

Unit 4 Assignment
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Schools can be organized in many different ways as seen in public, private, large, and small education systems. The organizational development within the school plays a major role in the learning of the student and can also affect the culture of educators. Within the organization system, all stakeholders (from student to superintendent) are affected and thus affect others. While organizational theory will continue to be debated, it is certain that school personnel need to keep in mind the best interest for the success of the student.

When schools began in the 19th century, teachers were the core part of how the school system was organized. As time went on and the educational system grew, more and more pieces were added to help sustain and improve a growing organization. The core teachers needed more resources and assistance with non-traditional or low functioning individuals. The need grew for assistance in preparing curriculum and assessing which set of material fits the learner best. Bidwell suggests that “networks of colleague-to-colleague consultation and advice are the prime structural elements” of solving problems (p. 105.) Teachers are even divided and organized into subjects to specialize in. It takes numerous positions to assist and make the learning environment functional so learning is the first goal and not a byproduct. While there are many different roles played among administration, faculty, and staff, the school system must remember that they are there for the student, who also plays a main role in their own education.

Scardamalia suggests that students take part as contributors participating in their education and rely less as clients receiving the education (p. 275.) This is how it should be if students are truly learning. They must participate, practice, and engage in the learning and not simply attempt to absorb the information. Not only does this teach the student something, it helps them to retain the information, learn from their own mistakes, and give them confidence to partake in endeavors within the realm outside of the classroom. This idea promotes a culture that

allows the student to be a focal part of the organizational structure of the school. Hoy focuses on organization within schools as an organizational culture. It is defined as “a system of shared orientations that hold the unit together and give it a distinctive identity” (p. 165). Defining the culture within the educational setting can set the stage for what is expected for both students and educators. When the members have the same beliefs and goals for the system, there is a stronger sense of unity and better chance for successful learning in the end.

There are many key things that school personnel should consider when attending to school structure. It seems that the most important thing to maintain is excellent leadership that flows from the top down. Bidwell suggests that it begins with top-level administrations to ensure that expectations are being met and that each level of the organization is sustaining as it should (p. 107.) Schools must be organized in such a way that promotes a superior learning atmosphere, an appropriate teaching environment, and a categorized curriculum. Another key point to focus on is knowing and maintaining the culture one wants reflected in their institution. For the school system to be organized, all members must be on board to promote the same environment. This corresponds to the previous idea that top-level administrators must do a good job of showing the culture they want to see and following through to make sure it occurs. A final key point to keep in mind when attending to school structure is to analyze events that occur within your own organization. When reflecting upon change or the norm, the educator must remember the parameters of their own institution and compare within that context first (Hoy 175.) This allows self-reflection within the system first, then looking to outside sources for assistance.

School systems must be organized in such a way to promote growth for both the educator and the student. The system is in place to organize the school and keep it running smoothly. Each school has its own culture and norm to maintain. The appropriate cultural and organizational

theories will differ between institutions to promote the best atmosphere. It is assured that the best schools will reassess both over time to continually maintain a quality learning environment.

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- Bidwell, C. E. (2001). Analyzing schools as organizations: Long term permanence and short term change. *Sociology of Education. Extra Issue.* 74, 100-114.
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