DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 364 933 EA 025 308

TITLE	High School Policy: A New Vision for Tennessee High Schools.
INSTITUTION	Tennessee State Board of Education, Nashville.
PUB DATE	17 Sep 93
NOTE	20p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - General (140)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Curriculum Development; Educational Assessment; *Educational Objectives; *Educational Policy; Educational Quality; *High Schools; Mission Statements; *School Restructuring
IDENTIFIERS	*Tennessee

ABSTRACT

This document presents recommendations made by Tennessee's High School Advisory Task Force, with a focus on describing what students should know and be able to do after completing high school. Nine elements that are essential for schoolwide reform are identified: a core curriculum, a focused plan of study, active learning, an integrated curriculum, extra support to meet student needs, assessment of learning, a schoolwide improvement plan, and provision of professional development. Statements about expectations for students are offered in the areas of communications; critical thinking and problem solving; mathematics; science, technology, and society; national and international awareness; arts and humanities; wellness and fitness; career education and work; and personal growth and responsibility. Specifications about what knowledge or skill students should be able to demonstrate accompany each statement. (LMI)

HIGH SCHOOL POLICY:

A New Vision for Tennessee High Schools

TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

400 Deaderick Street
Suite 200, Citizen's Plaza
Nashville, TN 37243-1050
(615) 741-2966

September 17, 1993

HIGH SCHOOL POLICY

Contents

THE CHALLENGE

The Education Improvement Act (EIA) directs the State Board of Education and the Commissioner of Education to develop and approve "a high school curriculum that will prepare students to be successful in the twenty-first century, including a two track high school curriculum, one for college bound and one for students entering the work force."

The EIA envisions that the general education track will be eliminated and all students will pursue a purposeful plan of study. High expectations for all students, significant improvements in student achievement and increases in high school completion rates are prominent themes of the legislation.

A High School Advisory Task Force developed a set of bold recommendations touching all facets of the high school. The recommendations are centered on a vision of the high school graduate including statements about what we want students to know and be able to do when they complete high school.

A New Vision for Tennessee High Schools

Meeting Changing Demands

Our schools were originally designed to meet the needs of a rural, agrarian society. At the turn of the century they adapted to meet the needs of an urban, industrial society. Now, they must change again to meet the demands of a global, information-based society.

As we approach the next century, more students than ever before need to be educated to higher levels. Students must be able to compete successfully in a job market requiring higher levels of skills, participate in our democratic system, and develop strong ethical values.

Preparing for Lifelong Learning

The high school experience must be designed so students derive the greatest possible benefit. All students, with the help of their parents and counselors, must develop focused and purposeful programs of study. We must prepare all students for postsecondary study, either in university or technical training. While all students may not enter postsecondary training immediately following high school, they must be prepared for lifelong learning.

Changing the Way Teachers Teach and Students Learn

The High School Advisory Task Force began its work by asking "What do we want students to know and to be able to do?"

After fashioning a vision of the high school graduate (see page 4), the task force noted that the vision statements must be linked to teaching, curriculum, and assessment practices. Students must be active learners, encouraged to work with others, and supported by teachers as coaches. Teachers must use diverse strategies to engage students in learning. Faculty members must collaborate to integrate the curriculum and to foster their own continuous learning.

Restructuring the High School

This policy builds on the innovative and effective reform efforts already under way in many Tennessee high schools. Some schools are implementing the "High Schools That Work" model developed by the Southern Regional Education Board. Others are using the principles of Ted Sizer's Coalition of Essential Schools. Several are implementing reforms based on the Paideia concept. At least one school system is implementing reform based on locally developed strategies.

What these innovations have in common is the belief that all students can learn and they can learn at higher levels.

Schools are encouraged to investigate and learn from the very promising initiatives already under way in Tennessee. While the proposed policy is far-reaching, it is practical and within our capability to achieve. While the state, school systems and individual schools will all share implementation responsibility, reform is focused at the school level. Putting this ambitious plan into practice will take time. But we must begin now.

Essential Elements for School-Wide Reform

The "High School Policy" is a logical extension of the Board's Master Plan as well as the Board's recently adopted policies regarding teacher education, professional development, the principal, and mathematics.

The proposed policy recognizes that all of the components of comprehensive reform must be integrated. Isolated initiatives won't bring about the needed change. We have identified nine elements (discussed more fully on page 8) which are essential for school-wide reform:

- Core curriculum
- Two paths: university or technical
- A focused plan of study
- Active learning
- Integrated curriculum
- Extra support to meet student needs
- Assessment of learning
- School-wide improvement plan
- Professional development

VISION OF THE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE

For our students to be successful in the twenty-first century, the high school experience must dramatically change. High schools must be redesigned to prepare students to be lifelong learners and, more specifically, to prepare them for either postsecondary university or technical training. Above all, the high school must be centered on student learning.

The following are statements about what students should know and be able to do as a result of their experience in high school. These statements, developed by the High School Advisory Task Force, can guide educators in making decisions about what and how to teach and also provide policymakers a basis for making decisions about curriculum, textbooks, and assessment.

1. Communications

Students will:

a. Read to construct meaning from a variety of print materials.

b. Write clearly and effectively for a variety of purposes in all subject areas.

c. Listen actively to understand complex oral messages.

d. Speak articulately in daily conversation and in making oral presentations in all subject areas.

e. Analyze by making critical judgments about, and evaluating various forms of, communication.

f. Use technology to gather, organize, and communicate information.

2. Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

Students will:

a. Formulate questions and access information and ideas.

b. Organize and interpret information.

c. Make informed decisions among options.

d. Think creatively in developing and inventing ideas, concepts, and products.

e. Integrate knowledge by applying information from multiple subject areas in making presentations or products.

3. Mathematics

Students will:

a. Read, write, and orally communicate mathematical concepts.

b. Use various methods, including mental math, estimating, modeling, and diagrams, in solving problems.

c. Organize, analyze, depict, and interpret data to make decisions and predictions related to real-world situations.

d. Use appropriate tools, such as measuring instruments, calculators, and computers, to solve problems.

e. Solve theoretical and practical problems using essential concepts of algebra, geometry, probability, and statistics.

f. Understand the relationship between mathematics, the sciences, technology, and society.

4. Science, Technology, and Society

Students will:

a. Use scientific inquiry to pose questions, seek answers, and design solutions.

b. Explain the relationships among the sciences, technology, and society.

c. Understand major scientific concepts, hypotheses, and theories and their applications.

d. Use models and scales to explain or predict the function and behavior of forces, materials, and living things.

e. Analyze the effects of society and technology on environmental quality and generate solutions to environmental issues.

5. National and International Awareness

Students will:

a. Use knowledge of the past to explain the present and anticipate the future.

b. Understand the relationships among geographical, historical, economic, and cultural development.

c. Compare economic, governmental, and political systems of the United States to those in other nations.

d. Demonstrate respect for the dignity, worth, and contributions of others, based on knowledge that the people of the United States are drawn from diverse cultures and are united by shared values and traditions.

e. Apply principles of justice, equality, responsibility, and freedom to real-world situations.

6. Arts and Humanities

Students will:

a. Read and evaluate literature.

b. Appreciate creativity and the historical and cultural context of works from the visual and performing arts and literature.

c. Express insights, feelings, and perceptions through creative performances or products.

7. Wellness and Fitness

Students will:

a. Apply knowledge of the human body to make decisions related to nutrition, mental and physical health promotion, injury prevention, and disease prevention and control.

b. Apply knowledge to make decisions related to nicotine, alcohol, and substance abuse prevention.

c. Develop a plan for maintaining personal fitness and health.

d. Demonstrate individual development in fitness and psychomoter skills to promote lifelong physical activity.

8. Career Education and Work

Students will:

a. Explore career options; relate them to individual interests, aptitudes and skills; and develop career plans.

b. Understand how changes in society, technology, and the economy affect careers and require continuous learning.

c. Demonstrate the ability to organize resources, work with others, access and use information, understand systems, and use a variety of technologies in producing an idea or product.

d. Demonstrate the skills needed to obtain and maintain jobs including interviewing, problem solving, understanding and giving written and oral instructions, and working without supervision.

9. Personal Growth and Responsibility

Students will:

a. Exhibit truthfulness, fairness, and respect for self and others.

b. Exhibit the self discipline and motivation needed to be a self-directed lifelong learner.

c. Work cooperatively with others as a team leader, mentor, or group member.

d. Analyze conflict to discover methods of cooperative resolution.

e. Appreciate and cooperate with people of different races, genders, abilities, and cultural heritages.

f. Develop the capacity for responsible citizenship and community service.

THE ELEMENTS OF SCHOOL-WIDE REFORM

1. CORE CURRICULUM

All students will have access to a rigorous core curriculum that includes challenging subject matter, emphasizes depth rather than breadth of coverage, emphasizes critical thinking and problem solving, and promotes responsible citizenship and lifelong learning. The curriculum will be tied to the vision of the high school graduate. Teachers, parents, and students will hold high expectations for all students. Schools will communicate high expectations to students, parents, business and indusury, and the community.

Policy Implications:

a. All students will meet the following core curriculum requirements:

English	4 units
Mathematics	3 units
Science	3 units
Social Studies	3 units
Health, Physical Fitness and Wellness	1 unit

b. The core curriculum and additional courses required for postsecondary study will be tied to the vision of the high school graduate. For students entering 9th grade in 1995-96 a total of 20 units will be required for graduation.

c. Schools will minimize tracking of students by ability, eliminate lower level classes, and provide all students a challenging course of study.

d. Whenever possible, and with appropriate support, students with special needs will be included in regular classes.

e. By the time they graduate, students will be required to achieve at least one of the following: algebra I, math for technology II or the equivalent in an integrated curriculum incorporating the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) standards in accordance with the State Board of Education's mathematics policy.

f. All science courses will include laboratory experiences. School systems are encouraged to develop an integrated science curriculum in accordance with emerging national standards.

g. The social studies curriculum will be revised - consistent with national goals and with admissions requirements of Tennessee public institutions of higher education - to include the study of United States history, world history/geography, economics, government, and diverse cultures.

h. The health, physical fitness and wellness curriculum will integrate concepts from each of these areas and may be taught by a team of teachers from one or more teaching areas, including health, physical education, home economics and health sciences and technology eduction. Participation in marching band and interscholastic athletics may not be substituted for this aspect of the core curriculum.

2. TWO PATHS: UNIVERSITY OR TECHNICAL

All students will pursue a focused program of study preparing them for postsecondary study in either university or technical training. While all students may not enter postsecondary training immediately following high school, they must be prepared for lifelong learning. The two paths will be flexible so a student can change from one path to the other. Students in both paths will acquire essential skills and knowledge.

Policy Implications:

a. Students electing the university preparatory curriculum will complete the core curriculum and courses required for entrance into Tennessee's public colleges and universities, including 2 units of the same foreign language and 1 unit of fine arts.

b. Students electing a technical preparation curriculum will complete the core curriculum and a four-unit program of study focusing on a particular technical area. Schools will have some flexibility in designing programs of study.

- Students will have the opportunity to move directly into the postsecondary component of a Tech-Prep program. The Tech-Prep program is constructed on a 2+2 basis: two years of high school applied academic and technology courses linked to two years of college courses leading to an associate degree or technical certificate credential. There are currently 14 Tech-Prep consortia representing linkages between high schools, colleges, postsecondary vocational schools, employees and the community.

- Students may also complete part of their program through youth apprenticeship. During the junior or senior years a student may spend part of the day working on site at a business or industry with a mentor providing instruction and closely observing the student's performance.

c. Students will be required to complete a total of 20 units, including the requirements for either the university or technical curriculum plus electives. Since most high schools offer the opportunity to take at least 6 units each year, for a total of 24 units, students will actually have an opportunity to take a considerable number of electives.

d. Students completing requirements for either the university or the technical curriculum will have the opportunity to graduate with honors, provided they maintain at least a 3.0 academic average. Local school systems may add additional requirements, such as requiring students to demonstrate performance of distinction in one or more areas. Schools will avoid implementing honors diploma criteria in ways that result in tracking.

e. Schools are encouraged to provide transition opportunities at the junior or senior level which include college level course work, apprenticeships, cooperative education and community service. This will require collaboration with community service agencies, employers, and others outside the school as well as careful coordination with emerging state and federal initiatives.

3. **A FOCUSED PLAN OF STUDY**

Prior to the 9th grade, all students will develop a four-year plan of focused and purposeful study. The plan will be reviewed annually and will connect the student's academic and career goals to school.

Policy Implications:

a. When the student is in the eighth grade, the student, parent(s), and faculty advisor or guidance counselor will jointly prepare a focused, purposeful plan of study.

b. The plan of study will be reviewed annually by the student and faculty advisor or guidance counselor, and revised based on changes in the student's interests and career goals. Results of various types of assessments will also be used in adjusting the plan of study.

c. High school and middle school faculty will collaborate in planning curriculum and the transition between middle grades and high school.

4. **ACTIVE LEARNING**

Schools will design curriculum and implement instruction in ways that invite students to participate in their own learning. In this teaching and learning environment the teacher serves as facilitator. In both academic and technical courses, teachers will emphasize active learning strategies like cooperative learning, peer tutoring, technology, and the application of knowledge to real life situations. Students will focus on fewer topics within courses but will engage them in greater depth.

Policy Implications:

a. Academic and technical faculty will work together to facilitate the sharing of ideas and the use of active learning strategies.

b. Applied academics courses, which use hands-on strategies, will be implemented in high schools statewide. Appropriate labs and staff development will be provided.

c. Calculators will be provided for use in all mathematics courses.

d. Technology will be used to access information, solve real life problems, and improve instruction.

e. Schools will regularly inform parents regarding expectations of the school and new modes of learning.

5 **INTEGRATED CURRICULUM**

Schools will strive to integrate the curriculum, especially during the first two years. Teachers will be encouraged to integrate the curriculum both within a subject and across subjects. Teachers will be encouraged to work in teams to plan and deliver instruction.

Policy Implications:

a. Schools are encouraged to integrate curriculum within subject areas. For example:

- An integrated math curriculum consistent with NCTM standards
- An integrated science curriculum consistent with emerging national standards.

b. Schools are encouraged to integrate curriculum across subject areas. For example:

- A program for 9th graders taught by a team consisting of teachers of English, math, science, social studies, and a technical subject.
- An integrated American history and English bloc.
- A math, science, and technology bloc.

6. **EXTRA SUPPORT TO MEET STUDENT NEEDS**

Teaching and learning will become more personalized as teachers work together in teams and students assume more responsibility for their own learning. Extra help and extra time will be provided for students needing it, and all students will be held to the same high standards.

Policy Implications:

a. Schools will seek ways to personalize the high school experience, including the extension of middle school concepts and practices to the high school. Teachers working in teams, for example, will have the opportunity to get to know students better and meet their needs more appropriately.

b. Students entering high school unprepared for high school work will be given extra help and extra time so that they can perform at grade level. Schools are encouraged to experiment with ways to accomplish this including:

- High school readiness programs during the summer prior to 9th grade.
- Small class tutorials (for elective credit) linked to regular courses in English or mathematics.
- Tutoring by teachers, peers or community volunteers during school, before and after school, and on weekends.
- An accelerated program to bring 9th grade students up to grade level.
- Computer assisted programs.

c. The state will encourage and assist schools in developing innovative methods to provide extra help and extra time for students requiring it. A combination of federal, state, and local resources will be used for this purpose.

7. ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING

Assessment will reflect the concept of teaching and learning as a collaboration between teachers and students. Assessment will be an integral part of instruction. In addition to paper and pencil examination, assessment will include portfolios of student's work, performances, and demonstrations. Schools are encouraged to develop graduation requirements that include demonstrations of competency.

Policy Implications:

a. State and local assessments will measure higher order learning and accumulated complex accomplishments rather than testing samples of discrete skills.

b. Schools will develop and use multiple means of student assessment. Schools are encouraged to develop portfolios of student work, interdisciplinary projects and other demonstrations to document student progress throughout the four-year high school program. Many of these could be embedded in regular courses.

c. Writing will be a part of local school assessment in all subject areas; teachers will be trained in holistic scoring. In 1995, as required by State Board of Education policy, all eleventh grade students will participate in the state writing assessment.

d. In accordance with the EIA, students will successfully complete an upgraded proficiency test. The new competency test will include skills at more advanced levels. Beginning in 1993-94, eighth grade students may meet the competency requirements based on their performance on the eighth grade TCAP achievement test. In 1994-95, the new competency test will be administered to students in grades 9-12.

e. Beginning in 1993-94, all sophomores will complete a preliminary assessment, either the PSAT or the PLAN (formerly the P-ACT+). Juniors will have the opportunity to complete the AAPP. These tests will provide diagnostic information and assist students in developing their course of study.

f. In accordance with the EIA, in 1995-96 all students will complete an exit examination. Students who complete the university curriculum will take either the ACT or SAT. Students who complete the technical preparation curriculum will take Work Keys. Students who complete requirements for both curricula will be allowed to take both the ACT or SAT and Work Keys. The state will provide funding for the exit exam(s).

g. In accordance with the EIA, by 1998-99 the state will develop high school course assessments. These will be developed in accordance with emerging national standards and will include performance components.

8. SCHOOL-WIDE IMPROVEMENT

Each high school will develop a shared vision, school-wide goals, and a school-wide improvement plan focused on what we want graduates to know and be able to do. The academic, technical, and special education faculty will work together to develop a plan that reflects the school goals. In working for continuous improvement, the school will collect and use student assessment and program evaluation information.

Policy Implications:

a. In developing school-wide goals and a school-wide improvement plan, schools are encouraged to draw upon the ideas of SREB's "High Schools That Work", the Coalition of Essential Schools principles, the Paideia concept, and other ideas appropriate for a particular school. Schools are encouraged to network with other schools to share ideas and exemplary programs.

b. Schools and school systems are encouraged to consider the optimal size of high schools. To support student affiliation and academic achievement, high schools should consider organizing themselves into smaller units, such as schools within schools.

c. For the continuous improvement of schools, the schools will collect and use student assessment information (such as diagnostic tests and portfolios of student work) and program evaluation information (regarding student advisement, course taking, college going, job placement, etc.).

d. To optimize student learning and teacher planning, schools are encouraged to consider alternative ways for organizing the school day. The number of class periods during the day, variations of the length of class periods, blocking interdisciplinary classes, and rotating schedules are among the options available.

9. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The school will become a learning community, with administrators, faculty, and students engaged in continuous learning. The faculty will have adequate support for professional development and time to work together to improve teaching and learning.

Policy Implications:

a. To implement this policy, the faculty must have time to work together and adequate support for professional development.

b. Professional development will be school focused, with needs defined at the school level and related to the school improvement plan. While the principal is responsible to ensure that professional development occurs, it will be planned and implemented collaboratively with the faculty.

c. In providing professional development schools may draw upon a variety of resources: state and local BEP funds and federal funds are available; state career ladder extended contract resources may be used for professional development when tied to assessment of student needs; and technical assistance can be made available by local businesses and industries.

d. Schools may experiment with scheduling to create time for teams to work together and for larger faculty groups and the entire faculty to work together. Faculty meetings may be used for discussion of instructional issues instead of announcements.

e. Mentors will be provided to all beginning faculty members.

APPENDIX A

HIGH SCHOOL ADVISORY TASK FORCE

Ann Black, Teacher
Hillwood High School, Nashville

Sharon Chaney, Teacher
Hunter's Lane High School, Nashville

Dan Covington, Vocational Director
Metro Nashville Schools

Paulette Crews
Guidance Counselor
Central High School, Bruceton

Bertha Curtis, Teacher
Humphreys County Vocational Center
Waverly

Cheri Dedmon, Teacher
Hixson High School, Chattanooga

Ann Hughes, Librarian
Booker T. Washington High School
Memphis

Patsy Rivers, Teacher
Hickman County High School, Centerville

Alvin Rose, Supervisor
Secondary Programs
Cheatham County Schools

Pat Scruggs, Teacher
Alcoa City Schools

Joanne Smith, Assistant Principal
Chattanooga School of Arts and Sciences

Ron Shuford, Vocational Director
Claiborne County Schools

Bobby Webb, Superintendent
Lauderdale County Schools, Ripley

Fred Wetzel, Teacher
Science Hill High School
Johnson City

APPENDIX B

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

COMMISSION REPORTS

Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce. America's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages! Rochester, NY: National Center on Education and the Economy, 1990. (716-546-7620).

National Education Goals Panel. Building a Nation of Learners (Report Executive Summary). Washington, DC: US Department of Education, 1991.

Southern Regional Education Board. Making High Schools Work Through Integration of Academic and Vocational Education. Atlanta, GA: SREB, 1992. 592 Tenth St. N.W., Atlanta, GA 30318-5790 (404-875-9211).

The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills. Learning a Living: A Blueprint for High Performance (Report). Washington, DC: US Department of Labor, 1992. (1-800-788-SKILL).

The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills. What Work Requires of Schools: A SCANS Report for America 2000 (Report). Washington, DC: US Department of Labor, 1991. (1-800-788-SKILL).

BOOKS AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Adler, M.J. The Paideia Proposal. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1982.

National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. Curriculum and Evaluation Standards for School Mathematics. Reston, VA: NCTM, 1989. Also: Professional Standards for Teaching Mathematics, 1991 and Addenda for Grades 9-12, 1992. (1-800-235-7566).

Purnell, S. and Hill, P. Time for Reform. Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 1992.

Sarason, S. The Predictable Failure of Education Reform: Can We Change Course Before It's Too Late? San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1990.

Sizer, T.R. Horace's School: Redesigning the American High School. Boston, MA: Houghton-Mifflin, 1992. Also, Coalition of Essential Schools, Box 1969, Brown University, Providence, RI 02912.

Senge, P. The Fifth Discipline. New York, NY: Doubleday, 1990.

The College Board. Pacesetter, An Integrated Program of Standards, Teaching and Assessment. 45 Columbus Avenue, New York, NY 10023-6992 (212-713-8220).

Weiss, P. & Clark, J. Paideia Promise. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co. (In Press) Also, The Paideia Group, Inc. Box 3423, Chapel Hill, NC 27515 (919-929-0600).

ARTICLES

Blythe, T. and Gardner, H. "A School for All Intelligences." Educational Leadership, 47(7), 33-37, 1990.

Bransford, J. and Vye, N. "A Perspective on Cognitive Research and Its Implication for Instruction." Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development Yearbook, 173-205. Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 1989.

Darling-Hammond, L. "Reframing the School Reform Agenda: Developing Capacity for School Transformation. Phi Delta Kappan, 74(10), 753-761, 1993.

Glickman, C. "Open Accountability for the 90's: Between the Pillars." Educational Leadership, 47(7), 38-42, 1990.

Kilde, R.F. "Integrating Learning for a Competitive Work Force." Phi Delta Kappan, 72(6), 453-455, 1991.

Levin, H., and Hopfenberg, W. "Don't Remediate: Accelerate!" Principal, 70(3), 11-13, 1991.

Newmann, F. "Can Depth Replace Coverage in the High School Curriculum?" Phi Delta Kappan, 69(5), 345-348, 1988.

Newmann, F. "Linking Restructuring to Authentic Student Achievement." Phi Delta Kappan, 72(6), 458-463, 1991.

Oakes, J. and Lipton, M: "Detracking Schools: Early Lessons from the Field." Phi Delta Kappan, 73(6), 448-454, 1992.

Wiggins, G. "Standards, Not Standardization: Evolving Quality Student work." Educational Leadership, 48(5), 18-25, 1991.

Wirt, J.G. "A New Federal Law on Vocational Education: Will Reform Follow?" Phi Delta Kappan, 72(6) 424-433, 1991.

State Board of Education Authorization No. 331793. 2,614 copies. This public document was promulgated at a cost of $ .38 per copy September 1993.