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ABSTRACT

The National Advisory Council on Educational Research and Improvement sponsored a conference to take a close look at the practical ways in which education is being reformed, and perhaps transformed, with the assistance of private-sector advice and innovations and with certain business disciplines. Following are the titles and authors of the papers presented at the conference: "Introduction" (Alan Heslop); "Reform in the Schools: Myth and Reality" (A. Graham Down); "The Reading Reform Foundation: A Partner in Reason" (Charles J. Micciche); "Research and Improvement in the Social Studies: Reflections of a Private Sector Practitioner" (Raymond English); "Partnerships and Mentorships in Educational Improvement" (D. Jerry O'Brien); "Teacher Private Practices in a Public School Setting" (Ruth Anne Olson); "The North Branch Experiment with Contracting In" (James R. Walker); "The Higher Achievement Program: How To Help Empower Low Income Youngsters To Become Achievers and Leaders" (Greg Gannon); "Increasing Participation of Inner-City Youth in Academic Experiences" (Joan Davis Ratteray); and "Parochial Aid to Public Education?" (Charles J. O'Malley). (MLF)

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INTRODUCTION

The National Advisory Council on Educational Research and Improvement is pleased to publish the proceedings of its second annual conference, this one devoted to an examination of Private Sector Initiatives in Educational Reform. The conference took place at the Sumner School in Washington, D.C., on April 2, 1987.

Since 1983, when some dismaying findings about education in this country were published in the landmark report, *A Nation at Risk*, by the President's Commission on Excellence in Education, *reform* has been the watchword in most discussions of education. Indeed, just now we are seeing the second tier or second wave of education reform reports, and education policy makers are seeking to devise the instruments that will assess how well the various states and regions have responded to the numerous calls for renewal and reform.

The National Advisory Council on Educational Research and Improvement is another Presidentially appointed body whose mission is to advance the cause of educational reform in the United States through the recommendations that it makes to the U.S. Secretary of Education, and to the Assistant Secretary for Educational Research and Improvement. As a Council, we have over the years concerned ourselves with theoretical questions on research and policy; but this year, having received an enlarged mission, and having our purview extended to educational improvement, we have decided to take a close look at the practical ways in which education is being reformed, and perhaps transformed, with the assistance of private sector advice and innovations and with certain business disciplines.

We look to the private sector for new ideas and approaches in education, as we have always looked to the private sector to generate the funding, direct and indirect, that keeps our whole vast educational apparatus functioning.

In the last few years, the education press has been replete with accounts of the growing involvement of business and industry with secondary schools, and increasingly with elementary schools. In this there is surely an element of disinterested philanthropy, but complementing that is the conviction on the part of business and industry that we must invest early on in the preparation of the workforce of tomorrow.

The Council is well aware that it will take more than edicts and slogans to inspire our schools, our teachers and our students to attain a standard not simply of competence, but of excellence. We have sought out individuals who have devised creative strategies to offset handicaps and revise outworn governance procedures that hinder true accomplishment in the classroom.

We thank the distinguished individuals who participated in our conference, and we offer their remarks to the public in the confident hope that Americans in every part of our vast country will find in these papers ideas and approaches that are worthy and useful.

—Alan Heslop
Chairman

"Private Sector Initiatives in Educational Reform" is a conference sponsored by the National Advisory Council on Educational Research and Improvement The views expressed by the authors are their own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Council or the U.S. Department of Education.

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James R. Walker is superintendent of schools in the North Branch School District of Minnesota. He has received master's and education specialist degrees from Saint Cloud State University. He was selected by the *Executive Educator* as one of the top 100 school executives in North America, and the programs at the North Branch schools have been described in *The New York Times* and *The Carnegie Report*.

Greg Gannon has been executive director of the Higher Achievement Program in Washington, D.C., from 1975 to January 1987. He has a master's degree from the University of Maryland. The program for academically talented, low income students received President Ronald Reagan's Volunteer Action Award in 1982, and has been described in recent articles in *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal.*

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Charles J. O'Malley is executive assistant for private education, Office of the U.S. Secretary of Education. He has a Ph.D. degree from Florida State University. He has been president of the Florida Association of Academic Nonpublic Schools, and is author of "Governance of Private Education," a national survey of private school governance, which has been cited in national and state publications.

Every day's experience shows how much more actively education goes on out of the schoolroom than in it.

—*Edmund Burke*

School Buildings, Walhalla, North Dakota.
Courtesy of the Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

REFORM IN THE SCHOOLS: MYTH AND REALITY

A. Graham Down

The term "back to basics" has always left me skeptical, for it possesses a comfortable illusion of nostalgia. We've always assumed that things were better than they are now. Frankly, our schools have never been good enough, even in the so-called golden age of American education. Furthermore, the back to basics movement has frequently been captured by myopic minimalists who confuse reading, writing, and 'rithmetic (usually along with classroom prayer) with true *basic education*. I cannot make the point strongly enough that these are indeed two entirely different propositions.

We must recognize that there are three over-arching principles which are central to school reform and are, in fact, the *sine qua non* of school improvement. First, the *mission* of schooling must be defined in a way as to be do-able. Too often schools are asked to be a kind of sociological grab-bag, to be institutions presumed capable of ameliorating most if not all of society's problems.

Secondly, in curriculum design, CBE insists that some subjects are simply more important than others because they are truly generative and empower the citizens of tomorrow to lead lives of genuine fulfillment. The Council, therefore, urges that 85 percent of an elementary school curriculum be spent on these basic subjects: English, mathematics, history, government, geography, science, a second language, and the arts. Such a curriculum should allow children to read precisely, write elegantly, think independently, and, perhaps most difficult of all, relish ambiguity.

Thirdly, and perhaps most important in our democracy and our changing world, the Council insists that *all can learn*. Economic or social deprivation cannot be tolerated as an excuse for the kind of disparity that our society now endures between minority and majority achievement. Taking this idea to its logical conclusion can only result in the development of a common curriculum for all.

Now to turn to the question of myth or reality. I would be the first to admit of a number of positive phenomena which have influenced the current educational landscape for the better.

Secretary Bennett's effective use of the "bully pulpit" is but one of many reasons for the continuing interest in reform over the last decade. I find myself in large measure of agreement with *First Lessons* as an excellent primer for what elementary schools should be, and I applaud the Education Department's insistence on using simple and direct English as a way of disseminating common sense in respect of school improvement.

A plethora of reform reports authorized by distinguished educators of the caliber of Theodore Sizer, John Goodlad, Mortimer Adler, Sarah Lightfoot, Ernest Boyer have also played an important role in setting the agenda for school reform. Yet, if truth be told, only the *Paideia Proposal* (and to some extent *Horace's Compromise*) really attacks the status quo frontally. And I am afraid that most of these reform reports affect the rhetoric rather than the reality of school improvement.

Largely in response to these powerful calls for change, however, the state legislatures have demonstrated a mercurial assumption of power. This may seem to many to be an improvement over the latitude enjoyed by the federal government in a previous decade. But we must wonder whether it is really possible for states any more than Washington to legislate excellence. For example, a recent bill passed by the California legislature insists that schools provide programs in either foreign languages or the arts—as if it were possible to have a good school without both! Another danger is that by such actions the state legislatures have eroded the already declining base of sovereignty associated with the local school board, thus putting the institution of the school board at risk and making democratic local control itself a myth rather than a reality.

At the same time, there are many realities that are encouraging, and it is worthwhile making mention of a few. I do strongly admire the efforts of a number of state superintendents of instruction such as Bill Honig in California and David Hornbeck in Maryland, both of whom are committed to concentrating the resources of their states on minority achievement and the professionalization of teachers. The Coalition of Essential Schools, based on Ted Sizer's work, is now making a powerful contribution to the dialogue about school improvement. As a former director of the College Board's Advanced Placement program, I note with pleasure the increase in the number of high school students doing college level work. The conscious efforts of federal agencies such as the National Endowment for the Humanities and the National Science Foundation to concentrate their resources on the professional development of teachers in the basic subjects is terribly encouraging. The Holmes Group, made up of deans from the most prestigious schools of education at research universities in the country, has shown the courage to propose truly radical notions about teacher preparation: that a grounding in liberal arts is crucial for all prospective teachers, and that it may be more logical to introduce them, through "clinical" practice, into the challenges and dilemmas of the classroom before rather than after they sign a first contract.

Perhaps most astonishing—and promising—of all these developments has been the transformation, at least at the national level, of union rhetoric. Albert Shanker of the American Federation of Teachers has shown considerable leadership in breaking the pattern of the old Detroit-like confrontational approach, and promulgating the important vision that being treated as professionals requires teachers to accept professional responsibilities as well.

So much for the good news, I'm afraid. The reality of improvement in the schools, as we can judge it from data supplied by the National Assessment of Educational Progress, suggests precious little gain in achievement, particularly where we need it the most. Dropout rates in major metropolitan centers are intolerably high; teacher attitudes toward meaningful change in methods and expectations change with the speed of flowing granite; and as for curricular change—well, I am reminded of the old witticism that it may be easier to move a graveyard than to implement a new curriculum. Too many of our central office administrators have such an investment in the status quo as to make it difficult if not impossible to admit of the kind of thinking associated, for example, with Ron Edmonds and the crucial qualities of school effectiveness. Principals, certainly, continue to be chosen for countless reasons other than those associated with academic excellence.

Frighteningly, realities yet to come are harsher still. Soon, very soon, we must find the courage to face the severe demographic complexities of the next few years: the significant shift in the ethnic makeup of public school students, the patent shortage of qualified teachers, particularly minority teachers, (which only threatens to increase rather than diminish), the erosion of financial support for schools. All of these make the tasks ahead all the more difficult. Simply put, as a society we have refused to recognize, except in the most amorphous way, the drastic need to restructure our schools to accommodate fewer teachers, a more diverse student body, new technology, and the social complexities of a society racked by marital and economic instability.

What is the Council for Basic Education doing about this intimidating prospect? And what results are we getting? Allow me to suspend my usual sincere modesty. For 25 years we were a lone voice in the wilderness insisting that excellence and equity were not mutually exclusive, that they are, rather, necessarily interdependent. We can claim, I make bold to say, no little credit for the current wave of reform. Yet in this day and age when our attire is all the rage, we continue to believe that our quintessential role is to distinguish between the rhetoric and reality of excellence, and to serve as a discriminating conscience in a world bombarded on all sides with exaggerated claims and inflated expectations.

Let me suggest some of the ambitious tasks we have set ourselves. Currently we are appraising the effectiveness of the various promising teacher education programs initiated by Tom Kean and his commissioner Saul Cooperman in New Jersey. We are beginning work on what we hope will be a definitive expose of the capricious and unsystematic ways that textbooks are adopted around the country. And we are developing a "greenbook" for elementary school; it will codify standards of expectations for what students should know and should be able to do as they make the transition from teachers who are generalists to the specialist teachers of secondary school. This book will reflect our long-held belief in the importance of defining the highest possible expectations for what students can achieve in their early school years.

On that same track we are preparing a proposal to the National Endowment for the Humanities for a program, aimed at elementary school teachers, that would complement in scope and purpose, our distinguished fellowship program of independent study for excellent high school teachers. In addition we have developed a school-based elementary math and science initiative designed especially for urban teachers. Here in the District of Columbia, we are about to launch a Writing to Learn project which will manifest another of our long-held positions, that our schools' failure to insist that all teachers teach writing is one of the most serious shortcomings of contemporary instructional practice.

We believe that our programs are worthy not only in and of themselves, but because they inform and temper our rhetoric, our advocacy, and our capacity to be the constant conscience of the education establishment.

THE READING REFORM FOUNDATION: A PARTNER IN REASON

Charles J. Micciche

Robert Frost wrote in his poem, The Bonfire, these lines: "Oh, let's go up to the hill and scare ourselves/As reckless as the best of them tonight." He is talking to children, and after a lengthy description of a bonfire he once set which got out of control, a listener thinks a similar game might be fun; after all, the narrator lived through the episode and experienced only excitement. The gleeful mood dramatically shifts when the children are told that the fire is a metaphor for war; the piece closes with, "War is for everyone, for children, too."

At a point in our not too distant past—some would put the time in the 1920's or '30's—a conflagration was let loose in our nation's classrooms, a bonfire of confusion in the form of a new reading method, look-say, or whole word, which devastated the reading ability of several generations of children, which blackened the landscape of reason, which has given us the scarred legacy we recognize today as illiteracy. Today, Frost's metaphor applies: Many of our children are the war victims of ill-begotten reading systems; many of our children are the refugees of an abusive progressive education thrust upon them in their most plastic and receptive years; many of our children are the POW's, the illiterate casualties who grow up to populate menial social niches that belie their potential for success in a vibrant society. And, year by year, the greater their numbers grow, the dimmer the glow of the civilization they become a part of.

It is not being simplistic or naive to say that there are only two systems which schools use to teach reading: Look-say and intensive phonics. An immense mass of solid research from linguists, neurologists, psychologists, and the archaeologists of language—people "educationists" seldom listen to—support the inviolable logic of phonics as the only real system that works. Sadly, the weight of numbers shows that over 90% of our public schools use look-say; put bluntly, it would appear that the bad guys are winning.

Where does that successful, but woefully outnumbered, minority of school districts find out about the effectiveness of phonics? There have always been among us bearers of light on the darkling plains, and one of them was Mr. Watson Washburn, whose recognition of the destructive influences of the look-say assault on our classrooms led him to found an organization in 1961 called the Reading Reform Foundation. This group of dedicated individuals, some, professional educators distressed at the impotence of look-say reading, others, educated citizens in the private sector appalled at the damaged look-say was doing to their clients, their employees, and their children, formed around one unyielding premise: To restore intensive phonics to the teaching of reading throughout the nation. For those teachers, parents, or schools inquisitive enough, or as often as not lucky enough, to hear about the Reading Reform Foundation (RRF), a channel of reason opened to them in their search for a better way to teach children to read.

The nature of the RRF is conceivably self-defeating in the context of how basal reading publishers operate in our economy: It is a non-profit private organization with an altruistic vision. Don Quixote, who had his difficulties several centuries ago, certainly would despair had he to survive the late 20th century. The RRF does not advertise itself in the popular or educational trade media; it does not sell a product with a bottom-line profit margin; it does not manage a franchise system of training schools; it does not demand dues or fees; it does not endorse, tout, browbeat, or high-pressure those who make inquiries of it. Like a latter day Quixote, the RRF simply supports a logical ideal, and to the mainstream American marketplace of consumers, conditioned by hype and glossy ads and polished sales organizations, the paradox of an idealistic approach may appear suspect.

But for anyone reasonably disposed to an objective, dispassionate dose of honesty, the RRF is not Quixotic in its mission; it has solutions. How does the organization go about its stated purpose of promoting intensive phonics? Perhaps its most important task in this regard is in providing lucid, documented definitions of terms, analyzing the elements of intensive phonics in simple language that slices through the fog of jargon generated by the educational establishment. There are two conditions the RRF is most diligent about exposing: Phony phonics and anti-phonics. Much of what passes as reading programs in the wonderful world of look-say goes by such euphemisms as phonetic analysis, analytic phonics, gradual phonics, intrinsic phonics, miscue theory, context clues, word guessing, psycholinguistics (which is really the domain of trained psychologists and psychiatrists), or just plain sight reading. Nearly every basal reading publisher claims, "But we *do* have phonics," when they really hold out only an empty hand to the rising clamor for the real thing. The RRF carefully analyzes these fallacious notions and demonstrates the confusion such inventions create for young children.

As an obvious example, the cluster of letters C-H-A-I-R is not the thing one sits on, but a code of symbols, representing the sounds of the human voice utters when it speaks of the real object. Yet look-say systems cause the learner to recognize the letter cluster as a whole unit, often displaying the word next to a picture of a chair. The RRF demonstrates to teachers that a child, who is not taught the code which letters represent for sounds in the word, consequently fixes a holistic image of the word in his mind. This is teaching to the right brain, ignoring the fact that generations of neurologists, dating back to Broca and Wernike, have amply demonstrated that language facility is located in the left cerebral hemisphere.

The RRF's approach to the more insidious anti-phonics agenda of look-say purveyors is supported in a correct analysis of phonics from its scientifically established linguistic base. Simply put, the alphabet, invented by the Phoenicians almost 4,000 years ago, was a system designed to codify the sounds of syllables used in speech, which was later refined from a complex syllabary to a streamlined system of single units representing sounds. All the variants of alphabets—Hellenic, runic, Cyrillic, and Roman, stem from that common source. Like the wheel, the alphabet was invented only once. With the exception of borrowed words from other languages, most English and Latin based words use no more than 44 identifiable sounds, or phones. Traditionally, English spelling uses the 26 letter symbols of the alphabet singly and in various combinations to codify the entire lexicon. Seventy "spellings" or phonograms give one access to 85% of the 200,000 entries in a good dictionary. The most significant impact of the RRF's work educates people to the simple reality that it is logical to teach these least common multiples of language first, in an orderly sequence. Further, it emphasizes that it is far easier for a child to master the use of seventy facts (and about 30 rules for their use in spelling) than to memorize thousands of whole words needed for reading.

Although much of the work of the RRF is ad hoc, responding to inquiries from parents and teachers, it does engage in a major outreach effort by conducting a very credible and useful annual national conference. The conference provides an opportunity for educators and others to access intensive phonics programs from a range of individuals and publishers to explore these reading systems in workshops, seminars, and in free-wheeling one-on-one dialogues. A tabloid publication is sent several times a year to anyone who puts his name on the RRF's mailing list; it reports on the activities of RRF supporters as well as on misinformation from the look-say establishment. That it presents a balanced perspective without resorting to jingoistic Jeremiads is a bulwark to its credibility. The initiative of the Foundation as a privately run provider of information and services for the public good reflects the best spirit of honest enterprise in America.

The very operational nature of the RRF places it in a precarious fiscal posture. Funding has come chiefly from the largest of its adherents and supporters, from a modest endowment, and from registration fees at the annual conferences. This creates the ironic condition that an organization, whose credibility rests solely on its objectivity and careful avoidance of supporting any single market product, has no access to the market capital which supports research. A further frustration reflects the broad range of highly qualified researchers, educational specialists, and collegiate investigators whose only arm of real reform in reading is the RRF, but who cannot be engaged by the Foundation due to its limited resources.

The classic catch-22 posture has a realistic solution, however. The research funded by philanthropic organizations, private sector corporations, and in particular the U.S. Department of Education, is eminently suitable to the services, agents, and purpose of the RRF. The urgency for reading reform from various national reports cries from the pages of the seminal Nation at Risk, the Reading Report Card, The Governors' Initiatives and, most recently, from the National Assessment of Educational Progress' study on illiteracy. These documents speak eloquently of the problem, lament its impact on society and lost human potential, measure the breadth of illiteracy's cancer across ethnic, economic, social, and all age groups in America. Yet none has penetrated the root of reading difficulties, other than to voice the obvious—and all too true—concern that the causes and cures reside in the domain of early schooling.[1]

The timing is propitious for efforts to focus, with scientific inquiry and dispassionate recommendations, on studies that will put to bed once and for all the controversy between intensive early phonics and look-say systems. It would be highly commendable for any funding agency with an honest stake in the literate future of our citizens to direct its energies through a partnership with the RRF for such definite research. Surprisingly, much of the data already exists in schools throughout the country. Before-and-after studies, longitudinal studies, case studies, all can be accomplished from existing information. More complex inquiries, including control-group experiments and matched-pair analyses, would certainly extend the validity of conclusions, but sufficient information is available on a document research basis to preclude the need for new, extensive, and expensive experimentation. It is most important that the results of these studies be promulgated to the classroom practitioners, parents, and taxpayers who have a vital stake in the success of children's reading abilities. Too often, arcane dissertations repose in dusty archives of scholarly establishments. A penetrating shaft of lucidity would be most welcome. The RRF is in an ideal posture to direct appropriate research and to convey it to the front-line clients of the nation's classrooms.

* * * * * *

Let me qualify my next remarks with a little background, to dispel any criticisms of conflict of interest. I am a member of the Board of Trustees of the RRF. How I earned that honor is a convoluted tale starting in serendipity and culminating in nine years of investigation, trial, study, and service to the organization.

In 1977, I moved from a high school principalship to a central office position. The three school boards I served charged me with the responsibility to "do something" about the poor reading scores on standardized tests. The children were averaging in the 45th percentile, and everyone—teachers, parents, board members—was dissatisfied. I brought a strictly secondary school background in the sciences to my new job, and had no idea of what the teaching of elementary reading was all about. To my scientifically focused mind, the first step was to find out what reading programs were available, how they were organized, and what research and documentation supported them. I started by collecting samples from all major basal publishers, plowing through a mass of material. By chance, I received in my daily ration of junkmail a "Dear Occupant" tabloid called the *Reading Informer,* the organ of the RRF. Considering this just another source of information, I wrote asking for their publications on the intensive phonics they were supporting, naively expecting more books for my shelf.

What came, instead, was an education in the form of personal correspondence from several members of the organization. They all accepted the challenge of my review of intensive phonics with objective comparisons to look-say programs, and calmly left it up to me to make up my own mind. Their logic, directness, and absence of salesmanship satisfied my need for objectivity. I discussed the options with my teachers, none of whom had any coursework or training in intensive phonics, and they asked for a workshop to see if it was the answer. The RRF recommended a list of possible trainers, quite like a medical professional providing a list of colleagues for a second opinion. No one provider was singled out over another.

The trainer selected happened to fit my limited budget (my schools were in Coos County in New Hampshire, then one of the 20 poorest counties in the country). After a two-week course, about a third of my primary teachers wanted to try the system. Within three months, the success of their children was so dramatic, all of their colleagues joined in the trial. Another full year's trial was conducted, and test scores climbed to—and remained at—the mid-to-high sixtieth percentile range. At the urging of the staff and with the enthusiastic support of the parents, intensive phonics was in, and look-say out.

The success of our program was more than enough to justify its adoption, but as a pragmatic administrator, I needed to affirm its cost-effectiveness as well. Our old look-say system was costing on the order of eighteen to twenty dollars per child per year to maintain, in 1977. That same program today is closer to thirty-five dollars per child, which is par for most basal systems. The innocuous Dick-and-Jane stories in the old readers quickly bored the children, unfettered by their new reading powers: They no longer needed controlled vocabularies, limited sentence and paragraph length, and deadly repetition to memorize whole words. They were ready for real literature. We purchased a hard cover reader of quality material to supplement the basic phonics instruction, to provide the challenging literary base for comprehension and higher order thinking skills. The old readers were discarded.

Each year a training course was provided. Each year we purchased lined paper and pencils for the children. One complete set of the new textbooks was purchased, which has a life expectancy of eight years (based on the life of other textbooks used in the districts). The average annual cost for the eight year period came to a paltry two dollars and twenty-five cents per pupil, in constant 1978 dollars. Realistically factoring for inflation and replacement of lost books, a more exact average figure works out to two dollars and seventy-eight cents per pupil. And all this for a program that worked, that satisfied the staff and community, that lifted reading scores to the mid-sixties on standardized tests, that gave remarkable reading power and enjoyment to the children.

During our trial period and early growth, I maintained continuous contact with the RRF, seeking advice, sharing data on our successes, and engaging in correspondence with teachers and administrators throughout the country who were looking for an effective reading system. The current vogue term is networking, and essentially that is the most valuable service of the RRF: Putting the grass-roots educational community in touch with itself as the occasions arise. Today, in my new position in a Massachusetts community (complete with a four level look-say system—four separate basals!), I am promoting intensive phonics, not by fiat, but by the grass roots approach. By letting my new staff visit, observe, and talk with my former teachers, I expect logic and reason to take a natural course. I anticipate an intensive phonics trial program to be in place by fall.

In 1984, the RRF, linked mainly by classroom teachers, asked me as an administrator to address a conference. Apparently, few superintendents were willing to stick their necks out that far. My acceptance and apparently valid message expanded to other opportunities to address the RRF and various interested groups, and the organization invited me, in 1986, to sit on its board.

The impact of the partnership established between a private foundation and the public schools is easily measured in dollars, in test score improvement, in concrete curriculum change. The impact of the RRF on the future of the children it has touched is immeasurable. How do you place a value on the ability to read? How do you cost out the enjoyment of our literary heritage? What is it worth in dollars to have a truly literate nation?

RESEARCH AND IMPROVEMENT IN THE SOCIAL STUDIES: REFLECTIONS OF A PRIVATE SECTOR PRACTITIONER

Raymond English

Since World War II, attempts at improving public education have produced more negative than positive results. The intervening years have been marked by a succession of tombstones with inscriptions such as *Quackery in the Public Schools, Educational Wastelands, The Twelve-Year Sentence, Death at an Early Age, The Literacy Hoax*, and *A Nation at Risk.*

One wonders if improvement is possible. Private education, while not perfect, seems to maintain adequate standards and to produce fairly competent graduates, while public education deteriorates. (See the two reports by James S. Coleman and Sally Kilgore (1982) and by Coleman and Thomas Hoffer (1987). The latter was the subject of a preview in *Education Week*, January 14, 1987.) Is the challenge of compulsory mass-education to age 17 or 18 an insuperable one? Or have we gone about it the wrong way? I cannot answer those questions, but I can offer a limited case study in the form of my experience as a researcher, developer, and would-be improver of Social Studies Education.

In the early 1960s a colleague and I decided to investigate why freshmen in our political science courses at a fairly selective liberal arts college were so ill-informed on matters that any moderately educated citizen ought to know about his country and its history, institutions, and national interest. Assisted by a grant from the foundation headed by Robert Hutchins, we examined, with the cooperation of our Honors Seniors, what was going on in social studies in a number of high schools in Ohio.

Our investigations revealed a depressing state of affairs. Teachers, by and large, were unsophisticated about political realities, and even administrators who presumably knew some facts of power and influence, talked glibly about the duty of education to create a better America and a better world. The tendency to avoid historical facts and resort to vague undefined glittering generalities was widespread in educational circles.

A preliminary report of our findings was published in a professional educational journal in 1963-64. It brought me an unexpected challenge. The president of an educational research organization demanded whether I was really concerned about the problem of education for citizenship. If I was, would I accept the position of director of his organization's Social Science program, with the task of improving instruction and producing textbooks and teacher's guides for the Social Studies?

I was young (or at least not as old and cagey as I now am) and not free from illusions: in short, I took the job. Within a few days I was caught up in a whirl of scholar consultants, teacher workshops, experimental materials, classroom visits, and technical novelties and jargon such as "feedback," "scope and sequence," "concepts," "Dale-Schall formula," something called the "Hawthorne effect," and other pedagogic paraphernalia.

From then on I had to fight against the vocational disease of substituting methodology and methodological busywork for substantial knowledge and the mastery of skills. Fortunately, I had learned to study and teach in old-fashioned liberal education backwaters like Cambridge University and Harvard. Equally fortunately, I had as advisers some outstanding scholars including historians, economists, geographers, and political scientists. I even had sociologists and anthropologists. In due course, I also accumulated theologians and philosophers: that was when I insisted that the role of religion throughout history was too important to be suppressed by the Church-State wall-of-separation lobby, and when I found myself pitted against the ethical relativists with their "values-clarification" and "cognitive moral stages."

From the onset of my 15 years in research and improvement I found myself in steady opposition to the pedagogic profession, although not to the classroom teachers. Most of the latter were refreshingly practical and common sensible. Most of them—at least in elementary and junior high schools—assumed that their job was to convey information and skills, to inculcate in their pupils decent, conventional standards of behavior and habits, and to train them in social discipline and attentiveness. When teachers went wrong, it was generally through paying attention to professional educationists rather than to their own common sense.

The educationists (the pedagogic experts) were a different species. They had learned from generations of progressive educationists that the task of public schools was to change our imperfect society by "modifying the behavior" of the children during the 13 years from Kindergarten to Grade 12. They had been working on this project since the days of John Dewey, but without any real success. Consequently, with a persistence worthy of Sisyphus, they sought a new method, a fresh gimmick, every two or three years. (See Appendix A.) That was the type of educational research and improvement for which the president of the Educational Research Council expected me to provide an alternative.

Although our textbooks were designed to fit into the social studies slots in existing curricula, we changed the title of our series to "Social Science." The change was significant. Our aim was to move away from sentimental and undisciplined impressionism to accurate, scholarly content. While we followed, broadly, the usual sequence of family, community, state and region, country, world, with reprises of U.S. History at Grades 8 and 11, our treatment of these topical themes was analytic and focused on the specific disciplines of social science.

With the advice of our consultants, we identified the conceptual framework of each discipline, and decided how and at what stage each concept should be introduced, and how it should be reinforced, once it has been introduced. For example, the concept of efficient work based on division of labor and good tools (capital) was first discussed and illustrated in Kindergarten. From then on it was developed with increasing sophistication at every grade.

The sociological concept of groups and in-group-out-group relations, with its intricate problems, was frequently applied, and gave a certain clearheaded realism to the analysis of racial, class, and international tensions. In political science, concepts such as authority, rule of law, freedom, representative government, and justice ran as conscious motifs through the examination of history and geography that formed the main topical-factual content of the program from about Grade 3 on.

In addition to providing intellectual stiffening, the conceptual framework was intended to rescue social studies from its prevailing insignificance in the curriculum (and in students' opinions). Unlike reading, spelling, and mathematics, social studies made no demands on the students' long-term memory. By this, I mean that each year of social studies was, so to speak, an isolated topic. The math teacher expected to pick up more or less where the math lessons of the previous year had reached, but the social studies teacher seemed indifferent to students' earlier exposure. The students recognized this incoherence and indifference. When one asked students in World History to recall what they knew about the American Revolution, the usual reply was "We did that in Grade such-and-such," the implication being: "We are entitled to forget *that,* and you are unfair to ask about it."

Worse still: the Grade 11 American History teacher was prone to tell the class that what they had learned in Grade 8 was irrelevant, just as the teacher of Freshman U.S. History at College liked to say "Forget all you learned in High School!"

Our intention was by constantly reviewing concepts and ensuring their continuous application to differing situations, no matter whether the study topic was U.S. History or a regional study of Latin America or the history of modern Europe, to compel students to accumulate knowledge of social science and its laboratories—history, geography, and current political and social conditions. The conceptual framework served as an organizing base, similar to the cumulative reading vocabulary or the axioms and algorithms of mathematics. See Appendix B.

With these principles we constructed a sequential textbook series K-8 with detailed teacher's guides. These materials were field-tested on a wide scale, and in a succession of revised experimental editions. We at first intended to project the sequential series through high school. We did, in fact, develop materials in experimental form for high schools, but for various reasons, did not publish commercial editions. I became convinced, in any case, that *if the process of social studies education was done well up to and including Grade 8,* the high school offerings could be quite specialized. Indeed, this was true of all the main subjects of formal education. Effective planning and efficient instruction could ensure that practically all basic education would be completed before high school.

Unfortunately, the deceleration and dilution of basic education had accompanied the rise of the comprehensive high school and the propagation of progressive and social engineering pedagogy. The high school today often fails to provide the competencies that were taken for granted in the grade schools of the past.

This being the case, the sequential social studies/social science curriculum should probably be continued through Grades 9 to 12. But at this point I have to confess that, after the successes of our developmental period and the relative success of our first two commercial editions, the inertia of the educational system defeated our hopes.

I come to the main concern of this paper, and the one that must preoccupy the National Advisory Council on Educational Research and Improvement: What are the obstacles to improvement, and why has public education deteriorated more or less steadily? Remember: we had produced an ambitious series of instructional materials, that had been thoroughly field-tested sometimes with as many as 25,000 students each year, and that incorporated input from scholars such as William H. McNeill, author of *The Rise of the West* and other trail-breaking studies, as well as from classroom teachers who could advise us that such and such a concept was too time-consuming at such and such a grade or that a particular teaching device or classroom activity had proved especially helpful. The program did work. It proved popular in many school districts, especially those where parents were well educated and demanded quality schooling. Commercially speaking, it was profitable, although we failed to be "adopted" in the monopolistic megastates, Texas and California.

And yet, after two successful editions, the publisher's editorial and marketing staffs (who seemed to be engaged in some sort of internal competition for power) began to insist on my making drastic simplification in the textbooks, including reducing the "reading level" by two grades. This was in 1979. I pointed out that the public was increasingly dissatisfied with the downward drift of educational standards, and predicted that the 1980s would bring efforts to restore quality in the schools. Unfortunately, I was unable to persuade, and I was not in a position to compel—even though we had a contract that gave my organization final editorial control of the texts. This contract, by the way, was unique: textbooks are almost unique: textbooks are almost universally controlled by publishers' editorial staffs, who are mainly recruited from public school teachers who have also served as salespersons.

Despairing of retrieving my 15 years' research and improvement, and unwilling to join in its destruction, I resigned. Instead of a constructive worker I became a carping critic of education. But what lessons can be drawn from my wasted career?

When I consider the multifarious obstacles we faced in our research, improvement, and development I hover on the brink of the deadly sin called accidie — hopeless apathetic resignation to a damnable predicament.

Let me summarize some of the obstacles to improving public education. Obstacle number one arose out of the attempt to reform society by means of the schools, which reached self-defeating extremes in the '70s. In the name of equality and affirmative action standards were lowered and abolished. As in the "caucus race" in *Alice in Wonderland*, everybody was supposed to win a prize. Incompetent teachers and an ideological teachers' union helped the downgrading of education. Our textbook series carefully researched and developed in the mid-1960s had become "too difficult" only 15 years later.

At the same time, and also in the name of social reform, history was rewritten and distorted at the demand of various militant pressure groups. Likewise, the consensual values that schools hitherto transmitted to rising generations were suppressed. A Brave New World of ethical relativism (or ethical topsy-turvydom) was to be brought about by educational brainwashing.

In these fairly successful efforts to weaken public education the Office (later Department) of Education in Washington played a not unimportant role. Federal bribes to force "categorical programs" on unwilling local school districts reduced time and energy available for basic education, and the Platonic Guardians in the Department's Office for Civil Rights literally coerced schools into mediocrity in the name of racial and sexual equality. Just how tyrannical and obstructive the OCR was and is may be gleaned from Lawrence Uzzell's recent article, "The Numbers Game: Running the Rights Scam at DOE [*sic*]," *National Review*, March 13, 1987, pp. 39 ff.

All this is hardly news, but it helps to explain why educational improvement is so often obstructed. Consider also the peculiar instability of most educational policy and research programs. For some reason or other, professional pedagogic experts are seldom capable of persisting for more than two or three years in a given project or plan. I am reminded of Dryden's characterization of the Duke of Buckingham ("Zimri").

Stiff opinions, always in the wrong,
Was everything by starts and nothing long;
But in the course of one revolving moon
Was Chymist, fiddler, statesmen, and buffoon;
Then all for women, painting, rhyming, drinking,
Besides ten thousand freaks that died in thinking.
("Abasalom and Achitophel," 11. 547-552.)

At this distance from my research and development days I cannot recall all the fads and gimmicks of the '60s and '70s, but a few come to mind: modern math, initial teaching alphabet, team-teaching, the inquiry method, values clarification, open classrooms, small group discussions, the abolition of sexism (and the teaching of sexuality), ethnic studies, mainstreaming the handicapped, abolition of objective testing, multi-cultural education, bilingual education, suppression of ethno-centrism, and I don't know what else. That ordinary teachers survived this cacophony of advice an be explained: they paid little attenion to it, once their classroom doors were closed.

The gimmick-worship still persists, however. I'm told that one of the latest fads is the abandonment of the textbook and the workbook and their replacement by computer screens and calculators. Apples for teachers *and* for pupils is the expensive order of the day, at least until the next fad takes hold.

Space and time preclude my developing in detail all the obstacles to improvement. Let me, then, list briefly a few more of my impressions. Remember: I am concerned with research and development directed to improvement or remedies, not with investigative or analytic research.

The problem, as I see it, is not in the R and D stage, but getting improvement into the classrooms and keeping it there. Furthermore, the problem is to check and reverse a process of deterioration, not to improve on an already satisfactory condition.

Obstacle number two: gigantism. Since James Conant endorsed the consolidation of school districts and the consequent creation of large educational bureaucracies and high schools, with enrollments in the thousands, the "customers" of public education —parent, student, local community—have had little control or choice. Teachers, too, have lost autonomy: decisions are made by the bureaucrats of their union and the bureaucrats of school administration.

The optimum size of secondary schools is discussed by Stuart A. Rosenfeld in a "Commentary" in *Education Week*, January 14, 1987 ("Small is Often Better Than Big," p. 40). Rosenfeld quotes a number of authorities, including Coleman, Goodlad, Theodore Schultz, Boyer, and Gilbert Sewell, who concur in rejecting the conventional enthusiasm for economies of scale in education. He quotes a Norwegian law passed in 1978 limiting high-schools to 450 students, on tne grounds that "bigger schools would no longer be *educating* individuals; they would merely be *processing* them through the institution."

Obstacle number three is closely connected with number two: call it the hydra-head syndrome. In public education too many organizations try to call the tune: state departments of education, the federal department of education, local school boards, professional organizations, special interest groups, private enterprise suppliers of instructional materials, and research groups in public and private sectors. I suppose I should add the courts and the judges. When one contemplates the size and chaotic complexity of the public education scene in our elephantine school districts one can understand why modest and manageable private schools remain comparatively efficient.

Obstacle number four is the monopoly in some states and near monopoly in other states in the purchase of instructional materials, especially textbooks. This amounts to government prior censorship of content and method. It inevitably imposes monotony and blandness on instruction. When you consider that, in most classes, the textbook dictates 80 to 90 percent of the content of instruction, you cannot help recognizing that monopoly and homogenization in education are a major road block to educational improvement.

The great advantage of a free economy, free market, and free enterprise is efficiency of distribution and variety of choice to suit the needs of different clients. Our public education system, however, manages to reduce the private sector to conformity and uniformity.

Obstacle number five parallels number four: it is our proneness to seek mass solutions, that is, research-and-improvement applicable to all schools and all classrooms. But education is a huge network of millions of human relationships. The social science program that I directed was intended to break new ground, and especially to give clear intellectual content and coherence and sequence to social studies. Since it was intended to appeal to ambitious, quality-conscious school districts, the level of challenge was intentionally high. The assumption I made was that, if the program succeeded, other writers and publishers would produce similar materials designed to accommodate different conditions. (Plagiarism is not considered wrong in the textbook publishing world.)

But our publisher wanted the program to appeal to a mass-market, and especially to compete for megastate monopoly adoptions. Hence the insistence that we lower standards, simplify challenges, and, in short, "dumb down" the program. If the publisher wanted that type of material, his obvious plan should have been to gather remedial reading experts, and teachers acquainted with the problems of inner-city schools, and ask them to produce a parallel program. The fixation on the mass-market and mass-solutions was, however, too strong.

This fixation—the idea that one educational remedy is applicable across the nation—seems to be associated with a sentimental concept of democracy and of schools as democratizing influences. It seems related, too, to socialistic theories of a beneficent paternal state with universal remedies for social ills. It is significant that the War on Poverty and the expansion of Federal education policies began almost simultaneously as part of President Lyndon B. Johnson's "Great Society" program.

* * * * *

To sum up: the obstacles to educational improvement, in the form of the adoption and retention of effective and improved curriculum, content, and method seem to be:

1. The pedagogic (progressive) persuasion.
2. The incoherent sequence of education, resulting in lack of continuity and reinforcement at successive grade levels.
3. The deceleration and dilution of formal education in the '60s and '70s: lowering of standards.
4. The unfortunate power of militant pressure groups.
5. The inability of the pedagogic experts to persist in a drive for improvement: their pursuit of gimmicks and fashions.
6. Gigantism in educational institutions.
7. The hydra-head syndrome: too many cooks.
8. States' monopoly and quasi-monopoly in purchase of instructional materials: consequent defeat of the free market and choice and variety.
9. Parallel to 8: the search for universal remedies and mass solutions to problems.
10. The attempt to homogenize or de-grade education in the name of democratic equality.

What weight should be given to the obstacles listed? Which are susceptible of removal? Does the list cover the principal factors inhibiting effective improvement in public education? I do not know the answers to these questions.

May I end on a more hopeful, if minor, note. There is available, for any entrepreneur who may be interested, a very thoroughly researched and tested social studies/social science series, K-8. It represents 15 years' work by a team of scholars, teachers and writers, and cost several million dollars. Apart from needing to be brought up to date in certain details, it is attuned to the new mood in education, and is, in truth, an unusual example of effective educational research, development and improvement.

Appendix A

Pedagogy as Threat to Education

I cannot resist quoting again Frances FitzGerald's indictment of professional pedagogy (or pedagogism). Here is a summary I wrote some years ago in an article in the *Journal of General Education*, Volume 32, Number 2, Summer 1980.

The social engineers find congenial allies in the pedagogic experts of the educational establishment. Frances FitzGerald has aptly characterized the inhuman, anti-intellectual tendencies of the self-appointed experts on education. She asks:

> Why is it that the school-reform movements have all been so intellectually reductive? Why in the profession most directly concerned with education, should there be a level of anti-intellectualism and sheer mindlessness found in few other professions? And, finally, why is it that school teachers and parents make no protest against all the gimmickry and the bland socialist-realism-style writing in the books that children read?

Her answers may be summed up:

1. Pedagogy is not and cannot be a science. Teaching is an art, but the pedagogic experts try continually to invent teaching gimmicks that are as futile as pop psychology. Hence methodology displaces subject matter and concern with knowledge.

2. The pedagogic experts also have a phony conception of children. They assume that children (even high school students) are *very* different from adults — weird, deformed creatures who require salvation rather than simply schooling in history or English. While the Puritans believed that children were naturally sinful and had to be educated to virtue, modern pedagogues tend to believe that children are mentally ill.... The study of teaching methods carries with it the assumption that children can and should be manipulated.... Pedagogy, in sum, is not just a vague and confusing subject, it is dangerous to those who think about it for too long.

3. A final disastrous notion is the idea that we should use children to make a better society than we adults have made or are willing to try to make. Hence the social engineering view of schools. This is self-defeating and hypocritical. How can we expect children to learn to be better than the adults they observe around them? How absurd to clamor about the word "damn" in a literary anthology when kids can hear it at every street corner! We try to offer children an unreal, utopian picture of the world and of history.

To teach history with the assumption that students have the psychology of laboratory pigeons is not only to close off the avenues for thinking about the future; it is to deprive American children of their birthright. (*New Yorker*, March 12, 1979, pages 102–106. Also in paperback, entitled *America Revised.*)

Appendix B

Conceptual and Topical Content for Social Studies K-8

By the time the Social Science Program which I directed was complete, K-8, we had an extremely detailed chart showing the sequential topical content of the program in relation to the conceptual framework that was applied with increasing sophistication at each grade level. We did not expect teachers to study this chart in detail, since the teacher's guides gave specific lesson-by-lesson or chapter-by-chapter information. We *did* suggest that the chart be displayed in classrooms from Grade Four onward, so that students could recognize the cumulative nature of their instruction (and, we hoped, their learning).

The *topical content* could be summarized as follows:

Kindergarten:	"Learning About the World" and "Children in Other Lands." Many kindergarten teachers used the first part for all their work, since it covered most obvious kindergarten topics—family, manners, rules, health, safety, traffic, community, color recognition, directions, reading readiness, etc.
Grade One:	"Our Country" and "Explorers and Discoverers." We placed considerable emphasis on simple readers coupled with teacher-directed classroom activities. There was a good deal of simple geography in the materials.
Grade Two:	"Communities at Home and Abroad." After a study of their own community, students had a choice of several other communities—Australian Aborgines; Eskimos at Port Barrow, Alaska; Williamsburg, Virginia; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and more.
Grade Three:	"The Making of Our America" and "Metropolitan Community." A simple, chronological and story-telling history of pre-Columbian, Colonial, and Federal Republic America led up to a study of a large urban aggregation.

Grade Four:	"Agriculture: People and the Land" and "Industry: People and the Machine." Emphasis on economics and geography, within broad historical contexts. Specific studies of rice growing in Indonesia and Texas and wheat in the Great Plains, and of textile, food-processing, and automobile industry.
Grade Five and Six:	"The Human Adventure" Major themes in world history from ancient Sumer to the nineteenth century.
Grade Seven:	"Challenges of Our Time," four separate studies: "Technology: Promises and Problems" "Prejudice and Discrimination" "Nations in Action' (International Affairs) "Choices and Decisions: Economic Society"
Grade Eight:	"The American Adventure " U.S. History and Colonial and Pre-Colonial North Ameri 1.

At each grade from Four through Seven optional area studies were available: "Indian Subcontinent," "Lands of the Middle East," "Lands of Latin America," "Lands of Africa."

Conceptual content was broken down by disciplines: "Geography"; "Philosophy-Religion-Psychology"; "Economics"; "Sociology-Anthropology'; "Political Science", and "History." Geography and History were, along with current affairs, the laboratory, or source of case studies, in which the concepts of all disciplines were applied.

There were many subdivisions of our main, simple conceptual categories, but these could not be shown on the chart. How the concepts fitted into a given grade's subject matter may be seen from the following excerpt from the comprehensive "scope and sequence" chart which refers to Grade Four ("Agriculture," "Industry," "Indian Subcontinent").

In the teacher's guides, the conceptual objectives were also expressed in terms of student ability (the fashionable term was "behavioral objectives"). The following page, from Grade Eight Teacher's Guide to "The American Adventure," gives the geography objectives (1–12) and three philosophy objectives (13–15).

In all there were 53 knowledge abilities, together with seven "Research and Investigation Skills."

(In objective 15, note the influence of the anti-sexist fashion of the time: "If men [people] were angels..." Even if one recognized the absurdity of trying to rewrite the literature of the English-speaking peoples on Orwellian lines, one had no option but to comply with the arbitrary rules imposed by militant feminists backed by federal and state offices of education. For all I know, Madison intended to leave open the possibility that women were angels. Who knows what Dolley's influence was?)

PARTNERSHIPS AND MENTORSHIPS IN EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT

D. Jerry O'Brien

I am pleased to be able to speak with you this afternoon regarding a business sector initiative in education, that being partnerships and mentorships. The Honeywell Corporation has a long history of involvement in support of education, both financially and through support of employee volunteer groups. The Corporation contributed a little over $4 million to scholarships and trust funds in 1986, and encourages employee volunteerism in support of education focusing on kindergarten through 12th grade.

In order to supply some structure and focus to the volunteer efforts in the Washington metropolitan area, the Honeywell Management Roundtable, which consists of all the managers of the Washington based activities, contacted Fairfax County (VA) to discuss the possibility of establishing some type of partnership with schools in the county. This contact took place in early 1985. The first question to be answered was, Where to focus the activity? What schools should we form partnerships with? We have employees living in all of the Northern Virginia counties, as well as Maryland and the District of Columbia, which made it difficult to focus on schools based on employee residence.

We therefore took the point that all employees had in common, namely, that the Honeywell office building is located in Tysons Corner (VA), and began to establish our partnerships with the school district that covered that area. The district happened to be Fairfax County Area III, and we entered into partnerships with three schools in that area, the Dogwood Elementary School, located in Reston (VA), the Herndon Intermediate School and Herndon High School, both located in Herndon (VA). We then proceeded to meet with officials from each of these schools to discuss what this partnership would look like.

It is a very simple process for a school to accept and manage a financial contribution, but when the contribution comes in the form of donated time, then it becomes more difficult for the school to manage. We identified a number of areas where we felt volunteers could be of help. We put together a speakers bureau to supply individuals who are knowledgeable on a number of subjects ranging from computer technology to space shuttle launches, from photography to astronomy. We also identified tutorial and remedial programs in the schools which might benefit from additional manpower, and of course we established mentorships.

Implementation of the program at the schools varied widely. Our partnerships were kicked off in the fall of 1985 with the beginning of the school term, and we gradually developed a pattern of activities at the schools based on the types of volunteer support they most use. The high school, for instance, calls upon our guest speakers, is involved with career shadowing, solicits advice for students regarding science fair projects, and works with our graphic arts department in the development of educational video tapes.

The intermediate school focuses primarily on activities with the graphic arts department and we have conducted a number of programs at that school focusing on industrial art and advertising. The most recent ad campaign that we worked with that school in developing was a "Say No to Drugs" program. Students were given guidance and direction in the development of advertising posters with the "Say No to Drugs" theme and the posters were then judged and winners selected. The winning posters were reproduced by Honeywell and displayed throughout the school.

Our volunteer activities at the Dogwood Elementary School have a little different flavor, in that we are involved in this school with ongoing programs. We have volunteers that work at the school two days a week in an early morning program called EXCEL—Extending Classroom Experience for Lifetime Learning—designed to help those students who are performing below grade level. Honeywell volunteers work with the teachers in supplying the students with that extra push needed to improve their performance.

Last but certainly not least is the mentor program at the Dogwood Elementary School, which has the highest participation of Honeywell volunteers. The purpose of the mentor program is to help those children with low self esteem. The volunteers visit the children at the school normally during the lunch period and strive to give the kids a boost in morale. There are also group events where all of the mentors and children get together for picnics and field trips.

The kids view the mentor program as a plus, something that sets them apart and makes them special, and this in itself is a beginning towards improving self esteem. We have been actively involved with these programs for about a year and a half, and while we are not able accurately to assess all of the benefits, I will share with you our findings thus far. From a Honeywell standpoint, we find that partnerships allow employees the opportunity to work in a volunteer activity that is aimed at improving one of the primary support services—that being the school system—in the communities in which they live. The employees are happy to be able to participate. They are proud that their company encourages this type of activity and they also have a higher motivation to get the job done at work. We have observed that although the volunteers are allowed some Honeywell time for their volunteer activities, their work has not suffered. A number of employees have commented on the fact that working in the schools is a real eye-opener. They are beginning to understand first hand the problems and pressures that are presented to both students and faculty, problems that may not have been present 20 or 30 years ago when a lot of the volunteers were students themselves.

The employees are happy to be able to share their interests with students who are genuinely interested in learning, and are happy to be able to work in a program where they feel they might make a positive difference in shaping or changing the direction that a young life takes. Who knows—we might be influencing the future president of the Honeywell Corporation!

The benefits that the students derive are similar. High school students are able to participate in career shadowing programs that allow them to understand better what life is like in a high tech company. They also learn about jobs that are available to them now, and jobs they can prepare themselves for as they move on to college.

The results of the "Say No to Drugs" program at the intermediate school are tough to measure, but if just one young life is saved from destruction by drugs or alcohol abuse, then the program will have been a success. Results of the EXCEL program at the elementary school are measurable and indicate that we are making a difference there. The school acknowledges a definite improvement in the work done by students in this program. A number of children have been able to move out of the program as they are again able to perform up to grade level. The mentor program is another that is tough to measure. The children in the mentor program know that they have another person in their lives that cares about them. The benefits of the encouragement that they receive and the self confidence and self esteem that they gain from the program can be measured only with time. Children are exposed to role models that give them the confidence that they can achieve whatever goals they set for themselves.

I hope you are able to gain from this presentation a sense of what Fairfax County and Honeywell are about in establishing their partnerships. I would like to point out a few things about the schools that we are involved with. Although Fairfax County is an affluent county with a large school budget, the socio-economic status of the students attending the Dogwood Elementary School, in particular, does not necessarily reflect that affluence. The children at Dogwood run the spectrum from very affluent to those from Federally subsidized housing. Children from the housing projects bring with them not only all of the problems associated with poverty, but also the frustration of having to cope in an environment where their friends have all of the benefits of the opposite end of the economic scale. This type of situation presents a real challenge for us. As I stated earlier, we have been in the program for about a year and a half. We began the program by meeting with school officials to begin to understand what a partnership meant, but we didn't spend a lot of time wrestling with philosophies and strategies in committees. We implemented a program and are learning as we go.

In September of 1985 we had four volunteers from the Honeywell Corporation ready to work with the schools in this partnership. I am happy to report that as of today we have 112 volunteers working with the three schools. We continually encourage other businesses to become involved in programs such as this, for we are convinced that there is nothing more important than the minds of our young people.

TEACHER PRIVATE PRACTICES IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL SETTING

Ruth Anne Olson

In 1983 the educators, business people, and public-policy folk of Public School Incentives began a series of conversations with public-school teachers. We discovered a major limitation placed on teachers as professionals as compared to all other professions. Other professionals—architects, lawyers, nurses, engineers, and all others—choose among several options for practicing their professions. They can be employed by organizations—large or small. They can join other colleagues in private practice. Or they can remain independent and work for themselves in an individual practice.

Teachers do not have this choice unless they are willing to leave classroom teaching. They do not have an option. If they choose to be classroom teachers—in public *or* in private schools, they must do so as employees.

Why are the choices of teachers so limited? And how does such limited opportunity affect the teaching profession and the education of students? These and many related questions were the focus of three years of exploration which asked, basically, "What if teachers could form private practices for the purpose of contracting instruction to public school districts?" Or, more simply, "What if teachers could work for themselves?"

In 1985 Public School Incentives, a Minnesota non-profit organization, began seriously to explore the issues surrounding this question. What forms would such practices take? What barriers would the teachers confront? What would be the impact of private practices on public education? What is the effect of denying teachers an opportunity that is open to all other professionals?

Hundreds of people have helped explore these and many other questions. Private practices have formed in Minnesota and are contracting with public school districts. And interest in the concept is beginning to spread to other states.

The experience to date contains many valuable lessons and leaves several important questions unanswered.

Teachers Who Work for Themselves

An early concern was an assumption that all teachers are security-minded. It is true that it is hard to find teachers who work for themselves in the schools today. But that is a comment about the schools, not about teachers. In fact, one need look neither hard nor long to find dozens of teachers who have gone into business for themselves but who, necessarily, had to leave the classroom to do so.

Often, in fact, these "former" teachers choose a business related to education. They start businesses for teaching writing to employees of private industry. They produce educational computer software. They design and sell classroom materials, provide training workshops for school districts, sell evaluation services, and design and sell specialized curriculum.

They are drawn to kids, to classrooms, and to school environments. But they are also drawn to the challenge of working for themselves. Over and over, conversations with these people evoked comments of strong satisfaction. "It's the most exciting and satisfying thing I've ever done," reported a former superintendent who is now in school-business for himself. And, he continued, "this is so much more fulfilling to me. I can't imagine going back to a staff position with a school."

But these discussions also brought another response—from teachers who sat listening to the testimony of satisfaction by their former colleagues. "This really frustrates me," said a high school English teacher. "I want that kind of responsibility and challenge of accomplishment, too. But do I have to leave the classroom to get it?"

What if this teacher, and others like him, want to work for themselves? Could it be possible for teachers to form private practices wherein they assume responsibility for their own careers in a manner typical of other professionals who choose private practice? Could school districts contract with such a professional practice to provide classroom instruction?

A Variety of Possibilities

Early efforts to think through the practicalities of private practice raise a wide range of possibilities.

*A private practice could provide instruction for students. Or it could teach teachers, develop curriculum, or perform related services. It could do several of those activities.

*It could work entirely in schools, or partly for schools and partly for families, business firms, or other institutions with educational needs.

*A teachers' professional practice might be built around subject area—perhaps where teachers are in short supply, such as mathematics or science. It might offer a single course, or the set of courses that make up a department. "Let us be your math department," a group of teachers might say.

*It might be built around a grade or age level. "We teach kindergarten," a group might say. Or, "We specialize in ungraded education for children ages six through nine."

*Private practices could be groups of teachers. They could be individuals working solo.

*A private practice might be formed out of teachers currently working in a school who simply convert their relationship from employees to private practitioners. Or a practice could develop their services and market them to districts where they were previously unknown.

*A private practice might include only classroom teachers. Or it might include teachers *and* other qualified professionals. Example: science teachers and engineers.

There is no single model, no "right" way. The central idea of private practice is bounded only by the professional interests of teachers and the instructional needs of school districts.

In practice, we have now seen two rather distinct forms of private practice develop in Minnesota. One form is internal to the district as teachers who are already part of the employed staff have converted their relationship with the district from staff to private practice. These teachers, essentially, continue to work in the same school buildings and as colleagues to the same staff as they have for years. But their relationship with the school district is dramatically changed as they assume total responsibility for the instruction for their classroom or program. They have greatly-expanded autonomy, responsibility, and accountability, and they assume control of the appropriate fiscal and other resources commensurate with that role. You'll be hearing, in detail, how one example of such a converted role has worked when you hear next from the Superintendent of Schools from North Branch, Minnesota. Two other school districts besides North Branch have developed their own form of this converted role.

The other form has been one in which teachers—individuals or groups—develop their instructional program and then market that to school districts where they have not been known or worked before. In some cases they offer instruction which is very separate from the regular program of the school; in other cases they become part of the ongoing life of the school for weeks or even months at a time.

In 1985–1986 when several fledgling practices began to form in Minnesota, we documented their progress. Some are group practices; some are individuals. Several were ultimately successful and have designed their programs and successfully contracted with public school districts. Others were not successful as the teachers involved decided that private practice, in fact, was not what they wanted next in their careers.

Interviews with the teachers and with the administrators in districts where they contracted have resulted in solid information about the attractions and the barriers to private practice.

Attraction of Private Practice for Teachers

Being Accountable and Gaining Autonomy. By far and away the most important attraction for these teachers who considered private practice is the desire for professional autonomy. They talk of their frustrations—and those of their colleagues—with the limitations of teaching as a job instead of as a profession. They see instructional decisions made by administrators far from classrooms. They describe the ineffectiveness of developing curriculum through long, drawn-out committee and administrative processes. And they express anger about a system of secure employment which degrades their work by accepting it whether it's good or bad.

The teachers who enter private practice do so from a compelling need for professional autonomy and accountability. They are confident of the importance and the effectiveness of their own teaching, and are willing to assume the risk of insecurity in return for the right to do what they believe they do best.

One teacher describes his decision, "This is a terrific program that would benefit most kids. Private practice gives us an opportunity to do the things that we're *really* interested in." Another says, "I like to learn, to grow, and to understand new things. My practice gives me the opportunity to research new curricula, to gain access to information and materials and to put them together in ways which most school districts could not do for themselves." Still another, "We're able to describe for ourselves what we most want to do; then we find the districts which share those interests."

The teachers who enter private practice quickly learn the value of accountability as a tool for achieving professional autonomy. One teacher explains, "We've learned that we become more autonomous as we become more accountable. We collect the information that helps us become better at what we do, and we keep administrators informed about what we're doing and how we're doing it."

Developing Collegial Relationships. A second benefit that teachers who have formed group practices talk of is the importance of sharing professional responsibility. Some recall with visible feeling the frustration of seeing long hours and commitment to creating new programs negated when the seniority rights of others led to their replacement within a group. Within private practice they feel the pride and responsibility of having formed their own group.

They plan together, and they learn from one another And they do so because of the responsibility and shared ownership toward what they have created. If one of the group is weak in classroom management, the others cannot afford to turn their backs to the problem. Their success is collective, and they know that no one else is responsible for making it work.

The Incentive of Money. People who leave employment to enter private practice give up job security and assume a wide range of responsibilities previously performed by their employers. Many people believe that increased earnings must be the motivating factor for such a decision.

But extensive interviews with the teachers who have formed private practices to date suggest tha this view is wrong. Most of these teachers do not see improvement of financial status as an attraction of private practice or, indeed, even a likelihood. One teacher's comment expresses the view of many: 'I am trying to find a way to do what I like. I am not trying to get rich."

Benefits of Private Practice to School Districts

The present system of teacher employment has served education for many years, and every school district has people and systems for making it work. A district administrator who wants to buy services from a private practice must develop new procedures and must face issues for which there are no well-established precedents. The experiences of administrators who have contracted with the private practices in Minnesota are instructive about the benefits to school districts.

Gaining Accountability in Exchange for Autonomy. Not surprisingly, the primary benefit to school districts is the flip-side of that to teachers. School administrators are more confident about handing instructional decisions to teachers when they know that the teachers are accountable. One superintendent explains, "People who are interested in this kind of contract are self-selected. If they'e willing to do this, they're willing to perform. They are *very* strong folk who have given our district high quality services because of the incentive they feel from being their own boss."

Another superintendent talks of the accountability his district gained when they developed a modified private practice plan with three fifth-grade teachers who had been part of their regularly-employed staff. "We say teachers are professionals, but typically administrators make many of the instructional decisions." He says that the private practice arrangement has made the teachers accountable for their decisions. The basis for teachers' decisions shifts from equity with other teachers, e.g., equal aide hours and equal field trip budgets, to the instructional needs of the particular students in the classroom.

Expanding Instructional Offerings. Private practice contracts have allowed several school districts to expand instruction in ways not possible within the employed staff. Most commonly, they are able to do this because of the skills and background brought by the private practice to its unique program of instruction. The uniqueness coupled with the short-term nature of the contract allows a district the flexibility to buy a service knowing that they maintain full control over the decision to continue the service. If student needs change, if the program fulfilled its purpose in one year, or if it was not satisfactory for whatever reason--the district administrators' decision of nonrenewal is uncomplicated and straightforward.

In some cases they are able to expand instruction because the district cost is lowered by buying only the specific service they need. For example, two teachers have worked over several years to develop college preparation classes for 11th and 12th graders. They recently formed a private practice and now contract with several districts to teach these classes. Each district who contracts with them gains the benefit of the extensive development time, without having to pay all those costs individually. In some other cases the costs to a district are lower since private practices that contract with several districts can use instructional materials more efficiently by spreading the costs of materials across several contracts.

Problems in Private Practice

The newness of this option creates a variety of problems for both teachers and school districts. Teachers are not used to being responsible for their own careers in the way that is required if they work for themselves.

Private practice requires that teachers decide what they most want to teach and how they can best teach it. They must be able to describe their program of instruction to district administrators and be able to give evidence of the quality of their teaching. They have the freedom—and the responsibility—to decide for themsevles how to spend their group income on materials, equipment, professional development activities, retirement plans and even their own salaries. And they must learn to approach the task of contract development as an independent agent—as a peer to school administrators. In short, they need new information and training toward taking control of their careers.

Teachers entering private practice have learned that developing something new can be a lonely and frustrating experience, and they have learned the importance of a support system of family, teacher colleagues or other people who are developing private practices. And, finally, private practice requires psychological and financial risk, an element that is highly personal in that circumstances that appear too risky for one person, invite challenge from another.

School district administrators, too, face new problems in private practice contracting. Such a relationship gives them the responsibility to think about instruction in a new way—to be clear about their instructional needs and about the ability of a particular private practice to meet those. They must learn to think in terms of people providing a program rather than of teachers filling positions. They must learn new non-hierarchical ways of monitoring private practice contracts. And they must accept the responsibility of deciding whether to continue the program into a new contract year.

Over the three years of the project, Public School Incentives has developed a variety of workshops, model documents, and other services for teachers and school administrators. Each step requires information and skills that may well be new to people in education. One must recognize, however, that private practice is not new. The information and support for other professionals entering private practice must only be made available to educators.

Barriers to Private Practice

Besides the problems for individual teachers or administrators who seek to develop and implement private practice relationships, several systemic issues also must be recognized.

On one level, the problem is one of development and dissemination. People have not heard of the idea. They do not think about it as an option. Teachers who have entered private practice often find discussions with administrators dominated by explanation of private practice itself with little opportunity to describe their own instructional program.

Lack of information can unnecessarily enlarge the effect of small problems. For example, contract language and liability insurance often loom as two large barriers until teachers and administrators become acquainted with simple alternatives for addressing them.

On another level, however, the newness of the idea is much more complex. The public education system is large and bureaucratic. Each organizational unit and each individual within the system has a defined role and responsibility. And the introduction of a new idea into such a system results in a variety of problems and reactions.

Private practice in education is assumed, first of all, to be a threat to the teacher unions. Rarely does a meeting conclude without a variety of questions such as, "What do the teacher unions think about this?" Or, "Do the unions allow it?"

The simplest answer is that there is, to date, no actual conflict. Each of the private practices currently in Minnesota has contracts with school districts whose employed staffs are represented by a teacher union. And none of the contracts between the private practices and the districts have threatened the master contracts between the unions and the districts. In fact, two local leaders were among the first teachers in Minnesota who were sufficiently attracted to the autonomy of private practice to begin their own, though neither carried their interest through to the end.

But the problem is, of course, more complex than that. At times pointing the finger of objection at the unions is an easy way for administrators to avoid the necessity to think through the issues for themselves. That requires participants within the public school system be willing to do several things. First, they must be willing to understand the concept of private practice for teachers. They must be willing to get beyond easy and often inaccurate labels such as privatization and sub-contracting.

Second, they must be willing to examine the potential effect of private practice on the educational opportunities for students and the professional opportunities for teachers.

And third, they must look at the choices they have for supporting or blocking these opportunities linked with the potential effects for strengthening their own roles.

If members of a local Board of Education, for example, determine that a private-practice contract provides greater professional autonomy for the teachers and expanded curricular opportunity for students, they can support that relationship by strengthening their own role in defining the policies and procedures to be followed toward developing and implementing the contract. Or they can focus on the problems such a contract will create and, in the process, effectively strengthen the problems in the assumption that they are insoluble.

The teacher unions face a similar task. Union leaders can focus on their role as representatives of all teachers and on a view that independence of a few is a threat to the unity of all. And, from that perspective, they can resist or openly fight all private-practice contracts. Or union leadership can look at the positive benefits of private practice for teachers and students alike—a view that would allow them to strengthen their own organization while they provide the services needed by private practice teachers.

These choices are, of course, more complex than can be stated here. The basic issue is, however, the responsibility which all participants in the education system have to understand the opportunities and the problems of private practice as they make thoughtful responses to their development.

The Future of Private Practice in Public Schools

Our public school systems are faced with increasingly complex challenges for its teachers at the very time when high-quality professionals have a burgeoning of new opportunities. Women and minorities no longer face the professional restrictions so common to earlier generations. And people trained in the content and methodology of teaching see a vast range of choices to practice their profession beyond the singular expectation built into the public system of K-12 education—that all teachers be employees of a large public bureaucracy.

These limitations of the K-12 system have led many fine teachers to leave the classroom, and a wide-range of evidence suggests that they negatively affect the career decisions of the young people we so desperately want to attract to teaching.

Our work during the past three years suggests that private practice can be an important option for attracting and retaining teachers who seek autonomy, who thrive on accountability, and can accept the risks involved. Developing this option is not a simple task, however. Potential private-practitioners must be given the support and encouragement to stretch the limits of their professional choices And school administrators must be given the organizational latitude to determine the best source of instruction for their students.

Most importantly, this option for teachers must be seen clearly for what it truly is. It is, in fact, an idea that shakes at the roots of the current structure of public education—a structure which assumes a homogeneity of staff and their relationships with one another, which assumes a separation of school and "the real world," and one which hierarchically places kids and teachers at the bottom of the system.

Private practice is an idea whose growth *has* and very likely *will* occur in small incremental steps of experience and understanding. It must, by definition, be a bottoms-up reform—but at the same time it can*not* succeed without the support, knowledge, and risk of those "above." My hope is that people in this audience and others like you can find the balance. On the other hand, we must not destroy the idea by prematurely pulling it up by its roots to see how it's growing. On the other hand, we must not be so naive as to believe it can grow without help.

Though many questions remain to be answered, the last years do make it clear that private practice does establish healthy roots for professional autonomy and accountability in public education.

THE NORTH BRANCH EXPERIMENT WITH CONTRACTING IN

James R. Walker

The North Branch, Minnesota public schools have been involved in strategic planning for four consecutive years. Some of the planning assumptions that the school district operates under are:

1. There is increased pressure on education to update, upgrade and develop new curricula.
2. We have to prepare students for the 21st century.
3. School districts, other educational institutions and businesses will likely have to share resources and programs to meet the needs of the students.
4. Competition, public and private, will be increasing.
5. Alternative delivery systems are needed.
6. Learner outcomes, rather than time on task or grade level, are being emphasized.
7. Students can handle advanced curricula.
8. More educational accountability is expected.
9. Computers and smart machines will do the bulk of grading and record keeping.
10. There will be more reimbursed time for planning and development.

With these basic assumptions in mind, North Branch schools have encouraged the idea of experimentation in different delivery systems. Using technology to extend teacher delivery, experimenting with schools within schools, implementing alternative delivery systems, and the experiment outlined in this paper, which allows teachers control of their own budget and budget decisions, are the results of the district-wide strategic plan.

The first thing we did to encourage teachers to take risks was develop a philosophy that said it is all right to experiment and all right to fail. We had to provide the assurance that expertise at the administrative level was available to help guide them in their experimental programs, thus reducing the chance of failure. We guaranteed them that no matter which delivery system they used we would not, as a result of that delivery system, cut staff directly, although we might do it by attrition. We would not jeopardize the job security of the teachers involved by removing them from the seniority list. We had to say that all salary, seniority rights and fringe benefits negotiated with the education association would be guaranteed to them.

The initial idea for teachers to control their education budget developed in the summer of 1984 as the school district looked more closely at its budgeting process. We were spending considerable time to assure that the budget distribution was equitable to all staff. For example, if we bought a computer for one teacher's classroom we had to be prepared to buy all teachers computers for their classrooms. If we bought one teacher six colored ink pens for various art projects we had to be prepared to buy six colored ink pens for all the teachers. We were assigning physical education, music, and art specialists to release elementary classroom teachers for preparation time. However, in many cases, the teachers being released had equal or superior skills to those of the specialists. The concept of equity—or fairness—had weakened education decision making to the point that we were no longer looking at teachers' delivery styles or even their individual strengths and weaknesses when it came time for budgeting. We were not looking at student learning problems unique to an individual classroom, and we were not looking at teacher accountability to parents if the personality of a class needed to go in direction that was unique.

A second thing that helped force this decision was teacher accountability. Under the current system the district office expends the funds. We have moved the major instructional budget down to the office of the principals, and the principals expend those funds as they see fit, but the actual financial accountability for how those funds were used in the classroom was not the responsibility of the classroom teacher. Teachers took the position that the more you asked for the more you got, and many of the staff were concerned that one teacher would get more or fewer supplies or more or fewer field trips than another would. Looking at our strategic plan and the problems we had seen in this district in fiscal accountability and the responsibility of staff to the school district, parents and students, the idea evolved to move the responsibility for distribution of funds one step further and give teachers actual budget control over their classrooms.

The original idea was presented to two fifth grade teachers. We met with Dona Yetter and Jackie Anderson, and I presented to them the concept of their budgeting the state aid received for educating the pupils, of their being responsible for the distribution of those funds and of buying those services from the school district that they felt were needed to · ı their classrooms. We subtracted from the foundation aid the costs of district office administration, the administration of the elementary school, accessing special education programs and the library program. These services, it was felt, should be accessible to all students and, further, some equity issues are involved in dealing with special education students because teachers must have access to the services without fear of financial liability. After subtracting the departments listed, the remaining $1,300 per pupil was allocated to the teachers. With 90 pupils they had $117,000 with which to run their classroom. Out of this $117,000, the teachers had to subtract supplies and textbooks, their salaries including fringes, and any educational services, such as staff specialists, that they felt they needed. Decisions had to be made immediately. The first questions were, "Do we want to go with 90 students and two teachers and extra teacher aides, or do we want to hire a third teacher?" "What specialists do we need?" (The art specialist would cost $31 per pupil, the physical education specialist would be $47 per pupil, the music teacher would be $20 per pupil, a full-time teacher aide would cost $134 per pupil.) The teachers immediately added a third teacher. (Team members are Dona Yetter, Jackie Anderson, and Joan Streater.) They consolidated some of their funds so they could hire a teacher aide. They did the interviewing and hiring of the aide. They cut down some of their supplies so they could have more field trips. They decided to hire two of the specialists and not all three, and they made decisions that would give them approximately four field trips this school year versus the customary one allowed by the school district. The original proposal was that all finances were to go to the teachers and that the teachers were to be removed from the salary schedule. The local education association went to the Minnesota Education Asociation to get an opinion. The Minnesota Education Association took the position that we would be in violation of the state contract laws if we went this route and therefore they opposed it. Because of this we changed our position and got agreement with the association to establish the same process without removing the teachers from our contract agreement with the association.

Planning went for one year before the model was implemented. The implemented model took place this year, 1986–87, and has been tremendously successful as far as the teachers involved are concerned. As with anything new, there were some unanticipated problems, although they have been minimal. The system now in place is accepted by both the building principal and the district office and by the budget control teachers as a method to work out problems. Basically, decisions made by the district office or the principal that require participation by the teachers or the students are paid by the district office or the principal. When the teachers in budget control would have to pay for a certain item, the decision to participate or not participate belongs to the budget control group. A typical example would be a lyceum program. The budget control group can decide whether they want to attend with their students and pay for their prorated portion of the expense.

Another decision the budget control group makes is whether to hire a substitute if one of their staff (licensed or classified) becomes ill. The typical procedure in the school district is to put a substitute into the classroom. Now the budget control group makes this decision on the basis of activities planned.

There are many other decisions: Do we want to hire a substitute so we can go to a workshop? Do we need a fund balance for emergencies? May we carry over our funds into next year? Do we want to hire ourselves for summer writing time to enhance the curriculum? A multitude of decisions, both minute and large, fall on the shoulders of these teachers.

Accountability for the program is based on two basic factors. First, the curriculum is owned by the school district. It is expected that district curriculum will be taught and current achievement rates maintained. Second, funding for the program is based on a per pupil unit basis. If parents are displeased they will move their children out of the budget control program and the group will lose revenue. If parents believe the teachers are doing an excellent job and are sensitive to the students, more children will be placed in the program by parents and the teachers will have larger budget. The teachers gain or lose $1,300 per pupil on a prorated basis based on pupil movement.

An evaluation is being conducted by an independent psychologist. The model is still being designed.

The number of teachers in budget practice will be expanded this year. Many teachers have expressed interest. A meeting was held with those people on February 23 to discuss the pros and cons of going into budget practice. Next year the district may add a fourth grade team, an ugraded second and third grade team, and a kindergarten team to this program. Currently a plan for middle school special education is being developed.

The pros and cons as presented to the staff by the teachers involved are as follows:

CONS:

Teachers cite the disadvantages to be more responsibility, greater scheduling and bugeting duties, loss of funds if students move out of the classroom, and heightened pressure due to in-person and phone interviews with newspapers and television stations. The experimentation of the program is causing some personal need on the part of the teachers to step back once in a while and remind themselves that their job is to teach school and not to become political proponents of this experiment.

PROS:

Freedom of decision making is the big one. Teachers always have access to their own budget and don't have to ask anyone. The third advantage is being able to buy supplies rather than going through central office purchasing or the central supply room. The fourth is they can save a fund balance from year to year. The fifth advantage is hiring their own staff. They decide on the teacher team and teacher team works together. They can hire their own teacher aides or other help as needed. Also, because of the decisions this particular team made, they aren't burdened with clerical duties. Also, the team's budgeting control allows them to respond more quickly and more effectively to unique needs of the classes as they present themselves.

The advantages from the district's point of view are teacher accountability and the high level of responsibility shown by these educators. Perhaps for the first they understand the budget process and the need to judge cash flow. Their self-image as professionals is enhanced by the freedom they have to plan, to budget, and to buy the goods and services *they* know they need without checking with the administrative hierarchy.

The cons from the district level are minimal at this point. There is some concern that, as the budget control group expands, the decisions now made by the individual teachers could become decisions made by committee. We want to assure other teachers who go into budget practice that these decisions are to be made by them individually, that they are to be held accountable for those decisions, and that we will not support any type of program that allows several budget practice groups to consolidate their funds, which would lead to committee decisions rather than individual teacher decisions. We will probably limit next year's growth to the groups mentioned earlier and not expand beyond that point for two or three years until long-term evaluations of teacher attitudes and parent response can be made.

Because of long-range planning assumptions, the school district wants to keep expanding and experimenting. We look at budget practice as only one method of bringing accountability to staff while enhancing the delivery system and teacher public and self-image. There are other methods we are developing to offer parents a choice of delivery systems and philosophy. Finally, we wish to point out that we have some very excellent teachers who are involved in budget control. We also have some very excellent teachers who possibly would not want the responsibility of budget control. It's essential we assure that our staff has options available to them so that our basic thrust remains instruction. The education association has some concerns. Their major concern is increased competition for students among teachers. They're not sure that it's healthy. We are trying to address this by having administrative control on student assignment if competition for student numbers does become an issue. Their concern is also that budget control might make teachers into administrators whose budget decision making becomes more important than their education functions. Another concern they have is that teacher burnout might be more likely with the increased responsibility added to classroom assignments.

Budget control on the part of the staff is working well in the North Branch school district. The teachers involved are extremely happy with it. It professionalizes their decision-making processes because they have actual control of their classrooms and what their classrooms do. It is our feeling that it increases accountability to their public and encourages a greater sensitivity to parental input.

THE HIGHER ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM: HOW TO HELP EMPOWER LOW INCOME YOUNGSTERS TO BECOME ACHIEVERS AND LEADERS

Greg Gannon

Good afternoon. My name is Greg Gannon and I am the former Executive Director of the Higher Achievement Program here in Washington. I have been asked to speak today to give you an example of an initiative that is both totally private and at the same actively working together with a public school system.

I have also been asked to put my talk in the context of the current debate on school reform and the appropriate roles of the Federal government, local school districts, and the private sector.

So, before I begin my description of the Higher Achievement Program, let me first do a little of that context setting.

There appears to be two dominant, and opposing, views on how to achieve school reform and improvement in the United States today. One group believes that the current plight of America's schools is due largely to the fact that the Federal government is no longer willing to act as a major player or major funder in education. Return government to that role and funding to a significant level, they contend, and you will have solved the problem.

The opposing view is that the problems now facing education have been primarily caused by the unwillingness of the liberal education establishment to open their staid and failing institutions to new ideas and the healing forces of the free enterprise system. De-monopolize education, they say, and the same competitive forces that provide variety and quality in other free markets will solve the problems for you.

Fortunately, I am a pragmatist and as such I do not have to ascribe to nor defend either theory. I believe that neither is very helpful if it must be taken as a whole, but that both make valuable points. If the two sides could be encouraged to be somewhat less doctrinaire and turf-conscious, then perhaps we could make better progress on developing a national consensus on school reform and a strong pool of ideas on how to make it work.

I have spent the past twelve years struggling professionally to develop and privately to fund an independent, supplemental education program for academically talented elementary and junior high school students from low income neighborhoods. I have been proud of the independent funding and have experienced the advantages of being freed from the bureaucracy. But I have also experienced the frustration of spending increasing percentages of my time as a professional educator, doing survival fundraising for a program that everyone agrees works and ought to be replicated.

I would cite the advantages and disadvantages of my own experience to argue for more of a middle ground in this debate between private sector competition vs an expanded Federal role. I believe that there is a Federal role and a Federal interest in the education of disadvantaged students like the ones that I have been working with through the Higher Achievement Program. I believe that role should go beyond gathering statistics and examples, and disseminating information, to include some limited funding of demonstrated projects.

At the same time, I also believe that we will get a much greater variety and quality of proposed programs to demonstrate if positive steps are taken to encourage non-traditional and non-institutional educators actively to propose, compete, and participate. We need much more private sector activity and interest in the whole area of pre-college education of disadvantaged students.

But certainly, there are other people here today who are both more qualified and better prepared than I to debate education reform policy. That is not why I came.

The most significant contribution that I can make to this discussion of Private Sector Initiatives in Educational Reform will be to help you focus with me very narrowly on a specific example of a single program that serves a specific quartile, of a specific age segment, of a minority of the U.S. school population.

I make no apologies for focussing on such a specific segment; both because in actual numbers it represents several million students and because, statistically at least, it is low income and minority students who are being least well served by our schools today. The program that I will talk about is an effort to enhance the educational opportunities of these students.

Let me begin by saying that I strongly believe that a standard public school system, alone, will not be enough of an intervention to help most low income students, even the brightest low income students, achieve up to their full academic potential. I contend that this is true even if the public school system is excellently run and generously funded.

To say this is not to disparage the public schools nor to discredit the efforts of low income parents. It is only to face the reality that such a large scale, public institution cannot alone provide large numbers of low income youngsters with the kinds of compensatory, extra school opportunities that they need; the kind of opportunities that more affluent youngsters are able to have provided by their families or their communities.

Low income youngsters do not just need in-school instruction that is equal to that received by more affluent youngsters. They need both excellent public school instruction plus some organized extra educational boost. Such a boost will be necessary if low income students are to expected to eventually compete with those students from more affluent backgrounds and meet such personal and societal goals as going on to college and/or positively contributing to the work force.

There are, of course, already a number of federally funded boosts for such students. Head Start and Upward Bound are two specific examples, but between these two programs there exists a huge gap. It is a gap that occurs at a critical time of life for many low income and minority students and it is a gap through which thousands of talented, low income students are falling each year. Unfortunately, few of these youngsters will ever regain the opportunity to fully capitalize on their academic and personal potential.

Therefore, I believe that there is a great nee for private sector initiatives to develop and support educational opportunity programs that enhance, supplement, and extend the education that public school systems are able to provide to disadvantaged youngsters. There is a great deal of room out there for competition between these kinds of programs and this competition would be beneficial to the students and parents who would be the clients served by such programs. But at the same time, I also believe that, under most circumstances, such efforts will work better if they are cooperative rather than competitive with the public school system.

I would like to take the next few minutes of your time to describe one such private sector initiative. The Higher Achievement Program is an independent, non-profit organization that works in cooperation with the Washington, D.C. Public Schools. Higher Achievement provides a supplementary education program to help enhance the educational skills and opportunities of talented low income students.

I started the program here in Washington in 1975. I adapted and developed the program model from a similar effort that I had worked in as a high school and college student. That program—also known as Higher Achievement—was run between 1965 and 1970 at most of the high schools operated by the Jesuit priests along the East Coast. Most of these programs folded when the federal money that had helped to support them dried up in the early 1970's. There are still a few, single center programs being run along that original model—in New York City, Jersey City, Buffalo, and Scranton.

But when I talk about the Higher Achievement Program, or HAP, here today, I will be referring to the program as it has been developed in Washington over the past twelve years. I myself have left the program here as of January 1 with the goal of promoting the Higher Achievement Program model on a national scale. I am interested in pursuing funding toward that purpose and in advising other states and school districts on how to initiate, operate, and evaluate a Higher Achievement Program in their area.

The Higher Achievement Program is designed to identify and help further educate fourth through eighth grade students with good academic potential from low income neighborhoods. It is not a replacement for regular school, but rather an extra challenge for low income students with academic promise. The basic target population for the program is the top 20–25% of students from each school in the lowest income neighborhoods of the city.

The objectives of the program are:

1) to identify students from low income areas who have above average academic potential

2) to help those students to significantly increase their math, reading, and language skills

3) to make these students and their parents more aware of the students' academic potential and to better inform them of the many programs and opportunities available for talented students

4) to work with parents and students to help the students gain a placement into an accelerated public high school program or private school scholarship by the end of the eighth grade.

Students begin the Higher Achievement Program at the end of fourth grade. They are selected for the program through a combination of recommendations and test scores. HAP staff members visit neighborhood elementary schools a minimum of three times each year to get the recommendations of principals, counselors, and teachers as to which students might most benefit from the program.

Next a letter and brochure explaining the program's objectives and operation are sent to the parents of the recommended students. Recommended students whose parents decide that they are interested are given a standardized test (the SBR Achievement Series). Keeping in mind the goal to identify the top 20 to 25 percent of a class, the students with the best test scores and strongest teacher recommendations are accepted. Parents of accepted students are then invited to a meeting to learn more about the program.

HAP students attend neighborhood based centers. Each of these centers enrolls between 85 and 150 students a semester. Each center draws students from eight to twelve different schools in the same geographic area around the center. The centers are located in neighborhood public or Catholic schools.

The ideal is that students will begin the program the summer after fourth grade and continue through the summer after eighth grade. While a good core of students do move through the program in this continuum, there are also many others who come only for the summer session, only for the winter session, or who take off one or more semesters during the course of the four years. The ultimate goal is eventually to see all the students who were accepted in the fourth grade win a placement into an accelerated high school by the time that they have completed the eighth grade.

The Higher Achievement Program operates in three phases:

1) *Summer Session* (June–August)

The summer session operates full time for seven weeks. The typical day is from [illegible]0 to 3:00. There are four, fifty minute academic classes and a structured afternoon recreation period of intramural sports, crafts, cultural trips and special events. The special events include such activities as field days, talent shows, and academic competitions (e.g., spelling, vocabulary, and math bees). Two hours of homework are required each night.

Two afternoons a week from approximately 3:00 until 6:00 recreational trips are run. These are large group activities such as swimming, bowling, bike riding, roller skatng, or hiking. Every other Saturday the program sponsors family field trips and picnics.

The summer program is staffed primarily by professional public school eachers. Each teacher is assisted by a college or older high school student. Many of these assistants are themselves former HAP participants. Each of the six center locations is directed by a full time HAP staff member who serves as the year round center director.

The average class size is relatively small, usually between 18 and 25 students. The summer session is culminated by a completion and graduation ceremony at each center. Parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, and friends are invited to see the students rewarded and awarded for outstanding academic performance, skills improvement, perfect attendance, spirit, and participation.

2) *Follow Up Session* (October-December; February-May)

The Follow Up Session operates four nights a week throughout the school year. Fifth and sixth grade students come on Monday and Wednesday evenings and junior high students on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The program does not operate during September, February, and late May-early June both to give students a break from the schedule and to allow them to get a good start on the routine of regular school at the beginning of each semester.

The program operates from 6:30 to 8:30 each evening. This period is broken down into three subject sessions:

a) *6:30–7:10* — Novel Reading and Discussion
b) *7:10–8:10* — Reading or Math Skills (Alternate Nights)
c) *8:10–8:30* — Vocabulary Skills

The Follow Up Program is staffed by a group of 350 adult volunteers, each of whom works for the program one or two evenings a week. The students are divided by grade and ability into groups of five or six.

The volunteer instructors are encouraged to be mentors of their students as well as tutors. Weekly contact between parents and instructors is encouraged and most instructors schedule one or more cultural or recreational trips for their small group during a semester. Group meetings and workshops are held for the instructors several times during the semester at each center.

Large group trips and special events are scheduled for the students two or three times each month. These include trips, open gym nights, academic competitions, hot dog and ice cream nights.

3) *Follow Through Component*

The purpose of the Follow Through Component is to work with parents, students, and local high schools to help HAP students gain a placement into an accelerated high school program or private school scholarship by the time the student has completed the eighth grade.

One staff member is assigned full time as the director of Follow Through. This person coordinates contact with the high schools and talent search organizations and works with the center directors to contact parents and students about opportunities.

Through this office a High School Night is run each year; students are given additional testing; school visits are arranged; and individual counseling, including help with financial aid, is provided to each family.

Statistics and Results

Perhaps the two questions that I am asked most frequently about the Higher Achievement Program are: 1) How low-income really are these students? 2) This program sounds great, but does it make a real difference?

The answers are: 1) yes, these are not just bright students nor just bright minority students. They are bright students who are truly low-income. 2) The program clearly does make a difference in enhancing these students' educational opportunities and that difference can be objectively demonstrated.

The Higher Achievement Program opened in 1975 with one center for 65 junior high school students. The program currently serves over 900 fourth through eighth grade students a year at six neighborhood based locations.

Approximately 75% of the students who participate in HAP are eligible for free or reduced price lunches under the National School Lunch Act with about 60% of that number being eligible for free lunches. The income eligibility figures for a family of four for the 1986-87 school year are: \$14,300 (130% of the federal poverty level) for free lunches and \$20,300 (185% of the federal poverty level) for reduced price lunches. About 20% of HAP families are dependent upon public assistance or social security benefits for their income.

In terms of measuring academic progress, the Higher Achievement Program evaluates itself primarily through two basic objective criteria—test score improvement and successful placement of HAP students into accelerated public high school programs and private school scholarships.

For test score measurement the program gives alternate forms of the SRA Achievement Series twice a year. Students have consistently improved their math, language, and reading scores an average of two grade levels a year—twice the national rate of improvement for all students. For students who had participated in HAP for one year or more, the average grade equivalency scores for students entering grades six, seven, eight, and nine in the fall of 1986 were all well above national norms. Those scores are cited below:

	HAP Students	*National Norm*	*Difference*
Students entering grade six	7.60	6.00	+1.60
Students entering grade seven	9.00	7.00	+2.00
Students entering grade eight	10.50	8.00	+2.50
Students entering grade nine	11.08	9.00	+2.08

In terms of placement in accelerated high school programs, this year former HAP students make up 20% of the student body at Banneker, Washington's selective admission, advanced academic high school. Other HAP alumni are now receiving more than \$300,000 annually in scholarships and financial aid at Catholic and private independent high schools, including all of the most competitive private schools in the Washington Metropolitan area.

There is still much research that needs to be done on the effectiveness of the Higher Achievement Program. There are many questions still to be asked about the best ways to identify and retain students and about how best to operate the program.

It would be useful to compare HAP students to a formal control group of other students with similar economic backgrounds and the same initial test scores of those who do not participate in the program. Even some basic questions need to be studied more formally. How many students who begin the program at the end of fourth grade stay through to the eighth grade? What is the average number of semesters that a HAP student has spent in the program by the end of the eighth grade? Which students leave the program and why do they leave?

HAP is now doing some surveying of the classes of students who have begun the program since the initiation of the Follow Through Component. That should yield some interesting information on high school placement and success and eventually on college placement and success.

One of the reasons that I am now most interested in starting the program in other school districts is for the opportunity to combine all the things that I have learned through trial and error about what should be looked at in running and evaluating such a program.

But although the research that has been done on the Higher Achievement Program to date has been rather basic, it does appear clearly to indicate that HAP is a program that does help low income students achieve positive, measurable goals toward advancing and improving their own educational opportunities.

Administration and Staffing

In the early days of one or two centers, the Higher Achievement Program was run as a department of Gonzaga High School, a private Catholic school, under the aegis of the high school's board of directors. As the program grew, first an advisory board was established; later, as the program grew further, a separate, independent corporation was formed.

The Higher Achievement Program is a 501(C)(3) non-profit corporation that is operated by a 25 member board of directors. The board includes local business people, parents and other residents of the communities served by the program, representatives of voluntary organizations, and some D.C. Public School administrators.

The program operates six neighborhood-based center locations—three for fifth and sixth graders and three for seventh and eighth graders. There is a full time year round staff of seventeen. The administrative staff consists of an Executive Director, Director of the Follow Through Program, and a Development Director. They are assisted by a Business Manager/Accountant and a Secretary.

Each center has a full time director and assistant director. The assistant directors are members of the HAP Volunteer Corps. Volunteer Corps members are usually recent college graduates who have committed to give fifteen months of full time service to the program. They live in a group house with other volunteers in a HAP center neighborhood. In addition to housing, they receive health insurance and a $200 a month stipend to cover living expenses.

Center directors are usually former classroom teachers or former HAP Volunteer Corps members who have already served a year or more as an assistant director.

During the school year this staff is assisted by a group of 350 adult volunteers recruited from the Greater Washington community. Each of these volunteers works one or two nights a week for the program. For the summer session, thirty to thirty-five professional teachers are hired and as many college and high school students as teachers' aides.

Costs and Funding

The cost of running the program in Washington is approximately $500,000 a year, or a little more than $500 per student annually. This cost does not include any calculation of the various in-kind donations that are so vital to making the program go. These include: volunteer services, office space and utilities, classroom and other building use, printing, and often one time capital costs such as vans, photocopying machines, etc. All these are provided to the program from a variety of sources.

HAP will not open a neighborhood center unless classroom, gym, cafeteria, and office space have been donated by the community. Both Catholic parishes and the public school system provide these facilities.

Clearly, such donations significantly reduce the cash costs of operating the program. Those cash costs break down roughly into the following kind of percentages:

— Administrative and Support Salaries and Benefits	20%
— Center Directors and Assistant Directors salaries and Benefits	35%
— Summer Staff Salaries	10%
— Postage and Office Expenses	12%
— Educational Materials	8%
— Cultural and Recreational Costs	4%
— Transportation	4%
— Insurance	3%
— Public Relations and Fundraising Costs	2%
— Miscellaneous	2%

Parents are charged $125 in tuition annually—$30 per semester during the school year and $65 for the summer session. About 15–20% of tuitions are either reduced or waived each semester for families with particularly difficult financial situations. The remainder of the money needed is all raised from private sources. The Higher Achievement Program receives no D.C. government, Federal government, or United Way funding. The sources of funding break down roughly as follows:

Foundation Grants	25%
Individual Contributions	15%
Tuition	15%
Fundraising Events	10%
Business and Corporate Donations	10%
Support From Churches	5%
Gonzaga High School Support	5%
All Other Support	15%

Funding the program has been a great challenge. From June 1980 through January of 1984, HAP opened five additional centers to serve new neighborhoods. Foundations and other sources were willing to provide seed money to spread an idea that worked into new areas. What has been more difficult, has been to generate a system of on-going financial support for the older centers which are already up and doing well.

The Higher Achievement Program would like to open four additional centers in Washington to serve the low income communities of Far Northeast and Far Southeast that are furthest removed from the services downtown. But for now, the program has consolidated two of its elementary centers, reducing the total number from seven to six, and has declared a moratorium on opening any new centers until a more stable system of on-going funding can be developed. Work toward that goal is progressing, but it has been difficult.

Developments and Changes in the Program Over the Past Twelve Years

The program model for Higher Achievement is very similar to that used for Upward Bound, a federally funded program for disadvantaged high school students with good academic potential that operates on college campuses across the country.

One of the founding principles of the Higher Achievement Program is that Upward Bound starts its intervention too late. By waiting until high school many youngsters who had strong potential in the earlier grades have already lost interest and hope in the system.

When the Higher Achievement Program first opened in 1975 we began working with students at the end of the sixth grade. Our assumption was that most of our students would continue on in their neighborhood public junior high and high school and that this extra boost of academic intervention at the critical beginning of junior high would help to carry these students onto success in high school and college. At that point in the program's development placement into an accelerated high school was not a major objective.

Then, in 1979–80 we surveyed the first two classes that had been through HAP. We found that their high school graduation record was excellent. About 94% had graduated from high school on time, compared to a city rate at the time of somewhere between 60–65%, with lower rates still for the schools in the low income neighborhoods where HAP was working.

But only 55% had started college within two years of high school graduation and not all of them had stayed enrolled. We believed that the program had the potential to achieve a greater effect.

Our survey had showed that many of these bright students had not even applied to college or taken the SAT's. While the D.C. Public School System was in the midst of a reform movement and was making great strides on the elementary level, secondary schools were still in tough shape.

Most of our former HAP students at that time were attending large, inner city, public high schools. In one of these schools, where over 25% of HAP's total alumni were enrolled, there were three counselors for over 1,500 low income tenth, eleventh, and twelfth graders. Among these counselors duties were issues relating to attendance, legal, family, dropout, job, pregnancy, and drug problems as well as a good deal of testing and record keeping. There was little time and little structure for formal college counseling.

Based on our findings, we made a decision in 1980 to change HAP in two ways. One was to adopt a goal of helping each student to gain acceptance into an accelerated public high school or private school scholarship by the end of eighth grade as a major, formal objective of the program. The second was to start working with students two years earlier, at the end of fourth grade.

The first change was made easier by the fact that at the same time D.C. had made a decision to open a selective-admission, advanced academic high school and to also develop some other accelerated academic programs within neighborhood high schools.

The jury is still out on whether or not this new, improved program design works better, but there seem to be strong indications that it does. The students who started HAP at the end of the fourth grade beginning in 1980 will not start graduating from high school until next year, but the percentage of those students enrolled in accelerated high school programs is now in excess of 70%. The percentage was very small for students who completed the program before 1980.

Other Key Concepts of the Higher Achievement Program

I hope that by now I have given you a rather clear picture of the objectives and operation of the Higher Achievement Program. But before concluding I would like to stress six key concepts that I think deserve special emphasis if one is to understand well the philosophy and goals of the program.

1) *The Higher Achievement Program emphasizes the teaching of accelerated basic academic skills. It is not primarily an enrichment program.*

Many programs directed toward students with above average academic potential purposely concentrate on "enrichment" of the students academic experience by emphasizing creative applications of basic skills knowledge. This is accomplished through such activities as creative writing, building physical models to illustrate mathematical principles, or exploration of the arts.

The Higher Achievement Program has taken the position that this is not the best approach to help empower low income youngsters academically. HAP believes that it is more important to help these students strengthen and extend their academic skills, so that they will be best prepared to make the most advantage of future opportunities for learning in the best and most competitive high school and college programs.

HAP believes that a sixth grade student who has mastered all of her basic math computation skills is much better off spending the summer taking algebra than building a scale model of the Brooklyn Bridge.

2) *HAP centers are neighborhood based, drawing students together from eight to twelve schools in the same geographic area.*

The other way of doing the program would be to run fewer, larger, more centralized centers that served a city wide population. A number of excellent educational opportunity programs operate with such a structure.

HAP, however, is looking for the best students within a specific community. HAP believes that being designated to attend a special program that is operated out of a different school can often be as intimidating as it is exciting for both parents and students, particularly when the students are as young as those with whom HAP works. That problem can be greatly increased if the program center location is in a distant and unfamiliar neighborhood to which travel is both physically and psychologically difficult. Many good students can be discouraged from even beginning.

A neighborhood based center, on the other hand, is both more convenient for families and creates a feeling of ownership of the program within the community.

3) *It is a world of results, not of intentions.*

A good deal of harm can be done to low income children by well meaning missionaries who are unsure of what they want to accomplish or how to go about doing it.

Intentions of programs such as Higher Achievement are always well meaning, but what makes a difference is whether or not they can be proven to be effective. Thus, HAP has always taken a hard look at the statistics for enrollment, attendance, test score improvement, and high school placement. It is a mistake to believe that children will necessarily benefit just because you care and are there.

This kind of outlook is shared with students. HAP is meant to be a support, but it is also meant to be a training ground and a challenge. The outlook at HAP has been that if you must choose between being too hard or too easy on students, it is better to be too hard. HAP wants its students to be ready and able to compete under what will often be difficult circumstances.

4) *Volunteerism is vital to both the financial viability of the program and to its spirit.*

Volunteer services provided by the school year evening instructors, parents, board members, HAP Volunteer Corps members, alumni, and others greatly reduce the actual cash cost of operating the program. More importantly that spirit of volunteer commitment creates a positive atmosphre that is characterized by optimism, new ideas, and enthusiasm. Involvement of volunteers from all over the Washington Metropolitan Area generates the feeling that the Higher Achievement Program is not just the student's program, or just the black community's program, but Washington's program. Therefore, everyone has an interest in supporting HAP and seeing it thrive.

5) *Parent Involvement is a must.*

HAP cannot work without parent involvement. Most HAP parents work at least one job, some two. Most have one or more children other than those attending HAP. More than half are single parents.

During the school year many parents walk their children into the center at night and then walk back to get them two hours later. Some parents travel with their children by bus for safety reasons and then wait at the center throughout the evening session.

These parents help their children with homework and reading assignments and struggle to pay a tuition that many really cannot afford to give their children an extra opportunity through HAP.

I believe that it is inaccurate and racist to portray low income parents as somehow less caring about their children's education. That has not been my experience at all. What most low income parents do lack are information, access, and opportunities to provide more for their children educationally.

In addition to meetings and conferences, HAP encourages parent participation as tutors and as members of the parent advisory councils at each center. Parents also serve on the board of directors and work on all major fundraising projects.

The program simply would not work if parents did not believe in HAP and actively support it.

6) *The program must ultimately be run for the students.*

There are a number of sound educational and sociological reasons to run a program like Higher Achievement. But in the end, none of these reasons matter if the students don't both learn from and enjoy the program.

Time does not allow me to share them now, but there are many HAP success stories. These students are the program's capital assets. They, themselves, are the program's best recruiters and best fundraisers.

HAP can take very little direct credit for what any of these young people have achieved. Most of what they have accomplished has been done through their own determined effort and strong family support.

What HAP has done has been to provide an extra opportunity—the kind of opportunity that normally is not there for students in low income areas without something like a Higher Achievement Program.

Conclusion

What does the example of the Higher Achievement Program have to offer to the larger discussion of private sector initiatives and school reform? I would hope that one suggestion that it can offer is that the solutions for today's problems in education do not have to be cast only in terms of *either* publicly funded reforms or independently contracted alternatives. There can be a middle road with the potential for combining the best of both approaches.

HAP is neither a public school nor a private one. It is a supplement that competes with neither and can serve both. One can be supportive of such an extra-school supplement without "abandoning public education" or freezing out educational free enterprise. The educational niche in which HAP operates is one where more competition is sorely needed.

One of the most interesting things for me in reading some of the comparisons of Japanese and American education that have been recently published by the Department of Education and others was to learn more about the Japanese institutions known as Juku.

Juku are private, for profit, extra-school educational institutions that offer after school, evening, weekend, and vacation educational programs in schedules not unlikely those offered at HAP. Some Juku offer accelerated courses; others remedial instruction; still others enrichment courses and the arts.

Some Juku start as early as the first grade, but most concentrate on the fifth through ninth grade levels. By the ninth grade, fully 47% of all Japanese children are attending some form of Juku.

Juku allow Japanese parents (and students) both to participate fully in a public school system with a national curriculum and at the same time exercise some clear choices in selecting the kind of education that they feel is best for their child.

Juku, clearly, have become a major additional force in the education of Japanese children. I believe that extra-school programs like Higher Achievement have the potential for developing a similar, positive, extra educational force here in the United States. The potential for the benefits of such a movement can be particularly promising for low income students, who most need the extra boost.

I hope that the success of the Higher Achievement Program here in Washington will encourage other cities and states to attempt the program in their area. If there is anybody here today who would like my help or advice in getting a Higher Achievement Program going in their region, I would be glad to talk to you after the presentations. Just line up right up front here--behind the corporate and foundation people, please.

I also hope that HAP's success will encourage other programs, organizations, corporations, and other players to enter this field of providing extra-school opportunities for disadvantaged students. Higher Achievement is clearly only one answer, appropriate for only a certain segment of the low income student population.

There is a need for much more competition and many more new ideas in this area from both the public and private sectors.

INCREASING PARTICIPATION OF INNER-CITY YOUTHS IN ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES

Joan Davis Ratteray

In America today, the quality of the education a child gets is frequently determined by the level of that child's family income, even in public schools. We are experiencing the phenomenon of tax-supported differential education.

It was American optimism that led to the creation of government schools as a way to achieve mass education, but America's egalitarian dream has become a nightmare. Now, egalitarianism wears two faces: one for all the affluent in certain public schools and in traditional private schools and one for all the minorities and poor[1] in inner-city schools.

We have seen our international academic standing plunge to embarrassing levels, and the debate is still raging on how to stress academic excellence, how to begin reforming our educational practices so that we are no longer a "Nation at Risk," and how to revamp our decaying education infrastructure. Yet, there continues to be a great disparity between the affluent and minority-group or poor children, especially in urban areas. The differences can be seen not only in what they learn but in how they learn it.

Now educators are descending on American businesses and urging them, ironically, to provide substantial additional *direct* subsidy to aid failing government institutions. But how can corporate America allow itself to be drafted into battle without the proper armor, with battle strategies developed by generals from lost wars, with commanders who do not understand the cultural dynamics of the population on whom they must rely, and with soldiers who will not fight unless they are paid more money for less work?

As a result of the courtship of American business, there may indeed be more money available. But businesses do not appear to be questioning the basic assumptions on which the edifice of minority-group education has been structured. Consequently, with large-scale educational systems financed by both public and private money, pursuing an approach to education that is unchanged in some of its critical elements, inner-city youth will continue to suffer but now on a much larger scale.

Nevertheless, there are some in the private sector who are attempting to adjust this imbalance. They have created small, independent schools that focus primarily on inner-city youth and serve them in their own neighborhoods. All across America, inner-city parents and poor parents are turning to private sector alternatives known as independent neighborhood schools. Through innovation, hard work, and the considerable financial sacrifice of low-income parents, these institutions are trying to define a new approach in the intellectual development of inner-city youth.

A distinguishing feature of these schools is that they accomplish their goals by relating the acquisition of knowledge to a larger context for learning. In some instances, it is a religious framework—not always restricted to the doctrinal teachings of a particular denomination—and sometimes the framework is built on the child's cultural background, whether it be as African-Americans or as members of some other group.

It should also be pointed out that they are not elite institutions. They maintain an "open door," often taking children that the public schools have labeled "underachieving" and turning them around. Their enrollment seldom exceeds 800 children, with an average of 120 per school.

The Institute has so far verified the existence of 220 schools in 30 States, the District of Columbia, and the Virgin Islands. Only five-day schools, as opposed to weekend schools and tutorial programs, are included in this number. Some schools that once enrolled only a handful have hundreds this year. Others identified a year ago have now closed, while several new ones have opened. Schools that have been in existence for many years are still being located.

The largest concentration, 38 percent, is in the urban Northeast. It is followed by 26 percent in the Central region, most of which are in Chicago and other large cities along the Great Lakes. We found 18 percent in the Southeast, 14 percent in the West, with Los Angeles and the San Francisco/Oakland area accounting for nearly all of this latter group, and 5 percent in the Southwest.

The schools indicating that they had a religious affiliation or that there was a religious influence on the curriculum had an average annual tuition of $1,542. Among the secular schools, the average tuition was approximately $2,000 annually. In contrast, according to a recent report, tuition costs at exclusive private schools may range from $3,975 to $11,000 annually.[2]

The question facing education policymakers is, What can the public sector learn from independent neighborhood schools about increasing the participation of inner-city youth in academic experiences. Research being conducted by the Institute for Independent Education is making it unquestionably clear that there are two lessons to be learned, one defining a cultural imperative and the other the actualization of choice.

The first lesson is that the operating assumptions of education policymakers must be tested against the unique character of the population being served.

For many years, education researchers and policymakers, in Washington and in the states, in government and in private-sector think tanks, have been relying on certain assumptions that have been inflicting serious damage on minority-group communities. For example, a favorite pastime has been to treat minority-group youth and label them "children at risk'—i.e. children who need more remedial education or "special programs for special minorities," and so on. They are gathered up and dumped into a virtual prison of state-imposed separatism. Here they are warehoused indefinitely, because government subsidies make it financially attractive to schools and special centers to keep these children in perpetual limbo, a condition from which they never emerge. They will stay in a remedial track, even if by some miracle they find a college that will accept them.

According to a recent study using statistics from the U.S. Department of Education, black and Hispanic students constitute nearly half the enrollment in classes for the educable mentally retarded and are far less likely than whites to be placed in programs for the gifted and talented. Black children in the 100 largest school districts are almost three times as likely to be placed in remedial classes as whites.[3]

Another favorite approach is to treat the interest of minority groups as an afterthought. Policymakers who simply cannot deal with the concept of special treatment for minorities, tend to ignore them altogether, putting them on hold until the larger problems of the Nation are addressed. They then grab the urban problem and stuff it into whatever policy framework has been designed to meet the needs of the majority population.

At the Institute we are articulating an educational philosophy that addresses the uniqueness and strengths of minority-group cultures. We are looking not at techniques for brewing a traditional "melting pot," where different cultures are blended together into a predominantly Eurocentric "stew." We see America as a mosaic, where distinguishable parts stand together to create a beautiful work of art. With this approach, policymakers will be able to examine their operating assumptions and develop educational strategies for inner-city youth that have relevance, that are likely to be successful, and will accomplish their objectives with dignity and respect for the cultural context of minority groups in America.

Last year, the Institute was fortunate to be able to upgrade the skills of mathematics teachers from independent schools by conducting a seminar called "MATH Alive!" Through this course and subsequent follow-up visits to the schools, we are assembling some important ideas and putting them in the form of training materials that all teachers can use.

We are offering proven classroom strategies, presented by master teachers, and based on their years of experience that are validated by state-of-the-art research. Our faculty could speak from their personal knowledge of young people who gained understanding and became more deeply involved in academic experiences. These are teachers who have personally witnessed inner-city youth conquer anxieties about mathematics that had been inculcated in them by their families and by society. They have seen black youth rise above the self-limiting perceptions that come from ignorance about the contributions of Africans and African-Americans to the development of mathematics, science, and technology.

The Institute is firmly committed to the principle that teachers who have higher expectations for the children in their classrooms are providing the foundation for change in American education. Consequently, we are showing teachers how to build on the interests, talents, and cultural history of minority groups and motivate them to higher achievement. We have begun by focusing on black Americans, but the principles we evolve apply equally to other American minority groups as well.

We have already started the process of disseminating some of this information. As a result of a national advertising campaign, we are finding that this material is being requested by teachers in public and private schools all across the country, in both urban and more rural areas. We have also found that there is some cross-over between independent neighborhood schools and public schools, as teachers who were trained in our "MATH Alive!" seminar move on to implement those ideas in public school employment.

The second lesson from our research is that "choice" in education must be an egalitarian concept.

Government sponsorship of education now costs approximately $278.8 billion annually, a $15 billion increase over the 1985 cost. These and other expenditures to support government intervention in our lives have sucked taxpayers so dry that they have no more money left to spend on education. Nor have we produced a reasonable or satisfactory return on our investment. For this reason, some say this level of sponsorship can no longer be justified. Moreover, in spite of overwhelming subsidy, the masses have been especially poorly served.

Mobility has been the key to educational choice for mainstream America, providing them with ready access to higher-quality education. Minorities and the poor, because of their relative economic standing in relation to majority America, for the most part are unable to offset the damage that is being done to them by educators and education policymakers. They are stuck, while the more affluent move on, and the extent of their demographic and economic dilemma can be seen from the census statistics.

According to census data, only 13 percent of all blacks in America earn more than $25,000 annually. Eighty-five percent of all blacks live in urban areas, and half of all black children are being schooled in the 12 largest inner-city school systems. There the masses sit, with no education, no mobility, and no choice.

Many studies continue to document the debiliating educational problems that large traditional school systems are having with an increasing number of minority-group children. Dropout rates of staggering proportions leave many people so overwhelmed that they feel they can do nothing about it. Others, safe behind the walls of their affluence, blithely ignore the fact that large numbers of young people are being intellectually assassinated year after year.

It is not the purpose of the Institute to advocate a redistribution of wealth to redress this imbalance. We are, instead, looking at a different side of the same coin. We have found that minorities and the poor are denied the power of choice, not merely because they have fewer economic resources to make them mobile, but because most Americans actually assume that government-sponsored schools are the *only* place where minorities and the poor *ought* to be.

Having only one option, they are constrained like citizens in a totalitarian state. When they behave—educationally, politically, economically, and in many other respects—as [illegible] in one of those societies, they are criticized for this b[illegible] this is the hypocritical and unfair attitude of many in majority America, who also happen to constitute most of the Nation's educators and education policymakers.

We at the Institute are forced to ask, How long can Americans continue their blind allegiance to public-sector education, when independent neighborhood schools are demonstrating how far parents will really go to exercise the power of choice!

Inner-city parents are frequently portrayed in the media and by educators as non-caring, passive victims of their own misfortune or socio-economic status, with a "different" outlook on life and vision for the future. Just who circulates and thrives on maintaining this image is not known.

The Institute is completing a study of why parents choose independent neighborhood schools for their children and how the schools came to be so important to the families they serve. Our research shows that this image simply is not true. Some parents have already exercised their freedom of choice and have chosen wisely by joining what is in effect modern "underground railroad" in minority education. The schools now stand as symbo[illegible] of hope for other parents and children who have not yet escaped to freedom.

In our study, we are asking whether these parents are concerned about basic skills, cultural identity, national test norms, career choices, or mobility out of the neighborhood. We are going beyond the superficial choice, when parents opt for private schools instead of government schools and we are asking why this type of school in these inner-city neighborhoods.

As we expected, in many instances schools were started as a reaction against the tragedy of public schools. However, our findings will illustrate some of the things that government schools must do in order to avoid losing even more constituents. And public sector educators will be able to decide for themselves how to overcome their myopic view of inner-city families and perhaps unlock this valuable resource and save more of our youth.

The problem of disparate educational quality is persistent and pervasive. It also destroys the potential of mainstream and inner-city youth, depriving both of the maturity that comes from respect for the roles each other can have in the American mosaic. Independent neighborhood schools stand at the point where the interests of the public and private sectors intersect. Both institutions serve the same inner-city population, but one approach is working and the other is not.

Independent neighborhood schools do not claim to have all the answers, but most of them are islands of hope in a desolate land. There are also some ways in which they can be models for the public sector. For example, they have smaller administrative units and allow greater flexibility for creative teachers. They are perceived by parents as "safe zones" for their children, because there is an atmosphere of discipline where the children can pursue their highly-visible willingness to learn. Indeed, in some ways these independent schools are what we all wanted the public schools to be in the first place. They demonstrate clearly that our modern institutions for traditional education, where there are a thousand or more individuals under the same roof, have become factories for behavior and learning styles that are socially undesirable. They show us that giant bureaucracies turn principals into caretakers of systems they cannot truly control.

The Institute for Independent Education promotes the development of independent neighborhood schools, for we believe that they are making and can continue to make an important contribution to American education.

NOTES

[1]The terms "minority" and "poor" are not necessarily synonymous.

[2]Rodman, B., "Price of Independent School Education Increases 80 Percent Over Past 6 Years," *Education Week*, September 24, 1986.

[3]National Coalition of Advocates for Students. *Special Analysis of 1984 Elementary and Secondary Schools Civil Rights Survey Data*. Boston, 1987.

PAROCHIAL AID TO PUBLIC EDUCATION?

Charles J. O'Malley

Over the past five and one-half years, my office has received countless inquiries about the availability of public aid to private schools. However, interestingly, we have received no inquiries to date on parochial aid to public schools. In fact, as you read the title of my presentation. "Parochial Aid to Private Education?," you probably thought this would be a short presentation, focusing upon the manner in which the local pastor or minister or rabbi handles in service training for prospective public school bingo game operators. After all, what more can a parochial school adminstrator offer a public school administrator than instruction in the proper inflection to be used when calling out "I-16," "B-3" or "BINGO!"

Yet those of you who have worked with the "other" sector of education probably have come to recogize the many important contributions private and parochial schools have made to public education. There is parochial aid to public education in the following areas:

1. *Students*
2. *Personnel*
3. *Facilities*
4. *Curriculum*
5. *Techniques*
6. *Governance*
7. *Finance*
8. *Cooperation*
9. *Competition*
10. *Community Support.*

Let's take a brief look at each of these and see in what manner the parochial aid is rendered.

1. *Students*

An examination of the national private school enrollment data indicates that somewhere between 60 and 65 percent of private school students are in elementary schools, which means that the vast majority of private school children continue their education in public junior or senior high schools. This also means that we are usually not talking about two separate student bodies, one public, one private. If the child coming from the private or parochial school is well prepared, and test scores seem to bear out that they are pretty well prepared, the public school teacher will have excellent material to work with. We also know that admissions officers of both public and private colleges and universities are very eager to enroll graduates of private and parochial high schools. Sound educational preparation of those students entering public education is indeed a significant form of parochial aid to public education.

2. *Personnel*

An informal survey I conducted for the Florida Department of Education about ten years ago traced the flow of teachers into and out of private elementary and secondary schools. At that time, about ten percent of the teachers employed by private schools in Florida accepted employment in public schools in Florida and approximately ten percent of public school teachers accepted employment in private schools. My own personal observation and some of the data currently being collected by the Center for Statistics indicate that a substantial number of teachers currently employed in public schools received their initial training in private or parochial schools. Many of these teachers, although relatively content and certainly competent, learned they had to eat, and the salaries at the local parochial schools were not conducive to that habit. In-service training or internship in parochial schools for prospective public school teachers—another significant example of parochial aid to public education.

3. *Facilities*

This is probably one of the more common forms of parochial aid to public education, and it is probably one of the more common forms of public a to parochial and private education. Chapter I classrooms. The sharing of gyms, baseball and football fields, tennis courts, auditoriums, and other types of facilities seems to be an area in which everybody wins.

4 & 5. *Curriculum & Techniques*

Let me return to these two shortly.

6. *Governance*

The autonomy or independence of a private school principal or headmaster is, I am sure, very much envied by many public school administrators. Fortunately, many of the national reform boards are reminding all of us of the important role of principals in ensuring the success of the school. Perhaps the *modus operandi* of the private school principal or headmaster should be the subject of research. Another important form of parochial aid to public education?

7. *Finance*

When relating the issue of finance of parochial to public education, there are a couple of interesting aspects to be considered. One is usually brought up by proponents of tax credits or vouchers, and it asks the question, what would happen if the parochial or private schools in a particular community were to close down because of lack of funding? Where would all of these childen attend school? The ready answer is usually the public school. However, that is usually tempered by the codicil that, if these children were released over a period of time, the public school could easily absorb them. If they were not, chaos would result as additional classroom space, additional teachers, additional facilities, transportation arrangements and all of the other operational arrangements would have to be brought into play.

A different type of issue presents itself, mostly in the Northeast, wherein smaller school districts do not maintain high schools. In those situations, the State Department of Education provides parents with vouchers enabling the parents to choose private high schools. These procedures have enabled the small districts to save considerable sums of money over the years.

8. *Cooperation*

This is an area of special importance to me, because I have observed at first hand situations wherein public school administrators are constantly at odds with private school administrators resulting in loss of money, time, effort and, most importantly, quality education for the children being served. I have also observed at first hand many situations wherein the private school administrators and public school administrators worked together in ensuring better educational opportunities for the children involved.

Smooth transfer of records from school to school, sharing in facilities (as I mentioned before), shared in-service activities, support by private school leadership of public education goals, and other examples of good, open communication result in a better channeling of resources for public education.

Other types of cooperation have been identified in recent years. For example, Choate-Rosemary Hall School in Connecticut and Bryn Mawr School in Maryland have developed programs which assist low-income, minority children, most of whom are public school students, to become better prepared educationally. Project Hope, conducted by the Jesuit high schools around the country, is a similar program. And, in spite of all the hue and cry about the private schools' being elitist and exclusive, there are numerous occasions wherein public school administrators have referred hard-to-handle students to private and parochial schools.

On the national level, meetings convened by our office (the Koffee Klatch) bring together the leadership of the national public and private and parochial school organizations so they can discuss matters of mutual concern. There have been instances over the four years we have convened these meetings in which the private school leadership has been of assistance to public school organizations in solving serious problems. In considering these matters on a national level, we should remember the cooperation between the national public school organization and major private school associations in the enactment of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act back in 1965. It is unfortunate that the Aguilar v. Felton decison has put a strain on the atmosphere of cooperation between public and private education, but we hope we can overcome this serious problem through the efforts of the leaders of both sectors. Similarly, I am aware of situations wherein national private school organizations join public school coalitions to obtain increased funding for public school activities. Very visible types of parochial aid to public education?

9. *Competition*

Having voiced that innocuous but nasty word, I can sense the vibrations, tensions and moral outrage at my suggesting that competition is a form of parochial aid to public education. Many are no doubt thinking in terms of "level playing field," "Make them play by the same rules we are forced to play by," etc. As a private school advocate, let me respond. If private schools are to play on a level playing field, let them play with the same type of equipment that their competition is using, not second hand or inferior equipment. Let me also respond that public school educators should enlist the support of private school educators to repeal some of those rules so that both public and private school educators can get down to the business they so enjoy, teaching! Rather than wallowing in misery and resentment, why not work together to reduce some of the misery?

Notwithstanding this attitude, I have heard many public school educators state publicly that one of the reasons they believe their school is doing so well is that there is a good private school or another good public school in the area. These schools do well, or they lose students. Interestingly enough, the improvements in public education being wrought by the education reform movement are forcing private school administrators to take another look at the "competition" argument. Will improvement in public education result in a competitive improvement in private education? And will that competition spur additional improvements in public education? Parents and students have to be watching this competition with great anticipation, as they will be the ultimate winners. A truly unique form of parochial aid to public education.

10. *Community Support*

Back in the mid 1960's, there was a national meeting of public/private school leaders at the Airlie House in Virginia. These leaders discussed ways in which public and private education could work together for their mutual benefit. A finding that emerged from that meeting is that those school districts which have positive relationships between public and private school educators are the districts passing public school bond issues receiving community support for other types of public school financing methods. Considering the number of private school eighth graders who continue their education in public schools, the numbers of private and parochial students participating in state or Federally funded programs, or those situations wherein public school administrators and faculty work closely with their private and parochial school colleagues, it becomes evident that the parents of private and parochial school children feel they have a strong investment in public education.

As one of the national leaders of a fundamentalist Christian school association stated at one of our Koffee Klatches, the majority of the families in his congregation have their children in public schools. Therefore, he is extremely concerned about maintaining a very strong public school system in his community. In Florida, not too long ago, the leaders of the various private school associations stood with the state commisioner of education at a joint press conference in the state capitol pledging their support for the state commissioner's effort to place Florida in the upper quartile of educational achievement. This is parochial aid to public education at its best!

11. *Now Back to the Areas of Curriculum and Technique*

These are two areas of parochial aid to public education that are being vastly underutilized. It is indeed rare that we hear of public school educators taking a good hard look at the private or parochial school curriculum, or the manner in which that curriculum is being taught. Although I cannot speak with certainty as to the types of requests that the National Diffusion Network receives, I would believe that it is rare when public school administrators ask for information about what is working in a private or parochial school. On the other hand, I am aware of several instances wherein local school boards have contracted with religious teaching orders of nuns to teach in the district's public schools. As the exemplary school recognition programs become more popular, perhaps we can better utilize this form of parochial aid to public education.

There you have it! Eleven forms of parochial aid to public education, including the training of bingo callers. I sincerely hope the church/state separationist will not test any of these forms of assistance, because I would hate to see any of the public school children lose in the same way that so many of our nation's private and parochial chldren have lost in the wake of recent Supreme Court decisions.