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ABSTRACT

The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), a nationwide nonprofit organization of public officials who head state departments of elementary and secondary education, provides leadership on major education initiatives. In 1999, CCSSO embarked on the initiative "Students Continually Learning," which focused on three issues: early development and school readiness, extended time to learn to ensure that all students achieve standards, and student motivation. This report discusses the initiative, including CCSSO's 1999 Summer Institute held in Girdwood, Alaska with the help of the Forum for Youth Investment. Part 1 of the report serves as an overview and includes sections on early childhood care and development, extended learning opportunities, expanded learning and doing opportunities, and expanded definitions of learning. Part 2 summarizes presentations and discussion from the Summer Institute in each of the three areas addressed by the initiative. Part 3 presents CCSSO policy statements on early childhood and family education, extended learning opportunities, and student motivation. (Contains 15 references.) (EV)

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STUDENTS CONTINUALLY LEARNING:

A Report of Presentations, Student Voices and State Actions

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The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) is a nationwide nonprofit organization of the public officials who head departments of elementary and secondary education in the states, the District of Columbia, the Department of Defense Education Activity, and five extra-state jurisdictions. CCSSO seeks its members' consensus on major educational issues and expresses their views to civic and professional organizations, federal agencies, to Congress, and to the public. Through its structure of standing and special committees, the Council responds to a broad range of concerns about education and provides leadership on major education issues.

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Gordon M. Ambach
Executive Director

Cynthia G. Brown, *Director*
Resource Center on
Educational Equity

Council of Chief State School Officers
One Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Suite 700
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 408-5505
Fax (202) 408-8072
www.ccsso.org

The Forum for Youth Investment

The Forum for Youth Investment (formerly IYF-US) works to increase the quality and quantity of youth investments and youth involvement by promoting a big picture approach to planning, research, advocacy and policy development among the broad range of national organizations that help constituents and communities invest in children, youth and families. The Forum facilitates relationships among members - offering neutral forums to tackle persistent challenges, new lenses for looking at old issues, supports to turn ideas into action and vehicles to advance lessons learned. It ensures that information, tools and insights generated by Forum members are shaped by and useful to local communities and practitioners. It infuses ongoing discussions with perspectives not usually heard - from other countries and cultures as well as from young people and their families. The Forum is a U.S. initiative of the International Youth Foundation.

Rick Little
Operating Council, Chair
of the International Youth Foundation
Founder and President

Karen Pittman
Executive Director

Merita Irby
Director of Programs

The Forum For Youth Investment
7014 Westmoreland Avenue
Takoma Park, Maryland 20912
(301) 270-6250
Fax (301) 270-7144
youth@iyfus.org
www.forumforyouthinvestment.org

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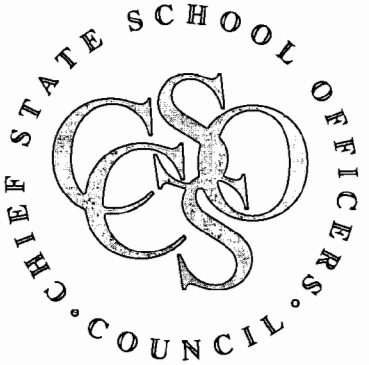

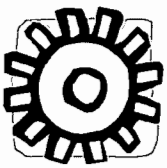

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The Forum for Youth Investment
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April 2001

Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS v

PREFACE vii

PART I YOUNG PEOPLE CONTINUALLY LEARNING:
AN OVERVIEW OF THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR EDUCATORS 1
by Karen J. Pittman and Merita Irby
Introduction 3

EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT
Early childhood care and development are critical. Quality costs, but quality pays. 4

EXTENDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES
Extended learning opportunities are valuable for all students but vital for those at risk of falling behind. Quality *and* quantity issues are only recently being addressed. 8

EXPANDED LEARNING AND DOING OPPORTUNITIES
Expanded learning and doing opportunities are needed for all students. Creating high quality learning environments for all students is the key 11

EXPANDED DEFINITIONS OF LEARNING
Expanded definitions of learning-when it happens, how it happens, where it happens, and why it happens, and what it focuses on-will be necessary for schools, governments, nonprofits, businesses, and communities to create effective partnerships to promote continuous learning 17

PART II SUMMER INSTITUTE 1999: PRESENTATIONS IN SUMMARY 19

EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION
Introduction 21

Status and Challenges of Early Childhood Care and Education
from Remarks by Dr. Sharon Lynn Kagan 25
Pedagogy: What Goes on Inside of Programs 25
Context: What Happens Around Programs 26

Applying Early Brain Research to the Education of Young Children
from Remarks by Dr. Craig T. Ramey 29
Early Experiences Make a Key Difference in Cognitive Development and School Readiness 29
Can Preschool Prevent Decline in Mental Performance? 32
Conclusion 33

Three States Strive for Quality and Access
Toward Universal Preschool and High Standards - California
from Remarks by Delaine A. Eastin 35
Umbrella Partnership Consolidates Programs - Florida
from Remarks by Tom Gallagher 35

Universal Services for Vulnerable Populations - Ohio
from Remarks by Dr. Susan T. Zelman 36

EXTENDED LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Introduction 39

Using Time Well

from Remarks by Dr. Reginald Clark 41
How Students Use Time 41
The Impact of Time Use on Student Achievement 42
The *Time/Lifestyle Management* Program 44

A School/Corporation Partnership for After-School Learning

from Remarks by Randy Best 47
The Need for Extended Day Programs 47
Voyager After-School Learning 48

21st Century Community Learning Centers

from Remarks by Dr. Marianne R. Kugler 51
Year I: What the Programs Looked Like 51
Year I: Program Success 52
Sustaining Community Learning Centers 53

A Look at Extended Learning in Three Communities

Intensive Corporate Help in Oklahoma
from Remarks by Sandy Garrett. 55
Using the Community and the Natural Environment
from Remarks by Barbara Dean 56
The Whole Community as a Teaching Resource
from Remarks by Margo Bellamy 57

STUDENT MOTIVATION

Introduction 59

Youth Voices for Change

from a Panel of Students Facilitated by Merita Irby 61
Participants. 61
The Impact of Relationships on Student Motivation and Learning. 62
School Climate 63
Respect 64
Learning and Teaching Styles. 65
Reality-Based Learning. 66
Agenda for Change 67

School Connectedness: The Relationship among Promoting Academic Success, Reducing Risky Behavior, and Increasing Civic Responsibility

from Remarks by Dr. Clea A. Sucoff McNeely 69
The Add Health Study 69

Using High Stakes Tests to Raise Achievement
from Remarks by Dr. John H. Bishop 73
High Achievement Is Thwarted by Peer Culture 73
Curriculum-Based External Exit Exams Put Teachers and Students on the Same Team 74
How New York Made the Shift to High Stakes 77
Recommendations and Implications for State Policy 78
Constructing Supportive Environments for Youth Learning and Engagement
from Remarks by Karen J. Pittman 81
The Call for a Cohesive Strategy for Preparing Young People for Adulthood 81
The Paradigm Shift 82
New Goals and Strategies for Schools 84
Applying Youth Development Principles to Schools 85
Putting It All Together at the Building Level
Strategies for Success
from Remarks by Sylvia J. Reynolds 87
Reality-Based Learning in the Extended Day
from Remarks by Hal Spackman 89

PART III STATE LEADERSHIP FOR ACTION ON THE 1999 PRIORITY OF STUDENTS CONTINUALLY LEARNING 91
Introduction 93
Policy Statement: Early Childhood and Family Education 95
A Call to Action 95
New Realities 95
New Opportunities 96
Unwavering Convictions 96
We Begin with the Children 97
The Imperative 98
Strategies for Change 99
Conclusion 102
Statement: Extended Learning Opportunities 103
Introduction 103
State and Federal Support 103
Council Efforts to Support State Capacity in Extended Learning 104
Continued Support and Increased Monitoring and Analysis of Programs 104
Statement: Student Motivation 106
Introduction 106
Three Lenses on Student Motivation 106
Continued CCSSO Review and Recommendations 108
REFERENCES 109

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The Council is extremely grateful to Karen Pittman, Executive Director, and Merita Irby, Director of Programs, of the Forum for Youth Investment (formerly the IYF-US), a U.S. initiative of the International Youth Foundation. They were Council partners in designing and implementing the 1999 Summer Institute, in preparing the student presenters, and in writing and publishing this document. The Council is deeply appreciative of the leadership of Alaska Commissioner of Education Rick Cross, former Commissioner Shirley Holloway, and their staff members for hosting the Institute in Alaska and providing an exceptional welcome and introduction to their state. The Council is also indebted to all the researchers, practitioners, program directors, members, and the Alaska young people who made presentations. We especially thank Becky Judd of the Alaska Department of Health and Human Services who helped identify and prepare the students for their participation.

Several colleagues contributed to the preparation of this document. Primary editing of the Institute transcripts and rewriting was done by Linda Brown Warren. Rhonda Munford and Cindy Brown of CCSSO also assisted. Melissa Mullins, Virginia Ebbert, and Joel Tolman of the Forum for Youth Investment (the Forum) helped to organize the transcripts and prepare the section on the voices of the young people. Georgette Offer, also of the Forum, provided valuable assistance to all. Reaksia Banks of CCSSO prepared the document and helped design the layout and format; Burton Taylor of CCSSO assisted with the final production; Marty Bush edited the document; and Manuel Valencia of MV Design designed it.

The Council thanks the Charles Stewart Mott and Marion Ewing Kauffman Foundations for their timely financial support of the 1999 CCSSO Summer Institute and publication of this document. The views expressed in this document are those of the authors and do not represent these foundations.

PREFACE

The dual challenge for the education system is to provide students with time and opportunity to learn and to assure students are encouraged with incentives to maximize and demonstrate their learning. This challenge is especially complex because of the different rates of individual learning and different motivations for success.

With this charge from incoming President Robert Bartman of Missouri, the Council of Chief State School Officers embarked in 1999 on a set of initiatives entitled "Students Continually Learning." The Council committed its energy to a year-long focus on "continuous and successful learning through the lens of students." Specifically, it examined three issues at pivotal points in every student's learning:

- Early development so every child enters school ready to learn
- Extended time to learn to assure all students achieve standards
- Charging the student battery to stimulate motivation for success

CCSSO had previously addressed these issues separately, but in 1999 linked them for two reasons: first, to emphasize the necessity to develop continuous learning strategies across stages of learning; and second, to keep the focus on student growth at each stage through the student's perspective.

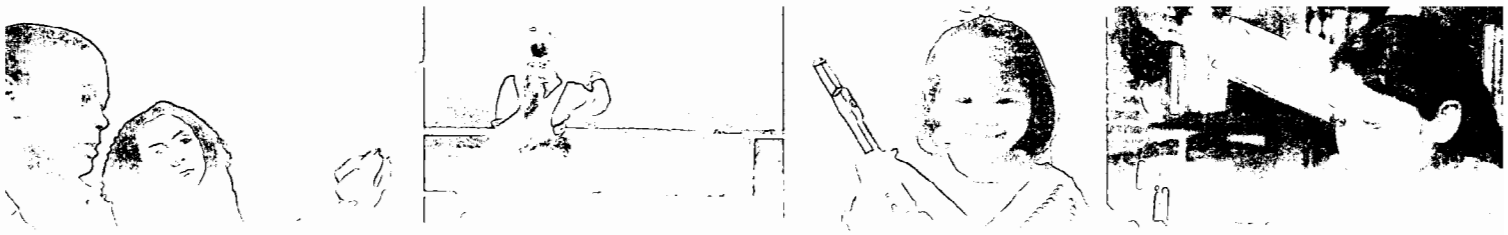
Council members devoted their 1999 Summer Institute held in Girdwood, Alaska to these issues. During the Institute, members of the Council and their staff were joined by several of the nation's leading experts on the topics. Several exceptional students from Alaska, some of whom had difficult experiences with schools, shared their experiences and insights on what leads to successful learning in and out of school and preparation for fulfilling adulthood.

The design of the Summer Institute and this document was done in a partnership with the Forum for Youth Investment (Forum), formerly the IYF-US, a U.S. initiative of the International Youth Foundation. The Forum Executive Director, Karen Pittman, provided essential conceptual assistance for the program, including a subtle title change. The Forum Director of Programs, Merita Irby, helped identify and prepare the students for their rich discussion with Council members. Together they co-wrote the overview of the Institute Proceedings.

Part of the year-long initiative focused on reexamination of the CCSSO policy statement on early childhood and family education adopted in 1988. With the assistance of an outstanding group of advisors, in November 1999, Council members adopted an updated policy statement entitled "Early Childhood and Family Education: New Realities, New Opportunities." It is included in the last section of this document.

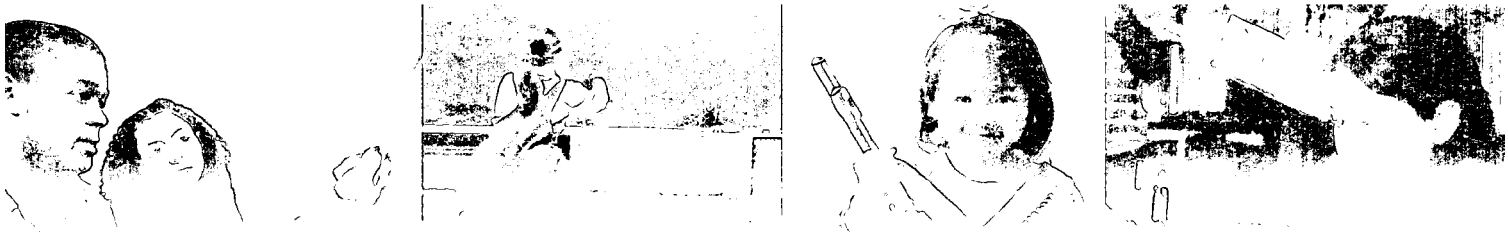
CCSSO is grateful for the support of the Charles Stewart Mott and Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundations in carrying out these activities. The opinions expressed in this document are those of the Council and those presenters who were asked to share their insights.

We hope readers find the summaries of presentations and discussions to be useful as they strive to prepare young people for successful learning and living. The members of CCSSO pledge to work in partnership with other service providers, community members and agencies, parents, and students to succeed.



PART I
Young People Continually Learning: An Overview of the Challenges and Opportunities for Educators

Karen J. Pittman
Merita Irby



Introduction

Many youth advocates spend a good portion of their professional lives looking for ways to convince policymakers, funders, and communities to increase the quality and quantity of investments in children and youth. Some invest time in trying to convince researchers to sharpen their tools and refocus their agendas to better answer the questions of practitioners and policymakers, to convince program planners to broaden their agenda, and to convince the public to listen.

The mantra among advocates is focus. Select an issue, define a population, target an audience. Promote, for example, the value of early childhood education *or* quality after-school programming *or* alternative work experiences for teens. But sometimes the mantra has to be changed. Sometimes the message needs to be more complex in the face of counterveiling forces that suggest the public and policymakers are looking for opportunities to decrease intentional time and resource investments in children rather than reasons to increase them. This makes no sense given the increased risks young people face in their daily lives and the increased skills they will need to succeed as workers, parents, citizens. So there is a huge and growing need in this country to embrace *early and sustained investments* in young people. And there is a need to keep constant vigil on the "spaces" adults and professionals should occupy in the lives of children and youth.

There is a huge and growing need in this country to embrace early and sustained investments in young people.

Educators play a huge role in the lives of young people. Formal education occupies much of the "space" of childhood and adolescence. But it does not fully consume the space. There are learning opportunities that begin before school enrollment and exist beyond the classroom. Educators would be among the first to concede that formal education does not fully consume the space during the school day. The steady drumbeat of reforms over the past few decades is testament to the fact that there is room for improvement in the quality of the learning experience in, as well as outside of, school.

Members of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) have a substantial impact on the actions of educators. This volume of papers, which draws from presentations and discussions at the 1999 CCSSO Summer Institute, indicates that the chiefs take this job very seriously. Focusing on Students Continually Learning, the Institute explored the role of schools in promoting learning (broadly defined) at a time when many states and school districts are under pressure to demonstrate learning (narrowly defined) among their students.

The Institute was rich with information and ideas, some of the most important of which came from students themselves. The presentation summaries are well worth a careful read. They combine to tell a powerful story that can and should be shared in speeches, newsletters, proposals, testimony and trainings. The story has four parts.

Early childhood care and development are critical. Quality costs, but quality pays.

Early childhood care and education programs are here to stay. The combination of working parents, school readiness concerns, and welfare reform ensures demand for slots. Research underscores the need for and payoffs of quality. But without aggressive work on the part of policymakers at all levels, the two needs will be seen as competing rather than non-negotiable.

Dr. Sharon Lynn Kagan, a much respected researcher and advocate of early childhood care and development, pressed the need to bring quality into the equation for strengthening and expanding a system of early childhood programming that was not designed primarily to promote early learning. "[T]he demand for care and education to reduce poverty and support working parents," she noted, "has contributed to the development of an industry driven to fill supply requests while the issue of quality is hardly raised." Eighty-six percent of all programs serving young children have been empirically classified as being of poor to mediocre quality, according to Kagan. Pressures to increase quantity are valid, but Kagan warns that "without quality, the investments made in early childhood education will continue to be limited in what they produce. . . . [I]t is the infusion of quality, not quantity, that will dramatically affect the life chances for millions of children." Her caution to the group: "8 minus 1 equals zero. . . . [E]ducators serious about increasing and sustaining high quality in early childhood education must be willing to create a system of care and education that consists of eight "components" that address

[I]t is the infusion of quality, not quantity, that will dramatically affect the life chances for millions of children.

- Programs
- Accountability
- Family and Public Engagement
- Credentialing
- Training
- Regulation
- Funding
- Governance

Without each of these, there can be no effective system of early care and education.

Recommendations for a System of High-Quality Care and Education

1. Use a wide range of proven approaches for improving quality in all family childcare and center-based programs.
2. Develop clear goals for children and quantifiable results about skills and knowledge that children should be able to demonstrate across various domains of development.
3. Engage parents and families as partners in early childhood programs.
4. Require all individuals responsible for children in centers and family childcare homes to hold licenses.
5. Revamp the content of pedagogy, particularly for early childhood educators (e.g., focus on infants and toddlers, multicultural education, the use of technology, and hands-on learning).
6. Require program licensing for all early care and education programs.
7. Develop a revised funding and finance strategy that involves a broad array of groups (e.g., businesses, governments, public at large, parents, and community organizations) and set aside 10 percent of public funds for the maintenance of infrastructure quality.
8. Establish permanent state and local early childcare and education boards that oversee governance, planning, and accountability.

Kagan and Cohen, *Not By Chance*, 1997

Dr. Craig Ramey reinforced Kagan's call for quality. Not only is there powerful research that early experience is important to school success, there is evidence that these experiences can be created for children in some of the most high-risk circumstances. Ramey summarized recent advances in our understanding and appreciation of early development with a call to amend three outdated beliefs:

Outdated Belief 1: Development is gene dependent.

"We now understand that genes are "turned on" and "turned off" by a variety of complex processes, including the kinds of experiences one might have... the old notion of determining which is more important to development—heredity or environment—should be tossed out of the window."

Outdated Belief 2: Experience has a limited impact on early development.

"We now understand that early experiences have a profound and decisive impact... Evidence shows that experiences actually beginning prior to birth become part of a child's education and a major determinant of what kindergarten teachers receive when that child comes to school at age 5."

Outdated Belief 3: Supportive caregivers create a context for learning, but do not directly affect children's capacity to learn.

"We now know that [the caregiving relationship] directly affects how the brain is wired; how different neurons make connections among different structures in the brain; and how certain brain structures and emotional centers become connected to higher order cognitive processing."

Not only is there powerful research that early experience is important to school success, there is evidence that these experiences can be created for children in some of the most high-risk circumstances.

Ramey and colleagues gleaned a list of seven critical elements for healthy child development from an extensive review of over 1,000 research studies. These elements, which are also referred to as "developmental priming mechanisms," emphasize the importance of basic ingredients all of us know: exposure, instruction, celebration, reinforcement, stimulation, guidance, and protection.

Seven Essentials for Young Children

1. Encouragement to explore the environment
2. Mentoring in basic cognitive and social skills
3. Celebrating new skills
4. Rehearsing and expanding new skills
5. Protection from inappropriate punishment and ridicule for developmental advances
6. Stimulation in language and symbolic communication
7. Provision of guidance and limitation in behavior

These mechanisms must be present in every child's life on a frequent, predictable basis.

Ramey and Ramey, *Right From Birth,* 1999

The power of research, however, is that it allows researchers such as Ramey to turn these elements into prescriptions for success and to systematically measure their impact.

The Abecedarian Preschool Project did just that. Children of extremely disadvantaged mothers (single parents with low IQs and special education backgrounds) were engaged in year-round child development programs with their parents from six weeks of age and remained in the program through school entry. The results were remarkable. By age 3, there was a 30-IQ point difference between these children and the control group children whose IQs, without intervention, had dropped low enough to border on being labeled mentally retarded. Moreover, the largest differences were found among the children whose mothers had the lowest IQs (below 70)!

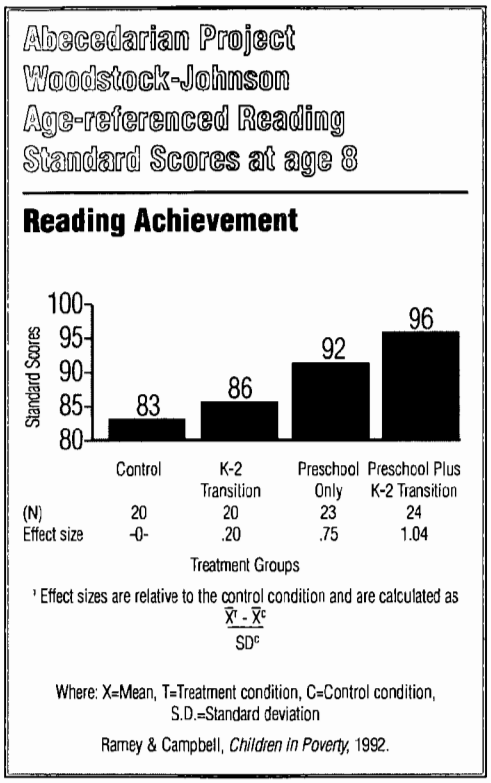
We can do an incredible amount to ensure that every child learns and develops at rates that allow them to enter school confident and competent.

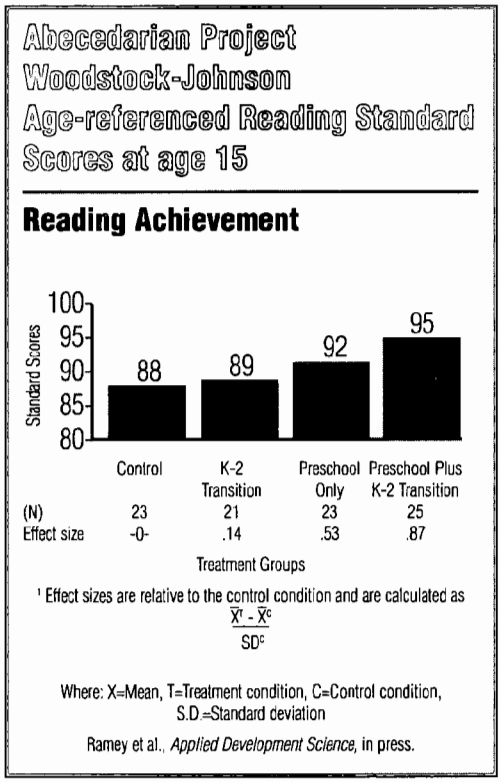
The Abecedarian Project has been replicated more than 20 times. It delivers a powerful end to a powerful story. Not only do we know an incredible amount about early learning and development, we can do an incredible amount to ensure that every child learns and develops at rates that allow them to enter school confident and competent.

Dr. Ramey's work focused on the preschool years, but it did not end there. To test the value of supports during the school years, the Abecedarian Project used experienced teachers to work with classroom teachers and parents to provide K-2 after-school and summer experiences to some of the students who were engaged in the original project. Half of those who received the early childhood program got the school-aged intervention as did half of those who did not, creating four groups of students: those enrolled in both the early and school-age programs, those enrolled in only one, and those enrolled in neither. They then followed these students' progress until age 15.

The results, again, show the value of quality interventions. At age 8, there was a 13-point difference between the reading scores of the students who received no support vs. those who

received the preschool and K-2 transition support (83 vs. 96). Those who received only the preschool program did well, but not as well as those with continued support (92 vs. 96). Equally important, those who received only the K-2 program were able to close some of the gap created in the early years (86 vs. 83).





These differences were still present at age 15. Also, by age 15 the control group was four times more likely to have been placed in special education and almost twice as likely to have been retained in grade.

There is powerful evidence of the importance of high-quality early and sustained supports to parents of all young children 0 through 8, particularly those in low-income, low-education families. There are promising reports from the states that suggest progress is being made. But this is only a part of the story. What about children 9 to 18? The provision of an early foundation is necessary, but is it sufficient? And what about those who did not receive early attention? What do we know about the power of interventions for students in the late elementary, middle, and even high school years?

Extended learning opportunities are valuable for all students but vital for those at risk of falling behind. Quality and quantity issues are only recently being addressed.

The idea of widespread after-school programming is a new political phenomenon.

The idea of widespread after-school programming is a new political phenomenon. School-age childcare, after-school enrichment, and youth development programs are not new. Schools and community organizations have always had a sampling of activities that were offered during the out-of-school hours. Public and private funding has been available at some level, with funding and tax credits for school-age childcare growing over the past two decades. But the quality and quantity questions that are now in full debate about early childhood care and education have only just begun for the school-age group. Discussions about the relationship between what happens after school and what happens during school are becoming a more central part of school-community discussions.

Dr. Reginald Clark, an independent researcher who has studied out-of-school time activities for 25 years, explained the importance of these hours for academic and social development and presented research-based tools for helping students use their time well. Like Dr. Ramey, Dr. Clark has focused his research on studying and developing program interventions for students most at risk of academic failure. His conclusion reinforces that arrived at by Ramey and his colleagues about the early childhood years.

Social and cultural background variables have less explanatory usefulness than variables related to parental expectations and student activity routines. In other words, there are factors that are correlated with low income and low parental education that, if addressed, have a huge positive impact on student success. His findings:

- ***Time on task pays.*** High-achieving students spend more time engaged in learning activities in school and outside of school than lower-achieving students. These activities include reading, writing, educational television, interactive board games, hobbies, arts, and organized sports. Instructional time in the classroom varies considerably among students; structured learning activities outside of the classroom vary even more. Both types of learning activities are important, and the two types are correlated—students who spend less time engaged in learning in school also spend less time learning outside of school. The result: a growing gap in cumulative learning hours that translates into an expanding achievement gap K-12.
- ***Adults matter.*** Students who have more opportunities for positive interaction with adults spend more time in constructive out-of-school learning activities than those who do not interact with adults. The operative factor appears to be the development of a consistent, caring relationship with an adult—parent, grandparent, teacher, youth worker, mentor—who sets high standards for success and provides guidance.
- ***Settings matter.*** Students are more likely to engage in high-yield learning activities when they are involved in high-yield settings like in-school or community-based

programs in which students can initiate actions, take on leadership roles, engage in discussion, and solve problems.

- ***Parental expectations and actions matter.*** What parents know and expect of their children with regard to out-of-school activities and time use and how these translate into actual routines matter more than socioeconomic status, family structure, and other background factors, including maternal education, which is usually the most powerful predictor of student success.
- ***Student planning matters.*** As early as 5th grade, students can learn the importance of high-yield learning activities and can be taught how to organize their time for increased learning away from school by balancing the time they spend across six types of activities.

Successful students allocate more time to structured learning activities in school. They also reserve more time for structured learning activities outside of school. Further, they spend more time in a given week doing personal maintenance activities, and they get more sleep and rest. Conversely, low achievers spend less time learning in school, less time learning outside of school, less time sleeping, and more time recreating than high achievers. These findings are consistent, regardless of race or socioeconomic status and constitute important information that can be translated into meaningful programs for youth.

Six Types of Student Activities

1. Structured learning activities, including in-school and out-of-school learning
2. Personal maintenance and exercise
3. Labor
4. Recreation, play, and leisure activities
5. Meditation and worship
6 Rest and sleep.

Presented by Dr. Reginald Clark during the Institute

Dr. Clark's findings suggest that the meta-list of essential elements gleaned from early childhood research studies by Dr. Ramey may have broader applicability. Opportunities for exposure, instruction, celebration, reinforcement, stimulation, guidance, and protection from disapproval appear as critical to the success of elementary and middle school students as they do to young children.

Evidence of the importance of sustained support for learning—in school and out—appears to be mounting. Public will to provide after-school opportunities is strong. But are there efforts to move what is known into practice? What is happening to take these programs to scale? What is being done to ensure that those students who need it the most get it?

Flexible tools for all adult caregivers. Dr. Clark set the stage for the discussion of how to improve low-income and low-achieving students' use of their out-of-school time with the

presentation of an Internet-based program, *Time/Lifestyle Management,* that he has created to help students—assisted by teachers, parents, or mentors—monitor and organize their time. He has found that the exercise itself—and the picture it provides to students, parents, teachers, and youth professionals of how students actually spend their time—allows students and adults to make empowering changes that support learning.

Public/private partnerships and packaged after-school and summer programs for school districts. Randy Best, founder of Voyager Expanded Learning, brought the group back to the quality and quantity discussion. He described the Voyager Program, a content-rich, active-learning after-school program for K-8th graders developed in 1997 in collaboration with the Smithsonian Institution, NASA, and the Discovery Channel. Voyager now operates in 1,000 school districts in 45 states, serving over 400,000 children during the summer and fall of 1999. The program has shown impressive early results in school attendance, basic reading and math performance, student behavior and social skills, and even reductions in juvenile arrests. The regular after-school program (4-1/2 hours of curriculum) can be operated at a cost of about $2,730 per class of 18, not including teacher salaries. The program requires the use of certified classroom teachers and encourages the development of public-private partnerships to identify additional learning opportunities and support educational innovation.

New federal funding to keep schools open for after-school programming. Dr. Marianne Kugler described the rapid growth of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CLC) program, which was initiated in 1998 with a $40 million commitment from the federal government and grew to $846 million in 2001. The Mott Foundation is partnering with the federal government to help fill in the gaps in training, evaluation, and technical assistance. Unlike the Voyager program, which is a research-based curriculum, 21st CLC is a funding program to expand learning opportunities for children and youth by enabling schools to stay open longer and provide safe places for a range of activities from homework help to arts education. Guidelines are offered and collaboration with community-based partners is encouraged, but schools design their own programs. Most sites are staffed with adults who are not certified teachers. Transportation and union issues ranked high as challenges in the early years. Quality and sustainability are now the issues on most grantees' minds. Toward this end, the Mott Foundation is engaging a range of experts to draw on what is known about quality early childhood and youth development programs that is relevant for after-school providers. It has also undertaken a $3 million three-year effort to a develop a public service announcement campaign to increase awareness and build public will for after-school programming.

Innovative state efforts to rethink the use of in-school and out-of-school time. State and local superintendents and individual principals are looking for programs, funds, and partners to assist in increasing opportunities for learning in the out-of-school hours. Equally, if not more, important, however, they are integrating these conversations into the more fundamental discussions about school improvement, school reform, and community education that are going on with businesses and communities. Districts are looking to increase attendance and achievement through partnerships that create school clubs, real-life learning experiences,

extended day block scheduling, and opportunities for parents and community members to volunteer, obtain GEDs, and oversee student projects.

While the reasons for action vary—from safety, supervision, remediation, enrichment, standards, and accountability—efforts to extend the time and expand the opportunities for learning in the out-of school hours must eventually be reconciled with efforts to use existing time better (i.e. school reform). It is very clear that the two tracks should not compete: what happens after school should complement what happens during the school day. There is reasonable consensus that after-school programming should not try to compensate for weaknesses in the school curriculum and should not be allowed to copy traditional methods of instruction. But it is less clear, especially at the high school level, what good learning environments look like—in school or out. At the time when students vote with their feet—either by staying in or dropping out—what does it take to motivate students to learn?

What happens after school should complement what happens during the school day.

Expanded learning and doing opportunities are needed for all students. Creating high-quality learning environments for all students is the key.

The standards movement has proven to be a double-edged sword. It has put the spotlight on the need to hold communities and educators accountable for the preparation of all students. But it has put undo pressure on educators to define and measure preparation in ways that sometimes narrow the definitions of teaching and learning at a time when they should be expanding. How do schools motivate all students to learn and create environments in which they can be successful? What is the impact of high stakes exams?

It is okay to be smart. But it is not cool to be studious.

Dr. John Bishop has done extensive research across states on two seemingly unrelated topics: peer culture and exit exams. His findings suggest that when the school's focus shifts to achievement (as measured by exit exams), students' valuation of achievement and effort goes up and student performance increases. Students (according to a 1997 survey done by Johnson and Farkas) perceive that they are not working very hard and report that, if more were required of them, they would try harder. So what accounts for the current picture?

Peer Culture at Schools in the Educational Excellence Alliance

- 24% agree that "My friends make fun of people who try to do real well in school."
- 55% agree that "My friends joke around and annoy the teacher."
- 58% disagree that "It's annoying when students try to get the teacher off track."

Findings from the Northeast study of 10th graders, presented by Dr. John Bishop during the Institute

- **Student popularity is linked to lack of effort.** Research dating back to the 1960s documents that students feel it is great to be a "jock." It is okay to be smart. But it is not cool to be studious.
- **The academic success of some, in a classroom-based grading system, means the relative failure of others.** Outstanding athletes work as a part of a team and bring glory to the school. Outstanding students work alone and raise the grading curve for others.
- **The pressure to get good grades tempts those who care to opt for less demanding courses.** These decisions are often supported by parents and sometimes teachers.

Bishop argues that when curriculum-based external exit exams, like those used in Europe, replace teacher grades, low-performing students stay and student achievement improves.

Bishop argues that when curriculum-based external exit exams, like those used in Europe, replace teacher grades, low-performing students stay and student achievement improves. Why?

- Curriculum-based external exams make learning in the class important. Students having to take standardized exams at the end of their courses have more reasons to learn hard material. Students in these classes tolerate fewer disruptions by their peers, are more engaged in class, do more homework outside of class, have peer leaders who are good students, and expect to complete more years of schooling. General high school exit exams do not have the same effect because the delay is too long and the connection to courses is too diffuse.
- They allow teachers to be coaches. Taking the responsibility of grading out of teachers' hands increases trust between students and teachers, reduces in-class competition (one student excelling does not threaten others' grades), and eliminates teacher pressures to grade on a curve.
- They highlight the importance of good teachers, which puts pressure on the system to increase teacher pay. Higher wages accompany higher standards in states like New York and in countries that have these exams.

When teachers, parents, and school administrators focus on increasing the amount of time struggling students spend on learning, results happen.

- They shift the focus and resources to students who are struggling. When teachers, parents, and school administrators focus on increasing the amount of time struggling students spend on learning, results happen. Expectations for low-achieving students go up. The quality and rigor of their courses improves. Resources such as teaching assistants, after-school classes, and peer tutoring increase. Teachers work harder. Low-achieving students improve their performance and stay in school.

Achievement of New York Students Compared to Those in Other States

- Scored 46 points higher on the SAT
- Scored one grade-level higher on the National Assessment of Educational Progress
- Same enrollment and graduation rates
- Earned 3.6% higher wages after graduation
- A higher proportion goes to and stays in college

Presented by Dr. John Bishop during the Institute

Discussions with **Alaskan students** reinforced many of Bishop's arguments. First, they brought home the fact that students are serious about their education. Every one of these students has a story, has opinions, has a resume— most hold jobs and/or are involved in youth or community programs—and has a future that they are trying to shape.

The group had a range of interests, experiences, and backgrounds that in and of themselves defied stereotypes. K8, 17, is an athlete and activist who has moved extensively, been in four high schools, and been homeless at points in her life. Maia, 15, is an honors student who grew up in foster care and now lives on her own with a roommate. Chris, 17 with ADD/ADHD, is out of school, living on his own, and working. Carolynn, a teen mom living on her own, just graduated from an alternative school. Sarah is an artist and activist on her way to college. Grace, who, in her words, knows what she wants out of life and is going to get it, switched to an alternative school that better met her needs. Matt dropped out of a large high school after being ridiculed, took correspondence courses, and finally re-enrolled in an alternative school because of a relationship he maintained with a teacher.

Each of these students had insights and opinions about what schools have done and can do to motivate and support them, and what schools and peers have done to alienate them in their quests to "get where they want to go."

What motivates students? Relevance, recognition, good teaching, real work, real options.

High school should prepare you for college or get you ready for a future career, but a lot of things that we do in high school don't teach us anything.

- **Relevance.** High school should prepare you for college or get you ready for a future career, but a lot of things that we do in high school don't teach us anything. At our school, though, you have to learn how to do your taxes ... really do your taxes; what you have to do when you get a job; how to make a proper resume; how to do a mock interview. It's not just the kids that are in business. ... It's every student there. When I'm doing these things, it's making me feel more like an adult. It's making me want to be more professional. [Carolynn]
- **Recognition.** The Grammy Institute decided to take the top five high schools from the entire United States and award Grammies to them. East High School was number one. It wasn't in the newspaper; didn't get put on the intercom. Nobody knows about it. [But they always manage to announce the sports]. About a month later, a group of seniors from East did a senior prank that caused ... damage. It's still in the papers ... things get publicized and stereotypes get put into place. [Sarah]
- **Good Teaching.** Some people learn slower than others. ... People think they're slow when it might be only that one subject they're learning slower than the others. They might be good in math, but not history. That's where different teaching techniques come in handy. Personally, I've learned all of my teaching techniques from my teachers. ... They'll focus on one thing, and then they'll teach it four different ways so that everybody gets it. [Matt]
- **Real work.** I think that the role of work in high school is really important. ... If students get out of high school, and if they haven't had a job while they're a student

because they don't have time for it, and they don't learn how to write a resume or type on a computer, they're not going to be able to get a job. [Matt]

- **Real Options.** Extracurricular activities like auto classes and swimming—any kind of extracurricular activities that kids might want to do in their future to make money. Keep extracurricular activities because who knows what students might become? [Grace]

What alienates students? Bureaucracy, favoritism, lack of respect, lack of voice.

- **Bureaucracy.** At Bartlett there are about 1,500 students. There are five counselors. ... When you first start the year, if you want to change your schedule, you've got to wait in line. You might have to wait a month. ... By the time they get to you, they say, "Well, sorry. We're already so many weeks into the school year. You can't change it." It becomes difficult to take your education in your own hands. [Chris]
- **Favoritism.** Favoritism involves jocks. It involves the smarter kids. A lot of students are trying harder and harder to be the favorite when really it is not right. Teachers shouldn't favor anybody. [Matt]
- **Lack of Respect**

  ... from adults. In a lot of high schools there's an entire authoritarian structure. Students are not people. They're babysitting charges. You don't get looked at; you don't get respected. People glare at you. There are security guards. ... They carry guns. It scares me. I'm not afraid of being physically harmed. But that's not a safe [environment] for the person that I want to become and the things that I want to do. [Sarah].

  ... from peers. When I went to a traditional high school for about two or three years, I became friends with a teacher, and I was singled out as teacher's pet. ... After a while I didn't like the traditional high school and I left. ... Here, you aren't a teacher's pet the moment you talk to a teacher. [Matt]
- **Lack of Voice.** Students need to be brought into the structures of their schools. ...We go there every day, and we're just as much part of it as the teachers and administrators are. Students need to be part of the administration of their schools. They need to be on the school board. [Sarah]

What supports do students need? Relationships, guidance, protection, referrals, flexible credits for real work.

- **Relationships.** I went to a traditional high school, with about 1,500 students, and the teachers were very distant. ... They didn't know me; I didn't know them, and when I went to school I felt no connection. If I had a problem, the thought of even going to a teacher would not cross my mind. ... At the smaller schools all our teachers are more personal with the students. Each teacher has a role as a counselor and has about 20 advisees. ... The students get to know each other. Not so many people stay in their own little cliques. ... we all work together to make our school work. [Carolynn]
- **Guidance.** In the POWER program we work with a lot of people who think that suicidal thoughts are normal. It's nothing to them. Sex is nothing. ... Being hit by

their father is normal. ... They really need someone to talk to, and they don't know these things aren't normal, that you can get help. Some kids end up dropping out of school because they think they're strange, and that if they are not normal, how can they graduate. ... There are family problems to keep them from even going to school sometimes. [K8]

- **Protection.** I was going to go to a travel school and get certified to be a travel agent. Before I went, I got two of my friends to enroll. ... They were probably the best students. They had done all the work. ... But they didn't fit in with the class. So they got shrugged off. They had taken out an education loan in their name, $5,000. I was going to go, but I decided not to because of what the school did. [Cameron]
- **Referrals.** In our school, any types of problems we have, whether we need a job, ... think we might have an STD, ... we know there's someone at our school we can tell who will give us a referral to a place where we can seek help. Any of these problems can impair your education. [Carolynn]
- **Flexible credits for real work.** Most teenagers are involved in many activities other than school, whether it's a sport or advisory commission or a youth employment project. You want to help out the community by being in these programs. ... You should get some credit and appreciation from the schools to help with that. [Chris] Last year I was in a program ... called Work Experience ... you have to be in special education classes, or have missed out on classes the past year to get into the program. [But] there are three spaces per counselor for students who are in regular classes. I managed to get one of the spots, even though I was in honors classes. I would go to school all day, have all my classes, and then also work in the afternoon, and I earned a full elective credit. [Maia]

There is no doubt that real learning occurs when teachers and students are motivated. Matt, who praised his teachers not only for their relationships but for their teaching skills, says it all in seven words: "I remember almost everything that was taught." But, there is also little doubt that environment counts. Favoritism, bureaucracy, poor relationships with teachers and peers—all of these factor into how much a young person feels connected to his or her school. School size helps. But, as many of the students emphasized, size is only a facilitating factor—it makes it easier for students and teachers to find time to build relationships, explore alternative teaching strategies, create flexible schedules, and engage all students. Is there any evidence that school environment is as important a factor in student well-being if not student success as the Alaskan students suggest it is?

Dr. Clea Sucoff McNeely, a University of Minnesota researcher involved in analyzing the Add Health study, says yes. School connectedness, as measured by eight questions about closeness, fairness, and difficulties with teachers and students and about overall feelings of happiness and safety, matters:

- *School connectedness is a strong predictor of emotional well-being and lower risk-taking.* Students who feel connected to school drink, smoke, and use drugs less and

School connectedness is a strong predictor of emotional well-being and lower risk-taking.

The quality of a school's climate is in the hands of those who can do something about it.

have fewer suicidal thoughts, violent acts, and pregnancies. No other factor—class size, mean level of education among teachers, parent involvement, public or private status—had as big an association with these variables. These factors may affect academic outcomes, but school connectedness is by far the strongest predictor of social and behavioral outcomes.

- *School connectedness depends on students' relationships with students and teachers.* The quality of a school's climate is in the hands of those who can do something about it.
- *School disconnectedness is more or less equally present in urban and rural areas, middle and high schools, among males and females, and regardless of socioeconomic status.* By and large, school connectedness varies more within a school than it does between schools.
- *Students in smaller schools and in schools where the most popular students are highly motivated* and are high achievers feel more attached to schools than those attending larger schools in which the popular students are not academically focused.
- *School connectedness does not, by itself, improve academic achievement.* A strong academic program must be in place. However, students who feel connected exhibit greater responsiveness to new programs aimed at increasing academic achievement than do those who do not.

These data reinforce the ideas brought out by the students—that good teaching can motivate learning, but poor environments can hinder it, in part by creating emotional distress and in part by leaving young people more vulnerable to pressures to engage in risky behaviors. As Sucoff McNeely states:

> "School connectedness itself will not create high test scores. Students can be having a great time in school, but if there is an ineffective teaching curriculum, achievement will not be high. In the reverse, some students will do well without being very connected to school. Youngsters have a wide variety of connections in their lives. The importance of school connectedness is going to depend on their connections to other people. ... [For some] school connectedness will not necessarily be an essential ingredient. But for some kids it is absolutely essential."

There are clear recipes for increasing students' connectedness to school and learning (Pittman):

- *Make schools safe, stable, stimulating places.*
- *Find ways to protect and promote nonacademic instruction offered during and after the school day.*
- *Ensure that staff have the capacity and motivation to play central roles in students' lives.*
- *Help students build and use diverse social and strategic networks.*

- *Make learning experiences more relevant by linking them to work, work preparation, and community involvement.*

Many of these changes are happening in schools and school districts across the country. The challenge, as Sucoff McNeely and Bishop suggest, is to help educators see these changes as central to, rather than competing with, the quest for improved student academic achievement. One way to do this is to redefine learning.

Expanded definitions of learning—when it happens, how it happens, where it happens, why it happens, and what it focuses on—will be necessary for schools, governments, nonprofits, businesses, and communities to create effective partnerships to promote continuous learning.

Academic competence is the sine qua non of economic success in the 21st century. Shifts in the labor market make it imperative that students come to the work force with solid skills. But basic skills, even higher order thinking skills, are not enough. In the new service economy, effective workers must not only be able to read, write, and analyze, they must be able to exercise good judgment; make decisions; work in groups; negotiate with clients, colleagues, and managers; and continuously retool. These skills are not learned only in the classroom. They are not learned through memorization and repetition. They are not adequately demonstrated through traditional testing approaches. These are statements of fact. They are known by educators and non-educators alike. The challenge, especially given the movement to set and test against standards, is how to expand on what is known about learning.

Academic competence is the sine qua non of economic success in the 21st century. But basic skills, even higher order thinking skills, are not enough.

The combined wisdom of students, school administrators, early childhood experts, academic researchers, and program designers creates something close to a moral imperative to act on what is known:

- Learning starts early.
- Learning and interest in learning must be sustained, throughout high school and into adulthood.
- Learning happens at home, in school, and in the community and happens best when supported in all three environments.
- Learning need not be dependent upon parental income or formal education; what parents do counts more than how much they make.
- Learning styles vary enormously; teaching styles must vary accordingly.
- Learning interests vary enormously; schools and communities should help students keep their options open by offering a wide array of experiences and skill-building opportunities beyond required classes.
- Learning and testing need not be antithetical. Teaching to the test is good when it is a good and fair test that measures mastery of complex ideas.

- All students can learn at high levels when adult and student expectations, resources, and supports are increased and teachers and curricula are of high quality.
- All students can and should be active crafters of their own learning experiences (and monitors of their learning time).
- All schools, big and small, can be places where all students feel welcomed and connected if school administrators pay more attention to creating supportive environments.
- All students, college bound or not, need opportunities to learn about, prepare for, and experience work and responsibility.

There are enormous pressures and opportunities for educators to reach back into the early years, push down into the after-school hours, and pull in to focus more narrowly on traditional academic content. The merits and challenges of these opportunities are discussed in the papers that follow. There is a theme that runs throughout most of the papers, however: *partnership*. Schools do not fill all of the space in young people's lives. There are many other actors and influences. But the time that schools have students plays an enormous role in students' ability to be continuous learners. No less important is the leadership educators take in ensuring that students have learning opportunities outside of school—opening school doors after school; creating school-day opportunities to work, learn, and contribute in the community; partnering to improve the quality of an early childhood care and education system; encouraging students, parents, and youth organizations to create high-yield learning activities.

Ramey proposed seven essentials for caregivers of young children that, if met, enhance learning:

1. Encourage exploration
2. Mentor in basic skills
3. Celebrate developmental advances
4. Rehearse and extend new skills
5. Protect from inappropriate disapproval, teasing, and punishment
6. Communicate richly and responsively
7. Guide and limit behavior

Again, these seem profoundly relevant to the education of all young people. Students continuously learning means adults—parents, relatives, teachers, administrators, caregivers, youth workers, public officials—continuously thinking about ways to provide a range of services, supports, and opportunities for young people that span time (morning to night, fall to summer); span development (birth to young adulthood); and span outcomes (from academic and vocational to social and civic).

Acknowledgment of the importance of linking education within the classroom to learning in the community is perhaps one of the strongest signs of educational leadership.

Educators cannot, and should not, be held accountable for delivering, against this full list. But they can and must be knowledgeable about the full list. Acknowledgment of the importance of linking education within the classroom to learning in the community is perhaps one of the strongest signs of educational leadership.

PART II
Summer Institute 1999: Presentations in Summary

Early Childhood Care and Education

Introduction

Imagine a dedicated week of front page stories among the most highly respected national newspapers and media sources focused on what has happened in early childhood and family education over the past 10 or so years. The "good news" headlines would say things like:

- *Growing Appreciation for the Value of Early Childhood Education: From Advocates and Educators to Parents and Politicians*
- *Early Childhood Initiatives Now Exist in Virtually Every State*
- *New Brain Research Confirms That Early Experience Matters*
- *Growing Numbers of States Provide Poor Four-Year-Olds with Access to Preschool*
- *New Funds for Early Childhood Research Available from Many Federal and State Agencies*

However, beneath the surface of "good news" in early childhood and family education lie challenges. Nationally, new and refined policies and programs are being created in record numbers. Yet, just below the exterior are goals that lack clarity and an imprecise, blurred list of desirable results for young children. There is no system to support successful service delivery. The degree to which the field remains under-prepared, under-financed, and under-conceptualized is indeed distressing as is the limited emphasis on quality—an issue key to making gains in early care and education count in the long term.

An examination of these issues begins with the story of Ruth Turner, a single mother of two, and her personal experience with early care and education. Ruth's story sets the stage for a discussion of the current issues of practice, policy, and public will. It shows how the flawed nature of pedagogy in early childhood education, as well as the context surrounding it, compounds the difficulty of choices that many parents must make today.

Pedagogy in early care and education faces a fundamental challenge as it continues to be dispensed as factual, disjointed tidbits that result in the mounting of ABCs and 123s. Rather than inspire wonder and exploration, too much of the current content and teaching strategies used in programs start young children along the path of rote memorization and factual store housing. Little attention is given to exploration, discovery, or self-directed and purposeful learning. Unfortunately, many workers in the field do not see the relevance of preparing young children in such ways. They view content as the end rather than the means to an end of meaningful, purposeful, lifelong learning.

The public calls out for something more. Affluent parents respond by spending substantial amounts of money for their children to participate in high-quality learning environments. Other

parents, like Ruth, are choosing to take their children out of mediocre programs to free up hard-earned, limited funds for other important expenses. In both instances, as parents are faced with the majority of costs for early care and education, economic status determines preparedness opportunities for young children. In both instances, the nonuniversal nature of access and quality is heightened. Ruth's experience reflects a field of extremely uneven opportunity. While multiple programs based on new and existing early childhood policies are springing up all over the nation, they remain woefully inadequate. The condition persists mainly because there continues to be no thoughtful system of quality care and education in this country.

New research contributes to new opportunities related to practice and policy in early childhood education. It resolves a long-time debate, demonstrating that development and learning are not attributable solely to nature or nurture. Rather, development relies on a complex interplay between both nature (heredity) and nurture (environment). The quality and quantity of caregiver-child relations significantly affect brain development. The kinds of interactions that take place between young children and individuals in their environments (e.g., encouragement of exploration, guidance/limitations in behaviors, etc.) are critically important. Early brain research supports the idea that early experience matters with regard to variations in children's learning and development. Further, well-designed research that has tested the proposition programmatically supports the idea that even among the most disadvantaged children, appropriate, intensive, preventive interventions make a difference in academic, social, and emotional outcomes over time.

Early brain research supports the idea that early experience matters with regard to variations in children's learning and development.

It is clear that policies and practice lag behind research and public will. High-quality learning environments should no longer be the privilege of a few, but the experience of all young children and their families. Trained and skilled cohorts of practitioners are sorely needed to help young children thrive and achieve their potential. Activities in the United States and around the globe that have made use of the knowledge base and successfully implemented high-quality systems with positive results must be expanded. In the next several pages, these issues are brought to bear by leading experts and educators. Their knowledge, experiences, insights, and research clearly suggest that the time for a shift in how to think about and carry out early care and education is long overdue.

The Story of "Ruth Turner"

This is the story of Ruth Turner, a single mother of two young children.

She came into her accredited preschool one day in March and very abruptly announced that she was removing her children from the program. Now, Ruth had been a very involved parent. She'd been to the center often. She'd participated in parenting education activities. Naturally, her decision to remove her children from the center was quite shocking to the director of the program, particularly since it was mid-year and likely to be disruptive for Ruth's children.

The director inquired whether Ruth was moving out of the area. Ruth replied that she was not. The rest of the dialogue, beginning with the center director continued:

"Are you unhappy with the program?"

"No, not at all. To the contrary, I love it and the kids love it."

"Are you quitting your job?"

"No."

"Well, why are you leaving then?"

Ruth looked at her and said, "Well, it's March and the teacher got to 'z.'"

The director stopped, looking very puzzled. Then, she realized that Ruth's oldest daughter had been in a classroom where the teacher had focused on the 'letter-a-week' pedagogy in early childhood. It was March. The children had reached 'z,' and Ruth believed that since there wasn't more to be learned, she could use her hard-earned dollars better elsewhere.

Ruth's story exposes some of the current issues in the care and education of today's young children. It illustrates two big challenges facing the field. First, in the area of pedagogy-*what happens **inside** of programs*-it shows that parents really do want and need their children in programs that they perceive as learning environments. Second, Ruth's story gives life to the contextual issues-*what goes on **around** programs*-by reinforcing the consumer driven nature of early childhood care and education; it is a service paid for in large by parents. Ruth's experience raises serious challenges inside and outside of early childhood programs.

As told by Dr. Sharon Lynn Kagan during the Institute

Status and Challenges of Early Childhood Care and Education

Based on Remarks by Dr. Sharon Lynn Kagan[1]

The current issues in early childhood care and education can be organized into two sets of challenges to facilitate analysis, discussion, and even recommendations. They are pedagogy—what happens inside of programs—and context—the issues that surround programs. They frame the remarks below.

Pedagogy: What Goes on Inside of Programs

Put simply, the issues of pedagogy are "What is learned?", "What is taught?", and "How is it taught?" Broader and equally important issues include "How are we going to assess young children?" and "What exactly are we going to assess?"

Means, not ends: Academic content in early childhood education must become a means to a greater end-the joy and the art of knowing, of doing and being.

The Nature of Learning

To understand current pedagogical issues a look at the nature of learning is helpful. Learning involves opportunities to

- Learn something new, something fresh
- Solve problems that were not realized as problems
- Collaborate in new ways
- Be engaged in what may not even have been realized as learning
- Hypothesize about things never thought of before

Indeed, this is the very purpose of early childhood education—to make learning meaningful.

Early childhood education programs in the United States have always had content, particularly with their commitment to literacy and numeracy. The debate about the content of pedagogy, then, is not a question of whether or not there should be content. It is deeper and more complex. It has to do with the means/ends dichotomy.

Unfortunately, in America early childhood education tends to be preoccupied with the mounting of particular facts and tidbits—the mounting of "Zs."

Reconciling the Means/Ends Dichotomy in Content

Unfortunately, in America early childhood education tends to be preoccupied with the mounting of particular facts and tidbits—the mounting of "Zs." This tendency, however, is quite unique to this nation. Europeans, for example, are baffled by this approach. For them,

[1] Dr. Sharon Lynn Kagan is a Senior Associate at Yale University's Bush Center in Child Development and Social Policy and the Virginia and Leonard Marx Professor of Early Childhood and Family Policy at Teachers College, Columbia University. She was the President of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), is Co-Chair of the National Education Goals Panel on Goal One, and a member of over 40 national boards and panels.

content is not the end of early childhood education. Rather, it is the means for a greater and more durable aim. For example, science and scientific facts are tools used to foster inquiry. Stories are used to foster comprehension and art to generate creativity. Math is used to inculcate a sense of relationships.

Reinforcing this approach to early childhood content, the National Education Goals Panel suggests that the ends or goals of early care and education should be specified in terms of the gains that children achieve in

- Physical and motor development
- Social and emotional development
- Approaches toward learning
- Communicative development
- Cognitive knowledge

Who Does the Teaching?

Teachers in early care and education, for the most part, are required to hold no certification and no degree.

The pedagogical process is about both learning and teaching. Without quality teaching, the content possibilities crafted will never be realized. This holds true across children's developmental periods and learning settings.

Requirements to teach in most early childhood settings have been characterized as woefully inadequate. Teachers in early care and education, for the most part, are required to hold no certification and no degree. The nation's premier program, Head Start, requires that its lead teachers have a child development associate credential, a set of basic competencies that are not even equivalent to an associate's degree, and only recently altered this to an Associate of Arts degree.

Moreover, in this country required professional development in early childhood education amounts to approximately three to six hours of training annually. With this information alone, is it any wonder that virtually 86 percent of all programs serving young children have been empirically classified as poor to mediocre in quality? Unfortunately, too limited attention has been given to upgrading and sustaining high quality for every early care and education program. Without quality, the investments made in early childhood education will be constrained in what outcomes they can yield for young children.

Context: What Happens Around Programs

Understanding context—what happens around programs—is necessary to construct policies that yield the highest good for young children and for the field. First, parents must be viewed as the consumers of early childhood education. They pay 60-80 percent of the cost of services for young children, with only 20-40 percent borne by the public sector. Even when quality is poor, parents pay. They need this service so that they might remain in the workforce, hoping that their young children are safe and happy.

In the United States, the general public tends to conceptualize education as an entitlement that is largely publicly financed. Therefore, it is often difficult to think of early childhood

education as it really is—market driven. It is a market industry—subject to market conditions, subject to rises and falls in the economy.

In addition, unlike K-12 public education in the United States, early childhood is not viewed as an essential part of a comprehensive educational system. The result is an uncoordinated, nonuniversal system that fails to treat early childhood education as a social imperative. It remains an ancillary service tied to political will and public claims from poverty and workforce constituents. It is under those two guises, the need to reduce poverty and the need to provide a safe place for children of working parents, from which most major early childhood legislation has been evoked. This context has contributed to the development of an industry driven to fill supply requests while the issue of quality is hardly raised.

Overwhelming evidence exists regarding the essential role high-quality preschool education plays in ensuring that young children enter schools ready to learn. State education agencies are realizing this relationship and see the need for an increased role in early childhood education. This realization, however, brings with it a range of pertinent issues. Who should govern the early care and education of young children ages 0 to 2? Ages 3 to 5? Should state preschool programs be universal or targeted? At what age should preschool begin? How can the issue of high quality be balanced with quantity and availability? How do state education agencies finance early childhood education? The list of issues could go on.

Overwhelming evidence exists regarding the essential role high-quality preschool education plays in ensuring that young children enter schools ready to learn.

What Some States Are Doing to Improve Early Care

Many states are making laudable efforts to address one or more of the issues central to early childhood education. As experts point out, communities that seriously invest in the early experiences of their young children fare better in economic and social outcomes. Leaders in state education agencies agree. In sum, states' efforts have involved

- Expanding services
- Addressing professional development
- Establishing external partnerships to increase infrastructures and build quality
- Reducing duplication of dual structures through state and local partnerships
- Instituting systems of accountability
- Building political will

Elements of High-Quality Early Care and Education

The 1997 publication "Not By Chance" challenges the field to develop a system of care and education that is created, not by chance, but with a great deal of thought. (Kagan and Cohen, 1997) The all-inclusive nature of the report's eight recommendations is well articulated by the formula "eight minus one equals zero."

What the formula means is all or nothing. It means that a single recommendation cannot be pulled out of the series and implemented on its own and have a real impact. It means that educators serious about increasing and sustaining high quality in early childhood education

must be willing to create a system of care and education that consists of all eight recommendations.

Recommendations for a System of High-Quality Care and Education

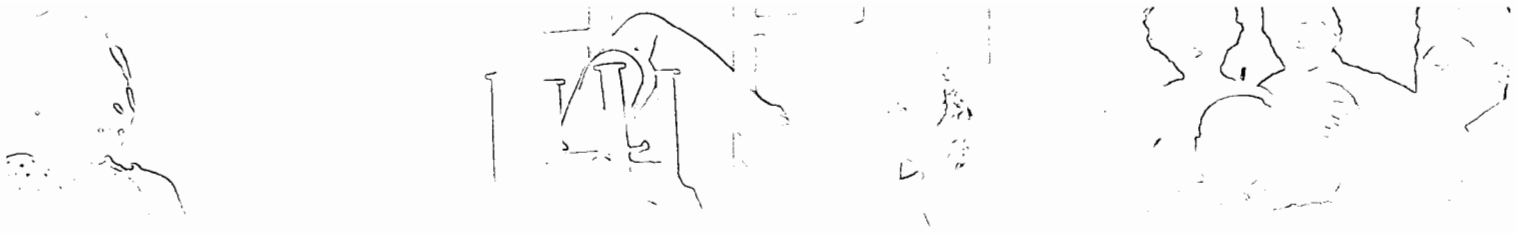
1. Use a wide range of proven approaches for improving quality in all family childcare and center-based programs.
2. Develop clear goals for children and quantifiable results about skills and knowledge that children should be able to demonstrate across various domains of development.
3. Engage parents and families as partners in early childhood programs.
4. Require all individuals responsible for children in centers and family childcare homes to hold licenses.
5. Revamp the content of pedagogy, particularly for early childhood educators (e.g., focus on infants and toddlers, multicultural education, the use of technology, and hands-on learning).
6. Require program licensing for all early care and education programs.
7. Develop a revised funding and finance strategy that involves a broad array of groups (e.g., businesses, governments, public at large, parents, and community organizations) and set aside 10 percent of public funds for the maintenance of infrastructure quality.
8. Establish permanent state and local early childcare and education boards that oversee governance, planning, and accountability.

Kagan and Cohen, *Not By Chance,* 1997

Recommendations for Education Leadership

Chief state school officers are in a unique position to make a remarkable difference in the approach to both pedagogy and context in early care and education. *First,* it is essential that they promote the establishment of a mechanism for clearly defining the pedagogical results for young children and in a way that can be measured. State leaders can then work with local superintendents and teachers to be certain they understand what it is the state has determined very young children should know and be able to do. This vision must go beyond the educational "tidbits" and focus on the skills, attributes, and habits young children must possess.

Second, state leaders should work with groups across the state to set in motion a process for creating the vision of what an early care and education system for the state's young children would ideally look like. This vision should be research based and future oriented, with a phased implementation timeline. A focus on these two tasks—establishing a results orientation around the five goals listed earlier and creating a long-term vision—will go a long way towards leveraging broad, systemic, enduring change in both the availability and quality of early childhood care and education.



Applying Early Brain Research to the Education of Young Children

Based on Remarks by Dr. Craig T. Ramey[2]

Cognitive development has a typical life course characterized by rapid acceleration in the early years, followed by a slower rate of development. Contrary to the notion that it flattens out in adulthood and spirals into a long, ignominious, deadly decline, the rate of learning can remain quite high if there is continued intellectual activity and challenge. However, if the environment fails to challenge, that deadly curve downward will in fact take place.

Application of this knowledge and the whole area of early brain research to the realm of early childhood education suggests that efforts to prevent lagging development are much more likely to be successful than the current emphasis on remediation. Data show that substantial numbers of children are woefully behind when they enter kindergarten because their early cognitive development has already fallen off from the period of rapid acceleration. The broad range of cognitive, social, and emotional development in kindergarten remains one of society's greatest challenges. It is tough work for kindergarten and first grade teachers to pull up the bottom, while at the same time encouraging development at the upper end of curve. What is now known from brain research can help society face and reduce these variations in development for children entering school.

Efforts to prevent lagging development are much more likely to be successful than the current emphasis on remediation.

Early Experiences Makes a Key Difference in Cognitive Development and School Readiness

Scientists now know that development is a complex interplay of genes and experience. Genes are "turned on" and "turned off" by a variety of complex processes, including the kinds of experiences one might have.

The old belief was that experience had a limited impact on development before age three, or even five. Now, it is clear that early experiences have a profound and decisive impact. Moreover, evidence shows that experiences before birth become part of a child's education and a major determinant of what kindergarten teachers receive when that child comes to school at age five.

Previously it seemed that having a secure caregiver relationship, particularly with the mother, was important because it created a favorable context for learning. Now, research shows that it **directly** affects how the brain is wired, how different neurons make connections among different structures in the brain, and how certain brain structures and emotional centers become

[2] Dr. Craig T. Ramey is University Professor of Psychology, Pediatrics, and Neurobiology and Director of the Civitan International Research Center at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. The Civitan Center is a ten-year-old organization of 350 scientists, staff, and faculty members who study brain development, what affects it, what goes wrong to cause developmental disabilities, and how to treat and prevent those disabilities. Dr. Ramey also serves on the National Academy of Sciences advisory panels on Minority Representation in Special Education and on Development Promotion and Early Childhood Intervention.

The architecture of the brain is literally altered by the quality and quantity of those early relationships.

connected to higher order cognitive processing. The architecture of the brain is literally altered by the quality and quantity of those early relationships. Moreover, it is not just the quality and quantity of relations with a child's mother, father, or other relatives. Rather, it is the quality and quantity with whomever the child has contact—including early care and education providers, well prepared or not.

New Perspectives on Brain Development

Topic	Old Thinking...	New Thinking ...
Brain Development	Depends on genes	Is complex interplay of genes and experience
Importance of Experiences	Before age 5, limited impact	Decisive impact on brain structure and adult before age 5
Secure Caregiver Relationship	Creates favorable context for learning	Directly affects how the brain is "wired"

Adapted from Shore, *Rethinking the Brain,* 1997

Reducing Variations in Children's Development and Learning

Knowledge from disciplines including neurology, pediatrics, and developmental psychology has substantially changed what is known about brain development. (Shore, 1997) It also has changed thinking about young children with mental retardation, learning disabilities, and other cognitively based difficulties.

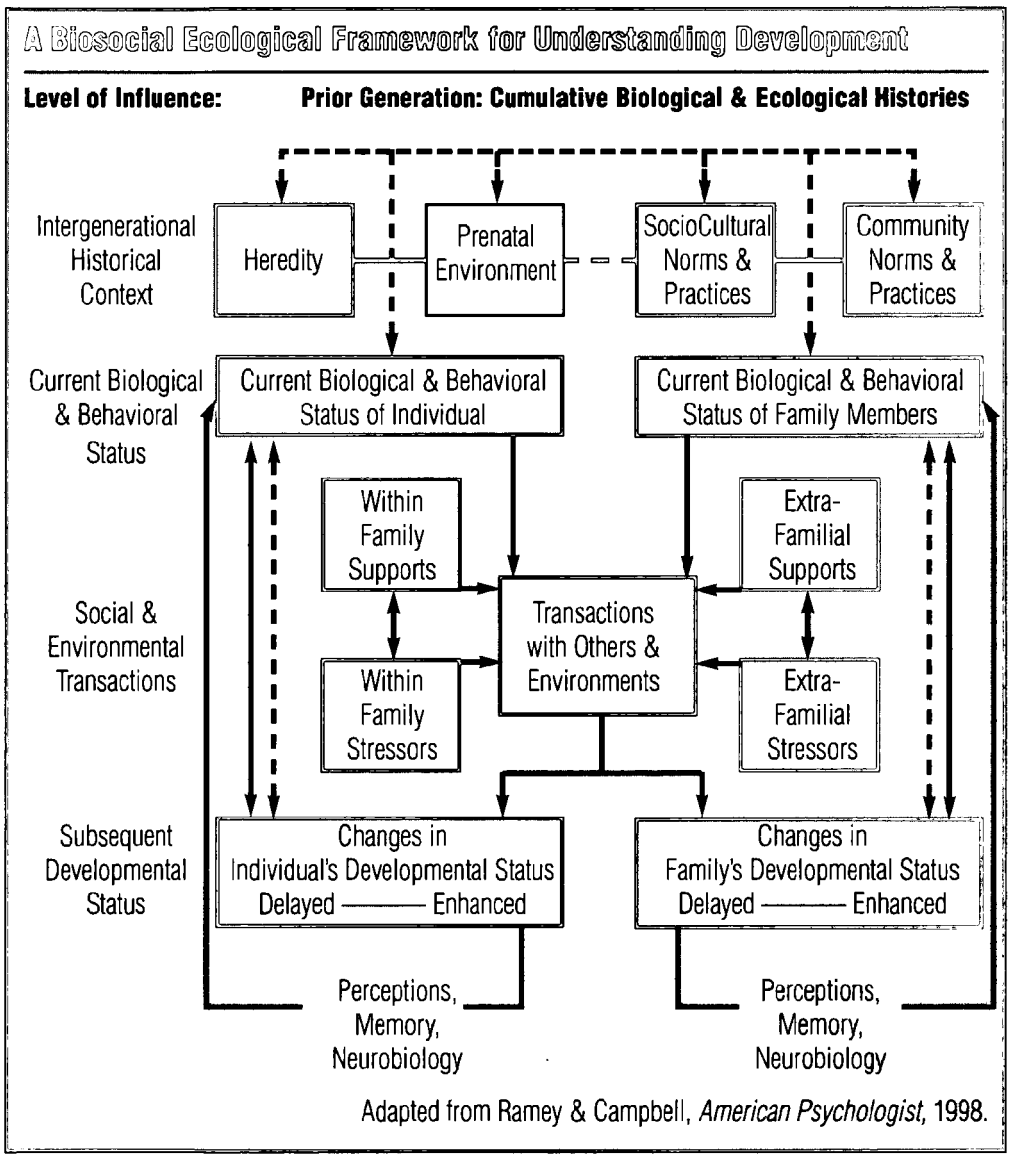
The struggle is identifying ways to reduce the percentage of children with mild retardation. These are the children typically participating in most public school special education programs. Usually, their special needs were not previously identified nor addressed prior to entering elementary school. In some instances, educators have waited as late as ages 12, 13, or 14 to identify new cases. Recent findings in brain development research and from other empirical evidence suggest that earlier identification coupled with prevention programs could work in tandem to reduce the number of students with such disabilities.

Mechanisms for Healthy Development in Children

Children's development depends on both early and subsequent opportunities and experiences. These events have been conceptualized into a biosocial ecological framework. (Ramey and Ramey, 1998) The importance of heredity is established in this framework. Also addressed is the vital nature of the prenatal environment, the kinds of family supports and stresses that children experience, and the quality of the communities in which they live.

Transactions between children and their environment should be carefully considered, particularly transactions between them and other people in their environment. It is what occurs

here, in this "transactional zone," that significantly contributes to how easily children can interact favorably with others in schools. Indeed, if the **quality** and **frequency** of interactions within the zone can be increased, a greater degree of plasticity and a higher level of functioning in all children can likely be preserved.



After reviewing over 1,000 studies related to the needs of young children, seven elements have been determined to be critically important for young children. Also referred to as developmental priming mechanisms, they include

- Encouragement to explore the environment
- Mentoring in basic cognitive and social skills
- Celebrating new skills

- Rehearsing and expanding new skills
- Protection from inappropriate punishment and ridicule for developmental advances
- Stimulation in language and symbolic communication
- Provision of guidance and limitation in behavior (Ramey and Ramey, 1999)

These mechanisms must be present in children's lives on a frequent, predictable basis.

Can Preschool Prevent Decline in Mental Performance?

Three decades of research have shown that not only can early education prevent decline in mental performance, but that prevention has more potential than remediation. Therefore, the focus of efforts should be on models that support early experience and prevention.

To test this proposition, the Abecedarian Preschool Project was designed in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, a very affluent, well-educated city with numerous social services available to the area's limited number of disadvantaged families.

A pool of eligible families was randomly assigned to one treatment condition or another. A set of individualized experiences was planned for each child each day and the development of the children was monitored. Because of interest in educational gains, some important variables that might confound results were controlled. Both groups received adequate nutrition, family support, either low-cost or free primary medical care, and other social services. Provision of these services to both groups made for a very conservative test of influence of early intervention to alter the course of development.

These children could all be considered severely disadvantaged. On average, their mothers had less than a 10th grade education, with IQs in the low 80s. Most were graduates of special education themselves, with 80 percent becoming the sole providers in their female-headed households. The project began with children at six weeks of age—providing them a year-round program delivered in a child development center that involved parents and held parent group meetings. Significant in-service training for staff was also provided. The program was intensive. It was offered for a full day, five days a week, fifty weeks per year over five years. In those days, the program components were visionary. Today, these same components match recommendations espoused by the National Association for the Education of Young Children for high-quality childcare.

Findings of the Abecedarian Preschool Project

During the first nine months of life, the groups of young children in the Abecedarian Project did not differ on developmental scores. Both had scores within the average range. However, by 12 months, very substantial differences in effect sizes began to emerge.

In education, effect sizes larger than .25 are taken seriously. When effect sizes become bigger than .75, attention is heightened given overwhelming evidence that differences between groups are most likely a result of treatment.

Reported Results of the Project:
After 12 months ——— Effect sizes of .39
After 18 months ——— Effect sizes of 1.45

Between 30 and 54 months, the cascade between groups grew substantially. More and more cognitive processes were being affected positively by the preventive treatment. The largest differences were among those children whose mothers actually had IQs below 70. By age three, a 30-IQ point difference existed between the two groups. In other words, children who were perfectly healthy and normal at birth had dropped down to being right at the edge of being called mentally retarded.

Using a multiple regression model, the contribution of various factors to IQ changes during development can be isolated. They come to exert different levels of control at different times on difference processes. Specifically, after the first year of life, the maternal retardation status of the mother becomes negligible, while adequacy of the home environment and education daycare tend to increase over time. Children in the early education group, on average, had IQ scores 31 points higher than their own mothers. To increase the credibility of these findings, the project was replicated, with similar results.

The contribution of various factors to changes in IQ of a child during development can be isolated. Specifically, after the first year of life, the maternal retardation status of the mother becomes negligible, while adequacy of the home environment and education daycare tend to increase over time.

Interventions Most Effective in Preschool

After the children entered elementary school, the two preschool groups were split and a school-aged intervention was provided for half of each group through age 15. The school-aged intervention consisted primarily of providing master's level teachers or Ph.D. level teachers with lots of experience to work directly with the children's classroom teachers and directly with their parents, facilitating alignment between the two systems. A heavy emphasis was placed on reading and math. Enriching summer camp experiences were added as well. Large effect sizes were apparent for reading and math achievement among children who participated in the early preschool program compared to those who only participated in kindergarten through grade 2 interventions. Thus, it becomes increasingly clear that the first three years of life matter a great deal.

Conclusion

With over 20 randomized controlled trials reported in the literature, it is clear that early childhood education, particularly when coupled with after-school and summer programs, and good health care, improves child development and school readiness, especially among at-risk children. In turn, their academic achievement in school is better and they become more socially adjusted as students. With good achievement in good schools comes reduced costs borne from absenteeism, grade retention, special education, school dropouts, juvenile and adult crime, youth services and incarceration, and teen and unwed pregnancies. Ultimately, communities

that make this kind of investment in young children are more competitive, have more of a participatory democracy, and demonstrate greater civility.

Teachers in the [French] preschool system receive higher levels of training, higher levels of pay, and greater levels of respect compared to their American counterparts.

A Contrast: The French Preschool

In France, recovery efforts from the Second World War increased participation of women in the workforce and significantly expanded the country's preschool system. Today, the French have created a comprehensive opportunity for children to be in well-designed settings that provide universal preschool for nearly 100 percent of three, four, and five year olds.

The organization and operation of the system make it a "crown jewel" in early education. Private organizations operate approximately 20 percent of preschool programs in France, while the remaining 80 percent are located in public schools. All, however, are publicly funded. The national government pays for teachers' salaries, with facilities being funded by locals.

Regardless of the location, French preschool is a full day affair, usually from 8 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. with a two-hour lunch period. Sixty percent of children stay in school for lunch, which takes place in a restaurant-like setting. Youngsters sit at little chairs and tables set with china and glassware. They are served meals of radicchio salad and lamb roast. During instructional periods, they learn colors, numbers, and simple words, with emphasis on reading, art, music and experiential gymnasiums. They have an incredible amount of physical activity. Overall, the French have very few experiences with disabilities like autism and attention deficit disorders.

Teachers in the preschool system receive higher levels of training, higher levels of pay, and greater levels of respect compared to their American counterparts. In fact, French preschool teachers have the same credentials and pay as elementary teachers. They are well dressed and highly professional in their demeanor. Generally, class sizes are larger than those in the United States. Yet, the well-developed structure of French preschools, coupled with highly trained teachers, seems to work well, yielding positive results. French children enter school more socialized and more prepared to learn.

As told by Delaine A. Eastin during the Institute

Three States Strive for Quality and Access

Toward Universal Preschool and High Standards – California

Based on Remarks by Delaine A. Eastin[3]

Kindergarten teachers everywhere can recognize children who have experienced preschool. Teachers can point them out the first day of school. These are the children who know their colors and numbers, can spell their names, and tell you where they live. These are children who are much more organized in terms of social setting when they enter school.

The next "big idea" for education is universal preschool and in California, it is underway now. A preschool task force was formed and issued a report calling for a 10-year plan to bring universal preschool for all three- and four-year-old children in the state. The plan will not focus only on "at-risk" children, but all preschoolers throughout the state—ensuring that whether the public money funds a private or public preschool, high standards will be set and met for all children.

This effort to create standards for preschool education will go a long way toward eliminating the uneven preschool experiences that currently exist in private and public California preschools. Simple reading and mathematics activities as well as small motor skill development will prepare preschoolers for elementary instruction. Academic achievement will be integrated into having fun, without treating content areas such as art and music as "extras," nonacademic components of instruction. These disciplines are treated instead as academic and necessary for learning.

Looking at our global competitors in Europe and in Asia, America must recognize that preschool education can and should begin before age five. Universal preschool is the next big idea in American education.

Looking at our global competitors in Europe and in Asia, America must recognize that preschool education can and should begin before age five.

Umbrella Partnership Consolidates Programs – Florida

Based on Remarks by Tom Gallagher[4]

The state of Florida recently passed school readiness legislation, an integrated, seamless system of early childhood education for the state's birth-to-kindergarten population. This new legislation brings together all of the state's federal- and state-funded readiness, pre-K programs into the executive office of the governor. Under this new umbrella legislation, funds for all of these programs will flow through a newly formed group called the Florida Partnership for

3 From a panel presentation made by Delaine A. Eastin, California Superintendent of Schools.

4 From a panel presentation by Tom Gallagher, Florida Commissioner of Education.

School Readiness (the Partnership). The Partnership brings together high-level officials from a broad range of state agencies.

Integrated funding facilitates full-day, year-round preschool programs, enabling parents to work and become self-sufficient and children to experience maximum learning and development outcomes.

This strategy is intended to yield a number of outcomes. First, it works to discontinue isolation among programs. In the new arrangement, existing services can be strengthened through coordinated cooperation with other programs and integrated funding. In turn, integrated funding facilitates full-day, year-round preschool programs, enabling parents to work and become self-sufficient and children to experience maximum learning and development outcomes.

The Partnership has responsibility for adopting, maintaining, and coordinating programmatic, administrative, and fiscal policies and standards for all school readiness programs. Funds for individual programs flow through the Partnership to the local coalitions. The Partnership also provides general oversight to local coalitions and the local coalitions, in turn, have oversight over individual programs. Local coalitions must provide the Partnership with reports on how Florida youngsters are doing in kindergarten and beyond, and information on the preschool programs from which they came. This information will encourage the expansion of effective programs and dissolution of those that are ineffective. Once the outcomes of pre-K programs have been accurately measured, certification efforts will begin.

Universal Services for Vulnerable Populations - Ohio

Based on Remarks by Dr. Susan T. Zelman[5]

Since 1989 early childhood education has been a statewide priority in Ohio aimed at ensuring that all children with disabilities and children living in poverty have access to programs. By 1999 Ohio achieved that goal.

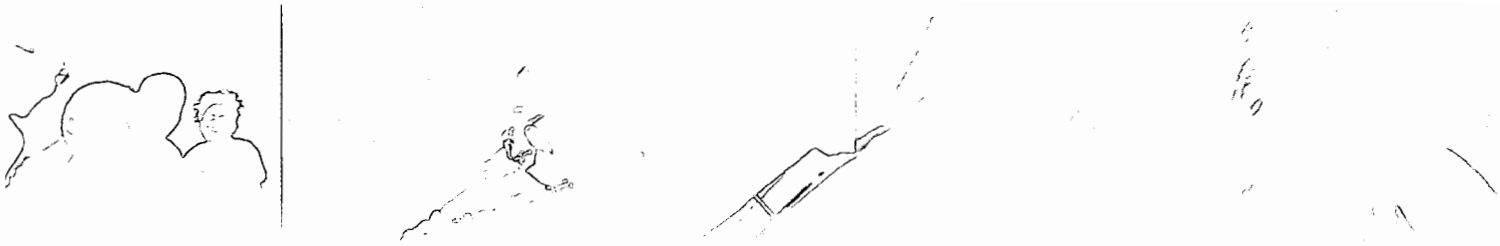
In fiscal year 1990-91, preschool special education in Ohio received $11.8 million and served only 2,500 students with disabilities. At the same time, Head Start funding in Ohio totaled $13.5 million and state funding for public school preschool was quite modest. At best, these two programs served approximately 9,000 youngsters in the state of Ohio.

Today, the story is incredibly different. Preschool special education is funded at a level of $75 million per year, serving more than 17,000 children. That represents an increase of over 600 percent in 10 years. Public school preschool programs likewise have expanded. State funding is now more than $19 million a year, with 8,000 served. Head Start, however, has made the most dramatic gains in the state. Nationally, Head Start programs serve 40 percent of eligible students. Ohio now serves more than 75 percent of its eligible students, making it number one in the nation. Both state and federal money is used to serve this total of over 60,000 students.

While these numbers demonstrate that substantial leaps have been made in terms of access, Ohio continues to struggle with the issue of quality. Beginning in 1997, the State Department of Education developed a quality initiative called Indicators of Success to ensure that preschool

5 From a panel presentation by Dr. Susan T. Zelman, Superintendent of Education in Ohio.

programs have a strong curricular base linked to the state's standards. Preschool competencies in the core curricular areas of language arts, social studies, science, mathematics, and citizenship are keyed to statewide assessments. Curriculum guides for each of the five areas and a special instrument called Galileo are used to measure cognitive, emotional, and social growth in young children and in professional development. Each state-sponsored program collects data that is used at the state level for accountability purposes. This same data provides parents feedback on how well their children are doing with respect to these developmental concepts.



Extended Learning and Development

Introduction

So many of the educational issues, considered by some parents, teachers, policymakers, and child and family advocates to be of near crises proportion, center around the matter of time. The curriculum is packed, leaving educators in a hot debate about how to structure the school day and year to accommodate new ideas about what should be taught and how to reach higher standards of achievement. Students who need extra help with their course work have difficulty finding environments and adults or other students that can offer that needed assistance. Working parents are often unavailable to provide supervision, homework help, enriching educational experiences, or companionship at a time when young people need it. All of these problems relate to the use of time; how to find it and how best to use it. And, they are not new.

Students who need extra help with their course work have difficulty finding environments and adults or other students that can offer that needed assistance.

By the mid-1970s, there was very little talk, even among graduate-level faculty and students in colleges of education, about the role of out-of-school communities, out-of-school agencies, and out-of-school activities in relation to children's learning. On any given day at one of these institutions of higher education, the flow of discourse and debate among student peers, among faculty members, and between faculty and students is a telling clue to the orientation that guides teacher preparation. An invitation to a department chair's office or a tour of the university library might provide the opportunity to peruse the most recent graduate theses and dissertations. These, too, tell the story of an institution's view of education, students, and learning. However, any discussion of the out-of-school learning in the lives of young people would likely have emphasized the custodial value of before- and after-school care. Those theses and dissertations would overwhelmingly focus on what went on in school settings before 3 p.m. between students and classroom teachers. With such a narrow emphasis concerning time allotted to settings for, and sources of, student learning, it is no surprise that in the 1970s very little research-based knowledge existed among educators about the role of out-of-school experiences in children's learning. Fortunately, more educators and education researchers have begun to broaden their perspectives about when, where, and how children learn.

Indeed, today's educators, administrators, youth-serving groups, community-based organizations, and American businesses have a greater vision of extended days, weeks, and years that goes beyond the traditional custodial model. In particular, they see the hours after school, on weekends, and during summer months as key opportunities—whether they involve activities to strengthen and accelerate academic learning for students who lag behind, enriching experiences for students already meeting the standards, or development of important nonacademic skills that support general well-being—to direct a portion of young people's discretionary, waking hours in productive, healthy ways that benefit students, communities, and

the nation. In addition, they are seeking ways to connect with one another based upon a shared vision of national excellence.

The next several pages explore new ways of using time to improve student learning and development and programs currently in use that help address America's after-school crisis. Extended day programs present great opportunities to address not only issues of time use by students but to provide solutions to the problem of productive after-school activities for students with working parents, and the need for extra help for students who require more time engaged in learning activities in order to achieve well academically.

Using Time Well

Based on Remarks by Dr. Reginald Clark[6]

Research considering how time and agents outside of the traditional school day and school building influence in-class learning is relatively new. Twenty-five years ago few discussions in graduate school departments of education considered the role of out-of-school activities, agents, and organizations in children's learning. This area of research is particularly important in the context of children of impoverished backgrounds. Specifically, one can observe that in a given group of students from identically low-income backgrounds, some students emerge successfully while others are not so successful. How these disparate groups of youngsters use time is a large part of the answer to why a student falls into one group or the other. Research continues to focus on the role of out-of-school time and activities and on various adult agents outside of school in facilitating youths' academic and social development over the school life cycle. This research has culminated in a set of tools available to help students use time wisely.

How Students Use Time

Effective management of time and energy during activities of any sort will affect whether or not the desired goals are achieved. But what is necessary to make the use of time "effective"? What procedure or process can be used by students, teachers, and other adult agents to implement those components of effective time use? What do parents need to know to help their students with effective time management and achievement? How can adults help students make the best decisions about how to use the 168 hours that make up each week?

Effective management of time and energy during activities of any sort will affect whether or not the desired goals are achieved.

A student's time can be apportioned into six types of activities:

1. Structured learning activities, including in-school and out-of-school learning
2. Personal health maintenance and exercise
3. Labor
4. Recreation, play, and leisure activities
5. Meditation and worship
6. Rest and sleep

Of the six types of activities, research shows that successful students allocate more time to structured learning activities in school. They also reserve more time for structured learning activities outside of school. Further, they spend more time in a given week doing personal health

6 Dr. Reginald Clark leads the multiracial research consulting group of Clark and Associates in Montclair, California. The central mission of the group is to help educational service providers effectively support youths' growth and development by conducting research on questions relating to student development, and using research to create and deliver results-oriented programs and resources to service providers and parents.

maintenance activities, and they get more sleep and rest. Conversely, low achievers spend less time learning in school, less time learning outside of school, less time sleeping, and more time recreating than high achievers. These findings have been consistent across data sets, regardless of age, gender, race, or socioeconomic status. These findings constitute important information that can be translated into meaningful programs for youth.

The Impact of Time Use on Student Achievement

Of 10 major hypotheses that emerge from research about how student achievement happens, four are discussed below.

- The first is that achieving students spend more time engaged in learning activities than lower-achieving students.
- Hypothesis two states that students who have more opportunities to interact with adults in positive encounters will spend more time in constructive out-of-school learning activities and less time on leisure activities than those students who do not interact with adults.
- Third, constructive learning activities of high-achieving students are usually of higher-quality than those of lower-achieving students.
- And finally, most "social and cultural background" variables have less explanatory usefulness than variables related to parental expectations and student activity routines.

To examine the issues of student achievement and time use, parental expectation, and adult involvement in students' lives, time use surveys were distributed to elementary, middle/junior high, high school, and college students. Their responses were collected and analyzed with regard to the hypotheses cited above. The resulting data provide evidence that educators can use to create practical and deliberate ways of helping students gain skills in time use and lifestyle management that are necessary for school success.

Time Spent Engaged in Learning

Standardized test scores show that higher-scoring students spend more time in comparison to lower-scoring students learning academic lessons in the classroom. They also spend more time engaged in literacy activities outside of school. This finding illustrates the need for effective use of time both in and out of school. In particular, it shows that both settings work together in explaining success on academic tests. Data from several studies show that literacy development (academic success) is more likely to occur when students spend 10 to 20 hours a week in structured learning activities outside of school, such as study, leisure reading or writing, youth programs and clubs, educational television, and volunteer work.

Outcome patterns tend to be cumulative and maintain themselves over the K-12 educational career of students. That is, each year on average, higher-scoring students tend to gain three or four months more beyond their lower achieving classmates. By the end of the third grade, for instance, lower achievers often are nearly a year behind their achieving classmates on grade

equivalency measures. By the end of the fifth grade, they are nearly two years behind. This pattern has been documented in many school districts.

Positive Encounters with Adults

Adult agents, who may or may not be the parents, wield substantial influence in the lives of students. First, they influence the types of achievement goals and aspirations students create. Adult agents also have a great deal of influence over how much opportunity students have to learn the skills they need to accomplish their goals. Third, teachers and other adults have important influence over what kinds of roles parents will play in the support of their own children.

Adult agents, who may or may not be the parents, wield substantial influence in the lives of students.

Over the K-12 life cycle, the encouragement and mentoring (or "coaching") that students receive from responsible adults correlates with increases in the amount of time students spend doing quality reading, writing, and other constructive out-of-school literacy-building activities. Moreover, their involvement in these activities with responsible adults promotes higher test scores. Student involvement and support from responsible adults correlates with decreases in involvement in unstructured leisure activities such as hanging out and television watching, as well as decreases in drug and alcohol use and juvenile crime. In sum, the likelihood of academic success is substantially enhanced if at least one adult outside of school sets high standards for students and regularly advises them to do well in school at the elementary through college level.

Similarly, others have observed that social bonding between a young person and an adult, who may be either or both parents, a grandparent, a teacher, or any other mentor, is a powerful force. In her book *Safe Passage,* Joy G. Dryfoos points out four elements of the adult-student relationship that promote effective, social bonding:

1. Consistency
2. Caring
3. Encouragement
4. Maintenance of contact (Dryfoos, 1998)

The Quality of Activities and Settings

The quality of a student's out-of-school constructive learning activities is correlated with student achievement and is an extremely powerful factor. A statistical examination shows that nearly one-third of the variance in student achievement is explained by the quality of the kinds of experiences students have outside of school. When students are engaged in reading, writing, composing text on computers, study, educational television, youth enrichment organizations, volunteer and hobby activities, organized sports, and spiritual enrichment events, they develop higher literacy skill levels if these activities occur in high-quality, high-yield settings. A high-yield setting is one where students show enthusiasm, focus on the process, take on leadership roles, and utilize developmentally appropriate words, sentences, ideas, and problem-solving strategies.

Parental Expectations and Activity Routines

When variables such as social class, ethnicity, and family background are examined across a broad range of participants, very limited predictive and explanatory information emerges with regard to these variables. Rather, what parents know and expect of their students with regard to out-of-school activities and time use, as well as students' actual activity routines (i.e., how they spent their time in the six activity domains listed previously) matters most. For K-12 students, maternal education, while significant, explains less achievement variation than the actions of parents, teachers, mentors, and other adults. In other words, the things about which something can be done are the most significant factors in student achievement, success, or failure.

The things about which something can be done are the most significant factors in student achievement, success, or failure.

The *Time/Lifestyle Management* Program

If the four hypotheses presented here are valid and true, educators and parents need tools to help students gain skills to manage their time across the various life domains. Further, it seems prudent to empower teachers, parents, and mentors with knowledge and skills for helping students organize and manage their time, particularly school and nonschool learning time.

The *Time/Lifestyle Management*[7] program is such a tool. It was designed to support the creation of a "balanced activity routine" in the lives of young people. The Time/Lifestyle Management (TLM) program is designed around two principles: (1) youth engagement in out-of-school "high yield" learning activities is most likely to happen when adult caregivers effectively guide and "coach" youngsters to do these activities, and (2) adult caregivers are more effective guides or "coaches" when they know specific procedures for helping youths evaluate, change, and manage their lifestyles. The TLM program shows adult caregivers how to help youths set high standards and how to regularly advise youths (through topical discussions) to do well at school from elementary school through college. Essentially, the TLM program helps adult caregivers to become "lifestyle coaches" who effectively "coach" students to use time wisely and create "success-producing" lifestyles (in and out of school). Most students have never had an opportunity to learn effective methods for organizing their time for increased learning away from school. Nor is there another existing research-based curriculum model for elementary or middle school, high school, or college that enables students to learn these skills involving time and lifestyle management.

Most students have never had an opportunity to learn effective methods for organizing their time for increased learning away from school.

Beyond facilitating the development and implementation of a balanced activity routine, *Time/Lifestyle Management* is aimed at helping students improve their reading and writing skills by increasing their involvement in out-of-school literacy activities after school and on weekends. The rationale is that using time wisely leads to a healthy and balanced lifestyle where there is a proper apportionment of time spent doing leisure, labor, learning, and sleep activities. Moreover, it is believed that achieving proper balance represents the foundation for life success. A

7 The Time/Lifestyle Management program was created by Dr. Reginald Clark through Clark and Associates to help students evaluate and reshape their weekly activity routines away from school.

balanced activity routine allows students to cogitate new information such that the knowledge becomes firm and automatic, particularly during assessment.

A Seven-Step Process for Success

Under the model, students first determine where they are with regard to their time use. This step is accomplished using a tracking system software available on CD-rom disks or on the Internet at **www.timeuse.com**. On the site, students select from a set of activities that they do in half-hour increments across a 24-hour period, over a 7-day week. This process usually takes about 20 to 30 minutes. After entering information for a given week, they can see where they are compared to other students their own age and grade level. In the second step, students can use the information to set their own personal goals that reflect how they want to change current time use patterns.

***Time/Lifestyle Management's* Seven-Step Process**

1. Assess current weekly activities by filling out the time-use chart.
2. Decide on a goal for educational success.
3. Make a time management plan to reach the goal.
4. Do the plan.
5. Assess the results to determine if the plan worked.
6. Determine whether the plan was followed.
7. Re-evaluate the plan. Consider whether it is necessary to return to step 3.

Presented by Dr. Reginald Clark during the Institute

The program uses a color-coded system to show the proportion of time students invest across specific domains. When working with a mentor/adult agent, young people can systemically discover ways to reorganize/restructure their time to increase the amount of time in constructive learning and decrease the amount of time in areas less likely to positively influence in-school learning. A color-coded pictorial representation of how time is being spent is displayed on the Internet site.

Once students discover their own time use pattern, they can go a step further and plan a different way of doing things.

Once students discover their own time use pattern, they can go a step further and plan a different way of doing things. A component of the time-use program permits students to **select out** those activities that they wish to change as well as **select in** activity areas in which they wish to invest more time. Next, working with an adult agent/mentor, young people can enact a lifestyle change based on data reflecting their own time use patterns and a self-generated action plan. They have the opportunity to revisit their goals and action plan should they encounter difficulties. The program also allows students to follow through on long-term projects that involve reading, writing, and research activities.

The computer technology for *Time/Lifestyle Management* has been designed to eliminate the need to collect separate data to evaluate program effectiveness. Specifically, once students

have entered individual data, it is stored in the system for later program evaluation use. At a moment's notice, individual student data can be organized into groups of students by a school district, for instance, and evaluated almost instantaneously.

Other Program Components

Besides the student component, *Time/Lifestyle Management* has been designed to provide parent support, to facilitate "coaching" by an adult agent, and to provide teacher and other in-school staff guidance. The program requires a two-day training on implementation, a debriefing interview at the end of the school year, and approximately 16 hours of time implementation—that is, four hours per grading cycle during the school year from teachers who want to effectively use the program with their students. This accounts for less than 1 percent of waking time during a typical school year. After this, the adult "coaches" engage youths in discussions that keep them on track with maintaining appropriate levels of involvement in school lessons and out-of-school enrichment activities—pleasure reading, writing, study, communications with adults, hobbies, projects, and so forth.

Benefits of the Program

The benefits of considering time and lifestyle management are part of the equation to increase academic achievement, particularly among students who typically lag behind. The approach helps to build larger parent and youth agency support in communities that work "in concert" with school goals. It further helps teachers and other school personnel become more familiar with students' learning and lifestyle needs. Teachers (and adult mentors) who have experienced *Time/Lifestyle Management* formally and informally have said it has given them a more complete, realistic picture of how their students spend their time outside of school. They report that the data has educated them on how to better motivate their students in the classroom. Most students surveyed feel the program actually helps them take charge of increasing their involvement in reading, writing, and study activities—thereby ultimately improving literacy skills—by empowering them with reflective knowledge, adult agent support, and student-designed strategies to meet academic-related goals. Recently made available to the education community, the *Time/Lifestyle Management* program is being piloted in youth-serving agencies in four states as of this writing.

A School/Corporation Partnership for After-School Learning

Based on Remarks by Randy Best[8]

The Need for Extended Day Programs

America has an after school crisis. The hours between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. represent critical times for high- risk behaviors in the lives of millions of American children. In particular, over half of all juvenile crime occurs between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. on school days. Today, almost 80 percent of all mothers work outside of the home, and in 68 percent of two-parent families, both parents work outside of the home. Additionally, the number of children in single-parent homes (currently at 30 percent) continues to grow annually. Because the school year is only half as long as the work year, our schools remain locked 50 percent of the time—leaving working parents with the challenge of finding suitable alternatives for their children beyond the school day and school year. Management of the current after-school crisis could be turned into a great opportunity.

Management of the current after-school crisis could be turned into a great opportunity.

Several polls indicate that quality public education remains the number one domestic issue in the United States. Many forward thinkers in business believe that this presents an enormous opportunity to implement programs so superior that they will overcome current deficits and make substantial progress toward the general public's expectation of quality public education. Among other things, they believe that the infrastructure and trained personnel to address this deficit exist within public education, particularly through high-quality, innovative after-school and summer learning initiatives.

Studies show that children who attend productive after-school programs make significant academic gains, feel better about themselves, feel better about school, and are less likely to participate in gang activity. Educators, legislators, parents, and politicians have been challenged to consider after-school and summer learning opportunities as a primary strategy to address the great unmet needs of working parents, to dramatically improve academic performance, to reduce juvenile crime, and to reduce the dropout rate. The business community further understands that after school adds an entire academic semester to each school year, at a fraction of the cost of the school day.

After-school and summer learning should be structured to help realize the potential of public education by focusing on a minimum set of outcome goals. First, programs should significantly influence performance in the regular school day. Second, children's attitudes about school and learning should be transformed. Out-of-school-time programs sponsored by public education should increase teachers' effectiveness and introduce teachers to new content and new,

8 Randy Best founded Best Associates in 1984 as a private merchant banking firm, which then created Voyager Expanded Learning, a national education initiative in partnership with public schools. He also has acquired and founded companies in numerous industries, including publishing, aerospace, agriculture, health care, banking energy, and specialty foods.

engaging instructional strategies to motivate their students in the classroom. Finally, programs should bring parents and communities directly into the educational process.

Voyager After-School Learning

Origins

About five years ago a diverse group of Americans interested in transitioning from successful business careers into lives that had some social significance met to discuss helping all of America's children have a more successful educational experience. Their plan was to bring systemic change to some of the most critical areas of education including classroom restructuring, redefinition of teacher roles, innovation in curricula that is both a joy to teach and an inspiration to study, advanced teacher training, and objective program evaluations. The mission was to forge a new generation of partnerships between public education and the private sector aimed at assisting public education in making a quantum improvement in the academic performance of all children. The group was joined very early by public school administrators, including superintendents, college presidents, a state commissioner of education, elementary and middle school principals and teachers, and curriculum writers from across the country.

Extended learning opportunities can serve as a terrific equalizer, insuring that all children have a chance to meet the rigorous academic standards that have been set for them.

To access the richest content, partnerships were formed with agencies such as the Smithsonian Institution, NASA, and the Discovery Channel. Collaborative joint ventures on research projects were formed among educational laboratories and leading universities. In developing Voyager, rigid programs of accountability with built-in assessment in every curriculum were proposed. Moreover, the use of independent evaluators as a means of measuring success and designing effective improvement strategies was stressed. In the summer months of 1997, the Voyager initiative was rolled out and is now serving over 400,000 students in 1,000 school districts in 45 states.

Program Content and Operations

Extended learning opportunities can serve as a terrific equalizer, insuring that all children have a chance to meet the rigorous academic standards that have been set for them. Both students and teachers need more time—not to do more of the same, but rather to use time in new, different, and better ways. A quality after-school program includes the key element vital to all meaningful learning: interest. Through Voyager, children can discover life forms from microscopic creatures in a drop of water to the giants of Jurassic Park. They can blast off with NASA astronauts for a mission to the dark side of the moon and encounter the force of 1,000 tornadoes. They can see the marvels of medicine come alive and hold the power of electricity in the palm of their hands. Quality after-school programs convert interest into academic achievement. Each student's knowledge base explodes while vocabulary, writing, reading, and math skills soar. With Voyager, children experience learning first hand, participating in adventures directly with peers and engaging in real world problem solving. Through child-centered activities relative to their lives, children learn about themselves and the world around them.

Quality after-school programs convert interest into academic achievement.

Voyager: A Pioneer in After-School Learning

Curricula: The research-based curriculum includes daily lesson plans, a comprehensive curriculum guide, instructional materials, guides for involving parents and the community, and built-in assessments of student progress.

Who: The program is designed to serve students in grades K to 8 in multi-age groupings of 18 students.

Time Frame: The curriculum allows for numerous combinations of hours per day and days per week. The most common format is 90 minutes a day for 3 days per week.

Staffing & Training: Each group of 18 students has a teacher who works under a site director. Implementation training for teachers and the director, considered essential to program success, consists of two six-hour days. Additional support is available through the Program Support Hotline via a toll-free telephone number.

Cost: The annual cost for a class of 18 students is $2,730 for the after school program.

From the 2000 Voyager Program Brochure

Outcomes

The impact of such an academically rich, after-school program is measurable and dramatic. Students attending a Voyager after-school program in Waco, Texas showed a 60 percent improvement in school attendance. In one program in New Hampshire, the percentage of students scoring at or above the basic level in reading rose from 4 percent to almost 33 percent, while corresponding math scores jumped from 29 percent to almost 60 percent. Eighty-six percent of students in after school programs in four states showed improvement in attitude and behavior. Seventy-two percent of students showed improvement in social skills. Additionally, in the first year of implementation of a Voyager after-school program in a public housing development, juvenile arrests declined 75 percent, while arrests rose 67 percent in a comparable housing development without a program. A study by the Title I office in the Houston Independent School District found significant difference between students enrolled in Voyager after-school programs and a control group. A study in Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina, showed foster children enrolled in Voyager's after-school program improved grades and attendance. And, a recent study in Lafayette Elementary in New Orleans of 60 students enrolled in Voyager's extended day reading intervention from September through May reported gains of one to two years.

Through partnerships among educators and members of the private sector, students have opportunities to use time to boost academic-related outcomes while engaging in innovative curricula that is research-based and aligned with state standards. Partnerships foster active involvement of families and communities and transform students' views about learning. In sum, successful partnerships aimed at extending learning have the potential to reshape the future in positive ways, one child at a time.

21st Century Community Learning Centers

Based on Remarks of Dr. Marianne R. Kugler[9]

In 1998 the federal government initiated In 1998 the federal government initiated funding for a program called the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CLC) by providing $40 million to expand learning opportunities for participating children in a safe, drug-free, and supervised environment.[10] These funds enable schools to stay open longer and provide a safe place for homework centers, intensive mentoring in basic skills, and drug and violence prevention counseling. Funded programs help middle school students prepare for college prep courses in high school and offer enrichment in core academic subjects, as well as opportunities to participate in recreational activities, chorus, band and other arts, and technology education programs. Services for children and youth with disabilities also are provided.

Programs operate in collaboration with other public and nonprofit agencies, organizations, local businesses, postsecondary institutions, scientific/cultural and other community entities. The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, which has been involved in education for over 60 years, has dedicated $83 million over five years to extended day and after school programs. In 1998 the foundation entered into a partnership with the federal government on the 21st Century CLC project to help fill in the gaps in training, evaluation, and technical assistance not addressed by the original $40 million authorized to start the program. In addition, the Foundation has given special attention to the areas of access, equity, and public will.

Year I: What the Programs Looked Like

Participation

In the initial group of 99 grantees, 75 percent included at least one low-income school and most included more than one. Half of the schools in the group of 1998 grantees were elementary schools and half were middle schools, with more high schools being added in subsequent years. The students in the programs were a heterogeneous mix and generally were not targeted based on income or achievement criteria, though in some cases specific students were encouraged to enroll or were selected into the program based on their academic needs.

"I Never Had Possibilities Before"

A group of at-risk, former gang members in a middle school described their experience in their after school program as "a wonderful time." They said they had learned so much and changed.
The program evaluator said, "It's really wonderful to hear this, but what are you going to do when you go to high school? Are you going back to the patterns you had before you were in this program? What are you planning?"
One young man turned and said, "You don't get it. This is all about possibilities. I never had possibilities before."

As told by Marianne R. Kugler during Institute Proceedings

9 Dr. Marianne Russell Kugler is a program officer for the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, which has worked in the area of community education for 60 years. She is currently the lead program officer working with the U.S. Department of Education to provide technical assistance for the 21st Century after school project. She has been a teacher, central office administrator, principal, professor, and newspaper columnist.

10 By 1999 Congress appropriated $200 million for these after school programs and in the year 2000, $450 million was awarded in grants ranging from $35,000 to $2 million to 1600 rural and inner-city public schools in 471 communities. For FY 2001, Congress has appropriated $846 million, serving approximately 6,600 centers in more than 1500 communities.

While the programs were not remedial in nature, a student could receive particular remedial help in a small group for a short period of time.

Time Frame

Most programs were four days a week, for three hours a day, with Fridays reserved as a drop in/drop out day to accommodate parents who liked to take their youngsters home early at the end of the week. The basic four-day program was very structured, very intentional and included work on academic skills.

Special Problems

Difficulties with unions and transportation were the most consistent problems seen in nearly all of the program sites, though both problems were resolved as time passed. Except for the heavily urbanized areas, raising additional funds took care of the transportation issues. Multiple strategies were used in working out conflict with the unions.

Staffing and Community Partners

The adult-to-student ratio in the program ranged from 1-10, to 1-15. The majority of adults were not certified teachers, unlike some other after school programs.

At least 90 percent of the programs worked with partners in the community. Initially these were partners on paper only, but as time progressed, school-based personnel learned that they could not operate well without actual support and the resources of community-based organizations (CBOs), universities, and increasingly, museums.

Year I: Program Success

Reading and Math Skills

After school and extended day programs are uniquely able to undertake certain kinds of academic skills reinforcement.

A close examination of first-year programs shows that after school and extended day programs are uniquely able to undertake certain kinds of academic skills reinforcement. Work on reading comprehension and higher order mathematical thinking are ideally suited to the structure and staffing of these programs. The unlimited time available to pursue a particular aspect of skill development in these areas, unlike during the regular classroom setting in the core day, and the lack of need for a certified teacher to work with students create this good match. For example, many school reform efforts are emphasizing the use of 20 to 30 minutes a day for reading. Reading is an activity that can easily be accomplished in an extended day program where there are adults for students to talk with about their reading in a ratio that does not exist during the school day. This also gives classroom teachers more time to work on decoding skills.

In mathematics effective learning of higher order problem solving and thinking skills appears to benefit from the opportunity to work in small groups and without time constraints.

Conversely, reinforcing spelling lists and arithmetic skill manipulation development and practice are not appropriate activities for extended day programs. This whole area requires additional research as programs strive for quality.

Student Behavior

After school programs are starting to show quality and they are starting to show impact. They appear to have a direct bearing on increased school attendance and higher grades during the core school day. In addition, students who participate in CLCs engage in less disruptive behavior in their regular classes than those who do not. These kinds of findings may indicate that the most important structural change that extended day programs bring to the lives of their students is in the value placed on adult-child relationships. All of these results were apparent in both urban and rural settings.

Addressing Broader Student Needs

Extended day programs seem able to respond with sensitivity and greater speed than the regular school program to the demonstration of specific needs of their students. As new issues surface these programs are uniquely able to expand their services. For example, if a program has a contract with a CBO and there is agreement that health issues exist among the student participants, such as problems related to sexually transmitted diseases, the necessary resources and groups can be brought fairly quickly into the partnership to provide the needed services or programs.

Extended day programs seem able to respond with sensitivity and greater speed than the regular school program to the demonstration of specific needs of their students.

Sustaining Community Learning Centers

Two keys to the sustainability of extended day and after school programs are quality and resources.

The research on the first year of the CLCs is showing an increasing move toward quality programs. The Mott Foundation will be engaging the help of other experts, such as Karen Pittman of the Forum for Youth Development, to help tap into the best knowledge from all fields related to youth and children to build on these efforts. What is now known about early childhood and youth development must be drawn into the effort to create high-quality after-school programs.

The sustainability issues must be addressed immediately or extended day programs will disappear like so many other programs that educators have thought at one time could make a difference in the lives of young people. One of the two areas of resources that is available and not utilized very well is local public will. While programs have partners in the community, they need to learn how to aggressively tap into local businesses and other local resources for funding and support.

The other resource area is national. This is where the Mott Foundation will focus. It will soon announce plans to initiate a $3 million, three-year public service announcement campaign on public schools, particularly after school programs, from the perspective of the responsibility of the whole community.

A Look at Extended Learning in Three Communities

Intensive Corporate Help in Oklahoma

Based on Remarks by Sandy Garrett[11]

Businesses in Oklahoma have had a long and dramatic impact during the era of legislated standards, assessments, and accountability. They have also focused on the local level, usually on the lowest performing schools in the state.

Phillips Petroleum, an international oil company with its headquarters in Bartlesville, Oklahoma, is a prime example of this kind of partnership with schools. It began its corporate involvement in schools with *Building a Presence for Science.* This program, entirely funded by Phillips, provided training for science teachers on the newly developed national science standards and was a natural link to a company in need of more engineers and scientists for the future. When the high-income, literate community of Bartlesville found among its schools one, the Jane Philips Elementary School, that was labeled "low performing" by the state, Phillips Petroleum once again stepped in to change this unacceptable situation. To kick off its efforts, the company conducted a survey of the families in the community and was surprised to find that most of the children served by the Jane Phillips Elementary School came from low-income families, many lived with single, working moms, and many were latchkey children returning to an empty home after school.

The three-year project expenditure of $322,000 for this one school was largely devoted to boosting skills in reading, writing, arithmetic, and language arts for every single student through a combination of before, during, after, Saturday, and summer school programs. Program strategies included student enrichment activities, parent education and GED programs, tutoring, special interest clubs, arts activities in the community, a reading program, and a Breakfast Club with morning tutors.

These efforts have paid off. When the Jane Philips School was first named "low performing" by the state, it scored in the 23rd percentile on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. In 1999 it could boast of scoring in the 48th percentile. In 1997 only 31 percent of the students were reading at or above grade level. Now that figure is 55 percent.

Initially, half of the program's expenses were borne by the petroleum industry and other funds and services were secured from federal programs such as Title I and the Agriculture Department, parent/teacher groups, bilingual and remedial programs, Boys and Girls Clubs, and private donations. Over the last two years the partnership has expanded to include contributions from the Allied Arts and Humanities Council, the American Red Cross, the Service League of Bartlesville, the Delaware Tribe, Family Care Services, the YMCA, the Grand Lakes Mental Health Center, and the Bartlesville Police Department.

11 From a panel presentation made by Sandy Garrett, Superintendent of Public Instruction in Oklahoma.

Early success of the extended day program in the Jane Philips School and the added support from other resources have made it possible to expand the program to a districtwide effort.

Using the Community and the Natural Environment

Based on Remarks by Barbara Dean[12]

Involving the Community in Teaching

Dillingham is a town of 2,500 that is only accessible by air, fishing boat, or barge. The school serves approximately 280 students, most of whom are of the Upik Eskimo people in whose culture teaching is done by showing—that is, by demonstration, watching, and modeling—not so much by the exchange of language. This makes education in Dillingham different than in the traditional model of schools in most of the United States.

The Dillingham Middle/High School uses an array of programs that could be called extended day programs because they do not take place during regular school hours. Businesses and other organizations in the community have provided support for many of these special programs. For example, the school-to-work plan and implementation grant had input from a committee of students, parents, and business leaders from the Bristol Bay Native Association, the Bristol Bay Economic Development Corporation, the Health Corporation, and other local businesses. They all have a stake in helping to create a skilled workforce for the area.

Seniors select a project that will be a stretch for them and then do research on it using a community mentor from outside the school.

The senior project is another program that involves the community. The requirement is in its second year and again, much of the work that goes into it is accomplished outside the regular school day. Seniors select a project that will be a stretch for them and then do research on it using a community mentor from outside the school. Final projects are presented to a board of five members, three of which are from the community. The curriculum, starting with the third grade, teaches skills that students will need to plan and carry out a senior project.

Using the Environment as the Teaching Lab

The survival skills program requires participation of all students. It has a set of activities for each of several grade levels in the middle and high schools. The sixth grade curriculum covers bear safety, hypothermia, and the compiling of a survival pack that students keep throughout their high school career and have with them any time they travel outside the school. The year culminates with a backpacking trip up the mountains, using what students have learned. The seventh grade project is a fly-in overnight to a barren beach where students must build their own shelters. Eighth graders learn about business by running a lunch time store to earn money for a five-day backpacking trip. Tenth graders participate in a winter overnight and again must build their own shelters and fires to signal a plane that drops breakfast to them.

12 From a panel presentation by Barbara Dean, Principal of Dillingham Middle/High School in Dillingham, Alaska.

The Whole Community as a Teaching Resource

Based on Remarks by Margo Bellamy[13]

The Wendler Middle School's 1,000 seventh and eighth graders come from a very diverse population that speaks over 44 different languages. They come from all over the world to this school right in the middle of the city, surrounded by a magnificent array of resources. Rotating block scheduling has helped the Wendler Middle School to both use time and the community flexibly and creatively.

All students take four core courses and two electives, with one of these being in an area of special interest that may not be curriculum based. In addition to teaching four core classes, each teacher has responsibility for one of the nontraditional electives, which can extend beyond the regular school day.

School-business partnerships have helped the school meet its goal of fully utilizing the community as a resource and motivating students by setting up learning experiences based on their elective-interest. The first partner was the Anchorage Figure Skating Association that needed a place to skate. Now the school district uses its outdoor track as an oval skating rink in the winter months for physical education classes and the association uses it in the evenings and on weekends. In the spring it becomes a track again with the help of the association in the required maintenance and cleanup.

The school has over 20 partners, all of which sign specific contracts detailing what they will do for the school and what the school will do for them as part of a reciprocal relationship. Partnerships have made it possible to creatively expand the curriculum and use the extended day effectively to engage student interest. It has been stimulating for students and for teachers as well.

Partnerships have made it possible to creatively expand the curriculum and use the extended day effectively to engage student interest.

13 From a panel presentation by Margo Bellamy, Principal of the Wendler Middle School in Anchorage, Alaska.

Student Motivation

Introduction

Heightened concern prevails among the American public about adolescent youth. Historically, adolescence has been a period of substantial, multi-tiered change in the lives of youth. Yet, Americans from all groups and sectors seem particularly distressed about the future of today's youth given increasing rates of high-risk behavior that lead to negative health, social, emotional, and educational outcomes. Some of these high-risk behaviors include drinking and driving, involvement in violence, early and unprotected sex, drug abuse, use of tobacco, poor nutrition, and sedentary lifestyles. Unfortunately, many of these risky behaviors represent a fallback from significant improvements made during the 1980s. Further, risky behaviors and out-of-school activities are deeply intertwined with what youth experience in school.

In this section presentations are offered that examine what educators need to know about motivating youth to stay in school, to be healthy and successful, and ultimately graduate from high school. While educators are concerned with improving the quality of education and student performance, this goal can not be accomplished, particularly at the high school level, by looking at education in isolation from the broader notions of youth development and the many environments in which youth function. More than ever before, it is apparent that there is a need to look at youth from the perspective of how society transforms children into adults.

Starting from a youth development approach in looking at adolescence in no way diminishes the concern for improving academic outcomes for high school students. Indeed, the fact may be that for many students, there is no other place from which to start if schools are to attempt to create environments that maximize the likelihood of success for all students. There is increasing evidence of the importance of broadening our goals for youth; considering the range of services, supports, and opportunities that students need; and redefining the strategies and settings used to provide a range of high-quality learning experiences. In fact, these may be the essential ingredients needed for the very results that education policymakers, administrators, and teachers are seeking.

The research presented looks at what factors in the lives of young people make a difference in protecting them from harm, helping them develop into healthy adults, and encouraging them to do their best in school. It further considers how educators and others interested in positive outcomes for youth can create more of those positive factors. An examination of the relationship between youth and school reveals the importance of school connectedness, what it is about schools that can make youth feel more or less connected to them, and then at the relationship between school connectedness and academic achievement. The research on the role of high-stakes testing and higher expectations goes directly to the pursuit of most education

policymakers: how to improve the quality of our educational institutions and student academic outcomes. This sophisticated examination of the impact of curriculum-based external exit exams takes into account the workings of peer climate and student culture and how they relate to student achievement.

Young people of all ages deserve a place in the discussions and decisions that impact their schools.

It is increasingly clear that education concerns cannot be adequately or productively advanced without looking at youth from the multitude of facets that make up their lives. To better understand them and the world they live in, the text begins with the voices of youth themselves, students struggling, succeeding, or falling through the cracks in our public schools. There is a pressing need to add these new voices to the national dialogue on school reform. Young people of all ages deserve a place in the discussions and decisions that impact their schools, but their input is especially critical at the high school level, as this is the place where they often turn off and have the option, as they get older, to walk off. Their input is needed in the effort to create high schools that meet student needs and support student learning. Therefore, this section of *Students Continually Learning* begins with them.

Youth Voices for Change

Based on a Discussion among High School Students in Alaska
Merita Irby, Facilitator

The Council of Chief State School Officers asked the Forum for Youth Investment (formerly the IYF-US), a U.S. initiative of the International Youth Foundation, to bring the voices of students to its 1999 Summer Institute to help them hear firsthand what young people need and want from the nation's high schools.

What motivates students to learn? This was the primary question addressed by these young people. Through their diverse voices two central messages surfaced:

- Students are as concerned as adults are about results; they want to learn.
- Far more than a narrow focus on academic standards is necessary in order to improve high schools so that sustained learning can occur.

In listening to students, it becomes clear that their emphasis on relationships, roles, respect, and reality does not contradict the emphasis of policymakers on rigor, rules, and required exams. Many educators affirm that addressing the concerns raised by students may, in fact, be the means to achieving the high standards set for young people.

Participants

The students taking part in this discussion represent the range of Alaska's schools and public schools nationwide—urban schools of more than 1500 students, along with alternative schools with barely 80 students. They also represent a range of student interests and backgrounds, from artists to overachievers to school dropouts.

K8 Brown: I am 17 years old and have gone to four high schools, from a small school of 300 students in Arizona, to Service High in Anchorage, which has 2000 students. I have lived in many different states but I have lived in Covenant House and been homeless too. I have many jobs during school and now work for the Anchorage Youth and Parent Foundation in the POWER (Peer Outreach Worker Education and Referral) Program. When I get older, I plan on being a nurse.

Maia Butler: I am 15 years old and a sophomore honor roll student in honors classes at West High School, a large public school with a lot of ethnic diversity. I am an Outreach Worker for the POWER Program. I was a foster kid, but now I live on my own with a roommate.

Cameron Dorsey: I'm 17 years old and have been out of school and living on my own for two years. The last school I went to was Whaley High School, a small violent school, pretty much for people who like to get in fights. I'm ADD/ADHD (Attention Deficit Disorder), which means that different ways are needed for people to get my attention. It takes a little bit more to get me to apply myself.

Grace Dushkin: I attend Burchell High, a small alternative school that I enjoy more than the other larger schools because I'm more involved here. This school focuses on the needs of the kids. I also have a job as a restaurant hostess. I know what I want out of life and I'm going to get it.

Chris Hoffmeyer: I go to Bartlett High School (about 1500 kids). My family is military, so I get around. I run a computer literacy program here in Anchorage because I feel that technology is going to play a large role in the future. I am also on the Youth Commission for the city and Spirit of Youth. I work with an ABC-affiliated TV station to produce news stories on youth doing positive things in their communities.

Carolynn Laliberte: I have a three-year-old son and I live on my own. I recently graduated from an alternative school, Burchell High School, and received a four-year scholarship to the University of Alaska where I plan to major in juvenile justice and psychology.

Sarah Lewis: I am 17 years old and a senior at Polaris K-12 Alternative, a small public school modeled on Socratic learning. I also take classes at the University of Alaska in Anchorage and East High School, a large traditional high school. I plan to attend a liberal arts college after I graduate from high school and then to explore the world.

Matt McCarron: I go to Burchell High School, which has only 200 students, but I have attended another school that was a lot larger. We don't have any extracurricular activities here. And, we believe in a very strict zero tolerance rule. I am currently holding two jobs, going to school, and passing with good grades. I am in the Peer Outreach Program.

Merita Irby, Facilitator: As a classroom teacher, ethnographer, and advocate, I have worked to ensure that youth perspectives and action are a part of educational and community change. After teaching in Central American and U.S. schools, I worked with student ethnographers on a five-year study of urban youth organizations. This work culminated in Urban Sanctuaries: *Neighborhood Organizations in the Lives and Futures of Inner-City Youth,* co-authored with Milbrey McLaughlin and Juliet Langman. Another by-product of this work was *Listen Up!,* a video-film targeted at "the suits" that I put together with a team of young people. Through work with Karen Pittman at the Center for Youth Development, the President's Crime Prevention Council, and the Forum for Youth Investment, I have had the privilege of working with young people across the U.S. and around the globe to ensure that their issues, ideas, and solutions are a part of key discussions and decisions that affect them.

The Impact of Relationships on Student Motivation and Learning

Merita: How does knowing your teachers affect what you learn in school?

Matt: When I went to a traditional high school for about two or three years, I became friends with a teacher, and I was singled out as teacher's pet. After a while I didn't like it and I left. I got into correspondence study, and I didn't do anything because I had no motivation, nobody pushing me. I had paperwork, and I didn't know how to do it. There were instructions,

but I'm not very good with instructions on paper. I'd rather have somebody explain it to me and help me out.

So I found my way to Burchell High. Here, you aren't a teacher's pet the moment you talk to a teacher. You have to check in with your teacher/advisor every Friday.

Merita: How can teachers strike a balance between knowing you and not always being in your face?

Matt: When teachers get on a one-on-one basis with you and become your friend, if you're having a rough day, they'll say, "Hey, buddy. What's up?" and they'll talk to you. If you don't want to talk, they totally understand and they leave.

Carolynn: Some students like it when teachers are in their face, others don't. I think some teachers need to learn to be more real. Others treat you like a normal person and can have a casual conversation with you.

In our school, any type of problems we have, whether we need a job, or we broke up with a boyfriend, or our friend is pregnant, or we think we might have an STD [sexually transmitted disease], any type of issue you can think of, we know there's someone at our school we can tell who will tell us where we can seek help. Any of these problems can impair your education. At a traditional high school, if I had any type of problem, school would be the last place I'd go to for help. But when you get to our school, all they do is lift you up, constantly.

When you get to our school, all they do is lift you up, constantly.

Chris: I wouldn't want to bring any of my problems up with the teachers at my school. It feels as though I'm just one more person in the assembly line going through the classes. The teachers don't really stop to get to know you.

Merita: How can you avoid getting lost in a large school?

Maia: I go to a big school and we have a variety of different types of teachers. There is the type that doesn't talk about anything. You come in and they say, "Sit down and get to work." The class is boring; you just sit there, and do whatever. They're not people you feel like you can talk to. But there are teachers that are nice and sit and talk to you and say, "How's your day?"

I was having problems at the end of the year. It seemed like at that point in my life everything was going wrong. I didn't know who to go to. I was about to fail out of every single one of my classes, and the person I went to talk to was the person who does attendance. I ended up sitting in his office for two hours and telling him everything. He helped me get my classes back in order and get my work done. He asked his sister if I could stay with her for a little bit, and he let me borrow $5 to get something to eat that day. I could just come and talk to him whenever I needed to. I don't think I'll ever forget him. He did a lot for me.

School Climate

Merita: What concrete recommendations do you have for creating motivating environments for all students? What can big schools learn from small schools about creating places in which students want to learn?

K8: Next year, I'm going to Stellar High School. It only has 300 students. It's easier with a small school to have a trusting environment because there are no locks on the lockers. There

aren't any bells. There's no detention, no security guards. It's easier for the students to trust each other.

I agree that smaller school environments are a lot closer, especially between teachers and students.

Carolynn: I agree that smaller school environments are a lot closer, especially between teachers and students. I went to a traditional high school, with about 1,500 students, and the teachers were very distant, almost like they were in another state. They didn't know me; I didn't know them, and when I went to school, I felt no connection. At the smaller schools all our teachers are more personal with the students. Each teacher has a role as a counselor and has about 20 advisees. We check in with our teachers every Friday, talk about what we've done, and make goals for the week. The students get to know each other. Not so many people stay in their own little cliques. Even though there are still cliques, they've kind of combined because we all work together just to make our school work.

Sarah: In a lot of high schools there's an entire authoritarian structure. Students are not people. They're babysitting charges. You don't get looked at; you don't get respected. There are security guards in these schools that carry guns. It scares me.

Merita: Do you think making teachers counselors in a way would work in a large school?

Carolynn: Like Maia was saying, the person she found wasn't even a teacher. If all the adults in the school could be like that, it would be nice. I'm not sure the solution is even necessarily to know every student in every class you have, but just saying, "Hi, how are you? Good day." And if you see somebody getting harassed, you could come in and stop it. If you see that somebody looks sad, you can say, "Are you okay?" It's not necessarily knowing everybody, just being friendly. Little things like that are easy to accomplish. Just make sure you're doing it with everybody and not just the jocks or the really smart kids or the kids that are so shy you want to be their only friend, but with everybody.

Respect

Merita: Tell me a little bit about adults treating you differently because of the activities that you're involved in and why you think that is?

Chris: Most teenagers are involved in many activities other than school, whether it's a sport or advisory commission or youth employment project. You want to help out the community by being in these programs, but at the same time, your schoolwork will suffer. You should get some credit and appreciation from the schools to help with that.

Cameron: I walk around, talking to people, and they seem to have a little more respect for me just because of my job. I think it's pretty cool, like a fringe benefit.

Carolynn: When I go into any high school, because of my outreach work, the teachers treat me like I'm an adult, like I'm their friend. They'll see me and say, "Oh, how have you been? How's your son doing?" If they could treat everybody like that, it would make a big difference.

Merita: Can you tell us about the downside to the recognition?

Matt: Everything that we're talking about involves favoritism. It will always be there. If a teacher sees a student and they recognize that this student is working, they may have a kid, they may be holding a job, they're going to say, "Wow, this student is doing really well for their age." They're going to pick this student out. Then, when that student lets them down by failing a test, or gets upset and has suicidal thoughts, the favoritism comes in again and they're not likely to give them any slack.

Favoritism involves jocks. It involves the smarter kids. A lot of students are trying harder and harder to be the favorite when really it is not right. Teachers shouldn't favor anybody.

K8: I've noticed something. I started in band in fourth grade, at a very small school. Eventually I moved to Virginia, and was in honor band. I was the worst clarinet player. Then I moved up here, and I made first clarinet. We were practicing all of these great songs and we weren't very good at them, but we could kind of make it sound like we were playing the same piece. But we only had one concert the whole year. And band was my favorite thing to do.

We would go to a competition and win, but it wouldn't be announced over the intercom at school. But then, after football games, they'd announce, "So-and-so scored so many points." And we were thinking, "Well, what about us?"

Maia: With sports there's the group of kids that are always involved. Everybody wants to be in sports, because that's cool. All of the football players sleep in class, but still manage to stay in football. And all of the cheerleaders are the cutest and everybody wants to go out with them. What about the people that can't play sports? And what about people that aren't cute enough or skinny enough or can't dance well enough to be cheerleaders? They can do other stuff, but they don't get the same recognition and it makes people feel bad because they don't know where to fit in.

Learning and Teaching Styles

Merita: Let's shift now and talk about the importance of teaching in a way that recognizes there are lots of different learning styles.

Chris: Everyone has their own way of learning. But teachers come in and deliver the information one way, their way or no way. It's not as effective as multisensory learning. If you could teach it, have students read it in a book, and then perform a task, say, in a science experiment, they can learn a lot easier and will retain the information much longer.

K8: I'm a little different when I learn things. Like, I can learn things easily through biology because we do dissections, and we look through microscopes. I can remember things like that. But, I can't remember what's in the book.

Matt: Some people learn slower than others. Some can catch something and it's in their brain. They remember it. Some people take a week, compared to a day. People think they're slow when it might be only that one subject they're learning slower than the others. They might be good in math, but not history. That's where different teaching techniques come in handy.

At our school, I remember almost everything that was taught. They'll focus on one thing, and then they'll teach it four different ways so that everybody gets it. If you fail a test, they won't

say, "Well, okay. That's marked down on your grade." Instead, they'll say, "You're having a problem with Question 9. Let's look into this." That's also connected to teachers having time for the students. Otherwise it's a brainwashing session, with teachers just saying, "Here's the work. Either you learn it or you fail."

Carolynn: I don't think I can remember anything that I learned at my first high school. If I had to do something, I found my paper, I looked up the answer in the book, and I wrote it down. Did I remember what I learned? No. A lot of teachers give out an assignment, see if it's done correctly or not. They don't seem to care if their students are actually learning.

Chris: Teachers have to be very versatile. They have to be able to survey the situation and decide which way would be the best way of delivering the information.

Reality-Based Learning

Merita: How can we make teaching more relevant to your experiences and hopes for the future?

Carolynn: My understanding is that high school should prepare you for college or get you ready for a future career, but a lot of things that we do in high school don't teach us anything. At our school, though, you have to learn how to do your taxes, and it's not just bookwork. They want you to really do your taxes; what you have to do when you get a job; how to make a proper resume; how to do a mock interview. It's not just kids that are in business that are doing resumes and mock interviews. It's every student there.

We have parenting classes, life skill classes, basically all real life things that are actually going to help you. When I'm doing these things, it's making me feel more like an adult. It's making me want to be more professional. It's making me want to get good recommendations on my resume. It's making me want to be more adult and be responsible, because I see that I'm coming close to the point where I have to take charge.

At my traditional high school, it seemed like having a job was 10 years away. I thought that when I graduated, my high school diploma would mean that I would get a job or be able to get in college, because high school is supposed to be preparing me for that. But you really have to take it into your own hands. Yet it's hard to expect a 14, 15, 16 year old to do that without help from teachers.

I would say by like the year 2004, if you don't know how to use a computer, it will be like not knowing how to read.

Grace: You begin to see things differently when you get into a job like ours. You realize that there are lots of dangerous things out there, and no one knows about them. Nobody knows that there are so many different types of STDs. You can't remember them all, and nobody knows how to protect themselves. You just get a different point of view on things.

If we're going to learn anything in school, it should be more of the stuff that we know now. If we knew then what we know now, we probably wouldn't have done a lot of things we did!

Merita: So finding ways to help students figure out how to deal with the real things going on in their lives is important if schools want students to feel like they belong?

Maia: Yeah. For some students it's hard to fit in.

Merita: Chris, can you talk a bit about how computers fit into this idea of reality-based education?

Chris: I've noticed in high schools that there isn't very much emphasis on computers and technology. I teach a computer literacy program in Anchorage, and from my experiences I would say by like the year 2004, if you don't know how to use a computer, it will be like not knowing how to read. But in my school, there are about 20 computers for 1,500 kids. There's no way that everyone is going to be able to learn how to use them. I've put over 120 computers into the community in the last two years on a $20 budget. That's all I've had, 20 bucks for the last two years.

Merita: And to whom do the computers go?

Chris: They go to kids, anyone in the community that doesn't have a computer, who needs a computer for schoolwork. It costs them nothing. All they have to do is show up, you know, do some community service, and be willing to listen to what I have to say.

Agenda for Change

Merita: What is your highest-priority recommendation for school improvement, that the chief state school officers can bring back to their states, and how would you rank it on a scale of 1 to 10?

Schools have to become more compatible with their students so that the students trust their teachers.

Cameron: Schools have to become more compatible with their students so that the students trust their teachers. Otherwise, the things they learn in school are just going to be irrelevant when they leave school. I give it a 10.

Matt: I think that the role of work in high school is really important. I believe that would be a 10. If students get out of high school, and if they haven't had a job while they're a student because they don't have time for it, and they don't learn how to write a resume or type on a computer, they're not going to be able to get a job.

Carolynn: I think teacher-student relationships are my highest priority. I'd rate it a 10.

Grace: I think keeping the extracurricular activities like auto classes and swimming—any kind of extracurricular activities that kids might want to do in their future to make money. Keep extracurricular activities because who knows what students might become? I rate it a 10.

Chris: I think that the school districts should avoid getting involved in politics. Sometimes there's more taxpayers going to this school, paying for this school—so politics says that they should get more money. I rate that a 10 just because it affects the students and the teachers. It affects everybody.

Sarah: I've got three. I'd say that student involvement, size, and funding are the three most important ones. One thing I didn't get to talk about here is arts funding, which is just as important as the computers. Two of our schools have no art programs. Two of our schools have no music programs. That can't happen. I mean, it's just as important. People forget that and we're losing arts in our society, and it's not a good thing. That's an 11.

Maia: I think what's really important is the different teaching styles. Some teachers are just used to teaching how they teach, and then the kids come up with questions and leave with the same questions because the teachers told them the exact same thing over again.

K8: I think that nobody can be successful until they've pulled their life together, and school should focus on emotional health as well as education. I rank that a 9.

Merita: Those were our general recommendations, our big picture. But what can each of the chief state school officers do to hear from other young people in their states about their opinion on issues like these?

Chris: One of the best things you can do is go back to your states and talk to your superintendents. You could look at each separate school district to try to get a wide range of students together and talk to them. See what their issues are. Once you get this information, look at ways of changing the school district around.

Sarah: We actually have a student liaison between the schools and the school board that goes and sits in on the school board meetings. They don't get a vote, but they at least get to sit in, and they get their opinion asked sometimes. I suggest making student government something that actually makes a difference in the schools.

Merita: We really are glad that you invited students to come and that you listened. We think it's important to keep up the momentum you started to build here and to keep listening as you go back to your states and do your work. Thank you.

School Connectedness: The Relationship among Promoting Academic Success, Reducing Risky Behavior, and Increasing Civic Responsibility

Based on Remarks by Dr. Clea A. Sucoff McNeely[14]

In response to the nation's grave concerns for the health and well-being of youth, the U.S. Congress in 1993 mandated the National Institutes of Health to undertake the first national study of adolescent health designed to measure the social settings of adolescent lives, the ways in which adolescents connect to their social world, and the influences of these social settings and connections to their health. The resulting study, the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (the Add Health Study), provides data of unprecedented scope and significance. (National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health, 1993) The first round of results is described in a monograph entitled, "Reducing the Risk: Connections That Make a Difference in the Lives of Youth." (Blum and Rinehart, 1997)

The gravest threats to adolescent health stem from behaviors such as violence, early and unprotected sex, drug abuse, tobacco use, poor nutrition, sedentary lifestyles, drinking alcohol and driving, and suicide. Because all of these behaviors have social causes, schools were one of the social factors examined. While many aspects of school were measured for their impact on youth behavior, the one factor that was associated with lower prevalence of every single one of the risky behaviors and was associated with increased emotional well-being was school connectedness.

The Add Health Study

How the Study Was Conducted

The design of the study explores how individual, family, and school characteristics protect American youth from emotional distress, suicidal thoughts and attempts, violence perpetration, cigarette use, alcohol use, marijuana use, early sexual involvement, and pregnancy. Data are based on a number of sources and survey techniques. Students in the Add Health study accurately represent 7th to 12th graders throughout the nation.

First, 90,000 students in grades 7 through 12, attending 145 schools in 81 different communities across the country, completed questionnaires about broad facets of their lives including health, friendships, self-esteem, and expectations about the future. During the second phase, more than 20,000 in-home teenage interviews were conducted. Because of the sensitive nature of interview topics, youth were queried using earphones and provided laptops computers on which they entered answers directly to protect confidentiality. At least one parent was

14 Dr. Clea A. Sucoff McNeely is an assistant professor in the Division of General Pediatrics and Adolescent Health at the University of Minnesota. She is a researcher, author, and reviewer for several journals.

interviewed as well during this phase. About 18,000 parent interviews were conducted. Follow-up interviews among 15,000 of the original 20,000 adolescents also took place.

School administrators were participants as well. They provided information regarding school policies and procedures, teacher characteristics, health service provision or referral, and student body characteristics.

Students reported that when they feel their teachers care about them and that they are treated fairly by students and teachers, they also feel safe at school.

Feeling Safe in School

If school connectedness is such a powerful protective factor, how do educators and others interested in positive outcomes for students create more of it? A number of findings provide answers and the tools that can help create a school environment where students feel connected and motivated. Safety was among the eight items that comprise the school connectedness scale. Specifically, students reported that when they feel their teachers care about them and that they are treated fairly by students and teachers, they also feel safe at school.

Another important finding is that students tend to feel the same way about their peers as they do about their teachers. When youth feel connected to their teachers, they are also feeling connected to other students. This is really good news. It says that teachers contribute significantly to a school's social climate. It means that the quality of a school's climate is actually in the hands of people that can do something about it.

Socio-Demographic Differences

Socio-demographic factors are not key determinants of school connectedness. Overall, the findings showed little variation in terms of race and ethnicity, between male and female youth, and adolescents at middle versus high school levels. There also was very little variation across schools. Rather, the data show that all schools have some students who are highly connected, and all schools have students who are disconnected. This suggests that efforts to improve connectedness should not be limited to a particular type of school, such as urban or inner city schools. Emotional distress and risky health behaviors are not concentrated in nor confined to urban, inner city schools. In fact, the highest rates of cigarette, alcohol, and marijuana use occur in affluent, suburban schools.

School Size, Peer Relationships, and Racial Integration

Peter S. Bearman and James Moody, two sociologists from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, used the study to look specifically at peer relationships and school connectedness. They found that, on average, students in smaller schools feel more attached to schools than those attending larger schools. They also found that in schools where the most popular adolescents are highly motivated and are high achievers, students in the general population tend to feel more attached to school.

An analysis of the Add Health data was able to identify actual friendship networks. It shows that when friendship groups are racially integrated, both black and white students feel more attached to school, as do Hispanics and Asians. Ironically, racially integrated friendship patterns

are least common in racially integrated schools. It seems that this results from a kind of numbers game. Where there are enough students from each racial/ethnic group, youth can form friendships within their own group. More segregated schools with few minority students seem to facilitate integrated friendship patterns. While segregated peer groups are not a necessary by-product of integrated schools, it is important for educational leaders to consider these findings and pay special attention that policies and practices do not reinforce the segregation of friendship patterns. Rather, policies and practices should be effective tools that facilitate integrated friendship patterns. Also, the analysis found that when social groups contain both males and females, students of both genders feel more connected to school.

They found that, on average, students in smaller schools feel more attached to schools than those attending larger schools.

Not surprisingly, students who are the most popular and at the center of their peer group or clique are very connected to school. However, only a lucky few acquire "popular" status, and what benefits these elite few often harms the masses. As such, in schools that have hierarchical, isolated cliques, overall levels of school attachment are low. In contrast, school attachment is highest when social cliques are overlapping and students have indirect ties to many social groups.

Questions the Add Health Data May Answer in Future Analysis

- Do older siblings influence the health behaviors of their younger brothers and sisters?
- How do school peer networks contribute to spreading or controlling the use of cigarettes and drugs among adolescents?
- What is the role of romantic relationships in the emotional health of adolescents? Do they contribute to emotional health or create problems?
- Can parents contribute to the health and safety of their children by sending them to a better school or moving to a safer neighborhood?
- How does the availability of alcohol in a community affect adolescent alcohol use? Can communities reduce the alcohol use of adolescents by making it harder for adolescents to get it in their community?
- What can single mothers do to reduce the high risk their children face in negotiating the hazards of adolescence?
- What are the risks and what are the benefits that adolescents derive from attending schools with multiple racial and ethnic groups, as compared to more culturally and racially homogeneous schools?
- Is early sexual behavior a risk to adolescent emotional health? Or are the risks of sex primarily pregnancy and STDs?
- Do some schools have more violent behavior because more violent adolescents go there, or do adolescents become more violent when they attend schools with higher levels of violence?
- Why do girls do better in school and have healthier behavior all around than boys, but have lower emotional health and lower self-esteem than boys?
- How do immigrant children, or American-born children of immigrants, make their way through adolescence in the American environment?
- How important is religion in keeping adolescents on a track toward well being?

From Blum and Rinehart, *Reducing the Risk: Connections that Make a Difference in the Lives of Youth*, 1997

School Connectedness and Achievement: The Research Message for Policymakers

Happily, educational leaders have it within their power to improve school climate and consequently emotional well-being, and reduce risky student behaviors by making schools a place where kids want to be.

Educators at all levels are under tremendous pressure from the public and politicians to improve test scores of students. While there does not appear to be a direct link between how well students in a particular school perform on achievement tests and how those students feel about school, if schools are going to reach all students, school connectedness is fundamentally important. School connectedness is not a magic bullet; however, it plays a critical role in reducing risky behaviors. Its power lies within its crosscutting ability.

School connectedness protects adolescents from engaging in risky health behaviors, it protects their well-being, and it is these factors that can then lead to higher achievement in a school, especially for certain students. There is evidence that when programs designed to improve academic performance are implemented, students who are connected to school exhibit greater responsiveness to such programs. Therefore, school connectedness represents an important condition or moderator of overall program effectiveness. Happily, educational leaders have it within their power to improve school climate and consequently emotional well-being, and reduce risky student behaviors by making schools a place where kids want to be.

School connectedness by itself will not create high test scores. Students can be having a great time in school, but if there is an ineffective teaching curriculum, achievement will not be high. In the reverse, some students will do well without being very connected to school. Youngsters have a wide variety of connections in their lives. The importance of school connectedness is going to depend on their connections to other people. If they are getting what school connectedness can provide elsewhere in their lives, school connectedness will not necessarily be an essential ingredient. But for some kids it is the absolutely essential ingredient. If the goal is to reach all students, efforts to create a safe environment, to make schools nurturing and supportive, to create engaging learning environments, and to reduce risky behaviors will be the keys to increased achievement.

Using High Stakes Tests to Raise Achievement

Based on Remarks by Dr. John Bishop[15]

There is increasing agreement that the standards conversation has had a tremendous positive impact on the equity conversation. The standards are not negotiable for anyone. The battle, rather, is finding the levers to make the system work for all kids.

—Peter McWalters[16]

High Achievement Is Thwarted by Peer Culture

Educational reformers and most of the American public think that teachers ask too little of their pupils. These low expectations, they believe, result in watered-down curricula and a tolerance of mediocre teaching and inappropriate student behavior. The prophecy of low achievement thus becomes self-fulfilling. (Bishop and Mane, 1998) Students themselves, responding to a 1997 survey, said they do not perceive that they are working very hard and that, if more was required of them, they would try harder. (Johnson and Farkas, 1997) Several factors account for these low standards and the failure of schools to deliver challenging curricula. First, adolescent peer culture in America demeans academic success and scorns students who try to do well in school. (Steinberg, Brown and Dornbush, 1996) Further, student avoidance of challenging courses in favor of getting higher grades in the less demanding courses is often supported, even encouraged, by parents and sometimes teachers as well. In addition, teachers find themselves in a difficult double bind when they try to combine the role of mentor with the role of final judge. Sometimes the role conflict is resolved by lowering expectations. Other times the choice of high standards means close, supportive relationships with students are sacrificed. (Bishop, Unpublished)

Trying Hard Academically Lacks Peer Rewards

Peer norms matter a lot in terms of what kids choose to do and how they choose to spend their time. A survey of approximately 36,000 students in 135 schools from five northeastern states shows that about 10 percent of kids are insulted, teased, and made fun of to their face almost every day.[17] While most just grin and bear it, some react by switching to the anti-intellectual norm rather than behaving in ways teachers would like.

15 Dr. John H. Bishop is a professor in the Department of Human Resources Studies at the New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York. He has served on advisory panels, conducted research, and testified before Congress. He has published numerous articles on issues including education reform; the impact of education on productivity; and the impact of the hiring, training, and promotional policies of business on incentives for students to study and schools to set high standards.

16 Peter McWalters is the Commissioner of Education in Rhode Island.

A focus on kids who demonstrate an effort to do well in school—the "nerds," who are then rewarded by becoming outcasts among their peers—shows the impact of peer norms on effort in school. Looking at traits ascribed by sixth and seventh graders in the survey to popular kids shows the expected responses, such as "cool clothes" and "attractive." But, also among the data was the finding that "attentive in class" was a trait describing the most popular crowd only 24 percent of the time, compared to "not attentive in class" at 28 percent. This data from middle schools is especially relevant because this is where the peer norms that have holding power over time seem to be established.

At the 10th grade less than half the respondents said, "It's annoying when students try to get the teacher off track" and 35 percent disagreed with the proposition, "My friends think it's important for me to do well in English."

The norm within student culture appears to be not that it is bad to be smart, but simply that it is bad to be studious.

Research findings that show a lack of support among students for hard study have been reported in research across the nation since the early 1960s. A 1960 study of a Jewish High School in New York City found kids rated the athletes who were brilliant, but not studious, as the most popular. Consequently, the norm within student culture appears to be not that it is bad to be smart, but simply that it is bad to be studious. James Coleman's work in 1961 also found the athlete held great status and concluded this was because the athlete was doing something for the school, leading the team to victory, whereas the outstanding student, by contrast, has few, if any ways, to bring glory to the school. Further, the victories of the studious are often at the expense of his or her classmates who must work harder to keep up.

Curriculum-Based External Exit Exams Put Teachers and Students on the Same Team

Curriculum-based external exit exams (CBEEEs) are subject specific. The responsibilities for preparing students for a particular exam lay within that department and are not a generic responsibility of all teachers in the school. The exams may be taken at various instances across the students' career in school. Most of Europe and Asia use some type of curriculum-based external exam to signal a student's achievement and success. This is not the case in the United States, except for New York where the Regents Exams, curriculum-based external exit exams, are given. The role of the teacher in these other countries is to help students prepare for an external judgment and, much like a sports coach, in the process can be very demanding and give lots of feedback about how the students are doing. This allows a stronger sense of trust to build between the teacher and student and between the teacher and parents because the teacher is the essential ingredient for achieving against the external goal.

17 States included in the research are Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, and Massachusetts. See Bishop, Unpublished.

Winning: A Group Effort and A Group Reward

"Except for my family, no other group of people has loved me, held me accountable and expected the best from me as my boat mates and coach." From a letter defending crew to the Wall Street Journal, June 3, 1999.

The coach in this experience is like the theater director, preparing the students for an external demonstration of their competence and achievement. The final judgement of success is made by others; it's external.

In crew, a highly interdependent sport, the performance of each student or participant is visible to everyone else and screwing up or slaking off can make the team lose the race very quickly. Coordination is essential. Everyone holds everyone else accountable.

As told by Dr. John H. Bishop during the Institute

Class rank and teacher grades mark student achievement and success in most U.S. schools. In a typical class if the students are able to slow the class down and get the teacher off track, that simply lowers the total amount that is taught and therefore, the amount that is on the exam, and the class is better off. In environments with external exams, this behavior works against the interest of all the students and it is annoying. It also means that students are more likely to think it is important that their friends do well in a particular class since they are not being evaluated in comparison to each other.

Impact on Peer Culture

A look at comparative differences among the states in the northeastern survey provides an opportunity to contrast attitudes relevant to student effort and the impact of a curriculum-based external exit exam, as is used in New York, on student behavior, schools, teachers, the costs of education, and student achievement. New York is the only state in the study with a curriculum-based external exit exam, the Regents exam. Minimum competency exams, like the one used in New Jersey, are not likely to have as big an effect as a curriculum-based external exit exam, because responsibility for how well kids perform on the exam is more diffused across the teachers and is not part of the final course grade. The Regents exam is part of the final grade in a course along with other exams.[18] A comparative look at the states in the study shows that students in New York were more engaged in their classes, completed more of the assigned homework, spent more hours outside of school studying, selected more of their leaders from among good students, and expected to complete more years of schooling.

Students in New York were more engaged in their classes, completed more of the assigned homework, spent more hours outside of school studying, selected more of their leaders from among good students, and expected to complete more years of schooling.

[18] The northeastern study was conducted prior to implementation of the requirement that all students in New York take Regents exams.

Where CBEEEs are used:

1. Being studious no longer threatens one's classmates. It's OK to admit to liking learning.
2. Students who disrupt class or get the teacher off track are considered ANNOYING by their classmates.
3. Teaching to a high standard is valued by students.
4. Teachers are now coaches who assist students in demonstrating their achievements to others, not judges.

Presented by Dr. John H. Bishop during the Institute

Impact on School Management and Teachers

Out-of-Field Teaching - External exams also drive changes in how schools are managed and their efforts to focus more on academics. Out-of-field teaching is common in the United States. with 54 percent of high school history students taught by teachers who did not major or minor in history. The percentage of students in physical science classes taught by out-of- field teachers is 56 percent and for biology it is 39 percent. In Canada, where external exams are used, the proportion of teachers who are specialists in math is 20 percent higher. The same is true for science.

The United States is unusual compared to the rest of the world in its tendency not to pay teachers very well.

Teacher Pay - The United States is unusual compared to the rest of the world in its tendency not to pay teachers very well. This is evident in comparisons between the salary of teachers with 15 years of experience and the average of all other workers in the society. In the United States. teachers receive about 30 percent more than the average of all other workers. In countries that have an external exam, pay is nearly twice and up to three-quarters more. Another way to look at the salary distinction is to compare teacher salaries in the United States. over time in relationship to other college graduates. For example, in 1940 when teaching was one of the few fields for women college graduates, the salary for those who did go into teaching and those who did not was roughly equal. Now, with more options available to women, they earn 20 percent less than those going into other fields. For men it has always been lower, and it continues to fall even further. Despite the fact that the real wages of teachers have risen, they have fallen relative to college graduates who go into other kinds of work.

If there is a desire for students to perform well on an external exam, efforts will be made to hire people who can teach to high standards.

Teacher Qualifications - If there is a desire for students to perform well on an external exam, efforts will be made to hire people who can teach to high standards. Those people with the competence and the knowledge in the relevant subjects are in short supply, as is evident from the background of those who are currently teaching these subjects. Therefore, higher wages are expected to accompany higher standards. Looking at wages in New York compared to other states bears this out.

Impact on Students

The stakes do not have to be very high to have an impact. The old Regents exam results that are captured in the northeastern study are very low stakes. Regents courses and tests were not

required and when they were taken, they accounted for a small portion of the students' grades. Yet, they have had very substantial effects without causing an increase in dropout rates.

The reason for moving to a higher stakes system where every student must pass the exams in order to graduate is that it shifts the focus among students to those who are struggling, the less able kids. This is a critical policy choice and the trade-offs may be painful. Making a shift in this direction is likely to open the system to legal challenges and all kinds of stress for students, teachers and parents, but ultimately it is a fairer system.

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New York Students Compared to Those in Other States

- Scored 46 points higher on the SAT.
- Scored one grade level higher on the National Assessment of Educational Progress.
- A higher proportion go to and stay in college.

Presented by Dr. John H. Bishop during the Institute

How New York Made the Shift to High Stakes

The shift in New York to a high stakes, curriculum-based external exit exam for all students is a demonstration of tremendous public will.[19] The step staken to accomplish the task are instructive. It is being phased in over three years, beginning with the requirement for the class of 2000, which must take a new six-hour Regents English examination and pass it at the 55 percent level. The new requirements will effectively abolish the bottom track.

A great fear exists among many educators that if the absolute standard is raised and applied before student learning has accommodated to it, a disproportionate impact will fall most harshly on those already struggling. Introduction of high stakes testing is not a simplistic answer to the question of how to raise student achievement. Careful planning, timing, and training must be put in place first. A representative group of teachers, school administrators, and parents, called the "Safety Net Study Group," agreed that the most important change is to increase the amount of time that struggling students spend on the task of learning. A look at the steps taken in New York may be helpful. The shift to all students being required to take Regents tests may not be a big deal in most of Westchester County, but is huge for New York City, Buffalo, and Syracuse. Yet, they are making the required shift.

19 The new Regents exam graduation requirement does not apply to the 10 percent of students who are in private schools, nor to special education students with an Individualized Education Plan.

How New York Made the Shift to High Stakes

The Curriculum Was Made More Rigorous and Academic

- All 9th graders were required to take expository writing.
- 7th & 8th grade math and science became more rigorous.
- Foreign language was started in 6th grade.
- Vocational courses were crowded out.

Resources Were Redirected

- Teaching assistants were hired to tutor students.
- Aides were hired to supervise study halls and monitor hallways, freeing teachers to tutor.
- Department chair release time was ended.
- School hours and buses were scheduled to allow students to remain after 3:00.
- Funds for professional development were increased.
- Peer Tutoring was expanded.

Teachers Worked a Lot Harder

- They began tutoring during their free period.
- Extra periods were added to the beginning and end of the school day for tutoring.
- Teachers stayed late to help students.
- Teachers offered nighttime review sessions.

Presented by Dr. John H. Bishop during the Institute

Recommendations and Implications for State Policy[20]

The success in upgrading standards will depend on a systemic program of prevention and intervention strategies, including, but not limited to the following:

1. **Grade Specific Curriculum –** Each school district and school should have grade specific curricula consistent with state standards.
2. **Extra Help/Extra Time –** Each school district should have, at every grade level, an assessment system to provide information on student performance. Enrichment and remediation should be provided as additions to and reinforcement of core courses of study as opposed to "pullout" programs.

[20] These final recommendations are taken from those made to the New York Board of Regents and are from the "Safety Net Study Group" of teachers, school administrators, and parents convened by New York State's Commissioner of Education and reported in The New York State Reform Strategy: Incentive Effects of Minimum Competency Exam Graduation Requirements, Bishop and Mane, 1998.

3. **Mandatory Summer School** – When students fail to meet academic expectations, based on grade- level assessments, they should be required to attend state-financed summer school.
4. **Professional Development** – Each district should provide professional development for all staff, kindergarten through grade 12, to enable them to help students meet the new graduation requirements.
5. **Student Promotion Guidelines** – Each school district should have a plan that explains the movement of students from grade to grade and identifies ways that schools engage parents, students, and other community members to help students understand and achieve higher standards.

Some of the most important implications for state policymakers include the following:

1. **Teacher Pay** – Teachers cannot be expected to work longer hours without higher pay or renegotiated contracts. The state must find ways to help districts meet demands for higher pay.
2. **State Aid Increases** – Additional state aid should be targeted toward preparing students to meet the new higher standards by funding summer school, longer school hours, the hiring of teaching assistants, and the grading of Regents exams by teachers in a centralized location as part of staff development.
3. **Status and Image of Academic Excellence** – The state is in a unique leadership position to work with the large companies and the media throughout the state to bring attention and status to the academic achievements of particular schools and individual students.
4. **College Selection Criteria** – In states that have a curriculum-based external exit exam, state leaders should try to persuade universities and colleges to use it as a part of the student selection process and de-emphasize the SAT.

It is our job to make sure that all students make it.

New York Moves the Standards to the Next Level

Student achievement is the heart of the matter. Education leaders in New York must develop creative strategies to help students meet the standards. One district superintendent told me that of 1200 juniors in his region, all but 76 had passed the English Regents exam-a whole year before they were expected to. He knew by name each of the 76 students who hadn't yet passed. Knowing your students by name means knowing what they need and then providing it.

Education leaders in New York know we have never faced a greater challenge as an educational community-but never have we been so primed for success. Until recently, we didn't have the data to prove what we already knew-that there are gaps in student achievement. Now as we are midway through phase-in of the standards, we have data to show where the problems are and that means we know where to focus our efforts. We all know how tough it will be. Some of the work before us has never been done before. Very few have tried to close the gaps in student achievement. Not at this level anyway.

We must ask ourselves to think about what we want for our children. The answer is always, "To be happy and healthy. To become educated and productive citizens. To engage in meaningful work." New York has developed the standards to ensure that all children will be able to achieve what they want, and that no child will be left behind. It is our job to make sure that all students make it.

The challenges facing education leaders over the next five years will be difficult. All eyes will be on them. The eyes of the community, the eyes of the media, the eyes of the parents, and most importantly, the eyes of the students. The critics will want us to back down-we can't. We have to stand tall in the face of those who say that not all students can do it. The students are already proving the critics wrong-they are rising to the challenge.

Richard P. Mills, New York Commissioner of Education

Constructing Supportive Environments for Youth Learning and Engagement

Based on Remarks by Karen J. Pittman[21]

> ***Every society must somehow solve the problem of transforming children into adults, for its very survival depends on that solution. In every society there is established some kind of institutional setting within which the process of transition is to occur, in directions predicted by societal goals and values. In our view, the institutional framework for maturation in the United States is now in need of serious examination.***
>
> James Coleman, Report of the Panel on Youth,
> The President's Science Advisory Committee, 1976

The Call for a Cohesive Strategy for Preparing Young People for Adulthood

Within a year of each other, two commissions, the Grant Foundation Commission on Work, Family, and Citizenship and the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, issued reports that reframed the challenges for the next decades.

In its 1990 report, *Turning Points,* The Carnegie Commission asked, "What qualities do we envision in the 15-year-old who has been well served in the middle years of schooling? What do we want every young adolescent to know, to feel, to be able to do upon emerging from that educational and school-related experience?" The answer is:

- An intellectually reflective person
- A person en route to a lifetime of meaningful work
- A good citizen
- A caring and ethical individual
- A healthy person (*Turning Points,* 1990)

In 1998, the Grant Commission issued *The Forgotten Half,* in which it stated that "young people's experiences at home, at school, in the community, and at work are strongly interconnected, and our response to problems that arise in any of these domains must be equally well integrated..." In light of this, they argued that all young people need

[21] Karen J. Pittman is the Executive Director of the Forum for Youth Investment (formerly IYF-US), a U.S. initiative of the International Youth Foundation. The Forum is dedicated to helping national organizations that invest in youth increase the quality and quantity of youth investments and youth involvement by promoting a big picture approach to planning and policy development. During her career Ms. Pittman has served on numerous boards and panels and currently sits on the board of the Educational Testing Service, chairs the board of the American Youth Work Center, and is a member of the Department of Education's Commission on the Senior Year of High School.

- More constructive contact with adults who can help them guide their talents into useful and satisfying paths
- Opportunities to participate in community activities that they and adults value, especially giving service to others
- Special help with particularly difficult problems ranging from learning disabilities to substance addiction
- Initial jobs, no matter how modest, that offer a path to accomplishment and to career opportunity (*The Forgotten Half,* 1998)

These commissions focused on different age groups and, to some extent, different systems. Both, however, offered lists of desired youth outcomes and critical community resources that spanned systems and levels. Both offered broad agendas calling for systemic and social reforms. And most importantly, both focused on the preparation of young people, rather than solely on the prevention or amelioration of their problems.

The Paradigm Shift

The most significant change over the past decade is in the increased acceptance of youth preparation and development, not just problem prevention and deterrence, as broad goals requiring intentional monitoring and action, and the increased attention to non-school organizations as sources of support. Dozens of models have been put forth as either descriptive or predictive youth development frameworks. Behind them all are these unflinching commitments:

- To **broaden the goals** to promote not only problem reduction but preparation for adulthood
- To **increase the options** for instruction and involvement by improving the quality and availability of supports, services, and opportunities offered
- To **redefine the strategies** in order to ensure a broad scale of supports and opportunities for young people that reach beyond the status quo

Broadening the Goals

What should young people accomplish? Since the Carnegie and Grant reports were issued, there have been numerous efforts to specify a list of desired youth outcomes that describe attitudes, skills, knowledge, and behaviors society should expect of young people and young people should want for themselves. The multitude of lists share a few underlying themes:

There is something fundamentally limiting about having everything defined by a problem.

Problem-free is not fully prepared. There is something fundamentally limiting about having everything defined by a problem. In the final analysis people are not assessed in terms of problems (or lack thereof), but potential.

Academic competence, while critical is not enough. There is a range of skills needed for success in adolescence and adulthood. They include intellectual competence, but also vocational, physical, emotional, civic, social, and cultural competencies.

Competence alone, while critical, is not enough. Skills can go unused, or be used in unproductive, anti-social ways if not anchored by confidence, character, and connections. Gang members, for example, are often extraordinarily competent.

Seven Key Inputs Influencing Youth Development

In order to expect fully prepared youth, communities must provide the following:

- **Safe, stable places.** One place can, and should be, the home. Places can also be faith organizations, schools, community centers, or youth programs.
- **Basic care and services.** Health, housing, nutrition, counseling, and transportation services that are appropriate, affordable, and if necessary, confidential.
- **High-quality instruction and training** in academics, the arts, sports, culture, life skills, trades, and the prevention of high-risk behaviors.
- **Sustained, caring relationships** with competent, well-connected adults.
- **Social and strategic networks** that connect youth to information, people, peers, jobs, and opportunities.
- **Challenging experiences and opportunities to contribute.**
- **High expectations and standards.**

Presented by Karen J. Pittman during the Institute

Increasing the Options

What do young people need? America's Promise broke through the public awareness barrier with its pronouncement of five "fundamental resources" for youth: safe places, caring adults, healthy starts, education for marketable skills, and opportunities to serve.

The bottom line is that young people need a range of services, supports, and opportunities that can and should be provided by every institution that touches their lives. Many schools, for example, opt not to provide or even house health and social services supports within their walls. But most successful schools have found ways to identify and support those students who need these services. Upon analysis, most successful schools have found ways to create a culture of high expectations for all within a climate of safety, structure, belonging, challenge, and purpose.

Most successful schools have found ways to create a culture of high expectations for all within a climate of safety, structure, belonging, challenge, and purpose.

Redefining the Strategies

What should schools, communities, and policymakers do? The shift from thinking "deficit reduction" to "full preparation" forces a recasting of the call for more programs and tougher standards (intentional interventions designed to change youth's behavior) to a call for better environments and opportunity structures (intentional interventions that change the mix of supports, opportunities, and services available to youth).

New Goals and Strategies for Schools

A series of challenges set out over the past decade builds upon what is known about youth development: redefine the goals, rethink the process, reassess the inputs, reprioritize the settings, and expand the time frame. Some of these challenges focus specifically on schools.

The principles of youth development allow researchers and advocates to push the goal for education beyond academic competence and to broaden the strategies and settings

- Beyond the school building to strengthen other settings such as home, religious organizations, community, youth and recreation centers, and libraries
- Beyond the school day to offer services, activities, and supports in the evenings, on weekends, and during the summer
- Beyond school professionals to improve the training and increase the number of volunteers, youth workers, and other adults in young people's lives

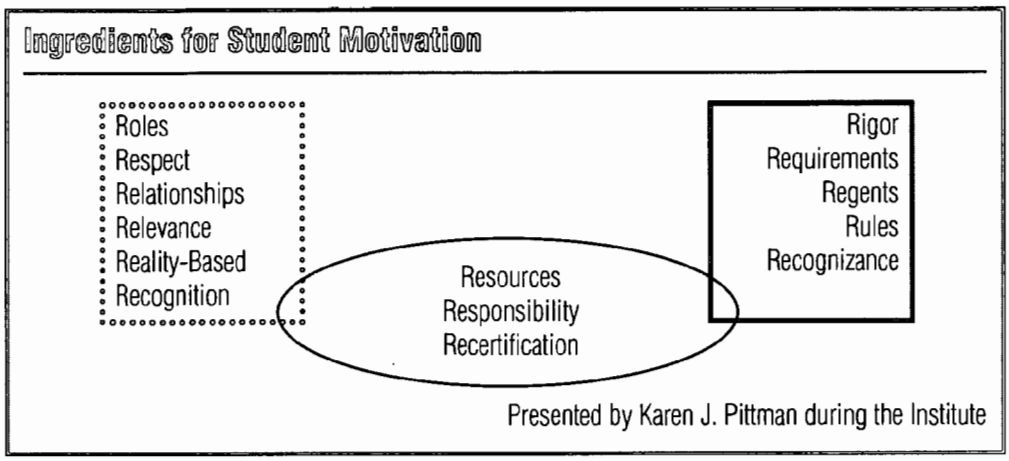
The "beyonds" are often effective in focusing attention on new ways of framing the issues and solutions, but they have sometimes been interpreted as a call for abandoning existing responses, rather than a challenge to build on them. This is certainly the case for schools.

It is clear that very little progress can be made without the cooperation of the schools. They are, after all, where the kids are, where the resources are, and, equally important, where the public focuses its expectations.

Every institution that touches young people's lives must provide opportunities to meet the needs that are the prerequisites of competence development, and build the full set of competencies. Institutions do not have to be comprehensive service providers. They should, however, all take a common, comprehensive, and positive approach to working with the young people who come in their doors. At an absolute minimum, institutions should do no harm.

Two Perspectives on School Reform: Students and Education Policymakers/Administrators

Over the past few years, the debates about school reform, especially those sparked by the highly publicized incidents of student violence, mirror many of the concerns of students, as well as education policymakers and practitioners. Both groups talk about the need for more resources, greater responsibility for students, teachers, and administrators, and better teacher training, certification, and retention. Both groups recognize the need to improve instruction. Beyond this, however, the language of reform spoken by each group seems quite different. Policymakers and administrators talk about the need for increased academic rigor, tougher requirements, regents exams, and zero-tolerance rules to curb youth drug use, truancy, and violence. And while not using the word, policymakers in particular seem fond of calling for greater recognizance efforts in schools, including drug sweeps, metal detectors, and hidden cameras.



Students on the other hand, offer a very different list of "Rs." They talk about the need for respect (from adults and peers), their desire to grasp the relevance of what they are being taught, their need for genuine relationships (with teachers and peers) that make them feel that they are known, and for roles and recognition that make them feel valued. Interestingly, students also want adults to be much more grounded in the reality of their (the students') lives, to "know where they are coming from." And, they want more frequent opportunities to check out the realities of life post-high school. For example, students would like to know more about college entrance exams and employer priorities.

The lists, while different, are complementary. Students are not opposed to rigor, requirements, and rules. (They do find recognizance efforts disrespectful, however.) They are not opposed to exit exams. They want to learn and they want recognition for their work. But they clearly want these rules and requirements to be implemented in an atmosphere that is fair and supportive. Educational administrators and policymakers are not opposed to relationships, roles, and relevance. Interestingly, these are prominent features of schools and/or programs that serve the ends of the student distribution curve—those in which expectations for students are very high (e.g. magnets), and those in which expectations are quite low (e.g. alternative schools). But these features have not been defined as solutions to the low achievement problem that plagues most comprehensive high schools.

Applying Youth Development Principles to Schools

Accountability: Going Beyond Academics

The most well-developed, best-funded, best-monitored institutions that youth interact with are schools. The debate has raged for decades about why and how this institution has far too often become a constraining and even hostile environment for young people. The answer is simple: rhetoric and good intentions aside, institutions are driven by their accountability systems. Schools are held accountable for attendance, matriculation, and achievement. Schools are not held accountable for their environments, beyond basic physical safety. Schools are not

Schools are not held accountable for the development of competencies beyond academic skills.

held accountable for the development of competencies beyond academic skills. As much as the sentiment is there to alter the environment and broaden the definition of education, the institution will not change until the bottom-line definitions of accountability change. And, perhaps the goals of academic competence and vocational readiness, at least for some students, will not be reached until they do.

Qualities of a "Healthy" School

The inputs defined as essential to the success of any youth programming can be applied to schools to craft a strong answer to a very basic question: What does a positive, supportive place of learning look like? What is a healthy school?

- Schools must be safe, stable, stimulating places.
- Administrators have to find ways to protect and promote the nonacademic instruction offered during and after the school day.
- Administrators must find ways to ensure that their staffs have the capacity and motivation to play central roles in the lives of their students.
- Teachers and administrators have to help students build and use diverse social and strategic networks.
- Everyone involved in schools has to push to make the experience more relevant and the opportunities for learning and contribution more prevalent for more students, more of the time.

Youth development is an ongoing process of meeting needs and developing and using competencies.

Youth development is an ongoing process of meeting needs and developing and using competencies. Assessing the extent to which schools contribute to the overall development and preparation of young people requires going beyond assessments of the content and impact of instructional programming. It requires assessment of the in-school environments and their links to the out-of-school environments in which youth function. Further, parents, teachers, administrators, and students will have to

- Move the school into the community, increasing its role as a youth development organization for the neighborhood in which it exists.
- Bring the community into the school, increasing hours, building partnerships, and sharing resources and decision making.
- Build communities *within* schools, engaging students and faculty in setting rules; defining standards; sharing responsibility for planning, instruction, and maintenance; and building bridges across race, ethnicity, class, track, and group.

High academic achievement results for all students will require standards and rules. And, schools will be required to increase their commitment to provide individual supports and services to students whose performance lags behind. But, in the end, exit exam success rates of 90 percent, even 70 percent, will require improved instruction *and* improved environments. As the panel makes abundantly clear, talk to students. They will tell you.

Putting It All Together at the Building Level

The building level is where efforts to motivate students will either work or not work. It is the place where the balance between the drive for high stakes standards and the creation of a nurturing climate is tested, with the hoped for result of high achievement without losing students to decreases in graduation rates. The two Alaska schools described below seem to have done that.

Strategies for Success

Based on Remarks by Sylvia J. Reynolds[22]

Soldotna High School is located in the center of the Kenai Peninsula of Alaska and houses 550 to 600 students. It is unique in that it has experienced continual upward growth in ACT/SAT scores for the past three years, surpassing other schools in the district in analytical writing and math performance, as well as in state and national norms. The graduation rate is between 96 and 98 percent. Students are very "connected" to the school. By the time the school opens its doors in late August, over half the student population is already engaged in one of the many activities offered.

Communication and Goal Setting

Department heads meet with the principal the first week of school to discuss goals of the previous year and to set new ones based on an assessment of where improvement is needed. Building goals have included improving study skills among students, wellness, and the use of technology. The administration also sets goals, which in the 1999-00 school year focused on the transition of new staff, and networking with the community.

Once set, these goals are shared with the staff, students, and community. Communication with students also extends to explaining why they are engaged in certain activities. For example, before students take schoolwide tests, the purpose of the test and why doing their best is important is explained to them. When the test results are available, they are shared with students, parents, teachers, and other schools along with an explanation of how to interpret and read them.

Commitment to Success of Staff and Students

A commitment to ensuring movement toward success by all students and all teachers is part of the Soldotna High ethic. The good things happening in one class are shared with other teachers through a system of frequent classroom visits by the principal and feedback via e-mails to other staff. Teachers who are not having success with students are put on an improvement plan. If this is not productive, they are encouraged to find a different profession or released.

22 From a panel presentation by Sylvia J. Reynolds, Principal of Soldotna High School in Soldotna, Alaska.

Intervention programs, such as young women's and young men's groups, Discovery Class, a new Personalized Education Program (PEP), the After the Bell tutorial program, and on-site intervention counseling are available to students needing assistance. Also, prior to the beginning of the school year, incoming freshmen attend an orientation that helps get them started in the right direction. Four different workshops, each presented by an upper class student are given. These workshops include opportunities for students to review their class schedules and walk through a typical day with a map in hand. Do's and don'ts or the rules and sanctions applied for broken rules, information on all the available activities, and a description of the Discovery Program, for students who have not been successful, are included in the other workshops.

Creativity

Creative solutions have been used to solve difficult problems. For example, some unsuccessful students have enrolled in alternative programs that can better meet their needs to complete high school. Further, the school-to-work program is designed to include all students, not just those who are at risk, as originally planned. The Kenai Peninsula College offers college classes on campus, and integrated units of teaching are used to link two or more curriculum areas studying a related subject.

Making Connections

Soldotna High has been aggressive in making real world connections within the community. Guest speakers have attended an entire day addressing the real world of work, the value of a good education, and work ethics. Other areas of collaboration with the community include police briefings to familiarize students and staff with the floor plan in case of a critical incident, as well as intervention counseling located within the school. Two city council members are on the School Site Council and the president of the Parent, Teacher, Student Association has strong ties to officials in the capital, thereby bridging educational and political issues. Student projects in the government classes have proved to be extremely successful in providing civic and environmental assistance to the city of Soldotna and the surrounding communities. All of these connections have helped gain community support when it has been needed.

Celebration

People doing good things are celebrated.

People doing good things are celebrated. The music, drama, and art departments are an integral component of the school, and their presentations and projects are phenomenal. The rate of student graduation is celebrated as well as making sure new hires and programs meet the various needs along the learning continuum. When students are an exceptional audience, they are provided with that feedback and acknowledged for their positive role modeling. Building on student, staff, and community success has worked well at Soldotna High School.

Reality-Based Learning in the Extended Day

Based on Remarks by Hal Spackman[23]

Mt. Edgecumbe High School is a boarding school of 320 students. Due to the fact that students live on campus 24-7, the school has the distinct advantage of being able to provide structure in the lives of students beyond the traditional school day. Consequently, staff are able to work constructively with students in some areas of students' lives that often have a negative impact on student performance in nonresidential or traditional schools. For example, Mt. Edgecumbe High School requires students to abide by a regular schedule (including bedtime), provides healthy recreational activities that limit unsupervised "free" time, and offers evening tutorial assistance that not only helps students build skills, but also develops effective study habits.

Secondly, students choose to attend Mt. Edgecumbe. If they do not like the structure, academic rigor, or other components of the program they find challenging, they are not required to remain. There is power in choice. However, staff find that, in particular, those students who experience growth in the areas of their lives they find the most challenging, or those students who struggle with decision making and simply lack structure in their lives, recognize that these skills will help them succeed and strive to remain at Mt. Edgecumbe. Generally, the longer students remain at Mt. Edgecumbe, the more intense their desire is to stay and finish high school.

There is power in choice.

A high percentage of Mt. Edgecumbe's federal programs money is used to fund after-school programs. Using these funds to hire tutors and library and computer room monitors, the school stays open from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Not only does this provide a positive environment for students after school, but it also allows tutors to guide students in developing study habits, building literacy skills, and completing homework. This "addition to the school day" makes it easier for teachers to develop involved project-based learning experiences that provide students with connections to learning that relate to real life applications.

Mt. Edgecumbe also offers internships and school-to-work activities in the community and statewide to enhance student motivation. This practice is particularly effective with second semester seniors "wondering" what they want to do after high school.

In conjunction with the residential program, staff encourage students to take personal responsibility, to think about their future, and to develop self-help skills that prepare students for life after high school. Staff use ropes/adventure education activities, group assemblies, small group training, and other goal-setting activities to reinforce this concept. Instruction is designed to instill in students the sense that they are learning something important—skills that they can use after graduation.

Instruction is designed to instill in students the sense that they are learning something important—skills that they can use after graduation.

Finally, Mt. Edgecumbe staff intensely believe two of the most powerful ideas the school can instill in students is a sense of connection to something important to them and the conviction that they have a positive, eventful future in front of them.

23 From a panel presentation by Hal Spackman, Principal of Mt. Edgecumbe High School in Sitka, Alaska.

PART III
State Leadership Plans for Action on the 1999 Priority of Students Continually Learning

Introduction

The Council will move forward with this year's priority and determine what action to take. Whether that action is developing a position or policy statement; generating analysis and research; collecting and circulating best practices; or promoting legislative recommendations, this whole system of education needs to be looked at not just from the institutional perspective, but from the perspective of students. Whether that student is a one-year-old, an 11-year-old, or a 17-year-old, we must consider how that shift in perspective further informs us.

Gordon M. Ambach

At the close of the Summer Institute Council members committed themselves to actions to support students continually learning. At their November 1999 Annual Meeting in San Francisco they adopted policy statements and planned follow-up activities in early childhood, extended learning opportunities, and student motivation.

Early Childhood and Family Education

CCSSO, with the support of the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, invested a major effort in 1999 updating its 1988 policy statement on early childhood and family education. The earlier statement reflected the Council's long-held position that early development experiences play a significant role in preparing children to enter school ready to learn. With the expansion of knowledge and new insights in this area, the Council revisited these issues, articulated an updated vision, and generated a set of recommendations to ensure a successful start for every child.

Updating the policy statement involved two major activities: (1) presenting an expanded body of knowledge, summarized in this document, to the chief state school officers during the 1999 Summer Institute; and (2) carrying out the work of revising the statement with the support of early childhood experts and state education officials. CCSSO convened a group of 11 experts from state education agencies, institutions of higher education, and well-regarded organizations that work on behalf of young children and their families.

The CCSSO Early Childhood Education Policy Revision Workgroup developed a draft of suggested modifications to the statement. Members of the group included Robert E. Bartman, Missouri Commissioner of Education and CCSSO President; Marci Andrews, Center for the Child Care Workforce; Henry Johnson, Associate Superintendent, Instructional Services, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction; Sharon Lynn Kagan, President, National Association for the Education of Young Children, Yale University Bush Center in Child Development & Social Policy; Anita McClanahan, Coordinator, Early Childhood Education, Oregon Department of Education;

Suellen K. Reed, Superintendent, Indiana Department of Education; Lorrie Shepard, Professor, University of Colorado at Boulder; Barbara Wasik, Co-Director, Early Learning Program, CRESPAR, Johns Hopkins University; Jane Wiechel, Director, Early Childhood Education, Ohio Department of Education; and Gene Wilhoit, Deputy Commissioner, Learning Support Services Bureau, Kentucky Department of Education.

Other members of the workgroup included Stacie Goffin, Program Officer at the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, and Rima Shore, an expert on issues of early childhood education and author of *Rethinking the Brain.*

The policy statement, "Early Childhood and Family Education," includes a Call to Action with a commitment to colleagues who teach and care for children; policymakers in localities, states, and the nation; those who provide caring services; leaders of community, business, and labor; and parents and families. The call invites them to join together to (1) promote parent and family education and join in coordinated health, child care, and education services to enable families to provide creative development for their infants and children; (2) assure every child has the opportunity for high-quality, universal early care and education at age 3 and 4 through either public or private schools and agencies with funding through public and/or private sources, depending on need; (3) assure continual education experiences through early childhood programs into elementary school, particularly pre-literacy preparation; and (4) advance and disseminate new knowledge about improved early childhood education. The entire statement is reprinted below.

POLICY STATEMENT

EARLY CHILDHOOD AND FAMILY EDUCATION

A CALL TO ACTION

Our statement of commitment as educators addresses our colleagues who teach and care for children; policymakers in localities, states, and the nation; those who provide caring services; leaders of community, business, and labor; and parents and families.

We invite all to come together at this extraordinary juncture to rethink our assumptions about how and when children learn and to renew our priorities and strategies. We must expand our efforts to see that every child receives the care and education, the skills and knowledge, needed to thrive in a fast-changing world, and to ensure that every family has the information, understanding, and support needed to give their children the best possible start in life.

We are committed to

- Promote parent and family education and join in coordinated health, child care, and education services that enable families to provide creative development for their infants and toddlers
- Ensure that every child has the opportunity for high-quality, universal early care and education at age 3 and 4 through either public or private schools and agencies with funding through public and/or private sources, depending on need
- Assure the continuity of education experiences as children move through early childhood programs and into elementary school, particularly in terms of pre-literacy preparation
- Strengthen early childhood program standards and accountability and improve assessment of child development and readiness
- Expand and disseminate new knowledge about how to improve early childhood education

NEW REALITIES

We call for a more systematic, comprehensive approach to early childhood learning that reflects new realities that confront our society as we cross into the new millennium, and new opportunities stemming from new insights into early childhood learning and greater public awareness of the importance of the early years.

Many of the broad changes that have taken place in American society over the last decade affect children from their early years. Today, 62 percent of preschool-age children have working parents. The great majority of children (about 70 percent) receive some or most of their care outside of their homes by the time they are three years old. Welfare reforms are requiring parents to enter the workforce and, therefore, increasing the need for preschool programs among low-income families. However, most working families cannot find or afford high-quality care for their young children. Nearly 86 percent of the settings where young children, particularly those of less affluent families, spend their days have been found to be of "poor" to "mediocre" quality. Infants and toddlers are more likely than preschoolers to receive care in inadequate settings. The 1995 Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study reported that only 8 percent of infant classrooms—compared to 24 percent of preschool classrooms—were of "good" or "excellent" quality. Staffing problems undermine the quality of early childhood programs—with staff turnover ranging from 25 percent to 50 percent annually. Finding and retaining qualified individuals to staff early childhood programs is

becoming an urgent challenge in many states. Addressing compensation and career development for providers is imperative.

We are very concerned about these findings, especially in view of the fact that meeting the needs of America's children is a more complex task than ever before. In the realm of education, diversity is not a slogan; it is a reality. By the year 2030, the majority of America's children will be from groups now thought of as "minorities." Moreover, many families continue to face tough odds as they raise their children. The percentage of children living in poverty remains very high: more than one of every five children, despite the robust economy of the nineties in one of the wealthiest nations ever. In addition, many children have working parents who hold low-wage jobs and are hard pressed to make ends meet.

NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Over the last decade, education—including the care and education of young children—has been lifted by the public and government policymakers to the top of the nation's agenda. In part, this surge of interest in children's issues reflects evidence, emanating from such fields as neuroscience, cognitive science, and child development, that learning is truly lifelong, stretching from the first days of life to the last; that continual learning is essential to keep up with technological changes; and that the nation's future is dependent on the knowledge and capacity of its citizens.

Research now confirms what parents and teachers have long observed—that early learning creates a foundation for later achievement, and that efforts to help children develop to their fullest cannot be postponed until they reach the age of five or six. Moreover, efforts to reform and strengthen K-12 education cannot succeed without a concerted effort to support the people and improve the programs entrusted with the care and education of our youngest children.

Researchers and practitioners in the field of early childhood education have made long strides in recent years. We know much more about how children learn and the kinds of programs and practices that promote healthy development and learning. The components of quality in early care and education have been researched and elaborated. We know more about how to promote literacy and prevent reading problems. In the primary grades, we have well-tested programs that help children get off to a good start in school. All of these advances present us with new opportunities.

UNWAVERING CONVICTIONS

The Chief State School Officers remain determined to see that every child has the opportunity to develop to his or her fullest potential. We remain convinced that our society must strengthen its commitment to the well-being of all children and their families, and must be willing to alter its institutions and services to address the new realities that shape their lives. These are the commitments set forth in our 1988 policy statement, and they remain bedrock beliefs.

But we have learned, over the last decade, that merely changing institutions and services will not take us far enough. A patchwork of programs—even new or improved programs—is not sufficient. We need, within each state, a common understanding of what it will take to help all children and all families thrive and a shared plan for getting there.

Over the last two decades, we have resolutely established new standards for learning and strategies to provide education that prepares all our children for world-class achievement levels—the highest in our history. As we act to overcome underachievement and inequity, we have many tools at our disposal, including a large body of research, an array of best practices, and powerful strategies for school improvement and system reform. But in the realm of early childhood education, a

wide gap remains between what we know and what we do. Our work is especially challenging.

WE BEGIN WITH THE CHILDREN

Their needs are great, and they are counting on the adults in their lives—at home, in early childhood programs, at school, or in their neighborhoods.....

.....TO PROTECT THEM. They are counting on us to ensure their safety and health—to prevent injury and illness, to act quickly when problems arise, and to ensure that no child falls through the cracks because of their parents' lack of means or their communities' lack of resources.

.....TO CHERISH THEM. To thrive, children need at least one adult who cares deeply about them—a loving parent, grandparent, or other concerned adult. In addition, they need secure, warm relationships with the adults who are responsible for them in other settings, or when parents are unavailable. Research on resilience shows that strong relationships with caring adults, whether at home or in their communities, can help children to thrive despite difficult circumstances.

.....TO UNDERSTAND THEM. Children need love...but love by itself may not be enough. They also need adults to understand their developmental needs at various stages of growth. Children fare better when the adults who care for them have the information, tools, resources, and social networks needed to do a good job. They fare better when educational programs and other organizations have a realistic grasp of their families lives and schedules and design services accordingly.

.....TO GUIDE THEM. Families raise children in different ways—imbuing them with different beliefs and values. But other institutions play a role in guiding children, setting and conveying expectations for their behavior and learning, and transmitting shared values of our society, such as compassion, service to others, success through effort, tolerance, and responsibility for one's actions. Children thrive when all of the adults they encounter reinforce these basic messages and set consistent, clear, and high expectations.

.....TO TEACH THEM. Children need parents and all of the other teachers in their lives to help them value learning and to engage in activities that advance their cognitive capacity and knowledge about themselves, their culture, and their environment.

All young children have these needs. Of course, at different stages, these needs may take different forms:

In the first years of life (0-3), early activities to promote creative development and to prevent negative impacts are especially important. Ensuring a good start in life means providing prenatal care, well-baby care, good nutrition, health screenings, stimulating learning, and early intervention when problems arise. Employment practices that give parents the option of caring for their own newborns should be encouraged (and modeled by state school officers whenever possible). Parent education and family support programs help parents in their roles as children's first teachers, and provide crucial information about the kind of learning activities and care children need both at home and in child care settings. Monitoring and improving the quality of infant and toddler programs is an especially urgent priority, given evidence that these programs tend to be of poor quality. Health and safety are of the utmost importance, but we must be particularly concerned about the kinds of learning activities and language experiences available to young children whether at home or in other settings. All caregivers need reasonable working conditions and access to information and support, including relatives or family child care providers.

In their preschool years (3-5), the developmental activities of the earlier years must be reinforced. At this stage, children continue to have strong health and safety needs combined with the imperative for creative learning experiences. Many more are in center-based care or pre-kindergarten programs. School readiness becomes a more pressing issue. While certain

children with disabilities are eligible for public education services, most other children are not.

We believe that during this age span, all families should have the option of enrolling their children in high-quality preschool programs. Affluent families are able to provide such opportunities. Less affluent families cannot afford them. If our nation is to have a "universal" opportunity for high-quality preschool, we must assure that the burden of paying for such programs is not borne entirely by parents and that public support enables access to programs for families of varying economic standing. Such programs must have strong family engagement components, and offer lively, varied learning activities that inspire children's curiosity and creativity while meeting their developmental strengths and needs and responding to their families' cultural backgrounds and preferences.

Children need our best efforts to monitor and assure quality. Program staff should be well qualified and highly motivated. Teaching and learning should be rooted in research-based best practices. Program facilities must be safe and promote healthy development. In particular, we need to bring to bear new insights into early literacy, profiting from research pointing to the kinds of early experiences that foster literacy and prevent reading difficulties, both at home and in early care and education settings. Helping all children learn to communicate effectively is essential for their readiness for school and their capacity for further learning.

In the primary grade years (5-8), children need schools that are ready for them—that is, ready to meet individual boys and girls wherever they happen to be on the developmental spectrum; to provide continuity with early learning experiences; to involve families; and to ensure that children do not slip into the gap that often opens up between the culture of the home and the culture of the school. Schools need to ensure that research on learning in the primary grades is infused into early childhood curricula, teacher education programs, and staff development strategies. School-aged children with working parents—the majority in today's world (approximately 76 percent)—need extended-day and extended-year programs to engage them in interesting activities and keep them safe while their mothers and fathers work.

During the first eight years, continuity of child care and educational services is critical to sustain the initial positive effects of parent and family. This is particularly important with regard to pre-literacy and literacy development. Children who receive consistent services as they move across institutional structures perform better on academic and social development measures well into the elementary, middle, and secondary grades.

THE IMPERATIVE

Meeting this broad range of needs requires a comprehensive strategy in each state. The goal is to create an early childhood "system"—an integrated, collaborative effort by many institutions (including families, child care programs, health care professionals, schools, institutions of higher education, employers, faith institutions, community organizations, and governments) to serve the full range of children's needs. Some have called it "a conspiracy of caring"—where everywhere children turn, they meet efforts dedicated to their healthy development and learning.

Virtually every state in the union now has some kinds of early childhood initiatives—some more far-reaching than others. However, no state has yet created the kind of seamless early childhood system with opportunities for all children and families, if they choose to take them, envisioned in this statement. Such a system will not happen by chance. It necessitates brainstorming, planning, ongoing advocacy efforts, and sustained collaboration. It calls for a willingness to rethink longstanding finance and governance structures. It requires our best efforts both to create high-quality programs, and also to strengthen accountability and

deepen our knowledge about early childhood learning. Many of the responsibilities and actions lie beyond the roles and authority of chief state school officers. No one group will have comprehensive or full responsibility. Nevertheless, we are committed to participating actively in collaborative efforts, dedicating resources to them, and playing a leading role in moving our states toward creation and realization of comprehensive early childhood strategies.

STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE

I. Assuring Every Child the Best Possible Start in Life By Creating a Comprehensive System for Early Care and Learning in Every State

In the field of early childhood care and education, solutions abound. In states and localities across the nation, good ideas for improving and expanding early care and education services are being put to the test. But most states lack a coherent strategy for ensuring that every family has good health and child care options. Experts on early childhood learning agree that piecemeal solutions cannot solve the quality problem. What states need most urgently is a comprehensive vision of the kinds of services its young children need, and a workable plan for realizing it. State governments can help to set in motion processes by which residents can come together to develop a plan for meeting the most urgent needs of young children and their families. As states urge local comprehensive developments, they must themselves model effective state agency collaboration by aligning data systems, financing, and program requirements.

These plans require attention not only to programs, but also to the behind-the-scenes issues that most states and communities are just beginning to address. Key elements of a comprehensive vision include the following:

- *Public engagement:* Recent experience in states that have launched significant pre-kindergarten initiatives shows that arguments for universal pre-kindergarten can hold sway in the political arena, but this requires a sustained and powerful public engagement effort.
- *Finance:* New finance models are essential to improving quality. Today, early childhood programs in our country are severely underfunded. Most of the costs are borne by parents with young children, who tend to be in the early stages of their careers. To stay competitive, programs charge fees that are well below the real costs of high-quality services; subsidies are generally tied to market rates and perpetuate poor quality. New strategies are needed to increase public investment in early childhood education and to assure accountability and equity in their use.
- *Governance and coordination:* In coming years, system-building efforts will require urgent attention. The overall governance of public funds must remain under the direction of the appropriate state and local agencies. However, a mixed delivery system, including public and private schools and other agencies, is the most realistic approach to getting large-scale pre-kindergarten programs up and running in a timely way, meeting parents' diverse needs and preferences, and overcoming resistance by existing providers. Local boards of education will need to form or strengthen working relationships with other early childhood education providers and community organizations. Intensive, ongoing collaboration is required, and this takes time and resources.

II. Assuring High-Quality Early Learning for All Children

In 1988, our Council broke new ground by calling for universal access to high-quality early care and education programs for four-year-olds. In an era of severe cuts in social programs, we recommended concentrating

public resources on children at risk.

Today's realities demand an even stronger commitment. We are calling for high-quality early care and education for all three- and four-year-olds whose parents want to enroll them. Nothing less will suffice at a time when most children have no parent at home during the day. Nothing less will ensure that every child has the chance to get a good start in school.

Today, most young children receive most or all of their care during working hours outside of the home. Indeed, most states now require former welfare recipients, including mothers with preschool-age children, to spend their days away from home. Making early care and education more accessible and affordable is therefore an urgent need. But expanding the supply is not sufficient. The quality of early care and education is a crucial factor, and has been shown to affect school readiness. In particular, high-quality early care and education programs can help to foster the literacy skills that are so crucial to school achievement.

Of course, wonderful programs and providers can be found in most communities. But today, they are the exception, not the rule. Researchers have judged the quality of most center-based programs—86 percent—to be mediocre to poor. The quality of care in family child care homes—where providers take in children while their parents work—also tends to be inadequate.

Key components of high-quality programs include the following:

- *Family engagement:* Early childhood programs need strong, ongoing partnerships with families so that they can address their preferences and needs and strengthen the connection between home and school. Parents also need help from schools and other authorities in being effective advocates and consumers of services for their children.
- *Parent preparation:* Each generation of secondary students is also a generation of future parents. The nature of their education shapes their disposition toward the way they will eventually raise and teach their own children. The quality of their overall education and the introduction they are given to their opportunities and responsibilities for their own children's learning are of great significance. The schools have a major potential in helping prepare students for successful future roles in early childhood and family education.
- *Community involvement:* Stronger linkages of programs to community agencies and organizations are crucial. In particular, there is an urgent need to link health services to educational services. An important aspect of community involvement is creating more family-friendly workplaces. To assist local school districts and community organizations in strengthening collaboration, state agencies must act together to promote cooperative services and to help build greater capacity to provide comprehensive services to young children and their families.
- *Teacher preparation and continued professional development:* The preparation and development of early childhood educators is woefully inadequate. For instance, the norm in early childhood professional development is three to six hours of training annually. The teacher reform movement has tried to raise teaching and learning results by focusing on the preparation, induction, and ongoing professional development of teachers. It seeks to upgrade the quality of teaching and learning by setting and enforcing higher standards for teachers. Providers of early care and education need to be held to high standards; at the same time, they need to have opportunities and incentives—both economic and professional—to stay in the field and to enhance their knowledge and skills.

- *Program licensing:* Today, half of all pre-kindergarten programs are legally exempt from any kind of quality standards. States must review and make more rigorous their licensing strategy for programs and for early childhood educators and other professionals.

III. Strengthening Early Childhood Program Standards and Accountability and Improving Evaluation of Child Development and Readiness

Public investment in the early years is a powerful strategy for raising school achievement. Based on more than a decade of research and practice, the Council believes that money spent up front, in high-quality early childhood programs tied to effective, well-targeted support services, will yield significant returns. However, if taxpayers are to increase and sustain support for early childhood programs, accountability is a top priority.

By strengthening accountability, early childhood programs will be aligned with today's most promising school reform efforts. A relentless focus on students and results sets today's school change efforts apart from previous waves of reform. However, finding the best way to gauge results is not easy. Parents, child advocates, and educators alike have questioned the appropriateness of readiness tests for young children, and expressed concern about the misuse of assessments to label or categorize children.

Judgments by parents, providers, and public officials on individual program and project effectiveness and on the progress of individual children are, of course, being made continually. The problems of accountability center on the validity of large-scale evaluations and the selection of indicators and techniques of measurement.

Recently, researchers have made strides toward defining the kinds of skills or developmental milestones that should be measured in the early years, determining how to assess them appropriately, and reaching consensus on how to use this information to improve services and strengthen accountability.

To move forward on the issue of accountability, educators in consultation with families and policymakers must diligently search for answers to these questions:

- *What have we learned from existing pre-kindergarten programs?* Rigorous evaluations of existing, large-scale pre-kindergarten programs are vital. In addition to data on program results, we need to know which public engagement strategies are effective or have worked; which finance and governance strategies are most promising; how parents have been engaged; how the transition from pre-K to elementary school is best attained; and how different sectors and organizations have contributed to (or undermined) success. Results from current practices must be effectively summarized and available for policy and decision makers.
- *What more can we learn about the impact of high-quality early childhood programs?* In particular, how does participation in a high-quality early childhood education program affect later reading achievement? Which approaches to early childhood education yield the greatest benefits? How can children with special needs or circumstances be served most effectively? Continued research on the long-term benefits of early childhood education is crucial to advocacy, implementation, and program improvement efforts.
- *What kinds of assessments are appropriate for programs serving young children, and how can they be used to benefit children by* providing valuable information on program effectiveness and accountability?
- *How do staff qualifications relate to program effectiveness?* How do the qualifications, training, and working conditions of the teaching staff influence program effectiveness?

In order to assist the states with information and support activities that can strengthen their knowledge base on the use of assessments at the early childhood level, the Council will take the following actions:

- Conduct a survey of the states to determine current activities in the areas of early childhood assessment or evaluation, and their interest in working together in a collaborative group or consortium to address crucial issues.
- Depending on responses to the survey, convene a special group such as a State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS) that will focus on issues related to the assessment and evaluation of young children and early childhood education programs.

IV. Expanding Knowledge and Improving Practice in the Realm of Early Childhood Education

Rarely in the history of our nation have elementary and secondary educators had such exciting opportunities to strengthen early childhood learning and, thereby, improve later achievement. Parents, families, and the public appear to be more inclined than ever before to invest in the early years. Elementary and secondary schools are working much more collaboratively with early childhood program providers to meet the full range of children's needs.

Things are happening quickly in the field of early childhood learning. The challenges are clear, and while it is difficult to predict how states will meet them, we can be sure that programs and services will proliferate in coming years. Quality and access by all families remain the big question marks. To ensure that programs and services are as appropriate and effective as possible, we need to support more research. We encourage institutions of higher education and other research centers to focus a research agenda on early childhood learning and practice and disseminate findings in clear language. In particular, we need to know more about the kinds of settings and curricula that benefit children in the early years, the kinds of preparation and staffing patterns that enhance quality, and the kinds of parent and community participation that promote learning. We need to know more about effective, equitable assessment practices. We need to know more about alternative, effective strategies for financing, governing, and monitoring early childhood programs.

To ensure that the research agenda has high yield, we need to be certain that researchers' assumptions and projects are grounded in the realities of today's early childhood programs and classrooms, and that professionals who work with children every day are involved in and benefit from the studies.

CONCLUSION

An astute observer of our nation's schools once wrote, Americans "invest in education with all kinds of millennial hopes and expectations." Now, at the threshold of the new millennium, those hopes and expectations are immense.

Today, across the nation, there is greater recognition that the early years present invaluable opportunities to enhance later learning and greater determination to seize those opportunities. We believe that the strategies outlined in this document will enable us to narrow the gap between what we know and what we do.

Chief state school officers stand ready, state by state and nationwide, to join with families, colleagues, policymakers, and the public to implement these strategies. As public servants, we must always answer to the public. As educators, we must answer to the children. We owe it to them to do everything possible to realize their promise and the promise of the nation they will inherit.

At the November 1999 Annual Meeting, Council members also adopted the following statement about their future actions to expand time for student learning.

STATEMENT

Extended Learning Opportunities

INTRODUCTION

The practice of providing students with after school, weekend, and summer opportunities to expand their learning and participate in a variety of extracurricular activities is longstanding. For the most part, participation has been voluntary, but schools have also required extra time for students who were not meeting standards.

Recently, the provision of more intensive and systematic extended learning has exploded in many school districts, states, and with substantial support of the federal government and foundations. As part of this year's priority of *Students Continually Learning,* the Council of Chief State School Officers has given special focus to the expansion of extended learning opportunities. This brief statement summarizes some promising key developments in the states and poses questions that will form the basis for continued monitoring and support during the coming years.

Two major factors underpin the expansion of extended learning. First is the development of challenging standards for all students, which are creating the need to provide extra time and additional opportunity for those students who have difficulty meeting standards. The challenge of higher standards is also causing an increase in extended learning for students who are meeting standards in regular school sessions but want to enrich their educational program. Programs and services after school, on weekends, and in the summer are being expanded rapidly to provide for these needs.

Second is the increased condition of both parents, or single parents, working full time. The result is that students are left without adult contact or supervision following the regular school day. Many are in unsafe environments or those that allow them to engage in troubling behaviors. Providing good quality extension of learning and recreation time addresses this need.

Extended learning programs create a powerful dynamic for crafting relationships among schools, youth, community organizations, cultural institutions such as museums and libraries, colleges and universities, and other entities that operate a great variety of programs and services outside of school. In more and more cases, programs are being provided jointly by schools and community organizations, thereby increasing the opportunity for efficient service, both to improve academic achievement and provide enriching, immersing, or engaging activity.

STATE AND FEDERAL SUPPORT

Several states have enacted programs to support after-school, weekend, and summer extended learning. With foundation support, the Council of Chief State School Officers has surveyed six of the states with initiatives. Activities in California, Illinois, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Kentucky, and Texas are summarized in a preliminary report on these state efforts. A copy of this report is attached to illustrate the variety and scale of emerging approaches.

The federal government is providing support for extended learning through the 21st Century Community Learning Centers initiative. This is one of the fastest

growing programs in the U.S. Department of Education. Two hundred ninety projects are supported around the nation. Schools collaborate with other public, private, and nonprofit agencies, organizations, local businesses, post-secondary institution, scientific/cultural and other community entities in these programs. In 1998, $40 million were appropriated for this initiative. Currently, $200 million supports programs in approximately 1,600 schools in 468 communities. President Clinton has requested $600 million in the FY 2000 budget, which would increase service to approximately 2 million children in nearly 5,000 community learning centers throughout the United States.

COUNCIL EFFORTS TO SUPPORT STATE CAPACITY IN EXTENDED LEARNING

The Council of Chief State School Officers is actively advancing state efforts for extended learning, particularly with relation to its work in low-performing schools in need of program improvement. This is a significant focus of the CCSSO Project to Improve Achievement in High Poverty Schools. Economically and educationally disadvantaged students must be engaged in high-quality, out-of-school-time experiences and, yet, they are least likely to have them. Without them, these students will continue to lag behind academically and to be at great risk for engaging in unsafe behaviors. The commitment to serve these students is evidence that the current debate is not whether such programs are necessary, but how to expand the programs with added funds and make the most effective use of school and community facilities and personnel.

Through the support of the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and Annie E. Casey Foundation, CCSSO's Project to Improve Achievement in High Poverty Schools has an important role in expanding the network of state and district officials implementing and/or replicating high-quality extended learning projects. This includes promoting the use of federal categorical funding, such as in Title I, for extended learning, and promoting reading literacy initiatives as part of extended learning.

CONTINUED SUPPORT AND INCREASED MONITORING AND ANALYSIS OF PROGRAMS

This is a period of extensive experimentation with extended learning programs. Different patterns of coordinated services that join schools, community organizations, youth organizations, and private, nonprofit and profit-making companies are underway. The Council will continue to support these developments through expansion of federal resources for the 21st Century Community Learning Center initiative and, in particular, work to assure that an expanded program will be administered by state education agencies in order to connect these resources with state funds being used for similar purposes.

The Council will also increase its monitoring of developments in order to assist states and localities in selecting the most effective strategies for their programs. Answers to these questions are central to further program yields:

1. How are extended learning programs most effectively used to support increased academic achievement without being more of the same "regular school day"?
2. How do extended learning programs support standards-based reform? In what ways should extended learning outcomes be linked with state education standards?
3. How is effectiveness of extended learning programs measured? What evaluation evidence currently exists?
4. What proportion of extended learning opportunities should focus on recreation, responsible civic activity, work-based learning and apprenticeships, technology, leadership

skills, or having fun, i.e., developing student capacities beyond the academics?

5. What cooperative agreements among schools, youth, community organizations, cultural institutions such as museums and libraries, colleges and universities, and other entities yield the most effective extended learning results?
6. What combination of funding sources—education, other public funds for youth services, foundation, corporate—are most feasible and likely to result in cost-effective expansion of student participation?
7. What special efforts must be made to increase services of extended learning for students of poverty or at risk of being low performers?
8. How is student health and safety enhanced through participation in extended learning programs?

The Council will provide regular reports to the members and continue its work with key representatives of the states, youth, community organizations, cultural institutions, colleges and universities, foundations, the private sector, and local and state government to help all "seize the moment" for this extremely important opportunity to help *all* students achieve challenging standards.

In addition, at the November 1999 Annual Meeting, Council members adopted the following statement about motivating students to success and future Council activity.

STATEMENT

STUDENT MOTIVATION

INTRODUCTION

Student success in education requires the right combination of challenging standards, opportunities for learning to achieve those standards, and student motivation to be successful. During the past few years, there has been extensive focus given to establishing challenging standards and the quality of the school offerings that will enable all students to meet them. There has not been equal attention given to an understanding of what is motivating our students to success or, perhaps more importantly, what is missing or undermining the opportunities and leading so many students to drop out, opt out, or perform under their potential.

As part of this year's Council's priority topic, *Students Continually Learning,* a special focus has been given to better understanding student motivation and its relationship to school success from the perspective of the students.

The Council's inquiry centered in the CCSSO Summer Institute in Girdwood, Alaska, during August 1999. Council members examined student motivation through three lenses. The first was through the findings of a powerful study called *The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health* (Add Health). Second was through discussion of high stakes testing and whether the impact of such tests, on balance, generates stronger student motivation to achieve standards or creates disincentives to stay enrolled and keep working. Third was through conversation about constructive and supportive environments for youth with a panel of students who shared their experiences, frustrations about and aspirations for the characteristics of schools that would be highly motivating. These presentations and discussions opened inquiry on the importance of the topic and next steps for the Council and states. Brief summaries are provided below.

THREE LENSES ON STUDENT MOTIVATION

- **School Connectedness—Considering the Social World of the Student**
  Discussion with Dr. Clea Sucoff, Summer Institute 1999, Girdwood, Alaska

Students have their own social worlds—environments that shape and influence the choices they make about their education for today and tomorrow. School is a major part of the that environment and the characteristics of the school powerfully determine whether students feel "connected" to it and to the adults associated with it.

The issues of "connectedness" among high school students are empirically captured in the *National Longitudinal Study of the Adolescent Health* (Add Health). Add Health data show that while personal characteristics and the home environment are important in protecting adolescents from risk or placing adolescents at risk, the school environment makes a significant difference on the student's actions. The data show that feelings of connectedness to school and feeling that other students are not prejudiced toward them are more important to student motivation than school-related characteristics, such as class size or teacher training.

Students who have low grades and who are held back experience greater levels of emotional distress, increased substance abuse, more involvements with violence, and earlier sexual activity. The single factor that matters most to adolescents is whether they feel the school provides an atmosphere where students are fairly treated, close to one another, and a part of the school community. The importance of the findings is that school authorities and policymakers can influence these school characteristics, thereby, affecting motivation and achievement.

- **High Stakes Tests and Student Motivation—What Are the Incentive Effects for Students?**
  Discussion with Dr. John Bishop, Summer Institute 1999, Girdwood, Alaska

John Bishop and colleagues find that schools having low student expectations produce patterns of limited motivation for high school students to do well academically. They assert setting challenging standards produces higher levels of work and achievement.

The incentive effects of such high stakes tests among students, however, is under debate. Opponents of such tests argue they will result in higher dropout rates. Those in favor of such tests believe that teachers will demand more and raise both the standards and their own expectations of students' abilities. They also will expect that students will study/work harder to graduate from high school better prepared to enter college or the workforce.

Bishop has found that external examinations—exams developed by states or districts, rather than by the teachers for their own classrooms—actually foster teacher/student collaboration to help students succeed. Members of a class band together and work collaboratively with their teachers toward the goal of high individual, classwide, and schoolwide examination pass rates when the test is "external."

Bishop's data comparing states/schools with high stakes exam requirements in the 1980s and the early 1990s show the following:

- States with high stakes tests did not have lower percentage enrollment rates or lower graduation rates. States that did require more courses to graduate did have lower percentage enrollment rates.
- Graduates from high schools with high stakes tests were more likely to enter and continue in college. Students with scores in the lower 3/4ths of the test score distribution showed a greater probability to enter and continue college.
- Case studies of 10 schools that moved to requiring all students to take certain Regents Examinations in New York State in the early 1990s found that students at risk of low performance actually were provided much more attention and tutoring by school staff than prior to the new requirement.

- **Listening to Students on What Motivates Them—Students from the Anchorage, Alaska Region discuss School "Turn Ons" and "Turn Offs"**
  Karen Pittman, Merita Irby of the Forum for Youth Investment, and Alaskan High School Students, Summer Institute 1999, Girdwood, Alaska

As one of the most well-regarded thinkers about constructing supportive environments for youth, Karen Pittman has developed nine principles of "full investment and full involvement" for American youth. One of the nine principles speaks directly to what schools must provide for "young people as recipients ***and*** as active agents in their own development and that of their communities and society." Schools, school districts, and state education agencies can foster increased student motivation by developing processes for listening to student voices on issues relevant to their needs and success. There

are too few forums for their active participation with adults to listen to them, to advise them, and to assist in reversing problems of diminished motivation and disengagement.

Alaskan high school students from various academic, economic, and background experiences effectively articulated specific events and practices that both promoted ***and*** discouraged successful learning. Their participation at the Summer Institute underscored the need to establish formal mechanisms for listening to students on what motivates them and enables them to shape a motivating school environment. The student focus was on "relationships" and the necessity for assuring they are effective as one condition for academic success.

CONTINUED CCSSO REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Council members benefited greatly from these experts and their perspectives of these three lenses. On the basis of the Summer Institute presentations and discussion, the Council will continue work as follows:

1. Urge each chief state school officer to establish and/or continue regular processes for discussion with students about educational policies that affect them and steps to assure schools are motivating positively. This may include, also, setting recommendations for local school district and school student advisory procedures.
2. Continue analysis of longitudinal data relating school conditions to "student connectedness" and academic achievement and recommending actions on the findings.
3. Continue analysis of the impact of the increasing number of high stakes tests on student performance, drop out rates, and motivation to achieve at higher levels with recommendations on findings.
4. Develop a set of indicators and associated materials to promote supportive and nurturing school environments that promote improved student achievement.
5. Undertake analysis of the ways teacher and staff preparation and professional development programs prepare personnel to understand the impact of student-adult relations and "connections" students have with their schools on student achievement.

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Council of Chief State School Officers
One Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Suite 700
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 408-5505
Fax (202) 408-8072
www.ccsso.org

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(301) 270-6250
Fax (301) 270-7144
www.forumforyouthinvestment.org

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