A Business View

Education Reform in Oregon

January 1993

OREGON BUSINESS COUNCIL

Table of Contents

The Council wishes to express its grateful appreciation
To Dr. David T. Conley for both his patience and
Scholarship during the preparation of this paper.

Executive Summary - Introduction

There has been no shortage of warnings that our educational system is in need of fundamental reform. Beginning in the early eighties, a stream of reports alerted us to the dire consequences of neglecting public education further. The initial responses to these reports by state legislatures and well-intentioned boards of education have proven inadequate. Public education still has not addressed the challenge posed by its new strategic role as a key element for achieving economic competitiveness and social unity. Old methods are being resuscitated and recycled as the means to achieve new goals. This formula will not work.

This paper is based on the assumption that nothing less than a complete overhaul and rethinking of public education will allow it to serve the dual goals of excellence and equity that it must address if the State of Oregon is to remain economically competitive and socially intact into the next century.

The Oregon Business Council, a private non-profit organization comprised of 48 Chief Executive Officers of Oregon's larger businesses, believes that public education is the legitimate concern of all members of society, including the business community. The concerns of business are broader than simply the preparation of workers. The work place demands functional, thinking people who can get along well with others, develop personal goals, strive to succeed, take the initiative to solve problems, and continue to learn throughout their careers. The work place also demands that essentially all workers master these skills, not merely an elite minority. The definitions of a well-prepared worker and a well-educated student are converging.

Public schools by and large are not producing enough students who demonstrate these traits consistently. Although educators may support these goals, schools as they are currently structured are not achieving them. The Oregon Business Council believes that the Oregon Educational Act for the 21st Century (H.B. 3565), passed at the last session of the Legislature, provides a blueprint for transforming public education and should be implemented on time and with the resources necessary to ensure its success.

This paper outlines in greater detail the rationale for school restructuring, provides a definition of restructuring, considers some general principles that frame efforts to transform schooling, and concludes with a series of recommendations for the Legislature and for Oregon's business community designed to continue the process of fundamental educational reform set into motion by H.B. 3565.

The following statements are specific recommendations for policy action by the Oregon State Legislature, the Oregon State Board of Education, the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission, local school districts. More detailed discussion of each is presented at the conclusion of this paper.

1 **The Oregon Education Act for the 21 st Centu!y must be given a chance to transform education by being implemented as it is currently written without major modification. The timelines for implementation should be maintained or accelerated.**

Recommendation: *The Legislature should publicly reaffirm its commitment to the Oregon Education Act for the 21st Century.*

2. **The Oregon Education Act for the 21st Century must not be implemented piecemeal. Mechanisms must be developed to ensure that its implementation leads to a sys wide transformation of public schools.**

Recommendation: *The State Board of Education should require each &strict to develop a comprehensive plan describing how it will implement the Act, and how this will bring about system-level changes in educational practices.*

3. **Adequate funding must be provided for those sections of the Act that do require significant new spending by districts. In addition, the legislature must allocate funds specifically targeted for extensive staff retraining and curriculum development.**

Recommendation: *The Legislature should allocate $1000 per teacher for staff retraining to meet the requirements of the Act. The funds could be spent over a two-year period. Each district would be required to submit for approval to the State Board of Education a plan for staff retraining designed to support the district plan described previously. If it is politically impossible to find such a recommendation, alternative strategies to create additional time for staff training should be employed.*

4. **Individual schools must have greater autonomy and encouragement to employ a much broader array of teaching techniques, and personnel to teach.**

Recommendation: *Waiver procedures should be streamlined through the development of clear guidelines and shortened approval times. The State Department of Education should procure waivers for federally-funded programs such as Chapter I and special education. Waiver from certification requirements should be granted quickly when districts provide a reasonable plan justifying their request. Such waivers should be of two types; those allowing teachers with existing credentials to teach outside of their endorsement area, and those allowing people without teaching credentials to teach.*

5. **There must be accountability for schools to produce results once they are given resources and autonomy.**

Recommendation: *Schools that do not reach expected levels of performance should be identified and assisted. Central office staff and local boards of education must also be held accountable for supporting school sites. If no improvement occurs, provisions for staff retraining, remediation, and transfer should be made. The State Department of Education should help create accountability for local boards of education.*

6. Schools must specify what they guarantee their students will master. Students' mastery must be at a much higher level than currently exists.

Recommendation: *Each district must be required to adopt the learner outcomes identified for the Certificate of Initial Mastery(C.I.M.). In addition, each district must conduct a process locally to augment or supplement these outcomes with others deemed relevant to the local community. All report cards must carry information on student performance in relation to these outcomes.*

7. Local school districts must develop more engaging, challenging, content-rich curriculum.

Recommendation: *The State Board of Education should not mandate curriculum once local learner outcomes are adopted. The State Department of Education should be transformed into a technical assistance center and resource clearinghouse that disseminates effective educational practices and assists in curriculum development, rather than regulates educational processes.*

8. All schools should demonstrate that they are adding value to students. Effective schools and practices should be identified and publicized. Schools that do not adopt such effective practices should be held accountable for their actions.

Recommendation: *The State Department of Education should develop means to identify schools that are implementing exemplary practices in ways that lead to enhanced student achievement, particularly as such practices benefit groups previously not served as effectively or equitably by public schools. The identified schools and programs should be publicized and promoted. Standardization visits should include a review of the effective or exemplary programs adopted by each school.*

9. The Certificate of Initial Mastery must be designed so that students can demonstrate high levels of knowledge in addition to mastery of various "process" skills such as problem-solving or critical thinking. Standards must be set at a level that is high enough to challenge the vast majority of students currently in school.

Recommendation: *The Certificate of Initial Mastery(C.I.M.) should consist of the knowledge and skills necessary either to begin to enter the world of work or to pursue additional education. It should assess a critical subset of skills and knowledge, not the* ***total curriculum.*** *Its standards should challenge the vast majority of today's students. It should include mastery of important cognitive processes in addition to subject matter. Students should understand that it does not replace the high school diploma, and that they will need considerably more education beyond the C.I.M. to succeed in the work place.*

10. Work must begin immediately to develop the many and varied options for experiences in the world of work as required for the Certificate of Advanced Maste!y.

Recommendation: *An interagency task force composed of members from large and small business groups, unions, local governments, and state agencies with responsibilities related to employment should be formed immediately to develop as many ideas as possible for the work experiences required for the Certificate of Advanced Mastery (CAM.)*

11. Parents must be involved as partners in the education of their children. Each child must be valued. All children must be educated as if they were 'talented and gifted.'

Recommendation: *Individual goal-setting should be employed with each child. Parents should be required to participate in goal-setting conferences each year. Instruction and curriculum should be adapted based on these goals. Many of the techniques heretofore reserved for talented and gifted students should be employed much more broadly with all students. Examples include competitive projects and demonstrations, personal goal-setting, use of outside experts and mentors, special field trips for small groups of students, and student involvement in selecting curriculum that is of interest to them.*

12. There must be many more research and development projects within schools to identify effective practices. Such practices, once identified, must be implemented quickly.

Recommendation: *H.B. 2020 should be modified to provide funds for the development of focused Research & Development (R&D) projects (or R&D centers) in local districts. Districts would have to agree to implement successful practices from these projects or centers as a condition offending.*

13. Instead of schools, we should begin to think in terms of "Child Development Centers, places where public and private agencies coordinate their services to young people to ensure that all kids develop into productive members of society.

Recommendation: *The Legislature should find the development of at least a dozen child development centers where both public and private agencies coordinate services for the benefit of the child. The Legislature should also ensure the removal of all bureaucratic and regulatory barriers. Provide both incentives and sanctions to encourage governmental agencies to make this project a priority.*

Economic Forces

It is clear to even the casual observer that the U.S. economic system is undergoing radical transformation. Most obvious is the diversification of the economy from its traditional industrial base, built on low-skills jobs, to one with much greater emphasis on services, and a much different mix of employee skills (Vaughn, & Berryman, 1989). It is noteworthy that during the growth years of the eighties, the largest number of new jobs were created by businesses employing 150 or fewer workers, not by large corporations (Carnoy, & Levin, 1985).

Most of these were service oriented enterprises. Linda Darling-Hammond (1990) notes that:

> *In 1900 about half of the nation's jobs required low- or unskilled labor; today, fewer than 10% do. And while fewer than 10% of jobs at the beginning of this century were professional or technical jobs requiring higher education, more than half of the new jobs created between now and the year 2000 will require education beyond high school, and almost one-third will require college degrees. (p. 286)*

It is estimated that by the year 2000, nearly 90 percent of the jobs in the U.S. economy will be service-related, and that about half will involve the collection, analysis, synthesis, structuring, storing, or retrieving of information (Cetron, Rocha, & Luckins, 1988).

Increased Economic Competition

At the same time, the industrial sector, which thrived in the fifties, sixties and early seventies, finds itself competing internationally on an unparalleled scale. Goods from abroad have increased from the early fifties, when they were an insignificant factor in the American market, to the eighties, when 70 percent of the goods produced in the United States had international competition, and to the present, where as much as 90 percent of all American goods may be faced with foreign competitors (Reich, 1990).

This intense, unremitting competition has led to a rapid increase in the pace of change in the work place. Companies cannot simply devise a useful product, develop economical means of production and marketing, then count on making a continuous profit. They must constantly improve and revise both their product line and their production techniques. The workplace has been transformed from a place where change was often viewed as a disruption that might interrupt the flow of profits, to a place where the ability to adapt rapidly is essential for survival (Reich, 1990). Teamwork and worker involvement in decision-making are the emerging norms. These changes are being undertaken to help companies adapt more rapidly to the increasingly swift currents of change in which businesses must exist (Port, Schiller, & King, 1990). The old motto, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it," has been replaced by a new one, adopted first by the Japanese and imitated subsequently by many others. That motto is: "If it ain't broke, improve it."

Access to Jobs and Careers

Combined with this change in the nature of work and the pace of change has been an equally fundamental alteration in the way workers gain access to employment, particularly entry

level workers. High school graduates and even dropouts once had clear prospects for jobs with a hopeful economic future before they left school. Now they seldom have such a guarantee. The old methods, where son followed father, where factory or mill employed everyone in town for generations, or where contacts through relatives gained access to stable employment, have been replaced by requirements that companies follow hiring procedures designed to allow equal access to all, by the frequent movement of industrial plants, by the demise of the apprenticeship system, and by employers who realize they must have the most highly skilled individuals available in order to compete. Often the young must leave their home towns to find jobs. For the unskilled and semi-skilled, it is much more difficult to move from the educational system to the job market successfully. They must be much better-prepared and more adaptable in order to get a job.

Coupled with these changes in access to jobs are changes in the make-up of the work force. The diversification of the labor force from one dominated by white males, to one highly dependent on women and racial minority groups will continue and accelerate. Of the approximately 20 million new workers expected to enter the work force between 1980 and 2000, 82 percent are projected to be combinations of female, nonwhite, and immigrant (Hoachlander, Kaufman, & Wilen, 1989). These previously disenfranchised groups will be critical to the economic success of the United States over the next decade. They must be well-educated.

The "Internationalization" of Employment

A second, related set of changes in the economy deal with the "internationalization" of American companies, large and small. More and more companies are realizing that their only hope for long-term survival is to develop international markets and strategies (Mandel, & Bemstein, 1990). This is as true for farmers and ranchers as it is for accountants and automobile manufacturers. Owners and workers are must be able to comprehend their relationship to a global economy, a relationship which may require their company to develop subsidiaries or partnerships in many different countries in order to survive and compete.

This trend has been accelerated by constant improvements in communications and travel between countries, which make the dissemination of information much closer to instantaneous. For example, AT&T and Kokusai Denshin Denwa, Japan's largest international long-distance company, have announced plans to lay an optical fiber cable between Japan and the United States that could carry up to 600,000 telephone calls, or other forms of electronic communication. This will increase by fifteen times the capacity of the current cable, laid in 1988, which carries up to 40,000 calls.

Motorola has unveiled plans for a network of 77 small low-orbiting satellites that can send and receive cellular radio signals without the need for switching equipment. They plan to construct a worldwide network capable of translating into reality a long-standing prediction; by the end of the century instantaneous communication and access to data banks, business colleagues, fax machines, family and friends will be possible from anywhere on the globe. Events half a world away can and will affect an American company in. say, the Midwest in an immediate and profound manner.

The , internationalization of the American economy has meant more than U.S. companies simply setting up overseas branches. Foreign companies are moving their operations to the

United States, as well (Misahiko, 1990; Shane, 1989). Examples include Japanese auto assembly plants in Kentucky, Ohio, Illinois and California, including plants with the express goal of producing autos for export from the United States to Japan.

Foreign companies with large scale operations are not limited to the Japanese. Nestle Corporation of Switzerland employs over 48,000 Americans, British Petroleum 37,000, Royal Dutch Shell 32,000, and Tengelmann of Germany over 74,000. All indications are that the trend toward the globalization of work will only continue. American workers to an ever greater degree are going to be in the employ of corporations with headquarters in different countries, with different cultural values and traditions (Hoerr, 1989). These workers must have a much broader view of the world and of the role of the United States in such a complex, ever-changing environment.

Impact of the Federal Deficit

A final economic force that will profoundly affect the future of the schools in this country is the federal deficit. It creates two related problems. First, the structural deficit in the federal budget must be brought under control, and, second, the staggering debt incurred during the past ten years must be repaid at some point (Hollister, 1990). This will be occurring during a period of time where economic growth will be much slower than in previous decades. Slower growth means less generation of wealth, which will make it more difficult to generate additional tax dollars with the existing tax structure.

This means that education cannot expect much in the way of additional funding, particularly from the federal level. At the same time, since the federal government is first in line in its ability to raise taxes, it is likely that state and local governments will be under greater pressure to reduce taxes as federal collections increase. All of this will occur in an environment in which there is a decreasing support among the public at large for social programs in general, and where there will be increased pressure for enhanced productivity in the service and government sectors of the economy, much as there has been in the industrial sector for the past ten years.

Given that the number of workers available to repay the debt will be decreasing, both in actual numbers and as a proportion of the total population, it is critical that each of those workers be highly productive (Beck, 1990). If not, we may find ourselves less able to repay our debts, or engaged in intergenerational warfare over how to allocate the resources that do exist, or both.

The Need to Educate All Students

Whereas in the past it was acceptable for public education to educate some subset of students, perhaps 10 to 25 percent, to high levels of competence, the new economic order will require essentially all students to achieve these levels. A report from the National Center on Education and the Economy examined the state of training for the other 75 percent of the workforce, those who are not trained to high levels of competence. Former U.S. Labor Secretary, Ray Marshall, who headed the commission that wrote the report, told reporters that the American educational system was the "the worst system of any major country for educating the non-college bound." (Mitgang, 1990). In a bluntly worded conclusion, the report stated: "What we are facing is an economic cliff of sorts and the front line working people of America are about to fall off it." (Commission on the Skills of the American Work Force, 1990).

The report recommends that all workers be educated to high levels of functioning in "job basics," and that they be able to demonstrate those skills in means other than standardized tests. The report's conclusions were based on the results from over 2,000 interviews conducted at more than 550 companies and agencies in the U.S., Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Ireland, Japan, and Singapore.

The difficulty of addressing this challenge with the current educational system is brought into perspective by a study of American students at risk conducted by Phi Delta Kappa (Frymier, & Gansneder, 1989). Data were collected on 45 factors deemed to place students at risk of failing in school and subsequently in life. Of the 22,018 students included in the study, between 25 percent and 35 percent were deemed to be "seriously at risk." As disconcerting as these figures may be, the report suggested that things may be worse than they seem: "But even these figures are artificially low .... (O)ur figures represent conservative estimates." The study did not indicate that the schools were confident or effective in adapting to meet the needs of these students: "Various data suggest that the professionals surveyed lacked skill with or confidence about particular approaches to working with at-risk students." Given the decreasing pool of labor available to the American economy during the next ten to twenty years, it will not be possible to write off one-quarter to one-third of the student population, and continue to compete with nations that are educating essentially all students to high levels of functioning.

Three reports from organizations outside of education indicate the direction the private sector believes education must go to adapt to changing economic realities. In 1990 the Commission on the Skills of the American Work Force published *'America's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages"*. The report outlines the crisis faced by American workers; they must develop higher skills to produce goods with high value on the international market or face decreasing wages as they compete with low-wage Third World workers in the production of low-value, mass-produced items.

Questions posed in the report indicate the concerns and priorities of the private sector regarding public education:

· Do we continue to define educational success as "time in the seat," or choose a new system that focuses on the demonstrated attainment of high standards?

· Do we continue to provide little incentive for noncollege-bound students to study hard and take tough subjects, or choose a system that will reward real effort with better pay and better jobs?

· Do we continue to turn our backs on America's school dropouts, or choose to take responsibility for educating them?

• Do we continue to provide unskilled workers for unskilled jobs, or train workers and give companies incentives to deploy them in high performance organizations?

• Do we continue to limit training to a select handful of managers and professionals, or choose to provide training to frontline workers as well? (pp. 8-9)

A second report, which has also been widely circulated among employers and educators, indicates more specifically the types of skills that employers desire in employees in the 1990s.

Entitled *Workplace Basics: The Skills Employers Want* and produced jointly by the American Society of Training and Development and the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment, and Training Administration, it was the result of interviews with employers throughout the nation. The report concludes that employers were looking for seven different skill strands:

· Employers want employees who can learn the particular skills of an available job - who have "learned how to learn."

• Employers want employees who will hear the key points that make up a customer's concerns (listening) and who can convey an adequate response (oral communication).

• Employers want employees who have pride in themselves and their potential to be successful (self-esteem), who know how to get things done (goal-setting/motivation), and who have some sense of the skills needed to perform well in the workplace (personal and career development).

• Employers want employees who can get along with customers, suppliers, or coworkers (interpersonal and negotiation skills); who have some sense of where the organization is headed and what they must do to make a contribution (organizational effectiveness); and who can assume responsibility and motivate co-workers when necessary (leadership). (American Society of Training and Development, & U.S. Department of Labor, 1990)(p. 8)

The third report, commissioned by the U.S. Department of Labor, entitled *What Work Requires of Schools: A SCANS Reportfor America 2000* (Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills, 1991), identifies five competencies and a three-part foundation of skills and personal qualities that the commission described as necessary "for solid job performance." These competencies and skills are as follows:

Competencies:

· Resources-allocating time, money, materials, space, and staff.

• Interpersonal skills-working on teams, teaching others, serving customers, leading, negotiating, and working well with people from culturally diverse backgrounds.

• Information-acquiring and evaluating data, organizing and maintaining files, interpreting and communicating, and using computers to process information.

• Systems-understanding social, organizational, and technological systems, monitoring and correcting performance, and designing and improving systems.

• Technology-selecting equipment and tools, applying technology to specific tasks, and maintaining and troubleshooting technologies.

The Foundation:

· Basic skills-reading, writing, arithmetic and mathematics, speaking, and listening.

- Thinking skills-thinking creatively, making decisions, solving problems, seeing things in the mind's eye, knowing how to learn, and reasoning.

- Personal qualities-individual responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management, and integrity. (p. vii)

In even a cursory examination of these three reports readers will be struck by the degree of congruence between what the business community says it wants from workers and the qualities most educators say they want to cultivate in students. One interesting aspect of the current move to restructure public education is the degree to which the agendas of educational reformers and of the business community overlap, albeit in an inadvertent manner and for very different reasons. Both groups tend to believe:

· The curriculum should move from a primary emphasis on rote learning and factual information to a greater emphasis on problem solving, application, and integration of knowledge and higher-order thinking.

· Students must be actively engaged in learning. They should not be trained simply to do what they are told.

· Knowledge must be applied. The acquisition of "seat time" is not adequate. The ability to apply or demonstrate a set of skills or knowledge is the best way to assess whether learning has really occurred.

· Education extends beyond the walls of the classroom. Students should apply knowledge and acquire new skills, information, and insights in the larger community.

· The teacher must facilitate learning, not control it. One of the key goals of education is to create lifelong learners, to develop a student's learning skills, not merely to transmit a body of information in a way that leaves the student with negative attitudes about learning.

· Students must learn to work in groups and as members of teams, not solely as individuals, and learn to work with students who are very different from themselves.

· Each learner is valuable; there are no "expendable" students. Students must have positive self-images and the ability to define goals for themselves. All students must be functional, healthy human beings with some reasonable probability of success when they leave school.

· "Process" skills used for thinking, reasoning, and problem-solving are as important as knowledge of specific content.

This "community of interest" that exists between progressive educational reformers and business leaders is an unusual, and perhaps fleeting, one. When the business community becomes actively involved in determining the goals and methods of education many educators react nervously. On the other hand, this involvement may herald a new relationship between schools and a rapidly evolving work environment.

This new work environment, already being tested in many areas of business (Port, Schiller, & King, 1990), is characterized by the demise of the traditional hierarchical structure of work where the few make the decisions and the many implement them, and is accompanied by the emergence of an increasing emphasis on teamwork, problem-solving and communication at all levels of the organization (Reich, 1990).

Clearly, there is a sense of urgency attached to employers' desires that public education equip essentially all students to survive and prosper in this newly developing economic environment.

Social/Political Forces

A host of writers have described the social forces that are converging on public education (Cook, 1988; Hodgkinson, 1988; McCune, 1986; Morrow, 1988; Moynihan, 1988). There is little reason to expect that the impact of these forces on schools will lessen. In fact, the relative ineffectiveness of public schools as instruments of social policy will tend to result in increased, not decreased demands to fulfill this role. This is due in part to the vacuum that exists in terms of organizations or structures that are capable of providing support to the family as the pressures on it continue to intensify.

The Changing Family

The changing structure of the American family has not yet been assimilated by the educational system (Hodgkinson, 1988; Shane, 1989). While some schools move to offer before and after school care, the school system as a whole still operates on implicit assumptions about parents and family structure that are no longer true. The number of family "constellations" has increased tremendously during the past three decades to the point where the nuclear family represents only one of perhaps a dozen different family structures. Schools tend to assume the existence of the traditional nuclear family, even while espousing rhetoric to the contrary. It will require profound changes for schools to develop different conceptions of the family and of the "contract" that exists between home and school.

Increasing Economic and Social Polarization

This aspect of public education will become increasingly important if the economic polarization that began in the seventies and accelerated in the eighties continues (Hollister, 1990; Jencks, 1989). Evidence continues to mount that it is becoming more and more difficult to escape one's social class of birth, particularly for those born into the lower economic classes. A report from the National Center on Education and the Economy (Commission on the Skills of the American Work Force, 1990) describes the "economic cliff" facing American workers: A few are getting richer, but most are losing ground:

- The highest earning 30 percent of American families increased their share of national income from 54 percent in 1967 to 58 percent in 1987, while the bottom 70 percent have been losing ground.

- Over the past 15 years, the earnings gap between white collar professionals and skilled tradespeople has gone from 2 percent to 37 percent; the gap between professionals and clerical workers has gone from 47 percent to 86 percent.

- Over the past decade, earnings of college-educated males age 24 to 34 increased by 10 percent. Earnings of those with only high-school diplomas saw their real incomes drop by 12 percent.

- Over 60 percent of white families have incomes over $25,000 per year, compared with only 49 per cent of hispanic families and 36 percent of black families. The poverty rate for black families is nearly three times that for whites, and the gap has been widening.

- One in five American children-one third of our future front-line workforce-is born into poverty. (pp. 19-20)

It is a chilling realization that students may go through their entire childhood without ever interacting with people who are different from them. If this pattern continues and expands, it has profound implications for the attitudes future adults will have toward those who are less (or more) fortunate than they are. Our social system has been based on the existence of a large middle class that has been relatively tolerant of both those who have more and those who have less. Changes in this alignment will reverberate through the policy making machinery of government with unpredictable consequences.

Decreasing Civic Responsibility

Closely related to this phenomenon is a concomitant drop in both the understanding of a democratic society and the sense of civic identity felt by most citizens. Polls have demonstrated increasing cynicism by Americans over the past thirty years, reflected by the unabated decline in participation in the electoral process since the early sixties. Other indicators are the deep-seated distrust of public office holders, and a declining knowledge of and interest in civic events on the part of American students (Boyer, 1990; Fowler, 1990). Schools are the institution with the primary responsibility for creating a value for and understanding of democratic ideals and principles. If schools remain predominantly authoritarian at worst and bureaucratic at best students (or parents) will have scant opportunity to develop and apply the skills and perceptions needed to function in a complex democracy (Glasser, 1990).

Why is it important to have citizens who are understanding and tolerant of one another? Beyond the obvious goal of social harmony, there is another set of issues that link back to the economic issues outlined in the previous section.

Throughout the world regional economies are developing and being formalized, the European Economic Community being the most striking example. There are strong indications that the North American economy will have to follow a similar model in order to compete. The free **trade** agreement with Canada is already being implemented and it is likely that Mexico will be included in some form of a North American "Common Market," as well. North American countries will need to open their borders and blend their economies to match changes in Europe and Asia (Baker, Weiner, & Borrus, 1990).

This trend, combined with the increasingly multinational nature of all businesses, not just large corporations, means that students will need to be able to understand and get along with people who are quite different from themselves, in order to survive economically. In practice this may mean having a boss who is of a different racial/ethnic group, or of a different gender (Dumaine, 1989). It may mean the need to travel and live outside of the United States for extended periods of time in order to advance within a company. The knowledge of different cultures needed to interact and move with comfort among different cultural groups is not highly developed in most Americans currently, and is not taught in most public schools.

Most Americans must also be prepared to shift jobs frequently throughout their careers, since various industries will flourish and others will atrophy as a result of cross-border pressures and shiffing social values, such as increasing concern for the environment. The ability to be highly adaptive, a lifelong learner, a problem-solver, and, perhaps, an entrepreneur, will all be critical survival skills in this fluid, unpredictable economic climate where the most basic rules of the game are being rewritten with increasing frequency.

There is little to indicate that what is occurring in our schools will prepare students for these changes in even the most remote way.

New Assumptions for Public Education

What follows is a list of six statements that reflect fundamentally different ways of thinking about education. They represent a summary of the ways in which society's values changed, and the implications of these changes for schools. Each is presented and its implications briefly discussed.

1 Essentially all students can be educated to some relatively high level of functioning

It is becoming increasingly clear that dropout rates of 25 percent will not be acceptable, nor will rates of 20 percent, 15 percent, or even 10 percent in the long run. Nor will it be enough to merely to keep students in school, to "warehouse" them until they are old enough to work. How will schools retain and educate students who have abandoned education because they feel it has little meaning or value for them? How will schools adapt if there can no longer be "winners" and 6'losers7

For starters, the notion of intelligence as something that is distributed normally will have to be examined. So long as this is accepted as the basis for educational practice there must be winners and losers by *definition.* Much of generally accepted educational practice is based on this deep, unspoken, unquestioned assumption. Practices such as tracking, standardized testing, grading on a curve, talented and gifted, and remedial education are all based on the notion that some must be smarter than others.

Alternatively, there is the Japanese model. It is with trepidation that this model is even mentioned, given the strong reaction it engenders in American educators, who evoke images of distraught Japanese teenagers committing suicide, driven over the edge by pressure to succeed on examinations. There is, however, a lesson to be learned from the Japanese system. This is a

system in which 97 percent of the students graduate from high school, apparently at high levels of intellectual functioning. If this is true, then it dispels the myth of the normal distribution, or at least calls into question the level of performance most students are capable of achieving. Denis Doyle (1991) states that "depending on whose data sets you use, the top 5 percent of the Americans are at the Japanese average (by about grades 5 or 6)" (p. 16).

There are only two possible conclusions: one, that the Japanese are genetically superior, a rather unpalatable and wholly unsubstantiated assumption; or, two, that somehow they are able to avoid the phenomenon of the normal curve. Certainly there are cultural differences. However, at a time when many are expressing profound frustration with the American educational system, it would seem logical to reexamine every aspect of educational practice in this country, rather than simply conceding that we cannot duplicate the performance of Japanese students, though we will clearly pursue ends and employ methods that are consistent with our own culture. The lesson to be learned from the Japanese is that it is *possible* to educate essentially all students to high levels of academic functioning (even with class sizes much larger than those in most American schools). Sincerely believing that all students can learn and designing schools in which this occurs may be the greatest challenge ever faced by the American educational system.

2. Learning is what students can do at the conclusion of education, not simply the processes to which they have been subjected.

Students need to be able to demonstrate what they can do at the conclusion of learning. It is not enough to say that someone sat in a class for the prescribed length of time, or that they passed the appropriate test. Learning is coming to be defined as what a student can do with what they have learned.

Educators are beginning to move away from evaluation (reaching some sort of summary judgment) to assessment (providing ongoing feedback based on the application of skills). Assessment involves more public demonstrations of skills. Currently schools use public demonstrations in certain areas, primarily to entertain (music assemblies, sports events), not to show public accountability for student learning.

Interestingly enough, such public demonstrations were part of public education in the 1890s when, at the end of each week, students recited their lessons to an audience of parents. It quickly became apparent which student knew his or her lessons and which did not. These types of demonstrations of rote learning will be replaced by more meaningful and complex demonstrations, but the fact remains that there will be a much higher degree of public accountability for student performance.

3. Education has economic utility for essentially all students and for society.

Pennar (1991) summarizes current thinking on the economic importance of education:

> *Today, economists agree that the widespread competitive and technological changes that occurred during the 1980s induced a sharp increase in the rewards for skill and education, thereby widening the gap in incomes. From 1980 to 1990, men with four years of*

high school saw their median incomes fall 15.5% in real terms. During the same period, men with four years of college experienced a gain in median income, after inflation, of 1.6%.

We have to ask ourselves whether the macroeconomy is becoming permanently hostile to less-skilled workers," says (Northwestern University economist) Rebecca M. Blank. If so, there will be considerable costs. First, there are the costs of having to support a population that is barely making it economically. Next, there is the potential cost of possible social disruption resulting from worsening income inequality and a population of persistently poor individuals. Finally, there's the cost of consigning people to low-productivity jobs when they and society could do better.

Poverty is always a burden, of course-both to those who must endure it and to the society that must cope with it. But by far the greatest burden and the greatest potential loss to the economy-stems from the extraordinarily high level of child poverty in America today. One in five children under the age of 15 lives in poverty, and a staggering 50% of all black children under the age of six live in poverty. Poor children don't eat as well or learn as much as their better-off peers, which means they won't do as well when they become adults. "We are dis-advantaging the next generation," says Timothy M. Smeedlin, an economist at Syracuse University. (p. 88)

The challenge for educators revolves around the way schools define and teach work skills. Since the 1920s, this goal has been addressed through a vocational track that taught specific trades to students. These trades either no longer exist or now demand skills in their workers that schools are not able to provide. As the results from the Workplace Basics survey indicate, the line between a "vocational" and an "academic" education will begin to blur, as all students need to acquire the skills of problem solving, inquiry, team building, oral and written communication. In addition, all students must have high self-esteem, a love of learning, and a strong sense of personal efficacy. All aspects of the educational program will have to contribute to the achievement of these goals; compartmentalizing education into distinct tracks will not be a productive strategy for achieving the goals.

4. Learners must participate actively in their own education in a variety of ways. Learning cannot be passive.

Schools must pay much greater attention to the need to provide environments that are highly motivating to students. Few young people will learn simply because they are told to do so. If they do learn under such circumstances, they tend to retain only isolated bits of information. Today's student seems less willing to perform tasks that lack clear meaning or purpose, that lack any inherent joy or sense of accomplishment. The 20 to 30 percent of the school population with clear sights on a college education still subscribe to the notion of delaying gratification and of doing the tasks that are asked of them. This creates the illusion for teachers that the system could still work, if only the other students had the right attitude. In the meantime, the other 70 to 80 percent go through the motions, frustrating teachers, creating discipline problems, and expending as little effort as possible. This system is kept running by the teacher's input of energy. Teachers come to see their roles in Sisyphusean terms-pushing boulders up hills for most

of the semester, only to watch them come rolling back down with depressing regularity, particularly over the summer. It is little wonder that teachers in such an environment are tired, frustrated, and often cynical.

Active participation in learning suggests more individualization of instructional goals and strategies for students. Teachers will need to become diagnosticians and planners, tailoring and modifying educational experiences to student needs and interests.

It is important to realize that this is not advocating laxness, reduced standards, or a "do-your-own-thing" educational experience akin to the 1960s. To the contrary, such experiences will be more demanding for both teachers and students. They will require more hours, more work of a higher quality, and more accountability than today, where many classrooms feature endless worksheets, reading assignments, and tests, the contents of which are quickly forgotten.

5. Education is a responsibility that extends beyond schools: Parents, emp1gyers, community members have responsibilities and a right to be included as partners.

The partnership between school and the broader community is in the process of seeking a new equilibrium point. Some educators fear parental involvement. They point to communities laden with pathologies-abusive parents, drugs, crime, lack of respect for authority--on the one hand, and of obsessive parents who push their children to achieve at almost any cost on the other.

Educators cannot educate children without parent and community involvement. VAlile teachers and principals will continue to have a key role in school governance, by virtue of their knowledge, expertise, and high interest level, they will not be unchallenged in these areas.

In an increasingly complex world where resources for education will remain relatively constant, it is clear that partnerships between schools and other segments of society will be the key to keeping education relevant and exciting for students. Transition from the world of school to the world outside of school must be more gradual. Some students will be ready before others. Even young children will be able to gain from experiences with a broader range of adults than those whom the student encounters at home and at school. Having experiences with other adults provides children with new understanding about themselves and their relation to a larger world. Such experiences also help young people develop the skills and self-knowledge necessary to make decisions about career paths and to develop the motivation and discipline to fulfill their goals.

6. Schools are perhaps the only place where a sense of genuine community can be developed for young people. They must function as communities, not factories.

Schools are based on structural designs from an era when students were expected to have their needs for affiliation fulfilled primarily through other institutions in the community, including extended family, church, and various social groups. In many cases, these institutions no longer meet these needs for young people. Youth are left to identify with the mass culture cre**ated by retailers and** the media, or, of greater concern, with gangs or cliques that embrace antisocial values.

This is due in large measure to the decreasing presence of positive adult role models in the lives of young people. Schools with hundreds of students, where a child can attend several years and be known by only a handful of acquaintances and teachers, create conditions that support student identification with youth culture of varying types. Not only are the young deprived of role models, they are held in very narrowly bounded age cohorts-thereby prevented from using the behavior of older or younger children as a yardstick against which to gauge their own development.

Schools need to be restored to a human scale. The old arguments about economies of scale will need to be reexamined, with true economies retained, and false economies abandoned. How "economical" is it to house 2,000 students in one building if hundreds of them are leaving each year due to feelings of alienation and a sense that no one cares about them?

Smaller schools, schools-within- schools, schools in various locations in the community, more adults in schools in various roles, more events at school that have meaning and interest to people in the local community; partnerships with community agencies to provide services on school grounds; more children in contact with positive adult role models outside of schoolthese are all strategies that can contribute to a stronger sense of genuine community within schools.

Schools may become places where many diverse adults interact with a modest number of students (perhaps 150-300) in ways that allow each student to feel part of some group with meaning, purpose, and direction, and to develop an identity within the group at least in part by observing the behaviors of competent. healthy adults.

What Is Restructuring?

It is important to distinguish among three levels of change occurring sometimes simultaneously in public schools. These are: renewal, reform, and restructuring. This differentiation can be important, particularly when schools profess a commitment or desire to restructure, but have no standards to determine which sorts of activities constitute restructuring.

Renewal activities are those that help the organization to do better andlor more efficiently that which it is already doing. Most school improvement projects fall into this category, as do many of the staff development programs districts offer. It is very easy for schools to assume that if they are undertaking a number of important renewal activities that they are "restructuring," since these activities take a great deal of energy, and are capable of yielding positive results. This type of program, however, does not cause schools to examine any of their fundamental assumptions or practices, except by implication. For many schools this may be the most appropriate way to proceed. For others, renewal efforts cloaked as restructuring will lead to frustration and will not achieve the goals for which they were initially intended.

Reform-driven activities are those that alter existing procedures, rules and requirements to enable the organization to adapt the way it functions to new circumstances or requirements. Two important points help to identify and define reform-oriented efforts: One, changes center on procedural elements, the policies and procedures that determine the basic "rules of the game" for

all participants in the system; and, two, the impetus for reform almost always comes from some external force, such as a board of education, a state department of education, or even educational reformers. This impetus results in the appointment of committees to examine current practice and to bring it into conformity with the new expectations or requirements.

Clearly, reform-oriented change cannot be overlooked. At the same time, such activities are unlikely to result in an examination of fundamental practices or assumptions about schooling, as much as they are likely to produce a new rule or procedure. As with renewal activities, a school can devote a great deal of energy to reform-based improvements, and never realize that they have not engaged in a consideration of issues related to restructuring the educational environment.

Restructuring is defined as: **Activities that change fundamental assumptions, practices and relationships, both within the organization, and between the organization and the outside world, in ways that lead to improved and varied student learning outcomes for essentially all students.**

The important elements of this definition are its emphasis on ensuring that student learning remains the key variable that is being addressed, and the idea that fundamental assumptions must be challenged for change to occur.

It is far too easy to have the emphasis on improved student learning become obscured when schools focus on changes that may really be designed to enhance working conditions for adults. While the needs of adults must not be overlooked, it is critical to remember that any change that doesn't result in improved student learning doesn't really matter. Clearly, there are many areas where the needs of students and those of the adults in schools overlap, and there are excellent opportunities to improve schools for both. These should be pursued vigorously. However, many of the ideas currently being considered as forms of school restructuring will not have any impact on students unless they are explicitly linked to other activities more closely related to student learning.

By way of contrast, it may be interesting to note the definition of restructuring held in the private sector, given that the term originated in that arena and has subsequently been adopted and adapted by the world of education. Enderwick (1989) writes that *"Corporate restructuring, which is prompted by the need to maintain or regain competitiveness, is a process of radical reaction to product or market changes." (p. 45;* italics added). These are not the terms in which schools think when they frame the issues of restructuring.

The State of Education in Oregon

Oregon's educational system does not face the problems of crisis proportions frequently associated with many inner city and some rural school districts. Although funding inequities and lack of community support for schools funded through the property tax have caused periodic crises in many Oregon districts, the overall quality of education as measured by current standards is acceptable. Performance by college-bound students on the Standardized Achievement Test generally places Oregon in the top ten nationwide. Dropout rates are below national averages. Inci-

dents of serious violence or drug abuse are rare. Oregon schools seem to be orderly, safe environments, and, in fact, compared to other places in the nation, they are.

Unfortunately, this has led many to conclude that what is happening in these schools needs little modification. If Oregon were an island unto itself and if the world were not changing at such a rapid pace perhaps such insularity and self-satisfaction would be acceptable. However, as noted earlier, this is not the case. The workplace and the family are being rapidly transformed along with the social institutions associated with them. The public education system has until recently been able to operate without taking these changes into account in any systematic way. The question we must ask is: Are Oregon's schools doing a good job of preparing students for a world that no longer exists by showing success on measures that are not relevant to the world in which students will live?

Educational Reform in Oregon

Oregon has worked to reform public education in the last decade through programs of school improvement (H.B. 2020), and significant efforts to enhance curriculum (Essential Learning Skills, Common Curriculum Goals). These programs have led, by and large, to better ways of doing what was already being done, not to fundamental change in education. The most profound and important attempt to transform Oregon's educational system is only now beginning to be implemented. The Oregon Education Act for the 21st Century, also known as H.B. 3565, was passed into law in June, 1991 and contains provision which, if enacted as written, will lead to a vastly improved educational system.

Many of the elements of the bill have been publicized widely, though not always accurately. The next section restates some of the Act's key points in summary form and comments briefly upon them.

Key Elements of the Oregon Educational Act for the 21st Century (ILB. 3565):

The intention of the Act is to create a "restructured educational system ... 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." There is an emphasis on educated citizenry and a high quality work force. Most critics of the Act have focused on the language addressing work force preparation to insist that the bill is a worker training bill, and that preparation of workers should not be the sole or the central purpose of public education.

The Act outlines a success-oriented educational system that begins with students who enter kindergarten ready to learn. It establishes as state policy the intention to implement "programs for early childhood education including prenatal care, parenting education, child-parent centers, and pre-kindergarten programs." It sets a 1998 goal for full funding of pre-kindergarten programs for all eligible children.

The use of non-graded primary classrooms, where children of several years of age are taught together, is to be explored. Models of such classrooms will be identified and/or developed. The emphasis is on creating success-based primary programs where failure is avoided. In combination with expanded preschool programs, the primary classroom will enhance success for

essentially all children through the use of teaching and grouping strategies appropriate to the developmental level of the child, not just his or her chronological age.

Middle level education will be studied and plans will be developed "to insure that the school restructuring efforts framed in this Act address the unique learning and developmental needs of the middle educational levels.

The largest changes in the structure of schooling occur at the high school level, where the traditional four-year program will be broken into two separate programs, the Certificate of Initial Mastery (C.I.M.) and the Certificate of Advanced Mastery (C.A.M.). Every student will have the opportunity to obtain the C.I.M. by age sixteen or the end of 10th grade. To obtain a C.I.M., a student must demonstrate "the capacity to learn, think, reason, retrieve information and work effectively alone and in groups." Additionally, students must have the "knowledge and skills to read, write, problem solve, think critically and communicate across the disciplines, at national levels by the year 2000 and at international levels by the year 2010." Assessment must include "a series of performance-based assessments benchmarked to mastery levels at approximately grades 3, 5, 8, and 10 including but not limited to work samples, tests and portfolios ... culminating in a project or exhibition that demonstrates attainment of required knowledge and skills."

The Certificate of Advanced Mastery (C.A.M.) leads to a college preparatory, a academic professional technical endorsement, or both, in one of six "broad occupational categories." Mastery must be demonstrated here as well through performance-based means. The requirements for the C.A.M. must be designed to "facilitate the movement between the endorsements and shall encourage choice and mobility so as to enhance a student's opportunities to maximize exposure to the full range of educational experiences." The curriculum must include "opportunities for structured work experiences, cooperative work and study programs, on-the-job training and apprenticeship programs in addition to other subjects." The certificate must also include "a comprehensive educational component."

Common perception notwithstanding, the C.A.M. is not designed to serve as a social sorting mechanism to separate the vocationally-oriented from the college-bound, and to compel students to make life decisions at age sixteen with little chance of changing their minds later. It is seen as a bridge or transition phase as the student moves from the common schooling environment of public secondary education to one of several possible futures, and is designed to ensure that there is some reasonable probability of that student being successful in this transition, whether it is to work, community college, higher education, or some other option.

The Act contains numerous provisions defining how help and assistance will be provided to students who are not succeeding in public education. Schools must identify in the primary years students who are not succeeding and attempt alternative instructional approaches. 'Mey must identify and provide comprehensive support to at-risk students. Social service agencies are required to coordinate their services with those of the public schools, and to offer them at the site closest to the client. For students who leave school before receiving a C.I.M., learning centers will offer "teaching strategies, technology, and curricula that emphasize the latest research and best practice" to help them obtain their C.I.M.

The Act contains other provisions that have implications for the structure and content of public schooling, and the relationship of public schools to other organizations. Several of the most significant areas follow:

Enhanced public accountability for education is achieved through the Oregon Report Card, an increase in standardization visits, local school and district self-evaluations every two years, and increased parental involvement.

2 1 st Century Schools Councils are mandated by September, 1995 in every school. Teachers will form a majority. These councils' duties are still being defined but they apparently will have responsibilities related to school goals, measures of effective teaching and learning, and allocation of grants for staff development. These committees will oversee the development and implementation of a plan to improve professional growth and career opportunities for the school's staff, to improve the school's instructional program, and to assure the implementation of the requirements of this Act. Some controversy surrounds the precise amount of authority these councils will have.

The Act contains provisions for lengthening the school day to 185 days in 1996, 200 days in the year 2000, and 220 days by 2010. These provisions are subject to legislative review and research on the likely value of such a change. This section has received a great deal of attention, but it is unlikely to cause the most significant change in public schools. Even if this provision is not implemented, the rest of the bill will transform education if implemented as written.

Guiding Principles for School Restructuring.

Changing public education is an extremely complex and challenging venture. The following general principles are offered to provide a framework within which policy initiatives to re-structure schools should be considered. They represent the principles that should be kept in mind when developing specific strategies for school restructuring:

I. *Efforts must be focused on curriculum, instructional methods, assessment techniques, and the outcomes learners are expected to achieve.* Reform is not meaningful if it does not lead ultimately to profound changes in what is taught, how it is taught, how it is measured and against what standards learning is assessed. The history of most educational reform is that it does not have an impact on classroom practices. This must not be the case once again.

2. *Local site councils can be a critical tool to help achieve the goal of transforming curriculum, instruction, and assessment.* It has been very difficult for educators to allow non-educators to participate in the development of new goals and strategies for schools. Such involvement is now critical. Site councils should be supported and allowed to focus on the central issues of curriculum, instruction, and assessment. 'Mere must always be more than token representation from parents and members of the business community on these councils, and they

must have an active voice in defining both the goals for schools and the consequences for failure to achieve these goals.

3. *A sense of urgency about the need for fundamental change in education must be created.* The current attitude of many educators, parents, legislators, and members of the business community is that the problems in education do not affect them personally, nor that there is anything seriously wrong with their local schools. No change is possible without some greater sense of crisis. We cannot wait any longer to begin to transform schooling.

4. *The pace of change in schools must accelerate drastically.* Current attempts at school improvement target one or two areas at a time and often take an entire year simply to agree to plan, and another year to develop a plan. Implementation of the plan may take another year, if it is pursued at all. Change should not be reckless; however, there is not an infinite amount of time available to study the issues, nor is there the luxury to pick one or two areas for improvement and pursue them for several years at a time to the exclusion of more fundamental change.

5. *There should not be indefinite patience with schools to change.* If the pace of change within schools cannot be increased dramatically, legislators, parents, members of the business community and others should be ready to examine other options for educating the young. These options should reflect principles of equity and equal access to education, but also emphasize excellence as well as rapid, sustained adaptation to change.

6. *New J'unding is not automatically the prerequisite for change.* While there are clear needs for additional funds to support staff training and program development to support school reform, it is unrealistic to believe that no change can occur in a district until financial stability is achieved. In fact, periods of financial uncertainty and even crisis are often the only time fundamental change can occur in complex, entrenched, bureaucratic organizations. This is true in the private sector as well as the public. School districts must learn to use periods of financial retrenchment to restructure operations, eliminate programs not central to their mission, and reallocate resources in ways that increase organizational effectiveness. There is evidence that the districts that received large increases in funding as a result of the school finance law passed last session are not necessarily taking the lead in restructuring efforts as a result of having obtained new monies.

7. *The coin of decentralized decision-making has two sides: rights and responsibilities.* By accepting decentralized decision-making as the primary strategy for school restructuring, policy makers are banking on the inherent skills and talents of teachers, administrators, parents, and community members to solve the problems that exist in their schools, and to improve educational practice substantially. If schools are given much greater autonomy in order to radically reconceptualize existing practices, they must be prepared to be held to much higher levels of accountability in return.

   While the private sector is decentralizing rapidly to respond more quickly to rapidly changing market forces, it still remains to be seen whether decentralization will lead to improved results in schools. There are indicators that this approach may be education's best hope. However, the movement to decentralize decision-making will be judged by one criterion: the

degree to which student learning is redefined, transformed, and radically enhanced. If this strategy fails, other alternatives to the public educational system will have to be examined more closely.

8. *Old bureaucratic barriers must be dismantled quickly.* The lines between public schools, community colleges, and institutions of higher education must be redrawn to allow learners to move more easily among all three. The separation of social services from schools must be eliminated. Funding issues, in particular must be resolved. Agencies must be required to develop procedures for pooling resources in ways that benefit the child. Funding must follow the client to a greater degree.

   And within school systems, existing bureaucracies must be dismantled or radically redesigned to ensure that they function to provide the resources and support teachers need to employ the most effective techniques possible and to adapt their programs so that all students meet high standards.

9. *The types of changes necessary to make public schools viable for the 21 st century will likely result in extreme reaction ftom established educational interest groups.* It is unlikely that fundamental change in the methods and outcomes of education can be achieved without upsetting the applecart of educational interest groups. It will not always be possible to find solutions that meet the needs of all groups. It is going to be necessary to develop the political will to recast education in broader terms than those which have been developed over the past twenty years by many groups. The goals of many of these groups are laudable, and should be pursued. However, it will not be possible to achieve them in the context of the current system.

Action Recommendations

The following statements are specific recommendations for policy action by the Oregon State Legislature, the Oregon State Board of Education, the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission, local school districts, and the Oregon business community:

1. The Oregon Education Act for the 21 st Century must be given a chance to transform education by being implemented as it is currently written without major modification. The timelines for implementation should be maintained or accelerated.

It is too easy to look at the Act and decide that it would be easier simply to eliminate the pieces that seem to be too challenging or costly. Before such piecemeal dismantling occurs, let those who seek to derail educational reform present their own solutions, and let them ensure that their solutions will result in radically improved education capable of enabling the children of Oregon to meet the economic and social challenges facing them.

The timelines in the Act, which look ambitious to many educators, seem arduously long from the perspective of the business community. Any attempts to alter the timelines or to amend or change the language of the Act should demonstrate clearly how such a change would benefit the reform effort and improve educational achievement within Oregon substantially.

> ***Recommendation:*** *The Legislature should publicly reaffirm its commitment to the Oregon Education Act for the 21st Century.*

2. The Oregon Education Act for the 21 st Centwy must not be implemented piecemeal. Mechanisms must be developed to ensure that its implementation leads to a systemwide transformation of public schools.

All of the current efforts both to define the Act in greater detail and to develop pilot or demonstration sites have broken the Act into numerous pieces. This has resulted in fragmentation and wildly differing views of the purpose of specific sections of the Act. It is imperative to knit together all the elements of the Act into a whole so that school districts do not begin to alter existing practices one by one to comply with various sections of the Act in ways that may lead to inconsistent or ineffective practices, but rather ensure that they step back and consider how to redesign their system from top to bottom.

> ***Recommendation:*** *The State Board of Education should require each district to develop a comprehensive plan describing how it will implement the Act, and how this will bring about system-level changes in educational practices.*

3. Adequate funding must be provided for those sections of the Act that do require significant new spending by districts. In addition, the legislature must allocate funds specifically targeted for extensive staff retraining and curriculum development.

This requires both the political will to follow through on commitments, and a careful determination of which activities do, in fact, require new funds. Many elements of the Act can be accomplished by reallocating funds within existing budgets and directing them to reformissues. Others, such as an extended school year, are clearly beyond the ability of local districts to fund.

For the Act to be successful, there must be guarantees from the Legislature that it intends to provide funding. No other factor may be more crucial to the success of educational reform in Oregon. Educators simply will not take reform seriously if there is no commitment of resources to it. At the top of the list should be monies for the retraining of staff and development of new curriculum.

If new funds become a political impossibility, the Legislature and State Board of Education should explore strategies for reallocating existing resources and focusing existing efforts to ensure implementation of the Act. Examples of such strategies include earmarking a percentage of basic school support and mandating that it be spent on implementation of the Act; requiring that all activities on state in service days be directed to preparing teachers to teach successfully in the type of educational environment envisioned in the Act; identifying model programs of staff training that redistribute instructional time to create additional opportunities for teacher training; mandating a slight reduction in the number of teacher-student contact days while holding teacher contracts constant to create several additional in service days to be devoted to implementation of the Act.

Recommendation: *The Legislature should allocate $1000 per teacher for staff retrain -ing to meet the requirements of the Act. The funds could be spent over a two-year period. Each district would be required to submit for approval to the State Board of Education a plan for staff retraining designed to support the district plan described previously. If it is politically impossible to fund such a recommendation, alternative strategies to create additional time for staff training should be employed.*

4. Individual schools must have greater autonomy and encouragement to employ much broader array of teaching techniques, and personnel to teach.

The State of Oregon must move more aggressively to remove bureaucratic barriers to educational innovation by streamlining waiver procedures, and working proactively to gain waivers or exemptions from federal regulations. The State Department of Education must continue to redefine itself as a provider of services, rather than a regulatory arm of government. The Teacher Standards and Practices Commission must move rapidly to provide districts the flexibility to assign teachers in ways that allow them to use new instructional practices and age configurations.

Recommendation: *Waiver procedures should be streamlined through the development of clear guidelines and shortened approval times. The State Department of Education should procure waivers for federally-funded programs such as Chapter I and special education. Waivers from certification requirements should be granted quickly when districts provide a reasonable plan justifying their request. Such waivers should be of two types; those allowing teachers with existing credentials to teach outside of their endorsement area, and those allowing people without teaching credentials to teach.*

5. There must be accountability for schools to produce results once they are given resources and autonomy.

When schools do not meet expectations, immediate action should be taken. After these schools are given a reasonable opportunity to improve, more serious measures should be taken. In some cases this may mean retraining staff, in others it may require wholesale transfers of teachers and administrators to create a new culture, a culture of success. In all cases adults should be held accountable for the achievement and performance of students. They should be **provided help and ideas, but ultimately** should either produce tangible results or yield to those who are able to do so. No school should be allowed to be an underperformer continually.

All districts should have adequate teacher and administrator remediation procedures in place. These procedures should include definitions of clear performance standards for all certificated employees, and appropriate procedures for improving the performance of those who do not meet the standards. Districts should be prepared to vigorously implement such procedures, to do all they can to help those who are willing to improve, and to be prepared to remove those who are unwilling or unable to meet district standards.

District central offices and boards of education must also be held accountable for supporting site-based success. If it can be shown that central office staff or boards of education are serving as obstacles to reform, it should be possible for them to be treated similarly. The State Department of Education, through its School Improvement Division, should be able to make such determinations and publish their findings.

> ***Recommendation:*** *Schools that do not reach expected levels ofperformance should be identified and assisted. Central office staff and local boards of education must also be held accountable for supporting school sites. If no improvement occurs, provisions for staff retraining, remediation, and transfer should be made. The State Department ofEducation should help create accountability for local boards of education.*

6. Schools must specify what they guarantee their students will master. Students' mastery must be at a much higher level than currently exists.

What will students know and what will they be able to do with what they know? These learner outcomes must be stated in language parents can understand. Student progress must be measured in terms of the outcomes that have been mastered. Mastery means the ability to apply knowledge and skills to real-world situations.

Report cards that carry only letter grades must be supplemented with profiles of student performance on the learnings that will comprise the Certificate of Initial Mastery. Parents must be able to determine the progress their child is making toward mastery of these learnings.

> ***Recommendation:*** *Each district must be required to adopt the learner outcomes identifiedfor the Certificate of Initial Mastery (C.I.M.). In addition, each district must conduct a process locally to augment or supplement these outcomes with others deemed relevant*

to the local community. All report cards must carry information on student performance in relation to these outcomes.

7. Local school districts must develop more engaging, challenging, content-rich curriculum.

In order to allow districts to develop such curriculum, the state must not specify the curriculum that local districts will teach (once challenging outcome standards are in place and approved locally). The Common Curriculum Goals and Essential Learning Skills must be advisory only. Energy should be spent on increasing the capacity of local districts to identify, adapt, or develop curriculum that is appropriate, engaging, and challenging for their students. This cannot be achieved if all districts are expected to follow state curriculum guides. The state can help by providing useful outlines, by creating clearinghouses where educators can exchange ideas, by publishing promising practices and new curriculum, and by encouraging innovative curriculum development projects by using a model based on the H.B. 2020 school improvement program.

Recommendation: *The State Board of Education should not mandate curriculum once local learner outcomes are adopted. The State Department of Education should be transformed into a technical assistance center and resource clearinghouse that disseminates effective educational practices and assists in curriculum development, rather than regulates educational processes.*

8. All schools should demonstrate that they are adding value to students. Effective schools and practices should be identified and publicized. Schools that do not adopt such effective practices should be held accountable for their actions.

Measures of predicted achievement must be developed or refined so that all schools are providing "value-added" education. In other words, schools should be compared with other like schools when determining their effectiveness, not just against statewide norms. A school with high test scores may look entirely different when compared with other schools of similar socioeconomic makeup. On the other hand, when schools outperform their comparators, they should be rewarded and their methods studied and adopted by others. In no case should this be interpreted to mean acceptance of inferior performance by any school, regardless of socioeconomic profile.

Recommendation: *The State Department of Education should develop means to identify schools that are implementing exemplary practices in ways that lead to enhanced student achievement, particularly as such practices benefit groups previously not served as effectively or equitably by public schools. The identified schools and programs should be publicized and promoted. Standardization visits should include a review of the effective or exemplary programs adopted by each school*

9. The Certificate of Initial Mastory must be designed so that students can demonstrate high levels of knowledge in addition to mastery of various "process" skills such

as problem-solving or critical thinking. Standards must be set at a level that is high enough to challenge the vast majority of students currently in school.

The Certificate of Initial Mastery should not be conceived as a measure of everything students are taught in school up to the tenth grade, but of key knowledge, skills, and behaviors that enable students to retain as many choices for their future as possible. The C.I.M will demonstrate high levels of knowledge in key subject areas that can be applied to real-world problems by use of important "process" skills such as teamwork, communication, planning, and problem-solving. The C.I.M. should not be viewed as a new terminal educational degree that replaces the high school diploma. While it may be possible for some students to begin to spend more time in work settings as a way to continue learning after they have received their C.I.M., they must understand that they will need considerably more education beyond the C.I.M. in order to succeed in the workforce over time.

Recommendation: *The Certificate of Initial Mastery (C.I.M.) should consist of the knowledge and skills necessary either to begin to enter the world of work or to pursue additional education. It should assess a critical subset of skills and knowledge, not the total curriculum. Its standards should challenge the vast majority of today's students. It should include mastery of important cognitive processes in addition to subject matter. Students should understand that it does not replace the high school diploma, and that they will need considerably more education beyond the C.I.M. to succeed in the workplace.*

10. Work must begin immediately to develop the many and varied options for experiences in the world of work as required for the Certificate of Advanced Mastery

The requirement that every student *pursuing an academic professional technical endorsement* will have some experience in a work environment before he or she graduates from high school is a challenging concept. For this to occur will require the cooperation of public and private sector employers, small and large businesses, labor unions and management. 'Mese conversations must begin immediately and numerous small-scale projects must be initiated as soon as possible to answer questions and create models for others. The business community must be centrally involved in these conversations and must take the lead in creating these models.

Recommendation: *An interagency taskforce composed of members from large and small business groups, unions, local governments, and state agencies with responsibilities related to employment should be formed immediately to develop as many ideas as possible for the work experiences required for the Certificate of Advanced Mastery (C.A.M.).*

11. Parents must be involved as partners in the education of their children. Each child must be valued. All children must be educated as if they were "talented and gifted.'

Involving parents as partners implies considerably more parental choice; choice of classrooms, choice of schools, choice of instructional programs. It also implies much more two-way

communication. The educational program of each child must be developed and shaped to a greater degree through an interaction between teacher and parent. Parents must be involved in setting goals for their child, establishing the level of challenge given the child, reviewing the content of the curriculum to be taught to ensure it is relevant and rich, and approving the instructional strategies the teacher uses. The techniques and expectations currently applied to talented and gifted students should be applied to all students.

This model works only when there is a much wider variety of options open to parents within the public schools. Choice can be achieved through schools-within-schools, or simply by having teachers share their teaching philosophy, curriculum, and methods with parents and allow parents then to choose the teacher they believe best matches their child's needs.

Recommendation: *Individual goal-setting should be employed with each child. Parents should be required to participate in goal-setting conferences each year. Instruction and curriculum should be adapted based on these goals. Many of the techniques heretofore reserved for talented and gifted students should be employed much more broadly with all students. Examples include competitive projects and demonstrations, personal goal setting, use of outside experts and mentors, special field trips for small groups of students, and student involvement in selecting curriculum that is of interest to them.*

12. There must be many more research and development projects within schools to identify effective practices. Such practices, once identified, must be implemented quickly.

Schools are slow to change and even slower to adapt effective practices school wide. Public schools must face the reality that they, along with all other institutions in society, must develop the capacity to adapt rapidly if they wish to maintain a claim on societal resources. To do so, schools must develop internal "R&D" capacities and the ability to put effective methods into practice much more rapidly.

Recommendation: *H.B. 2020 should be modified to provide funds for the development of focused research & development projects (or R&D centers) in local districts. Districts would have to agree to implement successful practices from these projects or centers as a condition of funding.*

13. Instead of schools, we should begin to think in terms of "Child Development Centers," places where public and private agencies coordinate their services to young peopie to ensure that all kids develop into productive members of society.

Schools need to be places where all governmental services (and private services as well) that relate to children are concentrated and coordinated. While the Oregon Educational Act for the 21st Century does take a first step in this direction, bureaucratic infighting and turfsmanship is likely to prevent this goal from being achieved in the foreseeable future. There is not time to wait. Schools cannot care for the whole child without being overwhelmed as they are being today. At the same time, today's children have more pressing needs that must be addressed before they are able to learn and participate successfully in school. Rather than directing additional resources to schools to care for the entire range of problems children

bring to school with them, existing services must be coordinated and integrated at school sites in a way that transforms schools into centers devoted to the total development of the child.

Recommendation: *The Legislature should fund the development of at least a dozen child development centers where both public and private agencies coordinate services for the benefit of the child. Ensure the removal of all bureaucratic and regulatory barriers. Provide both incentives and sanctions to encourage governmental agencies to make this project a priority.*

References,

American Society of Training and Development, U.S. Department of Labor (1990). Workplace Basics: The Skills Employers Want. American Society of Training and Development; U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration.

Associated Oregon Industries, National Association for Schools of Excellence (1992). Saving America's Children.

Baker, Stephen, Elizabeth Weiner, & Amy Borrus (1990). Mexico: A New Era. Business Week. (3187),102-110.

Beck, Melinda (1990). The Geezer Boom, The 21 st Century Family. Newsweek SNcial Edition, 62.

Boyer, Ernest (1990). Civic Education for Responsible Citizens. Educational Leadership. 48(3), 4.

Carnoy, Martin, & Henry Levin (1985). Schooling and Work in the Democratic State. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Cetron, M. J., W. Rocha, & R. Luckins (198 8). Into the 21 st Century: Long Term Trends Affecting the United States. The Futurist. 22(4), 29-42.

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

Cook, Bill (1988). Strategic Planning for America's Schools. Arlington, VA: American Association of School Administrators.

Doyle, Denis (1991). Can We Win the Brain Race with the Japanese. School Administrator. 6(48), 16-21.

Dumaine, Brian (1989). What the Leaders of Tomorrow See. Fortune. 48,50.

Enderwick, Peter (1989). Multinational Corporate Restructuring andInternational Competitiveness. California Management Review. 44-58.

Fowler, Donna (1990). Democracy's Next Generation. Educational Leadership. 48 (2), 4.

Frymier, Jack, & Bruce Gansneder (1989). The Phi Delta Kappa Study of Students at Risk. Phi Delta Kappan. 71(2), 142-146.

Glasser, William (1990). The Quality School. Phi Delta Kappan. 71(6), 424-435.

Hoachlander, E. G., P. Kaufman, & E. Wilen (1989). Indicators of Education and the Economy. In Education and the Economy: Hard Questions, Hard Answers (pp. 1-42). New York: The Institute on Education and the Economy, Teachers College, Columbia University.

Hodgkinson, Harold (1988). The Right Schools for the Right Kids. Educational Leadert~ip. 45(5), 10-15.

Hoerr, Thomas (1989). Parent Surveys Can Give You Useful Information. Educational Leadership. 47(2),38.

Hollister, Robinson (1990). Why is Equality Growing? Focus. 12(3), 28.

Jencks, Christopher (1989). What Is the Underclass- and Is It Growing? Focus. 12(l), 14.

Mandel, Michael, & Aaron Bernstein (1990). Dispelling the Myths that Are Holding Us Back. Business Week, SWcial Report. (3192), 66-70.

McCune, Shirley (1986). Strategic Planning for Educators. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Misahiko, Aoki (1990). Frontiers in Corporate Globalization. Japan Echo. 17, 26.

Mitgang, Lee (1990). Panel Says Work Force Lacks Skills: Radical Reform Needed for Non-college Bound. Eugene Register-Guard. 1B.

Morrow, Lance (1988). Through the Eyes of Children. Newsweek. 132(6), 32.

Moynihan, Daniel Patrick (1988). Our Poorest Citizens - Children. Focus. I 1 (1), 5.

Permar, Karen (1991). The Rich are Richer - And America May Be the Poorer. Business Week. 3240,85,88.

Port, Otis, Zachary Schiller, & Resa King (1990, April 30). A Smarter Way to Manufacture. Busines s Week, p. I 10- 117.

Reich, Robert (1990). Preparing Students for Tomorrow's Economic World. In Bacharach, S. (Eds.), School Reform: Making Sense of It All. (pp. 194-212). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (1991). What Work Reguires of Schools: A SCANS Report for America 2000. U.S. Department of Labor.

Shane, Harold (1989). Educated Foresight for the 1990's. Educational Leadership. L7(l), 4.

Vaughn, R. J., & S. E. Berryman (1989). Employer-sponsored Training: Current Status, Future Possibilities. In Education and the Economy: Hard Questions, Hard Answers (pp. 53-63). New York: The Institute on Education and the Economy, Teachers College, Columbia University.