

POLITICS, ECONOMICS, AND ETHICS:
THINKING CRITICALLY ABOUT SCHOOL-CORPORATE
TECHNOLOGY PARTNERSHIPS

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
BY

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IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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June 2006

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am truly grateful to the following people who were with me every step of the way:

My adviser, Dr. Scott McLeod, who continuously provided me with expert advice and encouragement;

The Cohort: John, Caroline, Mary, Karen, Jane, Bernadeia, Barry, Jeff, Debbie, Bob and Ed who were always there for guidance, support and lunch;

The staff at Randolph Heights School, who always believed I'd see this day;

My dear friends, who always provided stress relief; and

My beloved sons, Aaron and Brian, who never complained about having to eat macaroni and cheese – *again*.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated in memory to
my dear friend,
Gloria Wong Coltrain,
who shared her passion for learning, philosophy of education,
aspiration for leadership, and quest for balance in life.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the critical consciousness of school administrators with regard to school-corporate technology partnerships. This study examined how school principals in different parts of the United States think about school-corporate partnerships that involve technology, specifically the criteria and guidelines they considered when entering into partnerships and what they perceive as the benefits and costs associated with their school-corporate partnerships. The study revealed the level of critical consciousness of the school principals: the extent to which they considered the educational, financial, political, social, and ethical criteria, benefits, and costs related to school-corporate technology partnerships. The level of critical consciousness is significant, especially as it relates to both commercialism and funding in schools.

Three central themes emerged from participants' responses: 1) school-corporate partnerships are perceived as a beneficial necessity due to financial constraints and inadequate educational funding; 2) school principals seem unaware that they engage in promotional activities on behalf of the company; and 3) there is a need for policies and guidelines that specifically address technology partnerships with corporations. The paper includes a set of proposed guidelines for school-corporate technology partnerships. The guidelines are based on central themes that emerged from participant and interviewer discussions and are intended to help school administrators think critically when making decisions related to school-corporate technology partnerships.

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