

Chapter 6

Ecology of the School

The direction in which education starts a man will determine his future life.

Plato

The School's Function as a Socializing Agent

School Purpose

- From society's perspective
 - Transmit cultural heritage
- From the individual's perspective
 - Acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to become self-sufficient and participate effectively in society

The School

- **Universal**
 - Open to all
- **Formal**
 - Methodological
- **Prescriptive**
 - Provides directions based on custom

Macrosystem Influences on Schools

Macrosystem

- Political Ideology
- Economics
- Ethnicity
- Religion
- Science/Technology

Neuroscience and Education

- The reticular activating system (RAS), in the lower brain, is the brain's first sensory intake filter. Novel experiences stimulate the RAS.
- Teachers who engage in learning activities that correlate with increased dopamine, a brain chemical, can increase focus, memory, and attention.

Parental Options Regarding School

School Choice

- **Magnet School**

- A public school that offers special educational programs, such as science, music, or performing arts, and draws students from different neighborhoods by choice

School Choices

- **School Vouchers** are certificates issued by the federal government in the amount the local school district would normally spend on that child's education at his or her assigned public school.

No Child Left Behind

- Designed to address achievement gap between disadvantaged students and their peers
- Parents can transfer to schools with track records of academic success and safety.

School Choice

- **Charter School**

- A school, which is authorized and funded by a public school district, formed by a group of parents, teachers, or other community members with a shared educational philosophy

School Choice

- Home-Based Schools
 - Most home schools have credentialed teachers and follow a prescribed curriculum.

Diversity and Equity

- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Language
- Communication Style
- Religion
- Disability

Terms

- **Cultural Assimilation**
 - The process whereby a minority cultural group takes on the characteristics of the majority cultural group
- **Melting Pot**
 - The idea that society should socialize diverse groups to blend into a common culture

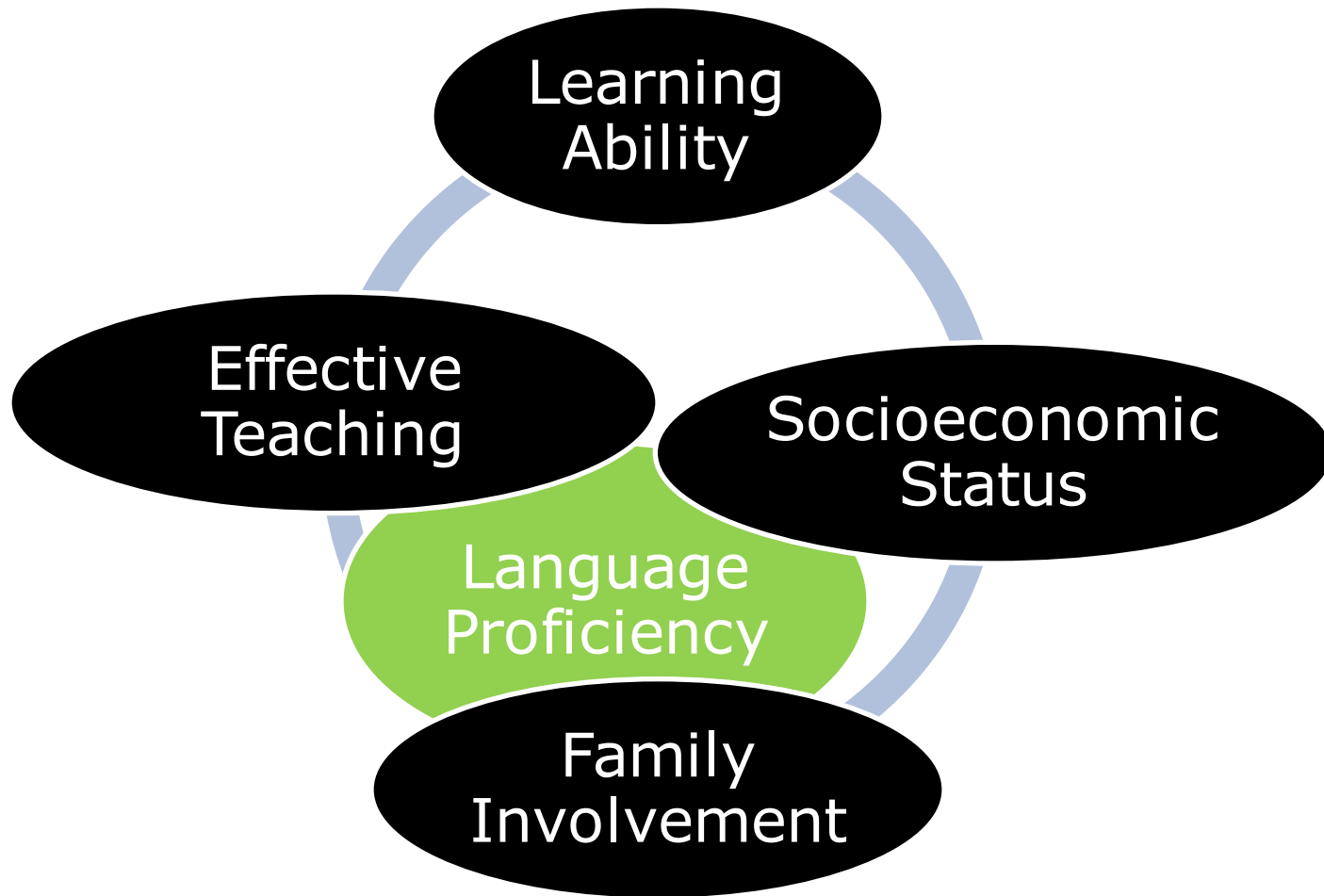
Terms

- **Cultural Pluralism**
 - Mutual appreciation and understanding of various cultures and coexistence in society of different languages, religious beliefs, and lifestyles

Terms

- **Bilingual/Multicultural Education**
 - Education in the student's native language as well as English, respect for the student's culture and ethnicity, and enhancement of the student's self-concept

Predicting Success



Disability

- **Disability**
 - Reduction in functioning of a particular body part or organ, or its absence
- **Handicapism**
 - Assumptions and practices that promote the deferential and unequal treatment of people because they are different physically, mentally, or behaviorally

Disability

- Individuals With Disabilities Act (IDEA)
 - Addresses the education of individuals with disabilities
- **Inclusion**
 - The educational philosophy that all children are entitled to participate fully in their school and community

IEP

- **Individualized Education Program**

- A form of communication between school and family, developed by the group of people responsible for the education of a child with special needs

Chronosystem Influences on Schools: Societal Change

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- Adaptations to Societal Change
 - Influential writings of prominent theorists
 - Changing political climate
 - National studies of school readiness and school accountability

Chronosystem Influences on School: Technology

- Computers
- Digital revolution
- Internet
- Online social networks
- Video-game learning environments
- Record keeping

Chronosystem Influences on School: Health and Safety

- Substance Use and Abuse
- Obesity
- Violence

Mesosystem Influences on School: School-Child

Mesosystem Influences on Schools: School-Child

Learning Style

- A consistent pattern of behavior and performance by which an individual approaches educational experiences

Mesosystem Influences on Schools: School-Family

Three types of family involvement

- Decision-Making
- Participation
- Partnership

Mesosystem Influences on Schools: School-Peer Group

Children's attitudes about learning can be influenced by the peer group to which they belong.

Mesosystem Influences on Schools: School-Media

Educational Television

Computers

Mesosystem Influences on Schools: School-Community

- School Size
- Class Size
- Business and Schools
- Community Services and Schools

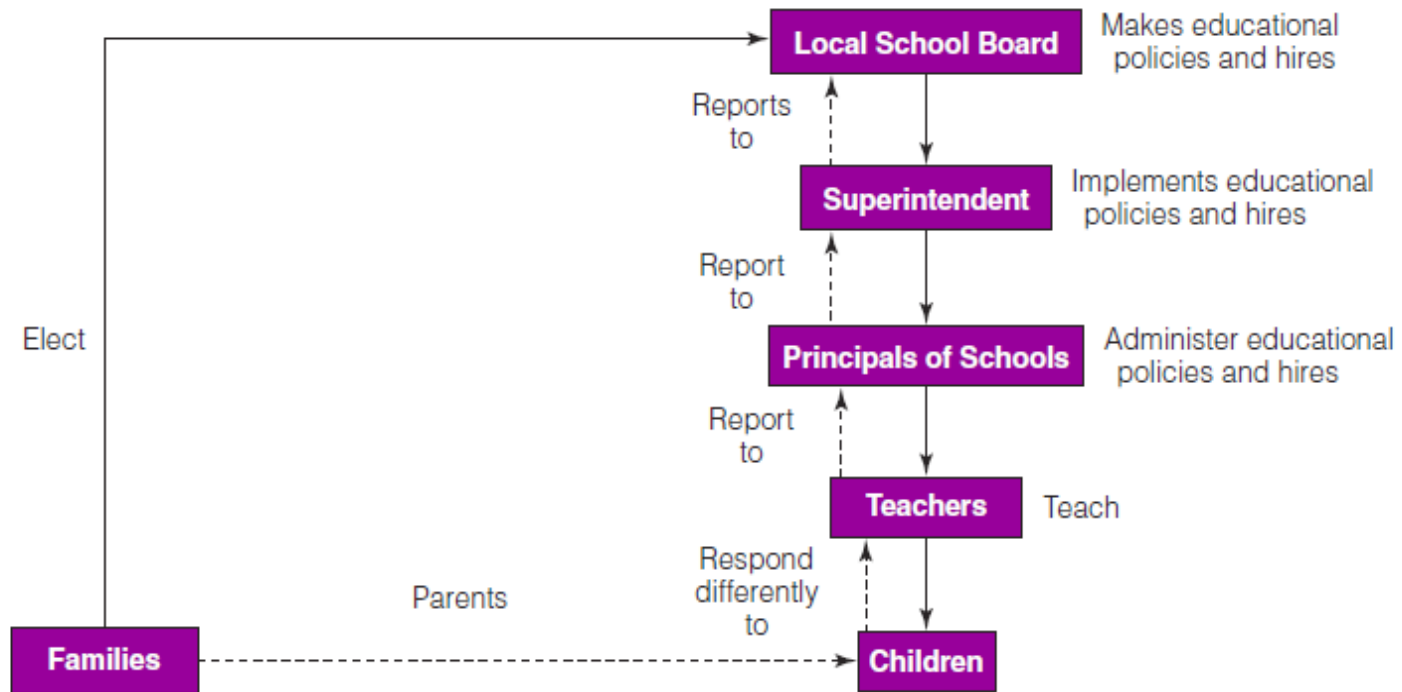


Figure 6.3 Child–Family–School Linkages

Mesosystem

- School-Peer Group Linkages
 - Children's attitudes about learning influenced by the peer group
- School-Media Linkages
- School-Community Linkages

Class Size

- **Large class** (more than 25 students)
 - Less interaction with teacher
 - Less frequent interaction in discussion
- **Small class** (less than 20)
 - More opportunities for interaction;
Increase in cooperative behavior