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ABSTRACT

States are in the leadership position to effect pervasive and comprehensive changes needed in the educational system. There exist five key dimensions for analyzing initiatives resulting in systemic changes: (1) infusiveness, building upon existing knowledge; (2) pervasiveness, effecting improvements in all key components of the system, including policy, human resources, community, and curriculum development; (3) potency, inclusion of all participants at all levels of the system; (4) coherence; and (5) sustainability. Oregon's School Improvement and Professional Development House Bill (HB 2020), promoting school improvement and professional development, and Washington's Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) for low income children exemplify strategies that research suggests is characteristic of effective systemic change. Both programs: have multiple targets and multifaceted strategies for intervention; are based on local needs; were designed by those who must implement them; provide support for technical assistance and training for local communities; are monitored by state-level policy makers; and have achieved a critical mass of local support. Demands for systemic change are unlikely to abate. The difference in new phases of reform is the quest for comprehensiveness and coherence. (Contains 24 references.) (TEJ)

THE Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

PROGRAM REPORT

THE STATE'S ROLE IN EFFECTING SYSTEMIC CHANGE: A NORTHWEST DEPICTION

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November 1992

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Resilient individuals are needed to meet new economic and social demands. This means the system of education must improve in pervasive and comprehensive ways. Systemic changes are necessary, and it is the states that are in the leadership positions to bring about those changes. The challenge is to achieve individual resiliency through systemic reform.

This document is an attempt to link emerging theories with emerging practices, and to learn from those linkages. Thus, three major sections are included: (1) a section on the context for change, in which the theories, conditions, characteristics, and paradigms for system change are synthesized, (2) a section with detailed descriptions of two state systemic change efforts in the Northwest, and (3) a section to draw out the implications for state systemic change initiatives.

The Context for Change

After synthesizing definitions, characteristics and sub-systems, three popular paradigms for approaching systemic change are described: the political paradigm, the organizational culture paradigm, and the research and development paradigm. Variations and/or combinations of these paradigms guide the selection of action mechanisms for systemic change.

State policy and community choice may be viewed as two action mechanisms for change. While some argue one approach over the other, the truth of the matter seems to be that state policy and community choice must be mutually supportive. The two must be effectively blended to bring about effective systemic change.

A state process for empowering and supporting local improvements will yield long-term gains and substantial returns on public investment. However, this does not mean simply "sending money." Both support and pressure from the state have been found to be essential for systemic change.

From these syntheses, five key dimensions were postulated for use in analyzing the extent to which an initiative results in systemic changes: (1) infusiveness, (2) pervasiveness, (3) potency, (4) coherence, and (5) sustainability.

Northwest Systemic Change Initiatives

Two mature state initiatives in the Northwest were selected according to a set of criteria to describe in detail attempts at systemic change and to analyze those attempts at blending state policy and community choice utilizing the analytical approach derived from the theory and context.

Oregon's School Improvement and Professional Development House Bill 2020 (HB 2020) has three components: (1) school improvement and professional development; (2) beginning teacher support; and (3) professional development centers to assist the first two. Funding was about $8.0 million for each of three biennia from 1987 through 1993. The school improvement and professional development component reached 347 of the 1,250 schools in Oregon and 10,427 teachers of the 25,000 in the five-year period. The beginning teacher support component reached 181 districts with 3,368 beginning teachers. The three professional development centers were funded in total at about $240,000 per year, or an average of $80,000 for each per year.

HB 2020 changed the education system in four ways: (1) there is greater emphasis on learner outcomes; (2) site-based decision-making has been expanded; (3) communities are more active in school decision-making; and (4) teachers are seen as key to Oregon school improvement. Further, restructuring legislation was enacted in 1991 that builds upon these results and provides greater emphasis on systemic change.

Washington's Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) was legislated as a comprehensive, family-focused preschool program that would help low-income children prepare for and succeed in school. Operational funds were awarded first in 1986 in the amount of $2.9 million to 12 contractors serving 1,000 children. The program has grown so that $23.9 million was awarded to 36 contractors serving 180 sites and 26,199 children in 1992-93.

ECEAP's vision of expanding services has resulted in changing the system in the following ways:

1. A large and increasing number of low-income children and families have received early childhood education and assistance services.

2. Longitudinal study findings show that children's cognitive skills, physical abilities, and social and emotional well-being have been improved.

3. Families have been assisted in accessing health and social services and have increased their participation in and support of their children's development.

4. A large and increasing number of communities throughout the state have enhanced their capability to serve children and families comprehensively.

5. The service delivery system has become flexible and more responsive to children and family needs.

6. Collaboration among service providers of all kinds and levels has been strengthened.

7. Program expansion has occurred without increasing state administrative costs.

8. The role of state staff now includes providing technical assistance and ongoing support in addition to managing contracts and monitoring performance.

Both of the state initiatives were analyzed in detail using the analytical dimensions. The concepts of infusiveness, pervasiveness, potency, coherence, and sustainability proved to be very useful as descriptive criteria for systemic change.

Implications for State Systemic Change Efforts

Oregon's HB 2020 and Washington's ECEAP are obviously very different entries into the field of systemic change for a state's educational system. One addresses the professional work environment of teachers; the other, the condition of young children and families. One is administered by a state agency whose focus is education, the other by a department concerned with the development of local communities.

The two initiatives have put into practice much of what research says about effective change:

1. Each has multiple targets and uses multifaceted strategies for intervention.
2. Both are based on locally felt needs.
3. Both have been designed and adapted by those who must implement them.
4. Each has provided for support of technical assistance and training to local communities.
5. Both have been carefully monitored and supported by the state-level policy makers and agencies who administer them and decide their futures.
6. Both have achieved a critical mass of advocates at the local level.

The initiatives handle some specifics in substantially different ways. ECEAP has focused to a greater degree on longitudinal study and evaluation of impact while HB 2020 relies more on formative data to assist early program implementation and to assess the extent to which programs actually meet original expectations. HB 2020 has gone much further in formal provision for technical and training support to local programs, while ECEAP relies more on collegial planning and monitoring processes for program growth. HB 2020 has a much wider target in terms of the local program practices which it hopes to promote, while ECEAP has program standards that provide a framework of activities within which programs have wide latitude for adaptation to local conditions.

Advice policy makers gleaned from the analysis includes the following:

1. Aim specifically for systemic impact by applying systemic principles.
2. Aim for impact on problems which are malleable, as well as critical to society.
3. Marry critical social concerns with broad, immediate local payoffs.
4. Invest, don't just fund.
5. Build on what has been shown and known to make a difference.
6. Monitor for both short- and long-term feedback.

7. Keep focused on the positive learner outcomes, with state and community activities designed to increase the resiliency of children and youth in accomplishing those outcomes.

Systemic reform in education is a concept and a charge which cannot be ignored. Further, it is an elusive idea, to which most of us still bring highly varied understanding and meaning.

The demand for systemic change is not likely to diminish. The defining difference in the new phases of reform is the quest for comprehensiveness and coherence, based on the belief that all aspects of the system must change at once. Thus, the rules, roles, and relationships within and across levels from community to state will need to be revised.

State systemic implementation strategies are not made more simple through this analysis. Lasting change requires the tapping of local vision and local commitment to action. The familiar tools of legislation and regulation will be successful only if there is a solid base of local agreement and support.

The experience of ECEAP and HB 2020 shows that it is possible to very quickly tap the local efforts of thousands of teachers, schools, parents, and community leaders and connect their local choices to sweeping state policy actions.

INTRODUCTION

We live in a world which is changing dramatically. Equally dramatic changes are needed in the outcomes for people which result from our system(s) for education and human service. At a time when a world economy has become a reality and the gap between the "haves and the have nots" in this country has both widened and hardened, fundamentally new economic and social demands confront us.

Resilient individuals are needed to meet these new economic and social demands, and our schools and communities are expected to produce them. Most agree this means the system of education must change in pervasive and comprehensive ways. What is needed, we all say, is systemic change. Increasingly, we turn to the state, as the level of government constitutionally responsible to take the lead in assuring that these changes occur.

This analysis attempts to assist state efforts to achieve systemic change in the educational system. It assumes that true systemic change can be achieved only when the systems of the literally hundreds of communities, including local districts and local school buildings, change. These local "subsystems" are the backbone of the state's educational structure and are the primary units for systemic change of the state's educational system.

In the past, the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL) has examined the questions of how state strategies impact school improvement, starting with state curriculum standards, moving to building-based planning and management, and then to professional development. That line of inquiry is continued in this fourth work, which focuses on how state level strategy can best operate to achieve systemic change in the state's system for education.

We recognize that the entire spectrum of state policy actions can have profound effects on the educational system. This is especially true of policies related to school and public finance. However, we have chosen here to focus on the particular "tool" used by states to carry out their constitutionally designated responsibility for education--legislative initiatives designed to directly impact educational practice and improve the statewide outcomes which result.

Since at least 1982, such initiatives have been labeled educational reforms. In the past few years, the term "comprehensive" has typically been added, denoting a steadily rising concern for systemic change. This awareness of the importance of systemic change was, at best, only a background for the many earlier state reform initiatives. It has increasingly moved to the foreground in the most recent state actions.

Unfortunately, most of these later and more "comprehensive" efforts in the Northwest have been in place for far too short a time to allow any data-based analysis of their systemic effects. Several have not even been fully enacted or implemented as yet.

Fortunately, from our perspective, some of the earlier generation of reform initiatives have the key attributes of systemic change strategies and have been in place long enough to give us a data-based picture of their systemic features and impacts. Even better, several were enacted by legislatures with the foresight to include significant evaluations of their outcomes. Many of these early "reforms" are now being "folded in" as specific components of the more comprehensive state reform attempts now emerging.

We believe that a "depiction" with special attention to the systemic characteristics and outcomes of these more limited but more mature initiatives is timely and can contribute to the evolution of state attempts to achieve systemic change.

We have chosen to concentrate on what we know best: the states of the Pacific Northwest Region (Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington). Within that five-state area, there are numerous initiatives which could have been examined. Due to a number of factors, which include the limitations of modest resources, first-hand experience of our staff with particular initiatives, differential access to data on outcomes, and the belief that some address topics which are more central to emerging "comprehensive" reform efforts than others, we have chosen two: Oregon's House Bill 2020 and Washington's Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP).

We recognize the important contributions of many other regional initiatives. Prominent are those which have implications for understanding systemic change strategies, including Alaska's Elementary Restructuring Network, Idaho's Schools for 2000 and Beyond, Montana's Systemic Initiative in Science and Math, Oregon's HB 3565, and Washington's Schools for the 21st Century. We applaud their contributions and wish that time and circumstance had enabled us to extend this work to include them all in this depiction.

THE CONTEXT FOR CHANGE

Lessons from Systems Theory

Sashkin and Egermeier (1991) have reviewed school change models and processes attempted over the past 30 years. They label the most recent of these change processes as comprehensive restructuring or systemic reform. However, they were at a loss to provide a definition. "None fully captures all the meanings and values being associated with restructuring." In order to achieve a fuller understanding of systemic reform, it is necessary to trace the etymological foundations of this phrase. We need to understand the meaning and implications of "systems," "systemic," and "reform" as they apply to educational organizations and social structures.

We can begin back in the 1940s with the scientific works of Ludwig von Bertalanffy (1945), the central proponent of general systems theory, which asserted basic principles common to all systems as a unified field of science. While this scientific discipline evolved into systems engineering, systems analysis, and operations research (which enabled NASA to mount a successful space program), the field was not fully capitalized on by the social sciences. This was largely because the social sciences were strongly influenced by experimental psychology which focused on simplistic, linear cause and effect relationships. Indeed, systems theory tended to be used to justify "instructional systems," contributing individualized independent learning models as the answer to education. But the instructional systems experts had missed von Bertalanffy's point. General systems theory is based on assumptions of non-linearity and complex interactions among the parts which make up a system.

Silvern (1965) defines a system as "the structure or organization of an orderly whole, clearly showing the interrelationship of the parts to each other, the whole to itself and to the environment."

It is the properties of systems which make general systems theory an intriguing basis for educational reform. For example, consider the following system properties:

1. A system is open if it has input and output. Input is the sending of elements from the external environment into the system. Output is the sending of elements from the system into the external environment.

2. A system is regulated if it has feedback--the return of output to the system.

3. A system has wholeness to the degree that a change in one element of the system effects changes in all other elements and effects a change in system action.

4. A system is centralized if an element or set of elements dominates the outcome of the system.

5. The action of a system is affected by the amount of its input.

6. If a system does not feed back some of its output, its stability decreases until the system degenerates.

7. A system achieves homeostasis when system inputs, processes, and outputs are self-regulating.

8. The structure of a system is determined by the elements.

The concept of systemic change relates to the third property--wholeness, and the seventh property--homeostasis. Systemic change means more than systemwide change--it is the pervasive adaptation of inputs and processes to achieve desired outputs (outcomes). We can further differentiate between "systemwide" and "systemic" change by noting that "systemwide" connotes number; that is, the units of the system that are affected by the change, while "systemic" connotes quality; that is, the overall effect of the change on all units of the system. Both, of course, are sought by comprehensive reform efforts, but we increasingly understand that systemwide change alone is not sufficient.

Let's look, then, at the nature of systemic reform in the educational system. The educational system can be described as an organized set of instructional elements which utilize resources to produce desired learner outcomes. The educational system is regulated by a series of controls which constrain the resources utilized, the quality standards for system processes, and the outputs to be produced.

These controls are the federal laws, state statutes, state codes, and local policies which govern public schools. The controls provide motivational forces to maintain homeostasis--sanctions, inducements, and authority. The controlling functions provide resources, performance standards, and parameters to ensure fairness and equity.

If we look further at the properties of systems, we find that "a system is regulated, if it has feedback--the return of output to the system." How then, do our policy controls account for feedback in the educational system? Feedback is provided through routine mandatory reporting, performance appraisal, and public opinion. To a lesser degree, empirical R&D information and professional standards are used to guide system functions. Macia (1962) identified the educational system as having four sub-systems:

1. Administrating unit: system controls

2. Facilitating unit: resources

3. Inquiring unit: data and information

4. Teaching unit: instructional activities

When we think about state educational systems, we see that the administrating and facilitating units are strong and closely linked--centralized. We also see that the inquiry unit is the least effective unit for providing feedback. Further, we find limited feedback provided to the administrating and facilitating units. Essentially, we have tight system controls within the system, its inputs and outputs, but weak feedback mechanisms. General systems theory concludes that if a system does not feed back some of its output, its stability decreases until the system degenerates. Transmission of output to the external environment requires greater energy than transmission across sub-systems.

So what does this all mean? General systems theory suggests that if we want to concern ourselves with systemic reform, we should be most concerned with (1) feedback of information to the regulatory system; and (2) ensuring that the regulatory systems are not in conflict with each other. To put it more simply, educational policy structures need to be systematically regulated by feedback from the other sub-systems of the educational community, rather than the other way around. The tenet of systemic reform is not "if we tinker with the system's elements, we can improve the output." Rather, it is "if we improve the nature, frequency, and quality of feedback, we can improve the output."

Systemic Change Paradigms

With these understandings of systems in mind, we need to consider the second critical aspect of attempts to achieve systemic change: how we approach change. Key to this consideration are our paradigms, the way in which we think about how change is brought about.

Just as there are different subsystems in which change is sought, there are different paradigms for seeking it. Several of these paradigms are interwoven in the current thinking about systemic change, and are reflected differentially in the mechanisms proposed or practiced in attempts to bring change about.

NWREL has identified three such paradigms. Taken together, they constitute a kind of theoretical base for system change, and it is useful to examine each briefly.

The "political" paradigm. A recent Policy Brief of the Consortium for Policy Research in Education, "Putting the Pieces Together: Systemic School Reform," provides an example of this paradigm at its best. Rooted in the concept of the state as the constitutionally responsible entity for education, this perspective sees change as driven by state policies, rules, and resources. Its major elements include:

1. A concern for systemwide change related to critical societal needs

2. An emphasis on coordinated policies so that all local system units (districts) get the same message(s) about the focus of change

3. A unifying state-level vision and state-level goals, expressed in state-level actions (such as state-level curriculum frameworks, textbook adoptions, and assessments)

4. A restructured governance system, in which:

    a. The state focuses on developing consensus about learning goals, crafting policies that consistently reinforce the goals, and providing support to schools in reaching the goals

    b. Schools develop specific curricula, programs, and pedagogies designed to achieve the goals, while meeting the local conditions and needs of their students

This paradigm sees barriers to change as including:

1. Policy fragmentation, in which "policy generation machines at each level and within each unit have independent timelines, political interests," and there are "few incentives to spend the time and energy to coordinate efforts" with the result that "policies compete, overlap, and often conflict"

2. A "project" mentality, whereby each problem is addressed with a special program/policy

3. Mixed signals at the local level about what to do and what works

4. Complex administrative requirements attached to programs/policies

5. Fragmented authority structures

6. Multiple short-term and often conflicting goals

7. Changes in one sector rarely being linked to necessary changes in another (e.g. curriculum to assessment or professional development).

The "Organizational Culture" paradigm. This approach concentrates on the "organization" (by inference the school, the school district, or sometimes, the local community). It sees change as driven by a focus on customer needs (by inference, the students and their families). The current movement to "Total Quality Management" provides one representation of this paradigm, where organizational learning and commitment of all those who staff the organization to continuous improvement are the hallmarks. Its major elements include:

1. A focus on "leading from the top, bottom up;" defining and constructing an organizational culture in which quality for the customer drives every action is combined with attempts to empower everyone and provide them with the knowledge and skills needed to take action consistent with this culture of quality

2. A belief that change is brought about through value changes within the organization

3. A belief that each organization's approach will be unique because each has a unique culture with special characteristics that imply specific needs

4. An emphasis on data-based monitoring of processes and results

This paradigm sees barriers to change as including:

1. A lack of shared vision and commitment to a central purpose

2. A failure to empower all workers, especially those at the lowest levels, with the knowledge and authority they need to act independently in the interest of the customer

3. Over-reliance on technique without appropriate thought to either client-centered purpose or systemic organizational commitment

The "Research and Development" paradigm. This approach is embodied in the efforts of the past two decades to develop, test, and demonstrate "best practices," supported by research evidence and program evaluations, in critical areas of need. It also draws heavily on the research on adoption of innovations, such as the landmark work of Hall and Loucks. The major elements of this paradigm include:

1. A planned, logical, and incremental approach to change

2. The use of empirical data and demonstrations of effectiveness for specific practices

3. Attention to the transfer and implementation of specific innovations

4. Attention to the processes by which people learn of, and adopt, innovations

This paradigm sees barriers to change as including:

1. Lack of sufficient information about the effects of an innovation

2. Difficulties involved in adapting the innovation and moving beyond "mechanical use"

3. The scarcity of time and resources for technical assistance and training

4. The difficulties in dissemination of information about "what works"

From Paradigms to Action

Paradigms are important precisely because they are ways of thinking which guide actions. They are not "models" and they are typically combined in one fashion or another as action is taken. NWREL believes that a combination of these approaches offers the greatest promise for systemic change, and has taken that approach in much of its recent work. Current efforts to achieve systemic change, as they are playing out across the nation and the Northwest, also reflect variations and/or combinations of these paradigms in their actions.

Taking action involves moving beyond the paradigms which guide our thinking to the actual choice of a particular "action mechanism" for systemic change. As efforts to achieve systemic change have moved ahead, two distinct emphases have evolved among the action approaches chosen: state policy action and community choice.

State Policy and Community Choice

State policy. The choice of state policy as a primary mechanism to produce change in local schools rests on the belief that change for the state as a whole is imperative and must occur rapidly. Rules, regulations, and resources are seen as capable of driving change in desired directions.

This reliance on state policy as the primary driver of change is buttressed in the current environment by the fact that larger and larger shares of educational and human service revenues are being raised on a statewide basis, and by widespread inequities in educational resources at the local level. The constitutional designation of the state as the entity responsible for education also is a factor, providing immediate means for legislative and gubernatorial action in many areas that have been traditionally left to "local control."

The strength of this approach rests in its ability to mobilize powerful groups and coalitions and to identify with the perceived needs and values of the broad sweep of a state's citizenry. State government has become, in many instances, the level of our system where the poor and disenfranchised have the most meaningful political power, and it is the growing urgency for inclusion of these groups in the economic and social mainstream that is perhaps the most powerful imperative behind the demand for systemic change.

It should be noted that there is a growing sophistication in state policy strategies for change. For example, NWREL, in a 1987 paper, "Using State Curriculum Standards as a School Improvement Strategy: From Implementation to Institutionalization," explored the then relatively new emphasis on both state curriculum standards and professional development as a means for using state policy to influence local systems. The Education Commission of the States also has conducted extensive study in this area, including a 50-state survey (State Programs of School Improvement, 1983). Recent efforts by some states (including Oregon) to develop broad indicators of quality of life and to tie educational and economic policy to them also are noteworthy as a developing dimension of the state policy approach.

Community choice. Concentration on this mechanism rests on the belief that only the full commitment of those who must implement change can actually cause change to occur. Cohesive action among the staff, administrators, parents, and concerned citizens at the local level is emphasized. It is buttressed in the current environment by growing evidence from educational research, which shows that decisions made by the individual school or community have the most impact on improving outcomes, and from organizational research (including that which underlies Total Quality Management approaches), which shows that levels of productivity improve in organizations where decisions have been decentralized to be "close to the customer." The increasingly apparent necessity for community level action in fighting drug use and crime also provides great impetus to this approach.

It is increasingly obvious that both state policy and community choice are necessary and that to be effective they must complement one another. No real, lasting change will come about without active commitment on the part of those who operate the local system and that commitment can only be achieved by the true involvement of everyone in a local community. It is equally true that societal change, while it will indeed be made one community at a time, is unlikely to come about quickly or broadly enough unless there is a combination of pressure and support from the state. The need is for both state and local actions to be shared so that, in the terms used earlier, the nature, frequency, and quality of the systems feedback will be improved.

The role of the private sector in supporting action at both the state and local levels also should be mentioned here, and especially that of private, for profit businesses. More and more, they have been active in pressing for systemic changes in education. Business leaders, often acting in concert as "roundtables," have taken the lead in studying the need for educational reform within almost every state. Their findings and proposed solutions almost always have incorporated large elements of both the organizational culture and the R&D paradigms for change, but they have, in the past, relied heavily, if not exclusively, on the state policy approach in choosing their mechanism in which to bring about systemic change. They, too, are beginning to recognize that this approach alone is not adequate to the task and are increasingly seeking ways to blend that approach with community choice.

Comparison of two operational examples of these action mechanisms, state policy and community choice, serves to illustrate the ways in which each draws on the underlying paradigms, as well as to reveal their commonalities and differences. The National Business Roundtable (BRT), in conducting several statewide "gap analyses," has set forth a very sophisticated and potentially powerful model for establishing state policy. This model is systemic, in that it rests on the following nine "essential components," which the BRT stresses are not a "menu" from which to choose, but rather a comprehensive and integrated plan, based in the best "research, thinking, and practice":

1. The system is committed to four operating assumptions:
    a. All students can learn at significantly higher levels.
    b. We know how to teach all students successfully.
    c. Curriculum content must reflect high expectations, but instructional time and strategies must vary to assure success.
    d. Every child must have an advocate.
2. The system is performance- or outcome-based.
3. Assessment strategies must be as strong and rich as the outcomes.
4. School success is rewarded and school failure is penalized.
5. School-based staff have a major role in decision making.
6. Major emphasis is placed on staff development.
7. A high-quality prekindergarten program is established, at least for all disadvantaged students.
8. Health and social services are sufficient to reduce significant barriers to learning.
9. Technology is used to raise student and teacher productivity and to expand access to learning.

The BRT is adamant that success cannot be achieved unless a specific plan for addressing all these components simultaneously is in place. This plan must be detailed in its targets, and include a long-term (probably phased-in) commitment to funding at a level sufficient to meet them. The BRT includes the belief that program and funding must be a part of the same legislative act, so that "no one gets to be in favor of good ideas, but against spending."

NWREL's successful school-based planning and districtwide decision making model, with three components: "Onward To Excellence" (OTE), "Creating The Future," and "Community-Based Outcomes," provides a strong example of the community choice mechanism. Each component addresses a key level of the local education system with a strong focus on results. Also highly sophisticated and recognized as the most widely used R&D product ever developed, this approach rests on the belief that only a constant and unwavering focus on student outcomes by those "close to the customer" will produce lasting and significant change.

The strength of this approach lies in its considerable ability to bring together teachers, administrators, and parents within a local community and engage them in creating a shared vision of outcomes for their children. The processes used are heavily rooted in the "organizational culture" paradigm and rely strongly on the R&D paradigm in helping local schools and communities select specific practices for restructuring their schools.

Drawing on the research base, NWREL's approach is grounded in the following assumptions:

- Successful school improvement is focused on improving student performance, including academic achievement, behavior, and attitude.
- Student performance results provide the basis for setting school improvement goals.
- Continuing to improve becomes the way of doing business in schools where students succeed.
- School improvement must be managed.
- The school is the level at which improvements most effectively take place, not the classroom or district.
- School improvements are based on research, a rich resource of examples, advice, and direction that supplement craft knowledge.
- In successful school improvements, the school staff, parents, and members of the community work together to establish high standards for student performance and to assure that all students successfully meet them.

NWREL's approach is representative of a large number of efforts to restructure and strengthen schooling at the local level. The extent to which these local efforts to achieve systemic change have grown in both number and effectiveness in the recent past reminds us there is a reason that local control is a strongly held value in a system where the constitution delegates all power to the state.

Blending State Policy and Community Choice

Each individual action choice, whether it relies primarily on state policy or community choice, will have its unique features and may differ in some important respects from those we have chosen to represent them. Clearly, both choices "coexist" within most states. However, analysis of these two examples of the "state policy" and "community choice" mechanisms reveals many similarities between the primary emphases of the two. These similarities include: beliefs that all students can learn, the power of high expectations, the importance of an outcomes-based system, the belief that real change takes place at the school building and community levels, and an intent to rely on "best practices" as touted by the R&D paradigm.

Differences in the examples also are apparent. The community choice approach is strongest in responding to the "organizational culture" paradigm and weaker in responding to the "political" paradigm's call for systemwide change within the state. The state policy approach is strongest in attending to systemwide impacts and tends to be weaker in guaranteeing commitment from those who must implement change.

Some would say that the most important difference between the two examples is that both research and actual evaluation(s) show the community choice approach can succeed in improving learner outcomes, while there are few data of a comparable nature on the direct effects of the state policy approach on such outcomes.

Wherever the truth lies on such points, it seems apparent that both masters must ultimately be served: state policy and community choice must be mutually supportive if we are to meet the demands we face. Our concern here is how the two can be effectively blended in state initiatives to affect systemic change.

Bridging state and local change contexts. NWREL believes state policy and local community choice can complement each other, and that both are necessary if we are to achieve the type of systemic change which will truly move us closer to the broad societal goals we seek.

In examining the ways in which state actions can bridge these two levels effectively, it is important to consider the differences in the context for change efforts between the state and local "subsystems." Ultimately, productive systemic efforts must recognize and mesh the factors at both levels.

The following chart presents one way to consider these differences in the state and local contexts, as they relate to important variables in the change process:

State And Local Change Contexts

Variable	Local	State
Focus of Decision to Change	Diffused with increasing emphasis on building and/or community levels	Typically centralized in the statehouse, legislature, or department
Nature of Policy Process	Relatively stable--many key actors have continuity and low visibility	Relatively volatile--many key actors are highly visible and subject to change
Expectations and Norms	Steady progress and involvement--focus on "one thing at a time"--planning	Reform and solution of a major problem--rule making
Scope of the Effort	Relatively narrow--1 to 50 buildings, often in communities with similar socioeconomic conditions and resources	Relatively broad--50 to 400 districts, several thousand buildings, highly variable conditions and resources
Perception of the Change	Relatively focused and concrete--programs with reasonable impact on specific problems and people	Relatively diffused--an approach to planning or a set of goals for addressing broad societal needs
Criteria for Success	Relatively clear--tightly coupled to assessment or direct affect on student/ parent relationships	Often complex--loosely coupled to assessment and impact on statewide infrastructure, especially the economy

Again, it must be emphasized that each context serves to influence the other. Our concern is how to effectively blend the two in order to effect systemic change. Variables such as these must be kept in mind as systemic state reform initiatives are created, implemented, and evaluated. They provide important context as we consider how such initiatives can be strengthened.

Strengthening State Reform Initiatives

We have seen that there are compelling reasons to be concerned with a state's entire system for educating and caring for its children. We know that real change actually occurs at the local level, but that the demands of the future have rendered "one school or community at a time" change strategies insufficient. Simply stated, large-scale changes are necessary and must be made soon. State action is demanded and growing.

The action options available to a state are many. Some would opt for a combination of "deregulation" and increased funding; others would concentrate on clear standards and assessments. Establishment of demonstration and dissemination programs are another option, as is the idea of tying funding to performance.

NWREL's intent in this depiction is not to examine the pros and cons of such an exhaustive set of options, even though the comprehensive reforms of the late 1980s and early 1990s do tend to encompass a large number of them. Rather, we hope to capture what can be learned about how state action affects systemic change from the experience and data of two specific (and successful) state initiatives which concentrated primarily on direct improvement of specific outcomes for students and families.

Strengthening the system's ability to regulate itself. While much state-level action has been taken with the intent to produce positive, systemic change, most policy makers to this point have had only an intuitive understanding of the key dimensions of systemic change to guide them. This has severely limited the ability of the system to regulate itself through feedback. Feedback serves to inform the system through several modes: (1) expert opinion; (2) external evaluation and monitoring; (3) practitioner viewpoints as they implement the process; (4) data sets; (5) policy positions; and others. The feedback support for changing the system of education can only be built as clear agreement on the vision for its outcomes emerges. Currently, such shared vision is missing or incomplete in many states. However, Northwest states which aspire to creating and supporting positive, systemic change are hard at work addressing such issues as the following:

- What are the critical outcomes which will support the development of resilient, adaptable individuals for the environment of the future?
- What is the optimum partnership among schools, families, and communities which can nurture these resilient citizens?
- What should be the balance among various goals such as school readiness, continuation of schooling, employability, and development as a person and citizen?
- What are the standards of performance to be used in judging outcomes of the system and how should they be used in decisions about public investment in education, human services, and other key elements of the state infrastructure?

Along with this vision of outcomes for the system and its operation as a framework for feedback, effective regulation of the system also must include feedback about two key dimensions of the initiatives. These are: (1) how effectively they have utilized what is known about change in their implementation; and (2) the extent to which their current status and results reflect key systemic principles. The framework for analysis which follows is designed to provide this type of information.

A Framework for Analysis

Application of our knowledge about change. States interested in creating systemic changes must choose a basic strategy. In the past, some have chosen what Sashkin (1991) calls a "fix the parts" approach. As disillusionment with that approach has grown, many have adopted or shifted to what Sashkin describes as a "fix the people" emphasis. The failure of that strategy, whether implemented alone or in combination with a "fix the parts" approach, has resulted in the current interest which Sashkin identifies as "fixing the system."

This approach relies on creating the necessary infrastructure to support long-term, locally driven, and statewide improvement. There is less emphasis here on funding innovative projects and much more emphasis on determining how to support and phase in the various elements in the state system so as to foster and monitor lasting improvement in critical outcomes on a broad basis. The active involvement of many sectors--education, human service agencies, business, health care, voluntary agencies, and government--is recognized as increasing the potential for sustained and positive change.

Such an approach concentrates on how to best use limited resources to create an infrastructure that expects, supports, and monitors improved outcomes for people within the context of the broad public responsibilities of the state. It does not rule out the funding of local projects, but sees them as a means of conducting R&D within statewide efforts, rather than merely a means to encourage local innovation in a limited number of areas. From the perspective of the local community, this strategy promises improved, accessible assistance in planning, implementing, and evaluating locally driven improvements across the entire state. The intent is to empower and support many communities, rather than rely on the competition and "incentive of example" which underlies direct cash grants for a few pilot projects.

This "fix the system" approach is supported by both research and experience on change. The knowledge base shows that systemic improvement must:

- Have multiple targets for change and utilize multifaceted, culturally relevant interventions
- Be based on a locally felt need and not just the opportunity for new money
- Be designed and adapted by those who must implement it
- Have the support of technical assistance and training
- Be carefully monitored and supported by policy
- Have a critical mass of local advocates

Research findings suggest that a state process for empowering and supporting local improvements will yield long-term gains and substantial returns on public investment. They also suggest that this does not mean simply "sending money" to every local entity without regard to a shared vision and commitment from the state as a whole. Both support and pressure from the state have been found to be necessary for large-scale change.

The underlying assumptions of the "fix the system" approach, as viewed from the state level, are:

- The community should be seen as the primary unit of improvement. This defines the front line work group at the level where the key influences of family, school, and voluntary associations interact to directly influence attitudes, behaviors, and resource availability.
- All communities operate within the context of state policies. This context must expect, support, and monitor improvement. General goals and strategies are legitimate policy-level decisions, but methods and means must be left to the local work group.
- The state should invest in a support structure for ongoing technical assistance to local improvement efforts. Such a structure does not demand the creation of new organizations and agencies, but it will cause changes in existing practices of existing agencies.
- The support should contain an ongoing R&D function, which both facilitates accumulation of new knowledge and reports the progress of efforts under way.

Although few states have articulated this entire "fix the system" approach, it is obvious that an increasing number of Northwest efforts are being driven by some subset of its assumptions and beliefs. Therefore, it can serve as one useful "lens" for analysis of existing efforts.

Applying the dimensions of systemic change to the analysis of state initiatives. In order to analyze effectively the extent to which a given effort has succeeded in effecting systemic change, it is necessary to go beyond the extent to which it attends to a set of characteristics found in the knowledge base. We must look at the ways in which its actual implementation plays out along a set of dimensions which define systemic change. To that end, the following dimensions are postulated by which the extent and nature of systemic change achieved by a given initiative can be assessed. These dimensions have their roots in research and are confirmed by NWREL staff reflections on their experiences.

These key dimensions are useful in describing the extent to which an initiative results in change(s):

Infusive: Does the initiative act so as to build upon existing knowledge, resources, and relationships and instill an increasing shared commitment to a common vision and a set of commonly accepted outcomes at both the state and local levels?

Pervasive: Do the initiative's goals and actions promote and facilitate improvement in all the key components of both the state and local levels of the system (policy, human resource, community, and curriculum development)?

Potent: Are the initiative's goals and actions valued and embraced by all participants (parents, teachers, program staff, legislators) at all levels (state, community, school, program) of the system

Coherent: Do the initiative's goals and actions increase and support congruence between the levels (state, community, school, program) and among the dimensions (including public understanding, aspirations, and assessment of outcomes)?

Sustainable: Do the initiative's goals and actions harness mechanisms within the infrastructure (fiscal resources, policies, professional incentives, and partnerships) to ensure long-term impact?

These dimensions form the basis for the depiction of the specific initiatives chosen as a basis for extending our knowledge. The particular initiatives selected, and the reasons they were chosen, are another important factor in the usefulness of this work.

Choice of Initiatives for Depiction

General Considerations. While this paper concentrates primarily on the state's role in systemic change, it also rests on the belief that the most progress will be made by combining the best features of state policy and community choice approaches. Furthermore, it is built on the premise that there are current reform efforts, initiated by states, relatively mature and successful, and operating on a statewide level, which do combine the best features of state policy and local choice effectively.

It also attempts to build from where we are today. NWREL is aware there are major comprehensive reform initiatives under way in each of our five states, along with hundreds, if not thousands, of local efforts which aspire to systemic change. We believe that leaders at both levels are already connecting, and increasingly we are seeing creative results, even as our collective sense of urgency for change grows. This energy is a tremendous asset to us all. We hope this analysis will be of some value in sustaining this energy and supporting the collective ability to get maximum payoff from it.

To that end, we have chosen, as our particular "lever," a focus on the specifics of two mature state initiatives in the region which seem to us to be "in the trenches" with regard to blending state policy with community choice. These initiatives are: (1) Oregon's House Bill 2020 (HB 2020); and (2) Washington's Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP). These initiatives were selected for study from among many potential candidates for the following reasons:

1. Each has many local expressions. In Oregon, 246 schools and 10,427 teachers throughout all 36 counties have been affected by HB 2020; in Washington, all 39 counties of the state are served by more than 180 local ECEAP programs, which, along with Head Start, currently serve all eligible four-year-olds (nearly 13,000) and their families throughout the state. Their presence in both local schools and specific communities is extensive.

2. Each is a "mature" state initiative; that is, HB 2020 and ECEAP were conceived in such a way as to support and encourage local efforts over time. Both HB 2020 and ECEAP are continuing (HB 2020 is well into its fourth year and ECEAP is into its seventh year) and both are now being considered as "centerpieces" of broader and more

comprehensive efforts to produce statewide systemic change. As such, their key "systemic" features may well offer important information to the broader efforts which follow.

3. Each has solid evaluation results to show their impact on the state as a whole. NWREL has had a major role in the collection, analysis, and reporting of these results. This direct involvement and familiarity with each initiative and its impact was a major factor in their selection, since our staff's direct experience with the initiatives' goals and access to data about their outcomes allowed us to more efficiently describe and analyze them.

Criteria for Selection

Beyond these general considerations and characteristics, each of the initiatives met critical, specific characteristics for "bridging the gap" between the action mechanisms of state policy and community choice. Each is sensitive to the local context in the following ways:

1. There are specific, identifiable goals which are in concert with widespread locally-identified needs.
2. Stability is reinforced by long-term intent of the legislation and a specific strategy for long-term funding.
3. Multiple roles and responsibilities of the local system are directly addressed.
4. Human and fiscal resources required from the local level are reasonable and available.

Equally important, the initiatives contribute to statewide systemic change through:

1. Expected outcomes which are clear and in concert with research-based expectations for impact on important social goals
2. Providing for data and information on statewide impact and outcomes
3. The creation of information to project achievement of long-term state targets and resource requirements

The following section provides an in-depth discussion of each initiative, including: (1) why the initiative is an example of statewide systemic change; (2) the evolving vision of the initiative; (3) the initiative's impetus for change; (4) the system within which the initiative operates; (5) the outcomes resulting from the initiative; (6) the costs, investments, and resource leveraging of the initiative; (7) the barriers and challenges; and (8) how the initiative changed the system.

NORTHWEST SYSTEMIC CHANGE INITIATIVES

Oregon School Improvement and Professional Development House Bill 2020 (HB 2020)

HB 2020 as a Systemic Change Initiative

Oregon's School Improvement and Professional Development House Bill 2020 (HB 2020) has its roots in Oregon's long history of state commitment to student outcomes and school improvement. From the early 1970s, a statewide emphasis on outcomes has evolved from such initial efforts as Oregon's mandated competency-based graduation requirements (Oregon's first positioning to become outcomes-based) and the funding of the Valley Educational Consortium at Western Oregon State College to assist local districts to build better statements of outcomes, tied to the curriculum.

State policy leaders in Oregon were influenced to move toward results focused improvement in part by the growing body of school effectiveness research. This research, conducted over the past two decades, set the stage to create schools in which all students succeed. NWREL systematically reviews and synthesizes this research to create an effective schooling research base. The research base identifies schooling practices and characteristics associated with measurable improvements in student achievement and excellence in student behavior. These effective schooling practices include elements of schooling associated with a clearly defined curriculum; focused classroom instruction and management; firm, consistent discipline; close monitoring of student performance; and strong instructional leadership.

This historic focus on school improvement through outcomes-based instruction was not lost in succeeding state legislative activity. By the latter half of the 1980s, a focus on outcomes was joined by site-based management (or the empowering of teachers to improve outcomes) as two major driving forces behind school reform efforts. Several external pressures served to influence state legislators and education leaders as they moved in this direction: to make education more relevant in the face of major cultural and societal changes, to incorporate successful "business" practices into education, to compete more successfully in a global marketplace, to expand and more clearly define the roles of education professionals, and to allow for changing demographic trends, among others.

All these factors leading to school restructuring--Oregon's historical perspective on outcomes, school effectiveness research, and external pressures for site-based management--focused on changing the very essence of schools, through changes in what is taught, to whom, and by what means; through changes in the school's authority and decision-making structures and processes; through changes in the conditions of teaching by increasing professionalism and accountability; and through changes in the relationship between teachers and administrators, and between school staffs and their communities. Restructuring and site-based management in Oregon required that more individuals (school staffs, parents, and community members) be empowered to participate in collaborative decision-making processes.

By the mid 1980s, Oregon legislators understood that results focused improvement efforts would not go far until improvements were made in the education profession, specifically in enhancing teachers' professional influence. HB 2020 was a result of this evolving understanding. It had its origins in 1987 in the recommendations of the

Citizens Advisory Committee to the Oregon Legislature's Joint Committee on Education. One major factor motivating this group was the May, 1986 Carnegie Report, "A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century" which strongly tied America's economic future and high standard of living to improved outcomes for students. The report noted that the key to restructuring schools to improve outcomes lies in creating a profession equal to the task: a profession of well-educated teachers prepared to assume new roles and responsibilities to redesign schools for the future. The Citizens Advisory Committee, working within the context of Oregon's historical concern for results-based approaches and thoroughly grounded in the recommendations of the Carnegie report, based their own recommendations on the need for site-based management approaches to improve outcomes for Oregon's public school students. HB 2020 was enacted as a result of their recommendations.

The legislation was based on the following rationale:

1. Further initiatives to promote educational excellence in the public schools are of vital importance in increasing student learning and strengthening Oregon's economy.

2. The state should encourage and assist local school districts in their efforts to establish school goals through a process that involves educators and members of the community and to develop effective tools to measure progress against those goals that will increase the public accountability of educational programs.

3. New career opportunities for professional development are desirable to recognize skills, knowledge of their subject matter, and other appropriate indicators of professional growth.

4. The establishment of site committees for the school district and for individual schools is desirable to encourage new initiatives in school improvement and shared decision making, the assessment of educational progress, to provide new and expanded opportunities for teachers, and to facilitate efforts to restructure the school workplace to provide educators with greater responsibility while increasing their accountability.

A major intent of the legislation was to create a school improvement program focused at the school level (which the legislation identifies as a site); another was to provide professional growth and career opportunities for teachers so as to facilitate student academic success. The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) which administers and oversees HB 2020 sees the primary purpose as to improve student outcomes and empower teachers in the process.

HB 2020 includes three components:

1. **The School Improvement and Professional Development (SIPD) Program** designed to encourage the following:

   - The development of educational improvement goals for individual schools and districts

- The assessment of the educational progress of school programs and students

- The expansion of professional growth opportunities for Oregon teachers

- The restructuring of the school site to provide teachers with responsibilities and authority commensurate with their status as professionals

2. **The Beginning Teacher Support Program (BTSP),** designed to pair beginning teachers with mentors during their first year of service

3. **Professional Development Centers (PDCs),** designed to provide consultation, training, technical assistance, and networking to the SIPD projects

HB 2020 was funded for approximately $8 million for each biennium. This breaks down to approximately $2 million per year for the SIPD Program and $2 million per year for the BTSP. In addition, the Professional Development Centers were funded for $240,000 for each of the first three years of the legislation. The following table displays the scope and impact of HB 2020 for each of the three components of the bill, over a five-year period.

HB 2020 Scope/Impact

	SIPD	BTSP	PDCs
1987-88	-	53 districts 189 beginning teachers ($564,233)	-
1988-89	70 grants awarded ($1,905,437)	115 districts 509 beginning teachers ($1,375,361)	($240,000)
1989-90	86 grants awarded ($2,603,543)	139 districts 679 beginning teachers ($1,876,161)	($240,000)
1990-91	51 grants awarded ($1,392,388)	139 districts 743 beginning teachers ($2,225,024)	($240,000)
1991-92	64 grants awarded ($2,285,270)	125 districts 602 beginning teachers ($1,505,000)	-
1992-93	76 grants awarded ($2,240,399)	115 districts 646 beginning teachers ($1,615,000)	($240,000)
TOTALS	(1) 347 grants awarded (out of 1,250 Oregon schools) (2) 10,427 teachers affected (out of 25,000 teachers in Oregon) ($10,427,038)	(1) 181 districts 3,368 beginning teachers ($9,160,779)	($1,200,000)

(1) Districts could receive multiple grants

(2) Data not aggregated by year

While state investment was significant, it is important to note the use of large amounts of local resources which were influenced by the bill. Many local sites already had been actively involved in school improvement efforts through NWREL's OTE program, which had reached 373 schools in Oregon, or similar school improvement practices. HB 2020 took these schools further in the school improvement direction they were heading, leveraging local staff development dollars.

HB 2020 was selected by NWREL for study as a statewide systemic change effort for the following reasons:

HB 2020 is infusive:

- HB 2020 is pursuing a vision of site-based decision-making to improve outcomes for Oregon students.

- HB 2020 is designed by those who must implement the program. Local site committees comprised of teachers, administrators, parents, community members, and students make and carry out critical decisions in educational and financial planning, goal setting, and professional development.

- HB 2020 has specific, identifiable goals which are in concert with widespread locally-identified needs. These shared goals and beliefs recognize that to achieve excellence in education requires a profession equal to the task--a profession of well-educated teachers prepared to assume new roles and responsibilities to redesign schools for the future.

- HB 2020 has clearly expressed outcomes which are in concert with research-based expectations for impact on important social goals. Research indicates that improving outcomes for students is the key to an improved supply of young people with the knowledge, spirit, stamina, and skills necessary to make the U.S. competitive in industry, commerce, social justice and progress, and in the ideas that safeguard a free society.

HB 2020 is pervasive:

- HB 2020 is broad-based, rather than isolated to a single project, program design, type of contractor, or geographical location. All 1,250 local school sites in Oregon receive grant applications. To submit a grant, a local school forms a site committee, which establishes school improvement goals based on the unique needs of that building. To date, over 10,000 teachers in all grade levels, district sizes, and geographic areas of the state have been involved in improving student outcomes through one or more of three areas of focus: curriculum, student behavior, instruction and/or governance.

- HB 2020 has multiple targets for change, including the various players, types of organizations, and policies at the state and local levels. All certificated (and now, some noncertificated) staff at elementary, middle, high, K-12 schools, ESDs, and consortia of small schools are eligible to receive funding. A school submits an application which includes that site's goals to improve outcomes and a plan to address the goals based on the purpose of the legislation.

HB 2020 is potent:

- HB 2020 involves a variety of key players at the state and community levels. Site committee members are active in planning for, implementing, and evaluating their own school improvement plans. At the state level, the ODE provides human and fiscal resources in the form of technical assistance to local projects and monitors and reports on progress.

- HB 2020 accommodates multifaceted, culturally relevant interventions by allowing local districts to design and implement projects that will improve outcomes for all students and empower teachers in the process.

- HB 2020 projects are developed based on locally felt need, and not just on ideas determined and presented from the state level. Schools receiving grants had demonstrated a readiness for change even before applying to the program; most had been involved in earlier school improvement practices. School staffs noted that these activities helped them develop skills in goal setting, in collecting systematic data, and in focusing their efforts around explicitly-stated, group-derived outcomes.

- HB 2020 has a critical mass of local advocates, most notably, the site committee, comprised of teachers, administrators, classified staff, parents, community members, and students. The site committees make and carry out critical decisions relative to their own goals to improve student outcomes.

HB 2020 is coherent:

- HB 2020 bridges the gap between state policy and community choice; its site-based decision making approach enables the state to support systemic change at the local level.

- HB 2020 is carefully monitored and supported by state policy. It was conceived as a long-term state strategy, coupled with long-term funding and evaluation, and responsibilities within the local system. The strategy was designed to be carefully monitored by the ODE and supported by state policy. The design included the availability of human and fiscal resources as technical support to local projects.

- HB 2020 involves multiple roles and responsibilities in the local subsystem. Teachers, administrators, classified staff, parents, community members, and students are active in establishing goals and implementing practices to meet them.

HB 2020 is sustainable:

- HB 2020 has the support of technical assistance and training. The ODE sponsors statewide or regional training; on-site technical assistance is available when necessary. Additionally, in order to provide technical assistance to serve the SIPD projects, the legislation established (1988-1991) Professional Development Centers (PDCs) in three locations throughout the state. These regional centers were governed by a consortium representing the counties served and provided consultation, training, and networking. (A new center operated by Linn-Benton and Lane ESDs, plus a consortium of other members, was initiated in August of 1992 to provide service.)

- HB 2020 provides for long-term change strategies, coupled with funding and evaluation. From its inception, the bill was based on the understanding that change is a long-term process (districts could receive continuation grants). Funds have remained consistent since 1987. The ODE provides for data collection and evaluation including conducting a comprehensive evaluation of district programs each biennium, and reporting to the legislative assembly.

- HB 2020 provides for data and information on statewide impact and outcomes. NWREL conducted the qualitative evaluation of the SIPD Program under a contract with the ODE. A final report of evaluation findings from the first two years was completed in August 1990. A third year evaluation was completed in May of 1991.

- HB 2020 provides for information to support projection of long-term state targets and resource requirements.

- HB 2020 builds from a base of positive experience in school improvement approaches which extends into most school districts and many school buildings.

These aspects of HB 2020 as a systemic change initiative will be discussed in the remainder of this profile and further highlighted in "Implications for State Systemic Efforts."

HB 2020's Evolving Vision

From the early 1970s, as we've seen, two beliefs about Oregon education have evolved: (1) improving student outcomes is the key to improving the quality of education, and hence, the capacity of the state's economy to provide a high standard of living for all people; and (2) a focus on outcomes must be coupled with improvements in the education profession, specifically enhancing teachers' professional influence. HB 2020 was enacted as a next step in this evolutionary process; it was seen as a solution to a major system challenge--matching outcomes to teacher empowerment, or site-based decision making.

This evolving vision of empowerment from schools to teachers was again extended through passage of the comprehensive "Oregon Educational Act for the 21st Century" HB 3565 (more fully described in "Impact on the Future"), passed by the 1991 legislative assembly. Several components of HB 3565 capitalize on the success of HB 2020's teacher empowerment strategies; the bill reaches deeper into the community to effect systemic change. In HB 2020, state policy leaders saw the local site committees as the key to effective systemic change--site committees including teachers, administrators, classified staff, students, parents, and other community people would be active in determining, implementing, and managing their own vision of school improvement, unique and specific to their own situations, demographic, and cultural characteristics. With the legislated HB 3565 which has, at its very core, extended site committee empowerment through the 21st Century Schools Councils, Oregon educational leaders' vision of empowerment had evolved from school, to teacher, to community.

The Impetus for Change

As has been shown, the move toward site-based decision making to improve outcomes was the driving force behind school reform efforts in Oregon by the latter half of the 1980s. Several factors served as major influencers:

1. **The need for education to be made more relevant in the face of increasing poverty and changing cultural and demographic characteristics.** Children in this country are getting poorer. Almost half of the poor in the U.S. are children. In Oregon, 19.7 percent of children are in poverty and comparative data suggest that things are getting worse for children, not better. Poor children tend to have a variety of medical and nutritional problems including unusually low birth-weights, a factor associated with major learning difficulties.

   At the same time, major cultural changes are occurring in our schools. While cultural demographics of students are rapidly changing, the teaching profession does not reflect these numbers. In Oregon, public school enrollment is expected to continue its record growth the rest of the decade, hitting 535,000 this year and climbing about 10,000 annually. However, while Oregon public school enrollment climbed 2.9 percent in 1991-92, enrollment for Hispanics increased by 6.2 percent and enrollment for Blacks increased by 12.5 percent. Yet projections of current trends indicate that Blacks will account for less than five percent of the teaching force in the next few years. The prospects for other cultural groups being well represented in the teaching force also do not look promising. The college completion rates for Hispanics, for example, are low; only about seven percent complete college.

2. **The need for education to focus on higher standards or outcomes in order to compete more successfully in a global marketplace.** During the early 1980s, the country was in the grip of the most severe recession since the Great Depression. While most Americans were deeply concerned about our economic prospects, few perceived that the world economy was in the midst of a profound transformation, one that demands a new understanding of the education standards necessary to create the kind of high-wage work force that can compete in a global economy. Many important national goals can be attained only if we are competitive in world markets. Our position as a world leader, the ability to provide a rising standard of living for all citizens, our national security, and the ability of government to fund domestic programs, all depend on the ability of American industry to compete both at home and abroad. The wealth of our nation is determined by the quality of our work force. Human resources provide the basis of productivity and productivity growth. Without a literate, skilled, healthy, and motivated labor force, capital and technology cannot create a productive environment.

3. **The need for education to expand and more clearly define the roles of education professionals.** A focus on outcomes requires new roles and responsibilities for teachers. Teachers must think for themselves if they are to help others think for themselves; teachers must be able to act independently and collaborate with others, and render critical

judgement. They must be people whose knowledge is wide-ranging and whose understanding runs deep. Teachers must be able to communicate what they know to others, stimulate students to strive toward the same levels of accomplishment, and create environments in which young people not only get a taste for learning but build a base upon which they will continue to learn and apply what they know to the lives they go on and lead.

These pressures contributed to the shaping of the recommendations made by the Citizens Advisory Committee to the 1987 Oregon legislature. The recommendations focused specifically on professional growth and influence to improve outcomes. HB 2020 was enacted in response to these recommendations.

The System

Structure. HB 2020 was designed as a statewide approach to improve outcomes through site-based decision making. Three components formed the structure of the legislation: the SIPD Program, the BTSP, and the PDCs.

State level. HB 2020 is administered by the ODE and operates through many types of local sites: elementary, middle, high, K-12 schools, ESDs, and consortia of small schools. Each year, grant applications for the SIPD Program are mailed by the ODE to all 1,250 schools in Oregon. Schools submit applications which include a site's goals and a plan to address the goals based on the purpose of the legislation. Each site selected receives up to $1,000 per each full-time equivalent teacher at that site. The legislation requires that in awarding the grants, the ODE ensures representation of school districts of different sizes and in different geographical locations. Four categories of district size were created based on Average Daily Membership (ADM):

1. Under 1,000 ADM
2. 1,000 - 3,999 ADM
3. 4,000 - 10,000 ADM
4. Over 10,000 ADM

Sites are selected through a competitive process where applications are placed into categories based on district ADM and further divided into subcategories by grade level and sorted as to initial and continuation applications. Thus, the applications from districts of similar size and grade level are reviewed together. Grant applications are screened initially by a group of volunteers trained by the ODE who rate the applications on program criteria established by the legislation. Their ratings are then reviewed by an advisory committee appointed by the state superintendent. The committee's final recommendations are sent to the State Board of Education.

Local level. Prior to submitting an application, a site team comprised of teachers (elected by their peers), administrators, classified staff, parents, community members, and students comes together to define important goals related to the improvement of student outcomes. A program of activities is identified which will address the needs of the school and achieve the established goals. Decisions made by the site committee include what improvements are necessary to meet an identified need, what staff training will be required, what the roles of staff members will be in the improvement effort, and how the budget for programs will be managed. Site committees conduct school surveys, set goals, conduct research, and draft the SIPD proposal. Teachers assume the responsibility for making all decisions necessary for the implementation, management, and evaluation of their project. Ongoing evaluation of the SIPD projects, as well as continuous monitoring and assistance, serve to inform the state agency and shape the system. The ODE reports back to the legislature following each biennium.

Site committees may develop goals under any of three major headings: Curriculum Focus, Student Behavior Focus, and Instructional or Governance Focus.

Examples of goals with a curriculum focus include:

- To implement programs in the writing process and in art production, appreciation, and critique
- To develop a coordinated system of instruction

Examples of goals with a student focus include:

- To create a school behavior program specific to the needs of middle school age children
- To increase student achievement in reading and language usage through the implementation of communications connections
- To enable students to identify the most appropriate personal, academic, and career choices

Examples of goals with an instructional/governance focus include:

- To implement cooperative learning techniques schoolwide
- To improve collegial and participatory management skills with a focus on communication, group problem solving, and group decision making
- To increase teacher participation in school decision-making through formation of a site committee

The advantages of this local process to develop goals and prepare the SIPD proposal go far beyond submission of application. Teachers become advocates for necessary change and the leaders of school improvement in their buildings. One local site noted that additional advantages include:

1. Individuals responsible for classroom implementation of the program are directly involved in all aspects of the improvement plan.
2. Staff have a high vested interest in the success of the program.
3. Teachers are provided the opportunity to develop leadership qualities.
4. Teachers are provided the opportunity to expand their roles and responsibilities as teaching professionals.

5. There is an increase in staff collegiality resulting from the sharing of a common goal.

6. A staff support system is created to ensure success of the improvement in each classroom.

7. There is an increase in the collaborative decision-making skill of teachers.

8. There is increased parent and community involvement in the school.

9. There is the realization that a process for long-term fundamental change exists.

The BTSP extends the focus on improving the professional autonomy and effectiveness of teachers by pairing beginning teachers with mentors during their first year of service. The ODE provides up to $3,000 per teacher team. Beginning teachers, along with their mentors, are provided training in developing goals, assessing educational progress of both students and programs, and identifying strategies to restructure the school site to improve student outcomes.

The current PDC operated by the Lane ESD/Linn Benton ESD is an interactive component of the bill, providing assistance to the school improvement projects through consultation, training, and networking. The center also is assisting local sites to understand components of site-based decision making in HB 3565. Services are provided to any local site.

The players and their assumptions about change. State policy leaders, in drafting HB 2020 understood the nature of change: it's much harder to make it happen than to just legislate it. A number of important assumptions underscored the bill:

1. A full range of options related to improving professional development should be examined for their potential to improve the system.

2. Long-term goals for change should be defined and should guide the development and implementation of action plans.

3. System components should be interrelated and implemented as a comprehensive set.

4. Research should be conducted and data should be accumulated to justify changes and their relationship to long-term goals.

5. Change takes time.

6. Other needed changes will be identified in the process.

7. Though change takes time, that should not be an excuse for waiting.

At the level of the administering state agency, the following assumptions about change guided the ODE:

1. Change depends on the existence of a "felt need" by local users and is more likely to succeed when the users select a solution that best fits their own needs.

2. Local sites must be involved in setting their own visions of school improvement as well as in determining the implementation plans.

3. Change involves an investment of time, money, state and local leadership, and state and local commitment.

4. Implementing effective change requires assistance to local sites in the use of the innovation.

5. Change must happen incrementally, in manageable steps, and with a balance between "doing" and "planning."

6. Change requires a supportive "authorizing environment," with strong leadership across sectors.

7. There needs to be continuous involvement of local sites in planning and decision making.

8. Processes are needed that help local users gain ownership of the program.

9. Practical training and easy access to consultation need to be provided.

10. Local users need incentives to fit the program's goals with their own unique needs.

11. Effective change requires a local mass of advocates.

At the local level, site committee members also understood that change is a process, not an event. Assumptions guiding the local site teams included:

1. Change must be understood in terms of what happens to individuals; understanding how teachers and administrators respond to an innovation is critical to facilitating, monitoring, and institutionalizing change.

2. Change is a highly personal experience; the perceptions, feelings, and frustrations of individuals are a part of the change process.

3. Change entails developmental growth in terms of individuals' feelings and perceptions of the innovation and their skill in using the innovation.

Outcomes

Goals of the initiative. The goals of the legislation are to:

1. Promote educational excellence in the public schools to increase student learning and strengthen Oregon's economy.

2. Encourage and assist local school districts in their efforts to establish school goals.

3. Provide career opportunities for professional growth and development.

4. Establish site committees to encourage new initiatives in school improvement and shared decision making.

Evaluation of the first three years of the SIPD Program, conducted by NWREL, found that the four goals of the legislation are being attained. The findings also provide important system feedback from the local sites. Ongoing evaluation, as well as consultation and technical assistance provided by the state agency to the local projects serve to shape and refine the system. Modifications in the system are continuously made based on this feedback. The state agency, in turn, uses this feedback to report to the legislature as state policy leaders continue to improve the system.

Clearly, HB 2020 has had a major impact on the state's education system. Evaluation findings show that outcomes have been achieved in four areas: (1) impact on goal development; (2) impact on assessment activities; (3) impact on school-based management; and (4) impact on professional growth and development. Major findings from the first two years' evaluation are given the following:

Impact on goal development. As a result of HB 2020, there was a substantial increase in the amount and types of activities related to goal setting. There was more teacher and community involvement in developing school goals. Faculty and community members met together and were responsible for discussing problem areas, gathering and assembling relevant data, and selecting school goals. Schools applying for continuation grants approached the needs identification task from the perspective of first assessing whether progress had been made toward reaching the goals they had set for themselves during year one.

The extent to which a school had carefully articulated a central school mission made a difference in its ability to assemble relevant data to develop or refine goals that could serve as organizational means to an organizational end.

Developing an overall school mission around which faculty could collaborate and plan their activities and around which individual and schoolwide efforts could be marshalled was easier to arrange and achieve in smaller schools, particularly elementary schools and in schools with continuation grants. Developing a unity of purpose was simpler in schools where faculty shared similar beliefs and values and in schools where faculty already had experience in a schoolwide goal-setting process.

Impact on assessment activities. As a result of HB 2020, there are more assessment activities, a stronger commitment to accountability, and greater involvement of faculty in assessment activities. However, the area of assessment has posed more problems for schools, especially schools with new projects, than any other feature of the initiative. The greatest difficulty was in relating assessment activities undertaken in a school to measuring goal attainment.

The nature and extent of respondents' knowledge about and involvement in implementing assessment and evaluation practices in 2020 schools varied according to their proximity to the project, the clarity and concreteness of the project, and to their past experience in project development and implementation. Individuals closer to the design and implementation of their project generally had a better grasp of the role of assessment and evaluation and the data being gathered. Site committee members in schools with continuation projects were appreciably better informed about and more comfortable with assessment activities and their relationship to the evaluation of project goal attainment than site committee members in schools with new projects. This also was true for nonsite committee members; nonsite committee members in most of the continuation projects could talk about assessment practices whereas nonsite committee members in new projects had only the vaguest understanding of assessment and evaluation activities. Level of awareness and implementation of assessment activities in nonfunded schools were contingent on the degree to which a project was actually being implemented.

Faculty in schools with a continuation project attributed their increased knowledge and comfort level with assessment and evaluation activities to several factors that were related to both their actual project and themselves. For most sites, year two was "the implementation year," i.e., a concrete project was being put into place. Thus, goals were tied to program implementation making it easier to identify indicators of change and to focus attention on evaluation. The fact that people had a year of experience also made them more comfortable and confident of their ability to gather data and to know how to use the information collected.

More attention needs to be paid to helping schools design concrete goals and assessment activities in tandem--not in isolation from one another--and that are related to a school improvement project that represents an integrated whole. At the time goals are developed, assessment activities should be developed that will be used to measure progress toward goal attainment and to determine if goals have been reached.

Impact on school-based management. A school's autonomy was related to the degree of social homogeneity within the community and the absence of serious problems that a school could not handle by itself. When a school was located in a community where there were no serious conflicts of interest about important educational issues and no serious problems the school could not handle, a school was more autonomous and in turn, teachers were more autonomous.

Staff members saw the site committees as the catalysts for change, the individuals with a clear vision of how to orchestrate change and improve their school, and the group responsible for keeping the project alive. However, the responsibilities of site committees varied from year one to year two of the project. During year one, management responsibilities included making project-related decisions, directing project activities, keeping lines of communication open, disseminating information, overseeing professional development activities, collecting and analyzing data, preparing reports, administering funds, and developing and administering mini-grant programs. During the projects' second year, site committees had the same responsibilities and also were responsible for overseeing implementation of a school's project. This required managing people involved in the change process. Because enforcing the implementation of a 2020 project was perceived as outside the jurisdiction of site committees, site committee members expressed frustration and discomfort with this new role and responsibility. This issue will require resolution by faculty members as schools move from a traditional division of labor to a site-based management system.

For both new and continuation projects, the collaborative relationships among teachers that were formed at the initial stages of project development have endured and have resulted in the formation of a community of professionals where educational values are shared. Schoolwide decisions are now often reached by discussion and consensus. Principals are now encouraging teachers to participate in collaborative planning and policy making outside the classroom. However, the nature and extent of teacher collaboration is different for elementary, intermediate, and high schools because of differences in norms, values, beliefs, and practices at the different school levels.

As a result of the implementation of HB 2020, decision-making opportunities at the school level have increased. However, decision opportunities are not the same for all schools or for all people in all schools. Organizational size, school level, staff position, membership on a school's site committee, whether a school is implementing a new or a continuation project, and characteristics of the school's institutional environment mitigate decision opportunities for faculty members. Opportunities for teachers to influence decisions with nonfunded projects are related to the same mix of variables as are found in schools with funded projects with two additional essential ingredients: the principal and the site committee. Strong school and project leadership are critical for making decision opportunities available to facu y in schools with nonfunded projects.

Prior to HB 2020, school improvement decisions had been predominantly the jurisdiction of school and district administrators and are now the province of both teachers and school administrators. Resource acquisition and being able to manage the resources were key factors in this shift of control. In many schools with continuation projects, especially large comprehensive high schools involved in structural reform efforts, the shift toward even greater teacher control is evident. Schoolwide, teacher-instigated programmatic changes in elementary and middle/junior high schools also is occurring.

A majority of faculty in all types of projects and across all grade levels felt they are most involved and influential in decisions around curriculum and instruction and least involved and influential in decisions pertaining to school budget and policy making. However, teachers in high schools with continuation projects and in middle/junior high schools with new projects feel they have gained greater influence and involvement in these kinds of decisions since the beginning of their 2020 projects. Teachers also feel they have made progress in decisions relating to school improvement and have increased the number and kinds of decisions they make pertaining to curriculum and instruction. Teachers wish to have greater influence over policies that affect their work lives. The constraint of school and district administration surfaced most often in discussions about areas where teachers felt the least influential and involved.

Impact on professional growth and development. Professional development activities were an integral part of every 2020 project. However, in schools with new projects, professional development activities played a prominent role in the developmental stages of a school's 2020 project, and in schools with continuation projects where attention was focused on the implementation of the project, professional development activities played a more secondary role. In schools with nonfunded projects, the opportunity to participate in professional development activities was contingent on the availability of district resources.

Control over professional development decisions rested with site committees and often with the entire faculty at a school. Teachers felt that being able to decide how to enhance one's role as an educator was an important source of power and control over one's work.

The availability of professional development activities at a time when most districts had to curtail professional development efforts was reported as a significant feature of the legislation.

Professionally developed activities that provided new information and knowledge about teaching strategies, a new language for teachers to communicate with one another, and that encouraged teacher interaction and dialogue about the newly acquired learning were perceived as the most helpful and the most used.

Professional development activities that were integrally related to a cogently designed and well-articulated school improvement program had the greatest impact schoolwide, especially professional development activities that were tied to goals that promoted the improvement of outcomes.

Professional development activities have resulted in teachers acquiring expertise and skills as trainers. Teachers in several schools are training teachers in their own schools and have been hired to provide training to teachers in other schools.

Professional development activities at the intermediate and high school levels were more successful if they had a ready application to the subject matter of individual teachers.

Although mini-grant projects had to relate to the school's 2020 goals, they allowed individuals to design a project tailored to their specific needs and interests. For many individuals, this was the most satisfying aspect of the 2020 program.

Third year progress of 2020 schools also was evaluated by NWREL. This evaluation focused on the restructuring occurring at 2020 sites and on data collection procedures used by sites to monitor their own success at attaining their goals.

Findings from the third year show that newly funded sites are more likely to select fewer goals, and to focus these goals more on site restructuring or the initiation of student programs to improve outcomes. These new type of goals are selected in preference to professional development and governance goals.

The changes in structure at these sites are tied, not to changes in rules or policies, but instead to the development of new roles and relationships for the staff and students. Teaching staff are accepting new responsibilities, and improvements in staff-administrator relationships mean that school climate is enhanced. Teachers' interactions with students also have been changed, especially for those teachers who have been most active in professional development activities. Teachers say they structure their classrooms differently and have personalized their interactions with students. Teachers at these sites believe their 2020 project has had more impact on their classroom and building structure than other ODE projects, such as standardization or curriculum renewal.

District staff indicated that the 2020 program has set a standard for site-based management of professional development. HB 2020 has provided models for increased central office support of individual schools, prompted changes in how administrative work is conducted, and increased community involvement in decision making within the entire district.

As the 2020 program matures, schools receiving funds show a great recognition of their needs to increase community participation, to secure district support for site-based decisions, to find mechanisms that improve collegial contact and collaborative decision making, to make their decisions be more data driven, and to improve the classroom use of new instructional modes. Sites receiving funding within the last round (1990-91) were able to prepare themselves for site-based management even before they received the grant.

However, schools do have difficulty collecting and presenting evidence of the program impact on students (goal one of the legislation). NWREL's evaluation recommends that the ODE modify its format for evaluation reports to help 2020 schools focus on data collection in this area.

Costs, Investment, and Resource Leveraging

Costs. The intent of HB 2020 was to provide supplemental dollars to local sites to improve outcomes through site-based decision making. Local contributions were assumed; neither the state nor the local sites was expected to foot the entire bill to achieve the goal of improving teacher autonomy and effectiveness. Resources appropriated by the state legislature to carry out the three components of the bill totaled approximately $8 million for each biennium. Now in its fourth (SIPD) and fifth (BTSP) years, approximately $20 million has been available to local schools to supplement new or ongoing site-based management practices.

Based on successful application, local sites were funded up to $1,000 per year per full-time teacher (some applications requested $500 per teacher; classified staff also can benefit from the grants as well as administrators because they're part of the site committee; however, these groups are not included in the teacher head count to determine amount of award). For the 1992-93 school year, grants to local sites ranged from $4,700 to more than $96,000.

Investment. State and local governments bear the brunt of payments for poor student outcomes such as poverty, unemployability, welfare, teen pregnancy, juvenile delinquency, and others. Therefore, state and local governments have the most to gain from investment in improving teacher influence and effectiveness to improve outcomes. While state investment was significant, large amounts of local resources were influenced by the bill, not only through in-kind dollars, but also through changes in the way resources were being spent. However, no effort has been made to determine the extent to which schools are influenced to spend their own professional development dollars. Additionally, no attempt has been made to determine the extent of benefit to the state's economy through achieving the goals of the initiative. Yet investment is clear: as has been noted, most schools already were involved in long-range improvement efforts, many through OTE and similar programs. Many school staffs already were actively involved in goal setting, data collection, program development to improve goals, and evaluation activities. HB 2020 provided local sites with supplemental funds to continue these activities. The investment in the professional development of Oregon teachers to improve outcomes continues with HB 3565, discussed in "Impact on the Future."

Resource leveraging. No system was established by the legislature to determine the extent of return on invested dollars or the extent to which the system was leveraged. However, leveraging of dollars invested in improving the environment for professionals and the ways in which they operate can be assumed.

To date, approximately 14,000 teachers in Oregon have been impacted by HB 2020, either through the SIPD or the BTSP. One way to determine resource leveraging is to look at the investment in the total salaries paid to teachers. A crude attempt was made to determine this amount of leverage, using the following approximate figures (over the five-year period):

Number of teachers impacted by HB 2020:	14,000
Five-year salaries for 2020 teachers:	$230,000 million
Total funds appropriated for HB 2020:	$20 million

Oregon's investment of $230 million in the five-year salaries of 2020 teachers has been significantly strengthened with the supplemental funds, which account for less than 9 percent of the total investment. This relatively small state investment serves to improve the effectiveness of these teachers, which in turn improves student outcomes, resulting in the improvement of Oregon's economy and standard of living.

The scope of impact is actually much broader and more significant than shown in these figures. Many 2020 teachers are now serving as trainers for other teachers, both within and outside their own school sites. The extent to which Oregon's entire teaching profession is leveraged is unknown; however, it can be assumed that the number is exponential--as 2020 teachers improve in their effectiveness and influence, other teachers and administrators also are impacted. The result is improvement of student outcomes in ever-widening numbers, reaching tens of thousands of teachers and hundreds of thousands of students.

Barriers and Challenges

Loosely defined emphasis on goals. A major barrier to evaluating measurable impact on student achievement was the initiative's loosely defined emphasis on goals. This requirement has since been strengthened and the application was rewritten by the state agency to require local projects to more clearly focus their goals on student outcomes. Newly funded sites are now more likely to select fewer goals, and to focus these goals more on site restructuring and the initiation of student programs.

Unrealistic expectations. Many local projects experienced frustration in their ability to reach their goals within a one-year funding period. These projects lengthened their duration to two years to provide continuous, stable support for the change effort

Selection and limitation of schools to fund. With Oregon deeply immersed in the issue of equity, the advisory committee is currently looking at options to expand the program to involve all teachers in the state, thereby eliminating the competitive application process. Recommendations are being drafted to present to the 1993 legislature. Options for HB 2020 that may be recommended to the legislature include:

- Continue the program in its present form.
- Tie the program in more closely with the requirements of 3565 (see "Impact on the Future").
- Provide funds to all Oregon schools on an equity basis.
- Restructure the program in a completely new form.

Fear that site-based decision making will result in negative impacts. Initially, many perceived site-based management and teacher empowerment as negative forces designed to rob the administrative structure of its function and purpose. However, evaluation results show increased respect for administrators by teachers and for teachers by administrators. New roles are emerging that allow for both to focus on the important issue of improving outcomes for students.

Improvement of data collection procedures. In order for sites to better inform and enhance the system, evaluation findings suggest they need to improve their project reporting. By modifying reporting mechanisms, local sites can provide important specific and concrete data to state policy leaders for the purpose of revising, extending, and improving the system.

How HB 2020 Has Changed the Education System

As a result of the initiative, four major changes in the system have been achieved: (1) there is a greater emphasis on outcomes; (2) site-based decision making has been expanded; (3) communities are more active in school decision making; and (4) teachers are seen as key to Oregon school improvement. Evaluation results point to these system changes as well as informal feedback provided by local sites to the state agency. These system changes served to influence the legislature; new legislation was passed in 1991 to support and extend the local system impacts.

House Bill 3565, "The Oregon Educational Act for the 21st Century," was passed by the 1991 state legislature. It further extends and enhances the state's focus on improving outcomes through site-based decision making. The bill was based on the following rationale: "The Legislative Assembly declares that a restructured educational system is necessary to achieve the state's goals of the best educated citizens in the nation by the year 2000 and a work force equal to any in the world by the year 2010."

HB 2020 was an important influence on this legislation, contributing to successful systemic change.

The key component of HB 3565 that supports and extends HB 2020 is the focus on "21st Century Schools Councils," a broadened vision of HB 2020's site committees. The legislation mandates that every school in Oregon, by 1994, create a committee of educators, parents, certified staff, and other community members to oversee the improvement of outcomes for students. The legislation, through the 21st Century Schools Councils, seeks to involve parents, social service agencies and other community persons and groups more heavily in the operation of their local schools. The legislation requires that parents and community people become more active in establishing and implementing educational goals and in participating in decision-making at the local school site.

Specifically, the components of HB 3565 that were developed as a direct influence of the HB 2020 legislation include:

1. **The emphasis on outcomes**--the legislation declares that a restructured educational system is necessary to achieve the state's goal of having the best educated citizens in the nation by the year 2000 and a work force equal to any in the world by the year 2010.

2. **The expansion of site-based decision making**--the legislation expands school site-based decision making through the requirement that committees be formed at every school, giving a greater policy and management role to teachers, classified staff, parents, and other community members.

3. **The enhancement of the role of the community in school decision making**--the legislation requires parental involvement in establishing and implementing educational goals, and in participating in decision-making at the school site.

4. **The emphasis on the teacher as key to school improvement**--the legislation requires the development of research, teacher preparation, and continuing professional development programs to achieve the goals of the bill.

The first two years of the legislation (1991-93) are devoted primarily to planning. However, this year, some schools will begin forming their site councils (required by 1995). The current PDC at Lane ESD, which serves the SIPD projects, also is assisting local sites to understand the purposes and requirements of the site councils in the HB 3565 legislation and is assisting them to begin preparations for full implementation by 1995.

Planning currently is being carried out by ten task forces, comprised of educators, board members, business people, parents and others, who are looking at various aspects of the bill. The recommendations of these groups were submitted for first readings to the SBE in October, 1992. Before taking action on the recommendations at their December 11 meeting in Salem, the Board wants to hear from the education community and the public. Hearings are scheduled in four cities in November. Written testimony also is being accepted.

The task force reports are being viewed by the ODE as work in progress and a first step. The ODE looks to refine and further develop the recommendations before implementing any of the major components of the bill.

The legislature will be asked to continue their commitment to the effort during their January session. In addition to requesting adequate funding for schools, the state superintendent will ask the legislature for special funds for staff development.

The task force recommendations related to site-based decision making focus on two tasks: one is a set of guidelines for districts as they begin implementation of 21st Century Schools Councils, and the other as legislative changes to be considered by the 1993 legislative assembly.

Guidelines for districts. The recommendations encourage districts to become familiar with the salient features of 3565 and site-based decision making. As districts implement the 21st Century Schools Councils, it is acknowledged there is no single or best model. However, the task force believes the effectiveness of school councils will be enhanced if the following components are carefully considered: team building/trust; resources; changing roles; patience and careful planning; decision-making processes; district/school relationships; respect for diversity; indicators of progress; communication; and existing advisory and local school committees.

Legislative changes. Recommendations for changes in the statutes regarding 21st Century Schools Councils were based on a discussion of the purpose, philosophy, and legislative intent surrounding these councils as well as a need for coordinating the language of previous legislation such as HB 2020 that also require site committees. The task force recommends the 1993 legislature consider the following changes:

- Delete the requirement that districts form a district site committee when applying for grants.
- Only one 21st Century Schools Council per school site is required for application to any program. When more than one school building is part of an application, the ODE may require a demonstration of coordination among such school buildings in the application process.
- Exclude ESDs from the requirement to have 21st Century Schools Councils.
- A majority of a 21st Century Schools Council shall be active classroom teachers. However, if the teaching staff is too small a number to accommodate the representation specified in this section, the configuration of the council shall be determined by rule of the SBE.

Other recommendations from the task force focused on the need for well-designed preservice and inservice developed around the research. Also recommended were models of effective school-based teams. Not only is there a need for professional development for council participants in such areas as team building, developing school restructuring strategies, consensus building, and other group process skills, but the task force also recommended time to allow for collaborative planning and implementation of decisions. Further, the task force recommended resources be available for initial planning and training. The task force felt that districts, as well as the SBE, the ODE, and the legislature should explore ways to provide these resources.

The following section presents the second Northwest state initiative selected for depiction--Washington's Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP). This initiative also is analyzed with regard to the key dimensions of systemic change presented in the paper's first section.

In the section "Implications for State Systemic Change Efforts," we compare the two state initiatives along five key dimensions and present key lessons for state policy makers as they look to implement systemic change initiatives.

Washington State's Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP)

ECEAP as a Systemic Change Initiative

Establishment of a statewide early childhood education program for at-risk children was proposed as the highest priority within a comprehensive set of recommendations for educational reform set forth by the Washington Business Roundtable in 1985. Motivated by increasing national concern about declining educational outcomes, and seeing a direct link between education and economic growth, the Roundtable had begun a study two years earlier, in 1983, to examine Washington's education system and explore options for its improvement. The result was a set of recommended actions to be taken by the legislature, the State Board of Education (SBE), and/or the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).

To guide the study, the Roundtable had consulted with a variety of education experts and reviewed other research to identify factors deemed most likely to improve "the excellence of the state's educational system." From these, a set of long-term goals were developed in a broad range of areas, including improved student achievement and competence, improved instructional programs, increased literacy, improved teacher quality and effectiveness, strengthened public involvement in and support of schools, increased lifelong educational opportunities, and cost-effective governance. Issues affecting the attainment of these goals were identified and studied. Among the many options considered, early childhood education was believed to have the greatest potential impact on child outcomes.

The Roundtable's study had revealed that Head Start was reaching only a small number of at-risk children in the state and that 10 of the state's 39 counties did not have a Head Start program at all because of limited funding. Upon reviewing research on the wide-ranging benefits of preschool for at-risk children, the Roundtable strongly recommended that the legislature fund a full-day comprehensive preschool program based on the Head Start model for all at-risk three- to five-year-olds in the state, and full-day kindergarten for those children when they enter school. In the Roundtable's plan, enough programs would be funded immediately to serve 5,000 children and then more would be phased in to serve an additional 5,000 children annually, until all estimated 27,000 eligible children were served by 1990. Local communities would be allowed flexibility in program design and implementation, as they have under Head Start. Such programs would provide an opportunity for young, at-risk children to gain a foundation for future success in school.

On the tails of *A Nation at Risk*, a widely publicized report expressing great concern about declining student performance and other unfavorable public school outcomes, the Roundtable's report in early 1985 provided impetus, support, and direction for state action. Washington's new governor, who stood strongly for both improved education and business growth, expressed commitment to early childhood education as an improvement strategy from the start and set his education assistant to work drafting a bill soon after the Roundtable's report was released. The legislature responded later in 1985 by authorizing House Bill 1070, which contained a planning grant of $38,000 for the formation of a statewide advisory committee charged with drafting program standards for what would become the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP), a comprehensive, family-focused preschool program that would help low-income children prepare for and succeed in school. Allocation of nearly $3 million the following year (1986-87) enabled 1,000 families to enroll their children in start-up programs and receive comprehensive assistance through ECEAP's four integrated program components: developmentally appropriate education, extensive parent involvement opportunities, health and nutrition services, and social services.

Since its inception, ECEAP has rapidly expanded to serve children and families in diverse geographical areas across the state. With ECEAP and Head Start together, the state is now serving nearly all income-eligible four-year-olds (estimated at 12,878, according to 1980 census figures). The number of children enrolled in ECEAP annually has increased seven-fold, from 1,000 children in 1986-87 to nearly 7,000 in 1992-93. In all, ECEAP has served over 27,000 children and families during its first seven years. Currently, ECEAP's 36 contractors are operating over 180 program sites across the state, offering assistance to children and families in every county. The following table illustrates ECEAP's rapid expansion.

PROGRAM YEAR	CHILDREN SERVED	STATE APPRO-PRIATION	COST PER CHILD	CON-TRACTORS	PROGRAM SITES	COUNTIES
1985-86	--	$38,000	--	--	--	--
1986-87	1,000	$2.97 M	$2,700	12	N/A	N/A
1987-88	2,047	$6.0 M	$2,700	21	N/A	N/A
1988-89	2,200	$6.0 M	$2,700	21	N/A	N/A
1989-90	3,581	$12.8 M	$3,120 [1]	28	N/A	N/A
1990-91	5,483	$15.8 M	$3,120 [1]	33	160	all 39
1991-92	5,968	$18.9 M [3]	$3,434 [2]	36	180	all 39
1992-93	6,840	$23.9 M [4]	$3,550	36	180	all 39
Total	27,199	$86.4 M				

Although ECEAP was operating programs in all counties and serving nearly 5,500 four-year-old children per year by 1990 (thus, meeting the legislature's expectations that services be available throughout the state), ECEAP and Head Start together were not fully meeting the Roundtable's recommendation that a full-day program be available for all three- to five-year old children by 1990. ECEAP's vision, however, encourages and supports further development in these directions as programs

[1] This figure is an average cost per child for the 1989-91 biennium. The actual cost per child during the first year of the biennium was slightly lower than $3,120, while the actual cost per child during the second year was slightly higher.

[2] This figure includes a $111.00 supplement from Quality Improvement Pool Funds.

[3] This figure includes a state appropriation of $15.8 million, Federal Child Care Development Block Grant funds totaling $3.1 million, and Federal Title IV-A Child Care Funds totaling $400,000.

[4] This figure includes a state appropriation of $20.3 million, Federal Child Care Development Block Grant funds totaling $3.1 million, and Federal Title IV-A Child Care Funds totaling $500,000.

evolve and respond to local needs and additional resources become available. Many programs are collaborating with childcare providers and other early childhood programs to provide a longer service day, and some programs, especially those in rural or remote areas, have successfully applied for a waiver to serve three- and five-year-olds in their communities. ECEAP's vision for expanded service, which emphasizes locally responsive service delivery, local program design and control, and ongoing state support, will be described in more detail in later sections.

ECEAP was selected for our depiction of Northwest systemic change initiatives because it reflects the five principles of systemic change. Specifically:

ECEAP is infusive:

- ECEAP builds upon existing knowledge, resources and relationships. ECEAP's authorizing legislation directed the advisory committee to use Federal Head Start program criteria as guidelines for developing the state's program. ECEAP contractors are expected to develop extensive knowledge of local resources and existing relationships and are given the flexibility and autonomy to decide how to utilize and maximize them. Programs are designed and expanded through collaboration among community service providers. Information and resource sharing, networking, and coordinated and integrated service delivery arrangements are evident at both the local and state levels.

- ECEAP is pursuing a vision of comprehensive service delivery based on improving a broad range of desired outcomes for children and families. ECEAP's four integrated program components (education, parent involvement, health and nutrition, and social services) are designed to facilitate children's development of a broad range of skills and abilities and to strengthen families' capabilities to support their children's healthy development and their family's quality of life. ECEAP programs tailor their services to address the unique needs and aspirations of the children and families living in their communities.

- The desired outcomes of ECEAP are in concert with research-based expectations for impact on important social goals. Numerous studies, such as the Perry Preschool Project, the Early Training Project, and the HOPE Study, have indicated short- and long-term benefits of comprehensive preschool programs for society at large, as well as for program participants and communities.

- ECEAP has specific, identifiable goals which are in concert with widespread locally-identified needs. These include: serving all eligible four-year-old children, especially in areas where the need is greatest; delivering services comprehensively and more efficiently; and improving child and family outcomes.

- ECEAP is designed by those who must implement the program. ECEAP program standards are flexible, so that communities can adapt the program in response to the unique needs and aspirations of the children and families in their area. Furthermore, families are encouraged to be involved in decisions regarding program design and operation.

ECEAP is pervasive:

- ECEAP is broad-based, rather than isolated to a single project, program design, type of contractor, or geographical location. ECEAP programs take on different formats depending upon local needs. Some are center-based, some are home-based, and many are a combination of the two. ECEAP contractors and program sites vary widely in terms of the type of organization with which they are affiliated. They include school districts, educational service districts, tribal organizations, community colleges, non-profit organizations, city and county government agencies, community action agencies, and childcare providers. Programs are located in both urban and rural communities, in non-isolated or remote areas.

- ECEAP has multiple targets for change, including the various players and types of organizations at the state and local levels; policies at the state and local levels; and the content, standardization, and delivery of the four integrated program components (developmentally appropriate education, parent involvement, health and nutrition services, and social services).

ECEAP is potent:

- ECEAP involves a variety of key players at the state and community levels. The legislature provides support and general direction for expansion of the program. A statewide advisory group guides state agency action. State agency staff are responsible for planning and implementing program expansion and for supporting local program development through training, technical assistance, and monitoring. ECEAP contractors provide administrative and programmatic support for their program sites and build collaborative relationships with other key community service providers. Program sites work with families to tailor the program in ways that will effectively address their children's and their own needs and aspirations.

- ECEAP accommodates multifaceted, culturally relevant interventions by allowing communities to design programs that are responsive to the unique needs of the children and families living in the community.

- ECEAP programs are developed based on locally felt need and not just on the opportunity for new money. Communities applying for ECEAP funding must base their applications and program designs on a family needs assessment as well as a community resource assessment. Allocation of state funding is based on greatest need.

- ECEAP has a critical mass of local advocates, including schools, other community service providers, and the private sector. To provide or improve access to a comprehensive array of services for families, ECEAP contractors and program sites build collaborative relationships with other community players. These collaborative efforts also improve information and resource sharing, facilitate referrals and access to services, and reduce duplication of services.

ECEAP is coherent:

- ECEAP bridges the gap between state policy and community choice; its empowerment-based approach to comprehensive service design and delivery enables the state to support systemic change at the community level.

- The development and operation of ECEAP programs are carefully monitored and supported by state policy. To be more responsive to local needs, program standards are flexible and monitoring processes are focused on providing technical assistance in addressing areas needing improvement.

- Multiple roles and responsibilities are involved in ECEAP's local subsystem. The ECEAP vision and responsibility for providing ECEAP services is shared by numerous contractors and subcontractors who are affiliated with many types of organizations, each having their own organizational and funding structure, rules, roles, responsibilities, and relationships with other community players and the public. Other community service providers and families participating in the program are involved in local program decision making, as well.

ECEAP is sustainable:

- ECEAP has the support of technical assistance and training. Technical assistance and training are available at all levels. Staff development funds are used by local programs to tailor training to local staff needs; the state administrating office sponsors statewide or regional training opportunities; state program managers offer on-site technical assistance whenever necessary or during monitoring visits; and staff at both levels attend state, regional, and national conferences whenever appropriate and feasible. A cadre of trainers, which includes experienced program staff, higher education instructors, and other prominent people in the field, is developing to support training needs and to train more trainers across the state.

- ECEAP employs long-term change strategies, coupled with long-term funding and evaluation. The development of ECEAP reflects a shift in the legislature's budgeting focus from relatively short-term treatment-oriented programs to long-term prevention-oriented investments that are expected to receive funding over a long period of time. State funding of ECEAP has increased rapidly and continues to increase through bipartisan legislative support. Even in times of state resource shortfall, ECEAP has maintained its funding level or experienced only a mild reduction compared to other state programs. In the program's initiating legislation, the legislature mandated that a longitudinal study of the effects of ECEAP participation be conducted. To handle ECEAP's rapid expansion in a planned manner, ECEAP's state agency staff developed a strategic plan that is based on the program's principles of local empowerment.

- Human and fiscal resources are available at the local level. Resources such as staff, facilities, materials, services, and additional funds are generated at the local level through collaborative relationships with other community players, in-kind contributions from ECEAP contractors or other community service providers and organizations, and other state and federal grants.

- Data and information on statewide impact and outcomes are available. ECEAP's longitudinal study provides data on immediate and longer term outcomes among ECEAP children and families, as well as data comparing ECEAP participants with a group of similar, but unserved, children and families. Other information routinely collected by ECEAP's state agency documents ECEAP's expansion and program activity.

- Information to support projection of long-term state targets and resource requirements are available. To inform budget and service projections, and to monitor the attainment of state targets, data regarding the need for expanded comprehensive preschool services, child and family demographic trends, community resources, and service costs are collected regularly at the state and local levels .

- Feedback channels exist between all levels of the system. Parents inform programs about their needs and aspirations; programs respond through appropriate service delivery design and inform parents about resources available in the community. Contractors inform the state administering agency about their plans, operational and training needs, and progress; the state informs contractors about resources, provides feedback regarding program performance, and offers training and technical assistance. The state informs the legislature and state budget office about budget needs and service levels; the legislature and administration control fiscal appropriations and service expansion. The longitudinal study informs local and state staff, the legislature, and the public at large about child and family outcomes.

These aspects of the ECEAP initiative, which make it an insightful example of systemic change, will be incorporated in discussion in the remainder of this profile and then highlighted in the final section of the paper.

ECEAP's Vision for Expanding Services

The principles underlying ECEAP's vision for expanding services are: (1) responsiveness to local needs and aspirations; (2) local coordination and control of program development and administration; and (3) ongoing state support and technical assistance.

Responsiveness to local needs and aspirations. ECEAP was founded on the belief that education can help reduce the cumulative effects of poverty by nurturing individual and community growth. While parents are a child's first and most influential teachers, and so bear the primary responsibility for education, fewer and fewer children in Washington were living in a family that could effectively support them and meet their needs. ECEAP was seen as a way for the state to provide developmentally-focused educational opportunities for disadvantaged children, as well as assistance to families in supporting their children's development and educational success. The program's four components (education, parent involvement, health and nutrition, and social services) are integrated in center-based and home-based learning opportunities designed to facilitate children's development of abilities and skills and strengthen families' capabilities to foster their children's healthy development. The program's name aptly describes what it provides for children and their families--early childhood education and family assistance.

The way in which these services are provided is shaped by the unique needs of the children and families living in a particular community. Whether a program should be primarily center-based or home-based, half-day or full-day, located uptown or downtown, are just some of the design issues programs consider based on assessments of the needs of the children and families living in their communities. Regular needs and resource assessments, as well as participation by parents and child advocates in the ongoing governance of local programs, assures that service delivery is locally appropriate, interactive, dynamic, and proactive. This principle of local responsiveness facilitates family empowerment, a major goal of ECEAP. By actively participating in program design, governance, and parent involvement opportunities, families can strengthen their capabilities to meet their own and their children's needs and aspirations.

Besides providing ongoing feedback to programs, parents have the opportunity to provide feedback directly to the state funding agency. A parent from each program is invited to attend an annual statewide parent meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to provide a forum for parents to express their needs and vision for ECEAP's future, information which is incorporated into ECEAP's strategic plan. This year, state staff will be asking parent representatives who attend the meeting to distribute a questionnaire about program quality and effectiveness to all parents in their programs.

Local coordination and control of program development and administration. Rather than basing the coordination and control of ECEAP service delivery in a single, large-scale administration, key responsibilities associated with ECEAP program development and administration are delegated to local contractors and their program sites. This principle of basing coordination and control at the local level enables cost- and resources-efficient administration while assuring that all program development is soundly based in family and community needs. Accountability, efficiency, and effectiveness are enhanced by localizing the responsibility for programmatic decisions.

Program design and development are interactive, initiated by either the local community or the state administrating agency and then supported and developed by both. ECEAP is not an entitlement program--state funds are combined with local resources to provide a voluntary program for eligible children and families. Local communities are not mandated to match state funds, but they are required to conduct an extensive community resource assessment (in addition to the family needs assessment mentioned above) and expected to develop collaborative relationships with various community players.

Program administration is carried out at the local level and monitored by the state administering agency. Each month, ECEAP contractors report expenditures (salaries, goods and services, travel, equipment, staff development, etc.) and program activities (enrollment, attendance and exit levels, staffing, service hours, parent and staff training opportunities, health and social services and referrals, etc.) to the state. State program managers review these reports and contact contractors at least monthly to provide feedback and discuss local needs, issues, or concerns.

This principle of local coordination and control facilitates community empowerment. By taking the lead responsibility for designing and implementing a program that is responsive to the needs and aspirations of the children and families living in the area, programs and the other service providers with whom they collaborate can strengthen their capabilities to serve children and families effectively and improve community-desired outcomes.

Ongoing state support and technical assistance. As the administrator of a limited number of contractors, who are responsible for their own operations and administration, the state can take on the role of technical assistant during program development and provide support as a facilitator or liaison among groups of providers. Having such a role allows the state level staff to remain small, which reduces administrative costs. State staff (program managers) visit contractors and their program sites at least once a year to observe program operations and provide technical assistance and support. Statewide or regional trainings are provided or arranged for during the program year. A cadre of trainers, which includes experienced program staff, higher education instructors, and other prominent people in the field, continues to expand in support of training needs. The state also disseminates a newsletter, alerting local staff about upcoming events, changes in regulations or procedures, or informative articles or materials.

ECEAP's state administering agency has developed an administrative database which monitors and summarizes child enrollment forms and the expenditure and program activity reports received each month from contractors. Routine and special reports can be generated immediately upon request by the state's budget office or legislature. State staff are called upon frequently to provide budget or program information to other state agencies, the administration, or the legislature.

Developing a strategic plan for expanding services. By 1989, ECEAP's fourth year of operation, it became clear that the program was experiencing, and could expect to continue to experience, rapid growth. The governor's commitment to provide preschool for all the state's disadvantaged four-year-olds by mid-decade (through ECEAP and Head Start combined), and the legislature's and business community's continued expressions of support, prompted the need for a strategically planned approach to expansion.

To handle the increased service expansion supported by the legislature, without compromising the principles of local responsiveness, local program coordination and control, and ongoing state support and assistance, ECEAP's state administering agency decided that its service delivery system would need some modification. Philosophically committed to a local empowerment approach, ECEAP staff sought models for statewide design and implementation of community-driven family service programming. A variety of experiments with local collaboration for the design and delivery of family services, and the experiences of some of ECEAP's own contractors and programs, indicated improved access, more effective and efficient service, and increased overall local commitment to the needs of children and families. But no model emerged, either nationally or internationally, for implementing the concept *on a large scale* such as was needed for the growing statewide ECEAP program.

In view of this lack of research on implementation, ECEAP determined to proceed cautiously, but affirmatively, developing its own research project for exploration of a statewide, empowerment-based service system model. Soliciting from among its most established programs, ECEAP secured commitment from a small group of contract directors to participate in a two-year experimental project, the Area Agency Pilot Project.

The Area Agency Pilot Project brought six ECEAP contractors together with state administrators to design a new system of contracting and service delivery based on collaboration rather than the old model of competition. The intention of the project was to eliminate the need for competitive bidding for state funding, which required formal response to the state's request for proposals every two years, as well as competition among agencies for program participants and community resources at the local level. ECEAP contractors, as "area agencies," would receive funding to use at their discretion in bringing community agencies and organizations together to design systems to meet the broadest array of local needs and eliminate or minimize duplication of services. The expectation would be that key community players would come together to create appropriate, responsive, cost-effective services, using funding support from both the state and the community, rather than each developing separate assistance programs for the same families and competing for various state and local funds. ECEAP contractors, as "area agencies," would serve as leaders in an area, however defined, helping to bring resources together to assure that families are well-served on many levels. The result would be cost savings for state and local agencies, and a broader network of support for families.

B The Area Agency Pilot Project revealed advantages and disadvantages of the area agency model for children and families, communities, ECEAP programs and area agencies, and ECEAP's state administering agency. For example, for children, families, and communities there are clear advantages in quality and responsiveness in service delivery. Collaborations that produce these advantages, however, can be difficult to develop, and a discrepancy between community service needs and service provided may occur in the meantime. For ECEAP programs and area agencies, the efficiency of service delivery is enhanced, resources are shared and multiplied, and access to highly skilled assistance at the local level is improved. Building relationships with other service providers, however, takes time, trust, understanding, and a willingness to compromise. Evolving into an area agency also requires programs to learn a whole new set of skills and responsibilities. The area agency model is advantageous for ECEAP's state administering agency because it supports local assistance in quality assurance and planning, enables program expansion without increased overhead costs or need for additional state-level staff, and provides local, immediate, and ongoing responsiveness and assistance to programs. The area agency model, however, requires state-level staff to delegate direct control of programs to the empowered local service delivery providers and shift roles away from monitoring towards quality support and technical assistance. Overall, the project concluded that the advantages of the area agency model outweighed the disadvantages at all levels and that the area agency concept showed great promise as a model for statewide delivery of ECEAP services.

The success of the Area Agency Pilot Project prompted the ECEAP Advisory Committee to recommend that ECEAP pursue this empowerment-based service delivery model on a larger scale, and eventually for all ECEAP contractors across the state. ECEAP staff then set to work to develop a strategic plan for moving ahead with statewide dissemination of the area agency concept and for modifying the state's administrative system to support the development of area agencies. The resulting plan has two focuses, or "strands":

Strand 1:	Building a common vision and strategic plan for ECEAP's future
Strand 2:	Developing an area agency-based administrative model and tools

ECEAP staff recognized that a shared vision and mission statement for the program would be a necessary first step, so that everyone would be committed to ECEAP's future direction. Out of a common vision, guidance for several next steps would come: determining a process for further service expansion, revising program standards and monitoring procedures, revising role definitions and administrative processes, expanding and updating the management information system, and developing guidelines for state assistance to area agencies. Activities in the two strands are intimately related and were planned to enable outcomes from one to become the input for another.

ECEAP's state administrating agency and several directors of ECEAP's contracting agencies started work towards building a common vision and a strategic plan (Strand 1) by holding a series of work sessions. Participants identified issues involved in expanding ECEAP services, reaffirmed ECEAP's underlying principles and assumptions about how services should be delivered, determined long-term goals for service expansion, and prioritized specific activities, responsibilities, and timelines related to the goals. State agency staff and field representatives are continuing their work together on the activities in Strand 1.

Work on developing an area agency-based administrative model and tools (Strand 2) was begun as well. State agency staff identified specific activities to be carried out in conjunction with activities related to Strand 1, and formed committees to guide the progress of each activity involved in developing ECEAP's administrative system. Field representatives will provide input to and review the plans and work of these committees as they develop.

The Impetus for Change

The impetus for ECEAP's development into a statewide, community-based, family-focused, comprehensive service delivery system came from several sources: growing numbers of Washington's children and families were needing support; desired outcomes for children and families were expanding; school readiness was being tied to economic growth; comprehensive, family-focused service delivery was increasingly seen as an effective means for supporting families and achieving desired outcomes; available resources were limited; and the political context was supportive of change. These trends, which are continuing to provide momentum for ECEAP's expansion, are discussed next.

Needs for support and services were increasing. Growing numbers of families in poverty or among the working poor, high rates of separation and divorce, and increasing numbers of teenage pregnancies, are just a few of the indicators of increasing need among families for support and services. Comprehensive preschool services can be an effective strategy for addressing the needs of families with young children, but such services were limited in Washington during the mid 1980s, as the Washington Business Roundtable's study underscored.

Desired outcomes for children and families were expanding. ECEAP was not sold solely on the fact that more and more families with young children were needing support and services. Desired outcomes for children and families were expanding as well, to include more than just improved performance in school or in work. Broader outcomes, such as the healthy development of children, greater self-esteem among children and families, family self-sufficiency, and improved quality of life, were increasingly acknowledged as interrelated goals.

School readiness was linked to future economic growth. While the legislature believed that its investment in a comprehensive preschool program would provide immediate, and wide-ranging benefits to children and families, it also believed that such an investment would have long-term positive impact on the state's economy. Providing educational and support opportunities for children and families now would strengthen their success in school and the workplace later, which would contribute to the overall performance and economic growth of the state.

Comprehensive, family-focused service delivery is effective. Belief that providing *comprehensive* services and support is effective in meeting the complex and diverse needs of children and families was becoming more widespread and increasingly supported by literature in the areas of family support and empowerment. Working with children and their families as a unit, understanding that their needs are interrelated, and addressing those needs in a holistic manner are the tenets of comprehensive service provision. A family is more likely to be served appropriately and efficiently if they are introduced to the system of services as a whole, rather than to a service at a time.

Community-based and locally designed programs are effective. Belief that communities know their clients best and are in the best position to gather family needs assessment information and design programs to respond effectively to the needs of families in their community can hardly be challenged. But, facilitating and supporting the development of community-based and locally-designed programs can be very difficult, especially on a large scale and from a different level in the system, namely the state level. ECEAP acknowledged these challenges and carefully planned a strategy for program expansion that would not compromise the principle of local empowerment.

Resources were limited. Providing services during a time of shrinking resources is a difficult challenge. ECEAP, with its comprehensive service design, family focus, and emphasis on community collaboration, was seen by the state as a cost-efficient way to bring needed services to many children and families. Limited funding at the state and local levels, facility shortages, increasing transportation costs, and a shrinking pool of qualified staff continue to be issues impacting ECEAP service delivery expansion. However, through collaboration with other community service providers, ECEAP contractors are able to provide, arrange for, and contribute to an array of services for children and families. Several contractors are expanding their service day through partnerships with local childcare providers. Others import comprehensive services into a childcare center or preschool program, paying less in facility costs. Health and social services are arranged for through county health departments or private providers. These kinds of collaborative relationships, and many others, are resulting in cost and resource benefits for all involved, including the families being served.

Political context was supportive. At the time the Washington Business Roundtable reported its study findings and recommended a comprehensive plan for educational improvement in 1985, multiple players were focused on the need for change in the state's system of services for children and families (including, but not limited to, education). The new governor was eager to implement a programmatic strategy that would build support for him as an "education governor," an area of increasing interest to the National Governor's Association. The legislature, facing budget limitations, was looking for a cost-effective response to the diverse and increasing needs of the state's children and families. The idea of a comprehensive preschool and family assistance program quickly gained widespread support, largely because it held promise for providing immediate and long-term benefits for many people (program participants, schools, communities, and taxpayers) with a reasonable and feasible investment of state resources. Although reliant upon continued voter satisfaction, political supporters were willing to invest in an effort whose greatest payback would likely be realized at a later time and not necessarily within the time they were still in office.

The System

Structure of the system. ECEAP is housed at the state level in the Department of Community Development (DCD), Community Assistance Division, and operates locally through many types of organizations, including school districts, local government agencies, nonprofit organizations, childcare providers, tribal organizations, and community colleges. An advisory committee composed of interested parents and representatives from the SBE, OSPI, the Division of Children and Family Services within the Department of Social and Health Services, early childhood education and development staff preparation programs, Head Start programs, school districts, and other organizations dedicated to serving children and families from across the state is responsible for guiding development of the program. The role of the ECEAP contractor is to design and support a comprehensive program (within program standards set by the advisory committee) that's most responsive to eligible families living in their community. To do this, ECEAP contractors enlist support from other community service providers, community volunteers, and ECEAP parents.

Although the Roundtable had recommended that funds for a state early childhood education program flow through the OSPI and local school districts, the legislature placed ECEAP under the administration of the DCD instead for several reasons. The DCD's experience with communities (including, but not limited to, school districts) in supporting community and economic development would be useful in administering and assisting a preschool program dependent upon collaboration among all types of community agencies, including schools. Furthermore, other programs administered by the DCD were already working primarily with low-income or otherwise at-risk families, and ECEAP was meant to be a family assistance program. Placing ECEAP in the OSPI also might have created the expectation that the program should be open to *all* children, when the legislation specifically states that "this special assistance program is a voluntary enrichment program to help prepare some children to enter the common school system and shall be offered only as funds are available. This program is not a part of the basic program of education which must be fully funded by the legislature."

Players and their assumptions about change. The ECEAP initiative involves several key players at different levels of the system: the Washington Business Roundtable, who pushed for and continues to support the early childhood education initiative; the state legislature and governor, who authorized and appropriated funds for the formation and expansion of ECEAP; the state agency, who is charged with supporting and assisting program development and expansion; and local contractors, who design and implement the program in response to local needs. Each of these players has a unique perspective on change. Their assumptions about change, which often converge, are outlined briefly here.

The Washington Business Roundtable's study in 1985 revealed several assumptions about change:

- A full range of options should be examined for their potential to improve the system.
- Long-term goals for change should be defined and should guide the development and implementation of action plans.
- Parts of the system are interrelated; action plans, therefore, should be interrelated and implemented as a comprehensive set.
- Research should be conducted and data should be accumulated to justify changes and their relationship to long-term goals.
- That systems are large and complex, and that change takes time, are not excuses for waiting to act.
- Other needed changes will be identified in the process.

The legislation that authorized the development of ECEAP requested the following:

> A report shall be provided to the legislature "... on the merits of continuing and expanding the preschool program or instituting other means of providing other early childhood development assistance...[including] specific recommendations on:
>
> (1) the desired relationships of a state-funded preschool education and assistance program with the common school system;
>
> (2) the types of children and their needs that the program should serve;
>
> (3) the appropriate level of state support for implementing a comprehensive preschool education and assistance program for all eligible children, including related programs to prepare instructors and provide facilities, equipment, and transportation;
>
> (4) the state administrative structure necessary to implement the program; and

(5) establishment of a system to examine and monitor the effectiveness of preschool educational and assistance services for disadvantaged children..."

This excerpt from ECEAP's authorizing legislation reflect these assumptions about change:

- Options should be explored before decisions to change are made.

- State and local support are necessary to implement lasting change. Change requires support from various entities at both the state and local levels. There is an optimum or appropriate level or mix of support to be provided.

- Input about needed changes must come from those who are being served (changes should be justified by their responsiveness to the needs of children and families).

- Change affects various components of a system (i.e., components of the ECEAP program itself and components of related programs that provide staff development, facilities, equipment, and transportation).

- Feedback about effectiveness of current implementation should guide decisions about change.

The DCD, ECEAP's state administering agency, has incorporated the following assumptions about change in its vision and strategic plan for program expansion:

- Local providers and state staff must be involved in setting the vision as well as in determining the implementation plan.

- Local providers must be given freedom to try various approaches.

- Change takes investment of:

  - Time
  - Money
  - State and local leadership
  - State and local commitment

- Change must happen incrementally, in manageable steps, with a balance between "doing" and "planning" (between reality and vision).

- Change requires a supportive "authorizing environment," with strong leadership across sectors; effective change requires a mass of advocates at the state level.

- Change needs an "incubator," a place to harness and coordinate on-going support for the change effort.

- Change requires a balance of pressure and support.

- Change requires ongoing support with regard to resources, information, training, and technical assistance; the state can play an important role in providing that support.

In designing and delivering locally-responsive services, ECEAP contractors appear to make the following assumptions about change:

- Input about needed changes must come from those receiving services (changes are more likely to succeed if they are responsive to the needs of children and families).

- Permission to develop slowly and take risks is necessary in the change process.

- Change takes personal commitment and willingness to change as an individual.

- Building collaborative relationships with other community service providers takes time and commitment to a common purpose (serving children and families comprehensively and effectively).

- Effective change requires a mass of advocates within the community.

Bridging state and local contexts for change. While many of the players' assumptions about change are similar, the contexts within which they are working for change are different at the state and local levels of the ECEAP system.

State change context. The context within which the legislature and the DCD pursue change can be described as having the following characteristics:

Focus of decision to change: Decisions to expand the program are made by the legislature, and decisions to modify administrative aspects of the program are made by the DCD, within the constraints set forth in the legislation. Decision making at the state level is centralized in these two entities.

Nature of the policy process: The governor and key legislators involved in the support of ECEAP are highly visible and subject to change at election time. DCD staff are affected by these administration and legislature changes, as well as by changes in administrative procedures and the timeline pressures of the biennial budget process. DCD staff turnover has been fairly high, and acquiring and orienting new staff takes time. All of these aspects contribute to a relatively volatile policy process.

Expectations and norms: DCD staff are concerned with establishing policies and procedures which affect and support all ECEAP contractors equitably. Priority is given to anticipating and addressing major problems which impact everyone across the state.

Scope of the effort: The scope of ECEAP is broad in many ways. Currently, there are 36 contractors serving nearly 7,000 children and families in all counties of the state. A wide variety of organizations, with highly variable resources and needs, have successfully bid for ECEAP contracts.

Perception of the change: DCD staff approach change in a planned, goal-oriented way. Strategic planning encompasses a broad range of considerations for both the short- and long-term. Program expansion and budgeting are projected within the biennium and into future bienniums.

Criteria for success: Criteria for the success of the ECEAP initiative include statewide expansion of services as well as positive outcomes of program participation for children, families, and the state. These criteria span both scope and quality of impact.

Local change context. The context within which local ECEAP contractors and programs pursue change can be described as having these characteristics:

Focus of decision to change: While decisions affecting program expansion and administration are made at the state level, decisions affecting program design and implementation are made at the local level by the ECEAP contractor in cooperation with program sites, ECEAP parents, other community providers, and community representatives. Details of programmatic changes are diffused to program sites under the guidance of ECEAP contractors.

Nature of the policy process: Dependent upon well-established and long-term relationships among community service providers to maintain comprehensive service delivery, program staff and community players remain relatively stable. Much of the work to build and sustain these relationships at the local level is done over time and behind the scenes, as opposed to quick coalition development accompanied by high visibility that occurs at the state level.

Expectations and norms: Just as the DCD is concerned with equity across ECEAP contractors, ECEAP contractors are concerned with equity across their program sites. With concern for establishing equitable policies and solutions, problems are addressed as they occur. Planning and progressing one step at a time is acceptable.

Scope of the effort: The scope of the services provided by an ECEAP contractor and its program sites is relatively narrow compared to the scope of the whole ECEAP initiative. The number of program sites per contractor ranges from 1 to 48, but the average is five. Through those sites, an ECEAP contractor may adopt a range of program formats to serve a wide variety of families from communities which are very different from each other (though in the same geographical area), but a program site generally serves families with similar kinds of needs in similar ways within one community.

Perception of the change: ECEAP contractors and program sites generally develop concrete plans and efforts intended to change program operation within a relatively short period of time (the program year or biennium).

Criteria for success: ECEAP contractors and program sites seek direct effects or results of the concrete programmatic changes they make. Service levels and anecdotal evidence are often used as a measure of immediate effects on program participants.

The success of ECEAP as a systemic change initiative lies in its ability to mesh the state and local contexts for change. ECEAP's approach (described above as following principles of local responsiveness, local control and coordination, and state support and technical assistance) blends the state and local change contexts by involving players at both levels in sharing responsibility for major planning and implementation decisions. Local staff are involved in statewide vision building and strategic planning processes. State staff stay apprised of local needs, provide, lobby for, or locate resources in response, and remain open to suggestions for change. On a case-by-case basis, state staff accommodate contractors' requests to waive particular program standards (such as a child's age or the length of service day) when children and families would be better served in another manner.

ECEAP contractors acting as "area agencies" have become bridges between the state and local change contexts; by assuming many of the administrative, programmatic, and collaborative building responsibilities traditionally initiated or carried out at the state level, ECEAP contractors are now operating in a change context which resembles that at the state level. For example, the scope of many ECEAP contractors' service delivery efforts have broadened and diversified considerably as they have expanded through subcontracts with other organizations to serve strikingly different communities through numerous program designs. While decision making continues to involve a variety of local players, and programmatic decisions are left to program sites, ECEAP contractors must centralize major administrative decisions to maintain accountability, quality, and equity among their program sites, just as the state must among the ECEAP contractors. While still focused on concrete change efforts that impact current or short-term operation, ECEAP contractors also must be knowledgeable of how these efforts fit into a bigger plan for change in their area and how they may effect longer-term outcomes.

Outcomes

Goals of the initiative. The goals of ECEAP include:

- Provide services statewide; serve all eligible four-year-old children and their families in tandem with the federal Head Start program.
- Provide effective, high quality, comprehensive services.
- Increase collaboration among community service providers to deliver more cost-efficient, comprehensive, and responsive services to children and families.
- Enhance positive child and family outcomes in the following areas:
    1. Establish patterns and expectations of success for each child, which will create a climate of confidence for present and future learning and development.
    2. Enhance each child's cognitive processes and skills with particular attention to conceptual and communication skills, including appropriate steps to correct current developmental problems.

3. Encourage each child's self-confidence, spontaneity, curiosity, and self-discipline.

4. Enhance each child's health and physical abilities, including appropriate steps to correct current physical problems

5. Enhance each child's access to an adequate diet, as well as enhance the family's attitude toward sound nutritional practices.

6. Enhance the ability of each child and family to relate to each other and others.

7. Enhance dignity and self-worth within each child and family.

8. Empower families to develop improved parenting skills, increased knowledge of and access to appropriate resources, greater advocacy for children's needs, and increased self-sufficiency.

Outcomes for the state. In its fifth year of serving children and families, ECEAP achieved its goal to have programs available in every county statewide. Through further expansion of ECEAP and Head Start this year, ECEAP's seventh year, the state has nearly attained its goal of serving all eligible four-year-olds in the state.

Outcomes for ECEAP programs/communities. The Area Agency Pilot Project, described earlier, documented several outcomes of program expansion through collaborative, rather than competitive, bidding for state funding. During the time of the Area Agency Pilot Project, each of the pilot area agencies succeeded in further developing ECEAP services in its area. Some highlights of their accomplishments during that time include the following.

- The pilots doubled the number of children they were serving within a two-year period and accounted for half of the entire state child count. Most of this expansion took place through subcontracting processes, drawing in new providers who were offered technical assistance, training, and, in some cases, specific program components by the area agency. This was accomplished without an increase in state administering staff.

- A broader base of providers was brought into the ECEAP system. Some new subcontractors were prior, unsuccessful ECEAP contract applicants who were able to offer quality start-up programs through the on-site assistance of their area agency. Other subcontractors included groups who had coalesced through the outreach efforts of area agencies, for example, a group of tribes who were willing to work with a local facilitating agency. Pilot area agencies provided on-site training and technical assistance to these new programs.

- Pilots developed strong community collaboration networks, working with a broad range of local educational and human service agencies, as program sponsors and as participants providing specific program components to children and families. Area-wide assessment of resources greatly expanded this capability to bring services together.

- Increased equity of access was an important outcome, as pilots pooled their area resources to enable outreach to remote communities with small numbers of children and to special needs populations.

Indications were that the six pilots were highly successful in both improving and expanding ECEAP services. Advantages and disadvantages of expansion through area agencies for children, families, and communities, programs and area agencies, and the DCD were assessed as well and included:

> Children, families, and communities: Quality and responsiveness of services improved as collaborative arrangements with other service providers in the community were developed. Collaborative efforts that were slow to develop, however, delayed service delivery for families in need.
>
> ECEAP programs and Area Agencies: Service efficiency was enhanced, resources were shared and multiplied, and access to highly skilled assistance at the local level was improved. New responsibilities and skills, however, were required by area agency staff.
>
> State administrating agency: Local assistance in quality assurance and planning was fostered, program expansion occurred without an increase in overhead costs or state staff, and local, immediate, and ongoing responsiveness and assistance to programs became available. State-level staff, however, had to delegate direct control of programs to the area agencies and shift their roles away from monitoring towards quality support and technical assistance.

Outcomes for children and families. ECEAP's authorizing legislation mandated that a system be developed to monitor the effectiveness of the program for children and families. To measure both short- and long-term outcomes, a longitudinal study involving a comparison to a group of unserved children is being conducted over an eight-year period. ECEAP children and families are being tracked from the beginning of their preschool year through the child's fourth grade year in elementary school. A comparison group has been recruited and will be tracked through fourth grade, as well. To encompass the full scope of ECEAP's comprehensive range of services for children and their families, the longitudinal study design includes child, family, program, and community variables. Some of the variables attempt to account for individual differences in children's development over time. Other variables address ECEAP's impact on families' abilities to support and enhance their children's development.

Findings from the first three years of the study indicate that children's abilities in several areas, including cognitive and physical development, social and emotional well-being, and health and nutrition, significantly improved during their participation in ECEAP. There also were indications of positive family outcomes, including increased utilization of community services and improved ratings of the adequacy of family resources. Subsequent study reports will discuss ECEAP children's and families' progress during the early elementary school years relative to a group of similar, but unserved, children and families.

Other research studies have found that preschool experiences substantially increase the likelihood of children's success in schooling through high school. Among preschool graduates studied, long-term positive outcomes including higher school performance, higher rates of graduation and continuing education, reduced teenage pregnancy, and reduced crime, have been documented. It is expected that children and families who participated in the ECEAP program will experience lasting benefits like these and others.

Costs, Investment, and Resource Leveraging

Costs. The costs of providing a comprehensive early childhood education and family assistance program vary from program to program depending on children's and families' needs and available community resources. Costs incurred by a program during a program year include staff salaries, facilities, equipment, goods and services, transportation, and other costs. In a survey conducted in October of 1992, the DCD found that ECEAP salaries and benefits accounted for approximately 65 to 70 percent of local program costs. To meet total costs, ECEAP programs must supplement the state funding they receive per child with local resources secured through collaborative arrangements or in-kind contributions.

Investment and resource leveraging. The following table displays the state's investment in ECEAP since its inception in 1985. Note that state funding and the number of children served have increased rapidly, while the cost per child has increased only slightly. Wanting local providers to stretch state dollars through community collaboration, the legislature has appropriated expansion dollars consistently to make more program slots available to children rather than to increase the funds provided per slot. The survey mentioned above indicated that programs have supplemented state dollars by as much as $500 per child through collaborative arrangements with other community service providers.

PROGRAM YEAR	CHILDREN SERVED	STATE APPRO-PRIATION	COST PER CHILD	CON-TRACTORS	PROGRAM SITES	COUNTIES
1985-86	--	$38,000	--	--	--	--
1986-87	1,000	$2.97 M	$2,700	12	N/A	N/A
1987-88	2,047	$6.0 M	$2,700	21	N/A	N/A
1988-89	2,200	$6.0 M	$2,700	21	N/A	N/A
1989-90	3,581	$12.8 M	$3,120 [1]	28	N/A	N/A
1990-91	5,483	$15.8 M	$3,120 [1]	33	160	all 39
1991-92	5,968	$18.9 M[3]	$3,434 [2]	36	180	all 39
1992-93	6,840	$23.9 M[4]	$3,550	36	180	all 39
Total	27,199	$86.4 M				

Washington's Administrative Code, which sets forth the conditions and procedures under which state funding will be used, specified from the beginning that funds appropriated for ECEAP would be used in the following way:

- Five percent of the total funds shall be used to administer, provide technical assistance to, and monitor the local programs;

- Five percent of the total funds shall be used for local program staff development, longitudinal studies of program participants, and unique costs associated with the start up of new programs;

- Up to 60 percent of the remaining funds shall be made available to programs in counties where 20 percent or fewer of eligible children are served; and

- At least 40 percent of the funds shall be made available to programs in counties where more than 20 percent of eligible children are served.

These requirements reflect the legislature's commitment to serving areas with the greatest need. Given that many areas were underserved, it is not surprising that the legislature has continued to support expansion to these areas, rather than increased funding to areas where services were available.

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[1] This figure is an average cost per child for the 1989-91 biennium. The actual cost per child during the first year of the biennium was slightly lower than $3,120, while the actual cost per child during the second year was slightly higher.

[2] This figure includes a $111.00 supplement from Quality Improvement Pool Funds.

[3] This figure includes a state appropriation of $15.8 million, Federal Child Care Development Block Grant funds totaling $3.1 million, and Federal Title IV-A Child Care Funds totaling $400,000.

[4] This figure includes a state appropriation of $20.3 million, Federal Child Care Development Block Grant funds totaling $3.1 million, and Federal Title IV-A Child Care Funds totaling $500,000.

Return on state and local investment. Because state and local governments bear the brunt of payments for some of poverty's symptoms, such as teenage pregnancy, welfare assistance, and juvenile delinquency, they have the most to gain from investment in high quality early childhood programs which can help break the downward spiral of school failure. The state continues to marshal the majority of resources needed to provide the comprehensive preschool and family assistance program. Because state and federal resources stretch ever thinner, however, an important part of ECEAP lies in the development of community capacity building and collaboration.

Immediate returns from state and local investment in ECEAP, and particularly from community collaboration, include more efficient service delivery to children and families and resource and information sharing among service providers. Comprehensive services that respond to the multiple and interrelated needs of a child or family have greater potential to effectively address and even alleviate the sources of problem areas than do separate services that respond to single areas of need.

Ultimately, the state is expecting improved education and employment success among its children and families, which then can lead to increased economic growth. Measuring these outcomes over an extended period of time will reveal the extent to which state and local investment in a comprehensive early childhood education and family assistance program is paying off.

Barriers and Challenges

Serving more children vs. increasing cost per child. While local programs acknowledge the need to increase service levels in underserved areas of the state, they have voiced concern over rising costs to serve children and families already enrolled. Balancing an appropriate increase in the cost per child and in the number of slots available for eligible children and families is a challenge for the legislature during every funding cycle.

Sharing responsibility and accountability. Because many administrative, programmatic, and quality control responsibilities are shared with local ECEAP contractors, state agency staff have needed to modify their role as a contract monitor to include a new role as a technical assistance provider. State staff have needed to shift their perspective and learn new skills, a personal development process that takes time.

Building community collaboration. At the local level, program staff work hard to establish collaborative relationships with other community service providers. Building these relationships requires time to meet, increased understanding of each collaborator's organizational constraints, and patience in arranging logistics. Different views, procedures, and policies can slow the relationship building process.

Limited resources. Expanding services at a time when resources are shrinking is very difficult. Limited funding, facility shortages, increasing transportation costs, and a shrinking pool of qualified staff continue to be issues impacting ECEAP service delivery expansion. As the number of children served by ECEAP expands, health care providers, local business, and local governments are finding it more difficult to increase the level of their support. Additionally, as the number of children who easily can be served by ECEAP's program models (center-based, home-based, or a combination) are enrolled, ECEAP is finding that those remaining to be served need more or different services. They are the rural-remote, special needs, and/or multiple or severe needs families. Some ECEAP programs also are finding a larger number of eligible children among the working poor and students. These families need full-day childcare and are unable to enroll their children in half-day programs, given the scheduling and transportation problems that occur. While new and creative collaborations among service providers have enabled communities to address these challenges, it is becoming increasingly difficult to meet the growing and diverse needs of children and families.

How ECEAP Has Changed the System

The ECEAP initiative so far has had at least the following impact on the state's system of services for children and families:

1. A large and increasing number of Washington's low-income children and families have received early childhood education and assistance services.

2. Longitudinal study findings show that children's cognitive skills, physical abilities, and social and emotional well-being have been improved before they entered kindergarten.

3. Longitudinal study findings also indicate that families have been assisted in accessing health and social services and in increasing their participation in and support of their children's development.

4. A large and increasing number of communities throughout the state have enhanced their capability to serve children and families comprehensively.

5. The service delivery system has become flexible (e.g., through the encouragement of various program designs and contracting organizations) to be more responsive to children's and families' needs.

6. Collaboration among service providers of all kinds, including school districts, health care providers, and social services, has been strengthened at the local level, resulting in improved service delivery efficiency and effectiveness, increased resource and information sharing, and improved access to highly skilled, local assistance.

7. Program expansion has occurred without increasing state administrative costs. The state agency staff has remained small.

8. The role of state staff has moved beyond managing contracts and monitoring performance to include providing technical assistance and ongoing support in program development.

In the larger picture of Washington state's reform action, a group of powerful education, business, and political representatives have been struggling for nearly 18 months to redefine the way students learn, the way public schools operate, and the way Washington state pays for its education system. Today, the Governor's Council on Education Reform and Funding (GCERF) is inching closer to its goal by unveiling a draft restructuring plan--the "Performance-based Education Act of 1993 (PbEA)"--in a series of public hearings across the state. One component of the draft, as a direct tie-in with ECEAP services, focuses on provision of additional funds for children and family services at or near school sites, with locally developed plans that promote collaboration. After the Council issues its final report in December, it will be submitted to the 1993 legislature.

The following section compares ECEAP with HB 2020 along five key dimensions and presents critical lessons for state policy makers as they look to implement systemic change initiatives.

IMPLICATIONS FOR STATE SYSTEMIC CHANGE EFFORTS

In human systems development, shared vision building and discovery of purpose through action and reflection are the fundamental substitutes for preliminary plans and blueprints in physical systems development (Hood, 1991).

Introduction

The first section of this paper, "Context for Change," set forth a particular way of defining systemic change and described our intent to apply that way of thinking to the experience of two particular state initiatives as a means of informing state systemic efforts which are planned or just coming on line. The second section was devoted to an in-depth analysis of those initiatives, including the context from which they grew, the assumptions which drove them, and how they have developed.

As we move into this final section, it is important to remember that we are attempting to build a more shared vision through reflection on action. In that context, these two state initiatives were deliberately selected because they:

1. Are relatively "mature," that is, have multiple years of experience and have moved beyond the turbulence of initial implementation

2. Have evaluation results which support viewing them as at least relatively successful

3. Have many local expressions in their respective states

That is to say, the two initiatives have many characteristics which we associate with systemic change.

Therefore, this analysis cannot be regarded as a "study" in any true sense of the word. It is only what its title says, a "depiction" of the role assumed by two Northwest states in enacting and implementing two particular initiatives which aspire to make "systemic change" in their systems of education.

These caveats are presented because the implications drawn rest heavily on the criteria which were used initially to select the two programs for depiction. Most of these criteria come from the cumulative experience and review of relevant knowledge base(s) which rest in the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. They reflect our particular vision, our belief in the importance of defining the key dimensions of systemic change, and our bias toward the importance of building on the research about change.

With that framework in mind, let us first examine the ways in which the two initiatives "fit" the key dimensions of systemic change. We then will review the ways in which they have utilized the knowledge base on implementing change, and conclude with the key "lessons" which they bring to state policy makers who are struggling with systemic change initiatives.

Comparison of Initiatives on Key Dimensions of Systemic Change

Oregon's School Improvement and Professional Development House Bill 2020 (HB 2020) and Washington's Early Childhood Education Assistance Program (ECEAP) are obviously very different entries into the field of systemic change for a state's educational system. One addresses the professional work environment of teachers; the other, the condition of young children and their families. One is administered by a state agency whose focus is education, the other by a department concerned with the development of local communities.

However, when the two are compared as to the ways in which they play out along the key dimensions of systemic change, rather than on their substance or home agency, strong similarities can be seen, as well as some important variations in their approaches to the more specific components of each broad dimension. Figure 1 lays out the detail of these similarities and differences.

Figure 1 reveals that the two initiatives have put into practice much of what research says about effective change: (1) each has multiple targets and uses multifaceted strategies for intervention; (2) both are based on locally felt needs; (3) both have been designed and adapted by those who must implement them; (4) each has provided for support of technical assistance and training to local communities; (5) both have been carefully monitored and supported by the state-level policy makers and agencies who administer them and decide their futures; and, perhaps most important of all (6) both have achieved a critical mass of advocates at the local level.

This overview of the two efforts also shows that ECEAP and HB 2020 have handled the specifics of the change process in substantially different ways, and that neither has achieved perfection in addressing all of the components of the five dimensions of systemic change. For example, ECEAP has focused to a greater degree on longitudinal study and evaluation of impact while HB 2020 relies more on data to assist early program implementation and to assess the extent to which programs actually meet original expectations. HB 2020 has gone much further in formal provision for technical and training support to local programs, while ECEAP relies more on collegial planning and monitoring processes for program growth. HB 2020 has a much wider target in terms of the local program practices which it hopes to promote, while ECEAP has program standards that provide a framework of activities within which programs have wide latitude for adaptation to local conditions.

This list could continue, but its real value is not in the conclusions that NWREL might reach; rather, it lies in the questions such a display may generate in those who are attempting to use the experience of ECEAP and HB 2020 to address their own efforts in systemic change--state planners and policy makers.

Lessons for Policy Development

ECEAP and HB 2020 have been successful in achieving some considerable degree of systemic change. The analysis which has preceded has attempted to present a fine-grained description of just how "systemic" they have been by describing the key systemic elements which they exhibit and the ways in which each has resulted in systemic change.

FIGURE 1: Comparison of Two Northwest Systemic Change Initiatives Along Five Key Dimensions

KEY DIMENSIONS	HB 2020	ECEAP
INFUSIVE		
• Pursues a vision	Improve outcomes for all Oregon students through site-based management.	Improve outcomes for Washington's children and families through comprehensive service delivery.
• Designed by those who must implement the project	Local site committees include teachers, administrators, students, parents, community members.	Local programs work with families and other community service providers to design appropriate services.
• Has specific, identifiable goals in concert with locally-felt needs	Improve education at the school site; support teachers as professionals.	Serve all eligible four-year-olds, especially in areas of greatest need; deliver services comprehensively and more efficiently; improve child and family outcomes.
• Has clearly expressed outcomes to impact important social goals	Make Oregon competitive in a global economy.	Improve children's and families' lives through comprehensive preschool and family assistance programs. Increase economic growth.
• Builds upon existing resources, knowledge, and relationships	Encourages collaboration among teachers, administrators, classified staff, parents, students, and community members.	Program components are based on Head Start model. Encourages collaboration among community service providers, including school districts, health and mental health agencies, social services, etc.

KEY DIMENSIONS	HB 2020	ECEAP
PERVASIVE		
• Is broad-based	All 1,250 local school sites in Oregon are eligible to receive grants; projects are unique to local situations; has served 246 schools and 10,427 teachers throughout all 36 Oregon counties.	Contractors and program sites vary widely in the types of organizations they are affiliated with; programs are uniquely designed in response to local needs and resources; has served all 39 counties in the state through more than 180 local programs.
• Has multiple targets for change	School buildings, teachers, and technical assistance agencies are all strengthened.	Communities, organizations, leadership, program designs, practices and procedures are all targets for change
POTENT		
• Involves a variety of key players	Legislature provides support; state agency provides human and fiscal resources and monitors and reports on progress; ESDs provide technical assistance; site committees design, implement, and evaluate their projects.	Legislature provides support and general direction for program expansion; state agency plans and implements program expansion and supports local efforts under guidance of statewide advisory committee; contractors provide administrative and programmatic support, and collaborate with other service providers; program sites work with children and families.
• Accommodates multifaceted, culturally relevant interventions	Local sites design and administer projects that will improve outcomes for students in that community and empower teachers in the process.	Communities design programs that are responsive to children and families living in that community.
• Developed from locally felt needs	Local projects are developed based on the needs of that site; most projects continue school improvement efforts already under way.	Communities base program designs on family needs and community resource assessments.

KEY DIMENSIONS	HB 2020	ECEAP
• Has a critical mass of local advocates	The site committees make and carry out critical decisions relative to their own goals.	Programs collaborate with schools, other community service providers, the private sector, and other community players to share information and resources, facilitate referrals, and access to services, and reduce service duplication.
COHERENT		
• Bridges the gap between state policy and community choice	Site-based management approach enables the state to support systemic change at the local level.	Empowerment-based approach enables the state to support systemic change at the community level.
• Is carefully monitored and supported by state policy	Conceived as a long-term state strategy, coupled with long-term funding and evaluation and increased responsibilities within the local system; the strategy was designed to be monitored by the state agency, and supported by state policy.	Conceived as a long-term state strategy, coupled with long-term funding and evaluation, and increased responsibilities within the local system; program standards are flexible and monitoring processes are focused on providing technical assistance in addressing areas needing improvement.
• Involves multiple roles and responsibilities in the local subsystem	Teacher, administrators, parents, community members, and students are active in setting goals and implementing practices to meet them.	Local program staff, families, and other community service providers are involved in goal-setting and decision making. Programs are affiliated with a wide variety of organizations, each having unique characteristics that impact program planning and operation.

KEY DIMENSIONS	HB 2020	ECEAP
SUSTAINABLE		
• Has the support of technical assistance and training	The state agency provides statewide and regional training; on-site technical assistance is available when necessary.	Professional development funds are used by local programs to tailor training to staff needs; the state agency provides statewide and regional training; state program managers provide on-site technical assistance when necessary.
• Provides for long-term change strategies coupled with long-term funding and evaluation	Legislation was designed as a minimum five-year effort; funds remain consistent; state agency provides for data collection and evaluation and reports to the legislature.	Legislation was designed to support program development and expansion upon availability of of funds; funds have increased rapidly; the state agency fulfills the mandate to conduct a long term evaluation study.
• Provides for data and information on statewide impact and outcomes	A qualitative evaluation of the program's first three years was conducted by NWREL, and provides data on program impact and outcomes.	A longitudinal study, conducted by NWREL, provides data on child and family outcomes. State agency documents program expansion and activity.
• Human and fiscal resources are available at the local level	Local districts provide in-kind funding and resources to support site-based projects.	Local funding and staffing support is generated through collaborative efforts and in-kind contributions.
• Provides for feedback	Data and information are provided by the local sites to the state agency. These data are used to monitor and modify program operation as well as reported to the legislative assembly.	Feedback channels exist between state and local levels. Parents inform programs and the state agency directly; programs inform the state agency; the state agency informs the legislature; and vice versa.

However, the bottom line for analysis of these mature, successful Northwest initiatives and their approach to effecting systemic change is to learn from their experience as we launch into the more comprehensive state reform efforts of the 1990s.

These more comprehensive reforms promise to encompass within their various components substantive areas as different from one another as ECEAP and HB 2020. They increasingly, as do our two initiatives, cut across traditional state agency lines for their support and monitoring. Yet, like HB 2020 and ECEAP, they also seek systemic change; they aspire to be infusive, pervasive, potent, coherent, and sustainable.

This common aspiration and the very variety of components which make them comprehensive increases the relevance of the lessons from the experience of initiatives such as ECEAP and HB 2020. Just what does reflection on the experience of these two Northwest efforts say to policymakers?

1. Aim specifically for systemic impact by applying systemic principles. Systemic change requires good legislation, but not all good legislation results in systemic change. The key is to consciously tailor the legislation to address the dimensions of systemic change, and assure that changes go beyond simply the demonstration of great ideas or even systemwide alterations of the rules to become truly systemic.

Such legislation must not only be PERVASIVE (broadbased, with multiple change targets), but also INFUSIVE (pursue a commonly held vision, have goals in concert with locally felt needs and build upon existing resources and relationships). It must be POTENT (have a critical mass of local advocates), COHERENT (bridge the gap between state policy and local choice), and SUSTAINABLE (build on local fiscal and human resource capacity, provide the support of technical assistance and training, set long-term funding strategies in place and provide for system feedback).

To achieve the full application of these principles, the experience of ECEAP and HB 2020 would suggest that systemic change efforts not depend so much upon a complete "paradigm shift" as a careful and creative blending of the best of the major change paradigms which are in vogue; they must employ the POLITICAL paradigm's close attention to policies, rules, and resources; simultaneously attend to the RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT paradigm's admonitions concerning the importance of empirical data, involvement of those who must implement the change in its design, and a logical, incremental approach; and build in the focus of the ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE paradigm on quality driven by the needs of the system's customers.

The creators of ECEAP and HB 2020 did not have the advantage of beginning with such complete and conscious classification schemes to guide their thinking; nevertheless, they did manage to apply most of them in the design and implementation of their respective initiatives. That may account for their success relative to other major reform efforts of the 1980s. Their experience provides an excellent starting point for the intentional design of initiatives which maximize systemic impact.

2. Aim for impact on problems which are malleable, as well as critical to society. ECEAP and HB 2020 were both helped by a focus on societal problems whose time had come. The solution of these problems was seen by large numbers of people as highly relevant to the pursuit of a shared vision for society--improved economic conditions and sustaining a high quality of life. The outcomes they sought were seen by many as capable of positively impacting the achievement of important social goals.

Less visible, but possibly even more important in the success which they have enjoyed, ECEAP and HB 2020 addressed problems on which the states involved were in a position to make a systemic impact. Oregon had built a strong base of experience and commitment to school improvement; Washington, through the leadership of the Washington Roundtable, had built a reservoir of commitment to early intervention. Both had the important advantage of a strong R&D base; the states were ready and the capability to capitalize on that readiness was at hand. In the parlance of this depiction, both were well positioned to be infusive.

3. Marry critical social concerns with broad, immediate local payoffs. The success of HB 2020 and ECEAP drew not only from the "readiness" of their respective states to embrace and implement them, but from a conscious strategy of broad involvement and implementation at the outset.

These strategies manifested themselves in both the initial broad approach to funding and the publicly stated commitments that "everyone" would soon have a chance to receive their direct benefits. These commitments were taken seriously and largely carried out in the early years of their implementation.

Further, the strategies directly addressed local "meat and potatoes" issues such as: improved teaching and improved teachers; improved school readiness; increased coordination of local resources for childcare and education. Finally, they explicitly attended to strengthening both local agencies and involvement of a variety of key players. These elements placed the two initiatives in a position to achieve the key systemic attribute of potency from the very beginning.

These strategies of inclusiveness and fit with the concerns of the person in the street can be contrasted with that of highly touted "pilot" efforts in which a few communities or schools receive substantial funding, usually accompanied by great fanfare, to show others how changes viewed as critical to more "distant" social goals by armchair policy analysts and scholars can be achieved.

The history of "pilot" programs initiated with those types of considerations in mind is a long and unhappy one when it comes to actually implementing systemic reform. At worst, they present solutions to problems which never really materialize; at best, they still may result in overexposure of the sometimes messy process of development to audiences whose expectations are for precision and immediate returns. Either way, they consistently fail to accommodate the systemic requirement for local ownership in the process of learning about and adapting the results of good research and development. They are really research and demonstration projects.

Pilot R&D efforts are very important, but should be seen as the knowledge base upon which the local adaptations which make up systemic reforms can be built. The case can be made that the state is better served by building on existing R&D knowledge and capability than by incorporating "from scratch" development efforts directly and visibly into uncharted components of systemic reform. The creation of expectations for precise and immediate results which are unlikely to be met can have long-term negative effects.

The experience of ECEAP and HB 2020 also reinforces the belief that systemic reform benefits greatly from an immediate and positive reception by the literally thousands of local professionals and parents upon whom its broad implementation depends. Such a reception greatly increases the long-term potential for achieving the systemic characteristic of potency.

It is a nice bonus if an initiative also is greeted warmly by the media, but success on this criteria may lie more in the lack of any initial negative reception than in widespread sensationalism. Achieving the critical mass of local advocates which systemic change requires depends far less on its initial reception by the press than the extent to which it turns out to be practical in meeting the action needs of local working groups. ECEAP and HB 2020 had good initial press, but their high degree of continuing potency can be attributed mostly to their fit with what literally thousands of local teachers, early childhood advocates, and parents were trying to do.

By this detailed attention to the "marriage" of critical concerns of society with strategies for broad and immediate local payoff, ECEAP and HB 2020 were, in the terms of our systemic dimensions, able to be both highly pervasive and extremely potent, at least by contrast to many of their peers in the school reform efforts of the 1980s.

4. Invest, don't just fund. This statement invokes the irreverent thought "Easy for you to say!" Policy makers in general, and legislators in particular seldom see or hear an idea which is not cloaked in terms of its importance as an investment. The lessons of ECEAP and HB 2020 do not offer an easy formula for determining the degree to which such claims are accurate, nor a specific means of achieving a well balanced "state portfolio" of investment in human development infrastructure.

What they do offer is a view of the other side of the coin; what happens when the policy system, at least in part, decides in a thoughtful manner that a given effort is a good investment.

The long-term funding which ECEAP and HB 2020 have enjoyed to an unusual degree produces many positive results. One is the increased leveraging of local resources, both human and fiscal, over the long haul; a second is that the importance (even at a slight additional increase in overall cost to the state) of providing ongoing technical assistance and long-term evaluation is seen as both appropriate and necessary. These attributes have taken both initiatives a long way toward achievement of another key dimension of systemic change--sustainability.

Much more attention to the concept of public investment and its relationship to systemic change is necessary. Efforts such as that undertaken by the Oregon Progress Board to specify broad impacts sought by the state as a whole need to be considered more widely, along with how outcomes and costs of reform efforts are related to them. More sophisticated economic concepts need to be studied and applied to the policy making process, including: (1) "opportunity costs," in which the cost of a particular effort is the value of other efforts which could have been undertaken with the same resources; and (2) dealing with "positive time preference," in which the normal human tendency to prefer enjoying benefits now and shouldering costs later is taken into account through "discounting," a procedure for converting future benefits to their worth at a single point in time (Hibbard, 1992).

The experiences of HB 2020 and ECEAP offer us only the possibility of using such important technical concepts as a lens through which to retroactively increase our knowledge about their practical application to public policy. That is beyond the scope of this paper. However, the state support of them appears to have changed the ways in which substantial public resources already allocated for education and human service have been used, and adds validity to the initial assumption that they were a good investment.

5. Build on what has been shown and known to make a difference. ECEAP and HB 2020 both drew from a careful examination and consideration of an established knowledge base which included practices that had been shown to produce solid results. Both also benefited from a widespread local awareness of that knowledge base, which helped to generate the critical mass of local advocates necessary to its potency as a change effort.

Such a base provides an opportunity to "lead from the top, bottom up," because it builds quality for the local participant into the change effort in as unequivocal a way as possible. To the extent that good ideas that are unsubstantiated by research (or even ideas that are based in research, but untested by development and monitored implementation efforts), are the basis for the systemic initiative, the possibility of damage to the key systemic dimensions of infusiveness, potency, and sustainability becomes a risk. That may argue for a phasing-in of the more comprehensive efforts, with accompanying state and federal support for related R&D work.

6. Monitor for both short- and long-term feedback. This observation brings us full circle; systems without feedback are static and unable to regulate themselves effectively--they require the return of output to their design and decision making components. The quotation which introduces this section says it well--"shared vision and discovery of purpose are the very stuff of human systems development." Feedback is the means by which discovery becomes something more than random activity; it is the way in which we build effectively on vision, research, and initial best estimates and efforts to actually achieve positive systemic change over the long haul.

The experience of both HB 2020 and ECEAP offer insight into the importance of using feedback effectively. Both began with the intent to study their effects and use the information to improve their impacts. However, the designs were quite different. ECEAP committed to a longitudinal study, with a strong focus on outcomes for children and families over time, while HB 2020 focused much more on outcomes for schools and professionals and provided for a strong formative evaluation in the initial year, followed by a summative one in the second year.

Neither approach was perfect from a perspective of systemic change. ECEAP might have benefited by an increase in focus on information for programmatic improvement, while HB 2020 could have considered the need for more longitudinal feedback. However, the fact that both did set formal evaluation mechanisms in place and devote significant resources to evaluation sets them apart from many state reform efforts of the 1980s. The kind of information available on each is decidedly more supportive of systemic change than that which is more typically generated by individual evaluations of highly diverse demonstration projects. It contributes directly to sustainability, a key dimension of systemic change.

As important as evaluation is, there are other factors in providing the feedback necessary to system improvement. One of those is monitoring which is simultaneously "loose and tight." It is loose, in that local variations are expected, and tight in that it is carried out against a common vision and a clear set of expectations about what are key research-based elements critical to its achievement. This set of conditions requires a different view of the role of the state agency, one in which collaboration with the local implementors is central. This maximizes the extent to which the experience of implementation provides feedback to the regulation of the system.

Both initiatives can be seen from this perspective as exceptionally coherent, another important attribute of systemic change. They carefully bridge the typical gap between state policy and community choice actions while providing both monitoring and support from the state.

7. **Keep the focus on powerful and positive outcomes for children and families.** The most potent "change lever" of all is consistent attention to a broadly valued superordinate goal Outcomes which are valued by local communities for their children and families must be clearly set forth as the reason for change and become the primary aim of feedback by which the system regulates itself.

This is really the "stuff" of achieving a widely shared commitment to a common vision. When such outcomes are the focus, the potential gap between state policy action and local choice in implementation is quickly and sensibly bridged. The initiative achieves the infusiveness which is critical to systemic change.

Achieving an outcomes focus, however, is not as simple as identifying a set of appropriate academic skills, setting high standards, and conducting a state-wide assessment. The experience of both ECEAP and HB 2020, as contrasted with other, more "accountability" oriented reform efforts of the 1980s, is informative. It demonstrates the subtle but significant differences between a narrow and often exclusive focus on "academic achievement," accompanied by a standardized approach to assessment, and a more systemic focus on outcomes which are broader and more "ecological" in nature, supported by "alterrative" approaches to assessing their impact.

The more "ecological" approach embodies greater concern for supporting the "resiliency" of individuals through strengthening their families, schools, and communities, than for supporting academic achievement alone. The connection between both initiatives' aspirations to achieve broad and longer term (more systemic) outcomes and a solid body of research and development, which gives reason to believe that those outcomes can be achieved through a variety of local implementation strategies, is also crucial.

ECEAP, for example, consciously built its vision upon, and is measuring its success against, a broad set of outcomes which were both valued by the public and supported by research. A key element was an emphasis on long term outcomes for children and families which demonstrate resiliency. The ECEAP vision recognizes that children's "readiness" for school and sustained academic achievement gains through the early grades are only two short term outcomes of early intervention programs and that there are key "intermediate" outcomes (such as strengthening families) which are critical to enhancing "resiliency" (for example, increased persistence in school, reduced adolescent pregnancy and delinquency, and increased adult employability).

HB 2020, while very different from ECEAP in many ways, also benefited from a sustained focus on broadly understood and valued outcomes that were assumed to be achievable through varied approaches and local adaptation of what was "known" to work. Here the focus on outcomes is strongly built into the initiative, but only to the extent that local schools and communities will choose approaches that research and experience show to have produced the specific locally desired outcomes in other settings. Again, systemic thinking allowed for local choice of changes that address broad policy goals.

In such a context, "narrow" and relatively short term measures of academic readiness and performance, including statewide achievement testing, become only one part of systemic feedback. Longitudinal studies and formative evaluations which attend to key factors beyond academic achievement, such as establishing shared patterns and expectations of success for children, improving family access to health care and community services, expanding the ability of schools and communities to serve children and families comprehensively and in collaborative ways, and increasing the decision making capability of local school teams, are much more informative about the success of "systemic" change, than short term evaluations (or even state-wide assessments) which focus primarily or even exclusively on academic progress.

Conclusion

Systemic reform in education is a concept which those leaders charged with the responsibility for assuring the well being of a state cannot ignore. It also is an elusive idea, to which most of us still bring highly varied understanding and meaning.

This paper has attempted to increase shared meaning, and in the process learn more about how one mechanism available to state policy makers--the legislative initiative process and its accompanying administration--can better contribute to achieving systemic change.

The demand for systemic change is not likely to diminish soon. The quest for it represents a new phase in the evolution of state reform efforts, one which will extend well into the 1990s. Like most "new" efforts, however, it springs from the experience of the past, often causing us to simultaneously reject past "failures" and labor to apply what we have learned from them.

We have attempted here to vary from that pattern by concentrating on success. We assume there are existing reform efforts which, even though they did not come into being under the current press for systemic change, are very successful from a systemic perspective. They are an important resource as we move ahead.

Perhaps the defining difference in this new phase of reform is the quest for comprehensiveness and coherence. The new initiatives are based on the belief that all aspects of the system must change at once if important new outcomes are to be achieved.

This logic seems unassailable, yet its appeal is diminished somewhat by the fact that most state education systems are actually composed of several hundred local district or county systems and thousands of local school systems. Thus, we must have approaches which change simultaneously the rules, roles, and relationships within and across both levels for at least the majority of these vast numbers.

State systemic implementation strategies also are not made more simple by the solid research and experience which shows that lasting change requires tapping local vision and local commitment to action. This means that traditional "mandate" approaches may not automatically lead to improvement. In fact, quite the opposite seems to be the case: whatever is mandated will be resisted. A solid base of local agreement and support has to come first.

To further complicate matters, systemic change efforts are not occurring in a vacuum. The "pieces" which need to come together in a coherent and comprehensive fashion are increasingly well known. They can be conceived of as a mix of critical curriculum components (Science and Math, Social Studies, etc.) which require new instructional approaches and new standards for performance, coupled with new structures (more professional control for teachers, increased decentralization of decision making to the site level, etc.), both accompanied by new connections (early childhood education and care, integration of education and human services). What is less well known is the precise mix of each which is required for each local situation, and the process by which states can facilitate that determination without falling into the trap of sweeping and ineffective top-down mandates.

All of these difficulties are overlaid with unprecedented attention from the media, a group whose incessant internal competition for audience through the presentation of dramatic news "bites" does not incline them to even recognize complexity, let alone tolerate allowing it to delay action.

As a result, the necessity to live up to the Total Quality Management concept of "leading from the top, bottom up," presents state policy makers with unprecedented challenges. The tools with which they are most familiar--legislation and regulation--seem ill suited to the task, at least if they are used in the traditional ways.

In the face of these challenges, leaders of emerging state reform efforts are making heroic efforts to restructure their policy tools and to craft systemic change in an unstable and often hostile environment. To succeed, they require "small wins" and the immediate creation of a positive broad constituency. The experience and success of such early efforts as ECEAP and HB 2020 can help with both.

The experience of ECEAP and HB 2020 shows that it is possible to very quickly tap the local efforts of thousands of teachers, schools, parents, and community leaders and connect their local choices to sweeping state policy actions with potential for positive impact on the entire state. With such a growing local constituency, and diligent attention to implementing all its principles, real systemic change has a chance to evolve.

A key for policy makers is to prepare for the long-term by building each component on careful study and a solid knowledge base about systemic change. To the extent that this depiction has contributed to both the understanding of the need for this state and local change connection, and to the very detailed analysis of decision options which must accompany its implementation, it can be considered successful. Like the systemic change which it seeks to assist, it can at best be only one more step forward, and not an end in itself.

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