

SCHOOL IN LOCAL COMMUNITY CONTEXT

– *Case study – Puiești Village, Buzău County* –

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Abstract: *This study approaches the relation between the school and the local community, a very important aspect to the contemporary social dynamics.*

The first aspect is the analysis of the place that the school occupy in the community.

The premises from which the analysis starts is that the school, although it is a social institution with clearly defined roles, specific objectives, organizational culture is directly influenced by what is happening locally. Schools have a level of development proportional to the level of the local communities in which they operate; it promotes local culture and local history. Thus, school is a community binder that promotes the local and responds to local educational needs.

This is possible by adopting a participatory management both at the school and at other representative institutions for the local community: mayor and city council, church, health units, traders, NGOs, etc.

This paper includes a case study carried out in Puiești Village, Buzău County, which customizes, in a defined local context, the premises from which we started. The analysis is longitudinal: describes the history of the place and the school, the current context, describes the expected local development. Considering all this information, in the end is made the recommendations on the development of the analyzed school.

Keywords: *school, local community, local partnership, local development.*

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1. School and the social context

The school and the community are two realities that represent an interest for: pedagogues, sociologists, psychologists, philosophers, anthropologists, etc., each trying to capture the issues that contribute to their operating mechanisms, also the involved agents and the degree of involvement in promoting education. Nowadays we are witnessing the development of a true power of ideas and action, centred on the community and its development. The approach of aspects of the school and the community, finds its legitimacy also in the current trends of extending the educational field, from school organization to educational agents.

The school is on the one hand, an institution that provides social service, being directly influenced by what happens in the social environment, transmitting knowledge, develop skills, rules, recognized and accepted social values; and on the other hand, has development logic, reproduces their own norms and values, having its own organizational system. Essential is to identify common values transmitted by school and community agents, of some points of development in order to increase the education of community (pupils, parents, various social categories, etc.).

The school is one of the central institutions of the community, that has specific roles, but cannot work and cannot be developed without taking into account the community specific, consisting of several factors with educational role: family, government, governmental and nongovernmental organizations, businesses, churches, cultural institutions, healthcare institution, etc., each having an explicit or implied educational offer. Thus, the school organization is under the pressure of a number of factors: ideological groups operating at local, political systems, economic conditions and different tendencies in society (Diaconu M., 2004).

Schools depend on the operating environment in terms of: obtaining material resources, human resources, financial resources, information resources, cultural resources, etc.

The approach the relation between the school and the local community can be made in terms of social needs for education that occur both at macro social level, at the education system and the social community in which the education institution works (Voiculescu, F., 2004).

Teachers and school managers, in two ways, feel social needs of education at the specific level of the school:

1. *The official way*: regulated and organized administrative, by requirements and obligations that arise from the position of the school in the educational system (level, profile, form of education).

2. *Informally*: the school operates in a social context, developing social relations directly with the social community in which they operate. The social community has expectations, requirements and obligations about the school as an educational, social and public institution, which has specific responsibilities. In this way (informal) the school representatives, the teachers and the school managers are in contact with the social needs of education, as they act in concrete terms, as needs and concrete expectation of the social community (training requests in relation with the demand of the market, communities traditions and mentality of the community, etc). The expectation of the community from the school is also different, depending on the communities in which they operate, even when the schools are of the same type.

Schools are perceived differently in the social communities, in which they operate (neighbourhood, district, city, state), have acquired a position, addressing to a particular population.

The notion of *community* has a large semantic range. Synthesizing the various approaches, we can extract the main approaches of the community (Bruna Zani and Augusto Palmonari, 2003):

- The community is a global social entity, in which the relation between the members are very close, and the sense of *in-group* is strong and rooted in deep traditions;
- The community is an entity that takes precedence over the individual, against the isolated individual by the virtue of its ethical and political transcendence;
- The community is the repository of common good; it is a moral reference for the individual, promotes basic values (by laws and traditions) and references values to the individual.

In the social practice in Romania in recent years, we often encounter with the concept of „community”.

In the specialized social analysis are indicated as communities: family, school, parishioners of a church, a village, a neighbourhood and even „virtual communities”, where the members communicate via the Internet, or „business community”, „political community”. A common feature found in these cases is the „unit value, the probability of having members with similar value orientations”. The community is specific to „the groups that tend to have a specific culture”. (Sandu, D., 2007)

Based on these considerations, in the current social context have to be redefined the role of schools in the community context in which they operate. Can school contribute to the strengthening of community? Who are the community agents involved with the school to train the younger generation? What is their role? We need to answer to these questions. We believe that: making the most of local community

resources, approaching a partnership by promoting a participatory management, awareness of the role of each agent of the community in the education, are not only ways that lead to the development of the local institution, but also to the development of the entire local community. The approaches are not uniform in all communities, but custom, as we attempt to prove in the case study below.

2. The development of the school from the commune Puiești, Buzău County, in commentary context – case study

Locally, the communities develop different, having different characteristics that distinguish them. The school, the central institution of the local community, develops itself according to the local directions. We consider that the school is not an institution that operates independently of what happens in the social context in which it operates. Each school operates in a local context different from many perspectives: historical, economic, human resources (demographics, structure, etc), natural resources, development perspectives, cultural, etc. (Stăiculescu, C., 2007). In our research we tried to bring arguments to certify our affirmations.

2.1. The researched conducted in 2007-2008 had the following objectives:

1. Identify the roles of the Community Operators in their partnership with the school;
2. The description of the factors that contribute to the cohesion of the partnership between the school and the local community;
3. Identification of possible forms of organization of the partnership between the school and the local community;
4. Identify the issues that may arise in the partnership between the school and the local community;
5. Identification of optimization solution for the partnership between the school and the local community.

2.2. The hypothesis that was at the base of the research are:

Hypothesis no. 1 If the school has the initiative of some partnership forms, important for the community, then it is possible to attract partners to join various activities initiated by the school;

Hypothesis no. 2 If the school has access to the community resources (human, material, informational, technological, cultural), then, the forms of manifestation of the partnership between

the school and the community are more diverse and more focused on community needs.

2.3. The research universe

We have proposed that through our research to extract statistically data significant at the national level. A school, in partnership with the local community, develops differently. Therefore, we believe that a statistical analysis at national level may not be possible without harming the local specifics, the „originality”. Depending on this specific, the needs of local institutional development of the school are different. Therefore, based on the analysis of the local specifics, using our own analysis tools, we will sketch some directions for the analysed school local development.

The universe of this research covers several areas:

- **Institutional:** schools, authorities, local institutions (medical units, police, church), local businesses, NGOs active on local;

The school from the commune Puiești, on which we stopped out, operate over small schools (structures) from the villages. The Puiești commune, has seven villages and the schools are arranged as follows: Nicoleşti Elementary School (available for Nicoleşti Village and Dăscăleşti Village), Puiești de Jos elementary school (available for villages: Puiești de jos, Puiești de sus, Lunca, Plopi, Măcrina), Măcrina Primary School (available for villages: Măcrina, Plopi, Lunca). It should be noted that in the commune operates five preschool units (in the villages: Măcrina, Puiești de jos, Puiești de sus, Nicoleşti and Dăscăleşti).

- **Human:** pupils, parents, teachers, priests, doctors, representatives if businesses, representatives of local government (mayors, deputy mayors, local councillors), police;

- **Information:** statistics, literature, websites, administrative documents, monographs of the school historical documents, etc.

2.4. In the research were used different methods: questionnaire-based survey, observation, monograph, social document analysis, case study, structured interviews and social biography.

2.5. Tools used in the research

1. The main research tool used was **the assessment grind of school according to the partnership between the school and the community and the level of community development, which was analyzed on three temporal levels:**

- **Past** – the historical dimension of the school and the local community that we studied;

- **Present** – the present situation of school and community;

- **Future** – the development of the school in the community context.

The assessment grid of school according to the partnership between the school and the local community and the level of the community development, followed these dimensions:

1. Historical dimension of the school and the community;
2. Current local resources of development;
3. The dimension of the human resources;
4. Leadership and management;
5. Information resources;
6. Communication;
7. Culture;
8. Strategic resources;
9. Material resources;
10. Financial resources;
11. Other resources;
12. Partnership programs;
13. Availability of the representatives of the local community for partnership.

2. In the research, the **Investigation based on the questionnaire** was applied to many community agents from the analyzed communities: pupils, parents, teachers, mayor and deputy mayor, local councillors, doctors, police officers, priests, representatives of businesses.

For each category of agents has been developed and applied a questionnaire, following comparable variables, which aggregate, could give an idea of how the school is perceived, its role in the local community and the opportunities of local development.

3. The research results

3.1 The community context and data about the Puiеști Elementary School

3.1.1 The history of the commune

Although the existing historical documents and the rare archaeological excavations made in the area suggest that the commune Puiеști was inhabited since ancient times (early and middle Neolithic – Boian Culture, Gumelnița Culture and Cucuteni),

first document dates from the sixteenth century, year 1581, and the document referred to the village Nicoleşti. In the documents from the eighteenth century are mentioned the villages: Puieşti de sus and Plopi (Plopii Vechi). The other villages are mentioned in the documents from the nineteenth century, although it is assumed that are older than these mentioned.

About the ground of the residence of the village does not exist a particular document but its existence in the nineteenth century is attested by a fragment of an ancient document, stored in the church from Puieşti de jos, in which is mentioned the date when the church was built and painted: " this church was founded in 1840 by the owner Anastasie Dedilescu, in the days of the blessed bishop Filotei, and was painted in 1884, by the pious Christians of this commune together with the present owner, Eduard L. Grecu, at the insistence of the priest Dimitrie Ionescu, with the blessing of the bishop I. F. Inocenţie, mason M. Orăşeanu, October 1884." (Archives of Puieşti School) We can deduce from the shown fragment that the settlement was already cohesive, stable and large in number in the days when the church was built, in the first half of the nineteenth century. The name of the village, as the elders said, comes from the name of the boyar Puiescu, the settlement being on his estate.

3.1.2 Characterization of the nowadays commune

The commune Puieşti is situated in the north of the Bărăgan Plain, in Râmnicului Plain, on the County Road 204 that goes from Râmnicu Sărat to the commune Ciorăşti. The nearest urban area is Râmnicu Sărat, 14 km from the town residence of the commune – village Puieşti de jos. The commune is 45 km from the residence of the county, city Buzău, in the northeastern side of the county Buzău.

Neighbours of the commune are:

- In the North: the commune Băleşti and commune Sihlea (Vrancea County);
- In the North-East: the commune Ciorăşti (Vrancea County);
- In the South: the commune Balta Albă, commune Boldu, commune Ghergheasa (Buzău County);
- In the East: de commune Vâlcele (Buzău County);
- In the West: the commune Râmnicelu (Buzău County).
- The commune has an area of about 10,000 ha, having seven villages: Puieşti de Jos (Răceni) – the commune residence, Puieşti de sus, Nicoleşti, Dăscăleşti, Măcrina, Plopi, Lunca.

The total area of the commune is/ from which:

Table 1
Distribution of land in the commune Puiești

Villages	Total Area	Puiești de jos	Puiești de sus	Nicolești	Dăscălești	Măcrina	Plopi	Lunca (Hoinari)
Habitable area (build-up area)	349 ha	130 ha	36 ha	65 ha	69 ha	36 ha	6 ha	7 ha
Agricultural land (unincorporated area)	8073 ha	2675 ha	894 ha	1600 ha	1700 ha	894 ha	138 ha	172 ha

Table 2
The distribution of the unincorporated areas from the commune Puiești

Unincorporated area distribution

Destination field	Arable land	Pastures	Forest land	Ponds/ Lakes
Area	7882 ha	737 ha	119 ha	8 ha

The total population of the village is:

Table 3
The distribution of the population from the villages belonging to the commune Puiești

Villages	Puiești de jos	Puiești de sus	Nicolești	Dăscălești	Măcrina	Plopi	Lunca (Hoinari)
Number of inhabitants/village	1540	520	930	990	520	80	100

Length of access roads / from which:

- asphalt: 39 km
- paved: 150 km

Length of water supply (under construction): 25 km

Total number of economic agents, of which:

Table 4
*The distribution of the economic agents
in the villages belonging to the commune Puiеști*

Villages	Puiеști de jos	Puiеști de sus	Nicolești	Dăscălești	Măcrina	Plopi	Lunca (Hoinari)
Number of economic agents/village	7	3	5	7	5	-	-

The profile of the economic agents: manufacturing and services 10, commerce 17

Health units: a dispensary in Puiеști de Jos, where are 2 doctors and 3 nurses

Police station: a post with 4 active members

Churches: Five Orthodox churches in Puiеști de jos, Puiеști de sus, Nicolești, Dăscălești, Măcrina, with five priests. Most people are Christian Orthodox, in Nicolești and Dăscălești are people with Adventist religion (in a small proportion compared with the total number of population).

The number of Coty Council members: 13

Birth rate in the last three years (2006 – 2008): 132 children born

The number of single parent families: 50

Additional allowances: 280

Special social situations: families who take care of children with disabilities, families with social assistance: 50

Immigrants: immigration cases are more often found in villages Nicolești and Dăscălești, however, the percentage of migrant working population in the community is significant.

3.1. The situation of the schools from the commune

The Elementary School from Puiеști was established around 1800, in the early years operating in some local houses.

A statistic from 1891 includes the following data about the school from the current commune:

- "The commune Măcrina (income: 1767 lei). Three hamlets: Hoinari, Măcrina și Plopi. The school is in Măcrina. It functions since 1889. The place is held by the

commune. It is in inappropriate place, together with the Hall, the place is too small, but it's a healthy place, available for the children. It has only one classroom (3.90 x 3.70 x 2.55), but there is not another room just for the teachers. Has a common courtyard with the Hall. Has no garden. The school has no income. The children from Hoinari and Plopi can attend to the school from Măcrina, where are 131 pupils, so there should be a second teacher. A new place is necessary."

- "The commune Nicolesci (income: 3940 lei). Two hamlets: Dăscălesci and Nicolesci. The school is in Nicolesci. It has a fence covered with reed, it is inappropriate, too small, it is a healthy place, but is hard for children to come to school. It has two classrooms: I (7 x 4.50 x 1.75), II (4 x 4 x 1.75), have not a room just for teachers. There is no yard or garden. The school has no income. The children from Dăscălesci (1 kilometre away) can attend to the school from Nicolesci, but there are 257 school-aged children and should be a second teacher at the existing school, but should also establish another school with two teachers. It would be desirable for the existing school to be transferred to another place, more capacious, away from the cemetery, and the new building should be located further to the village Dăscălesci."
- "The commune Puiesci (income: 3472 lei). Two hamlets: Puiesci de Sus and Puiesci de Jos. The school is in the village Puiesci de Jos. It was built in 1860. The place is the commune's property, built in 1856. The fence is old; the place is inadequate, too small, and healthy but is hard for children to come in this area. There is only one classroom, is not another room only for teachers. There is no yard or garden. The school has no income. The children from Puiesci de Sus (2000 m far from the school) can attend to the school from Puiesci de Jos, where are 179 school-aged children, there should be a second teacher. Is necessary to transfer into a capacious area, an area is reserved since 1864."(Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, Directorate of secondary education – *Statistical Data necessary for preparing the budget for the fiscal year 1932, The situation at the beginning of the school year 1931-1932 with staff remuneration which is entitled on January 1, 1932* – Puiești School's Archive)

After the rebellion of 1907, owner Arthur Greiel donates to the school 5000 m² of his estate purchased from the property owner Ștefănescu Gilcă. The property owner called the villagers, among the City Hall, to consolidate a new classroom, imposed by the increase of the number of school-aged children. About 350 pupils attended the data recorded in the school documents, the school – during 1939-1943.

The school building was expanded over the time, in 1961 were built two classrooms, and two more in 1964.

In 1973, the school was expanded even more, was built a building with first floor, and in 1976 was built a school workshop.

In the village, Puiești de sus, documents shown that a culture place was built in 1924. It became too small, and in 1965, a new construction for preschoolers and for primary school was built. After the graduates of the four grades (Primary School) the children go to the school from Puiești de jos (about 3 km between the villages).

In the village Măcrina, the documents show that there was an instructive-educational process since 1835, the school operated in the houses of natives, in the church, in the old Town Hall's building. In Măcrina the school building was built during 1924-1928, a building with 4 classes.

In the village Dăscălești, in the beginning (1917) the school operated in the houses of some natives, in 1927 it was attended by 77 pupils of which 22 repeated the grade. The current school building was built in 1928 on the initiative of Professor Enache Ionescu, Undersecretary of Education.

In the village Nicoleşti the school first operated in the homes of locals, in 1926 was built the first construction. The current local school was built in 1961.

A form of partnership between the school and the local community is in the village Nicoleşti. In the school year 1931-1932 in the village, Nicoleşti operated a school named "The Vocational Elementary School Niculești", established on 1 September 1926, consisting of three grades (first grade – 10 pupils, second grade – 12 pupils, third grade – 8 pupils) and there worked a substitute teacher and three masters, all substitutes, they prepared pupils for jobs locally required: ironsmiths and wheelwrights. The school has an ironsmith workshop, operated by a master in an area of 72 m², being attended by 16 pupils. In the school also functions a wheelwrights workshop, where was employed a master, being attended by 14 pupils. Under "special observations" of the quoted document stated that: "The number of scholarships was decreased from 25 to 5, many tools were missing being completely degraded, the fund is insufficient to improve the whole building, was completely reduced the maintenance of animals and vehicles which for the school is an absolute need." The school was funded by the payment of those attending and by the mayor's support, but it served to a greater number than those of the commune settlements. The school has a boarding house; in the school year 1931-1932 were 14 pupils, one administrative person and two service people. The number of the solvent pupils was nine; the annual fee was 2500 lei and other contributions consisting mainly of food. "(Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, Directorate of secondary education – *Statistical Data necessary for preparing the budget for the fiscal year 1932, The situation at the beginning of the school year 1931-1932 with staff remuneration which is entitled on January 1, 1932* – Puiești School's Archive) In 1948, the existent documents mentioned that in village Nicoleşti operated a Single Gymnasium, founded in 1946.

Other data related to the development of the schools from the commune Puiești are:

- According to the administrated-territorial division of the time (1894), the mentioned villages belonged to the Râmnicu Sărat County, they were not grouped as current commune, having their separately names;
- A list of "leading villages ready to establish commune schools, from the Slam Râmnic County"(1855) we find the localities: Puiești de Jos and de Sus with 92 + 46 families, teacher Petrea Violin; Niculești and Dăscălești with 97 + 70 families, teacher V. Manea; Măcrina and Plopii Vechi with 96 + 46 families, teacher D. Soare;
- Another document relating to "the situation of the rural schools that are going to start operating in 1857" we find the following schools from the villages: Dăscălești – no building; Niculești – needs to be repaired; Puieștii de sus – no building, Puieștii de jos – need to be repaired, Măcrina și Plopii Vechi – no building”;
- A statistic from 1854 that includes the number of pupils, shows that, at that time, the schools were attended by: Dăscălești – 67 pupils, Niculești, Puieștii de jos – 46 pupils; Măcrina – 105 pupils;
- During 1898-1911, the county’s loans helped at the built of school units in the rural places: Niculești (1908), Puiești (1910), (V. Nicolescu și I. Cârlan, 2003)

3.1.3 The present situation of the schools from the commune

Material resources

In the Puiești commune are the following schools:

Pre-school units: Puiești de jos Kindergarten, Puiești de sus Kindergarten, Niculești Kindergarten, Măcrina Kindergarten, Dăscălești Kindergarten.

In the villages Lunca and Plopi is no school. In Lunca was an elementary school, but because there are no more pupils, now the building is dilapidated.

Schools: Puiești de Jos elementary school, Niculești Elementary School, Măcrina Primary school.

All schools are subordinated (structures) to Puiești de Jos elementary school, their leadership being provided by the same unit.

School facilities are:

School constructions:

Schools:Table 5*The distribution of school units in the commune Puiești*

Locality	Puiești de jos	Puiești de sus	Nicolești	Dăscălești	Măcrina	Lunca	Plopi
Number of buildings	2	1	1	-	1	1	-
Number of classrooms	8 in the new building, 6 in the old building	5	8	-	6	4 – local disposed	-
Year of construction	1975 – new building 1916 – old building		1962	-	1973	-	-

Pre-school Units:Table 6*The distribution of pre-school units in the commune Puiești*

Locality	Puiești de jos	Puiești de sus	Nicolești	Dăscălești	Măcrina	Lunca	Plopi
Number of building	Old building	1	1 renovated building in 1996	1 – built in 1980, renovated in 1996	Old Building	-	-
Number of classrooms	6	2	4	2	1	-	-

Building Utilities: All functional units have electrical installations, toilets, heating with solid fuel, school from Puiești de jos, Nicolești and Dăscălești have central heating, and the other rural schools/kindergartens are heated by stoves. The schools from Puiești de jos and Nicolești have wells and house water supply plants (they have sanitary permits for this). This year the village was connected to water supply, yet only in villages Puiești de jos and Nicolești, schools from here are also connected to water supply network.

Areas of study:

Schools have:

- 25 classrooms, 2 offices, 2 laboratories, a workshop, 2 gyms (one in Puiești de jos School that was built in 2007);

- 8 playgrounds, those for pre-schoolers are equipped with modern properly outdoor furniture;
- Other areas: library, secretarial, teaching material storage facilities, sanitary facilities;
- 14 computers; teaching materials; school is connected to the Internet since 2007, it was possible by extending the services of Romtelecom;
- In summer 2008, the school from Puiești was refurbished (structure resistance), equipped with double-glazing, education areas renovated and equipped with new furniture.

Human resources:

Table 7

The evolution of the number of pupils/ pre-schoolers in the schools from the commune Puiești

Children enrolled in a school:

Number of pupils / school year	2006 - 2007	2007 - 2008
Pre-school education	154	145
Primary education	178	176
Gymnasium school	136	159

Number of preschoolers/pupils in 2007-2008:

Table 8

The distribution of pupils/ pre-schoolers in the schools from the commune Puiești

	Pre-school	1 st grade	Second grade	Third grade	4 th grade	5 th grade	6 th grade	7 th grade	8 th grade
Kindergarten/School from Puiești de jos	57	30	28	20	19	33	21	24	21
Kindergarten/School from Puiești de sus	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kindergarten/School from Nicolești	29	15	15	13	12	21	16	11	12
Kindergarten/School from Măcrina	18	4	7	7	6	-	-	-	-
Kindergarten/School from	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Number of classes in 2007-2009:

Table 8
The distribution of school grades in schools from the commune Puiești

	Pre-schoolers	1 st grade	Second grade	Third grade	4 th grade	5 th grade	6 th grade	7 th grade	8 th grade
Kindergarten/School from Rucști de jos	3	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	1
Kindergarten/School from Puieșide sus	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kindergarten/School from Nicoleşti	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Kindergarten/School from Măcrina	1	1 class with simultaneously teaching for the first and third grade	1 class with simultaneously teaching for the second and 4 th grade						
Kindergarten/School from Dăscălești	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Dropout rate in the last 5 years: low – 1.3 % in first grades, Roma children.

In the school year 2006-2007 dropped out from school:

- At school from Puiești: 3 pupils from Primary School, 1 pupil from Gymnasium School;
- At school from Nicoleşti: 2 pupils from Primary School;
- At school from Măcrina: 1 pupil from Primary School.

Rate of school absenteeism: very low, insignificant

Rate of wanting to continue education in 2008: High school: 65 %, School of Arts and Crafts: 35%

Social grants provided by the school – in the school year 2007 – 2008 – 5 scholarships.

Pupils whose parents emigrate: in 2007 - 7 children, pupils at the School from Nicoleşti, the have both parents working aboard.

Teachers

Employment situation for teaching staff in school year 2007-2008

Table 9

The distribution of teachers in the units from the commune Puiesti

Level	Primary School	Gymnasium School	Pre-school education
Number of teachers	11	16	9

Table 10

The origin of teachers from schools from the commune Puiesti

The origin of teachers	Residents	Commuters
Number of teachers	25	10

Table 11

The skill level of teachers from the commune Puiesti

Skill level of teachers	Preschool level	Primary level	Gymnasium level
Skilled	11	16	9
Unskilled	-	-	-
Ongoing skill	-	-	-

Table 12

The distribution of working teachers and retired teachers from the commune Puiesti

The situation of teachers	Worker	Pensioner
Number of teachers	35	1

Table 12

The distribution of full/deputy professors from the commune Puiesti,

The situation of teachers	Full professor	Deputy professor
Number of teachers	24	12

Table 13

Seniority of teachers from schools the commune Puiesti

The situation of teachers / seniority	Less than 5 years seniority	5-10 years of seniority	10 – 20 years of seniority	Over 20 years of seniority
Number of teachers	18	8	5	5

Table 14
*Teaching degrees of teachers from schools
from Puiеști Commune*

The situation of teachers/teaching degrees	No degree	Completed	Degree 2	Degree 1
Number of teachers	4	17	12	3

Table 15
*The distribution of teachers from schools
from the commune Puiеști, according to gender*

The situation of teacher	Female	Male
Number of teachers	27	9

Training courses attended by teachers in the last three years were counselling for teaching mode, counselling and guidance, computer training for getting the highest degree.

Managerial resources

Professor Gheorghe Gheorghe provides the school leadership; a professor specialized in mathematics, didactic degree 1, with 39 years experience in education. In the Board of Directors of the school are 10 persons of which:

Table 16:
The distribution of School Board members from the commune Puiеști

Categories	Teachers	Representatives of parents	Representatives of local authorities	Others
Number of persons	6	1 – Priest Gavrilă Alexe	Mayor 2 teachers in positions of local councillors	-

Information and communication resources:

- The communication with parents is provided directly in the meetings with parents, by a direct contact of parents with teachers at school or at children's homes;
- The school teacher have not mentioned that some parents that work abroad keep the touch with the school by telephone;

- The school has not its own magazine or website.

Curriculum includes the following subjects:

Puiesti Elementary School: years I to III – Health Education, 4th grade – Amusing Mathematics, years V to VIII – Informatics.

Nicolești Elementary School: first grade – Children’s Literature, second grade – Writing Process, third grade – Health Education, 4th grade – Traffic’s Friends, 5th grade – Health Education, 6th grade – Physics Science, 7th – Chemistry, 8th grade – Athletics – Football.

The subjects of curriculum have 1 hour per week, were chosen in consultation with parents and teachers and have been chosen, in some situations, for filling the education standards.

Organizational culture of the school:

The school does not have a proper name, a prestigious name that individualizes it and neither any cultural event for the School Day. The cultural events are organized by the school during the religious or historical festivals, at the end of the school year, etc.

Strategic resources

The school has a development strategy for the period 2006-2010 and annual work plans. The school’s development plan during 2006-2010 refers to the current situation of the schools from the commune and to the general situation of the commune, and reports problems as: the decrease of the active people’s number, due to aging and migration, lack of serious social problems, children access to school without restrictions and discrimination. In the same document is specified that the school do not have social utilities such as dining room, hostel, and surgery.

The plan includes a SWOT analysis of the school.

The *strengths* mentioned are: trained teachers, local teachers, families of the pupils are solid, good frequency to the courses, sufficient educational facilities, interest for the performance of pupils and teachers (the graduate rate is – 97%, over 90% graduates the Capacity Tests/National Tests), participation on county stages of school competitions, sports competitions awards (school has a male football team, a female handball team, athletics), a good working relationship with the City Hall, local Police, healthcare facilities.

The *weaknesses* listed are job’s instability for the teachers especially at primary school, a very high dropout rate of gypsy ethnicity children, lower results of children whose parents work aboard, children’s behavioural deviation, no Kindergarten in village Puiestii de Jos, toilets outside the school building, less sponsorship. From the

outside the school environment, the weaknesses are: wrong mentality of the gypsy families, low birth rates, loss of cultural traditions, dropping out of school by children who completed the eight classes offered by the school.

The strategic plan proposes the composition of the school curriculum – an annual establishment of part time courses for gypsies. This has not happened yet, but for this, the school needs to find resources and to think how to motivate gypsies to attend these courses.

For the school year 2007-2008, the school proposes to establish a specific class of the School Of Arts and Crafts where the pupils are trained for local required jobs: mason, carpenter, ironsmith, tailor, etc. This was not done during the mentioned period. As the previously mentioned direction, in this case the school needs to identify sources of funding, human resources and a logistics. In addition, the school should analyze the local work requirements and the aspiration of pupils and their families.

The school wants to revive the cultural traditions by developing extracurricular activities and by organizing events: Village Dance (it was organized in collaboration with the Mayor), social evenings, group work, holiday greetings, etc. In addition, the school aims to achieve educational history of the commune Puiești.

In relation with pupil's families, the school aims to a closely collaboration with the parents to harmonize their choice with educational offer and also to diversify the funding sources (not stated how this is going to be achieved), involving the parents by including 1-2 parent representatives in the school's Board of Directors.

The plan also includes the intention to expand partnerships with other schools from the area. The school has a managerial plan of educational work and a schedule of extracurricular activities.

In the discussion with the school directors and with the teachers, they have expressed their opinions that the school would need: to improve the material conditions of Puiești de jos Kindergarten, to purchase specific equipment for the informatics lab and hire specialized teachers, to equip properly the chemistry lab with supplies and tools, to collaborate more with the parents, to hire a school counsellor because the school has two pupils diagnosed with mental impairment (one in the second grade, the second one in the 5th grade), they should enjoy the support of a pedagogue.

The Puiești Hall made a “*Local development strategy for the village Puiești – period 2003-2013*”.

Under this strategy are identified, based in the SWOT analysis, a number of characteristics of the commune's education and culture:

- As *strengths* are mentioned: the existence of three schools and five kindergartens, the existence of one library and three cultural centres, adequate facilities, IT equipment and internet, most inhabitants have a high level of education and professional training.
- As *weaknesses* are mentioned: demographic decline of the population, which will lead to the reduction of population that will attend primary and gymnasium school.
- *The opportunities* identified are expressed as lines of action: development a play and recreation centre for children, rehabilitation of schools from the villages Puiești de jos and Nicolești (at this moment the process is started), rehabilitation and modernization of rural cultural centres from the villages Puiești de jos and Nicolești, policies to stimulate the people to come into the vacancies for teachers and maintaining the trained teachers, the existence of community and national programs to ensure the access to education for disadvantaged population.

Financial resources:

Table 17

The distribution of income sources in the schools from Puiești commune

Sources of income	National Budget	Local Budget	Own sources: taxes economic activities, sponsorship, contributions of parents	Other sources (e.g. project financing)
2005-2006	YES	YES	NO	NO
2006-2007	YES	YES	YES	NO
2007-2008	YES	YES	YES	NO

Investment in schools in recent years: playgrounds, gym in the school from Puiești, thermal rehabilitation of buildings: school from Puiești – being built, kindergarten from Dăscălești.

School's syllabus/activities in partnership

Local authorities: investment in the material basis of schools, art programs: celebrations, "Village sons", financial support to transport children to schools from other villages from the commune (has a contract with a transport company – mini-buses), City representatives to various activities.

Families of pupils:

- Every class has a Committee of parents, which appointed representatives to the Advisory Board of parents/school (according to Regulation school). Significantly is that in the Board of Directors of the school is only one parent (in our opinion is insufficient);
- Parents are regularly consulted and informed about: school attendance, dropout, the situation of children in school;
- Parents are asked by the school to help with the household activities, they answered every time requests;
- Were held information sessions about: the organization of children's free time, curriculum, educational and vocational guidance, counselling.
- Informing parents about the methodology of the Unique Thesis.

Local police:

- In 2007 was made a movie, 7 minutes and 30 seconds long, related to behaviours that represents a danger for children's life and health, the movie was shown and explained to children by teachers and police officers;
- Were organized contests about the rule of the road, between pupils from Puiest and Nicoleşti;
- The Police Station provided help for pupils from Roma families, also in school and kindergarten to avoid/prevent abandonment (challenge the family)
- In 2007, when the Police Station was equipped with a car, the team presented its equipment to children.

Church:

- Children are encouraged to attend church weekly;
- When the titular saint was celebrated, the church served a meal to the pupils;
- Support for children with low possibilities;
- Trips to monasteries organized by the church.

Health care facilities:

- Working with family doctors to establish the health of children;

- Early detection of diseases;
- Health professionals were invited to present to the children the risk of disease, but also the ways to prevent them;
- Working with family doctors to establish the state of cleanliness and hygiene of pupils.

Businesses:

- An undertaking maintain the sport in the school from Nicoleşti;
- An undertaking provides the cleaning of health facilities;
- Most businesses have sponsorship schools, especially with food and toys for gift packages, given to children on several occasions (Christmas, Easter, First June)

NGOs - no such of organizations in the commune

Joint activities:

- Organizing and participating in the festival "Village sons" – 3 editions;
- Organizing with the village priest from Nicoleşti, on 10/06/2006, a celebration of 110 years of education in the village;
- Helping poor/sick children, the school and the Town Hall help them with supplies, health and social grants.

Extracurricular activities organized by the school are:

- Dancing evenings at school, the school has 5 bands of folk dances that were awarded by the House of Culture Râmnicu Sărat and Bisoca Festival (2007);
- Organization of actions like "Children ask – adults answer" attended by representatives of both teachers and community representative persons (priest, doctors, consultants, etc.);
- The school organizes additional training courses for children examinations (Tests);
- Children are encouraged to participate to contests: Kangaroo, Winners (they won a camp as award), sports competitions with children from other schools, Olympics, etc.

3.2 The data obtained from the questionnaire-based survey

Table 18
The distribution of questionnaires

Categories of Community Agents	Pupils	Parents	Teachers	Mayors and Deputy Mayors	Local Councillors	Doctors	Officers	Priests	Economic agents
The total number of people	159 (secondary education)	159 families	35	2	13	2	4	4	27
Number of questionnaires	45 (29%)	47 (30%)	14 (40%)	2 (100%)	8 (61.5%)	1 (50%)	3 (75%)	2 (50%)	5 (18.5%)

I. Data from the questionnaire applied to **students** of middle school with classes I – VIII, from Puiești, Buzău County:

Informations about respondents:

The questionnaire was applied:

- gymnasium pupils (classes V-VIII);
- were surveyed 45 of 159 pupils in the gymnasium;
- the average age of respondents was 13 years old;
- Were surveyed 21 boys and 24 girls.

Informations obtained from the questionnaire

1. From the comparative analysis of responses to the 1st question, we ask students to write down the first three characteristics of: school, family, school and family, we conclude that the school is perceived by pupils as a place where education is characterized by specific activities and a place for socializing, entertainment, a basis for the future. The family is perceived as an entity that provides emotional support, which imposes rules; respect and they attend to some domestic tasks. Families and schools are seen primarily as the most visible common activity (sessions), then as space for collaboration, education which involves certain rules (some called by the surveyed pupils).

2. Interviewed pupils said that **parents are involved in their school** activity (in order of frequency of responses): attend to meetings with parents and teachers, they talk with the form master and school teachers (45 responses), participating in festivals

and rarer shows (37 responses), helped to renovate school – (8 responses), participating in excursions – (6 responses).

No child chose the options: chose electives, chose manuals, participated in teaching classes.

The analysis of these data shows that parents are involved in traditional activities of collaboration (meetings, discussions, celebrations, performances) rather than the actual activity of teaching/learning of their children.

3. Asked if they would like **to become more involved their parents**, questioned pupil said: yes – 18 pupils, no – 18 pupils, do not know – 9 pupils;

19 children, although they chose one answer yes/no/do not know, gave reasons for participation or non-participation of parents in school activities.

Parental involvement is desired by children, they have a clear picture about how they want their parents to get involved: to talk more with teachers (8 answers), to play football with us (5 answers), to learn a trade (4 answers), to help me with homework (3 answers), to be more involved in school activities (3 answers), to spend more time with us (2 answers), meeting with parents (2 answers), to participate in class (2 answers), to give me more help at homework, to supervise and advice me to chose optional subjects, because there are optional subjects chosen by teachers, to teach me new things, to defend me in some things, not allow teachers to curse us, to talk more with the teachers, would like to practice some sports with their parents, to extend the break time and introducing sports classes every day, to think more about my entourage, to play with my family on the computer, to discuss our marks (1 answer).

Children's reasons for *not wanting* to become more involved their parents in school activities are: to hide the bad grades (5 responses), the school is for children not for parents, to not find out before (I will tell them when they are in good spirits), not to chide us, to not beat us after finding out the grades, to take us easy and talk with us (2 responses).

Other answers: do not chide us when we take a bad mark, do not tell us we must learn, not to get involved at all, they forbid me some things – eg. going to play, I get chide, ask me to learn more, don't let me play, to advice me not to pester me, because they have another conception of school and cannot stand to be a nag, the family does not have time to get involved and from that are form teachers who choose appropriate optional but that means that parents are uninterested, because marks they put me to learn a lot, I must to learn a lot, do not see what flapdoodle I do at school, for pestering me, do not know that we take small marks at test papers, they would find out the marks I have not told yet, not to talk about our work school whit the form teacher, we do flapdoodle, not chide me, to continue to take me new

things, to let me out, parents would find out quickly about the flapdoodle we are doing at school and at home we get chide. The analysis of these responses shows that the relation between school and family is perceived by students as a source of stress for them.

4. The activities indicated by students, that school organized outside the classes are: trips (37 responses), karate (28 responses), folk/modern dances (18 responses), shows (15 responses), sports (11 responses), drama (9 responses), football, disco, „sons of the village” celebration (7 responses), party/ entertainment/ dance evenings (6 responses), dances (5 responses), visit the monasteries, the reading groups (4 responses), handball, hours of additional preparation (3 responses), reading 2 responses), contests, tutoring, sports, painting, sports competitions, athletics (1 each answer).

5. Favourite school activities of the surveyed students:

- Sport, breaks (14 responses), music, drawing (8 responses), trips (3 responses), recreations (2 responses), technology, disco, festivals, shows, trips, dance classes, religion (1 each answer).

6. Of those surveyed: 38 students also participated in other activities outside of school and 7 states that do not participate.

Activities outside of school that has been indicated by the surveyed students are:

- Olympics – (16 responses), competitions (Winers, sport) (14 responses), tutoring (11 responses), play handball with other classes/ schools/ common, soccer (7 responses), dances, trips, sports activities (5 responses each), sports (2 responses), dances, parties, sports, reading, lessons, “the children of the village”, walking, playing, karate (1 answer each).

Analysis of these responses show that students perceive outside school activities, extracurricular activities, all organized by the school.

7. Surveyed students say **they would like to participate more in:** sports (44 responses), recreations activities (trips, hiking, etc..) (43 responses), road safety education and for personal safety (42 responses), intercultural education activities (41 responses), drawing groups, computer science, music, theatre, etc... (40 responses), knowledge of the specific and history of the village in which they live (39 responses), tutoring in subjects that interest them, health education activities, cultural activities (school celebrations, exhibitions, shows, etc...) (32 responses), assessment of academic results, competitions, Olympics (31 responses), school psychologist counselling activities (29 responses), parent meeting (27 responses), choosing optional subjects and textbooks, environmental education activities (25 responses), visits to businesses to know their work (business) (23 responses).

II. Data from the questionnaire applied to parents whose children attend to middle school whit grades I – VIII, Puiești, Buzău County:

Information about respondents:

The questionnaire was applied to a number of 47 parents whose children attend elementary and middle school;

- The respondents are living in commune, as follows: 26 - Puiești de Jos, 4 - Măcrina, 2 – Plopi, 6 – Dăscălești, 9 - Nicoleşti
- The average age of respondents was 39.73 years;
- 18 male and 29 female were surveyed;
- The level of education of the respondents is: 2 persons with higher education, 1 school/college, 22 high school, 11 trade school, 5 with the first stage of high school (10 classes), 3 with 7-8 classes (of middle school), 1 no less than seven classes, and 2 undetermined.
- Occupations of the respondents are 16 home-keeping, 3 unemployed, 5 farmers, 16 employees, 1 entrepreneur, 1 retiree, 5 undetermined.
- Marital status is: 1 widower, 1 living with someone without being married and 45 married.

Data obtained by applying the questionnaire:

1. Comparative analysis of responses to questions 1, we asked parents to record the first three characteristics of: school, family, school and family, we conclude that school is perceived by parents as a place to make education/learning, which requires discipline and respect, organisation, a place of study, a base for the future. The family is perceived as an entity that is based on respect, providing emotional support (love, understanding, protection, support, etc.) but also a place where the child is educated (urbanity). Both families and school are seen as entities for education but also the most visible joint activities (meetings), then as a space for collaboration, education that involves certain rules.

2. Questioned parents said that they are satisfied with the following school activities:

- a) *Teaching*: to a small degree (6 responses), to a great degree (22 responses), in a greater degree (9 responses), do not know (5 responses).
- b) *The evaluation of children* to a very small degree (1 response), to a small degree (7 responses), to a great degree (16 responses), to a greater degree (9 responses), do not know (8 responses)

- c) *The school communication/ consultation with them:* to a very small degree (4 responses), to a small degree (10 responses), to a great degree (9 responses), to a greater degree (8 responses).
- d) *Extracurricular activities organized by the school:* to a very small degree (6 responses), to a small degree (4 responses), to a great degree (15 responses), to a greater degree (10 responses), do not know (7 responses).
- e) *The alliance between school and parents:* to a very small degree (6 responses), to a small degree (6 responses), to a great degree (13 responses), to a greater degree (12 responses), do not know (4 responses).
- f) *The general organization of school:* to a very small degree (no answer), to a small degree (1 response), to a great degree (21 responses), to a greater degree (14 responses), do not know (6 responses).

Analysis of these responses shows that a significant percentage of parents are dissatisfied with the school. School board should consider this condition and improve the collaboration with them. In addition, the school should make their action more visible and to involve more the students parents in these.

3. Regarding the frequency of coming to school of the parents, respondents said they come: biannual (26 responses), monthly (10 responses), when we are called to the meeting (9 responses), when I have time, every time I get, daily, I'm employee of the school (1 response each).

4. Questioned parents said that people who lyses with the school are, in hierarchy order: elementary teacher/form teacher, with class teacher, the school principal, with others (teacher advisor, educationalist, and school staff).

5. Respondents said they were involved with the school in: the election of parents in the Council class and in the school Administrative Board (15 responses), organizing cultural and recreation activities (school celebration, festivities, trips, etc...) (13 responses), evaluation of pupils (10 responses), renovation of the school and equipping schools with teaching materials (8 responses), resolving the conflict situations in school (6 responses), choosing the teaching methods (3 responses), choosing teachers and planning school budget (1 response each). Neither parent has chosen that option: composition of the school development plan.

6. The surveyed ones said that the parents should be more involved in: resolving conflict situations in school, choosing optional subjects and textbooks (8 responses), evaluation of pupils (6 responses), choosing the school teachers, renovation of the school and equipping school with teaching materials (5 responses), the election of parents in the Council class and in the school Administrative Board, composition of the school development plan (4 responses), organizing cultural and recreation

activities (school celebration, festivals, trips, etc..) (3 responses), choosing the teaching methods (2 responses), parent meetings, choosing the electives, school budgeting (1 response each);

7. The benefits of a closer collaboration between family and school, are as it follow in the opinion of the respondents: better communication (3 responses), resolving conflict situation in school (2 responses), collaboration between school principal / form teacher, the child is more active in school, the children preparation would be better,, better school results, better materials for study, I would know more about my kids, avoid drugs and violence in school, better informing on amendments in education system, better education of children, to avoid serious problems.

8. From the surveyed parents, the ones who would like to be involved in joint activities with the school are: 18 more than currently, 6 would not, 18 said they do not know.

Those who would like to become more involved indicated that activities: choosing classroom teaching methods, resolving conflict situations in school, communication, classes, extracurricular activities, environmental activities, choosing the optional subjects, joint meetings with parents- teachers – students, measures to eliminate the discrimination against good students – very good ones, organizing cultural activities.

The reasons mentioned by those who said they did not want to be involved are: I don't have time (7 responses), work (3 responses), I must to work for the family (2 responses), I influence the marks received marks by the child, do not think it is necessary to get more involved, the teachers are enough involved.

9. Activities perceived by parents as being organized by the school especially for parents are: meetings with parents (38 responses), celebrations (29 responses), and individual discussions with teachers of the class (13 responses). No parent has chosen the following: courses for parents, psychological counselling and guidance, school did not organize any of these activities at this time.

10. Questioned parents, ask if they agree to participate in other activities for education responded: 15 yes, 12 no, 12 do not know, 8 did not respond.

11. Barriers who stand in the way of a better cooperation between school and family, identified by parents are: lack of time (10 responses), the distance from the home to school, family problems, parents are very busy with work and cannot cooperate with school, (2 responses), bad attitude about Romanian education, lack of money, lack of job, stress, level of culture, a low level of education,, the conception that you can make money without school (college), parents ignorance, lack of information of parents, ne understanding, different mentality.

12. Solutions for a better collaboration between school and family, in the surveyed parents opinion are: more meetings with parents (9 responses),having contact

through teachers, regular participation of a parent to its child classes, more communication between school and parents, to contact family more often, more parents to go to school, keeping discipline, consulting parents on school plans: renovations, manufacture / purchase of teaching materials, more involvement of parents when teachers are asking, parents should go often to school, inter-school activities, home visits to students, discussions on topic with teachers.

13. On how the parents are contacted by the school they indicated: are contacted by the children (29 responses), are contacted directly by the teacher (14 responses), are contacted by phone (3 responses), displaying information on the school boards/school sites (internet) (1 response).

Analysis of these results we suggest that rather school cultivate the impersonal relations, parents and teachers know personally, modern means are very little used.

14. In connection with advisory practices surveyed parents were asked to say:

- *Who chose the alternative textbooks:* school teachers (24 responses), form teacher (12 responses), the school principal (8 responses), school teachers with parents and children's (1 response).
- *Who chose the optional subjects for students:* form teacher (13 responses), the school principal (13 responses), school teachers (11 responses), school teachers with parents and children (6 responses).

15. Questioned parents said they have/have not a representative in class Council/Administrative Board of school: yes (17 responses), not (8 responses), do not know (19 responses).

Criteria by which they were elected the representatives parents are: depending by the available time (6 responses), elected by other parents/vote (4 responses), do not know (3 responses), child's performance at school (2 responses), to be professionally prepared amorally, capable, competent.

16. Respondents said, in relation to any cash contributions at the fund of class/school: I agree (26 responses), disagree (7 answers), do not know (2 responses), 12 parents did not answer.

17. About who should decide school spending, the questioned parents said that: the school principal and teachers (27 responses), the local council (city hall) (15 responses), the Administration Board of school (9 responses), school inspectorate/Ministry of Education (7 responses), parents (3 responses).

Analysis of these responses show that consultative practices may be improved but not only from the school initiative but also requires an increased awareness of the role that parents have in relation to school, training for parents for that purpose.

18. The hierarchy of that **school should work**, according to respondents parents is as follows:

1. with student's families;
2. With local authorities (city hall/ Local Council);
3. with police;
4. with medical dispensary/clinic;
5. with economic and church;
6. with NGOs.

19. How parents perceive the various community agents collaboration with the school, the respondents indicated:

- *The local authority (city hall, Local Council):* meetings, to help schools, giving funds to equip school (6 responses), facts not words (2 responses), information on all irregularities, with the school development projects, those of the City Hall are invited to come to school.
- *With the Police:* organization of courses, officers participations at the tuition, information about those who are absent from school, training, prevention of juvenile delinquency, to assure protection for the school, intervention in conflicts from school, informing students, take lectures on safety to teach children how to behave in the community, how to speak.
- *The medical dispensary/clinic:* clinic visits – 2 responses, hygiene courses, in case of epidemic the school should notify the medical staff, medical examination of students, to check the health of the child.
- *With the church:* teaching children to attend church/to direct them to the church – 3 responses, religious classes, collecting money to help the church.
- *With economic agents: sponsorship – 2 responses, to give milk, corn, dessert, it is not necessary.*
- *With NGOs: providing funding, it is not necessary.*

III. Data from the questionnaire applied to **elementary school teachers** with classes I-VIII **Puiesti:**

Information about respondents:

The questionnaire was applied:

- 14 of the 36 teachers working in schools and kindergartens from the common.
- Of the surveyed: 5 are male, 9 are female;
- The average age of respondents is 47 years;
- Average length of working in education of the respondents is 18.5 years seniority (3 were between 2 and 5 years seniority, 5 were between 5 and 10 years seniority, 2 were between 30 and 39 years seniority, 2 have 40 years seniority;
- Of those surveyed: 1 has no teaching degree, 6 have tenure, 6 have the second degree, and 1 has the first teaching degree.
- Of those surveyed: 3 as educators, 3 – elementary teachers, others are teaching: biology, Romaine Language and Literature, English, Geography – Biology, Mathematics – 2 (persons), Physics – Chemistry.

Information obtained from the questionnaire:

1. Considering the **educational climate from the school**, teachers said they are satisfied:

- *The school atmosphere* – to a small degree (1 response), to a great degree (12 responses) and to a greater degree (1 response);
- *Material equipment of the school* – to a small degree (2 responses) and to a great degree (10 responses) and to greater degree (2 responses);
- *Communication with management/colleagues* – to a great degree (6 responses) and to a greater degree (8 responses);
- *Communication and collaboration with parents* – to a small degree (1 response), to a great degree (7 responses) and to a greater degree (6 responses);
- *The collaboration of school with you* – to a great degree (7responses) and to a greater degree (7 responses);
- *The general organization of the school* – to a great degree (8 responses) and to a greater degree (8 responses).

We can see that surveyed teachers have a pretty good opinion about school organization.

2. In the participative management and practices in this school, the surveyed teachers said they were involved in: choice of teaching methods in class (13 responses), evaluation of pupils (12 responses), the election of parents in the Council class and in the school Administrative Board (11 responses), the choice of optional subjects and textbooks, organizing cultural and recreation activities (school celebration, festivals, trips, etc..) (10 responses), resolving the conflict situation in

school (9 responses), counselling and helping in school orientation and professional of students (8 responses), renovating school and equipping school with educational materials, organizing extracurricular activities, attracting sponsors for school (7 responses), organization and support of additional training session for students school projects/programs/activities with community partners (NGOs, local Council, church, police, businesses, etc.), choosing the school administration and teachers, planning the school budget (5 responses), preparing students for contests (4 responses), the composition of the school development plan (3 responses), choosing school teachers (responses), no one is involved in achieving of the school magazine – school don't have one.

The analysis of responses do not reveals that the teachers are involved in activities related to the main responsibilities of the job and in partnership activities and participation. They were involved in extracurricular activities with students and parents but also in organizational development activities: the composition of the school development plan, planning the budget, attracting sponsorship, etc... .

3. The hierarchy of collaboration of school should be, in opinion of the teachers as it follows:

1. with students' families;
 2. with local authorities;
 3. with medical dispensary/clinic;
 4. with police;
 5. with church;
 6. with economic agents;
 7. With non-governmental organizations (NGOs – associations and foundations);
4. As for how school should collaborate with local community representatives, according to surveyed teachers were mentioned:

With students families: parent meeting and meetings with local Council to find solutions for preventions the school dropout, meeting between students – parents – special committee members of the local Council, home visits to students, activities organized in school with students and parents (celebrations, meetings), excursions.

With the local authorities (Town Hall, local Council) money for equipment, discussions with the representatives of Town Hall, meetings with parents and local council to find solution for prevention the school dropout, meeting between students – parents- special committee members of the local Council, organizing activities at school with students, parents (festivals, meetings, trips) inviting local representatives at parent meetings and at the tuitions, support for Roma families by local authorities.

With the police: ensure safety of children, discussions with the police representatives, participation of the Police representatives at the tuitions about road education.

With the economic agents: sponsorships, cultural activities.

With the medical dispensary/clinic: the detection of the serious diseases, hygiene education, and the participation of the hospital representatives at the tuitions about health education.

With Church: promoting moral values, discussions with the church representatives.

With mom-governmental organizations (NGOs – associations and foundations): material aid for under-privileged children.

5. The benefits of a closer collaboration between community and school according to surveyed teachers are: children educated parents more responsible, less violence at school, fewer children who drop out of school, a better equipped with studies materials, better school results.

6. 10 of the surveyed teachers **expressed a desire to be more involved** in the relationship between school and community, and 3 said they do not know, 1 does not want, arguing the lack of time.

Those who said they would like to become more involved indicated as activities: debates “democratic Tribune”, celebration of “village children”, meetings between students – parents – special committee members of the local Council, home visits to students, organizing activities in schools with students, parents: celebrations, parent meetings, school celebration, trips, all Roma education, in activities that create jobs for young people, environment protection, the school monograph achievement, organizing meetings between generations, the establishment a park.

7. The main **barriers** that stand in the way of a better cooperation between school and community respondents indicated: are low interested (below expectations) of parents, poor communication, lack of interest of Roma families for school – 2 responses, the families lack of interest for their children and to school, some outdated mentality.

8. Solution for a better working relationship between school and community respondents indicated are: more seriously, inviting local authorities in parent meetings and at the tuitions, better communication, involving representatives of: police, hospitals at the tuitions about road safety and health education, the minimum conditions for all citizens to lead a decent life, support for Roma families from the authorities, scholarization of all children.

IV. Data from questionnaires applied to the local government officials: Town Hall and local Council of the commune Puiești:

Information about respondents:

The questionnaire was applied:

- Puiești Mayor, Buzău County;
- Puiești Deputy Mayor, Buzău County;
- To a number of 4 local councillors from the Local Council of Puiești, Buzău County.
- All 6 surveyed people were male.
- The level of education of the respondents is as follows: 4 people have graduated from higher schools, 2 high school level;
- The average age of respondents – 51 years.

Information obtained from the questionnaire:

1. Respondents mentioned the following **roles that school should accomplished in community**: training, education, training young generation, physical and mental development of the individuals, comprehensive education of students – 2 responses.

2. **The main tasks** mentioned by respondents, which mayor/local council has in relation to the school, are: required to ensure school factors to shape the future generation, financial support, material and legal, financing development projects, coordination of school management; supporting educational action in terms of financial and managerial – 2 responses.

3. All respondents considered that are **beneficial for the community o tight collaboration between schools and local authorities** and identified **benefits** are removing the disturbances in communication and avoid problems, professional training for students, increasing the level of culture and civilization, thorough understanding of the educational acts.

4. Respondents consider the **collaboration between the Town Hall and City Council with school is satisfying**:

- Largely – 4 responses;
- In a greater measure – 1 responses.

5. In the present collaboration of municipality/local Council with school, respondents said that the Town Hall involves the following:

Selected variants by all respondents: finance various school activities (festivals, excursions for childrens, helping children from poor families, etc.), pay salaries of teachers and administrative staff, organizes cultural events with local character (celebration of the locality, shows, commemoration of local heroes, open day, etc.), choosing the optional subjects for students (this area of cooperation is unreal), finance rehabilitation and material equipping of school, coordinate and finance the public social service work.

Selected variants by 5 of the respondents by appointing local representatives of the Council of School Board, by including the school development plan in general development plan of village.

The chosen variants by 4 of the respondents: were/is a partner with school projects with external funding (The World Bank, the Romanian governmental programs, etc.) – the school was an investment partner (gym) with Romanian Government finances;

Other mentioned ways: are transporting the teachers and children to school and from school at home.

6. Respondents say that: local authorities should have greater role in: finance rehabilitation and school facilities;

7. The personal involvement of the respondents has declared they were involved in:

The chosen variants by all respondents: voting in the Council the decision about school;

The chosen variants by 4 of the respondents: steps to achieve projects in partnership with external financing, the composition of the school plan developmental points, organizing cultural events in school and community (the celebration of the village, shows, exhibitions, commemorations of local heroes, open day, etc..).

Chosen variants by 3 of the respondents: volunteering in school activities (spatial planning, coordinate of groups of children, activities with parents, etc.), Local Council representatives to the Board of Directors of the school, the proposed measure relating to the school for discussion and approval in the local Council, the organization of cultural and recreational activities (the celebration of the school, festivals, trips, etc..), participation in cultural events of the school.

8. Respondents said they **would like to become more involved in joint activities school – local authorities:** development projects, development of educational plan, education of Roma, project financing – structural funds.

9. The main barriers that stand in the way of better cooperation between schools and local authorities mentioned on respondents are: inertia to change, the county school inspectorate, trade union education from school.

10. Solution for a better relationship between schools and local authorities identified by respondents are: adoption of a new education law, common interest in preparing of the community members, organizing cultural events.

11. Respondents said they had **appointed a representative to the Board of Directors of the school** and the criteria by which they are designated.

12. School should collaborate, according to representatives of local authorities with the following (in order of importance):

1. Students families and local authorities;
2. Police;
3. Economic agents;
4. with medical dispensary/clinic;
5. The Church;
6. Non-governmental organization (NGOs – association and foundation).

13. As for **how school should work** with them, according to representatives of local authorities were mentioned:

- *The families of students:* a better communication in order to identify problems early, visits to students, parent meetings;
- *The local authorities (Town Hall, Local Council):* report the school needs and finding solution in common; attending Local Council meetings;
- *The police:* monitoring anti-social issues, education, road education, participation in joint activities;
- *Economic agents: funding and sponsorships, visits;*
- *The medical dispensary/clinic: reporting the student health issues, periodic checks, joint action;*
- *The Church:* religious education, volunteer participation of students at the church services;
- *Non-governmental organization (NGOs – association and foundation):* implementation of programs and organizing activities, possible sponsorships;
- *The other mentioned – the library:* book presentation, commemorations.

V. Data obtained from the questionnaires applied to **businesses** from the commune Puiești:

Data about the respondents:

The questionnaire was applied to the representatives of:

- 5 companies;
- They work in the commune Puiești, Buzău County, in the localities: Nicolești (1), Dăscălești (2), Puiești de jos (1), Nicolești (1);
- An economic agent has a profile on production and services, 4 – trade;
- 3 people were male, 2 were female;
- The level of education of the respondents is as follows: one person graduated the vocational school, 4 graduated high school.

The information obtained from the questionnaire:

1. The respondents mentioned the following **roles that school should have in their community**: children and youth education, training competent people for the future.

2. All the respondents considered that **a good relationship between the school and the businesses is beneficial for the community** and the identified **benefits** are better education and professional training, a better-equipped school, pupils would learn how to do a job, training pupils for a social orientation, a permanent collaboration between businesses and schools.

3. The economic agents have said that they currently **work** with the school: providing with sponsorship (money, goods) the school (3 responses), voluntary activity for the school (spatial planning, participation in cultural activities, etc.) (1 response), attending council meetings of the school administration (one response), school and professional orientation of pupils (one response).

4. The respondents consider that the businesses **should have a greater role** in: school and professional orientation of pupils (2 responses), the organization of knowledge activities of economic agencies (visit the businesses, specialist's participation in the economic education classes, etc.) (one response), offering sponsorships (one response), developing the professional orientation of pupils (one response)

3. of those surveyed said that they would like to become more involved in the joint activities (school-businesses), the activities they would like to be involved in, are: training children for the economic environment – training the disciples, bidding for jobs, programme “Roll and Bun”, extracurricular activities, cultural activities – educational.

5. The economic agents interviewed identified a number of barriers **that stand in the way of a better collaboration between schools and businesses**: bureaucracy, mentality, interests, lack of financial resources (2 responses).

7. The **solutions for a better working relationship between schools and businesses** mentioned are deeper communication relationships, developing a stronger economic base in the commune.

VI. The data resulted from the questionnaires applied to the **priests** from the commune Puiești:

Data about the respondents:

The questionnaire is applied:

- To two Orthodox priests;
- They work in the commune Puiești, Buzău County, in the localities: Dăscălești (1), Puiești de jos (1);
- The level of education of the respondents is as follows: the two surveyed priests have university education;

The information obtained from the questionnaire:

1. The respondents mentioned the following **roles that the school should have in their community**: instructive – educational, to make the pupil to love his family, faith and country; to highlight the qualities of each pupil.

2. The respondents identified **the responsibilities of church in relation to school**: “The church leads to an eternal life in society and aims to holy the man”.

3. The interviewed priests considered that **the collaboration between the school and the church is beneficial**, and the identified **benefits** are well-trained people with good Christian morals; good behaviour and Christian morality; respect the principles of divine and human.

4. The respondents said that they are greatly satisfied with the **cooperation with the school**, and the collaborating activities are developing cultural activities (on religious holiday), supporting religious activities in school (blessing the school, opening/closing the school year, etc.), counselling and guidance of parents.

5. The priests surveyed believe that **the church should have a greater role** in advising and guiding parents and children.

6. The respondents said that they **would like to become more involved** in the collaboration between the school and the church to help children with material, in family problems, in the problems related to age.

7. The mentioned **issues** that stand in the way of a better collaboration between the school and the church are the fact that some teachers are atheists who obstructs collaboration between the school and the church; the children cannot come to church on Sundays because are called to school for different activities.

8. The identified solution **for a better working relationship between the school and the church** are: a better communication between the representatives of the two institutions; involved in several joint actions.

VII. The data from the questionnaires applied to the **doctors** from the commune Puiești:

Data about the respondents:

The questionnaire is applied:

- To one of the two family doctors working at the dispensary from the commune Puiești, Buzău County;

Information obtained from the questionnaire:

1. The interviewed doctor mentioned the following **roles that the school should have in the community**: education and career guidance.

2. The questioned identified as **attributions** of sanitary units in relation with the school the following: health education, regular health surveillance of children.

3. The questioned doctor considered that until now, he had a good collaboration with the school, and that **the collaboration between the health units and the school is beneficial** for the community, and the **benefits** identified are: raising children in a healthy environment, awareness of the role that has the hygiene.

4. The questioned doctor said that he was **involved** in the relation with the school in the following activities: organizing activities or educational programs for pupils (courses of health education, information about the prevention of disease, etc), controlling periodic the health of the pupils or teachers, informing the teachers and the school directors about the special situation found (children who suffer from diseases such as: TB, HIV-AIDS, hepatitis, childhood diseases, etc.).

5. He also said that would like to involve more in the psychological counselling to stop aggression, and that the healthcare units should have a greater role in participating in the programs/project as a school's partner.

VIII. The data from the questionnaires applied to the **representatives of the police** from the commune Puiești:

Data about the respondents:

The questionnaire is applied:

- To 4 police officers working in the commune Piety;
- All four people surveyed were male;
- The level of education of the respondents is as follows: 2 people have graduated from higher schools, 2 graduated high school/college;
- The average of the respondents age – 30 years old.

The information obtained from the questionnaire:

1. The respondents mentioned the following **roles that school should have in their community**: educating children (4 responses), preparing children for life (3 responses), disciplining children (2 responses), the accumulation of knowledge (one response), and integration of children in society (one response).

2. The **main tasks** mentioned by the respondents, which the police has in relation with the school, are: to ensure the public order and the safety policy in the commune and in the school areas (3 responses), to ensure the pupils and school security (2 responses), to inform children about their behaviour in the school and in the society (one response), to inform pupils about laws and to present how these are helpful for them (one response).

3. All respondents considered that at that moment, the collaboration with the police is satisfactory and that **a good relation between the school and the police is beneficial for the community** and the **benefits** identified are: ensuring an adequate environment for education (2 responses), reducing crime and antisocial acts among children (one response), preparing children for the future to distinguish right from wrong and to not commit illegal acts (one response), pupils can learn about the benefits that can have for being a cop (one response).

4. The questioned police officers said that they were **involved** in the relation with school by: ensuring peace and public order in the community, organizing activities/educational program for pupils (courses: road safety education, to prevent juvenile delinquency, to prevent the consumption of drugs and alcohol, etc.), ensuring the security of pupils, informing pupils/ teachers/parents about the community's problems, organizing a community information service for residents, preventing the dropout/ school absenteeism, organizing ongoing communication activities, preventing child abuse.

5. The respondents believe that **the police should have a greater role** in: organizing educational activities to prevent juvenile delinquency, drugs and alcohol consumption, ensuring security of pupils, preventing violence.

6. The police representatives interviewed said that they **would like to become more involved** in: a partnership between the two institutions, in the meeting with the parents and the teachers.

7. The respondents believe that “although now the relation between the school and the police is satisfactory, it needs more attention” and that “if there is openness, all problems can be solved”.

8. The mentioned **solutions** by the respondents, **for a better working relationship between the school and the police** are continuing the collaboration of both institutions, giving more attention to the partnership area, teaching law in force to pupils during class-meetings, informing about the solution to reduce violations of the laws.

1. Conclusions and direction of development of the Puiesti Elementary School

The analysis of data obtained from this research reveals some conclusion about the school's development and the directions of action in terms of partnership.

The collected data, in this case, confirms the research hypotheses. The school has grown and developed along with the development of the community. School's life was and still is influenced by what happens in the commune. *The identified forms of development partnership mainly on those components whose main beneficiary is the pupil.* The analyzed school is well developed, locally recognized as an important institution. This confirms the assumption that *the access to various community resources, led to the existence of a well-developed school and locally recognized.*

The good cooperation with the local authorities made it possible for the school, at least in material terms, to have good equipment. The representatives of the mayor and city council have realized that the investment in the local infrastructure and services is one of the engines of development, that the inhabitants of the commune are more motivated to remain to live, work, invest in local plan, if they have access to services and public utilities. Thus, the commune connected to the water-supply system, have paved access roads, have built a modern gym, and have been rebuilt/strengthened: City Hall, churches, school buildings. The infusion of funds in infrastructures leads to increased motivation for teachers, pupils, their families, community residents.

The community presents itself as a developed one, the community agents understand their role in the partnership with the school, is aware of the benefits of the partnership on the community and its representatives.

The school, although efforts are made permanently for maintenance of the equipment, still has *material needs*:

- Renovation of school facilities (now is consolidated and refurbished the school building from Puiesti de jos). The existence of many places of the school and preschool makes the local effort to be higher. Also, the fact that some areas used by school cannot be held classes due to lack of children, are disabled and

require conservation efforts and a redistribution of these spaces to be used for other purposes;

- Providing schools and preschools with modern teaching equipment and materials and hiring teachers, this being a condition for a good quality education;
- Providing schools from villages Dăscălești and Măcrina with heating centrals would add safety and comfort for children and teachers, but would also create the need to allocate additional human resources to take care of these centrals;
- The Hall and the school, in the tests done locally, indicates the need to support activities for preschool education by constructing an adequate kindergarten in Puiеști de jos with extended program. This requires a consistent effort from the local authorities: buildings, equipment, hiring staff to support the extended program and to prepare meals, monitoring sleep program. Considering that many women with preschooler-aged children are housewives and many children are supervised by grandparents, it requires a careful analysis of the needs of medium and long terms;
- Increasing the number of computers and connecting them to the Internet networks gives children new opportunities to learn and gives both to teachers and pupils the opportunity to have easier access to information. A possible solution to this problem would be applying for sponsorship from businesses that provide cable services in the commune. This request can come either from the representatives of the school or the local authorities.

Regarding to **human resources** can draw several conclusions:

- In the developed villages from the commune, the birth rate is relatively constant, which ensures the sustainability function of school on longer terms. The school and authorities have identified as threat that the population of the commune is aging, leading to the decrease of birth rates. A solution would be to educate the Roma children, whose birth rate is increased. The issue is that the families of these children do not give much attention to education, the dropout being high in this case. We also meet cases of marriage of minor children of this ethnicity. In this case, school authorities try to unify their efforts. School, as a possible solution to the illiteracy of Roma population, aims to organize literacy courses for them (most Roma people are illiterate). But there are two major problems: Roma people's motivation to participate in these courses (do not see the utility) and the financial resources for this program. Accessing irredeemable grants, by school or local authorities, or establishing a non-governmental organization, which can access grants (community association, professional association, etc.), can be solution to finance training for adults. We consider that is necessary a consultation with the representatives of Roma ethnicity, to motivate the adults to participate in these courses. In addition, the parents should

be informed about the effects of early school dropout and early marriage of children. The Roma population from the commune is very poor, does not migrate, livelihoods being secured by agriculture, as day labourers, and by social aid from the municipality. Another fact to note is that in this population, especially the men, are alcoholics and this can be combated and prevented by intensive attention of the authorities, hospitals, schools, police, etc.

- Another issue is the small number of children to school from Măcrina, which required the organization of classes with simultaneously teaching. The educational process is slow and the results are low. We identified two possible solutions: either make the necessary arrangements for approving the operation of classes with a small number of pupils, or transporting children to the schools from the villages Puiești de jos and Nicoleşti;

- We also identified situation in which the parents are away, working abroad. It is necessary to keep an eye on these children, identifying the problematic situation that may arise, but also on the social units, and advising and apprise parents about their rights and obligations that have towards children;

- As regards teachers, the high percentage of commuter teachers (40% of all teachers of the school) increases the risk of their migration. Is doubled this risk by the similar percentage of substitute teachers, which can easily migrate. Unfortunately, the number of hours allocated to some subjects does not ensure standardization of some jobs. Easy access to town, the presence of transport, a short distance between the village and the city (14 km. far from Râmnicu Sărat) make the commute easy for teachers, and the school can be attractive for teachers from outside the village;

As good points of the school, we can mention that all the teachers are trained, many teachers are young and only one teacher is retired.

- Another problem that we signal is that of teachers' involvement in school and extracurricular activities. Although they are open to involve in this kind of activities, the motivation level may be fluctuating. Activities of this type may influenced by the fact that many teachers are commuters. Valuing those involved, highlighting them in various cultural events, rewarding those with great results are ways of motivation for teachers;

- Looking at the strategic point mentioned in the school documents we meet as a reference point the fact that school given its historical data (that has been another school of this kind in the village Nicoleşti), intends to establish in the school year 2007-2007 a special class of The School of Arts and Crafts, in which pupils are prepared for jobs that the local market requires: mason, carpenter, ironsmith, tailor, etc. This has not been done during that period. If this goal will be maintained, school

and local authorities should identify the legal possibilities for such an approach, also the logistics and the related funding source. It also requires an analysis of the local labour requirements and aspiration of children and their families;

The weakness of the school development strategy is note that some children leave school after the 8th grades offered locally. From the school documents results that all children that graduate all eight grades continue the education (in high schools, in School of Arts and Crafts). In the cases of children that risk abandoning education, the school, the authorities and the families must unify their efforts to advise families to identify sources of material support;

- Although the school violence is not very high, the teachers mention it increase among children (from the questionnaires and the strategic plan). It is a trend reported throughout the country. For example, in Romania, in 2010, of the total number of 11,232 cases of family violence on children reported to the General Directorate for Social Services and Children Protection, 1,218 cases have been of emotional abuse, 1,254 of physical abuse, 623 of sexual abuse and 7,642 of neglect. Some of these data are greater and other are smaller compared to the year 2009, in which 11,686 cases have been recorded, of which: 1,326 of physical abuse, 1,151 of emotional abuse, 572 of sexual abuse, 8,101 of neglect. (Fedor, C.G., 2011, p. 161) Counselling children (by a specialist), informing about the risks and the consequences on such manifestations, police involvement, representatives of health units, representatives of church, etc, in this kind of activities may be ways to reduce violence;

- As manifestation of *organizational culture*, school seeks the revival of cultural traditions by organizing extracurricular school activities and events as: Village dance (it was organized in collaboration with the mayor), social evenings, group work, holiday greetings, etc. As we have seen, these cultural events exists and are visible and appreciated in the local community;

- To strengthen the school image and to mark its specific in the community would be indicate to adopt a name that set it apart from the other schools and to choose a day in which would be organized joint actions with community stakeholders (parents, authorities, police, church, etc.).

Another strategy mentioned by the school is to achieve a complete monograph of the school. Such an approach is beneficial in terms of organizational culture of the school. Also, the approach may involve more people: teacher, children, village elders, representatives of the community, etc.

- If we analyze the informational component we detect that the curriculum offer is less varied, some subjects are required to complete the standard of teachers. Both children and their parents suggest becoming more involved in choosing textbooks and optional subjects. This assumes an appropriate behaviour of teachers, to be open for communication, informing and advising parents, a diversification of school education;

- In the relation with family, school aims to have a better collaboration with parents to harmonize their choices with the educational offer and to diversify the funding sources (is not mention how this is will be done), including 1-2 parents in the School Board. Although formally there is a committee of parents, in the operational plan these are not fully functional. As we have seen in the data provided by the interviewed parents, their relation with the school does not satisfy many of them, especially by the ways of communication. Most parents declared that are open for collaboration. In our opinion, the school should rethink procedures for consultation with parents, to organize meetings with them more often, not to consult them only in matters concerning children's school situation. Analyzing the current situation of the school, in children's opinion, it results that the school carries many extracurricular activities, sports, cultural, highly appreciated by children, but unknown by parents. Analyzing the other data, we can conclude that the school is still an area of expression of teachers and children, family operating traditionally (meetings, discussions with school teachers). Children consider that the school is a place to socialize, learn, but also causes stress and frustration. Regarding the relation between the school and their families, children want a closer cooperation, a concrete involvement of parents (sport, cultural activities), they see the relationship as being stressful. This may be the result of the communication with parents, they are called to school when there are problems, school results and the children's behaviour problems are discussed in meetings. Often, parents consider this relationship as being frustrating. Therefore, a good partnership with the parents involves a collaboration not only in the activities listed, but also in a set of activities, of events to diffuse the relationship, reducing the formal distance between the school and the family and encouraging direct communication, involvement, closer interpersonal relationships;

- Other community agents, although they have a good locally working relationship, this is because of the roles that they represent in the community. It is appreciated, that we meet in the presented communities, many collaborations and partnerships, a suitable climate and open;

- From the analysis of the responses to questionnaires applied to the local councillors' results that they have a vague idea of their roles in relation with the school, most considering that they must finance the school. Therefore, we believe that the school representatives must attract the councillors in the activities;

- The Town Hall made a contract with a company, which provides local transport and finances the children's transport from the villages to school. A better solution could be to purchase its own transportation;

The analysis of the data obtained from the questionnaires shows that the respondents identified several barriers that stand in the way of a better cooperation, but also some possible solutions.

In *conclusion*, we believe that although the school partnership with the local community is quite well developed, its improvement efforts must continue.

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