

THE FUNCTION OF ELMTOWN'S SCHOOLS

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Q1. Where was the town's original school and why was it placed in that location?

The town's original school must have been in the area known as the *old residential* neighborhood and near the mill as industry and the residential population would have developed at approximately the same time. In a newly inhabited community where advantages of organized mass transit in all likelihood did not exist, the close proximity near the center of industry as well as where the town's inhabitants lived both would be a necessary and distinct advantage in that community.

Q2. Where was the second set of schools built and why were they placed in those locations?

The second set of schools were most likely placed in the newer residential areas as the original schools become overcrowded as the population grew in the town. The addition of the mill's new addition is testament that the economy was growing and with it came additional workers and their families in need of housing as well as education. The two most likely areas would be within the older residential areas if space could be procured and the newer residential areas – the north and west ends representative of a newer suburban sprawl.

Q3. Why was the non-public school placed in its location and what purposes did it serve?

The Parochial school was likely built to allow parents an alternative to the public school that had become too crowded and was thought of providing inferior education than the private school could provide. A second additional possibility is that as some residents were able to acquire some financial wealth they now possessed the resources to require the need of a private school because of the assumed higher quality of education it was felt it would provide. A third possibility may exist if many residents shared similar religious affiliation and felt religious instruction important for their culture.

Q4. What major social values or assumptions about school functioning are embedded in or revealed by the decisions that has led to the system schools as you have described?

The basic assumption is that Parochial schools provide better education for populated blue collar parts of town and that the need arises out of dissatisfaction, whether real or imagined that the public school is not performing up to standards. In addition, as the town's population increased the need for newer schools became of paramount importance and in the newer residential areas these residents wanted schools reflective of their affluent neighborhoods which in addition to being monuments of their success would supposedly offer a higher quality education than the public schools which was the only options previously available to the citizens of Elmtown.

Q5. What are some of the major social changes that have taken place since early schools were designed and built in Elmtown and how might these changes or should these changes impact on the nature of the schools?

Some of the major social changes that have occurred appear to be **1.** *Population growth*, **2.** *Expansion of the town's industry base* and **3.** *The addition of the Mill.*

In the case of *population growth*, the obvious social issues would include students of various economic as well as ethnic backgrounds which potential would clash resulting in possible racism directed at the newer residents and the potential beginnings of gangs and/ or ethnic based groups to protect the interests of their communities. In addition the influx of residents to the older part of town may include among other new immigrants who may be first generation Americans where English as a Second Language (E.S.L) is a need the schools will have to address.

The *expansion of the town's industry base* would bring more job opportunities for the residents of Elmtown but with it would bring a significant number of lower minimum wage jobs thus resulting in a significant of students that may need financial assistance in the case of free school lunches. The likely lack of medical insurance or availability for many families could impact the schools need to provide medical intervention as nursing services may arise from families of these students who are unable to

financially acquire or pursue these needs.

The *addition of the mill* would also provide greater employment opportunities but these opportunities at the Mill, as the only main industry of the town reveals the potential for career advancement would be limited. Additionally, the increased work force would include increased congestion, which would result in the need for a more developed infrastructure and residential (garbage) waste removal effectively resulting in higher school as well as property taxes to raise the funds to provide for these needed community services. With these additional funds available the effect on the schools to be able to provide the need for increased school personnel and services of which the increased school enrollment would require. In the event these additional funds are not forthcoming, the effect on the educational environment would have an immediate impact on increased class size and reduced educational as well as extra curricular programs.

Q6. In what ways has the change in the social context of schooling in Elmtown changed the role and function of the high school principle?

The high school Principle must address the effect of the growing population of the school as it attempts to maintain the same quality of educational services in the community. In addition, the need to consider vocational and educational goals of the students nearing graduation will be of concern as well. For example – As the mill appears to be the main industry of the town, students will need to leave their community to further their education or career goals if

their choice is other than working in the mill or in one of the smaller job opportunities in the downtown business district. In addition the high school Principle will need to be cognizant of the growing number of students from minority or foreign cultures that now make up the school community and how it may affect the ever changing ethnic school climate. Thus, the high school Principle will need to consider adding programs for the growing number of immigrants where English is a second language.

Q7. In your professional opinion what is the educational agenda of Elmtown at this point in its history and where will the town find leadership to respond to this agenda?

The educational agenda of Elmtown will be to address the growth of the community and it's mix of students coming from the older part of town comprised of mostly blue collar families including newer immigrants where the need of consideration of a Bi- lingual education program. In contrast, the Principle will also have to contend with the more affluent residential areas comprised of mostly white-collar families in an ethnic and culturally mixed diversified town. The leader of such a community will need to bring all sides together as the educational needs of the town will be multi-faceted, as the curriculum needs to be responsive to the goals of all the residents. Included would be a population of long time multi-generational residents, new immigrants, residents that have relocated to the newer suburban areas and the newer affluent residents first moving to the older as well more affluent sections

of town. The challenges will place enormous pressure on the schools and it's administration to provide the highest quality educational services without reducing services or increasing class size. Not an easy task indeed.