1
6-d	3	0	0	0	10	0	1	6	3	0	11	2	2	5
6-e	2	0	0	0	0	3	3	0	0	1	2	1	1	1
7-a/b	5	5	1	2	1	3	12	0	0	5	9	2	4	6
7-c	2	0	0	0	6	0	0	6	0	0	6	0	2	3
7-d/f	4	3	1	1	3	0	0	0	8	1	7	1	3	4
8-b	3	3	1	1	0	1	5	0	1	6	0	1	4	1
8-c	8	5	1	2	10	2	7	6	7	0	21	2	5	12
9-a	2	0	0	0	2	1	2	0	1	1	2	3	0	0
9-b	7	3	1	2	2	1	4	2	3	4	5	0	9	0
9-c	2	5	1	1	5	1	6	3	4	1	13	0	0	13

Key to tabulated results of Part A and Part B of the survey instrument:

PART A: SUPERINTENDENT-SCHOOL BACKGROUND (number/percentage of responses)

1. Number of years as chief school administrator in the U.S.
2. How recent was this U.S. administrative experience?
3. Number of years as American school administrator overseas
4. Age of superintendent
5. Degree of thought and attention given to superintendent role in community formation
6. School location in A/OS world
7. Size of school
8. Grade levels of school
9. School/home relative location

PART B: SURVEY FINDINGS (expressed in mean scores)

1. Superintendent: enthusiastic and highly personal
2. Superintendent: human-relations skills
3. Superintendent: caring friend to all, not a partisan member
4. Superintendent: accept offers of others to get settled
5. Superintendent: accept offers of others to get settled
6. Superintendent: active participant in dinner/reception circles
7. Superintendent: time needed for belonging leadership
8. Verbal and visible warm welcome--personal worth
9. Visual message of school and grounds as support
10. Incorporate national symbols to draw in international families
11. Superintendent: help familiarize new arrivals to new school
12. Parent/teachers hosting of new teachers/ties to community
13. Initial interview/days determine mind-set
14. Superintendent: involved in initial welcome of teachers in a large school and of both teachers and students in smaller schools
15. Superintendent: during interview give chance for new families to show past unpleasant school experiences
16. American school is place of security
17. Third-culture "coping" community
18. Superintendent: active salesman of total school program
19. Superintendent: present needs and a plan to help
20. Welcome adults to use school campus
21. Plan opportunities that include all groups
22. Plan for monthly face-to-face parent meetings
23. Superintendent: on constant lookout for new adult talent
24. After-school intramural program draws students/parents into school community
25. Superintendent: active leadership in consensus making
26. Superintendent: sends regular communications to homes
27. Use of printed curriculum handouts

ITEM	ITEM									
	TOTAL	1-a	1-b/c	2-a	2-b/c	2-d/e	3-a	3-b	3-c/d	4-b
PART A										
1.		19/75%	7/25%							
2.				18/69%	5/19%	3/12%				
3.							12/48%	4/16%	9/36%	
4.										8/31%
5.										
6.										
7.										
8.										
9.										
PART B										
1.	4.53	4.47	4.71	4.47	4.60	5.00	4.46	4.50	4.67	4.37
2.	4.42	4.79	4.71	4.79	4.60	5.00	4.85	4.75	4.78	4.74
3.	4.57	4.42	4.71	4.42	4.80	5.00	4.31	4.75	4.56	4.50
4.	4.92	4.58	5.00	4.58	5.00	5.00	4.61	4.75	4.78	4.50
5.	4.38	4.26	4.57	4.26	4.40	5.00	4.31	4.50	4.33	4.50
6.	3.65	3.53	4.00	3.53	3.80	4.33	3.61	3.50	4.89	3.62
7.	4.60	4.58	4.00	4.58	3.60	5.00	4.31	4.50	4.56	4.50
8.	4.62	4.58	4.71	4.58	4.60	5.00	4.69	4.50	4.56	4.50
9.	4.58	4.53	4.71	4.53	4.60	5.00	4.54	4.75	4.56	4.37
10.	4.12	4.05	4.43	4.05	4.20	5.00	4.54	4.50	3.67	4.37
11.	4.31	4.21	4.57	4.21	4.40	5.00	4.15	4.50	4.44	4.50
12.	4.23	4.18	4.43	4.18	4.20	4.67	4.31	4.00	4.22	4.37
13.	4.15	4.05	4.43	4.05	4.20	4.67	4.23	3.50	4.33	4.74
14.	4.19	3.89	4.28	3.89	4.00	5.00	4.08	3.25	4.56	4.12
15.	3.70	3.63	3.43	3.63	3.60	4.33	3.69	3.25	3.56	4.87
16.	4.04	3.89	4.28	3.89	4.00	5.00	3.91	4.25	3.56	4.00
17.	4.15	4.16	4.14	4.16	3.80	4.67	4.23	3.00	4.22	4.25
18.	4.60	4.47	4.86	4.47	4.80	5.00	4.61	4.50	4.56	4.74
19.	4.19	4.16	4.57	4.16	4.40	5.00	4.15	4.25	4.22	4.25
20.	4.28	4.11	4.83	4.11	4.75	4.67	4.15	4.25	4.00	4.00
21.	4.20	4.11	4.50	4.11	4.50	4.33	3.85	4.00	4.33	4.00
22.	3.69	3.63	3.86	3.63	3.40	4.67	3.69	3.50	3.78	3.37
23.	4.27	4.18	4.57	4.18	4.40	4.67	4.61	3.75	3.56	4.25
24.	4.58	4.47	4.86	4.47	4.80	4.67	4.61	4.25	4.11	4.37
25.	4.48	4.32	4.83	4.32	4.75	5.00	4.42	4.00	4.11	4.37
26.	4.56	4.53	4.71	4.53	4.60	4.67	4.69	4.00	4.11	4.62
27.	4.52	4.53	4.57	4.53	4.40	5.00	4.54	4.00	4.78	4.50

ITEM	ITEM								
	4-c	4-d	5-(1)	5-(2)	5-(3/4/5)	6-a	6-b	6-c	6-d
PART A									
1.									
2.									
3.									
4.	9/35%	9/35%							
5.			10/38%	4/15%	12/44%				
6.						8/31%	2/8%	3/12%	10/38%
7.									
8.									
9.									
PART B									
1.	4.67	4.56	4.90	4.50	4.27	4.78	4.00	4.00	4.60
2.	4.78	5.22	4.90	4.00	4.55	4.78	5.00	4.33	4.80
3.	4.55	4.56	4.90	4.75	4.18	5.00	3.00	4.33	4.70
4.	4.78	4.78	4.90	4.75	4.55	4.67	4.50	4.67	4.60
5.	4.33	4.44	4.50	4.50	4.18	4.37	3.00	4.00	4.60
6.	4.00	3.44	3.80	3.50	3.64	3.15	4.00	4.00	3.50
7.	4.89	3.89	4.67	4.50	4.55	4.50	4.50	4.00	4.56
8.	4.67	4.56	4.80	4.75	4.82	4.50	4.50	4.00	4.70
9.	4.78	4.00	4.80	4.75	4.36	4.88	4.50	4.33	4.40
10.	4.11	3.78	4.30	4.50	3.91	4.00	3.00	4.33	4.30
11.	4.44	4.33	4.80	4.75	3.73	4.50	3.00	4.33	4.20
12.	4.22	4.22	4.50	4.25	4.00	4.12	4.00	4.33	4.33
13.	4.11	4.11	4.80	4.50	3.91	4.00	4.00	4.67	4.10
14.	4.44	4.44	4.20	4.57	4.00	4.12	4.50	4.67	4.10
15.	3.89	3.56	3.70	4.50	3.45	3.88	3.50	3.67	3.80
16.	4.22	3.78	4.10	4.50	3.73	4.25	3.50	4.33	3.90
17.	4.33	3.89	4.30	4.50	3.91	4.12	4.00	4.00	4.10
18.	4.89	4.22	4.40	4.75	3.73	4.87	5.00	4.67	4.20
19.	4.56	3.78	3.80	4.75	3.91	4.62	2.50	4.33	4.10
20.	4.44	3.89	4.50	4.00	4.00	4.50	3.00	4.00	4.20
21.	4.56	3.75	4.33	4.75	3.91	4.50	3.50	3.67	4.22
22.	4.11	3.33	4.80	3.75	3.18	4.12	3.00	3.00	3.80
23.	4.56	3.89	4.10	4.74	4.00	4.62	4.00	4.33	4.00
24.	4.78	4.44	4.70	4.50	4.55	4.62	4.50	4.67	4.40
25.	4.67	4.44	4.67	4.75	4.18	4.50	4.50	4.33	4.22
26.	4.67	4.44	4.60	4.50	4.55	4.62	5.00	4.33	4.60
27.	4.67	4.44	4.70	4.75	4.36	4.50	4.50	4.33	4.50

ITEM	ITEM								
	6-e	7-a/b	7-c	7-d/e/f	8-b	8-c	9-a	9-b	9-c
PART A									
1.									
2.									
3.									
4.									
5.									
6.	3/12%								
7.		12/46%	6/23%	8/33%					
8.					6/23%	20/77%			
9.							3/12%	9/36%	13/52%
PART B									
1.	4.67	4.56	4.33	4.60	4.67	4.48	4.00	4.33	4.54
2.	5.00	4.62	4.83	4.70	4.83	4.76	4.66	4.67	4.86
3.	4.33	4.50	4.67	4.50	4.33	4.90	4.66	4.22	4.69
4.	4.67	4.56	4.50	4.90	4.67	4.67	4.66	4.56	4.77
5.	4.67	4.19	4.67	3.97	4.33	4.17	4.66	4.22	4.33
6.	3.67	3.75	3.17	3.84	4.17	3.45	4.33	3.66	3.86
7.	5.00	4.63	4.67	4.40	4.67	4.58	4.66	4.56	4.58
8.	4.67	4.62	4.67	4.47	4.67	4.60	4.66	4.44	4.69
9.	4.67	4.62	4.33	4.57	4.67	4.55	4.66	4.33	4.77
10.	4.33	4.19	4.33	3.80	4.17	4.32	4.66	3.33	4.15
11.	4.67	4.56	4.33	3.97	4.33	4.30	3.67	4.11	4.62
12.	4.33	4.34	4.33	3.87	4.67	4.05	4.33	4.22	4.23
13.	4.33	4.31	4.17	4.20	4.50	4.05	4.00	4.11	4.15
14.	4.00	4.13	4.00	4.00	4.50	4.10	4.00	4.11	4.15
15.	4.33	3.69	3.67	3.47	3.49	3.75	4.33	3.56	4.62
16.	3.67	4.31	3.83	3.80	4.33	3.90	4.33	3.66	4.33
17.	4.67	4.44	3.49	3.84	4.55	4.05	4.66	4.89	4.23
18.	4.67	4.75	3.67	4.70	4.67	4.55	4.66	3.67	4.69
19.	4.33	4.44	4.67	4.27	4.00	4.25	5.00	3.89	4.23
20.	4.33	4.32	4.17	4.35	4.00	4.37	4.33	3.56	4.46
21.	4.33	4.31	4.00	4.00	3.83	3.21	4.66	3.78	4.42
22.	3.50	3.94	4.67	3.30	3.49	3.65	4.66	3.00	3.92
23.	4.67	4.69	4.17	4.20	4.50	4.20	4.00	4.44	4.23
24.	5.00	4.50	4.33	4.80	4.67	4.55	4.66	4.56	4.54
25.	4.33	4.50	4.00	4.55	4.50	4.42	4.66	4.44	4.50
26.	4.33	4.59	4.50	4.57	4.00	4.50	5.00	4.67	4.46
27.	4.33	4.75	4.33	4.37	4.67	4.50	5.00	4.33	4.54

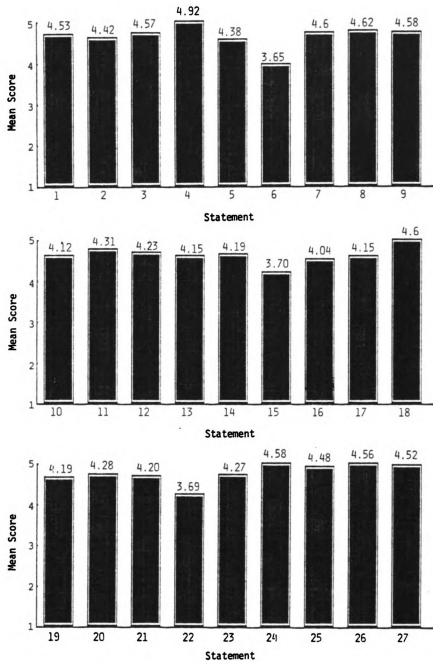
Interpretation of Results

Figure 1, in which the results of the total responses are shown, reveals that the normative group's reactions supported the writer's experiences as recounted in the dissertation.

The answers to just three statements registered mean scores that were not in the 4.0-and-above range, the "favorable to very favorable" category. Those three exceptional scores, although not "negative," were within the "neutral toward favorable" category. Specifically, Statement 6 had a mean score of 3.53, whereas Statements 15 and 22 had mean scores of 3.70 and 3.69, respectively. The three statements were as follows:

6. The superintendent needs to be an active participant in the dinner and reception circles of the overseas community.
15. The superintendent needs to include in his/her interviewing and welcoming of new families to the school opportunities to help disarm them of the negative baggage they may be carrying from past unpleasant school experiences.
22. The superintendent needs to plan the school year with periodic, monthly opportunities for adults to have face-to-face social contacts and shared experiences at the school. These regularly scheduled activities help in forming the community around the school.

As a way of making a comparison that may be of relative interest regarding these lower mean scores based on the total response to the survey, one should note that, concerning Statement 6, administrators who had had 11 or more years of experience in overseas schools registered a higher mean score of 4.89 (favorable to very favorable). For Statement 15, the mean score of school administrators whose ages were within the 31 to 40 years range registered a higher mean score of 4.87 (favorable to very



SCALE: 5=Very favorable
4=Favorable

3=Neutral

2=Unfavorable
1=Very unfavorable

Figure 1.--Graphic representation of survey responses.

favorable). Finally, for Statement 22, superintendents who stated that they were actively involved in community building registered a higher mean score of 4.8 (favorable to very favorable).

The following general highlights of the differences in mean scores, according to the categories of the final part of the survey regarding the background information on the superintendents and their schools, make some interesting comparisons:

1. Overseas school administrators who had had no experience as a chief school administrator in the United States registered higher mean scores for 23 out of 27 (89%) statements than did those who had had only one to ten years of experience.

2. Superintendents whose previous chief school administrative experience in the United States had been five or more years before registered 23 (87%) higher mean scores than those administrators whose more recent U.S. experience had been within the last four years.

3. Regarding the category listing the number of years of experience as an overseas American administrator, not much difference was registered. Specifically, those differences were that superintendents who had had one to four years of experience registered 16 (59%) higher mean scores than those who had had five to ten years of experience. Superintendents in the next category, 11 years or more of experience, registered 16 (59%) higher mean scores than administrators in the first two categories.

4. The results for the comparison of superintendents by ages revealed that those 41 to 50 years old and 51 and beyond had 21

(77%) higher mean scores than superintendents in the other age groups.

5. Perhaps to be expected, the degree of thought and attention a superintendent had given his/her role in the community-formation process followed closely the percentage of higher mean scores. Superintendents in the "actively involved" category registered 15 (52%) higher mean scores than the "involved" group and 21 (77%) higher mean scores than those in the "sometimes to never thought of it" group.

6. The comparison of mean scores according to the five A/OS areas of the world indicated only two out-of-the-ordinary results. Superintendents from Europe registered only two "neutral to favorable" mean scores, whereas those from the Near East/South Asia registered the highest number (10) of "neutral to favorable" mean scores.

7. Results of the comparisons of mean scores with size of a superintendent's school showed that superintendents of smaller schools (50 to 300 students) registered 18 (67%) higher mean scores than those from schools with 301 to 600 students and 17 (63%) higher mean scores than superintendents of schools with student populations of 1,501 or more.

8. In comparing the mean scores of superintendents of K-8 schools with those of superintendents of K-12 schools, it was found that K-8 superintendents registered 20 (74%) higher mean scores than their counterparts in K-12 schools. Two characteristics of a K-8

school may account for some of this difference. The facts that the K-8 schools had smaller student populations and that parents of younger students are usually more involved with the schools might have contributed to this difference in scores.

9. The last background-information category concerned the location of the overseas school in relation to the school community. Superintendents of schools where most of the students could walk to school registered 20 (74%) higher mean scores than superintendents of schools located in town but about 15 to 20 minutes by car from students' homes. That same category, however, registered only 15 (56%) higher mean scores than superintendents of schools in which students lived far from the school and had to be transported by school buses and/or private cars.

Conclusions

1. Overseas American school administrators who had had no previous school administrative experience in the United States had a greater affirmative insight into the findings of this researcher regarding the role of the administrator in the school community formation. In addition, the less recent was that stateside experience, the more in tune was the administrator to the community-development findings.

2. The number of years of overseas school administrative experience did not necessarily increase an administrator's insight into his/her role in forming a supportive school community.

3. Superintendents who were between 41 and 50 years old had a greater understanding of their role in community building than did their counterparts of other ages.

4. Superintendents who gave greater thought and attention to community development had greater insight into the process than those who gave less consideration to community development.

5. European superintendents were more involved in community development than were those heading schools in the Near East/South Asia.

6. Superintendents of smaller overseas schools and of K-8 schools had a greater insight into their role in the school community formation process and, in like manner, exhibited greater understanding of and need for their role in forming a supportive school community for an American overseas school.

Suggested Experiences or Strategies

On the last page, Part B, of the survey, superintendents were asked to include any personal experiences or strategies they had found helpful in pulling together a community around an overseas school. These shared thoughts on practical applications in helping form a supportive school community are as follows:

Board

Hold board meetings where the board listens to and communicates with the community it represents.

Staff

1. New people should be met at the airport.
2. Hold a wine and cheese party for the school community to meet both the new and old staff.
3. Involve second-year teachers in planning welcome programs and orientation for new staff.
4. Have the local staff teach the language of the country to new staff members. These are regular classes of one hour twice weekly, where the local staff are paid for their time.
5. Provide food, flowers, and so on, for the teachers upon their arrival. Also, have a host-country family help them through the first couple of weeks.
6. The school should provide social-club memberships for overseas staff.
7. The superintendent should hold small dinner parties for new staff members.
8. Local staff members set up a few social activities.
9. Hold monthly staff/parents cookouts.
10. Make people aware that they will experience "culture shock" and that this is normal. Have printed information as well as videotapes available and work with them to overcome this shock.

Students

1. Hold community-service days where students are involved in projects on campus, as well as in the larger community. Examples of

projects include painting the gym at the YMCA, entertaining orphans, donating toys, visiting the aging, and taking the blind to lunch.

2. Conduct strong after-school sports and activities programs.

Parents

1. Organize international dinners or nights.
2. Combine the annual open-house night with an international potluck dinner.
3. Hold a school bazaar every year for parents, students, and alumni.
4. Hold parent conferences, which draw many parents to school and allow presentation of information.
5. Sponsor exhibits, performances, and contests involving students, which draw various groups together.
6. Use local sports stars to offer clinics to parents and students on weekends.
7. Organize fun-and-fitness nights at the school. The gym is opened and instruction is provided by the physical education teacher, who organizes a parent/teacher sports program one night a week.
8. Make the campus a "closed condominium" available for family use on the weekends.
9. Organize alumni membership meetings, social gatherings, parties, and dinners.
10. Hold "headmaster coffee forums" every other month, where a 45- to 60-minute presentation is given to parents on an area of

education. These forums have three goals: (a) parents have an opportunity to meet with each other; (b) presentations are made, with questions and answers; and (c) during these evening affairs, current questions and answers on school life can be addressed.

11. Invite new parents to a special evening at the school within the first three weeks of school.

12. Invite parents to a planning session for new courses such as sex education.

13. At parents' night early in the year, give parents a written curriculum outline of their child's grade.

14. Hold athletic tournaments actively involve parents in planning and running the events.

15. Hold periodic small-group (10 to 15) parent coffees/teas with the superintendent.

16. Organize parent volunteer programs.

17. The superintendent should send out colorful newsletters weekly.

Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

1. Hold open forums at the PTA meetings.

2. Involve the PTA in hosting new parents' evenings.

3. Organize parent booster clubs for athletic programs.

4. The PTA has added a Community Information and Service Committee. Each year they sponsor at least two social events that bring teachers and parents together. Several community seminars are also organized, in which specialists give presentations on such

school programs as reading, English as a second language, helping the learning disabled, and internationalism at the school.

5. The PTA sponsored a day of international food.

6. The PTA sponsored numerous campus-improvement projects around the school, such as painting, building playground equipment, landscaping, and so on. The materials that the parents, teachers, and students used to complete the work were donated by the community.

7. The PTA holds a barbecue for the staff.

Summary

The 27 survey statements were based on the findings of this research study. All but three of those statements received "favorable to very favorable" support from the 26 overseas administrators who responded to the survey. A profile of the administrator who most readily agreed with the findings of this report was one within the 41 to 50 age range with no, or at least no recent, stateside chief school administrative experience who, however, did have one to four years of overseas experience. The superintendent was most likely to be the head of a K-8 school with a population of 50 to 300 students. This school was likely to be located in Europe. In short, the results of the survey supported the findings of this research project in the mean score range of the "favorable to highly favorable" category.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

Introduction

The format of this research followed a historical descriptive account, which used a participant observation approach in studying three overseas sites of different American schools. The two chapters covering purpose, methodology used, and related research began this study. The Cairo American College of Maadi/Digla, Egypt, was the school site of the third chapter. The topic of the next chapter was the Lincoln Community School in Accra, Ghana. The last school studied, the American Cooperative School of Tunis, Tunisia, was recorded in Chapter V. The reports on the above three schools covered a four-year period each, 12 years in all. The main focus of each, based on its own historical perspective through the eyes of the superintendent, was on the role of the superintendent in forming a supportive school community. Since this was the same superintendent reporting his progression of experiences in each school, the chapter reports of his growth in that role revealed his cumulative insight into the superintendent's role in the community-formation process at an American overseas school.

The survey questions included in Chapter VI were based on the reported findings found in the chapter summaries and in the

conclusion chapter of this research. These questions were then sent to a group of American overseas school superintendents who were selected from an A/OS list of overseas administrators. The random selection process used to determine this was to include every fifth school administrator on that A/OS list. Out of a total of 175 overseas administrators, 36 were included in this group.

The researcher's purpose in this survey was to learn the reactions of the overseas American school administrators to the findings based on the studies of the three overseas American school sites. A secondary purpose was to learn suggestions of activities they use in pulling together an overseas school community.

The concluding chapter is organized according to the eight questions that were listed in Chapter I under the section "Anticipated Findings." The point was made at that time that the anticipated findings would provide insight and an additional dimension to the traditional role of the school administrator located in an overseas setting. This study was to respond to these eight questions, the answers to which overlap each other just as daily actions over a four-year period begin to be intertwined. The summary lists several inferences, which are followed by applicable findings that support those inferences. The last section of this chapter, leading to the future, is titled "Needed Further Research."

The conclusion of this research on the role of the superintendent of three American overseas school communities is contained in this last chapter. The researcher hopes these findings

will be informative and useful for other superintendents of American overseas schools.

Findings on the Eight Questions

What is the third-culture concept, and how can it be used to assist in community building?

The literature stated that coping experiences are part of the common fate of all individuals living outside their own culture. Coping with the new, the unexpected, and the strangeness of another cultural setting and its people is one of the characteristics of what has been called the third culture. The new arrival to an overseas setting is an outsider whose position has changed from a full participant, an integral player in his/her own culture, to an outsider who becomes an observer of the new culture. These new arrivals, regardless of race, gender, or nationality, then join into loosely formed minority groups that do not belong to the overwhelming host-country culture. This commonly shared experience of coping, regardless of nationality of host country involved, contributes to a sense of peoplehood, to an identity with something other than to their home cultures or to the host culture. Thus, this new identity, which exists within the individuals who have experienced it rather than in a specific location of the world, is called the third culture.

This process of peoplehood is further aided by the common need of those parents and young people for the continuation of an American educational program overseas. Therefore, many of these third-culture sojourners of the world gather around American

overseas schools where others of similar experiences support, add security, and reinforce a minority grouping. The superintendent should become cognizant of this third-culture phenomenon and incorporate this readiness for belonging to others in the third culture into the welcome of new arrivals and into the planning of the school year's program.

A new, perhaps known but unexperienced, culture, language, race, and typography of a country often create a perceived threat to the outsider. The American overseas school offers an island of known and experienced security for students, parents, and teachers; from that safety, adventurous excursions into the new culture can be made. The superintendent needs to capitalize on this existing school characteristic of safety and use it in his/her thinking and planning in the development of a supportive school community.

How might the physical plant and grounds of the school serve as a center and aid in the formation of a supportive school community?

Each of the three school sites studied had completely different physical plants and school grounds, with Cairo's being the most attractive and naturally inviting as a community center. Nevertheless, with coping strategies, each became a center for the community.

Evening and weekend activities for both parent and student groups helped add a degree of ownership to those three schools that regular classes alone would not have accomplished. Square-dance groups, church potluck dinners, mother and daughter softball, international fairs, little league baseball, parents' and students'

drama productions, Sunday softball, jogging, video TV, sports nights, and barbecues were some of the activities cited that aided in the formation of a school community. The superintendent's encouragement and welcome of adult groups' use of the school campus helped adults join into a supportive school community.

Another important point that was made concerning the school's physical plant and grounds involved the visual message they related. Visual messages create strong first impressions. The superintendent needs to see that the upkeep details of the school grounds, campus buildings, and classrooms create a positive, organized, and inviting impression that someone is in definite control so as to support the unseen quality of the educational program.

Regardless of the physical limitations or advantages of a school site, an accepting tone must be established by the superintendent which "radiates" the fact that new arrivals are not suspicious intruders to be defensively studied, but rather that they are welcome and in fact needed new members to the community. The point is that as parents they are not only welcomed but are expected to make use of the school as their community center. The superintendent needs to see that the verbal and visible details of the school's orientation process express a warm welcome of acknowledged personal worth to new parents, new students, and new teachers.

What is the role of the administrator in the formation of a supportive community?

The community's image of the role of the administrator is often determined by the school's present circumstances and needs, as well as by the leadership style of the previous school head. Included in this community image could be a negative or positive set of expectations. Therefore, new leadership based only on a new school administrator's self-image can run into conflict with the community's image of what is believed the new leadership should be.

Because of the potential for these beginning conflicts and disappointments, this writer proposes a process through which a new superintendent can arrive at his/her own style of leadership and personality, a style that has worked in his/her previous administrative situations. The process includes first accepting the truth of a new school site, which is that he/she is a newcomer and does not already know all the answers to problems that have yet to be experienced by the superintendent in this new location. The superintendent needs to be willing to accept graciously the offers of people to help get settled in the new school and country. This acceptance during the orientation period not only helps make new contacts and friends but also begins to provide ties and communicative links into the new community. Both the act of receiving and being able to give help tie new arrivals into the school community.

Particularly during the orientation months of the first year, but also during his/her entire stay at the school, the

superintendent needs to be an active participant in the dinner and reception circles in the overseas community. Depending on the overseas location, much of the social life of the community is conducted in homes. The superintendent does not need to be a leader in this; however, he/she does need to accept invitations and be willing to be included in this socializing. These home social exchanges help keep the superintendent in touch with the ideas and desires of the community. They also provide an opportunity for the superintendent to be an active salesperson for the school's total educational program.

An important element in this process of assuming full leadership is time itself. Time on the job at a new location is needed to earn full community membership legitimacy for a new superintendent to become the superintendent. Nevertheless, the new superintendent, although usually bound the first year by the plans and budgets developed by others, needs to present immediate and visible leadership that complements what already exists of the school community's efforts. The superintendent's beginning leadership moves need to give full acknowledgment of the school accomplishments and make use of them. These first months are not the moments to tear up what already exists. Time on the job allows the new superintendent first to belong and then to lead improvement efforts, from within the school community.

Since the school community is an assortment of many smaller communities composed of groups of parents connected sometimes by nationality or company sponsorship, the superintendent needs to be

aware of these different interest groupings and be seen as the caring friend of all, the facilitator, the educator and school leader, but not as a partisan member of any one part of the school community. In addition, the superintendent needs to take active leadership in maintaining consensus among the different groups in the school community as well as among the different board members representing those groups. Active community leadership needs to be a clear self-focus of the superintendent's responsibility.

The time needed to move unobtrusively from the accepting stage as a newcomer to active community leadership has no magic number of days, weeks, or months. Each situation with its own combination of personalities, recent history, and pressing needs will set an acceptable pace for a sensitive superintendent.

How do hosting skills and the ability to communicate genuine caring and shared concern aid in the process?

The superintendent needs to communicate an open leadership with an interest and willingness to listen to the ideas, offers, and concerns of others. Not only does this style keep him/her in touch with community thinking, the openness encourages people to come and share their ideas with the superintendent. Often parents would come to the superintendent with community concerns without the feeling of threat. Those same complaints if expressed to her husband's boss or others in the company could cause company concern and threaten the husband's job and the family's security at that overseas employment. Often the superintendent knew three months or so ahead of a company boss about his employee's problems, problems that would eventually

land on his desk. This willingness to listen to others not only helps in forming the superintendent's thoughts and plans but also prepares ready listeners for his/her school community proposals and efforts.

The American overseas school administrator needs to be enthusiastic and highly personal in school community relations. Schools everywhere are concentrated human-relations businesses. However, an overseas school community seems to be even more attuned to such interpersonal skills, where people are motivated and respond accordingly. The superintendent's human-relations skills need to be highly developed and sensitive to individual differences and fears, cultural diversities, and educational needs. When the superintendent has learned these individual differences and has become sensitive to them, he/she can then develop a highly personalized communication of caring and show concern with others in the school community.

Since the strangeness of a new overseas site often creates a perceived threat to new arrivals, one of the superintendent's roles is to help familiarize them to the new site and school so as to reduce that anxiety and fear and to inspire them with the potential fun and adventure of the new site. This fact is the same for new arrivals, regardless of whether they are new students, new teachers, or new parents. Each new arrival is similar to a baby taking the first step and responding to the encouragement of a helping hand. This is a unique opportunity not only for the

superintendent to imprint a positive beginning relationship but also to set the foundation pattern for future interactions. Helping each new arrival take the first steps of seeing over the inconveniences and distracting adjustments to the potential fun and adventure of a new overseas location is probably the most valuable welcoming gift anyone could give.

What are the factors and activities that would help new arrivals begin to feel a belonging to the community?

The superintendent needs to be personally involved in the initial hosting, welcoming, and settling in at school of new arrivals to an overseas school community. Due to the demands on the superintendent's time in a large school, this involvement may need to be limited to new U.S.-hire teachers and, on occasion, to individual personal welcomes to new parents and students. In such cases the superintendent needs to clearly set the warmth and reception tone expected from the individuals assigned to those responsibilities. In a small school, however, the superintendent needs to be involved in seeing that new teachers, students, and parents are personally welcomed and begin to feel a needed part of the school community.

Often new parents and students arrive at a new site with unhappy past school experiences, which have caused them to develop present negative self-concepts and school expectations. A personal sit-down, relaxed conversational-style interview and orientation to the school often allow unpleasant previous school experiences to come out. When these are revealed, the superintendent can often

help make sure that the new school not only does not reinforce those negative experiences and perceptions but rather that immediate remediation is put into place. Close communication and cooperation with classroom teachers are necessary to accomplish this. In short, the superintendent needs to include in his/her interviewing and welcoming of new families to the school, opportunities to help disarm them of the negative baggage they may be carrying from past unpleasant school experiences.

What are some steps that can be taken to initiate the community-building process, and what groups could be used as the nucleus?

The superintendent's incorporation of a full after-school intramural program including drama, music, sports, and so on, helps mix different national social groups in joint sharing experiences. These activities in turn help students get acquainted and become a part of the larger school community. A school calendar of shared monthly events should also be prepared for parents. In addition to these planned school-centered gatherings, the superintendent needs to encourage the use of the school facilities for community activities such as adult square dances, theater productions, sports groups, jogging, charity bazaars, and so on. When the school facility becomes, as well, the evening and weekend community center, then the superintendent, as head of the school, becomes even more a central focus and potential leader of the entire community. This assumed and natural leadership position in an overseas community adds further support and responsibility to his efforts at welcoming and including new arrivals into the school community.

The superintendent needs to be on a constant lookout for new talents and offers to help within the adult community. This not only causes interest among students by the input of additional adult personalities but also draws the adults involved into the school community. When the average stay in an overseas location is about three years, the urgency of immediately discovering the talents of new arrivals becomes even more pressing. On a school board, for example, the school may get the use of a person's talents for only one year out of a three-year overseas stay. If the superintendent can help move ahead the time needed to get acquainted, he may be able to extend to a year and a half or possibly two years the school's use of the talents of new arrivals.

One of the key groups that can be used in the nucleus of the community-building process is the school's faculty. Of course the student body, the school board, and those parents who volunteer in a school are important groups that help make up the nucleus, but the most important part of the nucleus over which the superintendent can have a direct and daily input into the formation of thinking is the faculty. In most overseas schools the teachers then become the radiating spokes of communication into the community. Since their effect can be either positive or negative, the superintendent needs to be sensitive, to stroke, and to cultivate this group to be sure that positive communication comes from this important part of the center nucleus of the school community.

What are some specific planning strategies, activities, and communications that would help diverse groups of parents develop a school community focus?

The first planning strategy of the superintendent begins with the very first meeting held with new parents, students, and teachers. The initial interview, welcome, and orientation period of new arrivals to an overseas position is an invaluable time to develop deep friendships, personal commitments, and a positive mind-set toward the superintendent, the school community, and the host country. The superintendent needs to be personally involved in this process.

New arrivals to an overseas location are similar to young children learning to take their first steps. They are trusting, impressionable, and need the help of knowing residents. There is no other time like these first days and weeks in a new country to develop close friendships and loyalty. The superintendent cannot afford to miss these opportunities of tying newcomers into the school community by way of the school head's position.

The literature stated that shared information is an essential ingredient of community formation. The superintendent needs to be actively involved in seeing that regular and continual communications are sent to all individuals the superintendents wants to be included in the school community. The weekly "Dear parents" letter was the communicative tool used by the superintendent in the last two schools to provide one body of shared information between all the different groups in a school. These personal letters not

only provided commonly held information about the school but also gave parents weekly contact with the thinking of the superintendent. In short, he became the central figure of the school-focused community, the one voice held in common. In regard to any kind of communication, whether to parents, board members, teachers, or students, all individuals must think they are equally included in all information and that there are no inside, privileged groups. Privileged groups or individuals become a divisive factor and a block to the community-formation process.

The presentation of printed curriculum handouts and other typed, formal information the superintendent found was useful to add legitimacy to the educational program of small overseas schools and to help sell the schools to their entire communities. Therefore, both the informally worded weekly letter to parents and the formally worded curriculum program handouts were needed and found to be highly useful in pulling together diverse groups of parents into a supportive school community.

In addition to written communications, the superintendent needs to be actively involved in planning opportunities that will pointedly include all groups into the school community. The groups include host-country nationals and third-country nationals, as well as all the different groups of Americans resulting from a family's company or agency sponsorship. The use of national songs, languages, food, sports, and flags along with the performances of their own children are emotionally charged symbols that provide ready parental and student feedback during planned activities.

These visible symbols of acknowledgment, and thus of shared value, are invaluable communicative tools for the community formation of international groups of parents.

Also of use in pulling together a community of parents is the presentation of school needs for the benefit of their own children's education. As long as the community's perception is that all parents are paying their own way with an acceptable level of tuition, then special capital projects needing community fund raising can provide a common goal around which families can be drawn together. The superintendent's presentation of the school's needs, beyond what can be accomplished through tuition income, should be accompanied by a suggested plan or procedure by which individuals and companies can contribute toward those solutions. Knowing the need and then being able to help draws company leaders into the larger school community.

How can adults from the different groups in an overseas setting be drawn into the community-formation process?

Many of the points made previously overlap and apply as well under this question. The superintendent needs to purposely plan the school-year calendar with periodic, monthly opportunities for adults to have face-to-face contacts and shared experiences at the school. At least one such event should be scheduled each month. These regularly scheduled activities help in forming the community around the school.

The superintendent's incorporation during these activities of visible symbols such as national flags, dress, foods, and so on, as

well as planned opportunities for the sharing of national festivals and pride, helps draw international groups into the school community. The superintendent's use of third-culture references to shared experiences such as travels, cities, languages, and foods also helps to disarm the strangeness of first meetings and develops a common ground upon which to build a working relationship.

New teachers also need to be included as part of the community. The sooner they feel included and needed, the more energy is freed to be directed to teaching assignments.

The superintendent's planned involvement of both parents and teachers in the hosting of new teacher arrivals provides them with some initial reference points of belonging to the school community. The process of being able to help as well as of being helped is a two-way binding of the existing school community to the new arrivals. The superintendent should not miss the opportunity of being the first welcomer, who then helps them make their first contacts into the community. These initial contacts and personal assistance by the superintendent cause a loyalty and commitment to him as a friend and leader in the school community. Special attention to welcome details and getting new teachers off to a good start requires time that can never be regained if not applied during the beginning weeks of arrival in a new overseas location.

Much of the community formation around an overseas American school happens naturally. Nevertheless, the acknowledged role of the chief school administrator in this process, along with the

procedures that will help that formation, provides the superintendent with directive power in forming a supportive school community. The superintendent needs to see him/herself as the key central point of the school community-formation process. The superintendent's active involvement in this process places him/her in a community leadership position, thus enabling him/her to call on the support of the school community that he/she has been active in forming.

Summary Inferences

A new superintendent to an American school will experience a smoother period of transition in a new overseas school job when he/she:

1. Graciously accepts the offers of people to help him/her get settled. Both being able to offer help and accepting that help open up new friendships and support channels into the community.

2. Recognizes that time on the job is needed for full acceptance of his/her leadership; a new superintendent, an outsider, cannot become an immediate part of a new community.

3. Communicates an open leadership that is interested and willing to listen to the ideas, offers, and concerns of others.

4. Presents immediate and visible leadership that complements what already exists in the school community's previous efforts.

An overseas superintendent will develop greater human-relations skills, sensitivity, and trust by observing the following:

1. Recognizes that the strangeness of a new overseas site and school often creates a perceived threat to new arrivals.

2. Acknowledges that new families often arrive with the negative baggage of past unpleasant school experiences.

3. Understands that American overseas students, regardless of nationality, identify with a "third culture" of coping, of observing, and of being an outsider (a minority) in the general population; these are some of the shared experiences that contribute to a sense of peoplehood.

4. Realizes that an American overseas school can offer an island of known and experienced security for new students, parents, and teachers, who often feel threatened by a new culture, language, race, and/or typography of a country.

The overseas superintendent can help speed both the acceptance of new arrivals and their beginning feelings of belonging to the school community by including the following guides:

1. See that the verbal and visible details of the school's orientation process express a warm welcome of acknowledged personal worth to new parents, students, and teachers.

2. Plan involvement for parents, students, and teachers in the hosting of new arrivals; this provides them with some initial reference points of belonging to the school community.

3. Be personally involved in the initial hosting, welcoming, and settling in of new arrivals. This involvement may, of necessity, be limited in a large school just to new U.S.-hire teachers and occasional individual personal welcomes to parents. In

a small school, however, the superintendent needs to be involved in seeing that both teachers and families who are new to the school are personally welcomed and begin to feel a part of the school.

4. Take full advantage of this vulnerable imprinting time of new arrivals to develop friendships, personal commitments, and a positive mind-set toward the superintendent, the school community, and the host country.

An overseas superintendent's use of the following nonverbal visual messages will add support to his/her words and efforts in presenting the school's educational program:

1. See to the upkeep details of the school grounds, campus buildings, and classrooms so that they create a positive, organized first impression that someone is in full control, thus supporting the yet-unseen educational program.

2. Incorporate the use of visible symbols such as national flags, dress, food, and so on, as well as planned opportunities for the sharing of national festivals and pride; these are particularly helpful in drawing international groups into the school community.

3. Plan the school-year calendar with periodic, monthly opportunities for adults to have face-to-face social contacts and shared experiences at school.

4. Promote the school as a community center that welcomes families and students to use the school campus.

The superintendent of an American overseas school will take the lead in forming a supportive school community by observing the following guidelines:

1. Be enthusiastic and highly personal in school community relations.

2. Practice human-relations skills that are highly developed and sensitive to individual differences, fears, cultural diversities, and educational needs.

3. Be seen as the caring friend of all, the facilitator, the educator, and school leader who is not a partisan member of any one faction.

4. Communicate an open leadership with an interest and willingness to listen to the ideas, offers, and concerns of others.

5. Be an active participant in the dinner and reception circles.

6. Be an active salesperson of the school's total educational program.

7. Plan a school year of social opportunities that will pointedly include all national, social, and special-interest groups.

8. Be on the lookout for new talents and offers to help within the adult community.

9. Present school needs along with suggested ways individuals and companies can contribute to those solutions.

10. See that a full after-school intramural program including drama, music, sports, and so on, is developed.

11. Take an active leadership role in maintaining consensus among the board members and among different interest groups in the school community.

12. See that printed curriculum handouts and other information are professionally prepared and ready to be handed out.

13. Be actively involved in seeing that regular communications (weekly, if at all possible) are sent to all individuals to be included in the school community.

Needed Further Research

The unanswered question that remains foremost in the researcher's mind concerns the difference in the survey mean scores for overseas school administrators with one to ten years of chief school administrative experience in the United States, as compared to administrators with only overseas administrative experience. Specifically, overseas school administrators who had had no experience as a chief school administrator in the United States registered higher mean scores on the survey for 23 out of 27 statements (89%) than did those who had had only one to ten years of experience.

To further underline this point of difference for U.S.-experienced administrators, the survey mean scores revealed that the further away that U.S. experience was, the more support the administrator had for the findings of this study. For example, those superintendents whose previous chief school administrative experience in the United States had been five or more years before

registered 23 higher mean scores (87%) than those administrators whose more recent U.S. experience had been within the last four years.

What would be the difference in the administrative experience in the United States from that gained in overseas schools concerning the role of the administrator in the community-formation process? Is community formation not an administrator's concern in the United States? If it is not a concern, then what are the aspects that are different for a school community located in the United States as compared to a school community in an overseas setting? If it is a concern, but the community-formation process includes a different process, then what would be the findings of a similar study of an administrator in three stateside schools regarding his/her view of the role of the administrator in the community-formation process?

APPENDIX

SURVEY OF THE SUPERINTENDENT'S ROLE IN THE FORMATION OF A
SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY AROUND AN AMERICAN OVERSEAS SCHOOL

Purpose

The purpose of this survey is to validate and hopefully to add to the research findings. The study is based on the participant-observation recall method, which focuses on one superintendent's perception of reality concerning his role in forming supportive school communities in three different overseas school sites.

The names of superintendents and schools surveyed will not be included in this report. Thank you for your responses.

Information on the superintendent: Please circle the letter of your answer.

1. How many years were you a chief school administrator in the U.S.?
 - a. 0 years
 - b. 1 to 4 years
 - c. 5 to 10 years
 - d. 11 to 20 years
 - e. 21 or more years
2. How recent was that U.S. administrative experience?
 - a. 0 years
 - b. 1 year ago
 - c. 2 to 4 years ago
 - d. 5 to 10 years ago
 - e. 11 or more years ago
3. How many years have you been an overseas chief school administrator in an American overseas school?
 - a. 1 to 4 years
 - b. 5 to 10 years
 - c. 11 to 20 years
 - d. 21 or more years
4. Your age falls within the following category:
 - a. 25 to 30 years
 - b. 31 to 40 years
 - c. 41 to 50 years
 - d. 51 years and above

5. What degree of thought and attention have you given to your role in the community-formation process?
- a. Actively involved
 - b. Involved
 - c. Sometimes
 - d. Of minor concern
 - e. Never thought of it

Information on your present school:

6. Where is the location of your present school in the A/OS world?
- a. Europe
 - b. Near E/S Asia
 - c. East Asia
 - d. American Rep.
 - e. Africa
7. What is the size of your school?
- a. 50 to 150 pupils
 - b. 151 to 300 pupils
 - c. 301 to 600 pupils
 - d. 601 to 900 pupils
 - e. 901 to 1,500 pupils
 - f. 1,501 or more pupils
8. What levels are included in your school?
- a. Grades K to 6
 - b. Grades K to 8
 - c. Grades K to 12
9. Where is the location of your school in relation to the school community?
- a. The school is located in the middle of the school community. Many of the students can walk to the school.
 - b. The school is located in the town but about 15 to 20 minutes by family car from most parents' homes.
 - c. The school is located far from the living areas of most of the parents in the city. School buses and private cars must be used to transport most students to and from school.

PART A

Directions: Please read each statement carefully. Note that there are five responses below each item. Circle the letter to the response that best represents your thinking.

1. The American overseas school superintendent needs to be enthusiastic and highly personal in school community relations.
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. No opinion
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
2. The superintendent's human-relations skills need to be highly developed and sensitive to individual differences and fears, cultural diversities, and educational needs.
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. No opinion
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
3. The superintendent needs to be seen as the caring friend of all, the facilitator, the educator and school leader, but not as a partisan member of any one part of the school community.
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. No opinion
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
4. The superintendent needs to communicate an open leadership with an interest and willingness to listen to the ideas, offers, and concerns of others.
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. No opinion
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree

5. The superintendent needs to graciously accept the offers of people to help him get settled in a new school and country. Both the act of being able to give as well as to receive help tie new arrivals into the school community.
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. No opinion
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
6. The superintendent needs to be an active participant in the dinner and reception circles of the overseas community.
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. No opinion
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
7. Time on the job at a new location is needed in order to earn full membership legitimacy for a new superintendent. The new superintendent, although usually bound the first year by plans and budgets of others, needs to present immediate and visible leadership that complements what already exists in the school community's efforts. These first months are not the moments to tear up what already exists. Time on the job allows the new superintendent first to belong and then to lead improvement efforts from within the school community.
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. No opinion
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
8. The superintendent needs to see that the verbal and visible details of the school's orientation process express a warm welcome of acknowledged personal worth to both new parents and new teachers.
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. No opinion
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree

9. Visual messages create strong first impressions. The superintendent needs to see that the upkeep details of the school grounds, campus buildings, and classrooms create a positive, organized impression that someone is in control so as to support the unseen educational program.
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. No opinion
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
10. The superintendent's incorporation of visible symbols such as national flags, dress, foods, and so on, as well as planned opportunities for the sharing of national festivals and pride, helps draw international groups into the school community.
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. No opinion
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
11. Since the strangeness of a new overseas site often creates a perceived threat to new arrivals, one of the superintendent's roles is to help familiarize them to the new site and school so as to reduce that anxiety and fear, and to enthuse them with the potential fun and adventure of the new site.
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. No opinion
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
12. The superintendent's planned involvement of both parents and teachers in the hosting of new teacher arrivals provides them with some initial reference points of belonging to the school community.
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. No opinion
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree

13. The initial interview, welcome, and orientation period of new arrivals to an overseas position is an invaluable time to develop deep friendships, personal commitments, and a positive mind-set toward the superintendent, the school community, and the host country. The superintendent needs to be personally involved in this process.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. No opinion
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
14. The superintendent needs to be personally involved in the initial hosting, welcoming, and settling in at school of new arrivals to an overseas school community. Due to the demands of the new superintendent's time in a large school, this involvement may need to be limited just to new U.S.-hire teachers and occasional, individual personal welcomes to new parents. However, in a small school the superintendent needs to be involved in seeing that both new teachers and families are personally welcomed and begin to feel a part of the school community.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. No opinion
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
15. The superintendent needs to include in his/her interviewing and welcoming of new families to the school, opportunities to help disarm them of the negative baggage they may be carrying from past unpleasant school experiences.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. No opinion
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree

16. A new, perhaps known but unexperienced culture, language, race, and typography of a new country often create a perceived threat. The American overseas school offers an island of known and experienced security for students, parents, and teachers, from which safety adventures into the new culture can be made. The superintendent needs to incorporate this characteristic of safety into his/her thinking and planning in the development of a supportive school community.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. No opinion
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
17. The literature states that coping experiences are part of the common fate of all individuals living outside their culture. Coping is one of the characteristics of what has been called the "third culture." This commonly shared experience of coping, regardless of nationality or host country involved, contributes to a sense of peoplehood. This process of peoplehood is further aided by the common need of those parents for the continuation of an American educational program overseas. The superintendent needs to be cognizant of the third-culture phenomenon and incorporate this readiness for belonging to others in the third culture into the welcome of new arrivals and into the planning of the school year's program.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. No opinion
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
18. The superintendent needs to be an active salesman of the school's total educational program in the community.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. No opinion
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree

19. The superintendent's presentation of the school's needs beyond what can be accomplished through tuition income should be accompanied by a suggested plan or procedure by which individuals and companies can contribute toward those solutions. Knowing the need and then being able to help draws company leaders into the larger school community.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. No opinion
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
20. The superintendent's encouragement and welcome of adult groups' use of the school campus help adults join into a supportive school community.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. No opinion
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
21. The superintendent needs to be actively involved in planning opportunities which will pointedly include all groups in the school community. The groups include host-country nationals and third-country nationals, as well as all the different groups of Americans resulting from a family's company or agency sponsorship.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. No opinion
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
22. The superintendent needs to plan the school year with periodic, monthly opportunities for adults to have face-to-face social contacts and shared experiences at the school. These regularly scheduled activities help in forming the community around the school.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. No opinion
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree

23. The superintendent needs to be on a constant lookout for new talents and offers to help within the adult community. This not only causes interest among students but also draws the adults involved into the school community.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. No opinion
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
24. The superintendent's incorporation of a full after-school intramural program including drama, music, sports, and so on, helps mix different national and social groups in joint sharing experiences. These, in turn, help students get acquainted and become a part of the larger school community.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. No opinion
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
25. The superintendent needs to take active leadership in maintaining consensus among the board members and among groups in the school community.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. No opinion
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
26. The literature states that shared information is an essential ingredient of community formation. The superintendent needs to be actively involved in seeing that regular communications are sent to all individuals whom the superintendent wants to be included in the school community.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. No opinion
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
27. The superintendent's use of printed curriculum handouts and other typed information adds legitimacy to the educational program and helps sell the school to the community.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. No opinion
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree

PART B

Directions: Please include any personal experiences or strategies that you have found helpful in pulling together a community around an overseas school.

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