The School as Community Hub

Beyond Education's Iron Cage

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The Canadian Centre
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DAVID CLANDFIELD

The School As Community Hub: A Public Alternative To The Neo-Liberal Threat To Ontario Schools

DAVID CLANDFIELD

The first time I walked into Humberwood Centre I had a strange feeling. It was one of those cold blue-sky November days when everything breathes an air of unreality. Opposites meet and collide. What looked like a bleached summer's day felt like a crisp, windless winter's day.

Humberwood Centre on the outer western reaches of Toronto is a large complex, built of banded sandy-coloured brick and concrete. Its ground-hugging architecture breathes a contemporary corporate assur-

ance on the one hand, but gives off a sense of medieval community on the other. The main entrance is reached by crossing a moat-like stream on something akin to a drawbridge. This entrance is dominated by the shallow arc of a hugely protruding canopy, welcoming and protective, yet equally menacing and trap-like. Higher up behind it is another shallow arc acting as the roof of a large hall area, lit by a seemingly continuous row of glass windows visible under the eaves.

Entering a large rectangular atrium, I once again had the sense of two worlds colliding to form something different but unfathomable. Light poured in and there were no dark corners. Ten-foot high square brick columns in two rows held up grey-blue iron posts, tree-like in the way they rose up and sprayed out into four struts holding up the roof over its glazed upper wall.

My first thought was of an abbey church with its nave and aisles, lit by a clerestory. And yet as my eyes tracked round, the abbey turned into a shopping mall. There were notices advertising things, large windows beside doors looking like storefronts, and a sense of sheltered circulation. For a Torontonian, it might well seem like a miniature BCE Place, say, a site of commercial exchange, retail activity, corporate headquarters.

All the same, this building is dedicated neither to God nor Mammon; it is neither wholly religious nor commercial. It is a complex of public services grouped into one setting. In place of the side chapels or shops and office suites around the central hall, there are, in clockwork sequence, a public library, a community centre, a joint school gymnasium, a public elementary school (with over 1,000 pupils from Junior Kindergarten to Grade Eight), a public Catholic elementary school (with some 350 pupils of its own), a joint school library visible on an upper level, and a daycare centre.

Part of what made it seem strange to me on this Friday afternoon was the fact that the place was almost deserted. I had arrived on a Professional Development Day. The public library, community centre and childcare centre were open but seemed dormant. Nobody was circulating in this atrium. Its chief function was evidently to serve as a conduit and gathering place for schoolchildren, and it was not in use.

I had come because this site had been held up to me as a shining example of the school of the future, the school rethought, the alternative to the old way of conceiving and designing school sites, an end to the specialized silo of the single service. This was a version of the community hub: the focus of activity for neighbourhood families finding diverse needs catered to in one public site. And what's more, the plan contained what was, for Ontario, an almost visionary innovation. The two publicly funded school boards (public and catholic), constitutionally entrenched as distinct systems, were sharing the same site, the same gymnasium, the same school library and other facilities. They even held joint school assemblies. The old separate established orders of education in Ontario, the legacy of a Victorian confederation compromise, had apparently found a new plane of co-existence.

I later revisited the site when the pupils were there. Both sets of pupils from the catholic and public schools, it turned out, wore distinct school uniforms. There was no danger of confusing the two school populations. The atrium seemed to work well as the concourse funneled neat regimented lines of pupils into their distinct destinations at the far end. A security guard sat at the school end of the atrium, "to discourage loitering", as he told us. If this had been my first visit, I doubt if I would have had the same somewhat eerie impression. But the detachment offered by the earlier ghostlike visit provided a point of

departure for a reflection about the the threats facing Ontario's public schools today.

For some time, the public school system has been under siege from stresses imposed upon it by the neo-liberal ascendancy. The influence of market thinking on public policy has favoured consumerized competition among schools. The siren calls of private education, independent of local government, are luring away those who flee diversity and inclusion. Some seek advantage, privilege and exclusiveness in high fee-paying establishments. Some seek religious distinctness in faith-based schools, whose fees are substantially lower. So faith-based isolation and consumer choice, contemporary versions of God and Mammon, are hovering over the dream of the community school for all, the dream of one school preparing our country's future citizens together in all their diversity. And so, ironically, the architecture of Humberwood Centre encloses these hopes for educational integration in a vision that equally alludes to their dissolution.[1]

So where does the neighbourhood school, struggling to focus its surrounding community's needs and aspirations in one place, integrating services and learning, fit into all of this? Does a school hub model offer a serious alternative framework to neo-liberal public policy, which favours choice and advantage? And will there ever be a better time to find out as we confront a critical moment in the onslaught on public schools?

<div align="center">I</div>

SCHOOLS AS COMMUNITY HUBS IN A CRITICAL MOMENT

FLUCTUATING ENROLMENTS AND THE VULNERABILITY OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD SCHOOL

What we are experiencing as a critical moment in public education is another ebb tide of declining enrolment in our publicly funded schools. With fewer children in our schools, the pressure is on to reduce government commitment to the funding of schools for all. But actually, what is under attack is the funding of the democratic principles of equity and

community development, principles that have secured widespread support for universal education in schools catering to identifiable communities, whether in rural villages or urban neighbourhoods.

The neo-liberal argument is that the demand for school space is down and surplus inventory should logically be discarded. School sites are just property, a disposable public asset, and a potential public liability if they do not yield a return on their investment. By this logic, fewer schoolchildren should mean fewer schools. Schools have no place in neighbourhoods too small to supply a large enough clientele to make them "viable." Market forces and market thinking trump democratic ideals for local communities.

It is an argument that is coming down hard on Ontario schools.

In November 2009, the Ontario parent organization People for Education issued a report on school closings in the province. It contained the alarming news that "172 schools are slated or recommended to close in Ontario between 2009 and 2012, and a further 163 reviews are in progress."[2]

To be sure, 44 of the schools being closed are apparently to be replaced by new schools being built in the same area, a reflection perhaps of the chronic underfunding of public schools that has made it more practical to build new ones than to repair or renovate existing buildings. It is also the reflection of a provincial funding formula that calculates maintenance costs on a fixed square foot per enrolled pupil basis. In such a formula, older, roomier schools are judged to be inefficient. The formula is blind to the benefits of roominess to teachers and students alike, as well as of flexibility of use for community partners.

Even without the replacements, the loss of schools under Dalton McGuinty's Liberal government threatens to rival the dark ages of the Conservative Harris government in which massive public funding cuts led to the closing of 250 schools. Of course, the current Ontario government points to significant declining enrolment in public schools as justification that it regards as irrefutable. From its official perspective, as school enrolments shrink, school boards have to merge smaller schools to provide a big enough pupil population to provide specialist teachers in elementary schools, offer a broad range of options in secondary schools and get away from the fixed costs of keeping so many distinct sites in operation. And so arguments are driven to focus on the

optimal size of school, and research studies are canvassed to show this or that answer to the question.

But at the end of the day, the optimal size issue is something of a red herring. It is true that there is plenty of evidence to suggest that the smaller the school, the better the chances that children will benefit from the educational experience.[3] And certainly that is something that the rich and powerful know. Doug Little has pointed out that, when given the choice, parents like smaller schools with smaller classes, and the rich ones are prepared to pay handsomely to send their children there.[4] But public policy decisions are driven by what is considered publicly affordable by the government of the day. And neo-liberal governments will consider optimal school size in relation to the limits they want to put on public expenditures. Once arguments based on economies of scale and public sector restraint are factored in, pedagogical imperatives and parental preferences recede into the background. And private schools are waiting to take advantage of the demand from parents willing to pay extra, as I discovered on a visit to two small subdivisions in the northern reaches of Toronto.

These are residential communities, cut off from their neighbouring areas by major streets and the railway. They stand either side of the val-

ley of the upper east Don River, which completes their sense of enclosure. Each collection of 300 or so owner-occupied houses was built in the 1960s around one open area that served as the site for a small elementary school. This school was the only public building in the community and was the only focal point for any community activity. The two sites housed Page and Appian Public Schools, both named after the streets on which they were located.

In 1981, during Ontario's last declining enrolment crisis, Page Public School was closed by what was then the North York Board of Education. In that same year, the North Toronto Christian School was founded and has been leasing this property ever since. It claims now to have become "one of Canada's largest independent private elementary schools."[5]

Appian Public School was closed some 15 years later. It has been rented to a number of agencies since then, but chief amongst these have been Douglas Academy and now The Prestige School, both private elementary schools renting a school deemed to have enrolment too low to be sustainable as a public school.[6]

So public schools like these are not only bleeding enrolment to private schools, but school boards have actually been making it easier for them to get started. After all, the land and a suitable building, built with public funds, are both ready for occupation for a minimal capital outlay, and on affordable leasing terms.

But what if enrolment were not the only consideration determining the future viability of the school? What if school sites could serve their communities in a number of ways in addition to providing classroom space for compulsory school attendance?

WHAT IF PUBLIC SCHOOLS BECAME COMMUNITY HUBS?

Support for the notion of schools as focal points of community services, community activities, or even community life generally is growing everywhere. It is on the lips of politicians, administrators, educators, journalists throughout Canada and, as far as I can judge, throughout the English-speaking world. Take Ontario. You want to improve the pre-school years of children? Open "hubs for child and family services."[7] You want to reduce poverty? Community hubs in schools.[8] Concerned about youth violence? Community hubs in schools.[9] And so the story goes in provinces and territories across Canada.[10]

The idea of strengthening ties between schools and services to their surrounding communities is certainly not new. The term "full-service schools" to refer to one version of the idea has been in use for a couple of decades at least, particularly since 1994 when Joy G. Dryfoos published her landmark book on the subject.[11]

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The integration of services was, of course, on the public policy agenda well before then. I remember when I joined the Ontario Government as a Policy Assistant late in 1991 that the preceding NDP Minister of Education in Ontario, Marion Boyd, had called for "integrated services" as one of her three policy priorities and, by 1993 when she had become the Minister of Community and Social Services, there would be a Secretariat for Integrated Services for Children and Youth.

Earlier still, around 1981-82, when I was a school trustee on the Toronto Board of Education, Community Use of Schools and Parallel Use policies were regularly on the agenda as initiatives designed to bring diverse urban neighbourhood communities into a closer relationship with their schools. Not that we realized that in doing so we were following certain central tenets of the Progressive Education movement in the first third of the 20th century, or following in the footsteps of the settlement movement in the Progressive Era, or that the vision had been realized spectacularly in a small industrial city of Michigan in the 1930s as we shall see below.

Indeed, the school has been a focal point of community activity in rural and small urban communities for as long as there have been schools. And so, if we find the construction of multi-purpose school-community centres such as the one in Port Clements on Haida Gwaii new and innovative in 2008, it is because we have forgotten the rural school movement in Mexico in the 1920s and 30s,[12] or we are unaware of how community school approaches have been used to extend girls' education in Upper Egypt.[13] And we are ignoring such pedagogical leaders as John Dewey, Célestin Freinet, Anton Makarenko, Paolo Freire and their respective movements. The list is seemingly endless.

Regardless of its long pedigree and the amnesia of each successive generation of policymakers, the school-community hub idea has really caught fire now. For all sorts of reasons, ranging from the educational to the penny-pinching. But can or will this be the public alternative to closing schools and selling them or leasing them to private interests?

So I come back to the question asked above: How are we to take the new enthusiasm for schools as community hubs during this time of neoliberal ascendancy? If unused school space can be used for public services offered to surrounding communities, or if it can be used by those communities to bring themselves together in the pursuit of joint ventures for their physical and cultural benefit, then isn't the school com-

munity hub the tool we can use to beat back the neo-liberal agenda of shrinking public assets? Or is this another good idea about to be co-opted into the neo-liberal cycle: privatization, commodification of services, and the conversion of learning for full citizenship into preparation for a world of prosperity-seeking competitiveness where the entrepreneurial few reap benefits at the expense of the regimented many?

As we shall see, then, everything will depend on whether schools as community hubs are seen first and foremost as the tools of co-operative community development or whether they are implemented as an efficient channel through which to deliver viable human capital to the labour market and mass consumption. In the pages that follow we shall try to look at both of these polar extremes, ranging across time and around the world in the process but typically with an emphasis on Ontario.

<div align="center">II</div>

THE SCHOOL AS COMMUNITY HUB DEFINED

The term "community hub" is a politician's dream. It is the ultimate in ambiguity. Do we mean allowing community access to school facilities, or the staging of events and displays of work that are open to the public? Are we talking about the use of schools for community institutions like the police or fire department as learning resources? Do we mean integrating local volunteers such as seniors as mentors for students? Is the hub just another name for a Community School or a Full-Service School? Or should the hub idea take all this and go further still? And if so, how.

I'll start by situating hubs along a five-point continuum extending from the community use of schools to the fully integrated school-community relationship (what I am proposing as the true hub).

A. SHARING ON DEMAND

(1) Community use of schools.

Most schools and school boards in Canada have a permit system in place that allows eligible community groups to book school space for use after hours. It could be for a public meeting in the auditorium, a

sports event in the gym or on the grounds, a book club in the library, or a craft demonstration in an art room. We are talking about a process involving a formal permit application for access by a specific group to a specific space for a specific period of time on a specific day.

It usually involves an extension of school opening hours with additional costs being incurred for the on-site presence of school staff, a caretaker and, in some cases, a school board administrator in a coordinating or managerial role.

(2) Parallel use and shared use of schools.

These arrangements extend the permit system into something more akin to a time-share lease. A community dance class or a yoga group may arrange to use the gym every Saturday morning; the continuing education department may arrange to have a regular program of night classes in school classrooms; the municipality may operate a pool or a daycare centre on school premises; a refugee counselling centre may operate two days a week in space made available in the school.

Both of these forms of contact between school and community are to some extent market-driven. There may be preferred permitholders and lessees, and there may be limitations on which groups are eligible, but on the whole they run on a first-come first-served basis. The school has unused space at certain times and allows it to be used by outsiders, typically for a fee on a cost-recovery basis. Public policy issues involve the creation of user fee grids and scales, exemption policies, overhead calculations, liability costs.

More and more, then, these programs are run like businesses. Indeed, in the market-driven world, the management of this aspect of the school operation can be farmed out to an outside agency so that the school-community relationship takes the form of a business contract whose details are negotiated privately, following an RFP process, and subsequently kept private for reasons of "business confidentiality." Once market forces begin to take hold, however, community development begins to yield to the stimulation of consumer demand, and there is little likelihood of the day school learners and the after-hours space-sharers having anything to do with each other.

For such features of shared use of school space to remain within the

public sphere and to be truly community building, the policy regulating it must be made publicly and a strong element of community involvement in the local school decision-making processes must be guaranteed. In the spirit of Chris Bigum and Leonie Rowan's "Knowledge Producing Schools", the pupils of the school should themselves have an interactive relationship with what goes on in the adjacent spaces and extended time-frames of their learning place.

B. RATIONALIZING SERVICES AND USE OF SPACE

(3) Co-location of community services.

A single plot of land may house a school, a daycare centre, a public library, a swimming pool, a community centre. Some may be operated by the school board; some may be operated by the municipality. The placement of these services targeting the needs of the neighbouring community in a single site thus makes efficient use of public space. In its most fully developed form, this may occur when a new facility is being built for a newly built community. The Humberwood Centre with which I began this article is one such example. A less radical model consists in the conversion of an old facility into a Community School, by the addition of new buildings for co-location or a thorough renovation and a redistribution of uses.

In its ideal form, then, public agencies come together and co-ordinate their resources and service in a planned, mixed-use site, without necessarily limiting facilities to those that serve primarily the needs of children and their families.

In the neo-liberal universe, co-location can bring schools and commercial enterprises into the same planned site. Schools can be located upstairs from supermarkets, in shopping malls, or in office buildings. Publicly owned and operated schools in such an environment share space with businesses motivated and sustained by their bottom line more than the public good. If school space is leased by the public authority, then its long-term viability will be in the hands of the leasing business. If the land is co-owned in a public-private partnership, there will be limits on the room for growth or change in the design and use of the public education facilities. If the land is publicly owned, a business

model for the allocation and renting out of private space is usually nego-
tiated on terms sensitive to commercial market pressures. And if the
school is located within a retail commercial environment, the school
population becomes a target clientele for the businesses themselves.

(4) Full-service schools.[14]

I make a distinction between this policy and co-location, although the
niceties of the distinction may not always be observed from jurisdiction
to jurisdiction. The full-service school typically builds its array of serv-
ices around the needs of children and their families. In this, they recall
the efforts of the Settlement Movement in the late 19th century. Family
services supplement the daycare centre; children's screening programs
(vision, hearing, dental health) and the public immunization of children
may be conducted on school premises; immigrant services for new-
comers' families may be based in schools; nutritious breakfast and
snack programs may operate in schools located in needy neighbour-
hoods; and so on.

In the public model, the agencies involved will all be publicly funded
and operated by different levels of government or will involve partner-
ships with co-operatives and non-profit NGOs, themselves funded by
governments or public foundations or their own fund-raising efforts. This
is recognized in the federal funding model in place in the United States.

But the full-service model lends itself to public-private partnerships
and U.S. legislation is winding its way through Congress to make this
available for boards and schools that want to engage in them.[15] This may
be explained by the extent to which health and daycare programs are
already private there. But the provision of services through public agen-
cies already lends itself to corporate sponsorships.

The Toronto Foundation for Student Success is a charitable founda-
tion that acts as a conduit for grants and donations directly in support
of the programs of the Toronto District School Board. Its corporate
sponsors include the Toronto Real Estate Board, the real estate giant
Re-Max, Canada Bread (89% owned by Maple Leaf Foods), Sun Life
Financial, Russell Investments and Wal-Mart.[16] The Gift of Sight and
Sound, consisted of an extensive screening for sight and hearing defi-
ciencies in inner-city elementary schoolchildren in Toronto. It began in

2007, and received optometrist services and glasses at no cost from Wal-Mart's Vision department. A worthy example of the good corporate citizen? Maybe. But I think this goes beyond business profile building in the community and trying to build brand awareness and loyalty among children and their families. I remember a school snack program in a Toronto inner-city school that was sponsored by a big coffee-and-doughnut chain. I also remember the conflict that broke out between supporters of that chain and the principal when she wanted to convert the snack program to a more nutritious alternative. And when the School Board wanted to keep children in school for healthy lunches, the same chain's franchise-holders and employees seem to have led the charge against that, too.

In the two cases of co-located services and full-service schools, the earlier market-driven system of after-hours school use has yielded ground to a public policy model. The supplementary uses of the school premises are those planned and chosen by public agencies – the school board, the municipality, the board of public health, etc. – to provide services deemed necessary for the welfare of the surrounding community. Community consultation may play a role in the development of the policies and the allocation of resources.

But school uses are now more firmly institutionalized in these models and they are usually limited to providing what a public body of specialists and bureaucrats is prepared to consider beneficial for the recipient community. And in the neo-liberal ascendancy, these services may be operated or sponsored by commercial enterprises whose interests may conflict with the educational priorities of the school. Corporate philanthropy works as long as corporate interests are not adversely affected. And once you come to depend upon it, it is difficult to risk losing it.

In all four of the above models, we need to add, there is nothing that by necessity integrates the life of the school with the community uses of the school. There may be substantial overlap, as when nutrition classes are related to the breakfast program, or when a preventive health screening is accompanied by classroom work on the ear or the eye. But that overlap is not required for the public policy to work. The sharing can and usually does remain parallel. It may even create tensions, as when the regular day teacher objects to the use of certain

classroom materials by a night class for adults. Moreover, what is going on in the school often seems to unfold in ways that have no impact on community life outside the school or even on the community users of the school space. They are like ships that pass in the night, fellow consumers of space.

Overall, in these models, the school provides room for others to use its space without any necessary benefit to its educational programs, and the community makes use of the facilities without gaining anything from what is going on in regular school classes. For the relationship between school and community to go beyond this form of separated sharing we need an extra effort.

C. IMAGINING A DIFFERENT COMMUNITY SCHOOL: THE TWO-WAY HUB

(5) The school as community hub.

A school might be thought of as a two-way hub when children's learning activities within the school contribute to community development, and when community activities contribute to and enrich children's learning within the school.

This does not mean that the school dilutes its commitment to the development of critical literacy and numeracy or to the phased development of higher order critical thinking over the years of compulsory education.

It does mean that what the community has by way of knowledge and skills flows into and across a curriculum based on really useful knowledge – engaging its students in understanding and changing the world. It does mean that pupils can develop their own expertise and put it to work in the service of the community. It does mean that teachers' work and responsibilities change substantially. They will have a duty to understand their pupils not only as potential producers of knowledge rather than vessels to be filled, but also as community mediators providing the actual means by which school and community can work more closely together. And among the key vehicles for the development of that relationship will be the various community programs and services located within the school space (as in parallel space and full-service models) and in its immediate environment (as in co-location models).

The pedagogical model is exemplified in a contemporary setting by the "Knowledge Producing Schools" described elsewhere in this book by Rowan and Bigum. But it is an essential feature of many strands of the movements for Progressive Schools and L'Education Nouvelle in the first half of the 20th century.

So the full community hub will yoke the interactive neighbourhood school with the multi-use hub to produce a kind of New Commons where education for all, health, recreation, poverty reduction, cultural expression and celebration, and environmental responsibility can all come together to develop and sustain flourishing communities on principles of citizenship, co-operation and social justice.

This is how our schools can become a bulwark against the principles that would reduce them to factories producing skilled elites, compliant workers, and eager consumers in a drive to achieve competitive advantage and measurable prosperity in the world of neo-liberal globalization.

SO WHAT IS A COMMUNITY?

Until now, we may have being relying on an unstated assumption of what constitutes the community for any particular school. That assumption is that the geographical area surrounding the school, its neighbourhood, contains the community. In other words, the community is thought of as local, a word rich in associations that need to be unpacked rather than swallowed whole.

For example, how big is the area of a school community? And how inclusive is it, really?

The first obvious answer is the catchment area, the area in which all or the vast majority of its pupils live and in which any school-age children would be expected to attend that school. For elementary schools this area would be smaller than for secondary schools.

Of course, that is not as obvious as it sounds. For this definition to work, local families would have no choice on where to send their children to school. In a unitary school system, with no private or independent schooling alternatives, and with hard, uncrossable boundaries defining its catchment areas, that would be the case.

But in most places, private or independent school alternatives do exist, mainly for families wealthy enough to afford the fees, even if in

some locations the private alternatives mean that the children whose homes are in a particular neighbourhood are sent to live in boarding schools far away from home, even in another country. After all, the right to exercise such choices is vigorously defended by those who subscribe to a market-like education system. This niche market for the wealthy and exclusively minded preceded the neo-liberal ascendancy, but has become a growing threat as ideological attacks on the public education system gather steam in conservatively minded political circles and the media that fuel their campaigns.

This version of neo-liberal competitiveness also affects the public system, as pupil selection and school choice become a significant feature there too, ostensibly to staunch the bleeding to private schools by the exclusively minded. Its principal effect, however, is to reinstate or reinforce social strata within what is officially an egalitarian public school system. We see this happening as magnet schools and their like – specializing in sciences, new technologies, languages or bilingualism, the performing and visual arts, culturally specific programming, programs for students designated as gifted, or reflecting an alternative educational philosophy – pull students away from their neighbourhoods for differentiated education for students whose families are generally in higher income brackets. These schools designate their catchment area as part or all of a school board's jurisdiction. They have mechanisms to manage excessive demand. They may use random admission schemes such as lotteries or first-come-first-served systems. More frequently they exercise some measure of selection, as most private schools do, whether by testing, auditioning, portfolio evaluation, student and/or parent interviews.

Such demand-driven choices, whether regulated by school-based selection or not, draw their enrolment from the catchment areas of other schools. And so they undermine our notion of a school community based on a surrounding neighbourhood. The educational experience of individual students may be academically enriched by placement in a school environment officially responsive to the aspirations of their families and themselves. Or not. But what is certain is that there is a social offset to this individualism. The rich diversity of the neighbourhood schools reflecting the rich diversity of the surrounding population is compromised, diluted or lost. Individual pupils and their families making such choices divert their loyalties to other locations. The neighbour-

hood maintains its residential communality, but loses a unifying institutional pillar, the school. It acts as a mechanism converting future citizens into consumers for educational services.

It is important to remember that the ideology of choice embedded here – looking at our schools like an array of boutiques catering to specialized clienteles, circulating freely within an open market before committing to a particular brand – is a neo-liberal fantasy. The tough reality is that while the choice schools (privates, magnets or public alternatives) may (or may not) behave as specialized craft houses lavishing care and expertise on the provision of luxury forms of education, the remaining schools, the vast majority, are relegated to the status of the industrial factory. Gourmet food for some, fast food for the majority.

So how does this affect our sense of community as we contemplate the school as community hub, as part of a New Commons vision? We know that school choice dilutes and fractures neighbourhood-based communities. But we also have to recognize that in some jurisdictions, there are more deeply embedded fractures in the school system.

In Ontario, public education is actually divided into four systems, each with its own local governance structures and its own emphases in educational programming. With the 1867 British North America Act, the compromises that facilitated Canadian Confederation lay in the protection of the rights of two specific Christian minorities, the protestant minority in Roman Catholic Quebec and the Roman Catholic minority elsewhere, especially in Ontario. The result, now seemingly entrenched in the Canadian Constitution since 1981, has been the creation and maintenance of two publicly funded denominational systems in Ontario, a Roman Catholic system alongside a so-called "public" system that has, over the decades, lost much of its connection with protestant Christianity to become a near secular system. So any public school catchment area or neighbourhood community is threaded into a Roman Catholic school catchment area or neighbourhood community. And there is no reason why they should occupy the same size area, since the Roman Catholic population is often significantly smaller in aggregate than that of the rest of the population, and since the proportion of Roman Catholic students over a region may vary significantly from neighbourhood to neighbourhood.

This situation has been complicated by the evolution of French education governance following the repatriation of the Canadian

Constitution and the adoption of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1981 with its protections of the educational rights of official language groups. Charter challenges and court decisions led in the 1980s and 1990s to the creation of French-language school boards distinct from English-language boards in Ontario. Since the system was already divided between public and Roman Catholic boards, the new language dispensation has meant that there are now four kinds of school boards created out of the permutations of English and French, Catholic and non-Catholic populations. Some of the resulting school boards cover very large areas of the Province in order to achieve the economies of scale needed to run a central administration and governance model. And some of the minority official language schools have very large catchment areas and rely on busing to bring pupils to school from significant distances. It must be recognized that this form of school differentiation was not occasioned by neo-liberal choice ideology, but by a commitment to the protection of the educational rights of particular minorities, as these have defined the constitutional make-up of Canada.

The setting is more complicated still. In 1980, amendments to the Education Act in Ontario, reflecting the direction being taken by many jurisdictions within the Province and in much of the Western world, required Boards of Education to make provision for Special Education, meeting the educational challenges of school-aged children with physical disabilities such as deafness and blindness, but more importantly the educational challenges of school-aged children with identified exceptionalities.[16] These exceptionalities formally included such forms as developmental disability, learning disability, behavioural disorders and giftedness. This is not the place to rehearse the debate about the social abuses that have accompanied these exceptionalities (experienced as profiling in many poor racialized communities) and the introduction of legislation ostensibly intended to protect the rights and accommodate the needs of more minorities. The ways in which differentiated programming designed to stream children has favoured wealthier better-educated families' children at the expense of poorer families' children are well-documented elsewhere. But, for this argument, since the full range of Special Education programs required by law, is not available at every neighbourhood school, it means that children do have to leave their neighbourhoods to get to schools where the programs they are said to need are provided.

The image of the school bus as the enemy of the neighbourhood community surrounding a school needs consideration in one more context before we return to the vexed question of how to imagine the community in relation to any particular school that might serve as a hub.

For this we leave Ontario and venture south of the border to contemplate the effects of *Brown vs. Board of Education* (1954), the landmark Supreme Court case in the USA that declared racially segregated schools unconstitutional. In a thought-provoking analysis of African-American education before and after the Brown decision, Jeanita Richardson has shown how the full-service community school had taken root with positive effect in many segregated schools, finding solutions to the demands of educational and community development in the reciprocal relationship that is the subject of this book. She focuses on one K-9 segregated school in a small Pennsylvania steel town called Coatesville. The name of the school was the James Adams Community School (often shortened to JACS) and the key date in its history was 1943 when Thomas Jefferson Anderson (the author's grandfather) became principal. He worked tirelessly with his wife Anita to establish a full-service community school, based on principles developed from John Dewey, who was a faculty member of Columbia University when Anderson had studied there.[18]

But in 1956, the Supreme Court decision on *Brown vs. Board of Education* led to the eventual closure of the school. The point that Richardson makes about desegregation in the wake of the *Brown* decision is that there were thriving efforts under way to build community-school relationships despite the flagrant inequities of funding for the schooling of Black children and their school facilities and that these models of school-community co-development collapsed and died with desegregation. Court-ordered desegregation implanted in people's minds the sense that segregated schools for Black children were in and of themselves inferior to those of white children and that desegregation would fix that. Middle-class Black families moved out into now desegregated suburbs, leaving behind the poorer, less mobile families. Recalcitrant school boards would eventually be required to bus children to schools further afield and institutionalize the breakup of the neighbourhood school even further. The full-service community school and the fully realized reciprocal hub idea was irreparably damaged in the

small number of Black communities where it was being developed. It would have to wait for decades before being given another try.

Research abundantly shows that the children of the racialized poor do best in schools where their teachers are of the community and understand it, and in schools where there is a mixture of social classes and performance levels among the children.[19] That was the logic behind desegregation and bussing. However, when the best and brightest move out, when their local teachers seek residence and employment elsewhere, the odds are stacked against the poor who remain. For us today, the lessons from the JACS experience are there to encourage our schools and our teachers to re-engage with our depressed racialized communities, to build and maintain their confidence and self-respect, to make their schools the first priority for the new hubs.

But it will not be easy in Canada's urban priority neighbourhoods. JACS was closely tied to an ethnoracially homogeneous community. Many of our poorest communities, with immigrant and refugee populations side by side with those trapped inside poverty cycles of longer standing, are significantly more diverse by language, cultural background and faith affiliation. There is no unitary community, other than that which is based on living together, sharing class interests and challenges. The overwhelming temptation for public institutions in the neoliberal ascendancy is to offer what services it does agree to dispense to protect this population from ill-health, malnutrition, substance abuse, insecurity, violence and ignorance with the expectations that a good many will become or remain active within the lower reaches of the service economy. The full-service school can lead us in this direction if we are not diligent in our efforts to promote an alternative view – a view that incorporates community self-help, democratic principles and integrated learning.

So what is the community? If it is defined primarily as the families of the school pupils, then that excludes other people in the neighbourhood, and also the local families whose children attend schools in other boards (francophone or Catholic). If it is defined primarily as all of the neighbourhood in the school's catchment area, then that excludes those who cross boundaries to get to the school for whatever reason. And if the goal is to provide services not offered in all of the other schools in a cluster of elementary schools feeding a secondary school, say, then

would the other neighbourhoods be excluded from that daycare, parenting program, adult education opportunity or community garden? Clearly not. And finally, we must always think of the community in community hub as plural and, ideally, inclusive.

So the community eludes clear definition. A school can serve as a hub for many activities and each one may create and define its own public, its own community. Residential proximity will always be a major determinant, as will school enrolment. But public institutions, once they provide non-educational services and activities need to be all-inclusive, not because they are competing for clients in an open market for services, but because they belong to everybody. And that is why they need to be funded at the broader, local government level, and not dependent on specific acts of philanthropy or fund-raising efforts whose outcomes depend on the socio-economic status of the parent, alumni body or neighbourhood. Furthermore, there is no reason why all the services and activities on offer must be limited to children and families divided up according to their school board affiliation. A community orchestra does not need to have an official language label; a daycare does not need to decide whether it is Catholic or not. And that is why the co-ordination and governance of school facilities and hubs should be as inclusive as municipal government is generally. We shall return to these questions in our last section. But it is now time to put flesh on the bones of the school as community hub. By its acts we shall know it.

III

THE SCHOOL AT WORK
AS COMMUNITY HUB
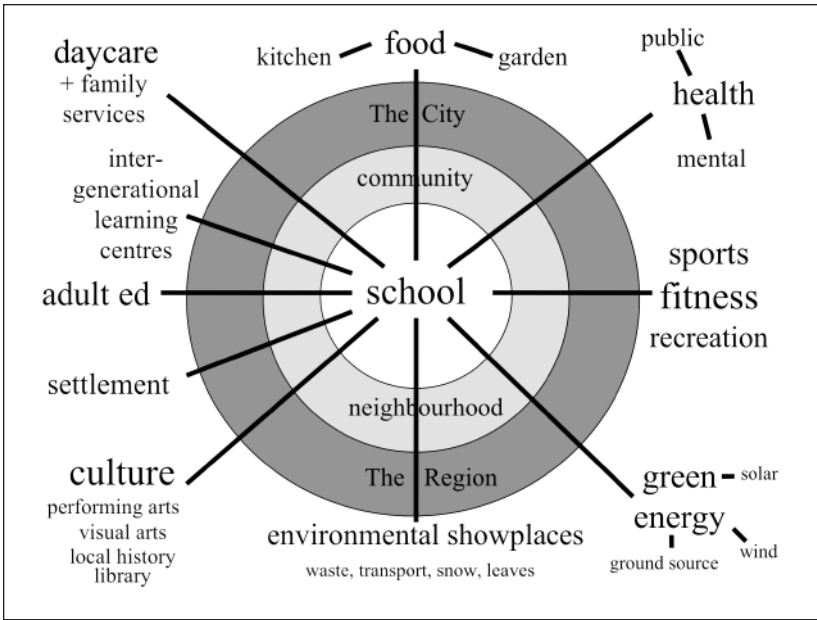
In this section, we survey the range of services and activities that can operate within the school functioning as a community hub. Naturally, each community would need to assess its own needs, priorities and preferences. It is unlikely that all of these uses would be accommodated within a single school, but many could be accommodated within a family of schools.

In well-developed communities, many of the services are probably offered within purpose-built community centres and public health clinics. So it could be argued that there is no need for schools to take on such functions. But the goal is not simply to rationalize services or to find alternative uses for unused school space. It is to transform the relationships between schools and their communities. So this will form part of our focus as we examine what can be done.

CARE AND SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Nowadays, it looks as if the idea and implementation of the hub begins with daycare services, located in schools, and catering to the childcare needs of pre-schoolers and school-age children. Seamless integration means gearing programs towards "school readiness" for the former and coordinating the organization of the day for the latter so that it wraps neatly around school hours. This service to families with young children often extends to include on-site group counselling for parents and other family services delivered by health and social workers. This understanding has now entered mainstream public policy.[20]
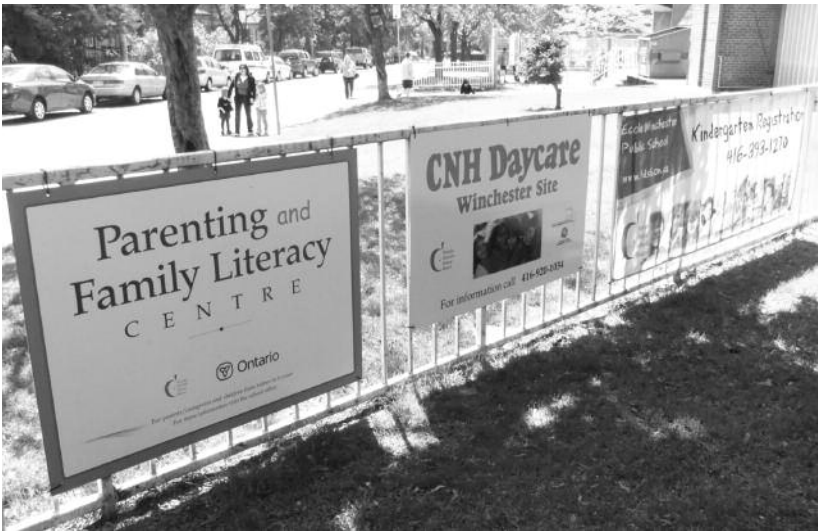
Advertising integrated early childhood services at Winchester Public School, Toronto

In Ontario, the latest expression of this came in 2009 from *With Our Best Future in Mind*, a report for the provincial government by a veteran civil servant, Charles Pascal. With respect to programs for the youngest children, Pascal recommends that:

- the many existing child and family programs be consolidated into a network of Best Start Child and Family Centres under the systems management of municipalities;

- the Centres be located in or partnered with schools, and provide flexible full-day, full-year, and part-time child care for children up to age 4 (supported by parent fees and subsidies available for low-income families);
- the Centres be a one-stop opportunity for pre- and postnatal supports, parenting resources and programs, playgroups, linkages to community resources, help with early identification and intervention for children with special needs, and other early learning services.[21]

These programs, along with full-day kindergarten for four- and five-year-olds and wrap-around childcare for school-age children in an extended day, would mean that elementary schools would offer a "continuum of service" and become what he calls "true community hubs for children and their families." Elsewhere in the body of his report, Pascal extends his definition of the school as community hub by advocating "the transformation of all elementary schools into community schools, open to their neighbourhoods and capable of providing families with opportunities for children's learning, care, health, culture, arts, and recreation from the prenatal period through to adolescence."[22]

We begin our breakdown of the various features that can be assimilated into the hub with the extension of services offered to children and their families in this Ontario report. It is full of useful reminders and insights into the ways that schools can be made more welcoming to their communities. Finding ways to overcome the fortress mentality that has become the prevailing model for school security by negotiating the balancing of security and accessibility with parents is one such example. At the same time, there are some issues in Pascal's report that need to be raised concerning the development of school-community hubs. There is no mention, for example, of possible negotiations with education workers and teachers over ways to extend opening hours meaningfully, and there remain considerable problems surrounding governance and finance. There are, however, three positive contributions I want to single out and that I will return to later on.

One is the sense that, as a community hub, the school is to be open to the neighbourhood for a range of services and activities that goes beyond the teaching and care of children both in time and space. True,

there is ambiguity over whether the neighbourhood extends beyond the families of schoolchildren and whether the "health, culture, arts, and recreation" provision is limited to children or is open to other generations within this particular vision. We obviously need to work this out in any vision of a genuine community hub.

Second, there is the emphasis on the fundamental role of the government and public sector in the operation of public services for the public good. In an age when the debate over early childhood care and education often crystallizes around the role that market forces and private enterprise might play in the name of choice and the recognition of home-based childcare, it is heartening to see such things taken off the table.

The third contribution is the understanding that the chaos of intersecting jurisdictions desperately needs simplification and a firm commitment to co-ordination and co-operation among a smaller number of bodies. Provincially, it is proposed to give the Ministry of Education the lead in the creation, funding, and program direction of the services offered by these hubs. As a previous Deputy Minister both of Education and of Community and Social Services, Pascal does not surprise anyone by coming up with a systems analysis and solution. Whether his nod to the Ministry of Education as leader would create the inter-departmental collaboration he seems to yearn for remains to be seen. But when he gets to local government, we sit up and take notice. Pascal recommends a joint role for municipalities and school boards in the operation of such services. We shall return to that a little later on.

There are, however, two points on which our vision of the school as community hub differs radically from Pascal's.

One is that his is still essentially a service model with experts making their expertise available to individual families or members of the public. The description of the service does come with a vision, but much of the report deals with the practical considerations of the public policy framework and a systems approach to delivery and governance. Again, this is to be expected of a career bureaucrat whose report is subtitled "Implementing Early Learning in Ontario."

Let us consider the extensive mandate of the network of Best Start Child and Family Centres that he advocates for expectant families and their children from birth to age four. The services on offer go beyond immediate learning and health-related needs to include "links to com-

munity resources such as libraries, recreation and community centres, health services, family counselling, employment trainings, settlement services, and housing." The school that houses such centres will be the home of what we called Citizens Advice Bureaux when I was growing up in England – the one-stop referral service, over-the-counter advice for the passer-by. Valuable as this tool for public information and communication is, the real or implied countertop between the information provider and the visiting member of the public serves as a barrier to the sense of partnership the "true hub" aspires to achieve.

To be sure, the notion that members of the community can be involved as equal partners in parenting program discussions rather than as recipients of expert advice is hinted at in some of the submissions and consultations quoted in Pascal's report,[23] but the notion that early childhood educators and parenting mentors have a lot to learn from the diverse communities in our schools, not only about cultural difference but also about the ways in which they meet the many challenges they face without the benefit of paid help, is more than somewhat muted. Two of the articles in Part Two of this book emphasize the importance of Indigenous knowledge both as a guarantee of cultural continuity and engagement for Indigenous communities in public schools and as a well-spring of really useful knowledge that can bridge the gaps between educators and learners, school and community, and build the hub principle. But this principle of local knowledge can usefully apply to schools with culturally mixed communities, or neighbourhoods whose teachers and education workers are not of that community.

The second point of disagreement with Pascal is his school-community governance model. Not surprisingly in a report by a veteran of the Ontario Public Service, the role of local communities and neighbourhoods in decision-making processes at the school is consultative and, individually, parents are invited to be full participants in the education and well-being of their children. These directions are, of course, vitally important, but if such an array of services is going to be really useful to the community and to be fully integrated into the life of the school hub, there must be an extended role for the School Council. In this context, the School Council is central to the fully-formed two-way hub in which teachers and education workers as well as parents, community members and older children have a voice and a role to play, one

that goes beyond the fundraising and volunteering that are the usual lot of such committees.

Finally, there is a significant omission from Pascal's vision of school-community hubs: intergenerational programming. This perspective is creeping in elsewhere as a feature of the public policy concerning school-located services for families and their young children.

THE INTERGENERATIONAL DIMENSION

Learning togther: Intergenerational IT classes in London and Singapore

In some cases intergenerational learning is a natural extension of the service model in Pascal's report. Such is the case in a 2009 report by Margaret Lochrie in the UK. She calls that country's Sure Start children's centres "integrated service hubs" for children under the age of five and their families. The advice and support for parents in disadvantaged areas includes outreach services and links with Jobcentre Plus, but some have gone further to include projects for disabled children and adults, debt relief advice, housing assistance, food co-ops, arts projects and even family outings.[24] At the same time, there is an element of the learning communities that resemble what we have in mind for school community hubs:

> In recasting children's centres with adult education providers as key partners, alongside health and other family centres, there is both an opportunity, not only to more systematically address poverty, but to offer parents a wider span of learning opportunities, whether of a functional nature (e.g. financial literacy) or more broadly educational. In this, there is the chance to redistribute the benefits of lifelong learning in fairer ways and support aspirations among poorer parents and from them, to their children.

However, through these closer links, there is also the opportunity to recast children's centres as *learning communities*, providing opportunities for reflection, and enabling parents to take responsibility for particular roles, not just within the private space of their homes, but in the wider community.

At the heart of the original Sure Start model was the idea of breaking with hierarchical models of service delivery and aligning support for families with community empowerment. The aim was to form effective partnerships between local authorities, primary care trusts, voluntary and private organisations, parents and other members of the local community, which would tackle local problems and work towards reducing social exclusion.[25]

Lochrie wryly suggests that the community empowerment through representation and power sharing has lagged behind individual empowerment through the development of coping mechanisms, social networking, and personal employment prospects. In spite of hopes to break with "hierarchical models," what we mostly have here is centrally directed social work.

In contrast to this social work dimension, intergenerational programming often means the opening up of childcare centres and schools to senior citizens.

In a more radical form, schools have been opened for educational and recreational uses by seniors. A famous example can be found in the famous Seniors' Centers in the Community Schools of Flint, Michigan, which went so far as to invite them in to retirement classes or evening gatherings to play cards and drink beer. The Mott program was founded in 1926, and by the 1930s, these centres were well established. Here is one contemporary description of how they functioned:

The Mott Program provides meals for the elderly, both at the Board of Education Food Center, and in their homes. All elementary schools maintain a list of elderly people living alone within their catchment areas and the school undertakes to contact daily those who would welcome a telephone call. In addition, each elementary school class adopts a "grandmother" – an elderly

woman living alone with no relatives in the Flint area. This
scheme provides contacts with the young for the "grandmother"
and provides much needed contact with the elderly for children
who, in this era of the mobile, nuclear family, may see their real
grandmother yearly, or less frequently.[26]

Now this account does not spell out the range and nature of interac-
tions between the two generations and the extent to which the product of
those interactions helped inform classroom learning. My inclination is to
think of this as essentially philanthropy at work. But what cannot be
denied is that the interconnection with local elders has the potential to
build and sustain a mutually enriching relationship between the school
and neighbourhood residents. For this community building to be practi-
cal in Flint, elementary schools were expected to hold their enrolment
under 600 with a catchment area of no more than 1,500 homes, one def-
inition of a school community that we had been looking for earlier.

Back in Canada, the provision of seniors' centres along these lines has
not been a regular feature of community schools.[27] The more frequently
encountered model of intergenerational programming is that of the vol-
unteering retirees. In Toronto, for example, Baycrest Public School, a K-
5 school with an enrolment of 162, has ties with the renowned Baycrest
Centre, a local health facility for the elderly with residences from which
octogenarians regularly visit the school as "Reading Angels," working
one-on-one with the primary students every Friday morning.

More ambitiously, the Toronto Intergenerational Partnerships, an
NGO in operation since 1983, have been partnering with schools to
facilitate reciprocal relationships between children and the elderly in
ways that recall the Mott programs in Flint. Children visit retirement
residences; seniors act as volunteers and mentors in daycare programs,
tell stories in elementary classrooms, sing in intergenerational choirs, or
lunch and play games with secondary school pupils. By 2002, they had
partnered with eight daycare centres, 33 elementary schools and six sec-
ondary schools. Since then there appears to have been exponential
growth. The number of schools has now expanded to over one hundred.
The Toronto District School Board and the Municipality of Toronto are
now among their funders. It's another reminder that local governments
have shared interests in hub-like activities.

David Clandfield

Intergenerational programs bringing the very young and the elderly together for mutual benefit will be a critical form of community development for schools as community hubs. Oddly enough, though, the TDSB's current plan for Full-Service Schools refers to them only tangentially.[28] And yet the mutual benefits of intergenerational programming surely lie within the service ambit, even when this is limited to health and health-related initiatives. The cultural benefits are particularly powerful in communities where the wisdom of the elders is prized as the repository of local knowledge. It might be assumed that this would imply stable communities with long attachment to the local land, Indigenous communities in particular. But this holds true in all cultures, including those of newcomers.[29]

IMMIGRANTS AND NEWCOMERS

In school districts that house newcomer communities, the advantages of partnerships between schools and settlement agencies or of locating settlement workers in schools are considerable. When required, such workers are ideally recruited from the immigrant population in that neighbourhood. They speak the language and are conversant with the social, economic and cultural challenges faced by those neighbourhood families. They have a pivotal role to perform, steering newcomers towards

housing and employment and helping them navigate the health, legal and educational systems of their adoptive country, whether as refugees or immigrants. In the school as community hub, these workers will serve as intermediaries between parents and schools.

Federal government responsibility for immigration accounts for their establishment of a school-based outreach scheme called Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) in 1999, bringing Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) together with settlement agencies and school boards. In the City of Toronto, the partnerships include both English-language boards, several agencies, and CIC in a group called Settlement and Education Partnerships in Toronto (SEPT). Its declared goal is to "promote security in the community for newcomers [and] ensure comfortability [*sic*] during the transition to a new environment."[30] The mixture of frontline groups and governments, local and federal, ensures that the services are designed with the best information available, appropriate workers are hired and documentation is available in all the relevant languages.

But when all is said and done, the aim is to meet government goals to assist settlement. There is nothing in all this to suggest connection with what goes on in classrooms. In fact, the settlement workers do not meet with children in elementary schools at all. That is not their role. Nor, one might suppose, could they involve themselves in anything that might resemble citizens' mobilization or community organizing.

This stands in stark contrast to the philosophy behind a long defunct program of the old Toronto Board of Education, the School Community Relations (SCR) department. There too, community contact workers were hired to facilitate interactions between incoming immigrant families and the school. This role did not extend to general settlement advice. There was quite enough to keep scores of them active in numerous schools, providing services like translation and organizational help to individual parents and at parent or community meetings held in schools. The big difference, however, was that SCR workers were hired centrally but then contracted to school communities. This changed their role entirely. The community had a major say in the kinds of events that SCR workers could help to organize and facilitate. SCR workers were not expected to take initiatives themselves, but their organizational and communications capacity enabled major mobilizations, so that the voices of the excluded newcomers could be heard amongst themselves and

then by the broader society. In my recollection, the great debates over the teaching of Heritage Languages in Toronto schools in which hundreds of deputations had their say at consultation meetings called by the old Toronto Board of Education would never have assumed the importance they did without the SCR department's help.

Naturally, there is only so much of this democratization that any traditional bureaucracy can bear, and when subsequent elections saw the balance of power shift to the right, SCR workers were made to report to school principals, their budget dwindled and they were eventually phased out.

The impact of such an experiment on school curricula was essentially political. Space was made available for subject matter and language programs that mattered to new communities seeking to establish themselves in a big city without sacrificing their identity. As each community made gains, others followed suit. Efforts to establish whole schools for language groups, such as the Armenians, though, were resisted. The goal was not to isolate newcomer communities but to carve out a space for them within a school system that still was meant to form citizens with a common experience of education.

In a school functioning as a community hub, settlement-related meetings would bring pupils and parents and teachers together, so that the kinds of exchanges there could overlap into classroom learning. Teachers would learn from communities and pupils could gradually assume the mediating role so many of them already take on informally.

In Toronto's Model Schools for priority neighbourhoods, the current coordinating principal Vicky Branco insists on taking newly-assigned teachers into the communities and having them become familiar with the diversity, the family dynamics and the daily routines of their future pupils' daily lives.[31] In the absence of local recruitment, this is a valuable beginning. An integrated settlement program in a community hub would find ways to incorporate an understanding of the various challenges faced by immigrant and refugee communities into classroom interactions. Again, there is ample room to dream of ways in which Rowan and Bigum's "Knowledge Producing Schools" would enlist the support of their pupils in the expansion of the school's knowledge and the community's understanding of issues and solutions of direct interest to them.

ADULT EDUCATION

Adult ESL class at Willow Park JPS Toronto

This is hardly the place to open a long discussion on adult education and the place that it can occupy within schools. It has long been understood that adult education is one of the mainstays of Community Schools and the after-hours use of school facilities. It was what the Mott program in Flint became famous for in its glory years.

Now there are some forms of adult education that provincial governments are readier to support than others: basic literacy education and high school courses for credit. Often these are provided in high schools for adults, and the students travel from far and wide to attend. The primary community in such schools is that of the students themselves.

Adult ESL education is much more complicated, since all levels of government are involved and programs are delivered in a variety of settings that include community centres and community colleges. The federal government has a settlement role to play, and this they do through the LINC (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada) program, which is strictly limited to landed immigrants in their first three years of residence. Classes are delivered in partnership with school boards and community colleges as well as immigrant and community organizations and agencies.

All other adults who need ESL instruction take programs funded by the province, often delivered by instructors hired and supervised by Boards of Education in their schools at night. Day classes may be taught in the facilities owned by partnering agencies or in spare classrooms located within elementary schools. The latter may include parents of schoolchildren who are elsewhere in the building. Equally, such parents may include registered volunteers in the kitchen or elsewhere in the school. Such programs may also overlap with daycare, family services and parenting programs in a school hub.

But the kind of adult education that brings communities together are the General Interest classes. And these are the ones that are in greatest jeopardy from neo-liberal tightfistedness.

I still recall my one and only experience with a woodwork class 40 years ago. I was a true beginner and needed careful supervision when I used hand tools to saw and plane pieces of mahogany for a sewing stool – not the best choice of wood for a beginner, I discovered. But what impressed me about the class was the atmosphere of general camaraderie. Many of the people in the class had known each other for years. Coming to the class wasn't about seat-time and lectures. It was a chance to use a workshop and tools they didn't have at home and meet neighbours all getting down to something useful and rewarding together. A group of women, whose regular job was cleaning offices, got to work making sideboards and wardrobes as Christmas presents for their in-laws. The school really mattered to them. It extended their community time, got them out of the house, let them catch up on neighbourhood news, swap snapshots, feel good. The instructor was primarily a troubleshooter and a specialist in tips of the trade. The fees were affordable and there were class discounts at local lumber stores. Nowadays, a woodworking course of eight weeks can set you back $150 or so (half that if you're a senior and $10 with a Social Assistance certificate). Not too steep, but out of reach for the working poor. More disturbing is that General Interest courses are seen as the frills for Continuing Education. They are not the serious part of the program – the one that gets you marks, a graduating certificate, a recognition that you have crossed important hurdles, and the one that gets the Board provincial funding.

At first glance, the current TDSB swath of continuing education courses looks bewilderingly varied, from wedding cakes to birdwatch-

ing, from gliding to something called full body boot camp, from Bollywood dancing to Chinese singing for seniors. It's like a community extension of cable TV. But it doesn't take long to realize that it's almost all practical crafts, fitness and self-improvement, performance skills, and language learning. Intellectual engagement is fairly thin on the ground. Perhaps Oprah and home-based book clubs have knocked literature courses off the agenda, but whatever happened to local history, global politics, cultural identities, classes in which real struggles with ideas stretched minds and connected learning with an understanding of the real world?

Of course, we all know that this kind of adult education, bringing reflection, debate and intellectual action happens all over the place: in union halls, community centres, prisons, hospitals, factories, libraries, museums and churches. The list is endless. But wouldn't it be good if schools as community hubs included this kind of community knowledge exchange, and not just to react to architects' drawings of a new development or a city counsellor's consultation on a new transit line? It could be an opportunity to spend time on the significance of food security, social enterprise, evolution, disability, trade unionism, biodiversity, jazz appreciation, information technologies, the sense of smell, the meaning of life.

In this context, I recall my experience working with a group of academics who wanted to bring university level discussions to people living in a large downtown public housing complex. We discussed with the locals the sorts of things they might want to hear about and discuss in person. To be sure, some were interested in discussions about how to start your own business and computing. But the first two series were devoted to a multi-disciplinary approach first to food and then to clothing. A different speaker each week, complete with readings assigned ahead, brought a specific perspective through anthropology, sociology, history, comparative religion, gender studies, materials science, chemistry. The school room where we met was full. Translators were on hand for the Bangla and Vietnamese speakers. Interest ran high. But the surprise came later, when we discovered that one of the most popular series turned out to be philosophy.

I do recognize that this range of questions regularly emerges in the world of public radio and TV. They are debated by invited panels of

speakers, sometime in front of a studio audience. Sometimes an extended interview allows a public intellectual to expound her ideas. But these are vicariously experienced discussions, an opportunity to see what lively and informed discussion looks and sounds like when you can't be there, the live performance of something we might otherwise get from a good book. So public broadcasters now use a variety of feedback mechanisms (phone-ins, voice-mails, e-mails, tweets, blogs and facebook) to stimulate or simulate conversation. All of this, however, effectively individualizes discussion. Comments become zingers, inquiries or short anecdotes. The discussion is inevitably kaleidoscopic. And the choice of what gets heard or read by the public is controlled by a distant presence.

It is difficult to imagine such things ever amounting to the mobilization of a community, the development of a neighbourhood's consciousness, or the human warmth of personal contact. When I have lived in small towns and villages, I have found over and over again that groups of people formed and gelled around such collective occasions, expanding to incorporate newcomers, constantly in flux, but also constantly aware of shared experiences strengthening community. In Mediterranean villages, the discussion could get pretty heated as the intensity of opinion and feeling ebbed and flowed. It took a while for me to get used to this from inside my own Anglo-Saxon *sangfroid*. Such discussions, often begun in school halls, always ended with "who's got time for a drink?" and the hottest of adversaries would repair to the bar happily, either to resume their debate or to talk over the upcoming community festival or soccer tournament.

It is a shame if a school as a community hub cannot provide fitness activities for the ageing brain, to match their emphasis on physical health and fitness.

HEALTH SERVICES: SCREENING AND PREVENTION

The emphasis on a public health role for schools is central to the Full-Service Schools movement. This is not new as Joy Dryfoos makes clear in Chapter Two of the movement's bible.[32] Settlement movements at the beginning of the 20th century responded to the concern over epidemics, poor hygiene, dental decay, mental health and untended medical condi-
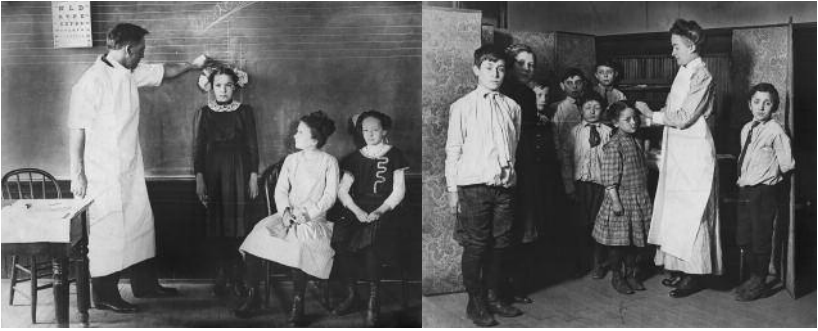
Scenes in a school clinic, somewhere in Ontario, ca 1905

tions in the overcrowded poor neighbourhoods of the inner cities with a variety of measures from trained nurses visiting homes to school-based screenings and examinations. In Canada, the Victoria Order of Nurses and school-based health nurses took their place in the health services menu at this time. Following extensive pressure from Medical Associations in favour of private physician services, medical services had been removed from schools by the 1920s. And then they came and went as epidemics and depressions came and went throughout the 20th century. And now, renewed public anxieties over child poverty and impending pandemics have forced preventive medicine back on the public agenda and the Full-Service Schools concept has surfaced to provide it with a rationale and a framework.

Perhaps the ups and downs of the recent fight to keep public health and public education together are best illustrated by the story of the Saskatchewan Health Dental Plan (SHDP). It came into effect in August 1974 and included provision for school-based dental clinics staffed by qualified dental nurses and dental assistants. They were indirectly supervised by dentists also working within the plan, and did everything from examinations, x-rays, and preventive services to fillings, extractions, crowns, and space maintainers. It was phased in until all children from three to 15 were covered. Then, in June 1987, the Progressive Conservative government of Grant Divine, elected a year earlier, privatized the SHDP, and a new Children's Dental Plan (CDP) covered the cost of basic dental services for children in dental offices[33]. All was not lost, however, as five of the 11 health regions retained a scaled-down version school-based dental screening. In Saskatoon, for example, chil-

Dental exam in an elementary school, Hamilton, Ont. [ca. 1930]

dren adjudged at risk in selected grades are given dental screenings every five years, and they are referred to dentists for treatment where it is called for. Oral health teaching kits are also made available to school staff, so there is some effort to connect the health service with the classroom, but only as an extension of the preventive program.

We referred earlier to a revived screening of children's vision and hearing in priority neighbourhoods of the Toronto District School Board in 2007, this time with Wal-Mart Vision donating the optometrists and glasses.[34]

Such services, as they are described in the literature, seem designed mainly to mitigate impediments to effective learning, with little or no impact on regular classroom work or on community development. They are amply and sufficiently justified as medical interventions, but they reduce the community school to a multi-use site with co-located parallel services. The question is: Do we need to accept this reduction and see the school, in this context, as simply an efficient vehicle for providing designated health consumers with what they need, "a Walmart [*sic*] of human service delivery" as one Tennessee professor approvingly called it?[35] There is no question that this is a useful service, particularly in communities that are unaware of the value of such preventive programs or

too engaged in subsistence work to find the time and energy to use them. It's a good thing if public education and public health initiatives can provide a good health curriculum, thoughtful parenting programs, and available health delivery experts. But the bigger question is: How do you build a lifelong commitment to and pride in healthy living? How would Rowan and Bigum's "Knowledge Producing Schools" do it?

Enter El Puente Academy for Peace and Justice. In 1994, I visited the small alternative public high school called El Puente in Brooklyn, N.Y. It had opened a year earlier as part of a school renewal program by the New York City Board of Education (as it was then called) in one of the poorest, most gang-ridden neighbourhoods of the county, with the highest teen homicide rate and the lowest voting rate of any congressional district. The goal was to pioneer new community-school relationships. In its first year, the two physician-teachers who started it had organized a measles vaccination program as a whole-school project, in which all the elements from human biology to effective neighbourhood communications were studied across the curriculum. When the whole thing was rolled out, it was a huge success, reaching families on a scale never before realized and previously considered unattainable by the local hospitals.[36] The participating students learnt a great deal about public health that they would never forget and the whole neighbourhood gained confidence in the ability of public education to make tangible changes for the better in their lives.

Closer to home is a program connecting a preventive health program to youth culture, the sort of thing that should be second nature in schools as community hubs. I got to know it during my years as Principal of New College at the University of Toronto, which houses the Women and Gender Studies Institute and the research team supporting this initiative. It is called Gendering Adolescent AIDS Prevention (GAAP), headed by June Larkin, and it works on "participatory approaches to working with young people in relation to sexuality, HIV prevention and AIDS awareness." Using young people's interests in visual and performing arts, and working with other groups in Toronto, Montreal, and South Africa, it enables young people to take control of their own disease prevention and awareness campaigns. Among its innovative techniques are such empowering strategies as photovoice and performed ethnography.[37]

This is not to say that each school should engage independently in its own immunization campaigns. But school-wide projects, health across

the curriculum rituals even, drawing in neighbourhood teens, adults, seniors, connecting with local cultural knowledge and the inventiveness of local youth culture, these are the things that can take medical interventions in schools and work them into community empowerment. The hub is then working reciprocally.

FITNESS AND RECREATION

An example of a vita parcours station on a parkland trail in Switzerland

Everyone is familiar with the wide range of fitness, sports and recreational programs that are run on school premises by community associations as well as through continuing education departments. As public money shrinks, the pressure builds to impose user fees to offset part or all of the direct operating costs (supplies, metered utilities, on-site staff) and eventually to cover a portion of what is calculated by way of overhead costs (school board administrative departments such as payroll, accounts and purchasing, program offices, etc.). In other words, the community benefit of these public installations and their operation is funded not from the broader community through taxes, but directly from those with enough money to pay[38]. Use diminishes and the diversity of use diminishes even further. At a time when the focus is on community development, such stratagems have the reverse effect.

The case is particularly acute these days in Toronto where indoor pools located in schools are consistently threatened and, at the same time, con-

sistently supported by vigorous community resistance to cutting pools. It is the right and duty of every citizen to be able to swim, and therefore to have maximum access to the opportunities to do so, at all ages. It is also fun for people of all ages to engage in water athletics and sports. Fitness activities for many, the disabled and the elderly, for examples, may only be feasible or health-enhancing if performed in water. And so, appropriately managed, pools in public facilities located in neighbourhoods are an essential feature of equitable and inclusive community development.

Once it is understood that such facilities and programs can benefit the surrounding community, the question is how this may be cycled back into the school curriculum. This is not simply a question of including fitness and physical education in the schedule, although that is naturally important. It goes beyond embedding an understanding of the relationship of personal health and community development in natural science and social studies. It means connecting potentially hypothetical and disembodied areas of the curriculum to the real, observable and immediate daily lives of pupils and their neighbours. Literacy and mathematics programs do not need to invent complex abstract data for pupils to manipulate. Pupils can maintain inventories of the opportunities for fitness and recreational activities in their neighbourhood parks and community centres. In Toronto, for example, the absence or sorry state of a Vita Parcours installation[39] could be documented, remedies proposed, and a public campaign launched to win public opinion and media attention. Jogging routes in the neighbourhood with exercise stations could be planned out, measured, and a grid provided that shows how many calories would be used up by different population groups at each point along the way. The resultant information could be made available to interested community members.

COMMUNITY GARDENS

The idea of incorporating a knowledge of gardening into the school curriculum and on the school site may be traced back to agricultural education in schools almost one hundred years ago. The Federal Government's Agricultural Instruction Act of 1913 provided funding, topped up with grants from the Ontario Ministry of Education, for the study of agriculture in schools. This was not to be limited to book knowledge, but to

Children working in school garden, Bridgenorth Elementary, Peterborough County, [ca. 1920]

involve "observation and experience through practice." School gardens were one such expedient, giving an "opportunity for practical experience," improving the "appearance of the school grounds," and giving the pupils "a sense of accomplishment and pride in their hard work." In some communities, the schools mounted their own agricultural fairs, in which the pupils made presentations of interest to all, thus involving "the whole community and not just the students and teachers." One such school in Ontario was at Bridgenorth near Peterborough. [38]

Boys giving a presentation on warble flies, Bridgenorth School Fair, September 26, 1939

Some of the most successful recent initiatives linking communities and schools in projects that enhance both learning and neighbourhood have come from the urban community gardens movement. Health and community well-being correlate with food, its production, its preparation and its consumption. Increasingly, schools are re-discovering the virtues of community kitchens and gardens that their rural counterparts had long understood. Vegetables are grown in learning gardens or on intensive roof gardens. The produce is harvested by the school caretaker (on the roof, for example) or by pupils and their teacher or in conjunction with community volunteers. Elise Houghton has given some splendid examples of this movement at work in Toronto (see Part II), both in school-based initiatives reaching out and in community-based initiatives reaching in.[41]

COMMUNITY KITCHENS

Community kitchens in cities have long been a feature of settlement work in the great nineteenth-century tradition, and many still operate in church basements and Salvation Army Halls, providing food for the homeless and destitute with the help of volunteers. They are charitable works not to be denigrated in a society where so many subscribe to the principle that, since the poor will always be with us, there is no need for any redistribution of wealth or income.

For a community kitchen located in a school, however, we are entitled to expect more than charity. Some of the Toronto District School Board's Model Schools located in priority neighbourhoods are beginning that process. Their first use may be to prepare and serve breakfasts, snacks and hot lunches for children who may otherwise arrive in class hungry. In some cases, a class can use it for cooking lessons. In other cases, community members make use of a staff kitchen in the day and permits are issued for evening use. It may be that the kitchens are used simply to prepare food when it is needed. But I like to think that the opportunity to learn in kitchens, whether in formally scheduled classes or more informally as an evening volunteer, goes beyond the important considerations of nutrition and socially responsible food choices and goes beyond the know-how of food preparation and transformation in order to realize two equally important goals.

Community worker, kitchen staff and pupils work and learn together in National Tasting Week in France

The first is the notion of community exchange. People cooking together introduce each other to their diverse techniques and food lore from within their family traditions, but also as an expression of their regional or ethnocultural identities. Out of such encounters strong communities are formed and sustained.

The second has to do with what I call, perhaps rather too grandly, the joy of alchemy and the beauty of taste. Any child who has never had the experience of making a mayonnaise, beating eggs for a meringue, roasting and mixing spices to flavour a curry, has not felt the full magic of transforming food before their very eyes or noses in order to make a treat to taste. And nobody preparing nutritious, healthily prepared food should ever be content with the sense that the body will objectively benefit from eating it. Enjoyment is a vital feature of all eating, the time to eat it in good company, and to savour its finer points in all simplicity and sincerity.

If schools do not help students associate pleasure with the preparation and consumption of food, then pleasure is left in the hands of the promoters of processed meals and fast food chains. Preparation is reduced to popping a packaged product into a household appliance. Pleasure is yoked to mass-produced foods that rely on the addictive appeal of fats, salt and sugar to capture clientele and induce product loyalty.

Scenes from National Tasting Week in France, 2008

This is something the French have understood for a long time. In recent years they have been finding ways to extend the insights of what were once the prerogatives of the rich and powerful to the population at large. Taste education was formally included in the French national elementary curriculum in 1974. This initiative expanded to become a feature of national heritage education in schools in 2000. It was part of an effort to preserve French culinary traditions from the encroachments of multi-national fast food chains in the eating preferences of the young. This school-based initiative reached out to neighbourhoods and communities of schools with the creation of National Tasting Week every October in 1992.[42] Schools and communities work together to learn, revive and celebrate regional and national traditions in the production, preparation and consumption of food. Anyone lucky enough to have been in a small village on the Saturday night of National Tasting Week – seeing tables everyone has brought out on to the main street, enriched with their own family's version of the great produce and dishes of their region for all to enjoy – will never forget it.

CULTURAL LIFE: THE ARTS AND HISTORY

Schools can and do play a positive role in the cultural life of their surrounding communities. Local visiting artists or artists-in-residence work with teachers and children in the creation of public art of high quality within and around the school, taking it out to other public places for exhibition.

I would add to this role and recommend that all students be encouraged to be attentive to their built environment and the crafting of landscape and the natural world. For such projects to be integrated

Two public mosaics by Toronto schoolchildren

into the life of the neighbourhood, students can produce inventories of publicly visible arts and crafts in their area, not just official installations like war memorials and commemorative sculptures, not just commercial ones such as commissioned murals and shop window displays, but less official ones: graffiti, front garden decorations, Christmas lights. Students can periodically design, write up and publish guides to such sights and post them on the web, on various forms of social media, or on publicly visible screens like those in subway stations. Little booklets might be made available at publicly placed stations alongside the screens, serving as an alternative to the advertisements for commercial establishments (restaurants, hotels, theatres) that are the standard fare of stands at libraries and around tourist attractions.

Schools can and do not only act as the site for their own productions of drama, dance, concerts, recitals, musicals and operas, but also can and do host those mounted by community associations and groups. In doing this, they need not stay close to the tried and true repertoires, but try out fresh material or revive forgotten gems. I lived for a year in Paris, and regularly went to schools to attend productions – often of a high standard – of forgotten minor works by celebrated dramatists or composers, works too small to attract professional productions. Schools often allowed musicians to rehearse future public performances on their sites before a school community audience for free or PWYC. Since the local community is the core audience and there is no need to appeal to a mass audience, risks can be taken. Community-written productions can be tried out. The community derives its enjoyment from participation in the production as well as attendance at a performance of the fin-

Toronto Opera Repertoire performing The Marriage of Figaro in a Toronto school

ished article. The school then works with the community in a process of shared cultural discovery and self-expression.

Célestin Freinet, the French founder of co-operative learning, taught in one- and two-room elementary schools in rural southern France in the 1920s and 1930s and founded a pedagogical movement that is still alive today in many parts of the world. Fridays were a special day. Not only would the school meet to review their accomplishments, disappointments, the things they wanted to celebrate and the things they wanted to put right, but it would be the day when the children would set up the latest exhibits for their school museum, a museum stocked, researched and curated by the pupils themselves. It could be a display of art or literature of their own making, but equally it could be items of local history, reflections of the community, archival and family photographs, artifacts and narratives, oral or written. And the public was invited in to visit.

As the hub for a community, the school has its own history, names, architecture, geometry and ecosystem. So does every street and building in the neighbourhood. The possibilities for observation, investigation, calculation, discussing and writing are endless. Schools regularly make full use of those opportunities to enrich their pupils' learning. But such efforts need not rest inside the school with their audience restricted to one teacher, or one class, or in rare cases the whole school. Such knowledge can be mapped on to the community in the form of themed walks, or guides to add to those mentioned above for publicly visible art and artifacts. We are living in a time when attentive, urban rambling is on the rise. The popular Jane's walks on the first days of May have mushroomed from their beginnings in Toronto in 2007 to the point at which, in 2010, there were 120 planned for Toronto and another 294 scattered

across 68 cities worldwide. They are a significant expression of local interest and delight in neighbourhood surroundings and identities. Increasingly, the racks of commercially produced and marketed guides to cities and towns are brimming with walking guides to the best and most famous of their sights to see. What schools and their communities can do is stimulate this interest among themselves about their very own areas, especially if these areas are not on the radar of the tourist information centres. Knowledge about one's own neighbourhood is an important step towards an appreciation of both what it is and what it can become. It is another key to community development and school hubs can do this.[43]

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND GREEN ENERGY

Chad Cowan powering an alternator at Abbotsford MIddle School, BC

I could not end this section without a mention of the critical importance of environmentally sensitive and sustainable action as a feature of schools functioning as genuine hubs in their communities. A detailed description of the underlying principles and priorities at work and some

inspirational examples are contained within Elise Houghton's article that closes this book. The growing interest in Eco-schools in Toronto or Green Schools in Australia – schools that motivate, implement and maintain environmentally responsible waste reduction and management, fall leaves collection and snow clearance – can incorporate an understanding of these processes and their impact into their daily curriculum as well as their practice. There are schools that dedicate themselves to promoting cleaner forms of transportation, building and installing their own bike racks, including bicycle safety in the curriculum, setting and monitoring targets for diminished car use by their staff. But the school becomes a fully realized hub when it interacts with its neighbourhood to have the same beneficial effects there too.

Green energy hubs are increasingly being considered for school sites, whether in the form of solar panels on their vast flat roofs, ground source energy under their extensive grounds or even various forms of wind power. But once again a green energy hub can only be part of a school-community hub if it becomes a vehicle for regular learning in the school and a perceivable benefit to the surrounding neighbourhood. Abbotsford Middle School in B.C. is exemplary in its incorporation of alternate energy into the curriculum.[44] The community benefit can occur when excess electrical generation is sold for a local community co-op that co-finances the capital costs. Savings on the cost of utilities can enhance school sites for the use and benefit of both the school population and the neighbourhood. Boards responding to neo-liberal reflexes are tempted to take rent for the use of their roofs by private companies that make their profit from selling off excess production with scant reference to the interests of either the school or the neighbourhood. This process should be nipped in the bud.

Like the struggle for nutritious food, public health, fitness centres and recreational opportunities, the effort to develop environmentally responsible initiatives such as green energy faces tough times during the neo-liberal ascendancy. The market fundamentalists insist that free enterprise motivated by profit is the only effective development tool for such initiatives, and that the role of public institutions and government should be reduced to a minimum. Corporate profits are also bound up in alternatives to responsible public education such as fast food, pharmaceutical treatments, professional sports, recreational franchises, urban devel-

opment and private education. At the same time, schools and their buildings sitting on prime development land represent another target for corporate profit-making. Schools as genuine community hubs will be one more bone of contention on the road to making a fast buck.

The school as a community hub offers the prospect of a New Commons kind of mentality. It gives form to the assertion that we have a collective existence, a common interest in public spaces and facilities and all the activities and services that can involve us there. We need to see this expanded mandate of our schools grow, reaching out to and involving all of us in the learning of our future citizens, and involving those future citizens as today's citizens in partnership with us, participating in the improvement and growth of our neighbourhoods and communities. The more people benefit from this public expansion, the more people will feel the benefits of a public education system for themselves, one that is worth paying taxes to support, one that is an alternative to the individualism and profiteering of the neo-liberal ascendancy.

Much of what is mentioned above has arisen from a combination of efforts by public bodies and local communities. But there are barriers that put the long-term prospects of these ideas at risk. For schools as community hubs to grow and spread, we need to overcome those obstacles. And we shall need new sources of sustainable public funding and new decision-making structures. That is the focus of the last section of this part of the book.

I V

WHO'S IN CHARGE AND WHO'S PAYING?

What the previous section has tried to demonstrate is that the possibilities opened up by Full-Service Schools, the provision of non-academic services in support of children and their families on school sites, are considerably greater than those of planned co-location. The opportunity is there to breach all kinds of boundaries that separate

- the role of teachers and the role of pupils in learning
- the transmission of knowledge and the creation of knowledge
- the work of teachers and the work of education workers

- the place of school and the place of community in education
- academic services and non-academic services for children and families
- school board and school community
- local government of education and local municipal government
- the role of local government and the role of central government

Standing in the way of this integration through co-operative public enterprise are two formidable forces.

One is typified by the inertial tendencies of institutional structures, the so-called silos that work in relative isolation from one another. They operate in vertical hierarchies, rewarding performance by vertical mobility, subordinating personal values to rational codes of behaviour, dividing labour for the sake of efficiency, getting the job done. In other words, they are Max Weber's iron cage incarnate. Thanks to them, the world of detailed expectations and statistical process control have taken hold in the heart of the most personal value-laden collective enterprise – the preparation of young people to find fulfilment in society as fully engaged citizens.

The other is typified by the neo-liberal ascendancy that we have referred to throughout this study. Thanks to this, individualism and private enterprise have been making deep inroads into the democratic aspirations embodied in public service for the public good. The impersonal rationalizations of the iron cage are put to work for the pursuit of economic gain and the preparation of a workforce rather than a citizenry. Public assets are sold off, public services are privatized, public funding of public institutions is stripped away. And at every turn, when the urge is felt to connect schools with their local neighbourhoods – to extend the range of services to meet the needs and aspirations of those communities – the iron cage and the private profit imperative combine to resist.

So if there is public support for the new visions of community schools as hubs, it is by implication support for a return to the human warmth of personal contacts, collaboration, reaching across fences, through doorways, round corners. And it particularly implies support for the inclusion and empowerment of the marginal, excluded members of our society, those not on the bureaucratic or corporate ladders to success, so that they

have the time and space and tools to live fulfilling lives and to challenge entrenched wealth and power in the name of a public good.

Conflicting messages on Toronto District School Board schools

So how can schools as community hubs work if the structures they find themselves in are imbued with values that seem to work against them?

How, for example, can we reconcile two juxtaposed slides in a presentation titled "Vision of Hope" by Toronto District School Board Director Chris Spence, one declaring support for Full Service schools, the other announcing the launch of "eight ARCs [Accommodation Review Committeess] impacting 35 schools"?[45] First he opens the door to schools as community hubs, and then, in the next breath, he initiates a process motivated by provincial cutbacks to reduce the space in which such hubs might operate by closing schools (with the eventual goal of leasing or selling their sites)?

The answer can only come from a rethinking of the governance and financing of our public school facilities. The details of what follows are tentative and provisional. But the principles behind them are not.

We need governance structures that go as far as we can imagine towards breaking down institutional barriers and silos, and we need to find a new balance between central authority and local community decision-making that tilts power more towards the latter.

We need new sources of funding that reflect these shifts of power and structure. More of the taxation in support of local community assets for local community use must come from local decision-making and local taxpayers.

RETHINKING GOVERNANCE:
THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL

If school-based councils are going to be involved, indeed to acquire the initiative in planning the transformation of schools into the two-way community hubs that we are advocating, their membership and mandate will have to reflect a genuine community focus – one that can formulate the needs and the strengths of neighbourhood communities for the purposes of building those relationships.

They will need to become genuine school-community councils. Their role must not be limited to that of sounding boards for central initiatives or organizing committees for volunteer assistance and fund-raising. Their role must be significant and real in determining the changing educational needs and priorities of communities and neighbourhoods and the place of buildings and grounds that respond to these needs. Not only parents but other members of the community have an important role to play. By going beyond the parent body, the structure must recognize members of partnering agencies in the extended services regime as well as the importance of neighbours whose multiple possible connections with the school can now be valued and recognized.

We cannot, however, let these new powers detract from the educational focus of the schools. The learning environment must always be always be front and centre in whatever changes are proposed; it must be enhanced by every community initiative, by every added use or service – not indirectly as by-product or secondary effect, but directly by interaction.

The logic of the "Knowledge-Producing Schools" that Rowan and Bigum are promoting is one important key in maintaining this educational focus. These schools – acting as community hubs – require not only teachers but also pupils to play an important role. At present, pupil involvement in school decision-making tends to remain at the consultation level and to be regarded with reservations by many in Canadian society. This has to change. In France, for example, all school councils and all class councils have elected pupil representation by law from Grade 6 up. Indeed, schools that subscribe to Célestin Freinet's co-operative pedagogy find a role in the organization of school life for pupils of every age. In one small town that I got to know in southern France, the middle-school principal told me that he found that the pupil

members of his school council often provided a perspective on the impact of changes in the community on young people that he didn't get from anyone else. If pupils are going to be understood as partners in their learning and producers as well as learners of really useful knowledge, they need to be acknowledged as decision-making partners also.

Unsurprisingly, the provincial government is not sympathetic to such democratic enhancement of local power. Its most recent contribution to school-community decision-making processes has been the Accommodation Review Committees (ARCs) that include representatives of a number of adjacent schools experiencing a significant decline in enrolment. These representatives are there only for consultation; they have no real power. By now in 2010, the formation of an ARC is generally understood as advance notice of school consolidations and the eventual closing of one or even two local schools. In the ARC process, every effort is made by school officials to gild the lily by promising refits and curricular projects in the remaining schools. The process is deeply destructive of the morale of each of the communities affected, and particularly so if any of them were already considering the possibility of developing new school-community hub initiatives themselves. Indeed, the limits placed on the ARC process have tended to exclude such considerations, even if some bold ARCs have ignored such limits, brought up the hubs alternative, and fought against school closures. How much easier it would be to use ARCs to convert some of the school space to the kinds of services and activities we have been talking about. Better still, in place of ARCs in selected schools, all school communities could engage in a regular review of their facilities and the opportunities for hub development in space opened up by reduced enrolment. That is not, of course, what is happening right now. We are currently facing a major increase in school closings and their leasing or sale on the open market (after preliminary offers to other branches of government have been turned down). All of this is moving us further in the direction of privatization and increased inequality. As of this writing, the Toronto District School Board was leasing former public schools to no fewer than 17 private fee-paying schools, many of which regulate admission by tests and interviews to assess the suitability of a pupil's promise of "success." Some of these private

schools only came into being when the opportunity to rent a ready-made public school came up.

The only solid alternative to assaults like this on our neighbourhood schools will come through revitalized school community schools with real decision-making powers and a budget, facilitated by an expanded membership and an expanded mandate.

But, local community school-based planning will not be enough, because the financial resources are not readily available in many communities. Indeed, hubs stand to benefit most the communities with the fewest resources already in place. These are communities, that experience the greatest gap between the official school curriculum and their members and the greatest alienation among students and teachers – and where there is the greatest social and cultural gulf between school staff and the neighbourhood. And since those communities are often the poorest, there are fewer chances of finding community support for an enriched curriculum other than through private philanthropy or commercial incursions.

RETHINKING GOVERNANCE: THE SCHOOL FACILITIES JOINT BOARD

Currently the resources necessary for schools to thrive as community hubs in Ontario are in short supply. School boards have no say over the level of provincial grants that are transferred to them or the property taxes that are levied on their behalf by the province. Moreover, the province insists that capital improvements to public schools must come from the sale of surplus property, using a formula that disadvantages the old schools that often serve poor communities.

However, a cursory glance at the kinds of partnerships that school boards need for hub growth makes it clear that the NGOs and co-operatives of civil society are only a part of the picture. Major partners can also be found in the departments or arms-length branches of municipal government. And the good news is that municipal governments have control of a residential property tax base. As a result, all the public proponents of school-community hubs mention the need to develop working partnerships between school boards and municipalities, but without saying what form they could take.

One helpful point of departure is the realization that in many European countries the construction and management of school buildings and grounds have been the business of municipal governments. Schools are often seen as an integral part of local public space or infrastructure, though not always with the best educational intentions. In England and Wales, school boards were replaced by local education authorities under municipal control as long ago as 1902. In France, in the 1960s, a highly centralized state system devolved responsibility for school facilities in a three-tiered school system to a three-tiered system of local and regional government. And more recently, in some of the restructuring democracies of central Europe (Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic), a similar devolution of responsibilities for schools to various forms of local government is occurring, while responsibility for curriculum and teachers is firmly rooted in the national government.[46] Sad to say, there are moves underway to undermine and remove elected local municipal governments from this role in England and Wales,[47] and under the neo-liberal presidency of Nicolas Sarkozy in France. In retrospect, the destruction of school boards in some of these countries has weakened their communities' capacity to stand up for local engagement in education once school board power was transferred to municipal politicians. But the engagement of municipal government remains important.

We want to hold on to our school boards – indeed, we want to strengthen them in their capacity to deliver good public education – while at the same time we want to encourage greater participation of municipal government in caring for the youth in their jurisdictions and in strengthening their partnership with local school boards. It is this participation and partnership we hope will emerge in a restructuring of governance and finance to develop school hubs.

It is important to recognize, however, that the massive cuts to public education and centralizing direction in the UK and some other Western European governments[48] is matched by Canadian provincial governments. The Conservative government of Mike Harris in Ontario, for example, vastly increased the power of the Ministry of Education at the expense of democratic local government. It was done by further amalgamation of school boards, thereby increasing the power of board bureaucracies, and by linking them more securely to the Ministry, thereby further reducing the power of elected school trustees. It did not stop

there. Local board power was reduced by the imposition of detailed curriculum regulations, by ending the taxation powers of school boards, and by adding restrictions on commercial property taxation. These directions are now being reinforced by McGuinty's Liberal government as it moves to restrict even further the decision-making powers and political freedoms of school boards and their trustees. Yet the same government has declared its commitment to the school-community hub concept and has said that this commitment will require local government reform. Whether this happens or not, is anybody's guess. In the light of the above, I am guessing not.

The simple solution to funding school-community hubs would appear to be a reversal of the Harris reforms – bringing us back to the level of provincial funding in 1991 and to the discretionary taxation powers accorded to school boards. We would not recommend, however, an end to the system of province-wide bargaining for salaries, benefits and pensions for teachers and education workers. We do acknowledge the useful role that the Province can play in maintaining an equitable funding relationship among school boards, with formulae that recognize the special costs and challenges of operating schools in remote northern and rural communities, or in the rapidly changing demographics of urban centres with growing poverty and large immigrant populations. But everything we know and can imagine for schools as community hubs, and the facilities that will host them, suggests that the funding and governance for them must be devolved.

What we propose then is a mechanism that recognizes that hubs are not logically the sole responsibility of the multiple school boards layered over every community. The municipality must be involved in a partnership that draws distinct communities together. Pupils may leave their homes for different schools (Public, Catholic, French and English) within a community, but they live together within the same municipality. They and their families have the right to access services together. If it can be said that not all the extraneous services need to be offered in all schools at the same time, and if municipalities want a role to play in planning the distribution of the services and the access to public space under its jurisdiction, then all must meet and work together. And if communities and schools are going to interact more fully for their mutual benefit, public officials and representatives have

to step out of the iron cage they have been constructing over all these years.

The proposal here is for the formation of a School Facilities Joint Board (SFJB). This is an embryonic proposal. It will need a public debate and full participation by all interested parties in order to emerge in practical form. Briefly it goes like this.

Responsibilities of the SFJB

Under this scheme, a first tier of decision-making responsibility in a given municipality for the maintenance of all school board properties, capital improvements and new construction would pass to a joint board consisting of representatives from public and Catholic boards (English and French) on the one hand, and from the municipality on the other. Within that mandate, then, responsibility for the long-term planning and development of school community hubs would fall to the SFJB.

Composition and voting powers of the SFJB

To maintain this as an arm of local government, rather than at arm's length, we recommend that representation consist of delegated elected trustees and councillors from school boards and municipality respectively.

To provide a symbolic and real reflection of the educational focus and priorities of schools as community hubs, there would need to be more trustee members from each of the boards than municipal councillors.

The school facilities would still belong to their respective school boards for the same reason. Municipality-wide policy decisions would be voted on by all board members, while decisions affecting only a school or schools owned by one board only would require trustee voting to be limited to the trustees from that board. Municipal councillors would need to be in a minority here too. Arguably, school boards would retain veto or referral rights with respect to the use of their own buildings, although considerable thought would need to be given to what limits could be placed on those rights, consistent with the constitutional rights of Catholic and minority language boards under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Obviously, this works best where the boundaries of both school boards and a municipality are the same. In many parts of the Province, for example, French-language school boards (both public and Catholic) serve widely dispersed small francophone populations and their boundaries are by no means coterminous with those of other forms of local government. Nor are coterminous Public-Catholic boundaries the rule through much of the province. The SFJB may work best in big cities, but the principle of institutionally sanctioned joint management must be the guiding principle for other models more suitable to rural areas or for the inclusion of French schools and boards.

Where would the money come from?

That portion of all provincial grants to affected school boards for the maintenance and capital construction of schools would be transferred to the SFJBs, although only after they have been adjusted upwards to meet the real costs of a phased plan to clear the massive backlog of deferred maintenance.

That portion of all provincial grants to affected school boards for what is now called the Community Use of Schools would also be transferred to the SFJBs, although it should be enriched by grants from interlocking ministries that support the kinds of programs that can be accommodated in school hubs. The list of ministries is long. I remember working on a long lost educational reform bill in the Ministry of Education when the ill-fated NDP government under Bob Rae was in power. Anyone who has filled in a proposal for new legislation to take to Cabinet will know that one page contains a checklist of all the interlocking ministries that must be consulted for input before the proposal is brought to Treasury to be shot down. For our reform proposal every checkbox was ticked. So the following list of ministries that could be involved in the delivery or support of schools as community hubs is probably too short:

- The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
- The Ministry of Health Promotion
- The Ministry of Children and Youth Services
- The Ministry of Community and Social Services

- The Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration
- The Ministry of Culture
- The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
- The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
- The Ministry of the Environment

In addition to these sources of hub and facilities funding, the portion of property taxes that can be attributed to school facilities would also be transferred to municipalities for use by the SFJBs and the responsibility for assessing the amounts to be levied would also rest at the municipal level – taking their direction from the SFJB. Responsibility for community development and for deciding how much communities will pay as their share for its development should rest with communities through a democratically elected local government.

But not all municipal decisions will be made at the municipal level. A portion of the budget will have to be distributed to the local schools for use at the discretion of the local school community council in each case, following broad criteria established by the school board.

To conclude, in all of the forthcoming public debates about hub development, it is important to remember that we are working to ensure that public assets will be used for the public good. Public support for schools depends on the daily public perception of the value that schools bring to community members whatever their age, their family status, their class, race, gender, condition or ability. Hubs can deliver that, but only if the activities and services associated within them cycle into and out of the school curriculum and into and out of community enhancement. Models of funding and decision-making must make that possible.

The old barriers between school board departments, between public and Catholic school boards, between school boards and municipalities, and between provincial ministries must all be breached. That is why support for the hub concept must be clearly articulated at the highest levels of government.

At the same time, efforts to bridge the gaps between community and school have to be stepped up. New forms of local initiative and partnerships within civil society at the neighbourhood level must be strengthened and public funds must circulate openly and accountably at this level, too. Only then can we set out on the long road to overcome the depredations

of decades of neo-liberal market fundamentalism, in the name of a more just society and education for all in everybody's schools.

ENDNOTES

[1] The architects of Humberwood Centre were Moffat Kinoshita Associates and Russocki + Zawadski Architects. Both firms had experience in designing Catholic schools before, and the latter had designed an innovative multi-use facility four years earlier: Mary Ward Catholic Secondary School, one of the few schools of its time designed for and dedicated to self-directed learning. The site also co-located the L'Amoreaux Park North Community Centre and a childcare facility.

[2] *School Closings in Ontario. People for Education's report on accommodation reviews and school closings 2009*. Information retrieved on November 12, 2009 from http://www.peopleforeducation.com/schoolclosings2009.

[3] French readers might want to look at the research done on small schools, split grades, and family groupings in France. See the following two websites: http://pagesperso-orange.fr/ecole.et.territoire/and http://ecoledeproximite.lautre.net/index.htm.

[4] Doug Little's article can be read on the Education Action: Toronto website at http://educationactiontoronto.com/home/doug-little-on-rich-folks-education-choices and the Deborah Meier piece is at http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/Bridging-Differences/2009/10/typos_questions_up_top_in.html.

[5] NTCS claims an enrolment of 300 (K-6) and its annual fees stand at $6,024 – information from Toronto District School Board, *Response to the Toronto Lands Commission*, June 2008 (Appendix 1, page xiii) and http://www.yorkland.on.ca/n-gen.htm. As this book went to press, the Toronto District School Board had decided to put the school site up for sale.

[6] The Prestige School posts a day enrolment of 140 from JK to Grade 12 and its annual fees run from $8,500 to $11,000. Information in *Globe and Mail*, *Our Kids Go to School. Canada's Private School Guide*, Toronto, 2009. The site also leases office space to the French Catholic School Board.

[7] This is recommended in Charles Pascal's report on integrated child and family services, *With Our Best Future in Mind: Implementing Early Learning in Ontario*, Toronto, Government of Ontario, 2009 (A report to the Premier from the Special Advisor on Early Learning), page 10. In Ontario's Peel Region District School Board, such centres are called Early Years Hubs and Readiness Centres (information retrieved Nov. 10, 2009 from http://www.peelschools.org/facts/readiness.htm).

[8] "As part of the Poverty Reduction Strategy, the government will invest $3 million in 2009-10 to establish community hubs in selected low-income neighbourhoods, which will bring together a range of partners and resources to identify and provide social, community and educational supports," the *Backgrounder to the Ontario Budget of 2009*, retrieved from http://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/budget/ontariobudgets/2009/ bk_families.html on May 1, 2010.

[9] *The Roots of Youth Violence* (the Curling/McMurtry Report of 2008) recommends that the government "enhance or create local centres, often based in or around schools, in which opportunities and services for youth and their families can be maximized, and community cohesion fostered. They will provide space and services, but just as importantly, will also provide hubs in which communities can anchor ever-increasing amounts of local policy-making, priority-setting and program delivery." Schools need "to be open and accessible to serve as hubs and to provide space for youth and youth activities." Schools can play a key role "as community hubs, bringing together children, families, agencies and community organizations." "Settlement services need to be expanded and integrated into the community hubs." The report recommends "Creating community hubs, wherever possible anchored in school facilities, not only to provide programs and services, but just as importantly to provide space and to facilitate connections so that communities can coalesce to play increasingly larger roles in setting priorities, developing policies and providing activities and services for their residents." Retrieved Nov. 10, 2009 from http://www.rootsofyouthviolence.on.ca/english/reports/volume1.pdf.

[10] A readily accessible rundown of some of these was found in *People for Education: School Closings and Declining Enrolment in Ontario*, Toronto, 2009; retrieved Nov. 10, 2009 from http://www.peopleforeducation.com/ schoolclosingreport/nov2009.

[11] Joy G. Dryfoos, *Full-Service Schools. A Revolution in Health and Social Services for Children, Youth, and Families*, San Francisco, Jossey-Bass, 1994.

[12] The rural school movement in Mexico, launched by Rafael Ramirez in 1922, the federal Director of Rural Schools, was conceived as an agency of social change in the poorest rural areas of the country through community schools, often jointly built by the poor people of the community themselves, and staffed with teachers often recruited locally and trained to acknowledge and incorporate the ways and crafts and culture and economy of their village people into their teaching. In exchange, they brought along their modern ideas on health, hygiene, immunization and nutrition to accompany their teaching of Spanish and ideas of social progress. They were admired by Dewey in 1926 and many other US visitors, even those who expressed reser-

vations about their clear "socialistic" orientation. In more recent years, it has been acknowledged that they achieved a measure of assimilation of the Indigenous populations that threatened their way of life, as more young Indigenous youth chose to abandon their own culture in favour of a more urban, modern, progressive one. The balancing of a priority to retain cultural identities and diversity with a progressive development model based on citizenship and really useful knowledge is still with us in today's Canada.

[13] Malak Zaalouk, *The Pedagogy of Empowerment. Community Schools as a Social Movement in Egypt* (American University in Cairo Press, 2004), in which he shows how decentralizing power to local communities has played a significant role both in community development but also, more specifically, in raising girls' attendance rates and in improving attitudes to girls' education.

[14] A recent endorsement of these schools comes from the Director of the Toronto District School Board, Chris Spence, in his policy paper *Full Service Schools*, Toronto, September 2009, accessible at http://www.tdsb.on.ca/wwwdocuments/Director/docs/TD%20Full%20Service%20Schools%20-Sept%2017th.pdf. Much in that document is compatible with the vision put forward in this paper. I would have liked to see more emphasis on the integration of school curriculum and community development. Done right, it would provide an alternative form of accountability to test scores and a much richer set of experiences for qualitative evaluation. The TDSB documents have not yet really tackled the complex funding and governance issues that would need resolution for this approach to get off the ground on a large scale.

[15] *The Full-Service Community Schools Act of 2009* (S. 1655). It defines a full-service community school as one that "participates in a community-based effort to coordinate educational, developmental, family, health, and other comprehensive services through community-based organizations and public and private partnerships."

[16] Information retrieved from the TFSS website at http://www.studentsuccess.ca/sponsors.html.

[17] This is best known as Bill 82, an act to amend the Education Act of Ontario, rather than a separate piece of legislation. Many of the provisions of this legislation have been revisited with the gradual move to more inclusive placement, see the Ministry of Education's *Education for All: The Report of the Expert Panel on Literacy and Numeracy Instruction for Students with Special Education Needs, Kindergarten to Grade 6* (2005) and their *Special Education Transformation: The Report of the Co-Chairs with Recommendations of the Working Table on Special Education* (2006). So the number of students traveling to specialized classes is significantly lower, but the labeling continues and the diminished expectations that often go with it.

[18] Jeanita W. Richardson, *The Full-Service Community School Movement. Lessons from the James Adams Community School*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

[19] A good summary of this is available in Jocelyn Berthelot, *Education for the World, Education for All*, Ottawa, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (*Our Schools/Our Selves*), 2008, especially pp. 139-140.

[20] A useful history of Canadian daycare is Donna Varga's *Constructing the Child*, Toronto, James Lorimer (*Our Schools/Our Selves*), 1997.

[21] C. Pascal. *With our Best Future in Mind: Implementing Early Learning in Ontario*. Toronto: Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2009. This summary is quoted on the Ontario Government's website at http://www.ontario.ca/en/initiatives /early_learning/ONT06_018876.

[22] *Ibid*., page 17.

[23] *Ibid*., page 30.

[24] Margaret Lochrie, *Lifelong Learning and the Early Years*, Leicester, National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, 2009, especially page 13. In Colorado Springs, in the same year, the Buena Vista Elementary School, which had been closed, re-emerged as the new home for the West Intergenerational Center, combining daycare programming with activities for seniors, as well as K-5 elementary schoolchildren, "teens and youth." See their website at http://www.springsgov.com/units/parksrec/Sports/WestFall09.pdf.

[25] Lochrie, page 14.

[26] I am grateful to Anne Beaumont for loaning me her M.Sc. thesis on Urban and Regional Planning, *An Evaluation of the Community School Concenpt and Its Implications for the City*, University of Toronto, April 1970. See page 20.

[27] A notable exception in recent years was the construction of a new school in Port Clements, B.C. Built on Haida Gwaii (formerly the Queen Charlotte Islands), and billed in 2007 as a forerunner to the new Neighbourhoods of Learning program, an attempt to move community hubs along (see Larry Kuehn's article elsewhere in this book), this elementary school with a capacity for 50 elementary pupils opened in 2008. It includes a community kitchen, community library, daycare, exercise room, multi-purpose room, seniors' meeting room and a teen room. An intergenerational bonanza indeed. For further details see the following site consulted on April 30, 2010: http://www.neighbourhoodlearningcentres.gov.bc.ca/forerunners.html.

It is important, however, to remember that the multi-purpose building housing most of these features of a regular community centre was built in 2006, and

the school was added later on the same site. So it is a co-location of services which, because of its smallness of scale, has evolved into a hub by force of circumstance.

[28] See Chris Spence, *Full Service Schools*, cited above in note 11, and the briefing notes to TDSB Trustees November 29, 2009 accessible at www.tdsb.on.ca/boardroom/bd_agenda/uploads/generalinfo/091120%20 FULL%20SERVICE%20SCHOOLS.PDF, and to TDSB Health Committee March 31, 2010. See also his op-ed article, "Full service schools offer more than just education", *Toronto Star*, Wednesday May, 5, 2010, page A23. These documents refer to seniors under adult education, schools sponsoring a seniors' day and pupils visiting a seniors' residence.

[29] The Chinese community around Queen Alexandra P.S. in the Toronto's East Chinatown is active within Toronto Intergenerational Partnerships, and there are Spanish Intergenerational Programs associated with the Toronto Catholic District School Board.

[30] Retrieved on May 5, 2010 from http://www.tdsb.on.ca/_site/viewitem.asp?siteid=203&menuid=6512&pageid =5682.

[31] Information provided in a personal interview on October 19, 2010.

[32] Joy G. Dryfoos, *Full-Service Schools*, San Francisco, Jossey-Bass, 1994, pp 19-43.

[33] This plan was subsequently scrapped by Roy Romanow's NDP government in 1993. See http://www.sdta.ca/newsite/history.htm, from which this digest was retrieved on May 3, 2010.

[34] See page 13 above.

[35] Robert F. Kronink, *Full Service Community Schools. Prevention of Delinquency in Students with Mental Illness and/or Poverty*. Springfield, Ill., Charles C Thomas, 2005, page 8.

[36] I urge all readers to visit their website at http://elpuente.us/academy/index.htm, to see what other ways they have found to link schools to community organizing. To see an example of their science curriculum at work in the immediate community, visit http://www.aircurrents.org/plans/cenyc2.htm. It is reminiscent of the work of the Quebec collective, La Maîtresse d'École, who took the view that a course on the Chemistry of Solutions that did not have practical applications, including how to organize a press conference, was not taking its civic responsibilities seriously. See La Maîtresse d'Ecole, *Building a People's Curriculum*, Toronto, *Our Schools/Our Selves*, 1989.

[37] Consult their website at http://www.utoronto.ca/iwsgs/GAAP/index.html. An online publication showing a broad variety of participatory art-related techniques developed by young people themselves is available at http://library.catie.ca/pdf/ATI-20000s/26158.pdf. See also the "Photovoice Process" on YouTube for a demonstration.

[38] or not too proud to receive a charitable dispensation.

[39] Vita Parcours is the name given to fitness trails in public parks, consisting in exercise stations distributed along a route to punctuate jogging with physical fitness routines. Typically each one is accompanied by a panel with instructions and diagrams showing appropriate fitness routines for that site. The first one was constructed in Zurich, Switzerland in 1968. Nowadays, they typically include various items of simple yet robust gym equipment designed as weatherproof installations. They do need maintenance, and the one I visited in Taylor Creek Park, Toronto, in November 2009 had fallen into disuse.

[40] Quotes and information retrieved from http://www.archives.gov.on.ca/english/on-line-exhibits/education/agriculture.aspx on May 3, 2010.

[341] Another example in Ontario is an initiative of the Brant Healthy Living Coalition called the School Food Garden Startup Program. See their website at http://www.healthylivingbrant.com/school-nutrition. There are other examples in Canada and elsewhere in the world listed among the links on this website: http://www.cityfarmer.org/schgard15.html.

[42] National Tasting Week (La semaine du goût) became a national festival bringing schoolchildren, communities and foodworkers together by building on National Tasting Day (October 15), an initiative of a Parisian restaurateur originally launched in 1990. See *La semaine du goût*, the official French website, consulted on May 10, 2010 at http://www.legout.com/home.php. But it doesn't really do justice to the experience of this week in towns and villages throughout the country.

[43] The same idea can be seen in the Green Mapping activity described in Elise Houghton's article elsewhere in this book. A wealth of similar ideas may also be found in the recently-published Gregory A. Smith and David Sobel, *Place- and Community-based Education in Schools*, New York/London: Routledge, 2010.

[44] Abbotsford Middle School in B.C. powers its computer lab with a combination of solar and wind energy projects, and when the weather is unfavourable to both, a team of students generate energy on bicycle machines, see "Abbotsford middle school runs computer lab on green energy," *The Vancouver Sun*, October 19, 2009 (retrieved from http://www.vancouversun.com/technology/Abbotsford+middle+school+runs+computer+green+energy/2121432/story.html).

[45] *A Vision of Hope!* - Presentation to Planning and Priorities Committee, October 20, 2009, retrieved from http://www.tdsb.on.ca/wwwdocuments/Director/docs/TDSB-Vision%20of%20Hope-Final%20(3).pdf on May 6, 2010. See Slides 32 and 33.

[46] See Kenneth Davey (ed.), *Balancing National and Local Responsibilities. Education Management and Finance in Four Central European Countrie*s, Budapest, Open Society Institute, 2002.

[47] Richard Hatcher's article elsewhere in this book describes the ways in which this is happening in England and Wales in depressing detail.

[48] See particularly Ken Jones et al. *Schooling in Western Europe. The New Order and Its Adversaries*, Basingstoke, Palgrave MacMillan, 2008, especially pages 50-52.

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Children being measured at the school clinic, [ca. 1905]
Archives of Ontario. Series RG 10-30-2, 3.03.2 (I0005191) Public Health Nursing Branch, page 43

Children being washed by a nurse at school, [ca. 1905]
Archives of Ontario. Series RG 10-30-2 (I0005195) Public Health Nursing Branch, page 43

Children working in school garden, Bridgenorth Elementary, Peterborough County, [ca. 1920]
Archives of Ontario. Series RG 2-43 (4-874-P), S16148   Ministry of Education, page 48

Boys giving a presentation on warble flies, Bridgenorth School Fair, September 26, 1939
Archives of Ontario, Series RG 16-304-0-7   (I0020970) Ministry of Agriculture, page 48

Dental exam in an elementary school, Hamilton, Ont. [ca. 1930],
Archives of Ontario, Series RG 10-30-2, 1.14.2 (I0005276) Public Health Nursing Branch, page 44

David Clandfield