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## DEVELOPMENT OF AMERICAN SCHOOL ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE IN THE CONCEPT OF «CARING COMMUNITY»

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### РОЗВИТОК ОРГАНІЗАЦІЙНОЇ КУЛЬТУРИ АМЕРИКАНСЬКОЇ ШКОЛИ В КОНЦЕПЦІЇ «ТУРБОТЛИВОЇ ГРОМАДИ»

*Стаття присвячена аналізу однієї із сучасних американських концепцій розвитку організаційної культури школи, а саме концепції «турботливої громади». Означена концепція виникла у зв'язку з необхідністю глибоких змін у внутрішньому середовищі американських середніх шкіл. Центральною ідеєю концепції є необхідність активізації співпраці між інститутами школи, сім'ї та суспільства з метою створення безпечного середовища в школі.*

**Ключові слова:** організаційна культура, школа, рекультуризація, турботлива громада, співробітництво.

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### РАЗВИТИЕ ОРГАНИЗАЦИОННОЙ КУЛЬТУРЫ АМЕРИКАНСКОЙ ШКОЛЫ В КОНЦЕПЦИИ «ЗАБОТЛИВОЙ ОБЩИНЫ»

*Статья посвящена анализу одной из современных американских концепций развития организационной культуры школы, а именно концепции «заботливой общины». Данная концепция возникла в связи с необходимостью глубоких изменений во внутренней среде американских средних школ. Центральной идеей данной концепции является необходимость активизации сотрудничества между институтами школы, семьи и общества с целью создания безопасной среды в школе.*

**Ключевые слова:** организационная культура, школа, рекультуризация, заботливая школа, сотрудничество.

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Enhancing international cooperation makes it necessary to address a number of important issues, such as improving the quality of education, the structural changes of the educational system according to the requirements of continuity of education, monitoring and implementation of the best international experience in the field of educational reforms.

However, the analysis of the domestic educational reforms shows that reformation processes often failure because of lack of consistency of their implementation at the school level. In addition, quite often the school staff is not ready for implementation of changes.

In this regard, the scientific interest is the phenomenon of organizational culture of the school. Her role in the process of reforming the educational system, as well as the ways of its change are actively researched in American theory of education, starting with the 70-ies of XX century, when it was first made the assumption of interconnection school culture and efficient operation of secondary schools.

We rely on the theoretical researches of American education, studying education experience of caring communities, specifically J. Brian, J. Lindvol, R. Hlatter. An analysis of this type of schools determines the principles of their functioning. In addition, numerous research programs noted the impossibility of creating a socially safe environment at school without involving the school community resources, and hence without creating socio-pedagogical competence of teachers and other educational activities. Outlined priorities of the American high school has led to the emergence of strategies of cultural development of safe and caring environment, the mechanism of which was to create so-called caring communities.

It should be noted that in a number of publications devoted to the consideration of caring communities, the organizational and pedagogical principles of their creation and functioning are described in detail, as well as the impact on learning outcomes of students, which is determined by efficiency of educational institutions in general. However, in our opinion, the development of organizational culture in the context of functioning of school educational institutions on the principles of caring community is not adequately covered.

The purpose of the article is to analyze one of a number of modern American concepts of organizational school culture development, namely the concept of «caring community».

Reasons for change in the priorities of the American high school activities and the implementation of models of «caring community» in American education theory can be explained by a number of motives. The social reasons include:

- overcoming racial, ethnic and social conflicts within the school;
- reducing violence in schools;
- creating an emotionally and physically safe environment at school;

- ensuring full realization of the rights of students and their families;
- empowerment of children's social support networks;
- strengthening cooperation of school, family and community, including businesses and other organizations representing community;
- expansion of educational opportunities for poor children [3; 6; 8].
- The pedagogical reasons include:
  - strengthen students' sense of belonging to school life – a necessary condition for improving their academic motivation and achievements;
  - the formation of social personality traits;
  - the culture of «co-operative collective» (collaborative collegiality);
  - school improvement through collaboration;
  - promoting a positive and caring relationships between children and adults;
  - contribution toward the children's meaning of life and activities associated with the school;
  - providing educational mission of schools: education erudite responsible for their actions, self-confident, happy members of the school community, preparing children to fulfill the social role of active citizens in a secure and democratic society [4; 5].

Achieving these objectives will be the construction of the so-called «caring communities» or «caring schools». The central idea of «caring school» concept is the idea that in American society the school even in the early stages of its development was the center of the community and now you must return it to that role again. The modern school can not function separately from society. What more important than ever, according to the research of American theorists of education is to establish a link between the school and the community – not only with parents but also with business structures, public and other organizations which represent the community. The purpose of this communication is to create a safe environment at school for the successful training and education of students, to form a new system of values, norms and beliefs necessary for the development of culture of safe and caring environment.

After making the analysis of studies of American educational theorists who study education experience of caring communities, we found that the activity of schools of this type is based on the following principles:

– establishing positive social and interpersonal relationships (connectedness). The «caring school» students, school staff, family and community have positive relationships with each other, a positive attitude to their involvement in school life, feel involved. According to the director of one of these schools, «caring school» is a «place where all relate to each other and each is important ... where everyone matters...». Significant is every child and school personnel's job is to give each student a sense that «his presence or absence

is very important». Speaking of school staff, we mean not only teachers, but also «janitors, secretaries, chefs – all. They all have ... to feel important component. And parents also need to feel that when they come to their school, they are part of it and not come to foreign territory...» [9, 375];

– the existence of broad rights and opportunities for everyone (empowerment). Providing empowerment makes sense when there are conditions for the application of these skills in specific situations at school. In addition, in the classroom and outside of it their students are provided with qualified advice about various problems. High school students are also involved in counseling, they are so-called «senior assistants» (peer helpers), which gives them the opportunity to feel like participants in the process of creating a safe environment in the school. Thus, students begin to realize that not only the actions of school staff, but also their own matter. The problem of staff is to support them and to learn to make important decisions for themselves and for the school as a whole;

– school safety supporting (safety). In a caring community everyone solve the problems, which forms an every member's of the school community sense of ownership for the life of the institution. So everyone feels accountable for his actions and understands his importance for the school conditions for preventing conflicts and threats to safety training and education of students. In addition, in areas where the majority of the population – citizens with low income, work with the school community and cooperation of various kinds of local organizations has great potential to reduce the level of social risks in these areas. In many cases, after-school programs aimed to prevent violence, as well as programs aimed the academic and cultural growth of students are the result of cooperation between schools and organizations representing the community. These programs enrich children and their families experience with positive relationships, skills and values necessary to develop an active position in society;

– development of members' of the school community cooperation (collaboration). This principle provides the establishment of partnership between teaching and support staff and members of the school community, based on the recognition of the positive features of each child and their family members, as well as the use of positive features to support students and expanding their rights and opportunities. The efforts of school personnel intended that every child felt care, and every family felt that its efforts appreciated;

– harmonizing the actions of members of the school community (consistency). Members of the school community are not chaotic. Their rights and obligations are clearly defined. But more important is what distinguishes the caring school from other – a clearly defined responsibilities of each group of participants in the school community: teachers, staff, students, parents, etc;

– a sense of common ownership (shared ownership). Since everyone in the school and the nearest community feels his involvement in school life, it develops a sense of responsibility for its logistical value;

– mutual respect (respect). All relations in the framework of the «caring school» are built on the recognition of the importance of the position of each of its members, his wishes, needs and beliefs are respected;

– joy atmosphere (fun). This principle implies support for a positive atmosphere in the school, regardless of any circumstances, support of each in the constant belief of positive prospects for the development of the school.

In our opinion, the main achievement of caring schools is changing the nature of relations between the groups that involved in school life. Just as beliefs and value judgments of people influencing standards and changes taking place in the school, relationships between individuals and groups of people – it's part of school culture that can facilitate or hinder educational changes. Analysis of reports of educational institutions, which studied the program embodied cultural development of the school, and research programs of the American scientists can come to the following conclusions about the changes occurring in the nature of the relationship between teachers, teachers and students, teachers and parents in caring learning communities:

1. The relationship between teachers. Building a culture of collaboration reduces professional isolation of teachers, allows the exchange of successful experiences and ensuring their mutual support. All this increases enthusiasm, promotes a sense of the effectiveness of the teachers and makes them more receptive to new ideas. However, according to US researchers to develop collegiality at school is very difficult. John Little says that it manifests itself in four forms of behavior of teachers: joint debate colleagues' practice school work, monitor the work of colleagues, co-design, planning, analysis and evaluation of the curriculum, and finally transfer to each other the experience of teaching, learning and management. Other education theorist R. Barth emphasizes the critical importance of the change in the relationship between teachers to develop a new culture of school: «Decisions are best. The mechanism of decision-making becomes more efficient. The level of trust between adult members of the school community increases. The interest of teachers to teach is enhanced and sustainable. There is also evidence that increasing the motivation of students to learn and study their performance, because when adults share experiences and work together, students will do the same ... These relationships between adults at school let infuse energy and support all other efforts to improve the school. While adults will not communicate with each other and help each other, little will change» [2, 31].

We agree with the opinion of American scientists that collegial relationships that are established in caring schools between teachers, promote changes in school culture since the emergence of new beliefs, attitudes to school and

work in it, new behaviors, skills, beliefs – all that is school culture – depend largely on whether the teachers work in isolation, or exchange ideas, get support and positive assessment of their work by colleagues. They are more willing to change if their relationships with other are personalized. So in an effort to reform school, you must be aware that the consensus among teachers will have a major impact on the adoption of the reform and willingness to participate.

2. The relationship between teachers and students. It should be noted that only since the 90th of the XXth century students became seriously considered as members of educational change. Before they perceived mainly as their potential beneficiaries, not participants. By this time in most US high schools the practice of management of the students' actions without interest in their opinions about it was common. Students are rarely informed of the plan, introduced to changes in school despite the fact that no plan can be implemented quite successfully, if students do not accept it or not configured to cooperate. M. Fullan explains that older students often seek to build relationships with their teachers to the scheme «live me and let me live differently», that tend to be «left alone» until they break the calm in class. Such actions create a barrier to introducing changes as aimed at preserving the status quo. But in this respect, caring schools share the view of American education theorists that the role of students, especially high school students, in the school improvement process should be reviewed. Changing behavior and attitudes of the students requires the same attention as any other members' of school reform.

The relationship between teachers and students in caring schools are bilateral. Teachers show respect, high expectations and support regarding students. We should also note, that such relationship between teachers and students in caring schools support the methods (objective and subjective) and stages of identification of gifted students (general screening or student search, review of students for eligibility, services options match) in American schools [1].

On the other hand, the ratio of teachers to students depends on the attitude of students to them. Thus, M. George stresses that the results of «caring schools» demonstrate a greater level of interest of students to study lessons without any reason comparing to traditional schools [7]. According to researchers, this is the result of teachers interest in cooperation with students and harmonious distribution of educational priorities for achieving a safe learning environment and school.

3. The relationship between the students. Particular attention to the students, their participation in important events in the life of the school, the opportunity to influence the results of the «caring school» develops a sense of self-esteem in them, the ability to monitor the situations of life, promoting the adoption of school values. Thus, students in the school share the same culture. The successful models of «caring school» have relationship similar to the

relationship in the family, because there is no competition between the students, they care about each other.

4. The relationship between parents, community and school. The «caring schools» as a result of mutual support between parents, teachers and school establish friendly relations. Parents feel co-teachers of their children, teachers receive support for their work on the part of parents and the community. This in turn contributes to the establishment of the partnership, elaboration of common objectives and prospects for education in the school, which helps to minimize the risk of conflicts between the school, parents and the community, and hence – within the school itself.

However, we found that supporters of the development strategy of the American school development programs within school as a caring community, in addition to its positives, called several drawbacks. Thus, the researchers K. MakDermot and B. Turnbal stress that involving not only parents, but also other members of the community to school life promotes a more democratic functioning of the school as an organization, creates conditions for important positive change. However, some researchers (J. Bryan, J. Lindwall) emphasize that the shared decision-making, collegiality have certain limitations. For example, positive relationships between teachers and administration, focusing on such-school issues as mission schools or choice of educational materials provides a priori desire of teachers to actively participate in shared decision making and school life in general. At the same practice does not always detect the appropriate level of readiness and willingness of teachers to do so. In addition, not only teachers, but also other school staff, parents and students may be unprepared to cooperate, reluctant to accept the changes or simply do not realize the importance of their role in the cooperation. The reason for the low motivation of parents and other community members to participate in school life is often a previous negative experience in shaping its culture. Besides cooperation and common concern for school can be a difficult test for the headmaster if his beliefs about future missions of the school are contradict beliefs of the community. To solve these problems, educational theorists can specially organize training for all groups of stakeholders to create caring schools.

The above allows us to conclude that the principles of the caring school culture program include the development of the institution, namely:

- support the desire of students to be honest, open, ready to help, respected and responsible;
- promote empathy and understanding of students to each other;
- enhance learning motivation of students;
- strengthen the ties of family and school;
- reduce isolation of teachers, parents, students and other members of the school community;

- establish relations of cooperation, trust and respect between all members of the school community;
- create an environment of caring and mutual support in school;
- diminish the differences between subcultures within schools and whole-school culture.

The result of the implementation of the principles of «caring school» concept is changing of school culture, namely the nature of the relationship between the groups of persons involved in her life. Thus, the development of a culture of teamwork makes teachers more supportive of new ideas. The relationship between teachers and students change in such a way that students begin to be seen as participants in the educational changes that establishes the relationship of mutual respect and trust between the two sides. The relationship between pupils established on the model of the relationship between the children in the family when the older feel responsible for the younger, and the younger pupils see model to follow in the older pupils. Building partnership between parents, community and school can minimize the risk of conflict between them, and therefore within the school itself.

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