Policy Brief Collection

2004

Access

Meeting the Challenges of Population Growth and the Future Demand for Postsecondary Education PDF - This policy brief tracks state-level population changes in the 18-and-older population and addresses the implications of those changes on the demand for postsecondary education over the next 15 years. Projected demographic and enrollment statistics are provided for all 50 states, and various state examples throughout the brief illustrate the higher education policy issues that will arise over the next decade. (Mario C. Martinez, Education Commission of the States, August 2004)...

Accountability

Closing Low-Performing Schools and Reopening Them as Charter Schools: The Role of the State MS Word PDF - This paper suggests that states consider incorporating into their broader restructuring efforts an option that allows policymakers and administrators – selectively and wisely – to close down chronically low-performing schools and reopen them as charter schools. It explores the challenges and potential benefits of this option, as well as the roles that states can play in its implementation. (Todd Ziebarth, Education Commission of the States, September 2004)...

Restructuring Schools in Baltimore: Policy Brief PDF - This paper presents a summary of state and local restructuring efforts in a single district: the Baltimore City Public School System (BCPSS). The state's and the district's experiences with restructuring persistently low-performing schools provide practical information to other state and district leaders charged with the arduous task of restructuring schools under NCLB. (Lauren Morando Rhim, Education Commission of the States, August 2004)...

Accountability--Sanctions

Closing Low-Performing Schools and Reopening Them as Charter Schools: The Role of the State MS Word PDF - This paper suggests that states consider incorporating into their broader restructuring efforts an option that allows policymakers and administrators – selectively and wisely – to close down chronically low-performing schools and reopen them as charter schools. It explores the challenges and potential benefits of this option, as well as the roles that states can play in its implementation. (Todd Ziebarth, Education Commission of the States, September 2004)...

State Takeovers and Reconstitutions MS Word - Many policymakers, educators and parents are deeply concerned about the performance of the nation's public schools. To ensure school districts, schools, administrators, teachers and students meet acceptable performance levels, many states and school districts are implementing a variety of accountability policies. Two of the more controversial ones are state takeovers and reconstitutions. (Todd Ziebarth, Education Commission of the States, March 2004)...

Stimulating the Supply of New Choices for Families in Light of NCLB: The Role of the State MS Word PDF - Under No Child Left Behind, districts cannot use capacity problems as an excuse for not providing seats for students who wish to transfer. For these districts, and the states that oversee their progress, it is vitally important to look at stimulating the supply of new choices so that interested families can exercise their rights to transfer. This policy brief sketches out the roles that states can play in the process. (Bryan C. Hassel and Lucy Steiner, ECS, September 2004)...

Career/Technical Education

Career and Technical Education MS Word - This briefing memo is designed to provide policymakers with an overview of the issues surrounding career and technical education in the states, including governance structures, recent legislation and research highlights. (Carl Krueger, Education Commission of the States, October 2004)...

Charter Schools

Charter School Laws and Partnerships: Expanding Opportunities and Resources MS Word - This *ECS Policy Brief* summarizes results from The Center on Educational Governance's study on the existence of provisions in state charter school laws that facilitate or inhibit the schools' ability to partner with organizations across economic sectors. The report shows that states with established charter school resource centers also tend to have more partnerships. (Education Commission of the States, April 2004)...

Closing Low-Performing Schools and Reopening Them as Charter Schools: The Role of the State MS Word PDF - This paper suggests that states consider incorporating into their broader restructuring efforts an option that allows policymakers and administrators – selectively and wisely – to close down chronically low-performing schools and reopen them as charter schools. It explores the challenges and potential benefits of this option, as well as the roles that states can play in its implementation. (Todd Ziebarth, Education Commission of the States, September 2004)...

Stimulating the Supply of New Choices for Families in Light of NCLB: The Role of the State MS Word PDF - Under No Child Left Behind, districts cannot use capacity problems as an excuse for not providing seats for students who wish to transfer. For these districts, and the states that oversee their progress, it is vitally important to look at stimulating the supply of new choices so that interested families can exercise their rights to transfer. This policy brief sketches out the roles that states can play in the process. (Bryan C. Hassel and Lucy Steiner, ECS, September 2004)...

Choice

Stimulating the Supply of New Choices for Families in Light of NCLB: The Role of the State MS Word PDF - Under No Child Left Behind, districts cannot use capacity problems as an excuse for not providing seats for students who wish to transfer. For these districts, and the states that oversee their progress, it is vitally important to look at stimulating the supply of new choices so that interested families can exercise their rights to transfer. This policy brief sketches out the roles that states can play in the process. (Bryan C. Hassel and Lucy Steiner, ECS, September 2004)...

Citizenship Education

Citizenship Education in 10 U.S. High Schools MS Word PDF - This issue paper describes 10 high schools in nine school districts across the country where students are given many opportunities to develop citizenship skills. The schools differ in the kinds of civic knowledge, skills and dispositions fostered by their programs. The paper concludes with a look at promising citizenship education strategies and a summary of policy implications for states, local governments, districts and schools. (Jeffery Miller, Education Commission of the States, February 2004)...

Citizenship Education Policy at the School District Level PDF - This report examines the "line of sight" between state policy and school practice of citizenship education through the efforts of 14 school districts. The report argues that district practice could improve by explicit articulation of the connection between the civic knowledge, skills and dispositions acquired in school on the one hand, and the obligations of citizenship on the other. (Jeffery Miller, Education Commission of the States, April 2004)...

Developing Citizenship Competencies from Kindergarten through Grade 12: A Background Paper for Policymakers and Educators PDF - This paper is designed to help policymakers and education leaders incorporate civic knowledge, skills and attitudes into policies that support effective citizenship education from the early elementary grades through high school. (Judith Torney-Puerta and Susan Vermeer, Education Commission of the States, August 2004)...

Involving Students in Governance PDF - Education is as much about fostering citizenship as it is about preparing students for college and the workplace, according to this policy brief. The brief presents the benefits of involving students in education governance and policymaking. It includes examples, challenges, questions for state and local policymakers to consider, as well as recommendations and resources. (Jeffery J. Miller, Education Commission of the States, October 2004)...

Senior and Culminating Projects PDF - This paper explores the challenges and benefits of combining service-learning with senior and culminating projects – multi-dimensional projects through which graduating high school seniors demonstrate their accumulated knowledge and skills. It provides examples of existing high-quality programs, and offers some questions for consideration by educational leaders and policymakers. (Jeffery Miller, Education Commission of the States, November 2004)...

The Role of Principals in Citizenship Education: Integrating and Sustaining Quality Efforts in American Schools MS Word PDF - This issue brief explores the role of school principals in efforts to unite civics knowledge with action and make citizenship education a vital part of their schools' functioning. The companion piece to this brief contains **excerpts from interviews with several principals** engaged in such efforts. (Linda Fredericks, Education Commission of the States, June 2004)...

Voting Age MS Word - This *ECS Issue Brief* gives an overview of the arguments for and against lowering the voting age, including recent policy actions and a list of pros and cons. (Susan Vermeer, Education Commission of the States, May 2004)...

Community Colleges

Community Colleges as Professional Development Resources for Working Teachers PDF - Community colleges can meet the needs of new professional development strategies by addressing the inflexibility and inconvenience of other programs, according to this report. It offers state examples of the community college role in professional development, as well as policy recommendations. (Gina Shkodriani, Education Commission of the States, December 2003)...

Seamless Pipeline from Two-year to Four-year Institutions for Teacher Training PDF - This report reviews the transfer and articulation of teacher candidates from two- to four-year institutions. It discusses ways to improve transfer policies such as common course numbering and common core classes, and offers state examples. (Gina Shkodriani, Education Commission of the States, December 2003)...

Teacher Education Baccalaureate Degrees at Community Colleges PDF - This paper discusses community colleges that independently offer bachelor of arts programs in education without a four-year university partnership. It includes state examples, implications, policy challenges and policy recommendations. (Gina Shkodriani, Education Commission of the States, December 2003)...

Demographics

Meeting the Challenges of Population Growth and the Future Demand for Postsecondary Education PDF - This policy brief tracks state-level population changes in the 18-and-older population and addresses the implications of those changes on the demand for postsecondary education over the next 15 years. Projected demographic and enrollment statistics are provided for all 50 states, and various state examples throughout the brief illustrate the higher education policy issues that will arise over the next decade. (Mario C. Martinez, Education Commission of the States, August 2004)...

Early Learning

NCLB: Implications for Early Learning PDF - The goal of this brief is twofold: (1) to inform early learning educators and policymakers better about specific NCLB components, and (2) to begin to discern what implications – both positive and negative – NCLB holds for the early learning field. It includes sections on adequate yearly progress, highly qualified teachers, and reading and literacy. (Kristie Kauerz and Jessica McMaken, Education Commission of the States, June 2004)...

Economic/Workforce Development

Career and Technical Education MS Word - This briefing memo is designed to provide policymakers with an overview of the issues surrounding career and technical education in the states, including governance structures, recent legislation and research highlights. (Carl Krueger, Education Commission of the States, October 2004)...

Employment

Career and Technical Education MS Word - This briefing memo is designed to provide policymakers with an overview of the issues surrounding career and technical education in the states, including governance structures, recent legislation and research highlights. (Carl Krueger, Education Commission of the States, October 2004)...

No Child Left Behind

Closing Low-Performing Schools and Reopening Them as Charter Schools: The Role of the State MS Word PDF - This paper suggests that states consider incorporating into their broader restructuring efforts an option that allows policymakers and administrators – selectively and wisely – to close down chronically low-performing schools and reopen them as charter schools. It explores the challenges and potential benefits of this option, as well as the roles that states can play in its implementation. (Todd Ziebarth, Education Commission of the States, September 2004)...

NCLB and Highly Qualified Teachers: Where We Have Been and Need To Be MS Word PDF - This *ECS Issue Brief* links ECS research in the two critical areas of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) – teaching quality and teacher working conditions in hard-to-staff schools. The paper offers recommendations on how to more effectively administer and implement NCLB, and proposes that targeted efforts be made to assist teachers in hard-to-staff schools reach the requirements of the law....

NCLB: Implications for Early Learning PDF - The goal of this brief is twofold: (1) to inform early learning educators and policymakers better about specific NCLB components, and (2) to begin to discern what implications – both positive and negative – NCLB holds for the early learning field. It includes sections on adequate yearly progress, highly qualified teachers, and reading and literacy. (Kristie Kauerz and Jessica McMaken, Education Commission of the States, June 2004)...

Stimulating the Supply of New Choices for Families in Light of NCLB: The Role of the State MS Word PDF - Under No Child Left Behind, districts cannot use capacity problems as an excuse for not providing seats for students who wish to transfer. For these districts, and the states that oversee their progress, it is vitally important to look at stimulating the supply of new choices so that interested families can exercise their rights to transfer. This policy brief sketches out the roles that states can play in the process. (Bryan C. Hassel and Lucy Steiner, ECS, September 2004)...

Participation

Meeting the Challenges of Population Growth and the Future Demand for Postsecondary Education PDF - This policy brief tracks state-level population changes in the 18-and-older population and addresses the implications of those changes on the demand for postsecondary education over the next 15 years. Projected demographic and enrollment statistics are provided for all 50 states, and various state examples throughout the brief illustrate the higher education policy issues that will arise over the next decade. (Mario C. Martinez, Education Commission of the States, August 2004)...

Postsecondary

Meeting the Challenges of Population Growth and the Future Demand for Postsecondary Education PDF - This policy brief tracks state-level population changes in the 18-and-older population and addresses the implications of those changes on the demand for postsecondary education over the next 15 years. Projected demographic and enrollment statistics are provided for all 50 states, and various state examples throughout the brief illustrate the higher education policy issues that will arise over the next decade. (Mario C. Martinez, Education Commission of the States, August 2004)...

Pre-Kindergarten

NCLB: Implications for Early Learning PDF - The goal of this brief is twofold: (1) to inform early learning educators and policymakers better about specific NCLB components, and (2) to begin to discern what implications – both positive and negative – NCLB holds for the early learning field. It includes sections on adequate yearly progress, highly qualified teachers, and reading and literacy. (Kristie Kauerz and Jessica McMaken, Education Commission of the States, June 2004)...

Readiness

NCLB: Implications for Early Learning PDF - The goal of this brief is twofold: (1) to inform early learning educators and policymakers better about specific NCLB components, and (2) to begin to discern what implications – both positive and negative – NCLB holds for the early learning field. It includes sections on adequate yearly progress, highly qualified teachers, and reading and literacy. (Kristie Kauerz and Jessica McMaken, Education Commission of the States, June 2004)...

Service-Learning/Community Service

Citizenship Education Policy at the School District Level PDF - This report examines the "line of sight" between state policy and school practice of citizenship education through the efforts of 14 school districts. The report argues that district practice could improve by explicit articulation of the connection between the civic knowledge, skills and dispositions acquired in school on the one hand, and the obligations of citizenship on the other. (Jeffery Miller, Education Commission of the States, April 2004)...

Developing Citizenship Competencies from Kindergarten through Grade 12: A Background Paper for Policymakers and Educators PDF - This paper is designed to help policymakers and education leaders incorporate civic knowledge, skills and attitudes into policies that support effective citizenship education from the early elementary grades through high school. (Judith Torney-Puerta and Susan Vermeer, Education Commission of the States, August 2004)...

Involving Students in Governance PDF - Education is as much about fostering citizenship as it is about preparing students for college and the workplace, according to this policy brief. The brief presents the benefits of involving students in education governance and policymaking. It includes examples, challenges, questions for state and local policymakers to consider, as well as recommendations and resources. (Jeffery J. Miller, Education Commission of the States, October 2004)...

Senior and Culminating Projects PDF - This paper explores the challenges and benefits of combining service-learning with senior and culminating projects – multi-dimensional projects through which graduating high school seniors demonstrate their accumulated knowledge and skills. It provides examples of existing high-quality programs, and offers some questions for consideration by educational leaders and policymakers. (Jeffery Miller, Education Commission of the States, November 2004)...

The Role of Principals in Citizenship Education: Integrating and Sustaining Quality Efforts in American Schools MS Word PDF - This issue brief explores the role of school principals in efforts to unite civics knowledge with action and make citizenship education a vital part of their schools' functioning. The companion piece to this brief contains **excerpts from interviews with several principals** engaged in such efforts. (Linda Fredericks, Education Commission of the States, June 2004)...

Teaching Quality

Alternative Certification MS Word PDF - The limited amount of research on whether alternative certification programs are equal, better or worse than traditional programs is inconclusive. What does seem apparent, however, is that alternative certification programs have the ability to recruit and deliver more minority, male and older teachers into urban and rural areas. With federal programs providing increasing support and oversight, and organizations such as NCATE accrediting community college programs, alternative certification programs are not only evolving, but also gaining wider acceptance. (Marga Mikulecky, Gina Shkodriani and Abby Wilner, Education Commission of the States, December 2004)...

Community Colleges as Professional Development Resources for Working Teachers PDF - Community colleges can meet the needs of new professional development strategies by addressing the inflexibility and inconvenience of other programs, according to this report. It offers state examples of the community college role in professional development, as well as policy recommendations. (Gina Shkodriani, Education Commission of the States, December 2003)...

NCLB and Highly Qualified Teachers: Where We Have Been and Need To Be MS Word PDF - This *ECS Issue Brief* links ECS research in the two critical areas of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) – teaching quality and teacher working conditions in hard-to-staff schools. The paper offers recommendations on how to more effectively administer and implement NCLB, and proposes that targeted efforts be made to assist teachers in hard-to-staff schools reach the requirements of the law....

Seamless Pipeline from Two-year to Four-year Institutions for Teacher Training PDF - This report reviews the transfer and articulation of teacher candidates from two- to four-year institutions. It discusses ways to improve transfer policies such as common course numbering and common core classes, and offers state examples. (Gina Shkodriani, Education Commission of the States, December 2003)...

Teacher Education Baccalaureate Degrees at Community Colleges PDF - This paper discusses community colleges that independently offer bachelor of arts programs in education without a four-year university partnership. It includes state examples, implications, policy challenges and policy recommendations. (Gina Shkodriani, Education Commission of the States, December 2003)...

The Impact of Mentoring on Teacher Retention: What the Research Says MS Word - This report's primary objective is to provide policymakers, educators and researchers with a reliable assessment of what is known, and not known, about the effectiveness of teacher induction programs. In particular, this review focuses on the impact of induction and mentoring programs on teacher retention. (Richard Ingersoll and Jeffrey Kralik, ECS, February 2004)...

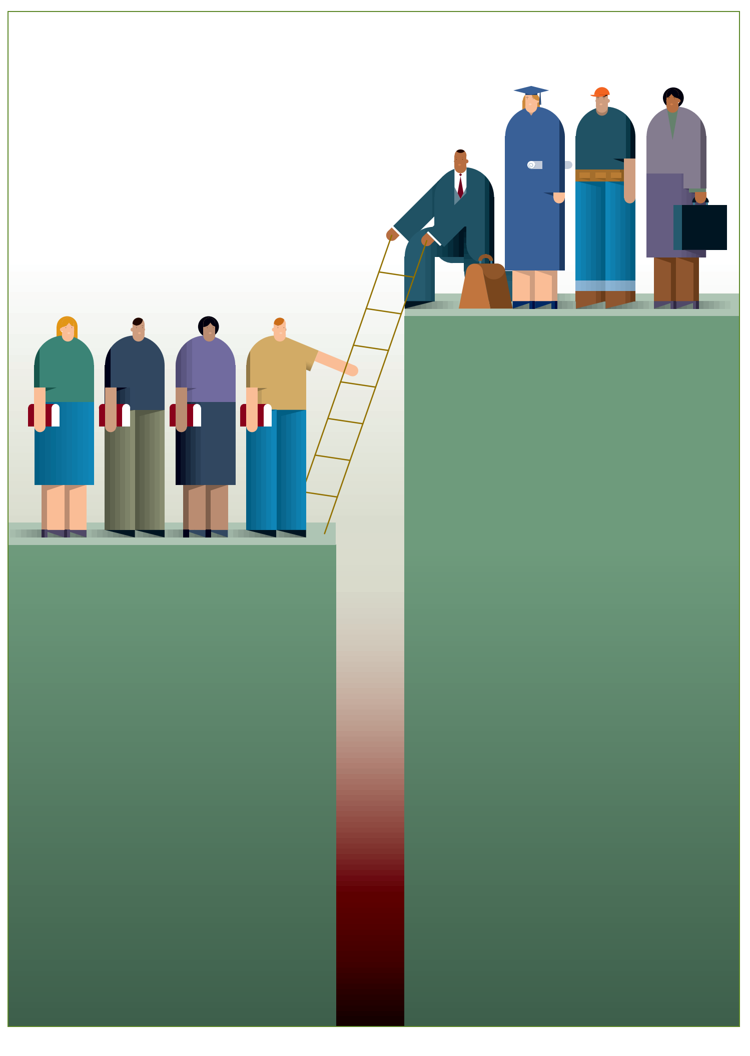
Vouchers

Early Lessons from Colorado's Voucher Experience PDF - Colorado is the first state to enact a school voucher law in the wake of the landmark ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court in favor of school vouchers. This report describes Colorado's voucher program, and then looks at what state leaders on either side of the issue hope it will accomplish – or fear it will lead to. The report also examines the implementation and evaluation processes being put into place for the Colorado program, and concludes with how evaluations might converge with voucher debates in the future. (Alex Medler and Todd Ziebarth, Education Commission of the States, May 2004)...

Meeting the Challenges of **Population Growth** and the Future Demand for **Postsecondary Education**

Considerations for State Higher Education Policy

By Mario C. Martinez



Education Commission of the States

Center for Community College Policy

August 2004

Meeting the Challenges of **Population Growth** and the Future Demand for **Postsecondary Education**

Considerations for State Higher Education Policy

By Mario C. Martinez

Abstract

This policy brief tracks state-level population changes in the 18-and-older population and addresses the implications of those changes on the demand for postsecondary education over the next 15 years. Changes in the 18- to 24-year-old and 25-and-older populations will vary widely across states. These variations raise questions about how states should focus resources to provide the postsecondary services that will be needed to expand access, improve educational attainment and produce a competitive workforce. Projected demographic and enrollment statistics are provided for all 50 states, and various state examples throughout the brief illustrate the higher education policy issues that will arise over the next decade.

Introduction

Over the last 30 years, enrollments in the nation's colleges and universities have steadily risen. In fact, the demand for all forms of education and training beyond high school has never been higher. Now that a high school diploma is no longer seen as the ticket to employment and higher earnings, the demand for postsecondary education[1] can only be expected to increase in the years ahead. The projected growth in the overall size of the 18-and-older population across all 50 states will further increase the demand for postsecondary education. States that successfully provide more postsecondary services or tailor those services to meet the needs of their populations can expect the percentage of college-educated citizens in their states to increase. Conversely, the percentage of college-educated people will decline in those states that are unable to expand access to meet projected demand.

Most state legislators realize how important postsecondary education is to the future of their states. In two national surveys conducted over the last decade,[2] policymakers said that raising educational attainment is inextricably tied to their states' ability to (1) strengthen and diversify state and local economies and (2) prepare and train a high-skill, high-wage workforce. There also is evidence that improvements in educational attainment lead to other public and private benefits, such as increased civic participation, less dependency on social programs and a reduction in violent crimes.

Policymakers and college leaders will need to work together to meet state priorities and the growing demand for postsecondary education. The fulfillment of these ends in any state is dependent on the existing postsecondary capacity in that state, which is a product of the number of postsecondary institutions, the mix of two- and four-year and public and private institutions, and the services the institutions provide. This capacity, then, is directly related to the number of spaces that are available for students to attend college. The existing capacity in some states may be sufficient to meet state priorities and future demand; in other states, it may not be.

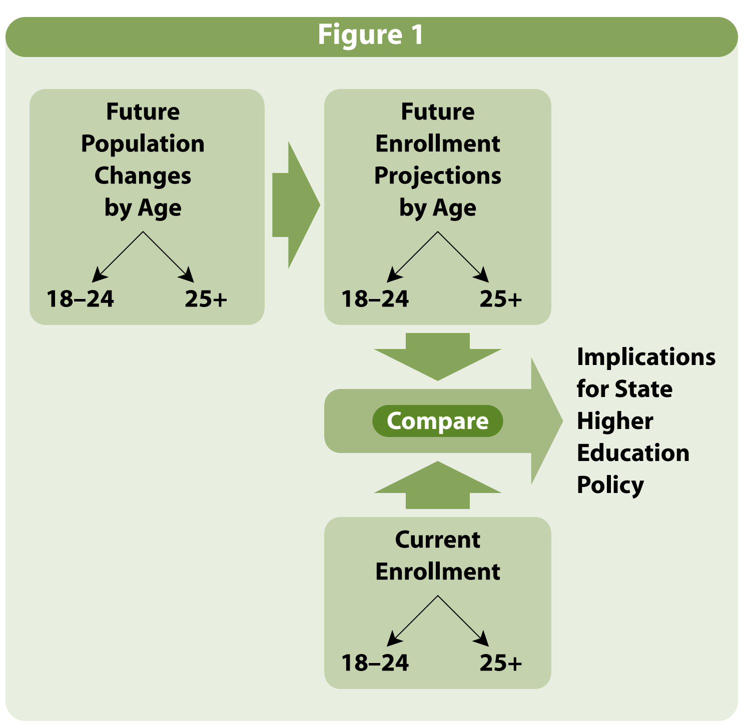
State Demographics and Postsecondary Enrollment

State age-group demographic changes over the next 10 years will affect the future demand for postsecondary education, policy decisions about funding and capacity, and perhaps even the priorities that states pursue. Demographics by age group are reasonably predictable and as such can inform state higher education policy.

The Education Commission of the States (ECS) began the process of helping states think about future demographic changes with the release of its *Closing the College Participation Gap* study in fall 2003. The study relied on U.S. Census Bureau statistics to calculate and rank current state-by-state participation rates for the two college-eligible populations: 18- to 24-year-olds, and those 25 and older. Census population projections and participation rates were used to project national and state postsecondary enrollment demand for 2015 for both of these age groups. The ECS project compared current enrollments with projected enrollments to inform states of the coming demand for postsecondary education. In addition, the study projected future enrollment demand assuming states improve their participation rates over current levels.

This policy brief describes how state-level leaders can make use of these and other data elements from the *Closing the College Participation Gap* study to help plan for projected postsecondary enrollments. The brief has four objectives, which are outlined below and shown in Figure 1:

- Examine broad population changes between now and 2015 for each state and the nation for two age groups: 18- to 24-year-olds, and those 25 and older
- Describe future enrollment projections for the two age groups, given the projected population changes by age group
- Compare the future enrollment projections by age group with current statistics on enrollment by age group and enrollment by sector (two- or four-year institutions)
- Discuss higher education policies that might help states meet future enrollment projections and state priorities, given the unique contexts of the states.



Changing Populations by 2015

A record 17.3 million people in the United States ages 18 and older are enrolled in some form of postsecondary education, according to the 2000 Decennial Census. If all states simply maintain their current participation rates, an additional 2.3 million students will enroll in college by 2015 — an increase of nearly 13% over 2000 levels. Demographic growth alone will drive this increase. If states expand access to higher education, both improved participation rates and demographic growth will push enrollments even higher. Participation rates across the nation will have to improve to prevent the United States from slipping further behind other industrialized nations on measures of educational achievement.[3]

The total number of people 18 and older will increase in every state by 2015, but growth rates by state for 18- to 24-year-olds and those 25 and older will vary widely. Table 1 shows the 50 states and their projected percentage demographic growth rates for 18- to 24-year-olds and those 25 and older.

In some states, the number of 18- to 24-year olds will increase, while in others it will decrease. For those states expecting a decrease, the total adult population

Table 1

General Population Changes, 2000–15

Age group: 18–24		Age group: 25+	
Alaska	**54.4%**	**Idaho**	**35.4%**
California	**40.8%**	**Wyoming**	**33.8%**
Hawaii	**36.0%**	**Utah**	**30.1%**
Maryland	**26.2%**	**New Mexico**	**27.9%**
New Mexico	**24.7%**	**Montana**	**26.4%**
New Jersey	**21.2%**	**Washington**	**26.0%**
Connecticut	**21.1%**	**Oregon**	**24.7%**
Texas	**20.7%**	**Hawaii**	**23.2%**
New Hampshire	**19.1%**	**Alaska**	**21.6%**
Massachusetts	**17.5%**	**Florida**	**20.5%**
Virginia	**17.2%**	**Arkansas**	**18.2%**
Wyoming	**16.7%**	**Texas**	**18.2%**
Florida	**16.2%**	**Colorado**	**17.8%**
Washington	**14.5%**	**Nevada**	**17.2%**
Georgia	**12.4%**	**Arizona**	**17.1%**
New York	**11.3%**	**Tennessee**	**16.9%**
Arizona	**10.4%**	**Georgia**	**16.9%**
Tennessee	9.4%	**Alabama**	**16.9%**
Alabama	8.5%	**South Dakota**	**16.9%**
Delaware	7.6%	**California**	**16.7%**
Colorado	7.5%	**Oklahoma**	**15.9%**
Illinois	6.8%	**North Carolina**	**15.9%**
Louisiana	5.7%	**Virginia**	**15.3%**
Idaho	5.1%	**New Hampshire**	**14.8%**
Nevada	5.0%	**South Carolina**	**14.7%**
Maine	4.2%	**North Dakota**	**14.4%**
North Carolina	4.2%	**Mississippi**	**14.0%**
Missouri	4.0%	**Kansas**	**13.8%**
Vermont	3.7%	**Vermont**	**13.3%**
Kansas	3.2%	**Minnesota**	**13.0%**
Ohio	2.6%	**Nebraska**	**12.9%**
South Carolina	2.4%	**Maryland**	**12.6%**
Oregon	2.3%	**Louisiana**	**12.2%**
Pennsylvania	1.9%	**Missouri**	**11.8%**
Rhode Island	1.8%	**Maine**	**11.6%**
Minnesota	1.6%	**Kentucky**	**11.3%**
Michigan	0.7%	**Wisconsin**	**11.2%**
Oklahoma	0.3%	**Indiana**	**10.6%**
Indiana	0.0%	**Delaware**	**10.1%**
Utah	–0.4%	Iowa	8.3%
Nebraska	–0.8%	West Virginia	8.1%
Wisconsin	–1.3%	New Jersey	7.1%
Montana	–1.4%	Ohio	5.6%
North Dakota	–3.0%	Illinois	4.5%
South Dakota	–3.1%	Connecticut	4.3%
Kentucky	–4.3%	Pennsylvania	4.0%
Arkansas	–4.8%	Massachusetts	3.6%
Mississippi	–5.9%	Rhode Island	2.8%
Iowa	–10.3%	Michigan	2.7%
West Virginia	–11.3%	New York	–1.3%

will still grow because of the expected increase in the number of people 25 and older. For example, Wisconsin's 1.3% decrease in the 18- to 24-year-old population will not result in a loss in the 18-and-older population because the 25-and-older population is projected to grow 11.2%. Even in West Virginia, where the 18- to 24-year-old population will decrease by 11.3%, the 8.1% growth of the 25-and-older population will still result in a total increase in the number of adults 18 and older in the 2015 population. In every state except New York, the 25-and-older population will increase.

Table 1 divides each age group into two categories, based on projected growth. States expecting double-digit population growth (10% or greater) for either age group are shown in bold. Thirty-nine states will experience double-digit growth in their 25-and-older populations. The growth in the 18- to 24-year-old population has captured much of the nation's attention regarding education, largely because those who attend postsecondary education from this age group are typically considered traditional students. Table 1 suggests that the educational needs of the 25-and-older population will require at least as much if not more attention. Those who attend postsecondary education from the 25-and-older population are often referred to as adult students.

States expecting double-digit growth for a particular age group can be considered "high-growth" states for that age group. States expecting less than 10% growth for a particular age group can be considered "low-growth" states for that age group. A state with low growth for a particular age group can have negative growth, which means that the number of projected individuals in this age group is projected to decrease. Every state falls into one of the two categories for each age group, high or low. This means there are four possible scenarios to describe a state's population changes relative to the two college-eligible populations:

- High growth for the 18- to 24-year-old population; high growth for the 25-and-older population
- High growth for the 18- to 24-year-old population; low growth for the 25-and-older population
- Low growth for the 18- to 24-year-old population; low growth for the 25-and-older population
- Low growth for the 18- to 24-year-old population; high growth for the 25-and-older population.

Figure 2 maps the population changes for the two age groups of interest for all 50 states using the four scenarios. The majority of states will experience high growth in the 25-and-older population and low growth in the 18- to 24-year-old population. The aging of the baby-boom generation has received much attention in

the popular press, and Figure 2 shows that a significant number of states may want to take into account this phenomenon as they plan for meeting the educational needs of their future populations.

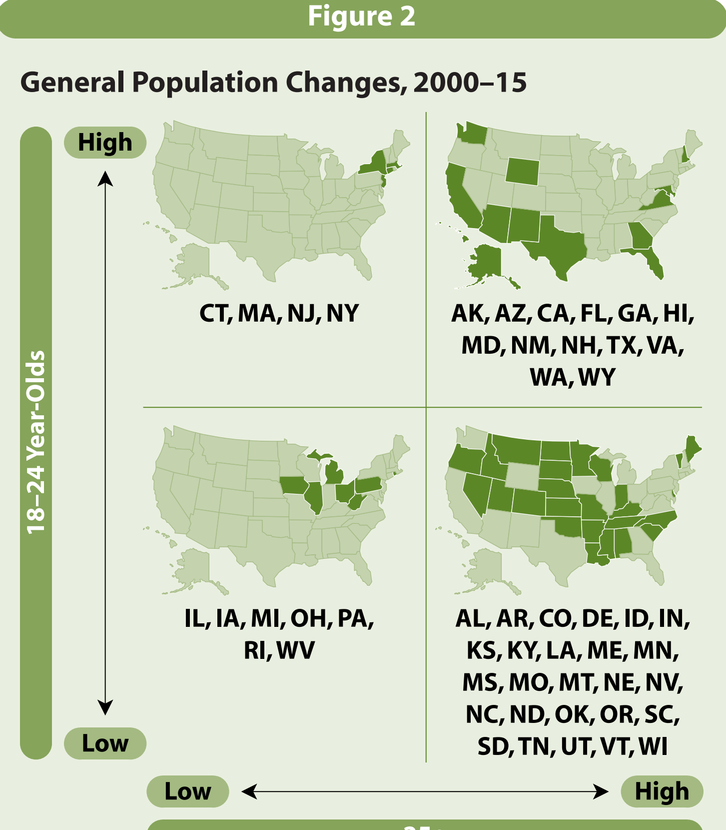
Several regional patterns are noticeable in Figure 2. Thirteen states will experience high growth for both age groups, the majority of which are located in the western half of the United States. The four states that will experience high growth in the 18- to 24-year-old population but low growth in the 25-and-older population are all northeastern states. Four of the seven states projected to have low growth for both age groups are in the Midwest. Even with low projected growth for both age groups, however, the total number of people 18 and older will still increase for all seven of these states.

A more detailed look at a select group of states illustrates the dramatic variations in population changes by age group among states. As the graph in Figure 3 shows, the extent of age-group population changes varies by state — even for states that are similarly categorized in Figure 2. For example, high growth is projected for both age groups in California and Florida, but in Florida the growth rate for the 25-and-older population will outpace the growth rate for 18- to 24-year-olds. In California, the growth rate for 18- to 24-year-olds will outpace the growth rate for the 25-and-older population.

The population changes by age group, when viewed through the lens of a table, map or graph, reveal complementary but different details about the age groups. Population changes by age group, when combined with existing statistics on postsecondary participation, can also provide a data-driven view of how future enrollments are likely to change.

Demographic Changes and Enrollment Demand

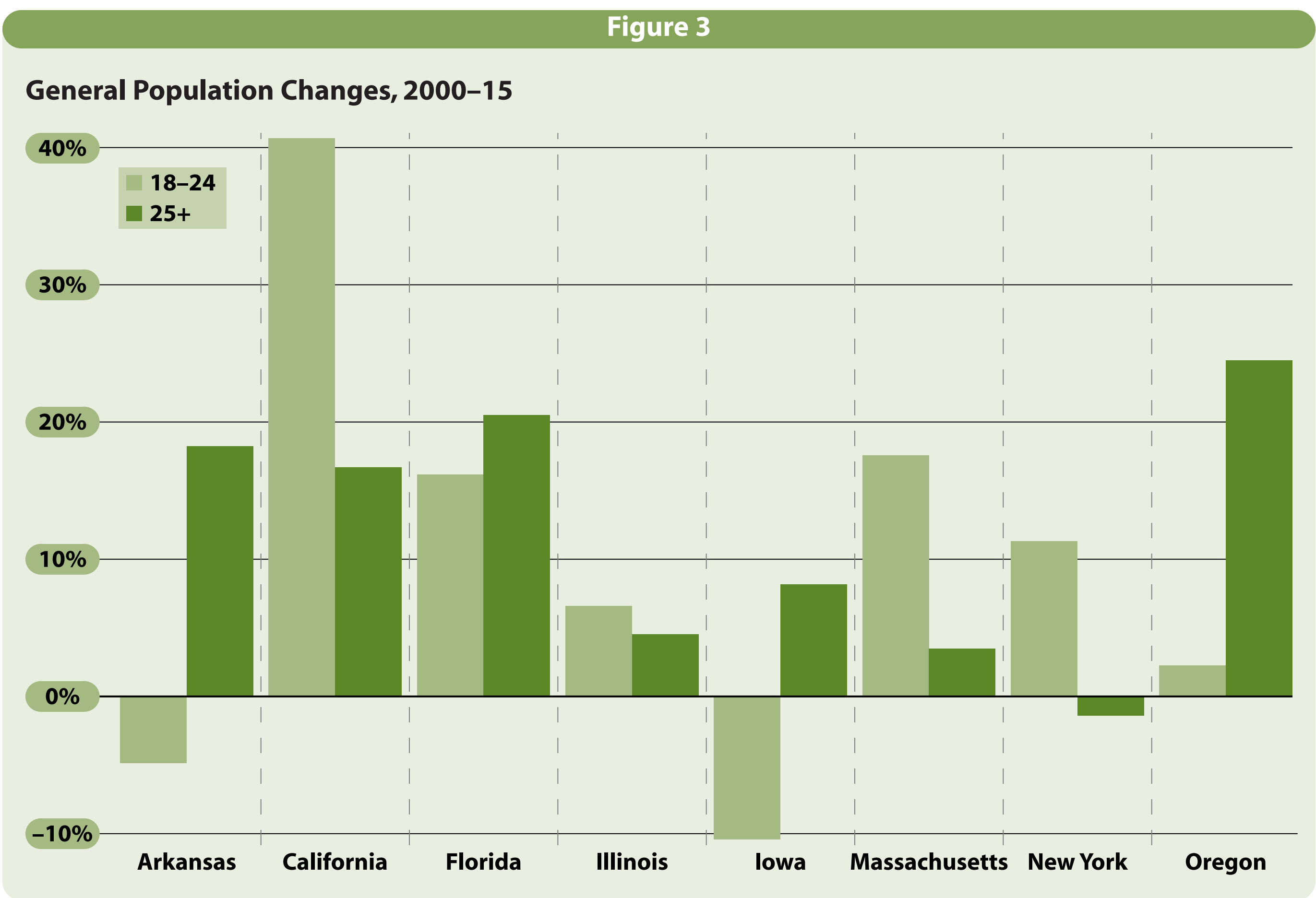
Population changes in either the 18- to-24-year-old or 25-and-older age group generally translate into changes in demand for postsecondary education from the corresponding age group. For example, states expecting an increase in the 18- to 24-year-old population should expect an increase in traditional student enrollment. This also assumes that states maintain their existing participation rates for this age group. Conversely, a decrease in the size of the18- to 24-year-old population should result in a decrease in traditional student enrollment, again assuming that state participation rates remain the same. Enrollment predictions for the 25-and-older population would follow similar patterns for adult students, if states maintain participation rates for this age group.



Several regional patterns are noticeable in Figure 2. Thirteen states will experience high growth for both age groups, the majority of which are located in the western half of the United States. The four states that will experience high growth in the 18- to 24-year-old population but low growth in the 25-and-older population are all northeastern states. Four of the seven states projected to have low growth for both age groups are in the Midwest. Even with low projected growth for both age groups, however, the total number of people 18 and older will still increase for all seven of these states.

Of the 17.3 million students 18 and older enrolled in the nation's colleges and universities, 53% are traditional college-age students, while 47% are adult students. This enrollment mix will not change on a national level, given that the growth in the 18- to 24-year-old and 25-and-older populations will both be near 13% and assuming states maintain their existing participation rates. There are a number of states for which population projections by age group will not be similar, as was shown in Table 1. For these states, it is likely that the proportion of the traditional student enrollment will shift relative to the 25-and-older student enrollment.

Table 2 shows the proportion of traditional student enrollment for the eight states identified in Figure 3. The eight states in Table 2 represent different regions of the country, and they vary in terms of their projected population and enrollment changes by age group.



The proportion of traditional student enrollment is the number of 18- to 24-year-olds enrolled in postsecondary education compared to the total number of students 18 and older enrolled in postsecondary education. This means that the proportion statistic in Table 2 is the percentage of traditional students enrolled in postsecondary education relative to the entire student population for each state. The student enrollment projections by age group used to calculate the enrollment proportions are from the ECS' *Closing the College Participation Gap* study. These projected enrollments assume that states will maintain existing participation rates for adult and traditional students. If states improve participation rates for one or both age groups, then the absolute number of students enrolled would increase and the age-group enrollment proportions would likely change.

Table 2 also shows enrollment trends against population changes for the 18- to-24-year-old age group only. The proportion of adult student enrollment is implied from the proportion of traditional student enrollment for each state. For example, in Arkansas, the 18- to-24-year-old population is actually projected to decline in 2015 (last column on the table). If Arkansas maintains its current participation rates for each age group, the proportion of traditional students enrolled in postsecondary education will decrease from 58.8% to 53.5%, as shown in Table 2. This means that adult students will represent 46.5% (100%-53.5%) of the state's enrollments in 2015, compared to 41.2% in 2000. The enrollment trend by age group in New York is opposite that of Arkansas: the 18- to-24-year-old population is growing and the 25-and-older population is declining. Traditional-age students are projected to represent a growing proportion of total enrollments in the state, from 53.8% to 56.8%.

It is possible that the 18- to-24-year-old population will increase in some states, yet the proportion of traditional students will decrease. The proportion of adult students will increase faster because the 25-and-older population for these states is projected to grow much faster than the 18- to-24-year-old population. Oregon is one such state.

As shown in Table 2, in Oregon, the 18- to-24-year-old population is going to increase slightly (2.3%), yet the proportion of enrollment for traditional students will decline. The bar graph in Figure 3 explains this result for Oregon, showing the 25-and-older population growing at a much faster rate than the 18- to-24-year-old population. Figure 3 shows that Florida's age-group growth patterns are similar to

Oregon's, although the difference in growth between the two age groups in Florida is not as dramatic as in Oregon.

The projected age-group population changes for 18- to-24-year-olds and those 25 and older will influence future enrollment demand. As shown in Table 2, the general impact of age-group population changes on future state enrollments can be established within reasonable parameters. This information can then be used to think about which institutions and services will best meet future demand.

Where Are They Enrolled? Where Will They Want To Enroll?

Any state's current capacity to provide postsecondary education is a combination of history, demand, state resource availability and past decisions by policymakers and higher education leaders. It is not easy to assess whether specific institutions are fully maximizing their existing capacity, and different stakeholders within a single state will predictably offer different perspectives on this issue. An examination of current enrollment trends, however, provides an indication of where, over time, states have built capacity to provide postsecondary services. In some states, such as Washington and California, the majority of state postsecondary enrollments are in the two-year sector. In other states, such as North Dakota and Massachusetts, the majority of state postsecondary enrollments are in the four-year sector.

Future enrollment demand by age group is one tool that states can use to think about where they should build capacity. States expecting large population increases in the 18- to-24-year-old population may focus their capacity-building efforts on a different sector than states expecting large population increases in the 25-and-older population. Historically, 18- to-24-year-old enrollment is more heavily concentrated at four-year institutions, while students 25 and older tend to enroll in two-year institutions. Traditional students constitute 61% of four-year enrollments and 49.7% of two-year enrollments. Those 25 and older show the opposite pattern, constituting 44.4% of enrollments at two-year institutions and 35.9% at four-year institutions . In general, these data suggest a state expecting dramatic increases in its 25-and-older population might expect more demand at two-year institutions[4] than four-year institutions; a state expecting a dramatic increase in its 18- to-24-year-old population might expect more demand at four-year institutions than two-year institutions.

Table 2

Statistics for the 18–24 Age Group

	Proportion of Enrollment		Population Change
State	**2000**	**2015**	**2000–15**
Arkansas	**58.8%**	**53.5%**	**–4.8%**
California	**46.7%**	**51.3%**	**40.8%**
Florida	**47.6%**	**46.7%**	**16.2%**
Illinois	**52.1%**	**52.6%**	**6.8%**
Iowa	**63.9%**	**59.5%**	**–10.3%**
Massachusetts	**54.3%**	**57.4%**	**17.5%**
New York	**53.8%**	**56.8%**	**11.3%**
Oregon	**49.3%**	**44.4%**	**2.3%**
Nation	**52.9%**	**52.9%**	**13.0%**

Table 3

Projected Enrollment Changes by Age Group Versus Current Enrollment by Sector

	Enrollment Change 2000–15		Percent of Enrollment, 2000	
State	**2000**	**2015**	**4-Year Sector**	**2-Year Sector**
Arkansas	**58.8%**	**53.5%**	**70.4%**	**29.6%**
California	**46.7%**	**51.3%**	**37.4%**	**62.6%**
Florida	**47.6%**	**46.7%**	**52.7%**	**47.3%**
Illinois	**52.1%**	**52.6%**	**53.4%**	**46.6%**
Iowa	**63.9%**	**59.5%**	**64.0%**	**36.0%**
Massachusetts	**54.3%**	**57.4%**	**79.9%**	**20.1%**
New York	**53.8%**	**56.8%**	**74.1%**	**25.9%**
Oregon	**49.3%**	**44.4%**	**53.7%**	**46.3%**
Nation	**52.9%**	**52.9%**	**61.2%**	**38.8%**

Table 3 shows the projected enrollment changes by age group versus current enrollment by sector for the eight states from Table 2. The two- and four-year enrollment percentages include both public and private institutions. A national average is provided for the breakdown of enrollment by sector so that states may assess whether they tend to over- or under-emphasize a particular sector relative to other states.

Projected Enrollment Changes by Age Group Versus Current Enrollment by Sector

Nationally, the percentage change in enrollment for traditional and adult students is expected to grow at approximately the same rate, 11.5% and 11.3%, respectively. Given the comparable rate of national growth in enrollments by age group, it is reasonable to assume that the national proportion of enrollment by age group for the two-year sector (38.8%) and four-year sector (61.2%) also will stay the same in 2015.

Projected enrollment changes by age group for some states will vary from the national averages, however, raising the possibility that the future enrollment proportions by sector also will change. Three states in Table 3 — Arkansas, California and Iowa — stand out as examples. In Arkansas and Iowa, enrollments in two-year institutions currently fall below the national average, at 29.6% and 36%, respectively. At the same time, both states are expected a see a decline in traditional student enrollment and an increase in adult student enrollment, as shown in Table 3. The result in Arkansas: adult students will constitute 46.5% of the student population in 2015 compared to 41.2% in 2000. The pattern is similar in Iowa, where the proportion of adult students is projected to increase from 36.1% to 40.5%. These two states may have to more fully utilize the two-year sector to meet the future demand of the growing adult student population.

California, based on the data presented in Table 3, exhibits a different pattern of projected growth, but like Arkansas and Iowa, it also appears to have a misalignment between future enrollment changes and its current capacity emphasis. California currently relies heavily on its two-year sector, but the growth in traditional student enrollment is projected to increase dramatically, by 29%, compared to a 14.3% growth rate for adult student enrollment. Although California's adult enrollment will increase in absolute numbers, it will decrease as a proportion of total student enrollment, from 53.3% in 2000 to 48.7% in 2015. California's disproportionate reliance on the two-year sector, in the face of astronomical growth in future demand from traditional students, raises many questions about where the state might need to build capacity to meet future needs.

Every state will have a different strategy for accommodating changing enrollments. Shifting enrollment by age group is one important factor that state leaders should consider as they attempt to align capacity with future student needs. The context of each state also will influence decisions about which policies will best maximize access to postsecondary education while helping states reach their goals. Policy options are best informed by demographics and state context, which is the topic of the next section.

Demographics, State Context and Higher Education Policy

In this section, three states representing different regions of the country — Arkansas, California and Massachusetts — serve as case studies to illustrate how future enrollment shifts and state context can inform higher education policy. These three states exhibit some variation in terms of either projected enrollment shifts or where they currently emphasize capacity.

The case studies are for illustration purposes and are necessarily abbreviated for inclusion in this brief. As such, the policy discussions that accompany the case studies primarily focus on the issue of maximizing access through capacity, against the backdrop of state context and demographic-driven enrollment shifts. There are undoubtedly additional policy options that must address capacity, demographics and other factors unique to each state.

For example, some states may focus on generous financial aid packages that can be used inside or outside the state, while other states may favor reciprocity arrangements with neighboring states to accommodate growing enrollments. In a select number of states, there is little projected change in adult and traditional student enrollments, which may mean that higher education policy in these states changes less dramatically than in other states. The bottom line: these abbreviated case studies are intended to be a springboard for conversation rather than a definition of absolute policy solutions for the states under study.

Arkansas

As in many southern states, Arkansas' poverty rate and median family income are both below the national average. The state is more rural than the average U.S. state and the population less educated. Arkansas' projected population shifts also are representative of many southern states. Double-digit growth in the 25-

and-older population likely will be accompanied by a decline in the 18- to-24-year-old population. These projections will create a shifting dynamic in the profile of students seeking postsecondary education in the future. The current focus of Arkansas's higher education system is on enrollment in the four-year sector — which, at over 70%, is well above the national average of 61.2%.

Aside from the projected enrollment growth among adult students, there are specific indicators suggesting that Arkansas look to the expansion or development of its two-year sector as a strategic point of emphasis to accommodate future demand for poststecondary education. Arkansas, compared to all states, already has the second-lowest percentage of college-degree holders relative to its 25-and-older population, and the second-lowest participation rate of adult students in postsecondary education. The percentage of the population 25 and older without a high school diploma is 24.7%, compared to the national average of 19.6%.

Arkansas demonstrates perhaps as much as any state the need to examine current educational statistics for its population against where it wishes to go over the next decade. This information, along with the coming population shifts, should be examined against the state's current capacity to provide postsecondary education.

First, several state indicators on educational attainment and participation suggest that postsecondary education and training for those 25 and older already is an important need. As the 25-and-older population continues to grow relative to the 18- to-24-year-old population, there will be an increasing number of adult students. Since the state clearly relies on the four-year sector to provide its existing postsecondary services, the major question for the state is: Are existing four-year institutions positioned to offer the services that existing and future students 25 and older require?

As the 25-and-older population grows, the challenge for Arkansas will be to build capacity at those institutions best at offering services that encourage adults to engage in education and training beyond high school. It may be that four-year institutions play a significant role in that process, as they prepare for declines in traditional student enrollment and growing adult student demand. Another option is for legislators to begin implementing policies that allow two-year institutions to play a more visible role in the delivery of postsecondary services.

State leaders, informed by state context, demographics and current capacity, are best positioned to decide whether enrollment at four-year institutions should be maintained or resources should shift to the two-year sector. Perhaps the particular sector is not as important as focusing on the types of postsecondary services that will meet the needs of future students. An important component to this issue is which institutions are able and willing to provide such services.

California

California's projected percentage growth in the general population and for enrollment for both college-eligible age groups is among the highest in the nation, a statistic even more remarkable given that the state is already the most populous in the country, at 34 million people. California also was the destination for one-quarter of new immigrants who arrived in this country between 1990 and 2000. The continued influx of immigrants will certainly contribute to growth in California's 18- to-24-year-old population, an important contextual factor that will impact the demand for educational services across the state.

California's future higher education policies will have to purposefully account for factors such as growth and immigration if the state is to maintain its standing in various educational statistics. For example, California's current participation rate for adult students leads the nation, at 6.4% — well above the national average of 4.5%. The state's 35.4% participation rate for traditional students is slightly above the 34% national average as well. Educational attainment levels of the 25-and-older population is higher than the national average, as is the median family income, but the state also has a higher poverty rate than the national average.

The success of California's future higher education policies will likely be judged on how well the state meets the needs of a population that varies widely in terms of its preparation level and ability to pay for postsecondary education. California's three-tier system already provides a number of avenues to accommodate a diversity of students, but more capacity will be needed if the state is to meet its economic goals and maintain a higher-than-average percentage of college-educated adults.

One indication of California's strategy for meeting future demand is the recent passage of a $2.3 billion bond measure for higher education construction projects through 2006. Proportionally, the California Community Colleges will receive the majority of these monies,[5] indicating that capacity-building efforts will occur in all three of the state's systems but more so in the community college sector. It appears the growing number of traditional students will be channeled into the two-year sector. California already relies disproportionately on the two-year sector (62.6% enroll-

ments statewide versus 38.8% enrollments nationally), so competing policy alternatives might consider whether more capacity-building efforts should favor four-year institutions.

California's state context and demographic growth will certainly drive capacity-building efforts beyond the recent bond measure. Additional questions to help strengthen future policy decisions might focus on future student needs: Is the growth in each sector going to align with the type of education future students seek and need? Will the state purposely channel students into two-year institutions as a short-term strategy to relieve cost pressures? Should the state continue to increase its two-year enrollments relative to four-year institutions, and what are the long-term implications of doing so?

Massachusetts

By a number of measures, Massachusetts is one of the most educated states in the nation. It has the second-highest participation rate in the nation for traditional students, at 44.1%. Participation among adult students also is higher than average, and poverty and dropout rates are lower than the national average. No state in the nation utilizes the private four-year sector as much as Massachusetts, and no state has a higher proportion of its enrollment in four-year institutions, public and private combined. Educational attainment and median income in Massachusetts are among the highest in the nation, as is the percentage of students who are enrolled in graduate programs.

All these factors help explain why the state enrolls a disproportionate percentage of students in four-year institutions — and there is no reason to expect significant changes given 2015 demographic projections. The proportion of traditional students enrolled in higher education in the state is slightly higher than the national average, and that proportion will likely increase as 18- to-24-year-olds become a larger proportion of the 18-and-older population in 2015. The 25-and-older population also is expected to grow, by 3.6% — substantially smaller than the 17.5% increase for 18- to-24-year-olds.

From a policy perspective, it appears that Massachusetts must assure continued capacity in its public four-year institutions to provide access to its resident 18- to-24-year-old population. The state's efforts to maximize accessibility may need to focus on maintaining student tuition and fees at acceptable levels. If capacity is not added, student tuition and fees can be expected to skyrocket for two reasons: increased demand from traditional students and limited space.

Massachusetts may consider another option to help accommodate its projected growth: draw more heavily on the private sector to help meet public priorities. The private sector in the state accounts for over half of the state's current enrollment. States such as New Jersey and Pennsylvania continue to use private-sector capacity to meet public needs, and an emphasis on similar strategies may be an important consideration for Massachusetts in the future.

Finally, though Massachusetts has high educational attainment levels among its 25-and-older population, a significant percentage of this population still participates in some form of postsecondary education. A percentage of these adult students are in graduate programs, while another percentage accounts for enrollment in the state's community colleges. As the state looks to ensure access in the future, two-year institutions will certainly continue providing the many services typically affiliated with community colleges, and they may also serve as a low-cost entry option for some traditional and adult students.

Conclusion

Some states may require only minor adjustments in their current higher education policies, as they strive to meet state goals and citizen needs. Other states will see dramatic shifts in enrollment demand between the two college-eligible age groups, and the services that future students seek may not be aligned with the types of services states currently emphasize.

In any state, there are a number of factors that can influence the types of postsecondary services that adult and traditional students will demand in the future. A state cannot possibly account for every factor and predict the precise impact of that factor. Data and information, however, can provide guidelines that help states construct a meaningful dialogue so the development of higher education policy does not take place in what has been referred to as a "policy vacuum."[6]

In the end, each state may devise its own policies to improve access and educational attainment levels in the future. The public and private benefits that will result from such improvements will certainly include a competitive workforce that can help diversify and strengthen state economies. It is for this reason that the lure of short-term solutions must be balanced with a long-term perspective on state priorities; a focus on only low cost and convenience may prove to be a future liability.

Endnotes

[1] The term postsecondary education follows the U.S. Census definition for postsecondary education: two- or four-year college and universities, public and private institutions, or any form of accredited education and training beyond high school that leads toward credit for a terminal degree. The terms postsecondary education, higher education and college will be used interchangeably throughout the brief to avoid repetition and improve readability.

[2] The two legislative reports are: (1) Ruppert, S.S. *The Politics of Remedy: State Legislative Views on Higher Education.* (Washington, DC: National Education Association, 1996), and (2); Ruppert, S.S. *Where We Go from Here: State Legislative Views on Higher Education in the New Millennium.* (Washington, DC: National Education Association, 2001).

[3] Ruppert, S.S. *Closing the College Participation Gap: A National Summary.* (Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States, Center for Community College Policy, 2003).

[4] National Center for Educational Statistics. "Fall Enrollment in Degree Granting Institutions, 1999, Table 176," *Digest of Education Statistics, 2002.* Percentages do not total 100 because students under 18 are not included, and a small percentage of student ages are designated as "unknown."

[5] "California Voters Approve a $2.3 Billion Bond Measure for Higher Education," *The Chronicle of Higher Education,* vol. L(27), A22. (March 12, 2004).

[6] Callan, P.M. and Finney, J. (1997). *Public and Private Financing of Higher Education*. (Phoenix, AZ: ACE/Oryx Press).

About the Author:

Mario C. Martinez is associate professor of educational leadership at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. He can be contacted at mario.martinez@ccmail.nevada.edu.

Meeting the Challenges of **Population Growth** and the Future Demand for **Postsecondary Education**

Considerations for State Higher Education Policy

© 2004 by the Education Commission of the States (ECS). All rights reserved. ECS is a nonprofit, nationwide organization that helps state leaders shape education policy.

Copies of this policy brief are available for $5.00 plus postage and handling from the Education Commission of the States Distribution Center, 700 Broadway, Suite 1200, Denver, CO 80203-3460; 303.299.3692. Ask for No. PS-04-05. ECS accepts prepaid orders, MasterCard, American Express and Visa. All sales are final.

ECS is pleased to have other organizations or individuals share its materials with their constituents. To request permission to excerpt part of this publication, either in print or electronically, please write or fax the Communications Department, Education Commission of the States, 700 Broadway, Suite 1200, Denver, CO 80203-3460; fax: 303.296.8332; ecs@ecs.org.

Please add postage and handling if your order totals: Up to $10.00, **$3.00**; $10.01-$25.00, **$4.25**; $25.01-$50.00, **$5.75**; $50.01-$75.00, **$8.50**; $75.01-$100.00, **$10.00**; over $100.01, **$12.00**.

Generous discounts are available for bulk orders of single publications. They are: 10-24 copies, 10% discount; 25-49 copies, 20%; 50-74 copies, 30%; 75-99 copies, 40%; 100+ copies, 50%.

Education Commission of the States

700 Broadway, Suite 1200
Denver, CO 80203-3460

Bringing To Life the School Choice and Restructuring Requirements of NCLB

Closing Low-performing Schools and Reopening Them as Charter Schools: The Role of the State

Overview

What should policymakers and administrators do when a school's persistently low performance is impervious to various interventions? Under the provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), they must restructure it.

NCLB requires that if a school fails to meet its state's "adequate yearly progress" (AYP) performance benchmarks for five consecutive years, its district must create – and, in the following year, implement – a plan to restructure the school in one of the following five ways:

- Reopen the school as a public charter school
- Replace all or most of the school staff, which may include the principal, who are relevant to the school's failure to make AYP
- Enter into a contract with an entity, such as a private management company with a demonstrated record of effectiveness, to operate the school as a public school
- Turn the operation of the school over to the state education agency, if permitted under state law and agreed to by the state
- Any other major restructuring of a school's governance arrangement.

Currently, most states' low-performing schools are not at the restructuring stage of the AYP timeline (See Appendix A). But given the potentially large number of schools that may face this fate in the next few years, school restructuring is sure to become more of an issue for state leaders – and one they should begin preparing now to address.[i]

This paper provides an in-depth look at the first of the five policy strategies mentioned above: namely, that states incorporate into their broader restructuring efforts an option that allows policymakers and administrators – selectively and wisely – to close down chronically low-performing schools and reopen them as charter schools.[ii]

The "close-and-reopen" option, as it's called, has several distinct advantages. It provides an opportunity to enlist the interest and energy of the community in changing and improving an underachieving school. It serves as a mechanism for heightening the visibility and promoting the spread of promising practices across the public education system. And it gives low-performing schools a powerful new tool – the unique blend of autonomy and accountability that charter schools embody – for addressing the difficult and diverse problems they typically face.

The close-and-reopen option is not, of course, a "silver bullet." Implementing it may be difficult politically, and carrying it out effectively may prove costly and time consuming. Careful consideration must be given to the nature and extent of the state's role in the process, and to ensuring the end result is fundamental and lasting improvement, rather than superficial change.

This paper explores the challenges and potential benefits of the close-and-reopen option, and the role that states can and should play in its implementation.

Why Should States Consider Closing Low-performing Schools and Reopening Them as Charter Schools?

Existing research on the effectiveness of the school restructuring options outlined in NCLB is scant, and what little there is focuses primarily on reconstitutions of schools and state takeovers of districts and schools. This research shows that reconstitutions and state takeovers have a mixed record of effectiveness

This paper was written by Todd M. Ziebarth, a policy analyst with Augenblick, Palaich and Associates, a Denver-based consulting firm. The U.S. Department of Education's Public Charter Schools Program provided funding for this paper.

What is a Charter School?

Charter schools are semi-autonomous public schools, typically founded by educators, parents, community groups or private organizations that operate under a written contract, typically for three to five years, with a state, district or other entity. This contract, or charter, details such matters as how the school will be organized and managed, what students will be taught and expected to achieve, and how success will be measured. Underlying the contract is an explicit exchange of deregulation for accountability, in which states apply less regulation to charter schools and demand a higher level of accountability for results. Charter schools may be closed for failing to satisfy the terms of their charters.

[i] On this point, it is important to remember that under the previously reauthorized version of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in 1994, which also included standards for AYP, over 8,000 schools were identified as needing improvement. NCLB's much tougher standards for AYP, however, will likely increase this number.

[ii] While the focus is on the option to close and reopen schools as public charter schools, much of the material in this paper also is applicable to the "contracting option" within NCLB, depending upon a state's laws. Within the "contracting option," a district enters into a contract with an entity, such as a private management company with a demonstrated record of effectiveness, to operate the school as a public school.

in significantly improving chronically low-performing schools.[iii]

NCLB's school restructuring requirements, it is fair to say, are driven primarily by the urgency of the problem rather than the clarity of the solution. A different approach – one that warrants the attention of states – is to incorporate into their broader school restructuring initiatives an option that allows the closing and reopening of low-performing schools as public charter schools. In the absence of such an option, most schools and districts are likely to take a minimalist approach – either removing a handful of staff at a school but changing little else, or choosing the "any other major restructuring option" but defining it in ways that don't fundamentally address the problems a school is facing.

In fact, one of the first states to experience school restructuring under NCLB – Michigan – recently reported that 41 of the 69 schools that faced restructuring chose to replace their principal or other staff members. The remaining schools chose such strategies as hiring an outside consultant to work closely with a district to launch an improvement plan at the school; appointing a governing board composed of teachers, administrators, parents, and business and community leaders; and using an external reform model that includes outside consultants to change how schools interact with parents or teach students. Not one district chose to close and reopen a school as a public charter school.[iv]

Closing low-performing schools. Besides the mixed record of reconstitutions and takeovers, as well as the likelihood that districts and schools will take a minimalist approach to restructuring, there are other, more positive reasons for states to incorporate the close-and-reopen option into their restructuring efforts. First and foremost, this option allows policymakers and administrators to close down low-performing schools with chronic and widespread failure – not, it should be noted, as the first strategy out of the box, but rather the last one after others have failed over a period of several years.

Providing autonomy. A charter school's autonomy gives it the flexibility to make changes in a timely manner to meet the particular needs of its students, specifically regarding budgets, staff, schedules, and curriculum and instruction. It is important to remember that closing and reopening as a charter school doesn't change the challenges that students often bring with them. It does, however, give the new school the flexibility to better deal with these complex needs.

For example, there is general agreement that struggling students need to spend more time on task. Toward that end, schools need to put into place longer school years, school weeks and school days, while also improving the quality of the instruction that takes place during this time. Because a charter school is freed from the many layers of school scheduling constraints that are found within state rules, district regulations and collective-bargaining agreements, it is often better able to create the types of schedules that respond to the needs of its students.

Ensuring accountability. A charter school's contract outlines the expectations for the school and charges the school with the responsibility for meeting these expectations. In the context of the close-and-reopen option," chartering is less of a "laissez-faire" approach that some associate with charter schools, and more of a thoughtful, rigorous approach to identifying the specific needs at a low-performing school, conducting a thorough process to identify an entity with proven results in successfully meeting the school's needs, entering into a charter with this entity to operate the school, and monitoring the school's performance relative to the terms of the charter.

[iii] See Brady, Ron (2003, January). *Can Failing Schools Be Fixed?* Washington, DC: The Thomas Fordam Foundation; Wong, Kenneth K. and Shen, Francis X. (2001). *Does School District Takeover Work? Assessing the Effectiveness of City and State Takeover as a School Reform Strategy*. Paper prepared for delivery at the 2001 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, San Francisco, CA; Seder, Richard (2000, March). *Balancing Accountability and Local Control: State Intervention for Financial and Academic Stability*. Los Angeles, CA: Reason Public Policy Institute*; Fixing Failing Schools: Reconstitution and Other High-stakes Strategies Meeting Summary* (1997, May 12-13). Summary of a meeting convened by the Consortium for Policy Research in Education and the Pew Forum on Standards-Based Reform, Baltimore, Maryland. Unpublished; Community Training and Assistance Center (2000, May)*. Myths and Realities: The Impact of the State Takeover on Students and Schools in Newark*. Boston, MA: Community Training and Assistance Center; and, Orfield, G., Cohen, B.L., Foster, G., Green, R.L., Lawrence, P., Tatel, D.S., and Tempes, F. (1992). *Desegregation and Educational Change in San Francisco: Findings and Recommendations on Consent Decree Implementation*. Report submitted to Judge William H. Orrick, U.S. District Court, San Francisco, CA.

[iv] Martin, Tim (2004, August 9). "Restructuring Schools Opt to Replace Staff, Make Other Changes, State Says," *The Associated Press.*

Emerging Research about Charter Schools and Student Achievement

A recent meta-analysis found that existing research on charter schools' impacts on student achievement reveals a mixed picture, with studies from some states suggesting positive impacts, studies from other states suggesting negative impacts, and some providing evidence of both positive and negative impacts.[v]

Since the meta-analysis was written in 2002, a handful of studies on student achievement in charter schools have been released. Here are some highlights:

- One national study found that test scores in charter schools lagged behind scores of regular public schools in the 10 states that were studied, but charter schools in those states registered significant gains in test scores from 2000 to 2002 relative to regular public schools. It also found that conversion charter schools in California produced average test scores despite serving students with demographics that are usually correlated with low scores. Finally, it found that compared to regular public schools and to charters serving students with similar socioeconomic characteristics, charters operated by educational management organizations (EMOs) have much lower test scores. Gains made from 2000 to 2002 in EMO-operated schools, however, have been significantly higher than those of both regular public schools and non-EMO charters.[vi]
- A study of charter schools in Arizona found that charter school students, on average, began with lower test scores than their traditional public school counterparts and showed overall annual achievement growth roughly three points higher than their noncharter peers. Plus, charter school students who completed the 12th grade surpassed traditional public school students on reading tests.[vii]
- A study of charter schools in California generally found comparable achievement scores for charter schools relative to conventional public schools. But it did find significant differences in achievement among different types of charter schools. Students in classroom-based conversion charter schools have average test scores comparable to those of similar students in conventional public schools, while classroom-based start-up charter schools have slightly higher test scores on average. In contrast, students in conversion or start-up schools that deliver at least some of their instruction outside the classroom have lower average test scores than do similar students in conventional public schools.[viii]
- A study of charter school performance on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) found that overall charter schools scored slightly lower than the average public schools. When the NAEP data was controlled for factors such as race, however, the difference between charter schools and traditional public schools was negligible.[ix]

Re-engaging the community. The close-and-reopen option also provides an opportunity to re-engage the community in the school in a variety of ways. At one level, policymakers and administrators may ask capable community organizations to operate some of the schools that are closed and reopened as charter schools. In fact, across the country, an increasing number of community organizations are starting charter schools as a means to expand their current services and provide one-stop shopping to their target population.[x] Short of that, policymakers and administrators may require the reopened school to work with community organizations, local governments, community foundations and local businesses as partners in the provision of services to the school's parents and students. At a minimum, policymakers and administrators may recruit people from these entities to serve as members on new schools' boards of trustees.

Potential Benefits of Reopening a Low-performing School as a Charter School

- New leadership
- New staff
- New mission
- New culture
- New educational approaches
- New schedules (e.g., longer school years, school weeks and school days)
- New boards of trustees
- New decisionmaking approaches (e.g., more decisionmaking authority for teachers and parents).

[v] Miron, Gary and Nelson, Christopher (2004). "Student Achievement in Charter Schools: What We Know and Why We Know So Little." In Katrina E. Bulkley and Priscilla Wohlstetter (Eds.), *Taking Account of Charter Schools: What's Happened and What's Next?* (pp. 161-175). New York, NY: Teachers College, Columbia University.

[vi] Loveless, Tom (2003, October). *2003 Brown Center Report on American Education*. Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution.

[vii] Solomon, Lewis C. and Goldschmidt, Pete (2004, March). *Comparison of Traditional Public Schools and Charter Schools on Retention, School Switching and Achievement Growth*. Phoenix, AZ: The Goldwater Institute.

[viii] Zimmer, Ron, Buddin, Richard, Chau, Derrick, Daley, Glenn, Gill, Brian, Guarino, Cassandra, Hamilton, Laura, Krop, Cathy, McCaffrey, Dan, Sandler, Melinda, and Brewer, Dominic (2003). *Charter School Operations and Performance: Evidence from California*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND.

[ix] Nelson, F. Howard, Rosenberg, Bella, and Van Meter, Nancy (2004). *Charter School Achievement on the 2003 National Assessment of Educational Progress*. Washington, DC: American Federation of Teachers.

[x] Halsband, Robin. (2003, November/December) Charter Schools Benefit Community Economic Development," *Journal of Housing & Community Development*, pp. 34-38.

Spreading promising practices. Another potential benefit of the close-and-reopen option is that it provides a mechanism to spread promising practices within the public education system. For example, policymakers and administrators can recruit as school operators the entities that have successfully served a population of students similar to the population of students in a school that is to be closed and reopened as a charter school. In this effort, they can reach out to national charter school networks (both nonprofit and for profit), national school reform models, and traditional public schools, charter public schools and private schools within the community and the state. The key isn't finding a model that has been successful in general, but rather finding a model that has been successful with a similar group of students in much the same circumstances that face the low-performing school in question.[xi]

Instead of attempting to add another layer of school reform on top of a low-performing school that is already wobbling under the multiple reforms that have been piled on it over the years, the close-and-reopen option allows the reopened school to implement such promising practices from a clean slate as well as with a new school community that is united behind the value of such practices.

What are the Challenges for States in Closing and Reopening Low-performing Schools as Charter Schools?

Along with the potential benefits of the close-and-reopen option, policymakers and administrators must consider several concerns and challenges involved in implementing it.

Making real changes. One concern that both charter supporters and opponents have about the close-and-reopen option is that renaming the school – Sunny Elementary School becoming Sunny Elementary Charter School, for example – will wind up being the extent of school restructuring. Thus, if states and districts implement this option, one challenge is to ensure they make real changes in schools, instead of merely adding a word to a school's nameplate.

Impacting teaching and learning. Some have voiced concern that governance changes are sometimes disconnected from teaching and learning changes. Therefore, another challenge for states and districts that implement this option is to ensure changes in the group of people in charge of the school are connected to improvements in the teaching and learning experiences at the school.

Matching problems and solutions. Another concern is the potential to mismatch a problem – a low-performing school – and a solution – closing and reopening the school as a charter school. In this context, the challenge facing state and district leaders is determining when the particular problems at a low-performing school will be alleviated by the close-and-reopen option. In some cases, it will; in others, it won't. The trick for state and district leaders is recognizing the difference – a topic that is addressed in the next section.

Finding school operators. Some state and district leaders interested in this option also are concerned that may not be enough high-quality school operators. These operators must not only be familiar with the particular problems facing chronically low-performing schools but also must have a track record of success in solving such problems. Thus, state and district leaders are faced with the challenge of determining where new, high-quality school operators will come from.

Navigating politics. The politics of implementing the close-and-reopen option may prove challenging. Often, when a district closes a school that is under-

[xi] Hassel, Bryan and Steiner, Lucy (2004). *Stimulating the Supply of New Choices for Families in Light of NCLB: The Role of the State.* Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States.

enrolled, there is an outcry from the school's parents and students. Under this option, not only is a state or district closing a school as people have known it, but they also are opening up a charter school in its place. While charter schools are increasingly familiar to policymakers, they remain an unknown quantity to many parents and students, which may exacerbate the apprehension and confusion they feel.

Two other elements of the political equation are the teachers at the school and the unions that represent them. The author of this paper assumes that in the close-and-reopen option, the new school operator will have the ability to start from scratch in staffing the school as well as have the autonomy to hire and fire staff at the school throughout the term of the charter. Another assumption is that the new school operator will have the autonomy to operate outside of existing collective-bargaining agreements in the district.

It is possible that a group of teachers at the existing school may apply to run the school and, if their application is the best of the bunch, may be granted a charter to do so. Even if they don't run the new school, though, they may apply for jobs at the new school, but it will be up to the new school operator to decide whether or not they want to hire them. Notwithstanding these opportunities, it is apparent that even if states and districts handle parent, student, teacher and union engagement well, the closing and reopening of the school will be a challenging process. If they handle it poorly, the process may be a failure.

Providing intensive support. A final concern of some leaders is that the close-and-reopen option may be time consuming and costly to successfully implement. First, the amount of management required of the charter authorizer for the closing and reopening to be a success is potentially significant. Authorizer staff must engage in a number of activities, including engaging the school community in the process, selecting a new school operator, negotiating a charter with them, overseeing preparations for opening the new school, monitoring the reopened school against performance benchmarks established in the charter, and periodically meeting with the new school operator to keep the effort on track.

Second, it is unclear in some situations how the state and district will fund the school once it is reopened as a charter school. The basic question is: By going "charter," will a school get less money than it did as a traditional public school? In figuring out the answer to this question, state and district leaders need to examine several issues, including:

- Will the new school get the same amount of operating dollars as it did before?
- Will it receive resources to cover facility costs?
- Will it get access to bond levies as a charter school?
- Will it receive the same amount of federal, state and local dollars as before?
- If there are any gaps between what the school received as a traditional school and what it will receive as a charter school, will the state and/or district make up the difference?

State Policy Options for Closing and Reopening Low-performing Schools as Charter Schools

As the above discussion makes clear, the close-and-reopen option represents a bold undertaking. Because of the dramatic nature of this option, state leaders should play a part in the process only if they see potential power in it. Assuming that they do, there are a variety of roles that states may play, including the following four that are discussed in this section:

- Establish guiding criteria and processes for the close-and-reopen option
- Create a request for qualifications (RFQ) or request for proposals (RFP) process
- Provide additional resources to school operators
- Implement the close-and-reopen option themselves.

Establish guiding criteria and processes

There are two major types of charter schools across the country – conversion charter schools and start-up charter schools. In the conversion model, an existing public school converts itself to a charter school. In these cases, state law typically requires that a majority of a school's teachers and parents vote in favor of the conversion. For start-up charter schools, school operators – e.g., parents, teachers or community organizations – essentially start the school from scratch.

Some policymakers and administrators have talked about implementing the close-and-reopen option through the processes already in place for conversion charter schools. While this approach may work in some situations, it is likely to be problematic in others. Put bluntly, if the leadership and more than a majority of the staff at a low-performing school are part of the problem at that particular school, policymakers and administrators probably don't want them making the decision about whether to convert to a charter school nor do they want them as part of the new school.

Therefore, one of the most important roles for the state is to establish a new set of criteria and processes to guide the closing and reopening of low-performing schools as charter schools.

As the first part of this effort, the state should create criteria for when the particular problems at a low-performing school match the specific solution of closing and reopening it as a charter school. Some possible criteria are:

- Several years of widespread low-performance
- Little, if any, improvement in performance from year to year
- Low rates of attendance for students and teachers
- Low quality of leadership
- Sub-par teaching staff
- Little capacity in the school community for strategic reflection and action
- Disengaged students
- Low level of parental and community involvement
- Dilapidated school facility.

These criteria may exist at a low-performing school in any number of ways. One scenario is all the above criteria exist. In essence, the school has completely melted down and is in total chaos. In this situation, the close-and-reopen option allows the district or state to wipe the slate clean (except for the existing student population) and essentially start over by bringing in an outside entity to operate the school. Obviously, it is critical for the district or state to involve students, parents and community members in this process from an early stage.

A second scenario is a school has disengaged students, parents and community members, a sub-par teaching staff and a crumbling facility, but also has a new, high-quality leader who is constrained in putting into place the necessary staff, educational programs, parental involvement efforts and facility improvement plans by a mountain of state, district and collective-bargaining regulations. In this case, the close-and-reopen option provides a less constrained environment for the school leader to assemble a team and a strategy to turn around the school, while still being held accountable for performance.

A third scenario is a school has unstable, ineffective leadership, but a small group of high-quality teachers and involved parents who are closely connected to the larger community. For these individuals, the close-and-reopen option provides a mechanism for organizing the school to strengthen connections between school and community. In this process, they can bring in community organizations, leaders, teachers and parents who share this vision, all toward the common goal of improving student achievement.

Autonomy and accountability. Another role for the state is establishing a process to ensure districts and schools implement this option in a way that truly provides the reopened school with the autonomy and accountability necessary for success, instead of just adding a word to a school's nameplate. In essence, the state needs a process for certifying that a given school is truly being closed and reopened under a different arrangement. The state should establish such a process through legislative statute, state board of education rule or state department of education regulatory guidance.

This process should make clear the various autonomies that will be granted to the school, especially regarding budgeting, staffing, scheduling, and curriculum and instruction. It also should delineate what the school will be held accountable for, as well as how the accountability process will work. For example, the process may require that a school's charter delineate academic, operational and fiscal performance goals and objectives for the time period covered by the charter. It also may require a reopened school to submit periodic reports to the district and the state – perhaps two to four times a year – that show the school's progress toward meeting the performance goals and objectives contained in the charter.

Timeline. Besides addressing what autonomy and accountability will look like at the reopened school, the new process also should address the timeline for closing and reopening the school. Obviously, there is no ideal time to close and reopen a school, and there are trade-offs within any particular approach. One option is for states to simply follow the timeline included within NCLB. In this option, if a school fails to meet its state's AYP performance benchmarks for five consecutive years, its district must create a plan to restructure the school. If a school fails to make AYP for a sixth consecutive year, the district must implement the restructuring plan no later than the beginning of the school year following the year in which the district developed the restructuring plan. The smoothness of this process will be particularly dependent on when the state releases its annual categorization of schools in relation to AYP.

While this timeline provides the district with over a year to create the plan to close and reopen the school, it essentially allows a "lame duck" group of leaders and teachers to operate the school during the year of planning, which may create a number of problems and tensions between the old and new groups of school operators.

An alternative approach is to use a modified timeline: If a school fails to make AYP for five years in a row, the district must still spend about one year creating a plan to close and reopen the school. If a school fails for a sixth consecutive year, though, the district allows the new school operator to take a planning year as well, instead of requiring the operator to reopen the school that year. If states want to include such a change in their restructuring timeline, the author assumes they will need to ask the federal government for permission to deviate from the timeline articulated in NCLB.

This option gives the new school operator more time to plan the reopening of the school; hire new leaders and staff; provide professional development to new leaders and staff; engage students, parents and community members in the process; and make the necessary capital improvements to the school building. One drawback of this approach is figuring out what happens to students during the new school operator's

planning year. In some districts, there may not be enough seats in nearby schools for these students, and therefore this approach is unrealistic. In a large district with many schools, though, there is still a challenge in moving students from school to school in such a short period of time.

NCLB sanctions. Another issue that states should clarify in a new process is the restructured school's relationship to NCLB's sanctions. According to federal regulations, a district must continue to implement the restructuring plan, as well as offer public school choice and supplemental education services to the school's students until the school makes AYP for two consecutive years.

But what if a restructured school continues to fail to make AYP? This situation presents policymakers with a dilemma. If the school must achieve immediate results to avoid additional sanctions, it will be difficult to attract organizations, school leaders and faculty to the restructured school. Most will likely say: "We need at least a few years to install our program and achieve results." But if the clock essentially restarts upon restructuring, with no consequences (beyond choice and supplemental services) for poor performance for several years, the sense of urgency created by NCLB may dissipate.

One state, New York, has addressed this dilemma through its restructuring guidance, which states that when a restructured school fails to make AYP for two consecutive years within three years of first implementing its restructuring plan, the district must develop a revised restructuring plan. The revised plan must be formally approved by the local school board by June 30 of the school year prior to the school year in which the revised plan must be implemented.[xii]

District accountability. One final issue that states should address is how to hold districts accountable for properly implementing the close-and-reopen option. The two major questions are: How should states monitor districts' implementation of these processes? What should a state do if a district isn't carrying out its obligations according to state law?

In answer to the first question, states can review the charters for the reopened schools to ensure they contain the autonomy and accountability requirements spelled out in the state's new process, both before the district and the school operator sign it, and when any changes are made to the charter throughout the life of the contract. In addition, as a parallel to the requirement that reopened schools must submit periodic reports to the district and the state, the state can require districts to submit periodic reports to the state about the progress of implementation as well as require that the new school operator and the district meet with a state oversight committee of policymakers and administrators upon submission of the reports.

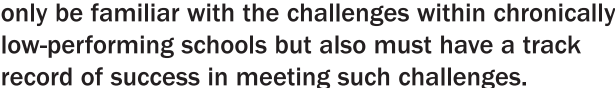
As for the second question, if a district isn't carrying out its obligations according to state law, the state can work with the district to make the necessary changes. If that fails to work, the state can take over the monitoring of the school from the district, as detailed later in this paper.

Create an RFQ or RFP process

As mentioned earlier, one of the challenges within this option is determining where new, high-quality school operators will come from. To meet this challenge, states should deliberately cultivate a supply of new school operators for schools that will be closed and reopened as charter schools, potentially through a request for qualifications (RFQ) or a request for proposals (RFP) process.

In implementing these processes, states should specify the types of problems that need to be tackled at the schools identified for restructuring as well as the types of knowledge, resources and skills that the state feels are necessary to address the problems in these schools. The state-selected operators must not

[xii] New York State Education Department. (2004 , February) *School Restructuring: Guidance for LEAs.*



only be familiar with the challenges within chronically low-performing schools but also must have a track record of success in meeting such challenges.

The goal of these processes is to develop a list of new school operators that contains specific information about each operator's approach, as well as detailed data about the results that each operator has achieved with specific types of students. If a district decides to implement the close-and-reopen option, but is struggling to find an entity to operate the school, it may choose an operator from the state-approved list of school operators, keeping in mind the importance of matching the particular problems at an individual school with the specific approach offered by an operator.

Colorado's RFP Process for the Close-and-Reopen Option

As part of Colorado's accountability system, if a school is rated "unsatisfactory" for three years in a row, it must become a charter school. On August 6, 2004, the state announced that Cole Middle School in Denver will become the first school to become a charter school under this policy. That set in motion the following process:

- By August 15, 2004, the Colorado Department of Education must issue an RFP to various groups that may be interested in operating the new charter school.
- By August 31, 2004, the state must form a seven-member committee – a member of the Denver school board, a teacher and two parents from Cole, a teacher and a principal from other middle schools rated "excellent" in the state's accountability system, and a business representative – to evaluate proposals and make recommendations to the Colorado State Board of Education.
- By September 15, 2004, applications are due from those interested in operating a new charter school at Cole.
- By October 15, 2004, the seven-member committee submits its recommendations to the state board of education, which then passes its pick on to the Denver school board.
- By February 15, 2005, the Denver school board negotiates a three-year contract with the new charter school operator.
- By July 15, 2005, all planning is completed and Cole is ready to reopen as a charter school in August 2005.[xiii]

Provide additional resources to school operators

To increase the likelihood of success for this option, one role for the state is providing additional resources to new school operators to plan and execute their approaches. If states decide to provide such resources, they must decide what monies to use for these purposes. One idea is for states to make a new appropriation through the legislative process. Another idea is for states to craft their next proposal for the federal public charter schools grant program to emphasize the close-and-reopen option as a major part of the state's strategy for increasing the number of high-quality charter schools in the state.

States also must decide at what point to award such funds. One option is to give the funds to potential school operators in districts with a large number of chronically low-performing schools before the district

[xiii] Mitchell, Nancy (2004, August 6). "Group May Apply to Operate Cole," *Rocky Mountain News*.

has selected such operators to run certain schools. This option allows the state to have a set of potential school operators at the ready once a district decides to close and reopen a school as a charter school.

A second option is to wait and award these resources after a district has selected the operator for a particular school. This option allows an operator's planning activities to focus on a particular school's set of challenges and ensures state dollars are only provided to groups that definitely open a charter school.

California's Federal Grant Proposal

As part of its recent grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Public Charter Schools Program, the California Department of Education (CDE) is emphasizing the development of high-quality charter schools for students assigned to Title 1, Part A, schools through a combination of weighted scoring and set-asides.

For example, CDE will create a set-aside of up to 20% of its local assistance funds for local education agencies (LEAs) converting schools to charter status. Anticipating that some of California's traditional public schools will fail to achieve their NCLB goals, CDE will give a scoring preference to Title 1, Part A, schools pursuing chartering as a means of improvement if the applicants contract with a neighboring LEA (not the district in which the school is located) or an educational management organization (EMO) to provide educational restructuring and management assistance. LEAs and EMOs must have a track record of success (as defined by CDE) in operating California public schools serving the same student population as the grant applicant school to be eligible for consideration.

CDE also is creating a set-aside of up to 20% of its local assistance funds for applicants developing innovative, community-based start-up charter schools, and a set-aside of up to 50% of its local assistance funds for applicants developing start-up schools based on existing, replicable models.[xiv]

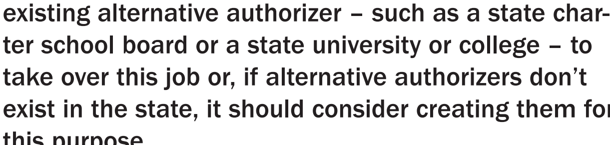
Implement the close-and-reopen option themselves

In states interested in the close-and-reopen option, some districts may implement it as a catalyst for making necessary changes in chronically low-performing schools. In addition, some districts may be interested in doing so, but may lack the capacity to do it. But other districts are likely to view the option as intrusive and unnecessary, and therefore won't pay it much attention. In addition, districts that choose to implement this option may fail to carry out their obligations according to whatever new process is created by the state. In these situations, states may choose to implement the close-and-reopen option themselves.

While the specifics of each situation will dictate the way in which the state should implement this option, there are two broad approaches for states to consider. First, the state can create a provision within its accountability system that allows a state entity (i.e., the state board of education or the state department of education) to close and reopen a chronically low-performing school as a charter school – either because a district has failed to turn around the performance of the school or because a district has asked the state to take over the school as allowed within NCLB. In this case, the state becomes the entity that oversees the closing and reopening process, as well as the entity that monitors the performance of the school once it is reopened.

As a variant of this approach, if a state is interested in implementing this option but doesn't have the organizational capacity to effectively close, reopen and monitor schools, it should consider either turning to an

[xiv] California Department of Education. (2004) *California's Approved 2004-2007 Federal Charter Schools Program Application.*



existing alternative authorizer – such as a state charter school board or a state university or college – to take over this job or, if alternative authorizers don't exist in the state, it should consider creating them for this purpose.

For this approach, the state can create a provision within its accountability system that allows it to turn over the closing, reopening and monitoring of a chronically low-performing school to an alternative authorizer. If a state implements this approach, it also should require that alternative authorizers submit periodic reports to the state about the progress of implementation as well as require that the new school operator and the alternative authorizer meet with a state oversight committee of policymakers and administrators upon submission of the reports.

Conclusion

Given that there is no silver bullet for addressing the difficult challenges posed by chronically low-performing schools, the author suggests that states incorporate the option of closing and reopening these schools as charter schools into their broader school restructuring efforts. When implemented selectively and wisely, it has the potential to be a powerful tool for school improvement. Conversely, if this option is implemented in a haphazard way, it has the potential to lead nowhere fast. The ultimate challenge for policymakers and administrators, then, is to provide the necessary support to reopened schools so that their students are more successful than before. The bottom line: Create something better for students attending the most persistently struggling schools in this country. A sound implementation of the close-and-reopen option is one plausible way for policymakers and administrators to do just that.

Louisiana's Statewide Recovery School District

As part of the state's accountability system, Louisiana created a recovery school district in 2003. According to state law, the recovery school district may assume jurisdiction over a chronically low-performing school if any of the following conditions exist:

- A local school board fails to present a plan to reconstitute the failed school to the state board of education.
- A local school board presents a reconstitution plan that is unacceptable to the state board.
- A local school board fails at any time to comply with the terms of the reconstitution plan approved by the state board.
- The school has been labeled an academically unacceptable school for four consecutive years.

Once the recovery school district has jurisdiction over a chronically low-performing school, it may turn the school into a charter school.

The state recently took over the first school through this process. Pierre A. Capdau Middle School in Orleans Parish was taken over by the state as of July 1, 2004, and will be operated by the University of New Orleans as a new charter school in the state's recovery school district beginning in 2004-05.[xv]

[xv] Louisiana Department of Education. (August 9, 2004) *Seventy-Five Schools Must Offer Choice, Press Release.*

© 2004 by the Education Commission of the States (ECS). All rights reserved. ECS is a non-profit, nationwide organization that helps state leaders shape education policy.

To request permission to excerpt part of this publication, either in print or electronically, please fax a request to the attention of the ECS Communications Department, 303.296.8332 or e-mail ecs@ecs.org. Copies of this issue brief are available for $5. Ask for publication #GV-04-05.

Helping State Leaders Shape Education Policy

Appendix A

The Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Timeline [xvi]

NCLB Status	Action Required by NCLB
School doesn't make AYP for two years in a row.	In the following school year: • School must develop an improvement plan • Local education agency must provide technical assistance and • Students must be offered the option of transferring to a higher performing school.
School doesn't make AYP for three years in a row.	In addition to earlier measures, the local education agency must offer supplemental services to low-income students.
School doesn't make AYP for four years in a row.	In addition to the earlier measures, the local education agency must do one or more of the following: • Replace school staff responsible for school not meeting AYP • Implement new curriculum • Decrease management authority at the school level • Appoint outside expert to advise the school • Extend the school day or year or • Change the school's internal organizational structure.
School doesn't make AYP for five years in a row.	In addition to earlier measures, the local education agency must prepare a plan to restructure the school in one of the following ways: • Reopen the school as a public charter school • Replace all or most of the school staff, which may include the principal, who are relevant to the school's failure to make AYP • Enter into a contract with an entity, such as a private management company with a demonstrated record of effectiveness, to operate the school as a public school • Turn the operation of the school over to the state education agency, if permitted under state law and agreed to by the state • Any other major restructuring of a school's governance arrangement.
School doesn't make AYP for six years in a row.	In addition to earlier measures, the local education agency must implement the restructuring plan at the school.

[xvi] The information in this table was drawn from the New Mexico Legislative Education Study Committee. (June 2004) *Schedule of Events for Schools That Do Not Make Adequate Yearly Progress Through Consecutive School Years.*

Education Commission
of the States

700 Broadway, Suite 1200
Denver, CO 80203-3460
www.ecs.org

Helping State Leaders Shape Education Policy

ECS Policy Brief
Restructuring Schools in Baltimore: An Analysis of State and District Efforts

700 Broadway, Suite 1200 • Denver, CO 80203-3460 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

By Lauren Morando Rhim

One of the critical challenges facing state and district leaders is how to improve public schools identified as low performing. The passage of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) brought a new sense of urgency to this challenge. NCLB outlines a timeframe for school improvement, as well as specific actions that districts must take if schools do not make adequate progress in improving student achievement.

This paper presents a summary of state and local restructuring efforts in a single district: the Baltimore City Public School System (BCPSS).[1] The state's and the district's experiences with restructuring persistently low-performing schools provide practical information to other state and district leaders charged with the arduous task of restructuring schools under NCLB.

State and District Restructuring Initiatives in Baltimore

- State negotiated contract with Edison Schools Inc. to operate three persistently low-performing elementary schools: Furman Templeton, Gilmor and Montebello.
- State and district negotiated contract with Victory Schools Inc. to operate one persistently low-performing BCPSS school: Westport Academy.
- District negotiated contracts with the Baltimore Curriculum Project and Coppin State College to operate "partner schools" under the New Schools Initiative: Barclay, City Springs, Collington Square, Hampstead Hills and Rosemont.

State and District Restructuring in Baltimore

In 1999, after more than five years of watching dozens of BCPSS schools languish on the "reconstitution eligible" list, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) moved to reconstitute three elementary schools in Baltimore. In 2000, MSDE reconstituted a fourth elementary school. The state decided to reconstitute elementary schools rather than middle or high schools because policymakers thought they could have the greatest impact at the elementary school level.

Separately, BCPSS created the New Schools Initiative (NSI) in 1995. The impetus behind the NSI program was to expand the opportunities to improve special education in Baltimore City by inviting external organizations to apply to operate public schools. The initiative allowed for the creation of two distinct types of NSI schools – wholly new schools and conversion schools. Within the NSI, the BCPSS school board enters into a contract with the operator that expects them to "show significant progress toward meeting state standards and individually established performance standards."[2] Because the focus of this brief is lessons learned from restructuring, the research was limited to the BCPSS schools that converted to NSI status.

---

[1] To identify the lessons learned through restructuring in Baltimore, the author conducted a thorough document review and interviewed state, district and school personnel directly involved with the restructuring process. The interviews provided vital information regarding policies and practices that fostered or impeded the restructuring process and academic performance. An extended review of the case study is available from the Education Commission of the States.

[2] Baltimore City Public School System (September, 2002). *A History of the New Schools Initiative*. Baltimore, MD: BCPSS.

Recurring Themes and Recommendations

This case study of state and district restructuring in Baltimore revealed recurring themes and practical recommendations regarding the transition to and actual operation of restructured public schools. The themes and recommendations fall into three broad categories: the contracting process, the transition to new management and the operation of restructured schools. The themes and recommendations are summarized below.

The Contracting Process

1. Nonprofit and for-profit operators can provide states and districts with a variety of options for restructuring schools. Rather than limiting potential operators to one type or another, states and districts should examine the range of vendor options when seeking external management of failing schools.

2. Engaging external entities to operate public schools requires negotiating a legally binding contract worth millions of dollars annually. The process of requesting and reviewing proposals should be transparent, rigorous and competitive. Most states and districts maintain standard procurement/contracting processes that can be used to recruit and hire an external manager to operate a school. Awarding a substantial contract outside of standard procurement processes opens states and districts to public-relations problems and potential litigation over the legitimacy of the contracts.

3. Conducting a thorough review of potential school operators' instructional capacity and financial stability will ensure the contractor has at a minimum the ability to provide the services articulated in its proposal to operate a public school. Absent this critical due diligence, including contacting multiple references, states and districts run the risk of hiring unqualified operators and/or operators that may go out of business before the end of the contract.

4. Effective restructuring requires dedicating adequate staff time to developing unambiguous contracts that clearly articulate roles and responsibilities. For instance, if the district is to be responsible for capital improvements and the contractor is to be responsible for maintenance, the contract should specify criteria for determining whether a repair is considered a capital improvement or maintenance. The absence of clearly articulated roles and responsibilities leads to recurring problems related to determining who is responsible for what in the school.

5. Hiring an external operator to manage a public school represents a delegation of authority but not a delegation of responsibility. The state or district is still responsible for ensuring that contractors fulfill their obligations. Ensuring the contract is fulfilled requires regular communication and monitoring. State and district stakeholders identified as problematic the perceived myth that once contracts are negotiated, the state's and/or the district's work ends. Managing the contract requires ongoing staff time.

6. Fiscal incentives are potent means to hold external contractors accountable for their performance. Discussions with school and company personnel revealed that meeting the quantifiable performance benchmarks is a top priority for the schools. Absent fiscal incentives, however, a commitment to the community also can serve as a powerful motivator for external operators.

Transition to New Management

1. The importance of zero-based staffing (i.e., not guaranteeing any previous staff member a position at the reconstituted school) was a recurring theme in state and district restructured schools. The process of interviewing staff allows the new manager to assess whether an employee is qualified and buys into the new governance and curricular model. Policy leaders can make the process palatable to the teachers union by guaranteeing all current employees an equivalent position in the dis-

trict if they decide not to apply to the restructured school or if the new operator decides not to rehire them.

2. Most schools, even failing schools, have certain features that work well. For example, a school might operate an exemplary homework club or have a productive relationship with a local university. Rather than characterizing everything about the school as negative, new operators should examine low-performing schools to identify both positive and negative aspects. Retaining components of the school that are functioning well provides the new operator with a foundation and can build credibility with the community.

3. Transitioning a neighborhood school from traditional management to private management can stir up fear and resentment, even when the school is failing. States, districts and the newly hired private operators should commit human and fiscal resources to engaging parents and cultivating relationships with parents and the larger local community to build trust and ease the transition process.

4. A school's physical plant sets the tone for students' learning environment. State, district and school personnel all identified improvements to the physical plant as an important contribution by the external managers. Providing students with a clean and engaging school building can earn instant credibility with skeptical parents.

The Operation of Restructured Schools

1. Strong, dynamic principals are the bedrock of successful schools. A universal finding, which emerged from both types of restructuring strategies, is while autonomy and a good curriculum can facilitate school improvement, the engine behind good schools is a skilled principal who serves as an instructional leader.

2. Second only to the importance of principals in restructured schools is the importance of skilled instructional staff. The autonomy granted to state- and district-restructured schools gave principals the power they reportedly needed to assemble a faculty that can cultivate an engaging learning environment and produce results.

3. A strong, coherent curriculum that is aligned with state standards and yet flexible enough to meet students' diverse learning needs is central to improving academic performance. Policy leaders charged with selecting school operators should carefully critique the academic model and operational track record of potential partners.

4. The restructured schools were granted variable levels of autonomy over their budgets. The schools capitalized on the autonomy to allocate resources according to school-level requirements as opposed to district formulas. External managers and their principals noted that controlling their school's budget enabled them to stretch their monies and target resources according to the greatest need.

5. The restructured schools that have demonstrated academic progress credited data-driven decision-making with providing them with the tools needed to improve instruction. Rather than viewing data as an end in itself, these schools regularly used student performance on classroom assessments to shape classroom practice.

6. The restructured schools found that engaging parents early and often helped with the transition to private management and provided students with additional support.

7. External resources played a major role in the academic program of a number of the restructured schools (e.g., colleges and universities, foundations and federal grants). Whether it is for operating a whole school or supporting a unique program, policy leaders charged with restructuring should engage external entities to infuse new energy, ideas and resources into public schools.

Final Thoughts

The Baltimore City Public School System, like many large urban districts, struggles to provide a high-quality public education to its students. The challenges facing BCPSS are numerous and extend beyond the schoolhouse doors. The implementation of NCLB has escalated the pressure to achieve and the consequences associated with failure.

The state and district restructuring initiatives in Baltimore have produced mixed results in terms of gains in student academic performance. Nevertheless, restructuring in Baltimore provides practical lessons regarding the process of restructuring. Reinforcing decades of research on effective schools, the key policy leaders (i.e., MSDE and BCPSS officials, management company personnel and school principals) involved with restructuring in Baltimore identified principals and teachers as the essential forces driving successful schools. Supporting conditions that are critical to enabling strong principals and teachers to succeed are school autonomy over budgets, personnel and curriculum, and instructional issues such as professional development.

Baltimore illustrates two types of restructuring strategies – state-led and district-led. NCLB incorporates these strategies, outlines additional ones (e.g., chartering) and grants districts wide latitude to implement their own specific restructuring strategies. NCLB, however, does not address issues related to will and capacity. As the case study of Baltimore illustrates, restructuring requires that the entity or individual leading the effort (i.e., the state or district) has the will to make meaningful change and the capacity to select and monitor an external operator. BCPSS' abortive experience with Victory arguably represents an instance of a district having neither the will nor the capacity to restructure via a private contractor.

Requiring districts that lack internal will or capacity to restructure due to NCLB may lead to restructuring efforts that are less than valiant. For instance, given the variety of options districts may use to restructure, what consequences are there for a district that issues a charter to a failing school but does not grant that school any autonomy associated with the charter? Alternatively, what consequences are there for a district that implements a restructuring initiative analogous to the New Schools Initiative yet does not ensure the quality of the external operator or thereafter hold the operator accountable for performance? In other words, what consequences are there for "real" versus "sham" restructuring under NCLB?

The case study of Baltimore documents the critical role of selecting and monitoring contractors hired to operate restructured schools, and this role presumes a requisite level of will and capacity to change. Absent will and capacity on the part of the entity charged with restructuring, it is questionable whether restructuring will be meaningful unless external entities, be they states, municipalities or community organizations, take a proactive role in ensuring district-directed restructuring is significant and substantive.

Lauren Morando Rhim is faculty research associate in the Department of Special Education at the University of Maryland, College Park. *The U.S. Department of Education's Public Charter Schools Program provided funding for this paper.*

© 2004 by the Education Commission of the States (ECS). All rights reserved. ECS is a nonprofit, nationwide organization that helps state leaders shape education policy. Copies of this *ECS Policy Brief* are available for $3.00 plus postage and handling. Ask for GV-04-04. To request permission to excerpt part of this publication, either in print or electronically, please fax a request to the attention of the ECS Communications Department, 303.296.8332 or e-mail ecs@ecs.org.

Helping State Leaders Shape Education Policy

Bringing To Life the School Choice and Restructuring Requirements of NCLB

Stimulating the Supply of New Choices for Families in Light of NCLB

The Challenge

Under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), school districts are required to offer students who attend schools that do not make "adequate yearly progress" for two consecutive years the option to transfer to higher-performing schools in the district. But two years after NCLB was enacted, it appears only a small percentage of the students eligible to transfer are doing so.

A survey released in January 2004 by the Council of Great City Schools found that the total number of children moving to a different school remains relatively small at 2%, although it did document a threefold increase over the previous year.[i] This finding was echoed by a study released in May 2004 by the Citizen's Commission on Civil Rights. It found that among those districts that submitted complete data, 1.7% of eligible students transferred to higher-performing schools in the 2003-04 school year.[ii]

As the number of schools that must allow their students to transfer to another school under NCLB rises, and as more parents become aware of their options, there will likely be a considerable increase in the number of parents requesting transfers. These likely increases, however, will often occur in districts where, up to this point, only a fraction of those eligible for a transfer actually get a seat in a higher-performing school if they apply. Chicago, for example, had 270,757 students eligible to transfer in 2003-04, and 19,246 requested a switch. But the district only approved 1,097 transfers. Though several districts honored most or all transfer requests, many cited the lack of seats at higher-performing schools as a constraint.[iii]

Under NCLB, though, districts cannot use capacity problems as an excuse for not providing seats for students who wish to transfer. For these districts, and the states that oversee their progress, it is vitally important to look at stimulating the supply of new choices so interested families can exercise their rights to transfer. This policy brief sketches out the roles that states can play in the process.

Is There a Role for the State?

Providing transfer options is a district responsibility under NCLB. But since states are ultimately accountable for meeting the terms of NCLB (and, most importantly, for the quality of public education), it is worth considering whether states also have a role to play in stimulating the supply of new choices.

In the past, state departments of education have acted primarily as regulatory bodies. Once districts have complied with regulations involving accreditation, the number of days that school is in session, reporting procedures and the like, state departments have allocated both federal and state funds to them. In several cases, they also have provided technical assistance to low-performing schools and districts. They have not, however, been responsible for stimulating the supply of new schooling options. While most states have enacted charter school legislation that allows new schools to form, in most cases this allowance falls short of the state's playing a proactive role in stimulating supply.

Even though states have not historically taken on this role, they are uniquely qualified to do so. Because of their statewide reach and perspective, state departments and other state entities, such as governors' offices, are in a position to leverage their influence in several key areas:

- **Assessing needs.** Because most state education departments have invested heavily in the last few years in testing programs and in data management systems, they are in a strong position to

This paper was written by Bryan C. Hassel and Lucy Steiner. Hassel is the president of Public Impact, a North Carolina-based consulting firm. Steiner is a consultant with Public Impact. *The U.S. Department of Education's Public Charter Schools Program provided funding for this paper.*

i Michael Casserly, "Driving Change." *Education Next* 4, 3 (Summer 2004), p. 34.

ii Cynthia G. Brown, *Choosing Better Schools: A Report on Student Transfers Under the No Child Left Behind Act*, Report of the Citizens' Commission on Civil Rights (Washington, DC: Citizens' Commission on Civil Rights, 2004), p. 6.

iii Ibid, p. 41.

Authorizing New Authorizers

Colorado established a charter schools institute as a statewide authorizer of charter schools. Previously, local school boards were the sole sponsors of charter schools (though their decisions can be appealed to the state board of education). The institute's governing board has nine members – seven appointed by the governor (with the consent of the senate) and two by the commissioner of education. One interesting feature of the legislation: school boards can retain exclusive chartering authority if they can convince the state board they are willing authorizers who treat charter schools fairly and equitably. In other words, a school board can prevent the institute from issuing charters within its jurisdiction by meeting the legislation's standards for high-quality authorizing.

Idaho created a public charter school commission overseen by a seven-member, governor-appointed board. The commission can approve "virtual public charter schools" to serve students, perhaps from more than one district, using online technologies. It also can approve other charter schools that appeal their non-approval by local school boards.

Utah instituted a new state board with the power to issue charters statewide. The board has seven members appointed by the governor. Two must have "expertise in finance or small business management"; three are selected from a slate of at least six candidates nominated by Utah's charter schools; and two are appointed from a slate of at least four candidates nominated by the state board of education.

assess the statewide need for new options and to set priorities.

- **Creating a favorable environment.** State-level policies determine the environment in which new options are able to flourish – or not.
- **Attracting and developing new "supply."** States also can aggregate resources for recruitment and development of new options. This prevents individual districts from unnecessarily duplicating each other's efforts and makes possible multidistrict partnerships with providers of new school options.

Each of these areas is explored in more detail below.

Assess the Need for New Choices

There are several activities states can undertake in this area, including the following:

Documenting the level of demand and supply

An important first step that state-level policymakers are in a strong position to implement is analyzing statewide data to determine not only how many low-performing schools there are, but also how many students attend these schools. A second step is for the state to determine the current level of available seats in high-performing schools on a district-by-district basis. The state also can examine information about the capacity of higher-performing alternative and optional programs, such as charter schools, to accept transfer students.

Determining where excess demand is concentrated

From the above data, states will see patterns emerge that document where new options need to be created and what types of students they should target. Are there certain districts, certain areas of the state, certain categories of children (grade levels, special needs, etc.) that have large numbers of students who will have the option to transfer?

Projecting need for new "seats" and schools

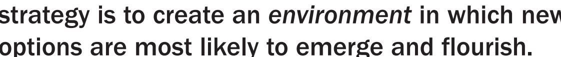
Over time, data on supply and demand can be analyzed for trends that policymakers can use to predict future needs. In many states, for example, growing numbers of Hispanic immigrants have caused districts to invest much more heavily in English-as-a-second-language programs. Any planning around new options would need to take this growing population into account. Another variable to take into account is how much districts are doing themselves. Some districts are working proactively not only to improve student achievement, but also to expand the availability of options so all students are successful. In districts where this is not the case, there will be more of a need for the state to act.

Publishing this information widely

Having collected data on supply and demand, the state is in a position to get the word out. State lawmakers, community groups and potential providers of new schooling options should know where there is a need for more capacity. Widely available information also helps hold school districts accountable for doing their part to offer sufficient options.

Create a Favorable Environment for New Choices

Once a state has a handle on demand for and supply of options, the question naturally turns to how the state can help close existing gaps. It is unlikely the state will actually go out and operate new schools to meet the excess demand. Instead, the state's best



strategy is to create an *environment* in which new options are most likely to emerge and flourish.

Many states have already taken a step toward creating such an environment by establishing charter school legislation. In some of these states, the existing chartering mechanism may be sufficient to meet the excess demand for new options. In others, the state will need to consider ways to improve the chartering mechanism – as described below.

While charter schools are one natural way for states to create new options, states also can contract with providers to start and run new schools, or make it easier for districts to do so. This kind of contracting is "charter-like," in the sense that providers are selected according to some kind of rigorous process, given the legal authority to run their schools and held accountable for performance. The formal label "charter school" is less important than these underlying concepts.

How can states make sure they have well-functioning chartering and contracting mechanisms? Here two levers are considered: improving the statutory and regulatory framework, and improving the quality of authorizing and contracting.[iv]

Improving the statutory and regulatory framework

New options cannot flourish in an environment that discourages them. Different states have different regulatory and statutory barriers to increasing the supply of new options. All states should carefully consider what impedes the creation of such schools and take steps to remove these hurdles. In so doing, they should consider several possibilities.

- **Empower new charter authorizers.** For a new charter school to open, it needs a willing "authorizer" – an agency that grants it a charter and oversees it over time. So an initial question for state policymakers is whether there are enough willing authorizers in the state. States without charter laws and states with laws that allow only districts to issue charters may want to consider adding more entities to the list of potential authorizers. Potential nondistrict authorizers include state boards of education, mayors, city councils, universities, nonprofit organizations and special-purpose entities created specifically to be charter authorizers.
- **Lift caps on authorizing.** Many states have limits on how many charters an individual authorizer, a type of authorizer or authorizers as a group can grant. States should consider lifting these caps for authorizers who have successfully managed the application process and the oversight functions that are their primary responsibility, particularly in areas where there are likely to be a lot of students eligible for transfer. Colorado and California, for example, originally had caps on the number of schools that could open, but their legislatures removed these caps or allowed them to lapse as the charter population neared the limit.
- **Create/clarify authority to contract.** Issuing a charter is only one way to open up the opportunity for a new school to form. Another mechanism is for the state or district to contract with some outside entity to start one or more new schools. In some states, the ability of the state and districts to do this kind of contracting is well established. In others, states may need to amend existing law to make clear that contracting for the operation of new schools is allowable, as well as to set appropriate parameters on such contracting.
- **Ensure charter/contract schools have autonomy.** To entice providers to open up new options, the resulting schools must have the management authority to carry out their school designs effectively. If the new schools face all the same constraints that existing schools face, it is unlikely that many of them will form, thrive and offer true alternatives. Some basic public school laws and regulations, of course, should apply, such as

[iv] While this paper focuses on chartering and contracting as mechanisms for creating new options, they are not the only possible mechanisms. Another mechanism worthy of mention is interdistrict transfers. Many low-performing school districts are surrounded by higher-performing ones. While many of these are truly full, not all of them are. NCLB does not compel these neighboring districts to accept transferring students, but states can take a proactive role in encouraging such acceptances; for example, by guaranteeing sufficient funding follows transferring students and ensuring receiving districts' AYP status under NCLB is not adversely affected in the short term.

Providing Start-Up Funds

In **California**, a new revolving loan fund allows charter schools to receive loans of up to $250,000 and have up to five years to repay them.

An **Illinois** statute authorizes the state to provide new charter schools with $125 per pupil for their first three years operation. A 300-student school could garner $112,500 through this mechanism.

health, safety and nondiscrimination, along with participation in the state's testing and accountability regime. But within those basic constraints, providers need wide latitude to establish their learning programs, organize their operations, allocate resources and staff their schools.

- **Ensure charter/contract schools have resources.** New schooling options will need adequate funding. While charter schools are typically operated with less funding than traditional schools, they need an initial boost of start-up funds for facilities and materials. Researchers looking at failing charter schools frequently cite financial difficulties as a major reason for their problems,[v] and a federal study found that lack of start-up funds was the top implementation challenge cited by charter schools.[vi] So an essential element of any supply-creation strategy is designing a funding system that provides sufficient start-up dollars and through which adequate resources follow children to their new schools.

Improving the quality of authorizing and contracting

In addition to playing a role in ensuring regulations and statutory requirements allow new schooling options to flourish, state policymakers also have a responsibility to improve the *quality* of authorizing and contracting bodies. They can do this in many ways.

- **Define authorizers' accountability.** Authorizers wear many hats, not all of them comfortable. Clearly, authorizers need to implement a rigorous application process that allows promising schools to open while weeding out those unlikely to succeed. And once the schools are up and running, authorizers need to oversee them. When their charters come up for renewal, authorizers need to make merit-based decisions about whether to renew them.

  Is there a state role in holding authorizers accountable for doing these jobs well? There are many possibilities for such a role. States can simply make information about authorizers' actions widely available: What schools are they approving and rejecting? How well are their approved schools doing? Such "transparency" has the advantage of putting minimal constraints on authorizer practice. States can also act more directly. Ohio, for example, has instituted an as-yet-untested procedure for the state to approve would-be authorizers and revoke the "licenses" of those that fail to live up to their obligations. Minnesota too has empowered the state to review the actions of its authorizers. One resource for states seeking to define authorizers' responsibilities is *Principles and Standards of Quality Charter School Authorizing* by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers.[vii]

- **Provide additional resources to authorizers.** Just as schools need adequate funds to succeed, so do authorizing bodies. For example, asking districts to authorize new schools without providing additional funding ensures this role will not receive priority status, hindering the effort from the outset. Once the authorizer's responsibilities are clearly defined, all parties should ensure sufficient personnel and financial resources are in place. Typically, states ask authorizers to devote their own resources to the job – an approach that makes some sense in states where pre-existing school organizations, like districts, are the primary authorizers. Because some financial commitment is required to become an authorizer, it mostly will be the more eager agencies that get into the authorizing "business." On the other hand, asking organizations to rely on their own resources alone is likely to limit, perhaps severely, the number of entities that become willing authorizers.

- **Provide assistance to authorizers.** Since authorizing is a relatively new function, many emerging authorizers can use help in creating their systems. In most districts, for example, taking a "portfolio approach," in which the district does

[v] Center for Education Reform, *Charter School Closures: The Opportunity for Accountability* (Washington, DC: Center for Education Reform, 2002).

[vi] RPP International, *The State of Charter Schools 2000,* Fourth Year Report of the National Study of Charter Schools (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, 2000), p. 44.

[vii] Available at: http://www.charterauthorizers.org/.

not directly own and operate all schools, is new. All the underlying processes, from constructing requests for proposals to entering into performance contracts to overseeing independently operated schools, need to be created. States themselves may not be in the best position to provide the needed help, but they can broker it to make it available to all districts seeking to use this approach.

As the ranks of charter authorizers have grown, more and more resources have become available to help them. Most significantly, there is now a National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA), which exists to promote quality charter school authorizing. A state interested in helping its authorizers be more effective can enlist NACSA or other helpers to provide materials, training, consulting or other assistance to authorizers within the state. States such as California and Georgia, for example, have called in NACSA to work with district-level authorizers to improve certain practices, such as application-review processes. On a state level, Ohio has helped fund the Ohio Sponsorship Institute to provide training for organizations seeking to become authorizers in that state.

- **Share information widely about authorizing, contracting and new-options creation.** Authorizers in the midst of managing application and oversight processes rarely have time to step back and research best practices from across the country. The state, on the other hand, can take on this role. Reviewing research findings, attending conferences and establishing ties with other state agencies involved in similar efforts are best accomplished at the state level if the state then leverages its findings into easy-to-use tools for authorizing bodies. Part of NACSA's work in California, for example, has involved convening district authorizers to share best practices related to reviewing charter applications.

Attract and Develop New Supply

High-quality leadership teams with strong school designs that meet the specific needs of particular communities are challenging to find. Therefore, the state should work with authorizing bodies to identify and recruit potential school operators. There are several places to look:

Proven models seeking to replicate

Several school models designed to meet the needs of at-risk and low-income students are seeking to open multiple schools. Some of these models have an emerging or long-standing body of research to support their designs. Most have some test score data to give an idea of how successful they have been in improving student achievement. These models take different forms. Some are national in scope, some regional and local. Some are nonprofit organizations, some are for-profit "education management organizations" or EMOs. The common thread is a desire to open numerous high-quality schools that share some basic features. Such organizations can potentially open many schools within a state.

Strong individual schools seeking to replicate

As an alternative to bringing in an entirely new design, the needs-assessment process may turn up individual schools within the state that are successful at meeting the needs of the same types of students who are seeking a transfer. While it is not always easy to pinpoint what makes a school successful, there are many examples nationally of thriving individual schools that have been able to scale up successfully.

Paying for the Authorizing Function

Some states have sought to provide additional resources for authorizers, through two main mechanisms:

Direct state funding. Free-standing, special-purpose authorizers such as the District of Columbia Public Charter School Board and the Arizona State Board of Charter Schools, are funded (at least in part) in this way. So are the State University of New York's Charter Schools Institute and other authorizers. This approach has the advantage of creating a direct – albeit somewhat unpredictable – funding source. But it also authorizes the state in a way that some might find uncomfortable if state funding comes with explicit or implicit "strings" they regard as unacceptable.

Percentage of school funding. Some states, such as Michigan, allow charter authorizers to retain a percentage (e.g., 3%) of schools' per-pupil operating funds for their own use. This approach has the advantage of creating a "natural" funding stream not subject to annual budget wrangling. Schools may grumble, though, about the diversion of "their" scarce resources. And a straight per-pupil percentage may create incentives for undesirable actions, such as approving questionable schools to boost revenues, approving larger schools to increase per-school income and keeping alive failing schools to retain revenue.

Recruiting Proven Models and Leaders

An example from Indianapolis, where the mayor is the only charter school authorizer, can provide some good ideas for states. To ensure a steady stream of good applicants, the mayor's office created the Seed and Lead program, with funding from the local Richard M. Fairbanks Foundation. In the "seed" component, the mayor's office is actively recruiting organizations with proven school models to submit charter applications in Indianapolis. Independent researchers vet potential models; community leaders visit model schools; and the city hosts visits by the model organizations where they have the chance to make local connections and learn about the environment for charter schooling in Indianapolis. In the "lead" component, the mayor's office is partnering with Building Excellent Schools (BES) to recruit and train eight or more top-notch school leaders as Indianapolis Building Excellent Schools Fellows. The Fellows will participate in BES's yearlong program, in which they receive training, spend time in excellent charter schools and earn a "salary" as they design a new charter school.

[viii] Bryan C. Hassel and Michelle Godard Terrell, *"How Can Virtual Schools Be a Vibrant Part of Meeting the Choice Provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act?"* Paper prepared for U.S. Department of Education Secretary's No Child Left Behind Leadership Summit, July 2004.

Strong in-state community and cultural organizations interested in opening schools

Several successful charter schools have been started by organizations with strong ties and recognition in the communities they serve. Examples include community-based organizations dedicated to meeting the needs of immigrants, providing social services in low-income communities, and advocating for underserved populations. Because they are often new to the role of school operator, these grassroots efforts may need more support with some aspects of running a school, but they have the advantage of strong community support.

Top-notch educators capable of starting new schools

Another potential source of strong leadership is highly effective educators. These individuals may need additional support in the form of extensive leadership training before they are ready to take on the responsibilities of running a school, but if they have been successful with high-needs students, they have the potential to translate their knowledge of what works into an effective school design.

Other entrepreneurial individuals

Potential school founders are not limited to people with an education background. At the secondary level, there are several employer-linked charter schools started by business leaders interested in investing in a highly educated workforce. Charter school boards are routinely made up of people from various backgrounds, including law, finance, nonprofit management and education. There are an increasing number of high-quality leadership recruitment and development programs designed to help this kind of promising individual launch a school.

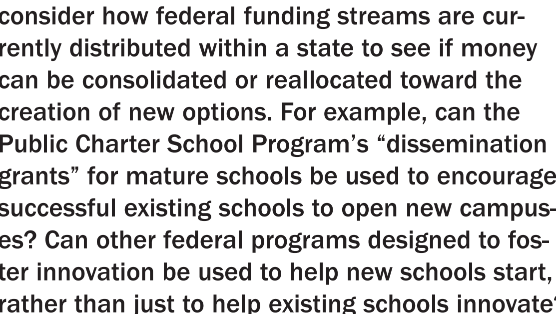
Virtual schools

More and more organizations have formed to offer different kinds of online education. Though much of this instruction is now delivered in the form of discrete courses, rather than entire schools, the number of full-blown virtual schools is also on the rise. Such schools can be part of the continuum of options provided to a state's students.[viii]

Recruiting and developing school leadership teams

There are several ways that the state can recruit and develop school leadership teams with the potential to open new schools in light of increasing demands for transfers due to NCLB.

- **Issue RFP or RFQ inviting organizations to propose new schools for high-demand areas.** Working closely with districts from across the state that are facing similar challenges, the state can help attract leadership teams with expertise addressing these challenges by issuing a series of request for proposals (RFPs) or request for qualifications (RFQs). The more specific and targeted the request, the more likely suppliers are to design school programs that meet identified needs and preferences.
- **Mount campaign to recruit from categories mentioned above.** At this point, the demand for high-quality proven school designs far outweighs the supply. Any effort to increase the supply will require a look at all the sources listed above in a systematic and ongoing way. This type of "campaign" to recruit and develop new models on multiple fronts is best orchestrated by a large district or by the state. Smaller rural districts and severely challenged large districts may not be capable of keeping so many different efforts on track.
- **Provide seed funding for creation of new schools/replication of successful models.** As part of its multifront campaign to increase supply, the state might have to offer funding support. Promising local efforts may need seed money to pay for staff and development costs, and successful models may need money to replicate their design elsewhere. One option for a state is to



consider how federal funding streams are currently distributed within a state to see if money can be consolidated or reallocated toward the creation of new options. For example, can the Public Charter School Program's "dissemination grants" for mature schools be used to encourage successful existing schools to open new campuses? Can other federal programs designed to foster innovation be used to help new schools start, rather than just to help existing schools innovate?

- **Create/support systems to assist new school founders.** Opening a new school successfully takes planning and preparation. Ideally, selected providers have time – perhaps up to a year – to get ready. During this time, and while the school is getting established, there are various roles the state can play to make sure new schools get off to a good start. The state can play these directly. Or the state can serve as a catalyst, providing encouragement and funding for outside entities to launch initiatives such as the following:

  Incubators. One option for state policymakers who know they will need several new schools per year might be to "incubate" leadership teams within the state. This will require additional manpower on the state level to run such an office, but there might be people with experience providing technical assistance or existing school-support organizations that are suited to take on such a responsibility.

  For an overview of the incubator idea, see the Center for Reinventing Public Education's publication, Stimulating the Supply and Building the Capacity of New Schools and School Developers: Recommendations for the Design and Implementation of a New Schools Incubator (June 2000), available at http://www.crpe.org.

  Leadership development programs. Another option for states with a large demand for new schools is to encourage the development of statewide leadership development programs. These can be housed in universities or state departments of education and funded by private philanthropies. They also can be specifically targeted to train teams to work in high-needs rural or urban areas.

  There are some national programs that have proven successful. For example, the Fisher Leadership Program provides principal training for people interested in leading schools that resemble the highly successful Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP) schools in Houston and the Bronx. Other examples include Building Excellent Schools and New Leaders for New Schools. All these programs offer extensive training, internships with a mentor and ongoing networks that new principals can tap into as they begin leading schools. A state can seek a partnership with one of these existing leadership programs in the same way that districts such as New York City and the District of Columbia have enlisted the help of New Leaders for New Schools in recruiting and training individuals to head charter and other public schools.

  Another approach the state can pursue to build strong school leadership is to establish alternative training options for strong local leadership candidates in rural and urban areas. These can include: creating distance-learning programs; funding the establishment of strong statewide networks that meet regularly; and allowing providers other than schools of education – such as teachers unions, nonprofits and districts – to train local people for leadership positions.

  Back-office service providers. One lesson from the first decade of charter schools is new schools often struggle with some of the ancillary aspects of schooling – financing a facility, managing finances, operating a transportation system and the like. These challenges are exacerbated when schools are independently operated, outside of district systems. States are not

Incubating Leadership

In 2003, the New Mexico Legislature appropriated $100,000 to the state department of education for "charter school incubation" – intensive help to organizations planning new charter schools. In May 2003, the department formally invited organizations to bid on a contract to create the incubator, which will provide on-site assistance to those planning charter schools on designing the school, completing the application, developing curriculum and understanding school law, governance, special education and charter finance.

The state let the initial contract to Youth Development Inc., a well-established nonprofit organization that offers a wide array of community services to children, youth and families in central and northern New Mexico. Twelve charter applicants made use of the yearlong training and assistance program, with the intent of submitting charter applications in fall 2004. As of August 2004, the state was in the process of awarding a new contract for $150,000 to continue these services.

© 2004 by the Education Commission of the States (ECS). All rights reserved. ECS is a nonprofit, nationwide organization that helps state leaders shape education policy.

To request permission to excerpt part of this publication, either in print or electronically, please fax a request to the attention of the ECS Communications Department, 303.296.8332 or e-mail ecs@ecs.org. Copies of this issue brief are available for $5. Ask for publication #GV-04-06.

Helping State Leaders Shape Education Policy

in a good position to address these problems directly, but states can serve as catalysts for the creation of organizations that can address them. For example, the District of Columbia provided funding to help charter schools create a cooperative organization to handle special education. Others, such as Ohio, have provided loan guarantees and other aid related to financing a facility. This kind of assistance helps new school leaders focus more attention on what matters most: what goes on in classrooms.

Other forms of assistance. In several states and districts with a strong history of creating new options, there are independent organizations that provide various types of assistance to new schools. These groups help new schools with the process of applying to a charter authorizer for a charter or contract. They also provide technical assistance, offer workshops, field inquiries, and even provide help with services such as accounting and facilities financing. By actively supporting such independent groups, the state can gain a valuable ally in its efforts to stimulate the supply of new schooling options.

Conclusion

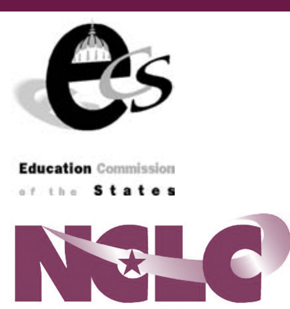
As more and more parents demand new options under No Child Left Behind, will the supply be in place to meet it? Without a concerted effort, it appears the answer will be "no." A targeted campaign to assess needs, create an environment in which new options can form and thrive and develop new supply, however, can provide the choices families are requesting.

While districts are primarily responsible for providing options, there are many roles states can play in making sure every family has the opportunity to make a successful school choice. Many states are already experimenting with these approaches, and more are sure to follow in the coming years. As they do, the knowledge and experience base related to this role will grow, and states will have more and more models to use as they explore how to stimulate the supply of new options.

Education Commission
of the States

700 Broadway, Suite 1200
Denver, CO 80203-3460
www.ecs.org

Helping State Leaders Shape Education Policy



CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Issue Paper

Citizenship Education Policy at the School District Level

April 2004

700 Broadway, Suite 1200 • Denver, CO 80203-3460 • 303.299.3600 • Fax 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

Introduction

At a time when the ongoing effort to reform public education in the United States is significantly influenced by requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind Act, policymakers and education leaders at all levels are focused on improving student achievement in math and reading. The emphasis on these two areas, however, is making many educators, policymakers and public education advocates concerned that public education's historical function of training young people for democratic citizenship is being pushed aside.

While no one disputes that public education must provide students with the knowledge and skills they need to establish careers and participate in today's economy, many people argue that schools still must teach the skills and values students need to participate in community life and in local, state and national politics. In 2000, the National Study Group on Citizenship in K-12 Schools concluded in *Every Student A Citizen*:

> *If we do nothing to improve how students are educated for citizenship, we give up the ability to set the terms for the future of our children and, in the end, the nation. The opposite of doing nothing about citizenship education is not stasis. It is to concede that the disconnect Americans now experience as a problem will inevitably be a permanent condition. The decision to default is one the nation cannot afford. (p. 30)*

During summer 2003, the Education Commission of the States' National Center for Learning and Citizenship (NCLC) invited 22 school districts across the country to complete surveys on their efforts to teach citizenship as part of a larger project examining the "line of sight" between state policy and school practice.[1] School districts represent a key leverage point in education policy because of their ability to mediate and interpret state and federal policy according to local conditions.

Districts were selected for this study based on recommendations from NCLC's national and state partners and on the center's previous work with some of the districts and their staffs. Fourteen of the 22 districts returned surveys. Respondents included small, rural districts, affluent suburban districts and two of the country's largest urban districts. The results are summarized below.

While the small number of districts included cannot represent the array of approaches to citizenship education in the roughly 15,000 U.S. school districts, the findings do provide useful information for district and state leaders seeking to support schools in preparing young people to participate in their communities and in the American democratic system of governance. The paper concludes with recommendations for policymakers to consider in designing and sustaining programs to prepare young people for citizenship.

Summary of Findings

The majority of survey respondents said citizenship education is important, and nearly all of them offer opportunities for students to acquire some of the knowledge and skills that effective citizens need. Most of the districts consider "citizenship education" to be a topic addressed through civics courses. When asked about the specific knowledge, skills and dispositions of citizenship, however, nearly all respondents described opportunities for students to obtain at least some civic competencies outside their civics courses.

Citizenship education is supported through state standards and local school board missions, with a number of districts also either requiring or expressing official support for the use of service-learning. These official policies are supported in a number of districts by local leaders' belief that civic engagement and involvement in the community are important qualifications for teachers and other education staff, by systems for shared decisionmaking among school and district staff, and by programs and unofficial opportunities for students to participate in district and school decisionmaking.

[1] Other products developed for this larger project include a 50-state database of state citizenship education policies, a policy brief based on information contained in the database and an issue paper describing 10 case studies of high schools providing high-quality citizenship education. All products are available on the NCLC Web site at www.ecs.org/NCLC.

Yet despite this apparent commitment to preparing young people to participate in democracy, few states have systems to assess whether these efforts truly are successful, and only half of the districts that answered the survey do any local assessment of students' citizenship competence.

Highlights from the survey follow, with more detail about the findings in the body of the paper. The categories under which the paper is organized represent one way a school district might coordinate its change efforts, but individual districts have to determine how best to organize their work. *Note that in some examples below, the total number of responses reported is less than 14. In these cases, one or more survey respondents did not answer a particular survey question.*

Curriculum and Instruction

- Ten of 12 districts report that district curriculum guidelines call for citizenship education to be taught in civics or other social studies courses. Two of those respondents added that district guidelines prescribe the teaching of citizenship in other areas as well.
- In seven of 12 districts, students learn about the role of the citizen by addressing community problems in civics or other social studies courses.
- Eleven of 14 districts report that their citizenship standards or requirements are not substantially different from their state standards and requirements, but only eight respondents view their states' academic standards as adequate in addressing the skills, knowledge and dispositions needed for effective citizenship. No respondents say their state standards are excellent.

School Board Policy

- Twelve of 13 school districts report citizenship is part of the district's mission, vision, objectives, strategic plan or local standards.
- Nine of 14 districts have school board policies relating to citizenship education, including district mission statements, strategic plans, service-learning and civics policies.
- Three of 14 districts have a service-learning graduation requirement, while three others have passed school board policies supporting the use of service-learning in their schools.

Leadership

- Eight of 13 districts consider competency in citizenship education or a belief in its importance when hiring teachers.
- Twelve of 14 districts report that democratic governance at the building and district levels is supported through shared decisionmaking, with eight districts citing site-based management as a specific example.

Civic Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions

The ECS National Center for Learning and Citizenship (NCLC) believes a student needs civic skills and dispositions, as well as civic content knowledge to be an engaged citizen. Civic knowledge, skills and dispositions should build on and reinforce one another, beginning in early childhood, and be seen as approximately equal in importance. Many, but not all, of these competencies already exist in state and local standards for civics. They also can be fostered through both school-related and out-of-school experiences (in family or neighborhood). Therefore, it is important that schools and communities work together to determine the civic competencies most important to them. Below are some examples of civic competencies a community might seek to cultivate among its citizens.

Civic-related knowledge (both historical and contemporary)

- Understanding of historical conflicts over the meaning of the constitution
- Understanding of the role of media in a democracy
- Knowledge of the ways ordinary citizens can act and have acted in the past to create change
- Knowledge of local community assets, problems and important local actors, and their connection to broader issues.

Cognitive and participative skills (and associated behaviors)

- Ability to understand, analyze and check the reliability of information about government from media sources and political communications
- Ability to articulate the meaning of abstract concepts such as democracy and patriotism
- Ability to express one's opinion on a political or civic matter when contacting an elected official or media outlet
- Ability to envision a plan for action on community problems and to mobilize others.

Dispositions (motivations for behavior and values/attitudes)

- Patriotism and commitment to American democracy
- Support for justice, equality and other democratic values and procedures
- Respect for human rights and a willingness to search out and listen to others' views
- Personal commitment to the well-being of others in the community and nation.

For more information about civic competencies, see *Developing Citizenship Competencies from Kindergarten through Grade 12: A Background Paper* by Judith Torney-Purta and Susan B. Vermeer, published 2004 by the Education Commission of the States' National Center for Learning and Citizenship.

Assessment and Accountability

- Four of 14 districts assess citizenship through state standardized tests, while seven districts use other means. Four districts report that citizenship is not assessed.
- Eleven of 14 districts report that student demonstration of proficiency in citizenship is not a requirement for promotion.

Civic Education and Civic Engagement

Evidence indicates that young people are graduating from high school with little knowledge of or interest in government and political affairs. According to the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE), nearly one-third of high school seniors demonstrated a lack of basic understanding of how American government works in the 1998 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Civics Assessment (see *The Civic Mission of Schools,* p. 19). Three-fourths of students who took the NAEP exam received a "basic" or "below basic" score.

In addition, today's students appear disinclined to participate in the public policy decisions that affect their lives. In presidential election years between 1972 and 2000, for example, the national voter turnout rate among 18- to 24-year-olds declined by 13% (Levine and Lopez, 2002).

As civic knowledge and participation among young people has slipped, the curriculum in American public schools has included fewer requirements for civic education. Between 1988 and 1998, the proportion of 4th graders who reported taking social studies daily fell from 49% to 39% (NAEP, 1998, p. 15). According to *The Civic Mission of Schools*:

> *Although the percentage of students enrolled in at least one high school government course has remained fairly constant since the late 1920s, most formal civic education today comprises only a single course on government – compared to as many as three courses in civics, democracy and government that were common until the 1960s. The traditional "civics" course used to emphasize the rights and responsibilities of citizens and ways that they could work together and relate to government. "Problems of democracy" involved discussions of public policy issues. The "government" class (which remains common today) describes and analyzes government in a more distant way, often with little explicit discussion of a citizen's role.*

While civic education requirements have decreased, many schools have expanded the use of community service to teach students about the responsibilities of citizenship. These service activities, however, tend to be one-time or short-term experiences not designed to help students understand the underlying causes of the community needs they are addressing, or the political conditions that may contribute to such needs. Furthermore, these limited service experiences do not appear to foster continued civic engagement once young people leave school. According to Lopez (2004), while the proportion of college freshmen who report having volunteered in high school is increasing, the volunteer experiences they have had are generally episodic (once a month or less), rather than regular activities. And according to data from the U.S. Department of Education's National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, which followed a cohort of more than 10,000 students through 2000, volunteerism among members of this group peaked at 41% at about age 20 (when many were in college), but had dropped to 33% six years later (National Center for Education Statistics, 2003).

Despite these gloomy numbers, there are places where students are given a variety of opportunities to acquire not only civic knowledge, but also the skills needed for effective citizenship and the encouragement to get involved. School districts across the country are demonstrating that the academic and civic missions of public education are not mutually exclusive.

Curriculum and Instruction

NCLC supports a vision of high-quality citizenship education through which students acquire knowledge of government and political systems; civic skills, such as the ability to understand how public policy decisions are made and the ability to participate in or influence those decisions; and civic dispositions, such as a belief in the importance of representative democracy and a willingness to get involved in community decisionmaking. (For more information on civic knowledge, skills and dispositions, see Torney-Purta and Vermeer.) Education for citizenship is not the sole responsibility of civics teachers; all teachers can provide opportunities for students to learn participatory skills and democratic values.

Yet, as highlighted above, 10 of 12 districts surveyed report that district guidelines require citizenship to be taught in civics or other social studies courses. Respondents from only three districts say citizenship is taught outside the social studies. All 12 of these districts indicate that students learn about state government in civics, government or other social studies courses, and 10 of the 12 say students learn about local government in civics or other

social studies courses. Only seven of these 12 districts, however, report that students learn in these courses about “the role of the citizen in solving community problems or making positive changes in the community.”

In seven districts, respondents say students learn about the role of the citizen through other courses or, more commonly, through service-learning.[2] One respondent from the Los Angeles Unified School District said the role of the citizen is not currently part of the curriculum and noted, “This is why we are adding a service-learning requirement.”

Yet when asked about specific civic skills (such as debating issues, synthesizing information, group leadership, public speaking and persuasive writing) and dispositions (such as respect for others’ beliefs and ideas, public spiritedness, and belief in consensus and collaboration), some respondents identified opportunities for students to acquire such competencies beyond civics and social studies courses. Dale Kinsley, superintendent of the Bellingham Public Schools in Washington, pointed to his district’s English/language arts curriculum for some of the civic skills listed, and indicated that many civic dispositions are part of the elementary curriculum, which emphasizes such values as getting along with others and being involved in the community.

Not surprisingly, the majority of districts surveyed count state standards and graduation requirements as important influences on the citizenship curriculum. Only three of the 14 districts have citizenship education course requirements or standards that are different from state requirements. Yet respondents from five of these districts say their state standards are less than adequate in addressing the knowledge, skills and dispositions necessary for effective citizenship. One respondent reported no state standards to support citizenship education (though the state, in fact, does have such standards). The other respondents say their state standards are adequate in this regard. Not a single respondent rated his or her state’s standards as “excellent” in addressing citizenship knowledge, skills and dispositions.

With respect to the influence of various parties on the citizenship education curriculum, 11 of 13 respondents (85%) said district administration has either “some influence” or “significant influence” over the curriculum, followed by individual teachers and building principals (77%), and school boards and district curriculum directors (62%). Four respondents (31%) said the state education agency has “little or no influence” over the citizenship curriculum. The superintendent of one of these districts, Shelley Berman of the Hudson (Massachusetts) Public Schools, said: “The state has significantly de-emphasized civics in the state standards. We are making it central to our local curriculum.”

Yet although they cite district personnel as having the most influence over the curriculum, respondents acknowledge that most districts embrace state standards and graduation course requirements. This apparent contradiction may be explained by district leaders’ view of state requirements as minimum guidelines that may be interpreted differently by individual districts. State standards prescribe the knowledge that students must be able to demonstrate, while course requirements often prescribe little in the way of content. Thus, while standards and course requirements lay out a framework for instruction, in most cases it is left to districts, schools and individual teachers to determine how to meet those requirements.

The school districts in this study use a variety of curricular and co-curricular approaches to provide students with opportunities to practice citizenship skills. Mock trials and mock elections are used in most of the districts, although it isn’t known how often these strategies are used. All districts report using service-learning, with most using this methodology across all grades. But the frequency of such opportunities for students varies across districts, with only a few appearing to use service-learning routinely.

Survey respondents mentioned a variety of civics and citizenship-related programs developed by external organizations, as well as local agencies. These include programs from the Center for Civic Education, the Close Up Foundation, the Constitutional Rights Foundation, Project 540, Street Law, First Vote, Future Problem Solvers/ Community Problem Solvers, Kids Voting USA, Character Counts, Teen Court, Model U.N., Project Ignition, First Amendment Schools and others.

The choice of instructional materials is influenced by both state and local decisions. Respondents from seven districts say decisions about instructional materials for civics or citizenship education are based on state-mandated adoption lists. But state adoption lists are not the only factor; 12 districts report district curriculum committees make decisions about curriculum resources as well. Other important decisionmakers are high school departments, school curriculum committees and, of course, individual teachers.

[2] Service-learning is a teaching methodology, which involves students in service to their communities in ways that provide students with opportunities to meet specific learning objectives. For a more detailed definition, see the National Service-Learning Clearinghouse.

School Board Policy

School boards usually maintain a mission and/or vision statement and a strategic plan containing specific goals, objectives and strategies. Many districts include in their mission or vision language about the importance of preparing young people for citizenship. Examples from the districts surveyed include:

- "… to become responsible, contributing citizens" (Boulder Valley [Colorado] Public Schools)
- "… to equip each individual for lifelong learning, responsible citizenship and productivity in an ever-changing world" (Richland School District Two, Columbia, South Carolina)
- "… become a useful and responsible member of home, community and society" (Nestucca Valley School District #101, Hebo, Oregon)
- "… to guarantee that each student acquire the skills and knowledge to become a successful individual and a responsible citizen" (Waterford [Connecticut] Public Schools).

Many other districts, however, do not have language about citizenship in their missions or vision statements. The largest urban districts surveyed – Chicago and Los Angeles – emphasize academic achievement and individual development rather than community membership or responsible citizenship. In Los Angeles, "The teachers, administrators and staff of the Los Angeles Unified School District believe in the equal worth and dignity of all students and are committed to educate all students to their maximum potential." In Chicago: "The Chicago Public Schools will … [provide] all our students and their families with high-quality instruction, outstanding academic programs and comprehensive student development supports to prepare them for the challenges of the world of tomorrow." While mission statements do not always guide an organization's day-to-day work, they do communicate publicly what the leadership believes is important.

School boards also convey their priorities through strategic plans. Several districts in this study include citizenship-oriented goals and strategies in their planning documents. For example, the first four instructional goals for 2003-04 for the Hudson (Massachusetts) Public Schools relate to citizenship:

- Strengthening the integration of character education in the curriculum, pre-K-12, by continuing to emphasize Hudson's core values of empathy, ethics and service
- Expanding and enhancing the understanding and integration of community service-learning into the curriculum
- Expanding the instruction of social skill and ethical development through such programs as Second Step, multi-age grouping or looped classrooms, "Responsive Classroom" strategies, conflict resolution skills, peer leadership or peer mediation, etc.
- Increasing student participation in class and school governance through class meetings, active student councils, forms of school governance that engage all students in dialogue and the development of "Responsive Schools."

Some of Hudson's other instructional goals target specific teaching and assessment practices that can support a citizenship orientation:

- Implementing inquiry-based strategies for teaching social studies that develop a critical understanding of the social and political world
- Expanding the use of such multiple forms of assessment as portfolios and other forms of alternative and authentic assessment for informing teaching practices, evaluation and reporting student progress to parents.

Three of the districts surveyed have passed school board resolutions supporting service-learning, and three districts maintain service-learning graduation requirements. The board of the Jemez Valley Public Schools, in New Mexico's Jemez Pueblo, adopted in 2001 a resolution that states, in part, that service-learning "meets the district's goals of helping to develop youth as contributing citizens and allows the opportunity for youth to be seen as resources in their communities."

The Chicago Public Schools requires students to complete 40 hours of service-learning to graduate. Among the expected outcomes of this requirement are: "Increase the civic and citizenship skills of students"; "expose students to societal inadequacies and injustice, and empower students to remedy them"; and "help students learn how to get things done."

Leadership

An important part of any district leader's job is communicating his or her vision and priorities. District leaders can support citizenship education by clearly communicating its importance to staff and faculty, students and the community, even when specific board policies supporting those priorities do not exist. Bill Hughes, superintendent in Greendale, Wisconsin, points out: "The superintendent of schools must set the tone and support the expectation of citizenship education." Accordingly, Hughes leads a yearly workshop for new teachers in citizenship education and service-learning. More than 30% of the district's current faculty have participated. Hughes also

requires his principals to include a service-learning goal in their annual performance reviews.

Another way superintendents and school boards communicate their priorities is in the hiring of staff. Eight of 13 survey respondents say competency in citizenship education or a belief in its importance is considered in teacher hiring decisions. Randy Collins, superintendent in Waterford, Connecticut, says he hired one applicant for a civics position over another candidate with more seniority because the junior applicant had taught a "problems-of-democracy" course. When hiring a service-learning coordinator, Collins sought candidates with a "citizenship orientation."

District leaders also can convey their belief in the value of democratic decisionmaking by establishing a management structure that encourages shared leadership. Twelve of the districts surveyed report democratic governance at the building and district levels is supported through shared decisionmaking, with eight districts citing site-based management as a specific example.

In all of the districts surveyed, leadership opportunities are available through student government. In Hudson, a new high school was built to facilitate all students' participation in school governance through regular meetings of student subgroups called "clusters." Ten of the districts surveyed have student advisory groups working with the principal in at least some schools, and 10 districts include student seats on school site councils.

Half of the districts include student seats on school board committees, and five include students as nonvoting members of the school board. None of these districts, however, allows students to serve as full, voting members of the school board. Other opportunities for student leadership cited by respondents include parent-teacher-student organizations, student-led parent-teacher conferences, student advisory groups to the superintendent, and opportunities for student participation in hiring and strategic planning committees and school improvement councils.

The survey data offered no clear patterns in the ways responsibility for citizenship education is assigned at either the building or district level. In four districts, the director of curriculum and instruction is responsible, while assistant superintendents are named in three surveys. A variety of other people are listed in the remaining surveys, with more than one person named in several districts. One large urban district reports that although many opportunities exist for students to acquire citizenship skills, no one is responsible for citizenship education at the district or building level.

Hudson Superintendent Berman says citizenship education in his district is everyone's responsibility. The district is organized to support students' moral and civic development through democratic governance and opportunities for service to the community, and teachers and other district staff are aware of their responsibilities. In school systems, however, that do not so clearly articulate the goal of effective democratic citizenship, and in which no one is held accountable for the district's success or failure in producing effective citizens, results of any efforts are likely to remain unclear.

Assessment and Accountability

Assessment of citizenship skills and dispositions is not as straightforward as assessment of student knowledge. Some civic skills can be assessed in traditional ways, such as paper-and-pencil tests, including the ability to determine bias in a newspaper article or a piece of campaign literature, take and defend a position, or even make a decision about a particular public policy issue based on the merits of the arguments. Other skills, such as leadership ability and conflict resolution, are harder to test on paper. Civic dispositions – such as willingness to participate in a public dialogue about a particular public policy issue – also can be difficult to measure through traditional assessments.

Districts in the NCLC survey reported only limited assessment of "citizenship." In fact, four districts have no assessment of citizenship at all. The survey question on this issue, however, did not refer to assessment of specific civic knowledge, skills and dispositions, which may have influenced the responses. (As noted above, many of the attitudes and behaviors needed to participate in a community *are* taught at the elementary levels, and elementary teachers are trained to assess student development in these areas.)

In addition, because state accountability systems must accommodate so many students, the type of information such systems can process must be managed. The simplest way to do this is by focusing state tests on what is most easily assessed – student knowledge. And because schools are held accountable by states for student knowledge, it should not be surprising that they spend more time ensuring students do well in that area than they do on cultivating civic skills and dispositions.

Also, because No Child Left Behind requires testing student knowledge in reading and math – and not in the social studies – states now may be even less likely to hold schools accountable for students' civic knowledge, much less their citizenship qualities. Indeed, only four school dis-

tricts report that citizenship is included on their state tests. This factor bears out the findings of NCLC's 50-state policy scan which indicated there is very little alignment between citizenship education standards, assessment and accountability at the state level.[3]

Assessment of students' civic skills and dispositions may be more likely at the district level, and the districts in this study offer some useful models. For example, students graduating from the Bellingham Public Schools in 2006 and thereafter must complete a culminating project that includes a community component. The Jemez Valley Public Schools already require students to complete a "senior exhibition" that includes a portfolio demonstrating what they have learned. The service-learning resolution passed by the Jemez Valley school board includes a statement recommending exhibits based on students' service-learning experiences be included in their portfolios.

The long-term outcomes of citizenship education can be difficult for schools to measure. Yet the Hudson schools are attempting to do just that, and have begun working with Hudson's town clerk to examine trends in voting behavior among the area's 18- to 24-year-olds over the last five years. Hudson also is beginning a three-year evaluation of its democratic governance model in the high school. Both of these efforts should provide district leaders with important information about whether their efforts to build students' civic skills and dispositions, especially a commitment to voting, are working.

Community Partnerships

Citizenship education should be seen as a strategy for teaching young people not just about American history and some far-off government over which they have little influence, but also about the roles they can play in improving their communities. To provide opportunities to learn these roles, it is important for school districts to establish partnerships with local government agencies and community-based organizations. Many of the districts that completed the NCLC survey have partnerships with external civic groups or institutions of higher education to support their citizenship efforts. These districts have found service-learning provides many opportunities for collaboration with outside groups. Organizations cited include Partners in Education, Industry Education Councils, the Scottish Rite Center, VFW, Kiwanis, Rotary, Wal-Mart, police departments and the courts.

Such partnerships benefit both students and the community. According to Susan Abravanel, education director at SOLV in Oregon, school-community partnerships around service-learning can benefit community-based organizations by providing a base of volunteers who may continue volunteering even after a service-learning project ends. These partnerships also can reduce mistrust between community and school by helping community members understand state standards and assessment, and by involving them in helping students meet those standards, she says.

Service-learning can serve as an intermediate strategy that brings schools and communities together. Once this happens, schools can begin involving students – with their adult allies – in public policy decisions that provide opportunities for students to learn civic skills that will equip them to participate in the political process throughout their lives.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Citizenship education is taking place in virtually all American public school districts. Beginning in elementary school, students learn how to resolve conflict, how to choose wisely among alternatives and how to contribute effectively to group deliberations. School districts' use of service-learning is helping cultivate a sense of civic duty and an orientation toward activism. Student government, co-curricular and extracurricular activities provide students with leadership opportunities and a sense of efficacy. And, of course, schools provide many classroom opportunities for students to acquire knowledge of local, state and U.S. history and government.

The school districts in this study have initiated a number of programs, policies and processes designed to support citizenship education that can serve as examples for other districts. These range from simply providing flexibility in scheduling to facilitate community-based learning opportunities, to the development of a community-generated list of desired character traits that is incorporated into lessons

[3] See the NCLC Web site for resources related to this issue, especially the State Policies for Citizenship Database, the StateNote titled "State Citizenship Education Policies" and the policy brief titled "State Policies to Support Citizenship Education."

districtwide, to the requirement that staff candidates demonstrate an orientation toward citizenship before being hired. These districts have created citizenship courses, established culminating project requirements that include community-based learning, added students to the school board and, in one case, completely redesigned the high school to facilitate teacher and student participation in school governance.

Yet what appears to be lacking in most of the districts in our study is an explicit articulation of the connection between the civic knowledge, skills and dispositions acquired in school on the one hand, and the obligations of citizenship on the other. Citizenship education has not been approached in a systematic way in these and likely other school districts. With this in mind, NCLC recommends the following steps for **district leaders**:[4]

1. **Include teachers (including those outside of the social studies), parents, students and other community members in decisions about what civic knowledge, skills and dispositions the schools should teach.** Provide opportunities for students to fully participate in this process.
2. **Conduct an audit of the district curriculum (including courses outside the social studies) to determine where and how the community's agreed-upon competencies are being taught.** Where gaps are identified, the school district and the community can begin to develop a plan to provide opportunities for students to acquire those competencies both in school and in the community. Include in the plan mechanisms for providing teacher professional development, an accountability system, a list of committed partners and their roles, and a "chain of command" to ensure someone is responsible for ensuring that students have access to the opportunities they need to acquire civic competencies.
3. **Communicate clearly to the community and district staff that citizenship education is a priority.** This can be done through position announcements and hiring, performance reviews, professional development opportunities, involvement of students and teachers in district decisionmaking, and other means.
4. **Encourage building principals to establish citizenship education committees** to ensure teachers and students feel ownership over decisions about the citizenship education and the curriculum.

Building administrators are as important as district leaders in moving a school district toward more effective citizenship education. They can demonstrate a commitment to democratic processes and set an example for teachers and students by encouraging input on decisions about the citizenship education curriculum, as well as school governance. Principals can support teachers by offering time for professional development provided by outside experts and by the teachers themselves through collaborative planning. More specifically, school principals and other building-level leaders can support districtwide efforts to promote citizenship education in the following ways:

1. **Bring teachers together to assess the extent to which the current curriculum provides opportunities for students to gain civic knowledge, skills and dispositions,** and develop a schoolwide plan to address competencies not currently being taught.
2. **Encourage community-based learning by permitting some flexibility in the school day and supporting collaboration among teachers.** Invite community members into the school to share their knowledge and to use students as resources.
3. **Provide opportunities for student leadership and participation in school policy decisions** through such means as student government, student-led parent-teacher conferences, and opportunities to serve on site councils and principal advisory boards.
4. **Provide support for teachers in all disciplines to participate in professional development opportunities that will enhance their citizenship education skills.**
5. **Encourage teachers to move beyond one-time service projects** and make ongoing service-learning opportunities that address the root causes of community problems an expectation of teachers and students.

While much of the work of improving the way schools educate young people for citizenship falls on the shoulders of local stakeholders, state policymakers and education leaders can make this work easier by ensuring that state policies acknowledge that citizenship education is part of the mission of public education, and that state program mandates and accountability requirements do not limit schools' ability to achieve this mission. In addition, **state education leaders** may wish to consider the following strategies:

1. **Examine state civics and social studies standards to ensure they clearly convey the importance of civic skills and dispositions, as well as civic knowledge.**
2. **Examine existing state policies to determine their effects on student civic engagement** (e.g., policies allowing minors to serve as volunteer poll workers), and consider sponsoring legislation or developing statewide programs to provide such opportunities.[5]

[4] Recommendations for local governments, elected officials and schools of education, as well as additional recommendations for schools, districts and state policymakers, can be found in the NCLC publication, "Citizenship Education in 10 U.S. High Schools."

[5] The NCLC's 50-state citizenship education policy database may be helpful here.

3. **Incorporate concepts contained in state citizenship standards into state reading and writing assessments**, and provide professional development to help teachers meet these standards.
4. **Incorporate school-community partnerships and local assessment of students' citizenship competencies into the state's accountability system.**

The process of bringing schools and communities together to discuss core civic values and skills may seem daunting, but NCLC's work in this area indicates consensus on these values is not as elusive as one might think. State civics standards can provide a useful starting point, and the NCLC publication, *Developing Citizenship Competencies from Kindergarten through Grade 12: A Background Paper* (Torney-Purta and Vermeer), may help in preparing for this process. It is important for educators to engage local community members in this discussion because their cooperation in providing learning opportunities for students is essential. By making a commitment to citizenship education, local school districts, as the unit of government closest to most American citizens, can play a vital role in reinvigorating civic engagement and American democracy.

References

Abravanel, Susan A. (2003). Issue paper: *Building Community Through Service-Learning: The Role of the Community Partner*. Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States' National Center for Learning and Citizenship.

Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement and Carnegie Corporation of New York (2003). *The Civic Mission of Schools*. New York, NY: CIRCLE and Carnegie.

Compact for Learning and Citizenship and the National Study Group on Citizenship in K-12 Schools (2000). *Every Student A Citizen: Creating the Democratic Self*. Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States.

Levine, Peter, and Mark Hugo Lopez (2002). Fact Sheet: *Youth Voter Turnout Had Declined, By Any Measure*. College Park, MD: CIRCLE. Retrieved from the World Wide Web, March 4, 2004, www.civicyouth.org/research/products/fact_sheets_outside.htm.

Lopez, Mark Hugo (2004). Fact Sheet: *Volunteering Among Young People*. College Park, MD: CIRCLE. Retrieved from the World Wide Web, March 4, 2004, www.civicyouth.org/PopUps/frequency%20of%20volunteering_updated%20Feb%202004.pdf.

National Center for Education Statistics (2003). Statistics in Brief: *Volunteer Service by Young People from High School Through Early Adulthood.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education Institute of Education Sciences. NCES 2004-365.

Torney-Purta, Judith, and Susan B. Vermeer (2004). *Developing Citizenship Competencies from Kindergarten through Grade 12: A Background Paper*. Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States' National Center for Learning and Citizenship.

The National Center for Learning and Citizenship wishes to thank the following school districts for participating in this project: Bellingham Public Schools, Bellingham, Washington; Boulder Valley School District, Boulder, Colorado; Chicago Public Schools, Chicago, Illinois; Fowler Unified School District, Fowler, California; Greendale School District, Greendale, Wisconsin; Hudson Public Schools, Hudson, Massachusetts; Jemez Valley Public Schools, Jemez Pueblo, New Mexico; Los Angeles Unified School District, Los Angeles, California; Milwaukee Public Schools, Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Nestucca Valley School District, Hebo, Oregon; RE-1 Valley Schools, Sterling, Colorado; Richland School District Two, Columbia, South Carolina; Waterford Public Schools, Waterford, Connecticut; and the Santa Barbara County Office of Education, which serves 23 elementary, secondary and unified (K-12) school districts.

Jeffery J. Miller is a policy analyst for the Education Commission of the States' National Center for Learning and Citizenship. Support for this paper was provided by the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE). For more information, contact Miller at 303.299.3665 or jmiller@ecs.org.

The Education Commission of the States (ECS) National Center for Learning and Citizenship (NCLC)

The ECS National Center for Learning and Citizenship (NCLC) assists state and district policymakers and educators who are developing policies that support K-12 school-based service-learning opportunities. These educational experiences help students acquire the skills, values, knowledge and practice necessary to be effective citizens. NCLC identifies and analyzes policies and practices that support effective citizenship education, creates and disseminates publications for education stakeholders, and convenes meetings to develop a collective voice for citizenship education and civic mission of schools. NCLC also encourages policy support and system structures to integrate service-learning into schools and communities. For more information, contact Terry Pickeral, NCLC executive director, 303.299.3636 or visit www.ecs.org/nclc.

© 2004 by the Education Commission of the States (ECS). All rights reserved. ECS is a nonprofit, nationwide organization that helps state leaders shape education policy.

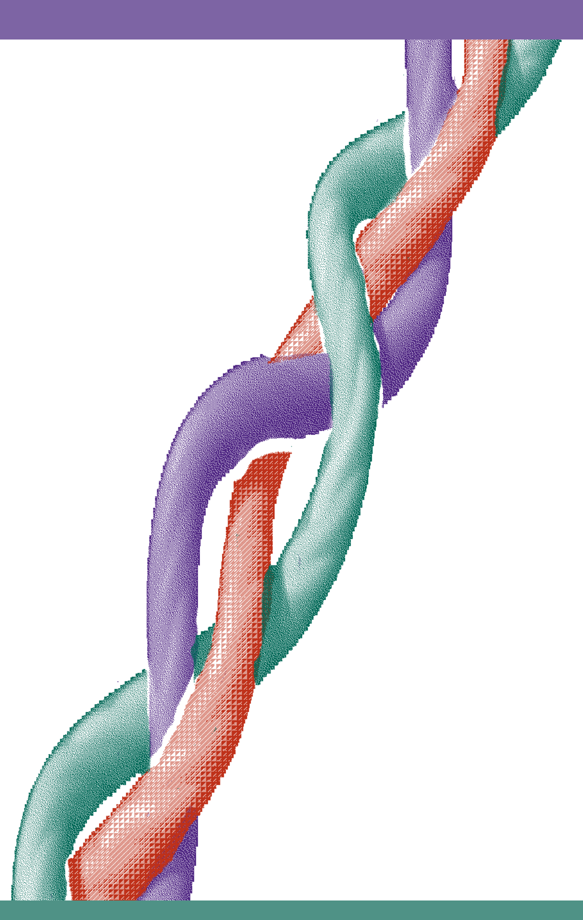
To request permission to excerpt part of this publication, either in print or electronically, please fax a request to the attention of the ECS Communications Department, 303.296.8332 or e-mail ecs@ecs.org.

Helping State Leaders Shape Education Policy

Education Commission of the States
700 Broadway, Suite 1200
Denver, CO 80203-3460

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Denver, Colorado
Permit No. 153

Developing Citizenship Competencies from Kindergarten Through Grade 12:



- Knowledge
- Skills
- Dispositions

A Background Paper for Policymakers and Educators

Developing Citizenship Competencies from Kindergarten through Grade 12: A Background Paper for Policymakers and Educators

Judith Torney-Purta
Senior Advisor to the National Center
for Learning and Citizenship and
Professor of Human Development
University of Maryland
College Park, Maryland
jt22@umail.umd.edu

Susan Vermeer
Project Manager
National Center for Learning
and Citizenship
Education Commission of the States
700 Broadway, Suite 1200
Denver, Colorado
svermeer@ecs.org

April 2004

This background paper and the meetings that were preliminary to it (the Thinkers Meeting, the Professional Judgment Groups) were supported by the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

Cover illustration contributed by Sarah Pearson.

© 2004 by the Education Commission of the States (ECS). All rights reserved.

The Education Commission of the States is a nonprofit, nationwide organization that helps state leaders shape education policy.

Copies of this status report are available for $12.50 plus postage and handling from the Education Commission of the States Distribution Center, 700 Broadway, Suite 1200, Denver, CO 80203-3460; 303.299.3692. Ask for No. SL-04-02. ECS accepts prepaid orders, MasterCard, American Express and Visa. All sales are final.

ECS encourages its readers to share our information with others. To request permission to reprint or excerpt some of our material, please contact the ECS Communications Department at 303.299.3628 or e-mail ecs@ecs.org.

Please add postage and handling if your order totals: Up to $10.00, $3.00; $10.01-$25.00, $4.25; $25.01-$50.00, $5.75; $50.01-$75.00, $8.50; $75.01-$100.00, $10.00; over $100.01, $12.00.

Generous discounts are available for bulk orders of single publications. They are: 10-24 copies, 10% discount; 25-49 copies, 20%; 50-74 copies, 30%; 75-99 copies, 40%; 100+ copies, 50%.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary 1

Strands of Civic Competency 1

State Standards 1

A Developmental Approach 2

Professional Judgment Groups 2

Recommendations for Policymakers 2

Developing Citizenship Competencies from Kindergarten through Grade 12:
A Background Paper for Policymakers and Educators 3

Rational and Purpose of This Paper 4

Explains the role that this paper plays in the NCLC initiative to help improve state and district policies that support citizenship education.

History of ECS Involvement in Citizenship Education and the Carnegie-supported
Project on Citizenship 5

Outlines ECS' Every Student A Citizen *report in the context of ECS' history and commitment to citizenship education. This two-year initiative, sponsored by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, is described along with the Thinkers Meeting on which this paper is based, as well as next steps.*

ECS History 5

The Carnegie-sponsored Project and its Elements 6

Thinkers Meeting: Background, Process and Follow-up Professional Judgment Groups 6

The Current Situation: Standards, Courses and the Quality of Civic Education 8

Contains baseline information on existing national voluntary standards, as well as state policy scans and examples of how they support civic knowledge, skills and dispositions. Research on how students learn about citizenship also is cited.

The Intended Curriculum for Citizenship 8

Standards of the Center for Civic Education and the National Assessment of Civics 8

Standards of the National Council for the Social Studies 9

State Standards 10

Transcript Reviews the IEA CivEd Study: The Implemented Curriculum 12

The Current Climate for Education for Citizenship and Related Policy 14

Outlines current issues such as the emphasis on math and reading in the curriculum, new requirements for citizenship education, professional development for teachers in regard to civic content and pedagogies.

The NCLC Thinkers Meetings and its Results 16

Summarizes the Thinkers Meeting during which participants identified knowledge, skills and dispositions as overarching sets of competencies for the initiative, and also proposed an approach beginning in the earliest years of schooling.

The Three Strands of Competence 19

Explains knowledge, skills and dispositions in detail, with examples and research.

Knowledge 19

Skills 20

Dispositions and motivations 21

Principles for a Continuous and Increasingly Complex Consideration of Citizenship Competencies Beginning at Kindergarten 23

Divides examples of civic experiences into categories of knowledge, skills and dispositions.

Embedded Contexts of Schooling Relating to Civic Education 27

Acknowledges the importance of other levels of influence, such as parents, community groups and higher education, within the focus of NCLC work on school-level reform and policy change.

Suggestions for State-level Policymakers and Advisers Using This Document 28

Suggests to state policymakers how state policy might be improved to support citizenship using the principles outlined in this document.

Executive Summary

Representatives at the school, district and state levels, as well as scholars and researchers, have been working with the Education Commission of the States' National Center for Learning and Citizenship (ECS/NCLC) to define citizenship education in terms of three strands forming "a braid" of civic competencies. Beginning with the rationale and recommendations presented in the Civic Mission of Schools report,[1] this paper:

- Explores the existing research and professional work in the area of civics and social studies standards
- Explains how ECS/NCLC developed these competencies
- Outlines detailed examples of how these competencies might be used across grade spans
- Provides recommendations for state policymakers.

The paper is designed to help state policymakers incorporate civic skills, knowledge and dispositions, along with a developmental approach beginning in the early years of schooling, into state policies that support citizenship education.

"Strands" of Civic Competency

These strands are:

- *Civic-related knowledge*, both historical and contemporary, such as understanding the structure and mechanics of constitutional government, and knowing who the local political actors are and how democratic institutions function.
- *Cognitive and participative skills* (and associated behaviors), such as the ability to understand and analyze data about government and local issues, and skills that help a student resolve conflict as part of a group.
- *Civic dispositions* (motivations for behavior and values/attitudes), which can include support for justice and equality and a sense of personal responsibility. Students will not necessarily connect knowledge and skills to their civic dispositions without experience or a reason to believe their participation is worthwhile.

The strands represent themes of accepted sets of standards, such as those of the Center for Civic Education (CCE) and the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), as well as a number of state standards. As illustrated in the cover's braid logo, the three strands are considered equal in importance and connected to one another. NCLC believes the balance between the three strands is a critical component of any systematic approach to citizenship education.

State Standards

Some state standards support an emphasis on civic dispositions, although content knowledge is the focus of most. Standards relating to civic competency often are not recognized in states' assessment and accountability efforts. In 41 states, statutes specifically provide for the teaching of government, civics and/or citizenship, yet less than half of the state assessment and accountability systems address civic outcomes. This paper includes performance standards (related to civic skills) and standards that support civic dispositions as examples (along with examples relating to knowledge).[2]

---

[1] Carnegie Corporation of New York and CIRCLE (2003). *The civic mission of schools.* New York: Carnegie Corporation.

[2] Miller, Jeffery (2003). *State Policies To Support Citizenship Education.* Denver, Colorado: Education Commission of the States.

A Developmental Approach

The paper also outlines how competencies relating to these strands are acquired from kindergarten through the 12th grade, and provides examples of civic knowledge, skills and dispositions by grade span. According to research by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA),[3] by age 14, the average student in democratic countries is already a member of his or her political culture. This (and other research) makes the case for a developmental approach beginning in the early grades, rather than starting citizenship education in high school.

Professional Judgment Groups

Professional Judgment Groups (PJGs) consisting of state policymakers; state, district and school leaders; teachers and community partners were convened by NCLC from October 2003 to February 2004. Participants, who are experts and practitioners in the field, discussed how civic education should be delivered at different grades, and then identified necessary resources and policies. These policy approaches will be tested in three states starting in fall 2004. The PJGs focused their work on the policy and resource levels needed to effect school reform. This effort, however, also acknowledges the importance of other influences, such as parents, community groups and higher education. The results of the PJGs and the resulting state policy approaches will be released at the Education Leadership Colloquium (ELC), July 12-13, 2004, in Orlando, Florida.

Recommendations for Policymakers

Recommendations for state policymakers are based on the evidence cited throughout the paper on positive attributes of effective citizenship education. Recommendations include such concepts as the following:

- Ensuring the three strands of knowledge, skills and dispositions are represented in state standards
- Extending citizenship education into the elementary and middle grades
- Making citizenship education experience grounded in knowledge and explicitly designed to be engaging for students
- Allowing more time for preparation and professional development to teach citizenship education.
- Recognizing testing and assessment are important elements of any citizenship education program, and legislators are encouraged to develop tests that go beyond civic knowledge.

---

[3] Torney-Purta, J., Lehmann, R., Oswald, H. and Schulz, W. (2001). *Citizenship and education in twenty-eight countries: Civic knowledge and engagement at age fourteen.* Amsterdam: IEA. Also: **www.wam.umd.edu/~iea/**; Torney-Purta, J. and Amadeo, J. (2004). *Strengthening democracy in the Americas through civic education.* Washington. DC: Organization of American States.

Developing Citizenship Competencies from Kindergarten through Grade 12: A Background Paper for Policymakers and Educators

The past three years have seen a remarkable set of actions promoting attention to a multidimensional view of civic competencies and commitment to the school's role in fostering them. Among the most important report is a consensus document, *The Civic Mission of Schools,* issued in early 2003 by the Carnegie Corporation of New York and CIRCLE (the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement). Nearly every previous report on this subject began with an assessment of the relatively gloomy picture of youth civic engagement as a rationale for proposed activities. The rationale contained in the *Civic Mission of Schools* represents a consensus (of liberal and conservative views, of practitioners, policy analysts and researchers) that is especially compelling. This report is beginning to be seen as a critically important reference document in this area, and the rationale contained there is presented in **Box 1** as a frame for what follows.

Box 1: A Consensus Rationale

For more than 250 years, Americans have shared a vision of a democracy in which all citizens understand, appreciate and engage actively in civic and political life – taking responsibility for building communities, contributing their diverse talents and energies to solve local and national problems, deliberating about public issues, influencing public policy, voting and pursuing the common good. Americans know it is a rare and precious gift to live in a society that permits and values such participation.

In recent decades, concern has grown about the increasing number of Americans who are disengaging from civic and political institutions such as voluntary associations, religious congregations and community-based organizations. This disengagement extends to political and electoral processes such as voting and being informed about public issues. In many ways, young people reflect these trends. Americans under the age of 25 are less likely to vote than either their older counterparts or young people of past decades. Surveys have shown they are not as interested in political discussion and public issues as past generations were at the same point in their lives. In addition, there are gaps in young people's knowledge of fundamental democratic principles and processes. As a result, many young Americans are not prepared to participate fully in a democracy when they become adults.

At the same time, young people are volunteering and participating in community activities at high rates. Some experts, in fact, argue this generation is one of the most engaged in history, evidenced by the growing number of young people involved in community-based civic renewal or volunteer projects.

Individuals do not automatically become free and responsible citizens but must be educated for citizenship. In recent years, the call has grown for new strategies that can capitalize on young people's idealism while addressing their disengagement from political and civic institutions. How to achieve this goal, however, has been a matter of considerable debate among experts representing various perspectives. Political scientists, for example, focus on the political; educators focus on what happens in or near the classroom; service-learning advocates focus on service and volunteering, and their connection to the curriculum; and youth development specialists focus on the developmental experience of the young person.

Recently, however, various experts from these disciplines, teachers, civic leaders, policymakers, federal judges and even the President of the United States agree that school-based civic education is one of the most promising approaches to increasing young people's informed involvement with political institutions and issues. It is also a promising way to spur interest in, and commitment to, service and voluntarism. (*Civic Missions of Schools*, p. 8)

Rationale and Purpose of This Paper

The purpose of this paper is to provide a short history of and background for a multipronged initiative of ECS/NCLC. The paper begins by reviewing ECS' history in the process of citizenship education renewal, and continues with a section reviewing existing sets of competencies and standards (as well as a synthesis of evidence regarding the climate for innovations in citizenship education). It also describes the process by which NCLC arrived at three strands of competencies (see cover graphic). The strands incorporate major features of previous sets of standards and a discussion of ways in which overarching competencies might be specified for different grades across K-12. The paper concludes with recommendations for state policymakers.

In the next step, four Professional Judgment Groups examined the ways in which civic competencies such as those outlined here might be realized within four different policy approaches at the district and state levels.

This paper is based on two premises. (1) To participate in a democratic society, young Americans need civic competencies that extend beyond knowledge of the history of the ratification of the Constitution or skills that contribute to their participation in conventional political activities such as voting. (2) Schools have a vital role to play in education contributing to civic engagement.

Schools and other organizations foster civic engagement when they help students to do the following:

- Gain meaningful historical and contemporary civic knowledge
- Link knowledge gained in an abstract form to more concrete everyday situations in which knowledge might be used
- Gain knowledge and skills in working with others toward political goals
- Gain skills in interpreting political information such as that from mass media
- Learn how to participate in respectful discourse about social and political issues
- Learn about effective leadership in groups of peers and how to mitigate the influence of negative experiences such as bullying
- Respect the rule of law and civil liberties
- Understand arguments concerned with the rights of groups subject to discrimination
- Join other students and adults to address a community need
- Learn about the root causes of community problems and assess opportunities to solve them
- Acquire a view of their community and nation based on appropriate levels of trust
- Develop a sense of identity that incorporates civic and political dimensions
- Demonstrate the willingness to spend time in bettering their communities
- Respect diverse adult role models who are politically active
- Link experiences in their families and communities with school-based civic education
- Express their views in media forms that are attractive and familiar to them.

History of ECS Involvement in Citizenship Education and the Carnegie-supported Project on Citizenship

ECS History

The Education Commission of the States (ECS) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization involving key leaders from all levels of the education system. Its mission is to help state leaders shape education policy. As part of ECS, the National Center for Learning and Citizenship (NCLC), founded in 1998, focuses on state policies that support citizenship education. ECS collects and disseminates information through a variety of formats, including the nation's most extensive Web site about education policy; provides policy research and analysis; brings key education and policy leaders together through networks and partnerships; offers customized technical assistance to states; and convenes policymakers and education leaders through state, regional and national conferences and through such means as Thinkers Meetings and Professional Judgment Groups that provide input about policy specifics and implementation.

This section of the paper outlines the events and reports that led NCLC to its view of citizenship education's important dimensions. It also explains the process NCLC is undertaking to help state lawmakers improve citizenship education policies and their potential implementation.

NCLC uses and defines the term "citizenship education" to mean the values, knowledge, skills, sense of efficacy and commitment that define an active and principled citizen (Eyler and Giles, 1999).

Citizenship education, from NCLC's view, is the responsibility of entire schools and education systems at all levels, not solely of civics teachers and designated classes during high school. With the proper support in content, pedagogy and policy, it is possible for schools and teachers to effectively engage students in activities that foster citizenship competencies at all school levels and all subjects. Social studies courses, such as history and civics, are well positioned to teach citizenship, especially the acquisition of civic knowledge. These classes, however, support other school- and community-based learning opportunities and should not be students' only opportunities to acquire citizenship competency.

NCLC's citizenship work is based on the goal of the Every Student A Citizen initiative, which is to engage all students in active citizenship and to help education leaders meet schools' academic and civic missions. The ECS National Study Group's report, *Every Student A Citizen: Creating the Democratic Self*, released in July 2000, outlines recommendations for schools, districts, states and national organizations to improve citizenship education, including support for service-learning as an effective pedagogy.

The NCLC strategic plan is based on the Every Student A Citizen mission. The plan's main goals are as follows:

- Provide timely and accessible information on the policy options available to state and district policymakers regarding citizenship education and service-learning
- Analyze and encourage research to determine effective citizenship education and service-learning policy, practice and capacity
- Provide policymakers and education leaders with expert guidance, technical assistance and facilitation on policy and practice options associated with effective citizenship education and service-learning that relates to positive student outcomes
- Exercise leadership in identifying the cutting edge of education policy, and enable state leaders to think, plan and act in a way that moves beyond current issues and short-term solutions
- Develop and maintain strategic internal and external partnerships
- Improve the expertise of the NCLC board and staff
- Communicate effectively the importance and results of citizenship education, including strategies for public involvement and political change.

NCLC believes that policymakers have an important role to play in helping districts and schools provide students with a well-rounded citizenship education. In particular, state policymakers can provide a framework for districts and schools to implement comprehensive citizenship education programs throughout the K-12 system. ECS and NCLC, with their broad constituency of state policymakers, are particularly

suited for developing effective methods to support states in developing comprehensive citizenship education policies. When called upon to help energize this constituency, ECS designed several potentially complementary approaches to state policies that will help engage all students in citizenship education.

The Carnegie-sponsored Project and its Elements

In April 2003, the Carnegie Corporation of New York funded NCLC to help states produce comprehensive citizenship education policies. NCLC's commitment to Carnegie is as follows:

- Provide a Web-accessible scan of existing state, district and school-level policies designed to promote students' civic knowledge, attitudes or skills (initial funding from CIRCLE; completed and disseminated on November 11, 2003; see details below).
- Convene a Thinkers Meeting to begin the process of developing and identifying student-level competencies for citizenship education (meeting held May 29-30, 2003, described below).
- Draft a background paper that builds on results of the Thinkers Meeting and consultations at the July 2003 Education Leadership Colloquium to assess the climate for policy, as well as some of the existing approaches and standards to provide a starting point for delineating the content of student competencies (this document).
- Conduct in-depth interviews in selected districts to better understand the unique elements that helped create – or impede the creation of – successful citizenship education policies in a district (conducted June through October 2003).
- Develop a state policy framework for citizenship education from which model state policies can be derived (includes meetings of four Professional Judgment groups that began by examining this background paper and then looked at alternative instructional approaches – held for four two-day periods in October, November and December 2003 and January 2004; see details below).
- Disseminate electronically (and perhaps in hard-copy form) a revised version of this background paper that takes into account the work of the Professional Judgment Groups, other professional and policymaker reviews and a further examination of state policies and standards (April 2004).
- Pilot the four policy options in three states. These states will be chosen based on their previous work in citizenship education policy and a strong commitment from state education leaders and policymakers (fall 2004).
- Create and disseminate (via the Web) alternative state policy models to state policymakers. This will include a list of key findings from applying the policy frameworks in three pilot states to identify the citizenship policies that best fit the needs of that state (May 2005).

Box 2: ECS Policy Scans

ECS/NCLC provides state-by-state tracking of state policies on civic education that goes beyond standards (**http://www.ecs.org/nclc**). Some of this material appeared in 1999 in the form of a comprehensive chart covering 41 states. Among the factors included were graduation requirements, standards and frameworks, the strength of statutory language, program design, grade levels covered and relation to other curricula. A frequently updated list of policies in the areas of citizenship and character education is on the ECS/NCLC Web site as well. Efforts in this area are being broadened to include a greater variety of state policies and a further study of linkages among standards, other policies at state or local levels, and instruction. This effort links different types of policy-relevant information and provides frequent updates of a rapidly changing situation.

Thinkers Meeting: Background, Process and Follow-up Professional Judgment Groups

A major NCLC goal is the development and dissemination of a policy framework for citizenship education that states can use to create coherent collections of state policy. This framework will help state policymakers consider policies that effectively include the key elements of K-12 citizenship education. To meet this goal, NCLC convened a National Study Group on Citizenship in K-12 Schools, a 21-member group of K-12 and university teachers, students and representatives from national civics and education organizations. A Thinkers Meeting, including some members of the study group, was held on May 29-30, 2003.

At the Thinkers Meeting, practitioners and policymakers from across the country gathered in Denver to generate lists of civic competencies for K-12 students. Led by NCLC staff and the senior author of this report, the group worked toward a framework identifying what students across grade levels need to know and be able to do to become effective citizens. The meeting addressed one of the recommendations to ECS in the *Every Student A Citizen* report, which encouraged the NCLC to develop a set of student competencies that*: identifies the core sets of knowledge and skills for all K-12 students; establishes benchmarks and indicators of various degrees of success; and articulates the set of values that citizenship education is schoolwide.* Thinkers Meeting participants applied their experiences and knowledge along with the resources provided by NCLC and other participants to deliberate and discuss student competencies for citizenship education. A wide range of domains was discussed:

- Dispositions/attitudes
- Expectations
- Behaviors/actions
- Knowledge
- Skills
- Efficacy
- Ideology
- Philosophy
- Values and commitment.

Three working groups considering competencies in cognitive, behavioral and affective categories developed provisional lists (although the discussions ranged a bit further than strict definitions of these terms would suggest). In addition, the groups called attention to a number of other considerations, including the importance of connecting student competencies across categories, teachers' instructional competencies, schools as communities, making it safe to teach about politics, ways of assessing competencies, and ways to counter the tendency for testing in reading and mathematics that crowd citizenship-related material out of the curriculum.

At the annual Education Leadership Colloquium (ELC), held July 16-17, 2003, the authors of this report met with participants, including state policymakers, chief state school officers, citizenship education leaders and advocates to discuss results of the Thinkers Meeting and its implications. Participants helped reframe the categories, while maintaining the focus on the areas defined by the Thinkers Meeting. They also discussed the policy implications of developing state policies to support citizenship education.

The next phase of this work was to convene four Professional Judgment groups from October 2003 to February 2004 with the task of creating and establishing policy and practice recommendations tailored to each of four instructional approaches. Each group considered one of the following approaches:

- Civics course-based
- Standards-based approach to citizenship education (based in most cases on social studies, civics or history standards)
- Citizenship education infused across the curriculum as part of standards-based reform
- Citizenship education using a community-connected approach.

The groups reviewed materials in this background paper and suggested changes. The end product will be a brief description of different ways of organizing instructional approaches and a set of policy and practice recommendations related to citizenship engagement for states and districts to use as guidelines. This product was released at the Education Leadership Colloquium July 12-13, 2004, in Orlando, Florida.

The Current Situation: Standards, Courses and the Quality of Civic Education

The Intended Curriculum for Citizenship

An assessment of the extent to which citizenship education is and could be provided as part of formal education should be examined by beginning with the "intended curriculum" or what groups with statutory power over education believe should be included in students' civic preparation. This is often reflected in standards linked to what is required of students for graduation or promotion (see **Box 3**).

Standards of the Center for Civic Education (CCE) and the National Assessment of Civics (NAEP)

To examine the "intended curriculum" of citizenship education in the United States is not as straightforward as in some other countries, where there are nationally mandatory curriculum standards. In the United States, only voluntary national standards are appropriate, and the Center for Civic Education (CCE) was supported by the U.S. Department of Education to produce such standards in 1994. These standards served as the basis for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) administered in 1998 and reported in 1999 (and will serve as the basis for another civics NAEP in 2006).

CCE's standards are organized around three categories: content, skills and dispositions, and are found in **Table 1**. The standards received detailed treatment in the CCE document, *National Standards for Civics and Government.* For example, 100 pages were devoted to explicating content standards in detail with considerably shorter sections devoted to skills and dispositions. These standards appear very detailed (especially to teachers who lack extensive background in political science or history and time to spend in analyzing them). They have been extensively disseminated nationally and internationally to shape both curriculum and assessment.

In addition, CCE's Civitas document, produced in 1991 prior to the national standards, identified core values of American constitutional democracy such as equality, justice, patriotism, individual rights and the public or common good.

Perhaps most important for the policy focus of this paper, a conceptual framework derived directly from the national standards served as the basis for the 1998 NAEP Civics Report Card and also will be the basis of the 2006 NAEP. One can learn a great deal about what the standards mean from the ways in which they were defined for an assessment. In the 1998 NAEP test for 4th graders, for example, the emphasis was on questions I, II and V; for grade 8 on question II, III and V; and for grade 12 on II, III, IV and V. Intellectual skills were defined as part of the measurement. Identifying and describing was the major intellectual skill tested for grade 4; identifying and describing, and explaining/analyzing for grade 8; and explaining/analyzing and evaluating for grade 12.

This is a somewhat narrowly defined view of cognitive or thinking skills. Proportionally, a small amount of test space was devoted to assessing participation skills or civic dispositions (and for the most part with items that could be scored right and wrong). Grade-level expectations for the Basic, Proficient and Advanced levels of competency were defined. These expectations were used by experts who made judgments and set benchmarks about what questions students at each level should be able to answer.

Box 3: A Definition of Standards

Generally speaking, standards are defined as what students should know and be able to do by grade level (knowledge and skills). In the case of citizenship education standards, both the Center for Civic Education (CCE) and the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) offer national voluntary standards related to civic education and social studies. Both emphasize a multidisciplinary approach, meaning that the civic or social studies standards are supported by other subject areas and in the "informal curriculum" of the school. NCSS also offers Curriculum Standards for Social Studies, which include strands such as "Civic Ideals and Practices" that emphasize the importance of civic dispositions. States are encouraged to use these national standards in developing their own. Some states also include performance standards, along with content standards. Performance standards focus on civic skills and often require performance assessment, which can be expensive and difficult for states to implement.

Table 1

Content Standards /Organizing Questions in the National Standards (CCE)

I. What are civic life, politics and government?*

II. What are the foundations of the American political system?*

III. How does the government established by the Constitution embody the purposes, values and principles of American democracy?

IV. What is the relationship of the United States to other nations and to world affairs?

V. What are the roles of the citizen in American democracy?

*Used in grades 5-12, simplified versions of questions I-II used for grades K-4.

Skills in the National Standards (CCE)

Intellectual Skills:

- Identifying and describing
- Explaining and analyzing
- Evaluating, taking and defending positions

Participatory Skills:

- Interacting
- Monitoring
- Influencing

Civic Dispositions in the National Standards (CCE)

- Becoming an *independent* member of society
- Assuming the personal, political and economic *responsibilities* of a citizen
- *Respecting* individual worth and human dignity
- *Participation* in civic affairs in an informed, thoughtful and effective manner
- *Promoting* the healthy functioning of American constitutional democracy

Standards of the National Council for the Social Studies

Another influential set of curriculum standards was issued by the National Council for the Social Studies in 1994 after an extensive process of development. A number of the 10 thematic strands have relevance to citizenship, while others are related to economics or geography. Two strands relate directly to citizenship:

- Power, authority and governance (how people create and change these structures)
- Civic ideals and practices in a democratic republic.

Several other strands have an indirect relationship. Early grade, middle grade and high school performance expectations are given. For example, under civic ideals, students in the early grades are asked to explain actions citizens can take to influence public policy decisions. In high school, they are to analyze and evaluate the influence of various forms of citizen action on public policy (not just a particular decision). Sets of essential skills also are elaborated: acquiring information, using information and social participation. Generally, the standards are less elaborate and encyclopedic than the CCE standards, and skills are more fully considered.

These standards have been strengthened and sharpened by an NCSS Task Force on Citizenship (charged in 2001 with "revitalizing citizenship education"). Their statements emphasize people who have made a difference in the civic domain in the country's history and links to civic engagement in the future. As a large membership organization of teachers and teacher educators, NCSS has exemplified ways of implementing these standards in their publications, for example, a lesson suitable for early elementary students about "defining good citizenship" (in *Social Studies and the Young Learner,* September 2002) and a lesson for middle school students on "Using Newspapers To Teach about Elections" (in *Social*

Education, September 2002*).* In fact, lessons about citizenship or ways of studying history in relation to citizenship appear frequently in NCSS publications (and have for decades).

Describing these two major sets of standards doesn't do justice to other sets of influential standards, many of them more focused on civic participation or engagement and less on content knowledge. For example, those developed by a Carnegie-sponsored group, including psychologists, sociologists and political scientists meeting at Stanford in 1999 emphasized youth development in citizenship outside as well as inside school. Standards from the Constitutional Rights Foundation emphasize youth engagement adapted to a particular context in the community.

Other groups have developed lists of competencies or outcomes relating to service-learning experiences (emphasizing the ability to evaluate and criticize public norms or institutions and to build social capital). If service-learning is to be a prominent feature of civic education or if out-of-school organizations for young people are to be involved, the content and skills standards developed by CCE and NCSS may need to be augmented with other perspectives.

State Standards

There have been attempts to document the intended curriculum for the 50 states and the District of Columbia within the past 10 years, some of which have related directly to the voluntary national standards covered previously. State standards for civics education, however, are evolving rapidly and often difficult to track. K. Tolo (1999), in collaboration with CCE, reviewed states' standards in light of the voluntary national standards CCE had developed. The findings included:

- InfluencingOverall, more than half the states had statutes specifically addressing civic education; more than half the states had course requirements.
- InfluencingState standards were perceived to influence funding, textbook selection, course sequences and curricular design at the district level.
- State-level assessments sometimes were aligned with these standards, but in only a few states (at that time) were tests dedicated to civic topics (more usual were assessments in the context of history or social studies generally).
- Most standards focused on the section of the CCE standards that dealt with the ways in which government established by the Constitution embodies the principles of American democracy (see **Table 1**, Content Standards, Question III).
- State standards were addressed in a variety of courses, including U.S. history and government.
- A survey of teachers and curriculum coordinators in several districts indicated that many were unaware of the national standards or unclear how their teaching related to them.

State policy regarding citizenship education also recently caught the interest of two national policy organizations. In November 2003, NCLC released a scan of state education policies that support citizenship education. The policies are searchable online (www.ecs.org) and offer states the opportunity to compare themselves to others. The NCLC scan, although it has information in different categories than Tolo's, offers some similar conclusions (see also **Box 2**).

According to the NCLC scans:

- Forty-one states' statutes specifically provide for the teaching of government, civics and/or citizenship.
- While 41 states have a course or credit requirement in government or civics for high school graduation, only five of those states currently require students to pass an exit exam to graduate (Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, New Mexico and New York). West Virginia will require four social studies credits, including one credit of civics, for high school graduation for students entering 9th grade in 2005.
- Alabama, Maryland, Ohio, Texas and Virginia are phasing in exit or end-of-course exams as a requirement for high school graduation.
- Assessment and accountability systems remain a primary focus of state education reform efforts, but less than half of state systems address civics. Twenty-two states' assessment systems include

knowledge of government or civics, while 13 states include performance on civics/government or social studies assessments within their accountability systems.

- Over the last two years, at least 17 states have enacted or amended legislation regarding recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, study of the Declaration of Independence, and display of the flag or the national motto, "In God We Trust," in schools.

The National Conference of State Legislatures also offers a database of recent state policies on their Trust for Representative Democracy Web site.

In another study, a 2002 CCE telephone survey of state social studies supervisors found 24 states had separate standards documents for civics/government; while 17 states incorporated civics/government as strands under a social studies standards document. The personnel questioned in all but two states reported that CCE's national civic standards had been influential in developing the state standards.

A variety of other state standards exist as well. At the May 2003 Thinkers Meeting, Ohio's social studies standards were presented. State tests are the mode of accountability for teaching about designated topics there. These standards include benchmarks (with the grades in five groups), as well as specific grade-level indicators. Kindergarten through grade 3 deals with important basic concepts of social life, grade 4 with Ohio history, grades 5 and 6 with North American and world geography, grades 8-10 with U.S. and world history, grade 11 with economics and grade 12 with preparation for citizenship.

This is somewhat misleading, however, since historical issues and the goals of understanding and preparing for citizenship may be found in the early grades and do not really begin at grade 8. For example, by the end of the K-2 program, students should be able to describe the results of cooperation with others and demonstrate the necessary skills; by the end of the program for grades 3-5, they should be able to explain how citizens take part in civic life to promote the common good; by the end of the grade 6-8 program, students should identify the historical origins that influenced the rights U.S. citizens have today.

The Ohio groups developing the standards used language and concepts from other sets of standards, including NCSS standards, as well as those developed in history, geography, economics and civics (the CCE standards mentioned previously).

In Maryland, social studies standards have similar sources but are organized in a slightly different way: spatial, chronological, individual, organizational and comparative perspectives, plus the disciplines of history, geography, economics and political science.

Study of the political system takes place starting in grade 1 (e.g., understanding why people create rules and describing the services governments provide) through grade 8 (e.g., differentiating between the use of legitimate authority and the use of unlimited power). In grades 9-12, for example, students analyze the relationship between governmental authority and individual liberty, and compare the effectiveness of the U.S. political system with the political system of major democratic and authoritarian nations. A lengthy list of social studies skills is enumerated and linked to various grade levels.

Both content knowledge and skills are covered in most of the standards documents, similar to the national voluntary standards upon which many state policies are based. The emphasis in most cases seems to be on content. Some state standards do support civic dispositions, motivation and participation, in addition to content (Miller, 2003). For example, Alabama's standards include "civic problem solving," and Alaska's Government and Citizenship Content Standards also include support for discussing public issues and recognizing the value of public service.

Arkansas' social studies curriculum framework acknowledges, "the formal curriculum should be augmented by related learning experiences, in both school and community, that enable students to learn how to participate in their own governance." Hawaii mentions service-learning as an example of how to accomplish its citizenship/participation standard, and Wisconsin's performance standards for grades 4, 8 and 12 include participating in a debate on public policy issues and other forms of civic action.

Although not part of state standards, a few states have established programs for students to be interns during elections or take part in other ways to encourage youth registration and voting when they become eligible. Such activities could help students develop their civic skills and dispositions outside of school.

For example, California requires the secretary of state to provide all students in high schools, community colleges and institutions within the state university system with voter registration forms and information. Recent Connecticut legislation establishes a statewide voter registration drive. Connecticut, Arkansas and Mississippi encourage students to participate in the political process by serving as poll workers.

Because standards tend to be diverse and extensive, questions have been raised about their quality as well as how realistic these standards are. Historian Paul Gagnon recently wrote a recent set of ratings of state-level standards found in a report issued by the Albert Shanker Institute, *Educating Democracy: State Standards To Ensure a Civic Core.*

Gagnon judged that *no state was realistic in matching standards to the amount of time necessary to teach to an adequate level of performance.* He gave the lowest rating for that criterion to all 50 sets of state standards. Lack of realism in expectations for American history courses was especially serious. There were somewhat less vague standards for civics, and he noted: "It helps that many of their (civics) salient points can be taught in the context of United States history." Gagnon also found that serious problems in producing a coherent and teachable set of standards resulted when isolated strands for civics, economics, geography and history were written by separate teams. Some states identify with a star items eligible for testing within much longer lists, resulting in teachers emphasizing those topics to the exclusion of others. Many states also fell short of fully meeting the criterion of teaching material covered in the standard to all students.

In summary, knowledge standards are clearly the focus in most documents; there is somewhat less emphasis on standards relating to skills and dispositions. The problem is not that there are too few standards or too little complexity in the way they are delineated. Rather, it seems that teachers have too little time either for instruction or for lesson planning, and too few opportunities for content-rich professional development (for example, opportunities to discuss students' level of understanding with other teachers). Given a debate about the relationship between the study of history and citizenship education among public intellectuals and some educators, as well as the current emphasis on tested subjects of reading and mathematics, many classroom teachers may be tempted to teach as they have always taught, modifying the content to meet whatever tests are announced for a particular year. When asked about the most important factor influencing what happens in their classrooms, teachers often mention particular students they have in their class and the desire to give them resources to help them learn. A different group of students in a different year studying to meet the same standard may evoke a different instructional plan from a teacher. *The challenges for state policy are to set more realistic standards and to provide teachers with what they need to give individual students the opportunity to learn.*

Transcript Reviews and the IEA CivEd Study: The Implemented Curriculum

Important information about the extent of citizenship education received by students was collected from the transcripts of graduating seniors by researchers Niemi and Smith (2001) in a reanalysis of the High School Transcript Study (HSTS) with data from 1987, 1990, 1994 and 1998, and parallel material from the 1970's and early 1980's. Courses were coded into the following categories: American history, economics, sociology/psychology, American government and politics (separating civics and problems of democracy), and international relations.

The study found "substantial erosion in the proportion of students studying American government in a stand-alone course [over this period]" (p. 282). History courses continue to be strongly represented, but there is no way of telling the extent to which citizenship is incorporated or emphasized in history.

The first phase of the IEA Study (see **Box 4**) is also a source of information about the intended curriculum. In the late 1990's, the national research coordinator for the United States in this study surveyed coordinators of social studies in the states and found the following:

> *Respondents from 45 states estimated that the majority of school districts in their state taught United States government or civics sometime between grades 6 and 12. Additionally, representatives from 34 states said the majority of districts in their state taught state and local government, often in courses combined with either state history or United States government. Courses specifically on government were likely to be offered at grades 8 or 9 and 12 (Hahn, 1999, p. 590).*

The IEA case study further concluded there was remarkable similarity among the three widely used textbooks. They emphasized the structure and function of national, state and local government beginning with representative democracy and introducing the Constitution as a foundation both for democracy and national identity. The texts discussed the three branches of government and tended to emphasize citizens' rights more than responsibilities. Although the books discussed the existence of the two political parties, they made little mention of the function of a multiparty system (see Hahn, 1999). How textbooks are used in teaching to these standards is a matter of debate (Chambliss and Calfee, 1998). Teachers reported they rely on them as general guides rather than as sole sources. Students, in contrast, reported the books are used extensively (and sometimes commented they were boring or old-fashioned).

Principals surveyed as part of the IEA study in the United States in October 1999 reported more than half the 9th-grade students were required to study civic-related topics five periods per week. Only about 20% of students were not taking a civic-related subject (Baldi et al., 2001). Reports from students corroborated these estimates of time studying civics-related topics. IEA data from teachers in the United States (and other countries) indicate the teaching of a core of content topics, especially national history, the national constitution and citizens' rights. Teachers considered international organizations and economics less important and covered them less fully. These teachers' reports were corroborated by the responses of U.S. students about topics studied, with the Constitution, how laws are made and the Congress the most studied topics, and international organizations and other countries' governments the least studied.

The teachers reported an emphasis on knowledge transmission and respect for national heritage and tradition. Across countries, textbooks, worksheets and recitation predominated, with role-playing exercises and projects used more rarely. In the United States, students were asked about the instructional methods used in their classrooms. Baldi et al. (2001) indicated in the U.S. national report that students reported reading from the textbook and filling out worksheets were the most frequent activities, with role-playing, debates, discussions and more interactive lessons much less frequent.

Both students and teachers internationally were asked one set of identical questions about what is learned in school. Similar percentages of both groups within each country agreed that students learn how to cooperate in groups with other students, to understand people who have different ideas and to contribute to solving social problems in the community. Within each country, however, *the proportion of teachers who believed students learned about voting in school tended to be considerably higher than the proportion of students who believed they had learned about this topic* (Torney-Purta et al., 2001). This discrepancy was especially large in several countries in which students appeared unconvinced about the importance of voting and other forms of political participation. Students were more likely to vote in countries that emphasized voting.

While many teachers teach about elected officials or elections that are important in history, implicit messages about the importance of elections may not be coming across to students. A relatively small proportion of students reported in the IEA survey they had opportunities to learn about the debate and discussion that is part of election campaigns.

Students, teachers, principals and policy scans all reveal that American students are studying the basics of government structure. Whether that is sufficient or effective across the grades is another matter.

The Current Climate for Education for Citizenship and Related Policy

The review of standards and requirements together with discussion at the May 2003 Thinkers Meeting and the Education Leadership Colloquium at The 2003 National Forum on Education Policy lead to some tentative conclusions about the current climate for education for citizenship and related policy.

- The current emphasis in the curriculum is on subjects such as reading and mathematics, to the extent that history and civic-related subject matter may be excluded. The unspoken assumption is that students will learn how to fulfill the role of citizen from sources other than the school.
- In the last 10 years, there have been many new lists of requirements, competencies and standards relating to citizenship education that provide useful starting points. These requirements, however, also deserve close examination. These documents:
  - Frequently consist of encyclopedic coverage of details of government structures or historical documents that may have little meaning to students and do not connect to their own identity as a citizen with responsibilities and rights
  - Are often complex, making it difficult to adapt them for students in the early years of school or for immigrants and/or second-language learners
  - Sometimes suggest covering a topic in the same way at several grades, rather than cumulatively building more complex understanding on earlier basic concepts
  - May be difficult to connect to students' motivation to learn about their communities
  - Sometimes focus almost exclusively on patriotic observances, which are important but incomplete as preparation for engaged citizenship.

The climate relating to teachers' or administrators' roles can be characterized this way:

- The teaching activities and subject matters that teachers are expected to emphasize (i.e., those which are tested) are usually *not* those explicitly connected with making students thoughtful or participating citizens.
- Concern exists about how instruction can help students acquire better literacy skills (as a tested subject). Considerable uncertainty exists about how enhanced literacy (or other currently valued aspects of education) might contribute to students' identities

Box 4: The IEA Civic Education Study

In the early 1990's, the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA, a comparative education association of nearly 60 member countries with headquarters in Amsterdam) explored the subject of civic education to develop a measuring instrument and conduct a test and survey of young people. In the first phase of the IEA Civic Education Study, participating nations wrote case studies concerning the expectations for 14-year-olds learning about civic-related subjects (Torney-Purta, Schwille and Amadeo, 1999). After cross-national consensus building, considerable agreement about a core set of expectations for civic education was achieved.

Knowledge about democracy and its principles, sense of engagement and willingness to participate in civil society organizations, attitude of trust in government and about the rights of various groups formed the basis for the test and survey, which made up Phase 2 of the study. A three-year process of test development involving research coordinators from more than 20 countries arrived at an instrument suitable for classroom administration across countries. Fourteen-year-olds were tested because that was the last year before school-leaving age in some countries.

The instrument included three core domains: democracy, democratic institutions and citizenship; national identity and international relations; and social cohesion and diversity (Torney-Purta, Lehmann, Oswald and Schulz, 2001). The IEA instrument also included a measure of concepts of the good adult citizen. The knowledge test had two subscales – content knowledge (relating to concepts of democratic governmental structures, citizenship, international organizations and social diversity) and skills in interpreting civic information (e.g., a political leaflet, political cartoons).

The test and survey were administered in 1999 to 90,000 students, a nationally representative sample of students in the modal grade for 14-year-olds. In the United States, more than 2,000 students in grade 9 participated (from a nationally representative sample of schools). Each sampled school surveyed three teachers of civic education-related subjects (often history or social studies) and the school principal.

as citizens. Generally speaking, an inadequate evidence base exists for making connections between citizenship and other areas of the curriculum.

- Few teachers have access to high-quality professional development in civic-related subjects and fewer have preparation time to fully incorporate suggested new content or effective approaches into their classes.
- There is a division of opinion regarding the best way to enhance the teaching force's proficiency in teaching citizenship. For example, is a history major (or a political science major) the only appropriate preparation for teaching about citizenship? How can teachers in the nonspecialized elementary grades acquire the background to teach citizenship?
- Many of those currently preparing to be teachers are from the generation in which conventional political participation is at an unprecedented low. This raises the importance of preservice preparation, but the direction to be taken is not clear.
- There is hesitation about whether and how to incorporate enhanced opportunities for students' voice and input in their schools and classrooms.
- Although some methods, such as service-learning, make explicit connections to the community, uncertainty exists about how to use citizenship education systematically to meet the needs and concerns of the community and its members.
- Ambivalence also exists about whether and how to incorporate service-learning into citizenship education programs. Research shows that teachers using service-learning in other subjects do not necessarily connect it to the civics curriculum. When high-quality service-learning is used for civic outcomes, research shows it does help improve students' skills and dispositions.
- Because of the political nature of teaching and learning citizenship, teachers often are unsure of the boundaries around engaging students in political activities.
- To address some of the above issues, ECS' *Every Student A Citizen* report offers "principles of best practice," including school climates that support a civically engaged school, civic engagement as a part of the school's mission and exemplifying a commitment to democracy throughout the school's activities.

The NCLC Thinkers Meeting and its Results

After considering these aspects of the current climate, NCLC believes state policy could be an effective way to help create a more supportive environment for citizenship education by stating what students should know and be able to do by grade level. With the purpose of integrating existing national and state standards into a framework that state policymakers could adopt eventually, NCLC convened a Thinkers Meeting in May 2003.

Thinkers Meeting participants moved from a consideration of the specifics of standards developed by organizations and states to developing long lists of competencies in three categories, and then to a more integrative discussion that attempted a synthesis of concepts. There was general agreement on several issues:

- First, there are three important overarching sets of competencies related to citizenship:
  - Civic-related *knowledge* (both historical and contemporary)
    This knowledge includes historical knowledge, such as understanding the structure and mechanics of constitutional government and contemporary knowledge, knowing who the local political actors are, and current issues of local debate and concern.
  - Cognitive and participative *skills* (and associated behaviors)
    These skills include the ability to understand and check data about government and local issues, and articulate abstract concepts such as patriotism and democracy. Participatory skills refer to a student's ability to be part of an informed discussion about a candidate or be able to resolve conflict as part of a group.
  - *Dispositions* (motivations for behavior and values/attitudes)
    Students will not necessarily connect knowledge and skills to their civic dispositions without experience or a reason to believe their participation is worthwhile. Civic dispositions can include support for justice and equality, a sense of personal responsibility (to include voting and obeying the law) and a personal commitment to others and their well-being.

  In the sections that follow, the three terms – knowledge, skills and dispositions – are more fully defined.

- Second, these three strands of citizenship should be seen as approximately equal in importance and connected with one another. In fact, the braid on the front of this paper is the way in which the group envisioned the three competencies together forming a stronger cord than any could alone. The balance among the three strands is a critical component of any systemic approach to citizenship education.
- Third, these competencies are built by school-related and out-of-school experiences (in family or neighborhood) that begin in early childhood and are by no means confined to experiences in a high school government course. Different types of experience foster different competencies (as the *Civic Mission of Schools* noted in a matrix developed from an examination of research evidence; see **Box 5**).
- Fourth, the knowledge, concepts, information or skills learned in school need to be connected to students' civic identity, including their feeling of responsibility to vote or volunteer in the community. For example, knowing some of the ways in which elected officials shape policy influencing citizens' everyday lives is pertinent information when motivating citizens to vote. Knowledge needs to be connected to plausible motivations for civic engagement.
- Fifth, most existing state policies regarding citizenship education can be enhanced or modified in ways that can fit into the overarching framework. The aim is *not* to establish a new set of competencies to compete with those already developed by national organizations or the states. The hope of those involved in the ECS/NCLC effort is that it will bring groups together. To enhance that possibility of collaboration, a framework recently developed by John Patrick, director of the Social Studies Development Center, Indiana University, to derive core concepts from the CCE Standards and the 1998 NAEP was merged with the Thinkers Meeting's competencies. Patrick, based on many years of work in civic education in the United States and internationally, derived six core concepts for students at all levels of pre-adult education and in teacher education programs to use in comparing and evaluating democratic systems (see **Box 6**).

Box 5: Excerpt About Promising Practices and Competencies from the *Civic Mission of Schools*

Many schools across the country have adopted the following approaches (and sometimes combinations of them), and research clearly demonstrates their benefits. These approaches produce different types of benefits, ranging from knowledge of politics to civic skills to willingness to volunteer.

Most Substantial and Direct Benefits from Each Promising Approach

Approach	Civic and political knowledge	Civic and political skills	Civic attitudes	Political participation	Community participation
Classroom instruction in social studies	✓	✓		✓	
Discussion of current issues	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Service-learning		✓	✓		✓
Extracurricular activities		✓			✓
Student voice in school governance		✓	✓	✓	
Simulations	✓	✓	✓		

Given these diverse outcomes, educators, policymakers and communities must decide on their priorities when they choose an approach to civic education and/or integrate more than one approach in a curriculum that develops several dimensions of civic and political engagement at the same time.

Box 6: Excerpts from John Patrick's Core Concepts of a Global, International and Comparative Education for Democracy

1. Representative Democracy (Republicanism)
   Examples: Free, fair and competitive elections of representatives in government
2. Rule of Law (Constitutionalism)
   Examples: Observance of the rule of law in the government, society and economy; an independent judiciary
3. Human Rights (Liberalism)
   Examples: Natural rights/constitutional rights to liberty, equality and justice; political or public rights; personal or private rights
4. Citizenship (Civism)
   Examples: Membership in a people based on legal qualifications for citizenship; rights, responsibilities and roles of citizenship
5. Civil Society (Communitarianism)
   Example: Pluralism, multiple and overlapping group memberships and identities; civic participation for personal interests and the common good
6. Market Economy (Capitalism)
   Example: Freedom of exchange and economic choice through the market; protection of private property rights (Patrick, 2003, p. 28)

Five of these six concepts have been merged into **Table 2**, containing three categories of content and the three strands of competencies listed above as an organizing framework for the competency lists.

Table 2: The Intersection of Three Categories of Content (from Patrick) and Three Strands of Competencies (from NCLC)

	Strands of Competencies		
Categories of Content	**A. Knowledge**	**B. Skills**	**C. Dispositions**
1. Democracy/Law			
2. Citizenship/ Human Rights			
3. Civil Society/ Market Economy			

Each of the three strands of competencies will be considered in the next sections. Market Economy from Patrick's list is more likely to be part of economics-related subject matter than civic-related subject matter and has not been incorporated here.

The Three Strands of Competence

Knowledge

Knowledge relating to democracy, citizenship and civil society is already an important dimension of competency lists and deserves to remain so. **Box 7** summarizes the *Civic Mission of Schools* consensus view about knowledge.

Box 7: Research-based Recommendations Regarding Knowledge from the *Civic Mission of Schools*

Schools should provide instruction in government, history, law and democracy. The NAEP and IEA studies indicate that students perform better on tests of civic knowledge and skills if they have studied a range of relevant subjects, such as the Constitution, U.S. history, the structure and processes of government and elections, and the legal system. In particular, the breadth and amount of such instruction correlates with improved knowledge of citizens' rights, of state and local government, and of the structures and functions of government. Similarly, evaluations of specific programs (such as the "We the People" curriculum of the Center for Civic Education) clearly show that such approaches can have a positive impact on students' tolerance, civic knowledge and skills.

Formal instruction in U.S. government, history or democracy is most promising as a way to increase civic knowledge. Knowledge is a valuable civic outcome, quite apart from any relationships it may have with other forms of engagement. Americans should grasp a body of facts and concepts, for example, the fundamental principles of U.S. democracy and the Constitution; the tensions among fundamental goods and rights; the major themes in the history of the United States; the structure of our government; the powers and limitations of its various branches and levels; and the relationship between government and the other sectors of society. Studying these concepts does not have to be seen as "rote education," but rather as intellectually challenging and beneficial.

Knowledge also helps people engage politically. More knowledgeable adults are more likely to vote on the basis of issues rather than perceived personalities; they vote more consistently; and they distinguish better between substantive debates and personal attacks. There is little evidence, however, that political knowledge correlates with volunteering or group membership.

The effects of formal instruction on behavior appear to be greater when teachers make explicit connections between academic material and concrete actions. IEA data, for example, suggest it is not enough to point out that the right to vote was won after long struggles in the past. Only when teachers explicitly teach about the importance of voting in the present, and convey that voting is a citizen's duty, are students likely to say they will vote. Likewise, when teachers explicitly discuss ways of addressing community problems, more students say they expect to volunteer.

The May 2003 Thinkers Meeting generated a short but comprehensive list of knowledge-related competencies, making it clear that historical as well as contemporary understanding and illustrations are essential. Examples from these competencies can fit into each of Patrick's three conceptual categories:

- Examples of knowledge relating to the content category of "Democracy: The System or Rule of Law":
  - Understand the structure and mechanics of constitutional government (at the national and state levels), political institutions (including elections), and how they evolved in the history of the United States.
  - Understand democratic principles such as the rule of law, majority rule and minority rights, representative government and constitutionalism – markers of democratic and nondemocratic government.
  - Understand historical conflicts over the meaning of the Constitution.
  - Understand the role of media in democracy.

- Examples of knowledge relating to the content category of “Citizenship/Human Rights”:
  - Understand the legal system and the rights of citizens, such as freedom of religion, speech and association, in balance with the responsibilities of citizens.
  - Know how ordinary citizens can act and have acted in the past to create change.
  - Understand ideologies and other bases on which political organizations (such as political parties) are formed, which also shape interest groups or the media.
- Examples of knowledge relating to the content category of “Civil Society”:
  - Understand reasons for disagreement as well as consensus on issues of public concern.
  - Describe local community assets and problems and their connection to broader issues, including the important local actors.
  - Know about issues that might be addressed through community service.

Skills

Competencies related to skills are also part of most (if not all) of the standards documents, though they sometimes may be merged with knowledge. Many feel it is appropriate for schools to transmit skills that would make students’ current and eventual participation more informed and effective, but that it is less appropriate for schools to actually require participation. Sympathetic to this viewpoint, the Thinkers Meeting generated a list of civic actions and behaviors (ranging from paying taxes to voting to being active in one’s community to protesting injustice) and then looked at skills whose possession would enhance either the effectiveness of the behaviors or the likelihood that students would participate in them. They distinguished *thinking skills* (similar to cognitive or intellectual skills described in the IEA study in **Boxes 4** and **8**, and the NAEP assessment, respectively) from *participatory skills* (similar to the leadership, group mobilization and communication skills in **Box 8**).

Box 8: Research Findings on Skills in Citizenship Education

The IEA Civic Education Study measured skills in interpreting political information (leaflets, cartoons, news articles) because these are potentially important in the process of getting information related to elections, issues and protest (though probably less so for volunteering). IEA measured this directly with right-and-wrong-answer items, including this kind of stimulus material. These skills can be thought of as a kind of specialized literacy (decoding information where differences in point of view are important). And these skills can be taught (at least as evidenced by the increase in scores between ages 14 and 17 in the IEA data and the fact that countries which emphasize a hands-on approach in their curricula, such as the United States, Australia and Sweden, tend to have 14-year-old students who excel in them). In fact, American 14-year-olds are far more proficient in demonstrating their skills in interpreting political information than they are in showing they understand the principles and concepts of democracy. On the skills subtest in the IEA study, they scored at the very top of the 28 countries. In content knowledge of democratic principles and concepts, however, these same students were tied for 10th place, scoring at the same level as students from Russia, Slovenia and Hungary (and well below Finland and Greece, for example).

The Political Participation Project (Burns, Schlozmann and Verba, 2001) concentrated on skills in being part of, mobilizing or leading a group that might take political or social action (including volunteering, getting others to vote, managing conflict-related problems). This was measured retrospectively by asking adults about their experience. The researchers viewed these skills as resources acquired through experience in adult employment as well as in adolescence. They argue that the absence of these resources in women is a serious issue in the generation they surveyed.

Examples of these skills generated at the Thinkers Meeting also can be incorporated under the three content categories derived from Patrick.

- Examples of skills relating to the content category of “Democracy: The System or Rule of Law”:
  - Be able to understand, analyze and check the reliability of information about government from media sources and political communications.

- Be able to articulate the meaning of abstract concepts such as democracy and patriotism.
- Be able to articulate the relationship between the common good and self-interest and use these ideas in making decisions.

• Examples of skills relating to the content category of "Citizenship/Human Rights":

- Be able to express one's opinion on a political or civic matter when contacting an elected official or a media outlet.
- Be able to participate in a respectful and informed discussion about an issue.
- Be able to reach an informed decision about a candidate or conclusion about an issue.
- Be able to analyze instances of social injustice and decide when some action or nonviolent protest is justified.

• Examples of skills relating to the content category of "Civil Society":

- Be able to analyze how conditions in the community are connected to policy decisions.
- Be able to act in a group in a way that includes others and communicates respect for their views.
- Be able to resolve conflict and build consensus in a group.
- Be able to envision a plan for action on community problems and mobilize others to pursue it.

Dispositions and Motivations

Motivation and the disposition to be engaged civically are built over a span of years, not in the last two years of high school. Some motivations for engagement are based on positive experiences (for example, academic success in civic-related subjects), others on negative experiences (for example, experience with injustice). Several examples follow:

Acquiring knowledge and practicing citizenship in the community is sometimes a by-product of the pursuit of another goal. Students may learn facts about the Constitution because passing a test on these facts is required for promotion, or they may volunteer in the community because it looks good on a college application. This type of learning does not necessarily promote a long-lasting disposition that will sustain engagement.

Young people gain motivation when they can readily see the people they trust value their nation and/or their community and the democratic principles that sustain them. Students gain such exposure by being surrounded by practices, symbols, groups and individuals that reinforce the message that democracy is important. Community service, which is undertaken in a partnership or collaboration with respected adults who talk with young people about their experiences, is a potentially important source of this kind of motivation. Classrooms with respectful discussion also have a role.

The knowledge and cognitive skills acquired in and out of school serve as motivators when they help young people develop a framework for understanding what happens in their community or nation and a reason for believing their participation is worthwhile. This has several layers: knowledge itself; accepting norms that participation is worthwhile; having the skills to assess a situation from different points of view; and possessing the dispositions, motivation and skills to actually participate. This knowledge and these skills provide a background for engaging in effective participation. What is important about this type of motivation is that enhancing young people's skills encourages them to believe in their own self-efficacy and in the more generalized efficacy of getting together with others to take action. This is a positive type of dispositional pattern, but it depends on meaningful knowledge, on experience in settings in which students can feel empowered and on feedback from respected adults. This is an orchestration of experience that is rare for the majority of students.

Finally, motivation may result when students get upset or angry about something, often about injustice they feel personally or see in the lives of others. This is a kind of motivation that can be prompted by volunteer experience, but if the resulting action is to be constructive, it often requires discussion with adults.

Box 9: Research Findings on Dispositions, Motivations and Values in Citizenship Education

Some educators place an emphasis on cultivating civic dispositions (also called civic virtues or motivations), often meaning students' responsibilities and acceptance of duties to obey the law and participate in activities associated with conventional adult political activity and with being a contributing member in solving problems in the community. The IEA results show that when asked about norms for citizens' participation, 14-year-olds across countries agree that adults should obey the law and vote, but other aspects of what is called conventional political participation (discussion participation, party membership) are much less likely to be seen as important.

Willingness to volunteer also can be considered a positive civic disposition. In contrast to its importance as a predictor of voting, the IEA test score on civic content knowledge is not a significant predictor of the likelihood of volunteering as an adult in the United States. In some countries, the less knowledgeable students say they are more likely to volunteer. Instead, currently being a member of a volunteer organization and learning in school about community problems and how to solve them are the important correlates of willingness to volunteer. It also is important to note that considerable emphasis is placed on the confidence students develop in participating within the school environment, in discussion with parents and through organizational membership in general. Different experiences are important in promoting voting and volunteering (see also Table 1, Skills in National Standards).

There is evidence the school can address many types of attitudes and dispositions, especially those priming different kinds of dispositions toward participation and attitudes supporting rights for groups experiencing discrimination. Family influences are especially important for values development, a factor supported by the IEA relationships between attitudes and reported participation with parents in discussion.

In another study, *The Civic and Political Health of a Nation, A Generational Portrait* (Keeter, 2002), "civic" (volunteering or helping to solve community problems) is distinguished from "electoral" (voting, campaigning) engagement. This research supports the idea that volunteering predicts electoral behavior. Only 15% of the 15- to 25-year-old respondents are engaged in electoral activities, while only slightly more (17%) are engaged in civic activities. Only 11% engage in both. Another category, consumer activism, had a surprising response. Over half report boycotting a product or buying something as a positive response to a company's practices. This research also suggests that open conversations in schools and political discussions at home are important to student engagement, as well as having an example of volunteering in the home. The 19 indicators identified in this research have been duplicated in other studies, both in K-12 and higher education.

The Thinkers Meeting group that dealt with topics related to dispositions and motivations found them linked in many respects to knowledge and skills transmitted at school, but suspected they also were linked to experiences at home more than to the other two strands.

- Examples of dispositions relating to the content category of “Democracy: the Rule of Law”:
  - Patriotism and commitment to American democracy
  - Support for justice, equality and other democratic values and procedures.
- Examples of dispositions relating to the content category of “Citizenship/Human Rights”:
  - Respect for human rights and willingness to search out and listen to others’ views
  - Sense of realistic efficacy about citizen’ actions
  - Sense of personal responsibility at many levels (obeying the law, voting).
- Examples of dispositions relating to the content category of “Civil Society”:
  - Social trust in the community
  - Personal commitment to others and their well-being, and to justice.

In summary, intersecting the results of the three groups at the Thinkers Meeting with Patrick’s three concepts provides a useful set of exemplars of competencies.

Principles for a Continuous and Increasingly Complex Consideration of Citizenship Competencies Beginning at Kindergarten

A variety of studies of elementary and middle school students, including the IEA Civic Education Study, shows that in democratic countries the average student is already a member of his or her political culture by age 14. Students' attitudes about the economic role of government and their trust in government-related institutions, for example, already match in many respects those of adults in their society. Identity groups already exert an influence; at 14, there are already gender differences in support for women's rights and differences between immigrants and native-born students in their attitudes toward immigrants' rights. Between 9th grade and high school graduation, substantial gains in political knowledge and civic skills occur.

Early studies of elementary school children showed that from grade 2 to grade 8 attitudes change (toward less personalized attitudes about government and more awareness of issues). Rudimentary concepts of fairness and freedom of speech exist. By 8th grade, in children were much like adults in many of the dimensions underlying political awareness (Hess and Torney, 1967).

The 1998 NAEP framework looked at three levels of competency at each of the three grade levels tested (4, 8 and 12). The resulting competencies, however, were only moderately well-integrated across grades, and a number of them presented difficulties for paper-and-pencil measurement. Some state frameworks are probably a better source for grade-level competencies, but this is beyond the scope of this paper.

Based on these findings and on studies in developmental psychology, however, a sequence of experiences such as the following seems appropriate:

In the early elementary grades, build on children's interest in what adults do to introduce them to voting as a process. Expand their curiosity about how governmental processes work and how America developed its form of government (much as how their curiosity is built about how trains work). A concrete point is easier to grasp than an abstraction at these levels. Careful scaffolding of experience is important. Prompt students to think about issues outside their immediate environment (both past and present). Certain aspects of law and institutions such as elections can be discussed in rudimentary form. As students learn to read, or as they hear stories in the classroom, include books with historical, social and civic content. Early elementary students often have the opportunity to take field trips into the community, which can be excellent opportunities to connect these experiences to classroom discussions of government's role in influencing their communities.

In the late elementary grades, build on children's growing ability to take others' perspective and increase opportunities to look at community issues. Encourage participation in out-of-school organizations that have age-appropriate ways of involving children in their communities. Begin formal (but not rote) civic education classes and make explicit the civic-related themes that are central in social studies and history topics. Ask "what is a meaningful connection for a child of this age between this topic and some kind of understanding of the importance of informed and skillful citizen involvement in a democracy or ways in which one can become personally engaged in one's community?" (see Torney-Purta and Richardson, 2003).

In early adolescence, offer the first full civic education course (preferably at grade 7 or 8) or make the history course one in which explicit attention is given to citizenship education competencies. Have daily discussions of related issues in the classroom, rather than infrequent current events exercises. Think of innovative out-of-class or homework assignments that will make these issues engaging for students. Provide opportunities for developmentally appropriate service-learning (or, for the students who prefer or whose parents prefer, opportunities to review community assets and risks). Make it possible for students to engage with adults in common activities and to talk with them about those activities. Continue formal (but not rote) civic education classes and make explicit civic-related themes central in history and the social studies. Introduce democratic simulation exercises, such as mock trials and town meetings. For a range of curriculum topics, ask "what is a meaningful connection for a student of this age between this topic and some kind of understanding of the importance of citizen involvement in democracy or ways in

which one can become personally engaged in civil society?" Consider using the school as a democratic laboratory.

In high school, study issues in the context of history and politics in greater depth. Expand the complexity of exercises in reasoning and finding information about social and civic topics. Encourage students to compare sources, which can mean analyzing media and other sources of information to assess their validity. Provide opportunities for relationships with adults engaged in common projects and opportunities to discuss the many dimensions of civic and political identity. Allow students to work in groups to address a local issue. There is quite a bit of good material in state competencies and textbooks at the high school level already; the challenge is to choose the materials and activities that will be motivating to students.

At all levels, it is important to realize there are individual as well as developmental or age differences. Building competencies is a cumulative process. For example, the student who gains a good understanding of the basic nature of elections in the primary grades has a foundation to build more advanced understanding. Individual differences are present in all classes but tend to be larger at higher grades.

Anyone who is a parent or a teacher knows that some 8-year-olds have considerable curiosity about how the social world outside their immediate environment operates and how people different from themselves think, while other 8-year-olds do not. Some 11-year-olds will read parts of the news section of a newspaper, while others will go right to sports or comics. Some 14-year-olds are alienated from society, while some can be mobilized to engage in their community. By this age some young people may begin to reject their community as having too few opportunities. Some 17-year-olds are so preoccupied with their right to be silent in front of their peers that they refuse to utter a word in class, while others voice an opinion on any subject (informed or not). The school can aim its civic education programs at the average student, but should provide opportunities to build variations addressing both developmental and individual differences, as well as fitting into the community in which the school is located.

As a more detailed illustration, **Table 3** presents a draft schematic of one aspect, elections, of the first two rows of **Table 2** (dealing with Democratic Institutions/Law and Citizenship/Human Rights,). **Table 4** presents a similar schematic dealing with understanding processes of conflict and agreement (or consensus). Because there is less elaboration available of competencies appropriate for the lower grades, that is where **Tables 3** and **4** concentrate. Almost any government text or set of state standards would yield appropriate high school examples.

The purpose of these tables is to suggest some developmentally appropriate themes and examples. The examples are meant to be illustrative, not comprehensive, and to suggest ways in which connections might be made to several subject areas in the curriculum (for example, history, language arts, science, environmental studies). These tables are based on the national voluntary standards developed by the Center for Civic Education and National Council for the Social Studies. The categories of civic knowledge, civic thinking skills, civic participation skills, and civic dispositions and motivations are derived from the braid illustration on the front of the paper.

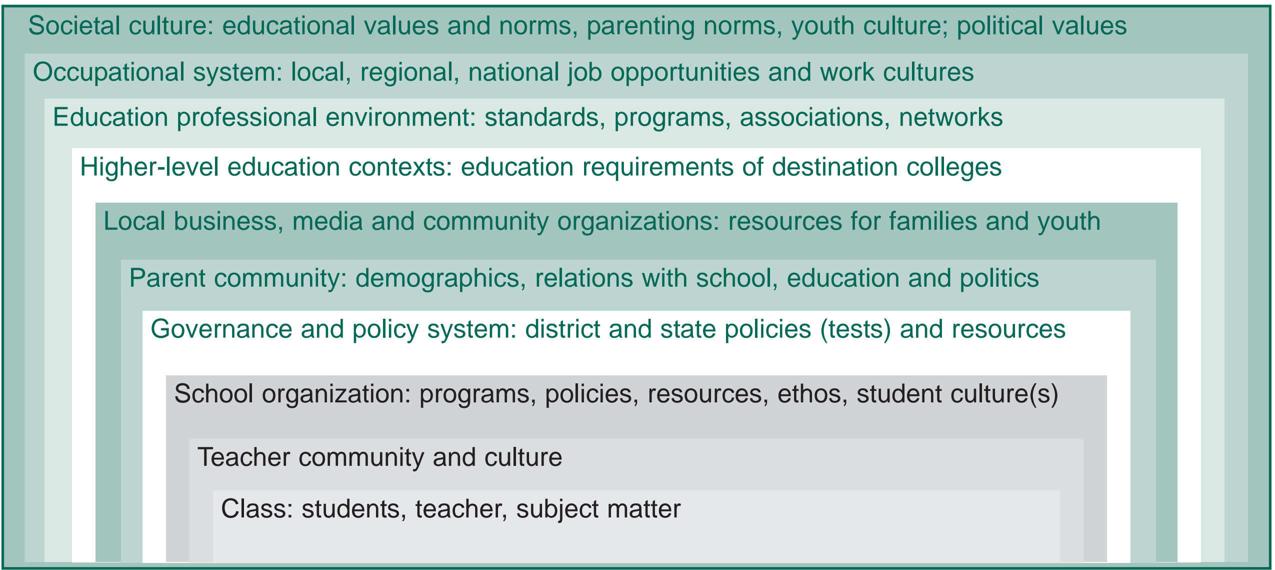
Table 3: An Example of K-12 Civic Competencies: Government and Elections				
Grade Span	**Civic Knowledge**	**Civic Thinking Skills**	**Civic Participation Skills**	**Civic Dispositions**
	What students should know about citizenship	*Cognitive civic skills students should possess*	*Participatory civic skills students should possess*	*Civic dispositions and motivations students should possess*
	Know:	*Be able to:*	*Be able to:*	*Demonstrate:*
K-3	...that groups and leaders beyond those in family and school influence people's actions (by rules, laws). …that leaders are often chosen by election and what an election is.	…recognize pictures of national leaders (and distinguish between those who are historical and contemporary). …consider basic aspects of candidates or positions before voting.	…participate in a simple election (both as voter and candidate).	…support for equality and fairness in voting.
4-6	...why only adult citizens vote in most elections. …what elected representatives do. …that citizens can and cannot do various things to influence the outcome of elections.	...interpret a simple news story or political cartoon about an election.	…discuss the reasons for making an electoral choice. …give persuasive reasons about why citizens should vote.	...commitment to equality and fairness and the ability to consider the public good as well as self-interest.
7-9	...that elections have their basis in the Constitution (and basics about the history of the right to vote). ...about elections at the local, state and national levels. ...the role of political parties and interest groups.	…interpret a news story or political cartoon about an election that shows different perspectives. …to get information about candidates.	...persuade others to become a candidate or to vote based on a reasoned and respectful argument.	…a sense of personal responsibility to vote and seek fair elections. …motivation to seek information before voting.
10-12	[Many examples from standards]	[Many examples from standards]	[Many examples from standards]	[Many examples from standards]

Table 4: An Example of K-12 Civic Competencies: Conflict and Consensus				
Grade Span	**Civic Knowledge**	**Cognitive Thinking Skills**	**Participatory Civic Skills**	**Civic Dispositions**
	What students should know about citizenship	*Cognitive civic skills students should possess*	*Participatory civic skills students should possess*	*Civic dispositions and motivations students should possess*
	Know:	*Be able to:*	*Be able to:*	*Demonstrate:*
K-3	...that persons in the present and in history sometimes differ about what the best course of action is. ...how leaders sometimes help groups achieve consensus.	...show nascent awareness of other perspectives.	...participate in a simple discussion that recognizes and respects different points of view.	…willingness to listen to others. …willingness to articulate one's own views.
4-6	...about important debates in history – how they have been resolved and that some served as "turning points." ...how consensus as well as conflict contributes to political dialogue.	...recognize and find sources (newspapers, cartoons) where different points of view are presented. ...take another person's or group's perspective.	...frame an argument giving both sides fair treatment. …argue using evidence, reason and persuasion in school-based or local issues.	…willingness to consider the public good as well as self-interest in resolving a conflict. ...willingness to participate in discussion to build consensus. ...motivation to seek information and evidence from media sources.
7-9	…about more complex historical and contemporary debates. …mechanisms used to resolve conflict in school, community, nation.	…interpret a news story, speech or political cartoon that presents different perspectives.	…make a presentation using evidence, reason and persuasion on national as well as school-based or local issues.	...willingness to engage someone with an opposing point of view in discussion (while conceding valid points).
10-12	…how different political groups differ on issues (e.g., political parties, interest groups).	…compare different news sources.	...evaluate the effectiveness of different strategies to make a point.	…motivation to work toward self-accepted political and civic goals on issues where people differ.

Embedded Contexts of Schooling Relating to Civic Education

The last remaining piece of this paper is a graphic to orient the Professional Judgment Groups (PJGs) to the variety of contexts in which civic education is embedded, delineating the groups involved and influencing the actions suggested. **Box 10**, which contains a modification relating to citizenship of a schematic originally developed by McLaughlin and Talbott to apply to high schools more generally, can serve as a way to examine the implications of the material presented in this paper. Although the participants in the PJGs looked at all these levels, and affirmed their importance, they focused on the governance and policy systems.

Box 10:



Adapted from *Professional communities and the work of high school teaching*, Appendix A, p. 144, of McLaughlin, M. and Talbott, J. (2001). Gray shaded portion refers to proximal influences on teaching.

Suggestions for State-level Policymakers and Advisers Using This Document

As indicated previously, this document and the process with which it is associated is not intended to supplant other work in this field but to extend it and make it more coherent and effective.

There is considerable evidence about positive attributes of effective civic education programs. They do the following:

- Fit into the three categories of content and three strands of competency detailed earlier
- Incorporate strands of civic preparation in designated courses and across the curriculum, through schooling and related community experience
- Include, as appropriate, didactic instruction, experiential learning, issue-centered classroom discussion, peer interaction outside the classroom
- Emphasize meaningful learning and authentic engagement
- Expect students to reason about the support for their own positions and reflect about their experience in and outside the classroom
- Evaluate students in a developmentally appropriate way to assess more than easily measured facts; for example, analytical or participatory skills
- Connect to the world outside the classroom, not only to what's in the textbook
- Make knowledgeable, committed and caring adults accessible to students
- Allow different opinions to be expressed, not expecting one right answer for every question
- Empower students to solve problems
- Make links among subject areas, for example, not unnecessarily isolating learning to read from reading about their communities and nation.

It is important that state education policies begin citizenship education in the elementary years, starting with simple concepts and progressing to more complex concepts, which allows students to embrace citizenship as part of their identity by age 14.

Some states have standards or lists of competencies that have been strongly influenced by the National Voluntary Civic Education Standards (CCE), while others reference their standards more closely to the NCSS Standards or the National Standards for History. Some may have developed programs that relate to standards with a different focus (for example, service-learning) or to an emphasis on aims such as loyalty and patriotism. The entry point into examining standards or lists of competencies will be different, but the direction of effort should be the same:

- Toward greater coherence around concepts such as those identified by Patrick and illustrated here, rather than encyclopedic detail
- Toward making sure the three strands (knowledge, thinking skills and participatory skills, and dispositions) are all represented and related to one another, rather than an overwhelming focus on content knowledge
- Toward extending citizenship teaching into the primary and middle school grades, rather than a predominant emphasis on high school
- Toward making the curriculum suitable for students at a variety of learning levels, especially second-language English students and students from homes with poor literacy and economic resources, rather than focusing predominantly on preparing students who are likely to receive reinforcement at home for becoming informed and active citizens
- Toward making citizenship education experiences more likely to engage and motivate every student, rather than relying primarily on the incentive to get good grades or to be accepted into college
- Toward making it possible for teachers to cover the material in the lists of competencies by allowing more preparation time and professional development support

- Toward a developmentally appropriate testing procedure that moves beyond multiple-choice items about facts to more informative ways of benchmarking students on knowledge, skills and motivations to be active citizens.

Bibliography

Allen, G., Kirasic, K. and Spilich, G. (1997). "Children's political knowledge and memory for political news stories." *Child Study Journal*, 27, 163-176.

Amadeo, J., Torney-Purta, J., Lehmann, R., Husfeldt, V. and Nikolova, R. (2002). *Civic knowledge and engagement: An IEA study of upper secondary students in sixteen countries.* Amsterdam: IEA (International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement).

Baldi, S., Perie, M., Skidmore, D., Greenberg, E. and Hahn, C. (2001). *What democracy means to ninth graders: U.S results from the international IEA Civic Education Study* (NCES 2001-096). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

Burns, N., Schlozmann, K. and Verba, S. (2001). *Private roots of public action.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Carnegie Corporation of New York and Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) (2003). *The civic mission of schools.* New York: Carnegie Corporation.

Chambliss, M. and Calfee, R. (1998). *Textbooks for learning.* Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Center for Civic Education (CCE) (1991). *Civitas: A framework for civic education.* Calabasas, CA: CCE.

Center for Civic Education (CCE) (1994). *National standards for civics and government.* Calabasas, CA: CCE.

Delli Carpini, M.X. and Ketter, S. (1996). *What Americans know about politics and why it matters.* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Education Commission of the States (ECS) (2001). *Every Student A Citizen: Creating the Democratic Self*. Denver, CO: ECS.

Eyler, J. and Giles, D. (1999). *Where's the learning in service-learning?* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc., Publishers.

Gagnon, P. (2003). *Educating democracy: State standards to ensure a civic core.* Washington, DC: Albert Shanker Institute.

Hahn, C. (1999). "Challenges to civic education in the United States." In J. Torney-Purta, J. Schwille and J. Amadeo (Eds.), *Civic education across countries: Twenty-four national case studies from the IEA Civic Education Project.* Amsterdam: IEA.

Helwig, C. (1998). "Children's conceptions of fair government and freedom of speech." *Child Development,* 69(2), 518-531.

Hess, R. and Torney, J. (1967). *The development of political attitudes in children.* Chicago: Aldine.

Keeter, S., Zukin, C., Andolina, M. and Jenkins, K. (2002). *The civic and political health of the nation: A generational portrait.* Washington, DC: CIRCLE.

Lutkus, A.D., et al. (1999). *NAEP 1998 civics report card for the nation.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.

McLaughlin, M. and Talbott, J. (2001). *Professional communities and the work of high school teaching.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Miller, Jeffery (2003). *State policies to support citizenship education.* Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States.

NAEP Civics Consensus Project (1998). *Civics framework for the 1998 National Assessment of Educational Progress.* Washington, DC: National Assessment Governing Board.

National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) Creating effective citizens position statement.

Niemi, R. and Junn, J. (1998). *Civic education: What makes students learn.* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Niemi, R. and Smith, J. (2001). "Enrollments in high school government classes: Are we short-changing both citizenship and political science teaching?" *PS: Political Science & Politics,* 34(2), 281-287.

Patrick, John J. (2003). *Teaching democracy globally, internationally, and comparatively: The 21st century civic mission of schools.* www.civiced.org/articles_patrick_global.pdf

Ravitch, D. (2003). *The language police: How pressure groups restrict what students learn.* New York: Knopf.

Schwille, J. and Amadeo, J. (2002). "The paradoxical situation of civic education in schools: Ubiquitous and yet elusive." In *New paradigms and recurring paradoxes in education for citizenship: An international comparison,* G. Steiner-Khamsi, J. Torney-Purta and J. Schwille (Eds). Oxford, UK: Elsevier Science Ltd., 105-136.

Sinatra, G., Beck, I. and McKeown, M. (1992). "A longitudinal characterization of young students' knowledge of their country's government." *American Educational Research Journal,* 29*,* 633-661.

Tolo, K. (1999). *The civic education of American youth: From state policies to school district practices.* Austin, TX: Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, University of Texas.

Torney-Purta, J. (1991). "Schema theory and cognitive psychology: Implications for social studies." *Theory and Research in Social Education*, 19: 189-210.

Torney-Purta, J. (1992). "Cognitive representations of the international political and economic systems in adolescents." In H. Haste and J. Torney-Purta (Eds.), *The development of political understanding*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass (New Directions in Child Development), pp. 11-25.

Torney-Purta, J. (2001) "Civic knowledge, beliefs about democratic institutions, and civic engagement among 14-year-olds." *Prospects*, 31: 279-292.

Torney-Purta, J. (2002). "The school's role in developing civic engagement: A study of adolescents in twenty-eight countries." *Applied Developmental Science,* 6: 202-211.

Torney-Purta, J., Lehmann, R., Oswald, H. and Schulz, W. (2001). *Citizenship and education in twenty-eight countries: Civic knowledge and engagement at age fourteen.* Amsterdam: IEA. (Distributed by the American Bar Association Division on Public Education, 1-800-285-2221, code 235-0042.) Also: **www.wam.umd.edu/~iea/**.

Torney-Purta, J. and Richardson, W. (2003) "Teaching for the meaningful practice of democratic citizenship: Learning from the IEA Civic Education Study in 28 countries." In J. Patrick, G. Hamot and R. Leming (Eds.), *Civic learning in teacher education: International perspectives on education for democracy in the preparation of teachers.* Bloomington, IN: ERIC.

Torney-Purta, J., Schwille, J. and Amadeo, J. (1999). *Civic education across countries: Twenty-four national case studies from the IEA Civic Education Project.* Amsterdam: IEA.

Zemelman, S., Daniels, H. and Hyde, A. (1998). *Best practice: New standards for teaching and learning in America's schools* (2nd Edition). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Web Sites

Center for Civic Education: **www.civiced.org**

Constitutional Rights Foundation: **www.crf-usa.org**

Education Commission of the States/ National Center for Learning and Citizenship: **www.ecs.org/nclc**

IEA Civic Education Study: **www.wam.umd.edu/~iea**

Kids Voting: **www.kidsvotingusa.org**

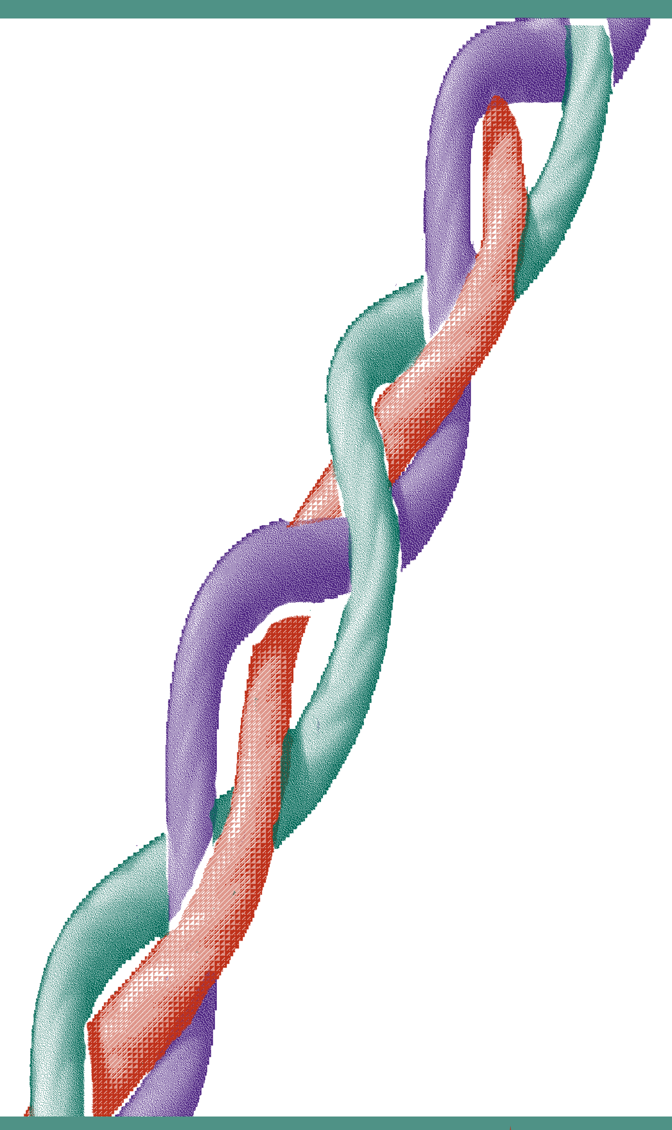
National Alliance for Civic Education: **www.cived.net**

National Conference of State Legislatures/Trust for Representative Democracy: **www.ncsl.org**

Project 540: **www.project540.org**

Student Voices: **www.student-voices.org**

Youth as Resources: **www.yar.org**



Education Commission of the States

Education Commission of the States
700 Broadway, Suite 1200
Denver, CO 80203-3460
303.299.3600
www.ecs.org

Citizenship Education

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 1200 • Denver, CO 80203-3460 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

The Role of Principals in Citizenship Education: Integrating and Sustaining Quality Efforts in American Schools

July 2004

Although school districts' mission statements routinely refer to the importance of preparing students to become responsible citizens, the current focus on academic knowledge often diminishes a commitment to the teaching of citizenship skills. A recent analysis of the scores of 4th, 8th and 12th graders on civics tests administered by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) showed that only one in four students was able to explain in even simple terms how American democracy works, while only 9% were able to list two or more positive benefits of active citizenship. Students may learn facts about democracy, the NAEP analysis concluded, but in general "they have difficulty applying this knowledge to community problems or public policy."

"There is such pressure on principals to raise student achievement that other important aspects of education are getting lost along the way," says Delaine Eastin, executive director of the National Institute for School Leadership and former state superintendent of public instruction in California. "Our schools and policymakers have to be concerned not just with improving test scores but with growing great citizens, because we can't have a successful democracy without them."

Many districts are attempting to go beyond the valuable but limited scope of a civics curriculum – which focuses on the *knowledge* of democratic concepts, institutions and rights – and use active citizenship education, which gives students systematic opportunities to *practice* civic skills such as decisionmaking, leadership, consensus building and communicating with policymakers about issues of concern.

This issue brief explores the instrumental role of school principals in efforts to unite civics knowledge with action and make effective citizenship education a vital part of their schools' functioning. It concludes with excerpts from interviews with several principals engaged in such efforts.

Citizenship education and service-learning

Service-learning is a form of instruction that benefits both students and communities. Though sometimes confused with community service, service-learning differs substantially since it is closely tied to academic instruction, curriculum frameworks and standards. It can be used in virtually any subject area, across subject areas and at any grade level. In all quality service-learning projects, students perform a needed service in the school or surrounding community. In cooperation with their teachers, students also make decisions about the nature of their projects and have structured time for reflection about their experiences.

For example, a high school civics class in Waterford, Connecticut, became involved in the case of Captain Arnold Holm, a young man who had graduated from their school some years before and been declared missing in action after his helicopter was shot down during the Vietnam War. The students did research on the helicopter crew, met with their congressman and eventually convinced the federal government to reopen the case. "While the case is still unresolved and no remains have been found,"

said Waterford High School principal Don Macrino, "the young people saw that they could, through their efforts, make the wheels of government turn. That was a very powerful lesson for them."

Service-learning, citizenship education and academic achievement

Principal Sharon Buddin from Ridge View High School in Columbia, South Carolina, believes "any time that you make connections between learning and service, the learning sticks." She also asserts that the application of citizenship skills through service-learning helps to shape the culture of the school, and that in turn "gets you the accountability results that you want."

Buddin's view are borne out by a number of statewide and local studies suggesting that students involved in service-learning receive better grades and score higher on state tests of basic skills than their peers. Other studies have found that service-learning students have better attendance records, are more likely to come to class and finish tasks on time, and feel more connected to their schools.[i]

Waterford High's Don Macrino sees a clear connection between academic achievement and the application of citizenship skills through service-learning. "Some students who may not do well academically really shine in service-learning," he says. "It lights a fire inside of kids to do bigger, better things. It gives them the acceptance of their peers and helps them to become real leaders." Macrino also sees benefits for students who are gifted academically. "Service-learning gives them a way to put theory into practice and demonstrate what they've learned," he says.

Making education more relevant to students

Principal Jan Fries-Martinez of Polytechnic High School in Los Angeles recalls how many of her students wanted to help after an earthquake struck the area. With guidance from their teacher, students in one class volunteered to help repair broken walls and windows at a nearby senior housing facility. "Students could see the connection between what they were learning in school – in this case, geometry – and what they were doing to help people," Fries-Martinez says. When civic education is taught through the vehicle of service-learning, it also creates a real sense of community, she says. "The students say, 'I need to be at school because I'm part of a project.'"

Celia Ripke, an elementary school principal in Hollywood, California, notes that students are not just participants, but are often initiators of service-learning projects. When students have planted a garden or conducted a clothing drive in one class, they want to do a similar project in another class because of their positive experience. "So our students play a big role in convincing teachers about the importance of service-learning," she says.

Numerous studies of service-learning point to a range of benefits for students beyond academic achievement: a heightened sense of civil and social responsibility; reduced behavioral problems; greater acceptance of cultural differences; and better relationships with peers, teachers and parents.[ii] Through service-learning, young people's innate need to find meaning in their lives and do something important in this world is given expression within the context of their studies. In contrast to the frequent and profound disconnect of experience that occurs between the inside and outside of classroom walls, students who combine knowledge with service find a comfortable continuity of learning between their schools, homes and community.

Former California State Superintendent Eastin points out a number of other benefits for students, including the favorable reception that students involved in ongoing service to their communities can get when they apply to a college or for a scholarship. She also believes service-learning can help immigrant students develop a greater understanding of and appreciation for democratic government. Finally, she extols the simple pleasures of human connection. "You meet the nicest people doing hands-on, value-driven democracy," Eastin says.

Involving parents

The importance of parent involvement in schools is well documented. When strong connections exist between homes and schools, students are more likely to have better attendance records, higher levels of academic achievement, fewer behavioral problems and better social skills.[iii]

Service-learning invites the meaningful involvement of parents and provides a variety of options for parents to help, both in the school and at home. At Gardner Elementary School in Hollywood, California, where there is a large concentration of recent Russian and Latino immigrants, most parents work or go to school full time. “They can’t come to classes during the day, but are very supportive of things that they can help with after school hours,” says Gardner principal Celia Ripke. For example, many parents who work full time were instrumental in organizing and contributing to recent book and clothing drives.

Middle school principal Madeline Brick from Hudson, Massachusetts, says it takes a lot of work to involve parents, but it’s worth the effort. “Today, for example, we had 15 parents helping with the painting of another mural for the school,” she says. “Parents know what is going on in the school and feel more connected because of that.” All the principals interviewed for this paper emphasized the importance of regular communication with parents to inform them about service-learning projects and describe opportunities for parents to become involved.

The use of policy

Embedding service-learning and citizenship education in schools through policy (1) helps ensure this practice will continue beyond the tenure of certain dedicated teachers or administrators, (2) provides added support, and (3) makes explicit they are not “add-ons,” but rather integral components of school district goals. For example, the mission statement of Richland School District Two in Columbia, South Carolina states:

> *Richland School District Two, in partnership with the Columbia Northeast community, guarantees each student a quality education by providing appropriate and challenging learning experiences to equip each individual for lifelong learning, responsible citizenship and productivity in an ever-changing world. The School Board . . . values service-learning as an effective pedagogy to achieve its mission and ensure each graduate can be successful.*

There are two basic approaches to embedding service-learning and citizenship education in policy. The first is to strongly encourage the use of service-learning as a means to citizenship education. The second approach is to mandate its use – in specific classes, such as social studies or civics; in certain grades or grade spans; or as a graduation requirement.

In Philadelphia, for example, district policy states that all students will have a service-learning experience at least three times: by the 5th grade, again by the 9th grade and before graduation. “We leave it up to the principals and teachers at each school to figure out how this will happen,” says Kenny Holdsman, the district’s former service-learning director. “At some schools, principals encourage certain teachers to use service-learning. At other schools, students are assigned to teachers who employ service-learning in their classes.” The district verifies students’ compliance with the policy by showing the completion of a service-learning experience on report cards.

Service-learning mandates – whether they are generated at the state or local level – can be a source of controversy. In Waterford, Connecticut, where students are required to complete 80 hours of service to graduate, some parents voice complaints about community service and service-learning being “forced volunteerism.” Principal Don Macrino responds that the school is dealing with a student population that “needs to be steered in the right direction” through an expectation of service. Macrino feels that the drawbacks of the mandate are greatly outweighed by the benefits to the students, the school and the city. Because his students work in more than 200 local agencies, all those partners get to know the young

people. “They see that a certain student is not just some strange being dressed in black, but he’s John Smith who is a responsible, caring person,” he says. “The service work allows people to see beyond the appearances. It’s that kind of connection that strengthens the community.”

Whether service-learning is mandated or not, district policy can be used to provide a broad base of support for it. As an example, the Nestucca Valley School District in Tillamook, Oregon, formally supports and encourages the use of service-learning as a teaching strategy “by giving it priority status in the use of transportation resources, by providing staff development, by teacher release time, by publicly recognizing service-learning projects and by providing financial support for service-learning projects.”

Conclusion

The habits of democracy must be relearned in each generation; they are not automatically bestowed on young people when they reach the age of 18. There can be no effective citizens without a quality education, and educational institutions have historically played a key role in fostering the attitudes and skills of democracy. In the words of Professor Benjamin Barber of the University of Maryland, “a theory of democracy… demands a civic pedagogy rooted in the obligation to educate all who would be citizens; and since the reverse is true, to make citizens of all who are educated.”[iv] The classroom is not just a container for knowledge, but a laboratory for democracy.

Even in a time of heightened emphasis on test scores and accountability, well-planned citizenship education is indispensable to schools and communities. Teaching young people about the workings of democracy and giving them opportunities to practice their knowledge through service-learning provides the foundation for students to become lifelong, contributing citizens. Neither citizenship education nor service-learning are “add-on” activities; they are potent tools that fulfill the civic mission of schools and simultaneously strengthen students’ academic, social and career development. As administrators and gatekeepers, principals play a crucial role in overseeing, strengthening and promoting these efforts in their schools.

Resources

The one resource cited most frequently by the principals interviewed for this issue brief was of the human variety – principals at other schools with credible citizenship education and service-learning programs in place, service-learning consultants and teachers who encourage their peers, through words and by example, to try something new. One principal told us: “For me, the best resources are people around me in the building and the dialogue we create around the attributes that we want to see in our students. There are hundreds of Web sites, and all of that is helpful, but first you need to talk to the people whom you trust. We were able to build our service-learning efforts to meet our needs and match our vision.”

Recommended readings

Berman, Sheldon, Sheila Bailey, Randall Collins, Dale Kinsley and Elizabeth Holman (2000). *Service-learning: An Administrator’s Guide for Improving Schools and Connecting with the Community*. Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States.

Recommended Web sites

California Department of Education, CalServe Initiative
www.cde.ca.gov/cyfsbranch/lsp/cshome.htm

Center for Civic Education
www.civiced.org

Constitutional Rights Foundation
www.crf-usa.org

Corporation for National and Community Service
www.cns.gov

National Center for Learning and Citizenship
www.ecs.org/nclc

National Service-Learning Clearinghouse
www.servicelearning.org

National Service-Learning Partnership
www.service-learningpartnership.org

National Youth Leadership Council
www.nylc.org

Points of Light Foundation
www.pointsoflight.org

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dltcl/bbfcsp/slhmpage.html

W.K. Kellogg Foundation
www.wkkf.org

Boston, Bruce and Barbara Gomez (2000*). Every Student a Citizen: Creating the Democratic Self*. Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States.

Miller, Jeffery J. (2004). *Citizenship Education in 10 U.S. High Schools*. Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States.

Miller, Jeffery J. (2004). *Citizenship Education Policy at the School District Level*. Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States.

National Commission on Service-Learning (2002*). Learning in Deed: The Power of Service-Learning for America's Schools*. Battle Creek, MI: W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

Potter, Calvin, Jane Grinde, Stan Potts, Barbara Babcock, and Neldine Nichols (2000). *Learning from Experience: A Collection of Service-learning Projects Linking Academic Standards to the Curriculum*. Madison, WI: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

Vermont Community Works (2001). *Connecting Service Learning to the Curriculum: A Workbook for Teachers and Administrators*. Guilford, VT: VCW.

Linda Fredericks is a consultant to the ECS National Center for Learning and Citizenship and other national and regional education organizations. She is the author of the "Service-learning and Standards Toolkit" and "Learning That Lasts: How Service-Learning Can Become an Integral Part of Schools, States and Communities." Delaine Eastin is executive director of the National Institute for School Leadership, former state superintendent of public instruction in California and a member of the ECS National Center for Learning and Citizenship's Executive Board. Randall Collins is superintendent of Waterford (CT) Public Schools and chair of the National Center for Learning and Citizenship.

---

[i] Billig, Shelley (2000, May). "Research on K-12 School-based Service-learning: The Evidence Builds." *Phi Delta Kappan,* vol. 81, no. 9, pp. 658-664.

[ii] Billig, Shelley (2000). *Service-learning Impacts on Youth, Schools and Communities: Research on K-12 School-based Service-learning, 1990-1999*. Denver, CO: RMC Research Corporation.

[iii] National Center for Family and Community Connections to Schools. (2002). *A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family and Community Connections on Student Achievement*. Austin, TX: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory.

[iv] Barber, Benjamin (2004, May). "Making the Public Out of Education." *School Administrator*, vol. 61, no. 5, pp. 10-13. www.aasa.org/publications/sa/2004_05/Barber.htm.

This paper was written by Linda Fredricks, based on the expertise of Delaine Eastin, executive director of the National Institute for School Leadership and former state superintendent of public instruction in California, and Randall Collins, superintendent of Waterford (CT) Public Schools and chairman of the National Center for Learning and Citizenship.

© 2004 by the Education Commission of the States (ECS). All rights reserved. ECS is a nonprofit, nationwide organization that helps state leaders shape education policy.

To request permission to excerpt part of this publication, either in print or electronically, please fax a request to the attention of the ECS Communications Department, 303.296.8332 or e-mail ecs@ecs.org.

Helping State Leaders Shape Education Policy

Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers to Use Technology (PT3)

Policy Brief

By Gina Shkodriani

Shkodriani is a senior research associate with JBL Associates, Inc.

Community Colleges as Professional Development: Resources for Working Teachers

Introduction

Education policy must respond to the changing needs of students and their teachers, just as businesses provide employee training as market and industry changes evolve. Like all professionals, even the best-trained teachers need to keep up with the changes in their subject field and developments in current practices and policies.

"School improvement efforts over the last few decades require teachers not only to study, implement and assess learner outcomes outlined in local, state and national educational standards but also to provide meaningful, engaged learning (cognitively, socially and culturally) for a very diverse student population. Teachers are expected to understand emerging standards – such as those in math and science – and views of learning, and to change their roles and practice accordingly. Teachers who were prepared for their profession prior to the reform movement may not be prepared for these new practices and roles."

There is growing consensus among education reformers that professional development is at the center of education reform and instructional improvement. In working toward change, teachers need to be continually supported with professional development to address the additional challenges of implementing educational standards, working with diverse populations and changing forms of student assessment.

In general, professional development programs help teachers improve their skills, keep up with changes in statewide student performance standards and incorporate them into their teaching, and enhance student learning. They also help teachers learn new teaching methods and adapt to changing school environments. Professional development programs that help teachers in the instructional use of computers, the Internet and other technologies are often offered by community colleges.

In most school districts, professional development is thought about almost exclusively in terms of formal education activities such as courses or workshops. Two or three times a year, school administrators designate a half or full day for an "inservice" program. Typically, professional development is relegated to after-school sessions or some other out-of-school time, separating it from the workday and from the workplace.

These programs may feature experts who speak to teachers on a specific topic or may take the form of a series of workshops that teachers can choose to attend. Teachers typically spend a few hours listening and acquiring practical tips and some useful materials. There is seldom any follow-up to the experience.

Education Commission
of the States
700 Broadway, Suite 1200
Denver, CO 80203-3460
303.299.3600
Fax: 303.296.8332
ecs@ecs.org
www.ecs.org

PT3 Policy Brief

Resources for Working Teachers (cont'd)

- Teachers participate in professional development for a number of reasons, including:
- Salary increases
- Certificate maintenance
- Career mobility
- Gaining new skills and knowledge to enhance classroom performance.

Teacher professional development is often required as part of a school improvement plan. Recertification policies in most states require that teachers earn a certain number of credits or continuing education units (CEUs) within a set time (typically five years). Some states expect teachers to obtain a master's degree within a given period to obtain a permanent license or reach the highest step in a career ladder. Some districts subsidize the tuition for graduate courses taken by teachers.

Sometimes teachers receive compensation for professional development on an individual basis for the number of hours spent above and beyond the nine-month teacher contract. Salary scales in many districts offer increments to teachers for taking additional coursework or CEUs.

The federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 2001 (or No Child Left Behind Act) emphasizes the importance of ongoing professional development and offers states substantial funding. The law also combines the funding of federal education programs, including class-size reduction and the Eisenhower Professional Development program, into performance-based grants. States and local districts are to use this funding to strengthen the skills and improve the knowledge of their public school teachers, principals and administrators. The plan also establishes math and science partnerships between state and local districts and institutions of higher education. The ESEA offers opportunities for community colleges to develop partnerships with and offer their expertise to local schools and districts.

"We know a good deal about the characteristics of successful professional development. It focuses on concrete classroom applications of general ideas; it exposes teachers to actual practice rather than to description of practice; it involves opportunities for observation, critique and reflection; it involves opportunities for group support and collaboration; and it involves deliberate evaluation and feedback by skills practitioners with expertise about good teaching. But while we know a good deal about the characteristics of good professional development, we know a good deal less about how to organize successful professional development so as to influence practice in large numbers of schools and classrooms." In this report, the author explores how community colleges can be used as resources.

Current Roles of Community Colleges in Professional Development

Community colleges already play a role in teacher professional development by offering courses, workshops and institutes that enhance teacher competency in math, science, technology and foreign languages. It appears most current offerings revolve around the use of technology and how to integrate it into curricula. Mathematics professional development also is common and usually includes a technology component. Below are some examples of current community college offerings.

Three community college districts – **Maricopa (Arizona), Miami-Dade (Florida), and Cuyahoga (Ohio)** – are currently involved in The Alliance for Training K-12 Teachers in Instructional Technologies. The project for K-12 teachers to be trained in technology is a three-year initiative funded by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Educational Research and Improvement, and is a partnership between the Stevens Institute of Technology, the League for Innovation in the Community College, 13-WNET and the three community colleges. The collaboration creates trainers proficient in the use and integration of information technology, who then serve as staff developers in their schools and districts.

The Alliance project includes a comprehensive training package in which the Internet is used as a resource to teach curriculum development in math to middle school teachers. Teachers learn how to use the Internet, chat rooms and other types of information technology. It provides training and support for teams of three faculty members and administrators from each of the three community colleges, who in turn provide training and support to teams of trainers from partner school systems. Project partners and community colleges provide ongoing support to schools. The curriculum emphasis is on science, but the project is applicable for all grade levels and many subject areas.

At **Kankakee Community College** in Illinois, a No Child Left Behind grant supports the Mathematics and Science Enrichment Project. It is a professional development program that consists of a one-week math technology workshop. The collaboration between the community college and Aurora University allows teachers to receive continuing professional development units and/or post-graduate credit. Kankakee Community College also is approved by the Illinois State Board of Education to provide other professional development training for teachers. Some examples of classes offered are:

- Learning Disabilities and Oppositional Disorders in School-age Children
- Classroom Management for Diverse Populations
- Spanish for School Administrators, Teachers and Staff
- Spanish for Child Care Facilities.

In Maryland, **Essex Community College** offers an inservice training program where middle school teachers learn ways to use graphing calculators, algebra software and the

Internet for teaching math. **Anne Arundel Community College** has a summer Technology Institute and works with local schools to provide technology integration to teachers and staff.

Delaware Technical and Community College has an Educational Technology Certificate (ETC) program that helps teachers integrate technology into their curriculum and use computers as teaching tools. Developed by a statewide advisory committee of college faculty and school district representatives, the program has been identified as a national model by the American Association of Community Colleges, and helped the College earn the 1999 Community College of the Year Award from the National Alliance of Business.

Northern Essex Community College in Massachusetts has a technology program to give teachers tools to engage recent immigrants outside the traditional school schedule.

Tulsa Community College in Oklahoma has a professional development center where teachers train in the use of technology to enhance student learning.

In Virginia, **J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College** collaborates with Virginia Commonwealth University, other two- and four-year colleges, and local school districts. Courses and institutes have been developed to model best practices in teaching, assessment techniques and the use of technology. Eisenhower institutes are available to train inservice teachers on graphing calculator-enhanced teaching and geometry, and to create a team-taught statistical course.

Challenges to Community Colleges in the Professional Development Market

Although there are examples of state-level initiatives on professional development, challenges exist regarding the delivery of programs, the payoff to teachers, and the quality of community college programs and faculty.

Delivery

There are inherent problems in the way professional development is usually delivered. The following are typical criticisms of professional development efforts:

- Inflexible and too short – Instructors have a predetermined amount of material to get through in a short amount of time
- Often designed as "one size fits all," operating as if all participants have the same background, the same subject areas, and learn at the same pace and in the same way
- Inconvenient, involving travel to areas sometimes a distance from home or school – It takes place outside the classroom environment and requires additional time beyond the normal daily schedule
- Teachers are not involved in determining program content.

Credits Earned Toward Salary Advancement

State and local policies often emphasize graduate credits as the only ones that count toward salary advancement and promotion. This policy deters teachers from taking advantage of professional development opportunities at community colleges. This may work against effective professional development programs offered by community colleges.

Quality of Community College Programs and Faculty

There are some who question whether community colleges are the appropriate place to offer professional development. Programs are suspected of lacking content expertise in specific subjects. There are also questions regarding the faculty's quality and educational background.

Policy Recommendations

State policymakers should reach out to key stakeholders such as local board members, school administrators, teacher leaders, and community college and university representatives and engage them in discussions about the adequacy of existing professional development opportunities. Without proper planning and development, professional development programs are likely to be fragmented, resulting in the failure of attempts to improve teaching. A coherent plan for systemic change that includes community colleges as valuable resources will be most effective. The following recommendations are offered:

- **Make clear the advantages of community college.**
  - They have leaders in using technology in the classroom.
  - They can develop and provide high-quality continuing education programs for teachers either on their own or with universities.
  - They are located near working teachers, so they can provide ongoing program support and continuity that may not be possible for more distant institutions.
  - Community colleges have fewer barriers to using superior classroom teachers as faculty than do four-year institutions. Community colleges can readily draw local teaching talent to conduct professional development.
- **Establish community college program criteria and faculty requirements.** Community colleges must provide evidence they have quality professional development programs and qualified faculty. The community college can work with the appropriate state and local boards and institutions to establish standards.
- **Ensure broad access to providers of high-quality professional development.** This is an important state responsibility. The community-based locations of community colleges can serve districts that may not have access to professional development programs otherwise, especially hard-to-serve schools and isolated rural districts.
- **Establish clearinghouse of programs.** States should increase awareness by establishing a clearinghouse of promising professional development programs and strategies, easily accessible to principals and teachers, and include models developed by other

school/district/community college collaborations. This would ensure effective professional development opportunities are accessible to teachers who serve the most vulnerable students. Teachers who work with poor children, isolated minorities, immigrant families and others who are at high risk of failure in the schools often work under the most difficult conditions and have less time and opportunity for professional development.

- **Reduce school or district costs.** The use of community college services and facilities could reduce the costs to the local school or district. Local districts bear the brunt of professional development costs, which are much higher than is typically understood by state and local policymakers. Expenditures include the staff costs associated with planning and delivering inservice programs, and opening schools for two to five extra days per year for inservice.
- **Community college credits toward salary increases.** Systemic reform should allow community college credits to count toward salary increases and promotion when the community college offerings are provided through collaborations with university programs. In many states, teachers need graduate credit to qualify for higher pay. This policy deters teachers from participating in community college professional development programs.
- **Change method of delivery.** Delivery methods for professional development should be:
    - Economical
    - Flexible
    - Convenient
    - Adaptable to individual differences
    - Responsive to the complexities of classroom teaching.

  Community college programs can meet these standards because they can offer programs at low costs. Because they are close by, training can take place in local schools or be supported through distance education, allowing teachers to work at their own pace.

Regardless of who provide professional development, challenges to the planning and funding of programs need to be considered. The following recommendations address these issues:

- **Develop longer inservice programs.** For successful, long-lasting results, a new approach to professional development should feature longer inservice programs. Because learning that takes place in communities is more effective than learning in isolation, learning should be integrated with classroom practice. In addition, teachers should be included in defining the content, rather than having it imposed on them.
- **Assign time for training activities.** The National Staff Development Council recommends that 20% of the teacher work year be devoted to professional development. This is in contrast to the norm of several days a year or a few hours per week for staff development. The typical one-time professional development seminar has limited value.

More time devoted to professional development is vital to building a culture of professional growth among teachers and acculturating them into an environment that values continual learning.

- **Integrate professional development into classroom**. Because effective professional development is embedded in the workplace, state policy should enable schools and districts to incorporate professional development into teachers' routine work. To be effective, professional development must be related closely to teachers' work experience.
- **Provide local support.** The schools and districts need flexibility and support for integrating programs into the school and classroom schedule.
- **Fund professional development.** External factors such as changes in the state's funding formula, property tax values, demographic growth and local politics influence funding. States must make sure all local schools have access to the funds necessary to provide inservice training and not to reduce funds from budgets during financially difficult times.

Conclusion

Education reform initiatives include suggestions for new professional development strategies because current offerings are deemed ineffective at improving teacher competency and enhancing student learning. Most often, professional development takes place outside the school and classroom environment, is too short and involves no follow-up.

Community colleges can meet the needs of new professional development strategies by addressing the inflexibility and inconvenience of other programs. The local nature of community colleges can better serve schools with limited access to opportunities offered in other venues. Furthermore, costs to local schools and districts can be reduced by using community college facilities for the development and delivery of professional development programs.

With their valuable resources in technology, off-site and distance education, community colleges can collaborate with universities and local schools in programs that embed professional development into daily educational processes and the classroom environment. Teachers need consistent on-the-job professional development, and community colleges are in a good position to provide that continuity.

Community colleges should first prove their competency and unique capabilities through formal procedures, rather than be given an open door to offering professional development services. With appropriate standards and approval processes in place, community colleges should be allowed to provide resources, especially in rural and hard-to-serve areas. Furthermore, universities should willingly collaborate on these programs. State policy can encourage strategic change in professional development by supporting community colleges as key resources.

PT3 Policy Brief

Resources for Working Teachers (cont'd)

© January 2004 by the Education Commission of the States (ECS). All rights reserved.

Print copies of this policy brief are available from the Education Commission of the States Distribution Center, 700 Broadway, Suite 1200, Denver, CO 80203-3460; 303.299.3692. Ask for No. PS-04-03.

To request permission to excerpt part of this publication, either in print or electronically, please fax or e-mail the Communications Department, 303.296.8332 or ecs@ecs.org.

Production of this report was supported by grant P342B010 020-03 from the U.S. Department of Education. Any opinions, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed herein are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Education.

Resources

American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. *Education Tops President's and Congressional Agendas*.
www.aacte.org/governmental_relations/education_agenda.htm

Center for Occupation Research and Development. *CORD Projects and Activities: Web-based Professional Development Strategies*.
www.cord.org/lev2.cfm/142

Consortium for Policy Research in Education (CPRE). "Helping Teachers Teach Well: Transforming Professional Development – June 1995," *CPRE Policy Brief*.
www.ed.gov/pubs/CPRE/t61/t61c.html

Delaware Technical and Community College. *Educational Technology Certificates*.
www.edtech.dtcc.edu/pages/welcome.html

Education Commission of the States. Issue Site: *Community Colleges' Role in Teacher Preparation: Some Examples of What States Are Doing*.
http://www.communitycollegepolicy.org/TeacherPrepWS

Education Commission of the States. Issue Site: *Teaching Quality – Professional Development, Pros & Cons*.
www.ecs.org/html/IssueSection.asp?issueid=129&subissueid=64&s=Pros+%26+Cons

Elmore, R.F. (1997). *Investing in Teacher Learning: Staff Development and Instructional Improvement in Community School District #2*. New York City.

Kankakee Community College. *CEUs and CPDUs for Teachers*.
www.kankakee.edu/community/personalprofessional/cpdu/index.asp

Kavanaugh-Brown, J. (2000, February). *Community Colleges Come Alive with K-12 Collaboration: Maricopa, Miami-Dade, Cuyahoga*. Center for Digital Education.
www.centerdigitaled.com/converge/?pg=magstory&id=3583

North Central Regional Educational Laboratory. *Critical Issue: Finding Time for Professional Development*. www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/educatrs/profdevl/pd300.htm

North Central Regional Educational Laboratory. *Educational Policy Publications: The Findings*.
www.ncrel.org/policy/pubs/html/lead/findings.htm

North Central Regional Educational Laboratory. *Professional Development in Education*.
www.ncrel.org/policy/pubs/html/lead/pded.htm
www.ncrel.org/policy/pubs/html/lead/conclude.htm
www.ncrel.org/policy/pubs/html/lead/findings.htm

Powell, B. (1998). *Why Don't We Do What We Know Works? Designing Professional Development for a Standards Based System*. Sacramento, CA: California Professional Development Reform Initiative.

Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers to Use Technology (PT3)

Policy Brief

Seamless Pipeline from Two-year to Four-year Institutions for Teacher Training

By Gina Shkodriani

Shkodriani is a senior research associate with JBL Associates, Inc.

Introduction

Improving transfer of education majors from community colleges to baccalaureate programs is important for several reasons:

- A large number of teachers start out in community colleges. Community colleges may provide the only technology training and most of the general content area courses these future teachers will receive. Specifically, four out of 10 teachers have completed some of their math and science courses at community colleges.
- Community colleges are a conduit for minority and nontraditional teacher candidates. Community colleges can help increase the diversity of the teaching force because they have higher percentages of minority, low-income and nontraditional students than four-year institutions. This is significant because 30% of the nation's K-12 population belongs to an ethnic minority, compared with 13% of the teachers.

  Working adults, low-income students and students with families find it easier to start their teacher training in community colleges. In part, this is due to convenient locations, varied class times, low tuition, distance education options and more family services compared with most four-year colleges. Community colleges are more likely to meet the needs of students who do not fit in the regular college schedule.
- Allowing education majors to start their training in community colleges will help ameliorate the growing national shortage of teachers. Increasing the community college role in teacher training can help fill the shortage of teachers. The United States will probably need over 2.4 million new teachers within the next decade. Six percent of community college freshmen indicate interest in elementary school teaching and another 4% indicate interest in secondary school teaching. If this interest were converted to teachers, the nation would have more than 500,000 additional teachers within 10 years. Such numbers would fill 21% of the increasing need over the decade.

Community colleges are already broadly involved in teacher education. Their programs offer:

- Terminal programs that prepare early childhood professionals and school paraprofessionals
- Continuing education classes

Education Commission of the States
700 Broadway, Suite 1200
Denver, CO 80203-3460
303.299.3600
Fax: 303.296.8332
ecs@ecs.org
www.ecs.org

- General education course work required for transfer
- Alternative certification
- Some baccalaureate degrees.

This policy brief reviews the transfer and articulation of teacher candidates from two- to four-year institutions.

Articulation from Community Colleges

Articulation goes to the heart of the college education process. The goal of articulation agreements is to provide seamless student transfer between the two sectors of higher education. Frequently, this goal is not met. Imprecise articulation policies harm community college students who are teacher education candidates and want to transfer into a bachelor's degree program. Teacher education students often find:

- Lack of a system for aligning courses across institutions
- Not all courses transfer because of problems with course equivalencies
- Different general education requirements
- Credits are lost
- Classes have to be repeated
- It takes longer to graduate.

The fact that community colleges offer both terminal and transfer credits in education complicates the issue. The majority of community college graduates in terminal early childhood programs and paraprofessional programs receive an associate of science or associate of applied science degree. Graduates of these programs could potentially be teacher candidates in four-year institutions, but most upper-division colleges do not accept these courses. These are costs to students and institutions, and contribute to statewide teacher shortages.

Teacher education majors who start their education at a community college want assurance they will not lose credits when they transfer. In most cases, if a student completes an associate of arts degree, he or she is assured all their general education classes will count toward graduation requirements. The more difficult problem is whether or not specific classes in the student's major program will be accepted by the four-year institution.

An articulation agreement between a community college and a receiving college or university education department indicates the classes are comparable. The agreement is developed by determining whether specific classes taken at a community college fulfill the requirements for an education major at the receiving institution.

This requires a judgment about the community college curriculum by the academic department of the receiving institution.

This detailed process makes statewide articulation agreements among all the public institutions in a state difficult to attain. Even with a general statewide agreement, representatives of four-year college and university education departments still need to agree that students who have taken specific classes at community colleges meet the same standards as those at their institutions. The differences surface when states attempt to make the transfer process risk-free for students while protecting the quality and autonomy of the academic departments at the receiving colleges or universities.

Model Agreements in Teacher Education

The traditional role of community colleges in teacher education has been to offer the general education, lower-division courses required for students in transfer programs. The required courses generally include humanities, mathematics and sciences. Most community colleges offer a minimal number of teacher preparation classes, generally just one or two pre-professional courses.

Some teacher education transfer programs at community colleges offer education foundations or other introductory education courses such as early field experiences or methods courses in subject areas. Several states have authorized community colleges to offer a limited number of credits to meet state teacher licensure requirements. Some even approve as many as 18 credits of professional education courses. Other states provide incentives for increased collaboration between community colleges and four-year institutions to develop 2+2 degree programs. Studies show a higher retention rate for students in these articulated teacher training programs.

In the majority of states, articulation policies do not exist in legislation, but rather in formal agreements between two- and four-year institutions. Models come in several forms:

- **Institution-to-institution agreements.** Many community colleges go through the time-consuming process of hammering out institutional transfer agreements with local colleges that accept a high number of their transfers.
- **Common course numbering.** Some states have common course names and numbers to facilitate transfer between state colleges and community colleges and assure transfer students of receiving credits. If course numbers at community colleges and four-year universities are identical, the possibility of a student taking nontransferable credits is greatly reduced. According to one source, just eight states have common course numbering.
- **General education common core.** Some states have a general education common core of courses to facilitate transfer between state colleges and community colleges.

PT3 Policy Brief

Seamless Pipeline (cont'd)

A common core streamlines the articulation process by eliminating the confusion that can arise when individual colleges and universities require different core courses to fulfill graduation requirements. According to one source, 23 states have a common core.

- **Associate degrees with guaranteed admission.** Other states have agreements that include an Associate of Arts in Teaching with guaranteed admission into state universities. This assures a student that if he or she finishes the degree, all the units in education will count toward graduation and the major. Maryland and California are two examples described below.

- **Transfer agreements.** States have developed variations on these basic models. Several are described to provide a sense of how articulation can be approached:

  - ***California:*** In southern California, three community colleges have formed an alliance with a local school district, two state universities and the Orange County Department of Education. The collaborative effort trains students for teaching careers. After two years of community college, the students are guaranteed admission to either of two California State University campuses where they can complete their bachelor's degree. The California Community College System is providing a $1.45 million grant over five years in the form of stipends for students and counselors at the community colleges.

    California State University, Glendale Community College and Glendale Unified School District formed the collaboration "Tutors Today, Teachers Tomorrow (T4)." Students complete all their lower-division coursework at the community college and then may transfer to California State University Los Angeles for their bachelor's degree and teaching credential. They also tutor in Glendale elementary schools.

  - ***Florida:*** Miami-Dade Community College has a school of education that offers programs in early childhood, elementary and secondary education. Students earn an associate of arts degree and can enroll with junior level status in any of Florida's state universities' colleges of education.

  - ***Louisiana:*** The Louisiana Community and Technical College System has worked with local school districts and universities to create ways to address the teacher shortage in Louisiana. One method is the 2+2 pathway for teacher education students seeking to transfer from two- to four-year teacher preparation programs.

  - ***Maryland:*** Maryland developed the nation's first associate of arts in teaching (AAT) degree that allows prospective teachers to take community college class credits that parallel the first two years of a baccalaureate program in teacher educa-

tion. The governor initiated the change by convening two- and four-year institutions to address the teacher shortage problems and charged them with doing more to address articulation.

The teacher shortage was critical in Maryland. The state hired approximately 8,900 new teachers in the 2002-03 academic year. The 22 colleges offering teacher education programs only produced 2,550 teacher candidates. Just 62% (1,585) of those teacher candidates became teachers in Maryland schools. Even with incentives such as scholarships, loan forgiveness, increased salaries, low-interest mortgages and alternative certification routes, teacher education enrollments in colleges and universities in the state could not meet the need.

The State Plan for Postsecondary Education included requirements that the Maryland Higher Education Commission pursue efforts to provide dependable articulation of credits from two- to four-year institutions. The state acted to ensure a fully articulated transfer for community college students in teacher education to any of the 22 four-year public and independent institutions offering education programs in the state. This agreement replaced 353 separate articulation agreements in place before the development of the AAT. If a community college seeks to offer the AAT, it must follow standards set by the Maryland Higher Education Commission. The college has to submit the curriculum, teacher credentials and institutional support for the program. Student requirements for attaining the AAT include:

- Obtaining sixty credits of lower-division coursework in the arts and sciences to satisfy National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education standards
- Taking courses on educational psychology, special education and educational theory
- Maintaining a 2.75 gradepoint average
- Passing the reading, writing and math proficiency tests
- Developing a portfolio
- Completing the field experience requirements.

- ***Michigan:*** Wayne State University initiated an articulation agreement with local community colleges within commuting distance to increase the number of certified teachers from minority groups. A Joint Development and Review Board worked out the articulation agreements between the community colleges and Wayne State.

- ***Missouri:*** Missouri has a process whereby two-year colleges are approved by the Missouri State Board of Education to offer pre-professional courses in teacher education, which may be transferred to any four-year institution and will be accepted as partial fulfillment of the certification requirements of the state. The two-year colleges offer from four to eight education courses, including adolescent and child psychology, children's literature, physical education for children, art for children, introduction to teaching and music for elementary teachers.

- ***New Mexico:*** New Mexico established a Common Core of Lower-Division General Education. It is a list of 35 credit hours of general education courses to facilitate transfer for students who have not yet selected a major field of study for their degree. The common core is the base around which most degree programs are built, and the courses are guaranteed to transfer between all New Mexico campuses and apply toward graduation requirements for most degree programs.

  New Mexico also has transfer modules for students who have identified an academic major. It includes lists of recommended courses equivalent to two years of full-time study for students who have selected a major but do not yet know where they would like to complete their major. A transfer module is available in teacher education. Students will be able to move between campuses without loss of credit.

- ***North Carolina:*** The general assembly allocated $2 million to help the North Carolina community colleges and the University of North Carolina develop a statewide program of 2+2 degree completion programs.

  The North Carolina Comprehensive Articulation Agreement (CAA) is a statewide agreement governing the transfer of credits between North Carolina community colleges and public universities and some private universities in North Carolina. Its objective is the smooth transfer of students. The agreement has been approved by the Board of Governors of the University of North Carolina (UNC) and the North Carolina State Board of Community Colleges. It identifies community college courses that are appropriate for transfer as electives and specifies courses that will satisfy pre-major and general education requirements. The agreement defines a 44-semester credit hour general education core that is fully transferable to UNC institutions and satisfies general education requirements. The agreement also includes pre-major articulation agreements for a series of majors, including education. Each pre-major has its own list of required and recommended courses. The agreement does not guarantee admission to a UNC institution or to a particular major.

- ***Rhode Island:*** Nearly 50 private and public four-year institutions throughout New England have general articulation agreements with the Community Colleges of Rhode Island. Many agreements also include course equivalencies with the associate of arts degrees to easily transfer into education programs.

- ***Texas:*** A regional partnership agreement exists between the University of Texas-Pan American and the South Texas Community College District. Lower-division courses required for students enrolled in a teacher preparation program are offered at the community college.

  In 1997, the Texas State Legislature required the Education Coordinating Board to develop a field of study curricula in high transfer disciplines, including teacher

education programs through the 8th grade. When students complete the community college curricula they are guaranteed their courses will transfer to any public university in the state.

- *Washington:* Washington State received a Title II grant to recruit and train inner-city youth to become teachers and to return to inner-city communities to teach. Directed from the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, the grant brings together four community colleges, four colleges/universities and multiple school districts. State funding is provided for the articulation of teacher training curricula from community colleges to universities. The National Science Foundation provided a two-year grant for teacher training and curriculum articulation in math and science at one community college and one university. Faculty-to-faculty discussions are underway on how to articulate two- and four-year degree programs, possibly including full transferable education courses taught at the two-year level.

Challenges to General Transfer Policies

An examination of state approaches to education reveals that transfer is routinely included as a priority for the community colleges, but few states set clear goals for institutions or the higher education system. Without transfer strategies, states face several challenges.

Responsibility for Successful Transfer

Without formal legislation, responsibility for successful articulation generally falls on two-year colleges instead of four-year institutions. Placing some responsibility for successful transfer of students on four-year institutions will generate more collaboration. Dual responsibility is crucial to the successful transfer of teacher education credits.

Faculty Support and Involvement

Simply changing state policies cannot improve articulation. Faculty members must support and be involved in the development of articulation agreements. An example of statewide collaboration that included the academic community is the Illinois Articulation Initiative. Its emphasis is on two- and four-year faculty as equal partners in developing the articulation agreement. Launched in 1993, it sought to create a statewide General Education Core Curriculum, which consists of 12 to 13 courses selected from five fields common to general education programs. Students who take the core courses can be confident their credits will satisfy the general education requirements at the institution to which they transfer.

General Education Core vs. Common Course Numbering

Matching course numbers at different institutions may be necessary, but not sufficient. If broad agreement among academic departments does not exist, not all the colleges and universities in the state may accept courses with the same number. A statewide general education core avoids the problems posed by common course numbering systems.

Incentive Funding

Few states have incentive funding for institutions with successful transfer programs. Examples of funding include financial aid programs as incentives for students to start their education in a community college before transferring, awarding funds to two-year institutions whose students transfer at a high rate, and to four-year institutions that accept a high number of transfers. Illinois has institutional programs, and Maryland, Arizona and Wyoming have scholarship programs specifically for transfer students.

Challenges to Teacher Education Transfer Policies

Transfer policies specific to teacher education are seldom included in state education strategies. The most effective strategies result from community colleges and four-year institutions closely working together. Some obstacles, however, interfere with the process.

Limited Teacher Education Resources

One obstacle is limited resources. Senior education departments may perceive increased investments in community college teacher education programs as threats to their own programs. This is especially true when support for higher education declines. The desire to control the content of education training increases when education schools are criticized regarding the quality of their graduates. Senior colleges and universities will put their need to improve teacher education programs before supporting community college participation in training teachers.

Teacher Education Accreditation Standards

Another obstacle is the new and more complex accreditation standards for teacher education programs. Community colleges are not considered in the standards for education schools. The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education charter presently applies only to four-year degree programs, making them responsible for the quality of teachers. This is one reason why schools of education want to control teacher preparationcurricula and are hesitant to allow community colleges much autonomy in offering education classes.

PT3 Policy Brief

Seamless Pipeline (cont'd)

Quality of Community College Transfer Programs

Another concern is that community colleges do not match the quality of the coursework at four-year institutions. This represents a mix of concerns about the qualification of professors in community colleges and the academic maturity of the students. When community college students transfer to four-year institutions, however, they graduate at the same rate and succeed in their jobs on a par with students at four-year institutions who did not transfer. The problems that prevent transfer students from completing a bachelor's degree usually occur before or during the transfer process.

Time and Effort

Another obstacle to articulation is the staff time required to negotiate articulation agreements, transfer policies, course equivalencies and many other issues. With already heavy workloads and less than compelling motivation, faculty members at senior institutions may not find time to work on these problems with community colleges. Faculty members at two-year institutions have been found to be more concerned about articulation than those at four-year institutions.

Complicated Certification Requirements

Lastly, many teacher education programs have narrow certification requirements and involve several different specifications. Many states require unique courses to qualify for dozens of specialized teacher certificates. The more complicated the certification requirements, the less likely a community college can offer an effective teacher education transfer program.

Policy Recommendations for Improving Teacher Education Articulation

To be successful, a well-articulated teacher-training program must provide a predictable transition between institutions while assuring high-quality education for students from diverse backgrounds. Despite the barriers and challenges, two- and four-year institutions can work together to provide teacher candidates the connected, integrated, standards-based programs needed to produce a supply of diverse and well-trained teachers. The goal should be the provision of opportunity for students who may not be able to attend a traditional four-year college to get a meaningful start toward becoming a teacher. Therefore, the following is recommended:

- Community colleges must provide assurance they have qualified faculty teaching well-designed courses.
- Community colleges must provide assurance their education courses and the students who take them meet the same standards that colleges and universities demand of their own students.

Seamless Pipeline (cont'd)

- Institutions that accept transfer students must work in good faith with community colleges.
- Community colleges should be authorized to offer associate of arts in teaching degrees as one way to assure education majors all their credits can transfer to four-year institutions.
- The state can provide the leadership and the resources to help make articulation in teacher education successful.

The state can provide the leadership and the funds to bring the appropriate academic groups together to develop programs that facilitate the transfer of students while meeting the requirements for high-quality education programs. Without state leadership, results will be fragmentary and uneven. Local colleges will develop their own agreements that may not help meet specific state needs. Strategies for state policy development should include:

- Clarification of state teacher education transfer policies and plans. Conduct state policy audits to ensure policies do not inadvertently discourage transfer.
- State departments of education and higher education groups should forge collaboration between two-year and four-year institutions bringing them together for work sessions. They should jointly address issues that affect policy and practice such as standards, program requirements, expectations of students' skills and knowledge, and technology's role.
- Develop statewide articulation agreements. Be sure both two- and four-year institutions are represented as policy is formulated.
- Establish incentives/funding for programs that promote seamless transition.
- Formulate same standards for programs and students at two- and four-year institutions.
- Coordinate student advising for prospective teachers between the two- and four-year institutions concerning transfer of courses and program requirements. Support the transition of students at both institutions, both before and during the transition process.

PT3 Policy Brief

Seamless Pipeline (cont'd)

Resources

Coble, C.R., and Piscatelli, J. (2002, Fall). "Teaching Quality – A National Perspective." *ECS State Education Leader*, vol. 20, no. 3. Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States.

Early, D., and Winton, P. (2000). *Early Childhood Teacher Preparation at Two- and Four-Year Institutions of Higher Education.* Roundtable presentation at the American Educational Research Association Conference, New Orleans, LA.

Education Commission of the States (ECS) (2001, February). "Transfer and Articulation, Transfer and Articulation Policies." *ECS StateNotes*. Denver, CO: ECS.

Evelyn, J. (2002, March 8). "States Give Community Colleges Role in Educating Teachers." *The Chronicle of Higher Education.*

Hudson, M. (2000). *Final Report for the National Study of Community College Career Corridors for K-12 Teacher Recruitment*. Recruiting New Teachers, Inc. Project #3.3. www.ericsp.org/pages/digests/CCRecruit.htm

Hudson, M. (2002). *Tapping Potential: Community College Students and America's Teacher Recruitment Challenge*. Recruiting New Teachers, Inc. www.rnt.org/channels/clearinghouse/audience/media/1g11_media_presstappingpotential.htm

Maryland Higher Education Commission (2002, July). *2002 Update of the Maryland State Plan for Postsecondary Education*. www.mhec.state.md.us/publications/NewStatePlan/StateplanUpdate.asp

Rifkin, T. (1998, September). "Improving Articulation Policy To Increase Transfer." *ECS Policy Paper*. Denver, CO: ECS.

Schuhmann, A.M. (2002, June). *The Community College Role in Teacher Education: A Case for Collaboration*. Washington, DC: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education.

U.S. Department of Education (1999, June). *Community College Education Reform Practices: For All American Students*, Washington, DC: Office of Vocational and Adult Education, Community College Liaison Office.

PT3 Policy Brief

Seamless Pipeline (cont'd)

© January 2004 by the Education Commission of the States (ECS). All rights reserved.

Print copies of this policy brief are available from the Education Commission of the States Distribution Center, 700 Broadway, Suite 1200, Denver, CO 80203-3460; 303.299.3692. Ask for No. PS-04-01.

To request permission to excerpt part of this publication, either in print or electronically, please fax or e-mail the Communications Department, 303.296.8332 or ecs@ecs.org.

Production of this report was supported by grant P342B010 020-03 from the U.S. Department of Education. Any opinions, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed herein are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Education.

Wellman, J.V. (2002, August). *State Policy and Community College – Baccalaureate Transfer.* The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education and the Institute for Higher Education Policy. Report # 02-6.

Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers to Use Technology (PT3)

Policy Brief

Teacher Education Baccalaureate Degrees at Community Colleges

By Gina Shkodriani

Shkodriani is a senior research associate with JBL Associates, Inc.

Introduction

Community colleges have begun offering baccalaureate (BA) degrees in fields such as education, health and technology, which raises a host of concerns. Unsurprisingly, these new programs have generated mixed reactions. The majority of community college officials, as well as industries and employers, welcome this addition. Some established institutions and state officials, however, express concern that community colleges are not prepared to embark on this new mission. Even proponents of community colleges fear that adding a BA degree will dilute the traditional community college mission and generate conflict with existing baccalaureate institutions.

The idea behind a BA at a community college is to expand educational opportunity for students who have:

- Full-time employment
- Families
- Limited options for commuting
- Limited options for attending college during regular business hours.

Baccalaureate degrees at community colleges also provide opportunities for students who have obtained associate degrees and are comfortable staying in the community college environment, and for older students who may be uncomfortable attending four-year institutions that enroll predominantly younger students. In addition, community colleges provide a conduit to higher education for students from low-income and rural communities.

The community college BA has evolved at three types of institutions:

- The community college that continues to offer primarily associate of arts (AA) degrees, but includes a few BA degree programs
- The community college that morphs into a four-year college and is renamed, even though it may continue to offer AA degrees
- The four-year institution that offers BA degrees in partnership with a community college, with classes on the community college campus.

This overview discusses community colleges that independently offer BA programs in education without a four-year university partnership.

Education Commission
of the States
700 Broadway, Suite 1200
Denver, CO 80203-3460
303.299.3600
Fax: 303.296.8332
ecs@ecs.org
www.ecs.org

States with Community College Teacher Education Baccalaureate Degrees

In addition to serving the needs of local students, teacher education BAs at community colleges serve the needs of school districts that need new teachers who come from the community and understand its problems. The following are four state examples of community college offerings in the area of teacher education baccalaureate programs:

- **Nevada.** Elko is a rural town in Northern Nevada, hours away from the nearest baccalaureate-granting college. Many students in the small towns of this region cannot afford the time or cost to continue their education past that offered by the local community college, *Great Basin College (GBC)*. Historically, one of the problems resulting from geographical isolation was the trouble Northern Nevada had in retaining teachers recruited from other states or urban parts of Nevada. When efforts to get a university to offer a program in the region failed, leaders at GBC moved to develop baccalaureate-level programs in education, and other fields, in response to the need to increase student access, address local workforce needs, provide specialized training and contribute to the economic stability in local communities.

  GBC created a committee of teachers from various departments in the college and superintendents from local school districts, who worked together to design a four-year teacher education curriculum that maximized field experience in the local schools. GBC began offering their baccalaureate programs accredited by the Northwest Association of Colleges and Schools in 2001.

  Students entering the program must complete the associate of arts in elementary education degree. They can then concentrate in language arts, math, science or social studies. The program includes technology and assessment techniques, and collaborates with five local school districts that provide students with clinical and field experience. As part of their education, they have early and frequent clinical experience and attend faculty meetings, training and other teacher activities that allow them to judge the working culture of the school.

  Prior to the introduction of this program at GBC, local districts recruited candidates from outside the area. Now GBC is able to produce teacher candidates from the area who are familiar with the community and its schools because they live in the area. Local school districts believe homegrown candidates who become teachers are more likely to stay than those hired from outside the region. They also find that teachers who have trained in the local community colleges are highly qualified.

  In addition to a BA in education, the college offers baccalaureate programs in business and technology, and soon plans to offer a BA in nursing. The Great Basin approach to teacher education also is being followed in the new State College at Henderson.

  Based on the positive results at GBC, Nevada has made it possible for other community colleges to petition to offer the BA degree. This is a formal application process with review by the state higher education board and the state universities.

PT3 Policy Brief

Teacher Education Baccalaureate Degrees (cont'd)

- **Florida.** Florida lawmakers have been trying to increase access to four-year degrees for a decade. In 2001, their efforts resulted in the creation of a single board responsible for all levels and types of education institutions. Since then, community colleges have been allowed to petition for BA degrees. One concern of four-year institutions has been that community colleges might duplicate their programs. The benefit of the new single board is that it can monitor program offerings, which makes it easier for community colleges to originate new programs.

  Governor Bush supports the decision to offer BA programs at community colleges because they provide "greater access to bachelor's degrees for nontraditional students in fields where we are experiencing critical workforce shortages." Florida is third in the United States in the number of associate degrees it produces, but 47th in BAs. The state has more teacher positions open than employees to fill them. Eduardo J. Padron, president of ***Miami-Dade Community College (MDCC)***, sees this discrepancy as an opportunity for his institution to fill a niche.

  In 2001, ***St. Petersburg Junior College*** was the first community college in Florida approved to offer BAs, filling a need that seemed to be unmet by research universities. The college now plans to hire at least six additional faculty members for its new upper-division education courses in pedagogy, science and math. As part of this process, the college dropped "junior" from its name to reflect its new status and is now identified as St. Petersburg Community College.

  In May 2002, the Florida Board of Education approved bachelor degrees at MDCC for prospective teachers of the physically and learning disabled, through a separate school of education. Miami-Dade also requested approval for programs in early childhood and elementary school education, but the Florida Secretary of Education said there was no "critical shortage" in those areas. According to local officials, the teacher shortage in the Miami area is "dire." Although 1,800 teachers graduate from four-year programs in the state annually, the area needs three times that number. Even with this shortage, local four-year colleges and universities are finding it difficult to increase enrollment in those much-needed subject areas. Most baccalaureate programs offered at community colleges in Florida are in teacher education. MDCC will add secondary math and science, and special education programs beginning in fall 2004. The college also plans to offer four-year programs in nursing and technology.

  Although some believe that the introduction of a BA dilutes the mission of a community college, Miami-Dade officials insist that this will not change the community-centered character of the college. In fact, the president believes that the college is enforcing its mission by "responding to our community's workforce needs." Nevertheless, to gain accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), Miami-Dade must drop "community" from its name because SACS considers an institution a four-year college once it begins to offer an upper-division program.

PT3 Policy Brief

Teacher Education Baccalaureate Degrees (cont'd)

- **Utah.** Utah also has opened the door to community colleges becoming baccalaureate institutions. In part, this has been done to expand access without building new campuses. Three campuses in the state award both associate and baccalaureate degrees. One of them, Weber State, is a four-year school that offers associate degrees. The other two are community colleges that have added baccalaureate degrees.

  Utah Valley State College, formerly Utah Valley Community College, is the fastest growing institution in the Utah System of Higher Education. During the past 10 years, the number of full-time equivalent students has increased by 117%, while the number of faculty members has grown by 86%. Utah Valley State College began offering a BA in elementary education in 2000, and has since added the following BAs in education: early childhood, English, math, biology, chemistry/physics, earth science, history and business/marketing.

  The Utah State Legislature granted a name change and baccalaureate degree status in 2000 in recognition of the growth of ***Dixie State College***, which grew from approximately 2,500 students in 1990 to 7,000 students in 2000. There, students can enroll in an elementary education program after obtaining an associates degree. Upon completing the education program, students obtain a Utah State Level I Educator License, and are allowed to teach grades 1-8. Graduates of the program start their teaching careers with a mentorship or practicum.

- **Arkansas.** The ***University of Arkansas at Fort Smith***, formerly Fort Smith Junior College, began offering several programs through its University Center in 1998. The University Center currently offers a bachelor of science degree in several programs, including early childhood education P-4, middle childhood education with emphasis in math/science, and biology with life/earth science teacher licensure. Fort Smith awards roughly half of its associate of arts degrees in education. Although it is now a university, very few baccalaureate degrees have been awarded.

- **Other States.** It should be noted that while just a few state examples exist of bachelor-level teacher education programs at community colleges, more states have community colleges offering BAs in other subject areas, such as information technology management and business administration. These states include:
  - Georgia
  - Louisiana
  - Vermont

Currently considering proposals to allow two-year colleges to offer four-year degrees are:
  - Texas
  - California

Florida, Nevada, Utah and Arkansas also are among those that offer baccalaureates in areas other than teacher education at community colleges.

Implications

The traditional mission and role of community colleges are blurring as new institutions are developed and old ones evolve. Adding BAs in education in community colleges is only one indication of a larger phenomenon. Kenneth Walker, president of the five-year old Community College Baccalaureate Association, which now has 63 members from 21 states, notes that the community college mission changed several years ago, to include more technical and vocational programs aimed at furthering careers, and the sector intends to keep adding programs to improve the economy and assist in workforce development.

Walker also notes that charter colleges, e-colleges and proprietary colleges are essentially community colleges with BA's. "The title 'community college' will no longer be synonymous with two-year college," the number of which has "declined by more than two hundred during the past 50 years." The trend operates in the other direction as baccalaureate-granting colleges and universities have adapted to market demand by offering associate degrees. The clarity of institutional missions is further convoluted by the emergence of digital technology education delivery options that can provide offerings from multiple institutions across a state.

By offering BA programs in education, community colleges are responding to the needs of a changing student population. The majority of community college students take longer to complete programs because they are older, enroll part time, are usually employed, and often have families. These students are likely to have employment experience and life skills that could add to their value as educators.

As traditional universities become both more expensive and more selective, community colleges continue to respond to the needs of a broad base of students by providing open access and low tuition. They are often better situated to meet the needs of nontraditional students than are more conventional universities, which primarily provide classes to younger students who attend full time. Community colleges offer off-hour classes, and have a faculty that is attuned to the community and lives of their students. For example, Edison Community College in Florida appeals to nontraditional students because of its course sequencing and scheduling options, which make it easier for these students to keep up with family and employer responsibilities. A survey there found that 80% of its students would like to stay there because of accessibility, convenience, affordability and small class size. In addition, community college faculty members, whose sole responsibility is teaching, are more available to students, while those at universities, with other interests such as research, spend less time teaching. All this adds up to a very different academic environment in the two types of institutions.

Although community colleges work with four-year universities to help students transfer from two- to four-year degree programs in education, it is difficult for working students

with families to have long commutes, in addition to their other daily responsibilities. These students find it easier to succeed at local community colleges. This is especially true in rural communities with little access to four-year institutions, and in states where enrollment growth exceeds the ability of four-year institutions to add new campuses.

Policy Challenges

The primary challenges to teacher education BAs at community colleges are concerns over their quality and duplication of programs at four-year institutions. Secondary are concerns about changes in the traditional role and mission of community colleges. Once approved, challenges within community colleges revolve around equitable teaching loads and compensation for faculty of new upper-division courses.

The following provides more information about the primary and secondary concerns:

- **Program quality**. Community colleges may not be well-equipped to offer content-specific upper division courses. Many arguments against BAs at community colleges question the ability of community colleges to offer quality upper-division courses.

- **Recruiting quality faculty.** Questions arise about the quality of education that a community college can deliver. In some cases, community colleges may have trouble attracting qualified education faculty members. Quality faculty may not be available to community colleges if they do not offer the same salaries, teaching load, or prestige that would be available at a recognized baccalaureate college.

- **Duplicate programs**. Leaders in four-year institutions are concerned about the possibility of duplicate teacher education programs at community colleges that may take students from their programs. Duplicate programs will not address the problems of teacher shortages in specific areas such as math, science and special education.

- **Institutional roles.** A central issue is whether BAs offered by community colleges will draw enrollment from established colleges and universities in the state or attract new students who would not otherwise continue their education. Furthermore, there is some debate on whether adding a BA degree dilutes or expands the traditional community college mission.

- **Tuition and state funds.** Another set of issues revolves around finance. Most of the community colleges with a BA program plan to charge higher tuition for BA programs than AA level classes, but less than public universities in the state. It costs states less to support students in community colleges compared with other institutions because they have higher teaching loads and no research. Estimates indicate that it costs roughly half as much to deliver a BA at a community college than at a public university. Adding a BA in education to the community college is one way to expand capacity at a lower cost than expanding existing BA institutions. This raises the issue of how the state funding formulas should treat these mixed mission institutions.

- **Teaching load and salary.** Adding upper-division courses at community colleges raises internal questions of differential teaching loads and salaries among faculty teaching at the upper and lower levels. State leaders will need to determine if upper-division teachers should have a lower teaching load and higher salary than those teachers who teach lower-division classes.

Policy Recommendations

The following are recommendations for states to consider before embracing baccalaureate degrees at community colleges, particularly degrees that lead to entry into the teaching profession:

- **Assure quality and accreditation.** Adopt high standards and quality review processes that reflect the same expectations for quality in the community college program as those for any other teacher preparation program. Before new degree programs are created, there should be a review of the institution's ability to prepare new teachers in both subject matter and teaching skills. Teams of persons from the best programs in the state should conduct these reviews. In addition, the appropriate accrediting agencies must acknowledge and accept the change in mission.
- **Maintain community college mission.** Ensure community colleges do not change their overall role and mission upon offering BAs. Serving the community workforce needs is highly valued and should continue to be a central role.
- **Avoid duplicate programs.** Coordinate offerings among various education institutions within the state to reduce duplication among programs. One approach is to centralize governance into a single board for approvals, making oversight easier. This also would include being selective about programs approved. Establish guidelines that only allow for programs in areas of worker shortages or areas unavailable at traditional institutions.
- **Consider geographic needs.** Determine geographic areas with most dire need of teachers. Duplicate programs may be approved when certain locations have high demand. For example, a duplicate program in a rural area may be acceptable if all other higher education institutions in the state are beyond commuting distance.
- **Resources for upper-division courses.** Ensure community colleges have the resources necessary to offer BA degrees, including funding for upper-division courses. State leaders will need to develop new funding formulas for community colleges that offer BAs.
- **Salary and workload.** Leaders must establish clearly defined salary schedules and teaching loads before approving baccalaureate degrees at community colleges. Consider changes to faculty workload and compensation. Also consider internal faculty morale and relations between those who teach lower- and upper-division courses.

PT3 Policy Brief

Teacher Education Baccalaureate Degrees (cont'd)

© January 2004 by the Education Commission of the States (ECS). All rights reserved.

Print copies of this policy brief are available from the Education Commission of the States Distribution Center, 700 Broadway, Suite 1200, Denver, CO 80203-3460; 303.299.3692. Ask for No. PS-04-04.

To request permission to excerpt part of this publication, either in print or electronically, please fax or e-mail the Communications Department, 303.296.8332 or ecs@ecs.org.

Production of this report was supported by grant P342B010 020-03 from the U.S. Department of Education. Any opinions, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed herein are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Education.

- **Articulation from AA to BA.** Examine the relationship between a community college's programs, ensuring the BA programs build upon the AA programs. In addition, the AA degree requirements should easily fulfill prerequisites for upper-division courses.

Resources

Best Educational E-Practices (BEEP) (2001, November 1). *Providing Four-Year and Graduate Degrees in a Community College Setting*. www.spjc.edu/eagle/BEEP/BEEP14.htm

Brophy, B. (2000, September 11). "Is a Four-year Degree from a Two-year School Right for You?" *U.S. News and World Report*.

Clark, L. (2002, May 15). "MDCC Allowed To Offer 4-year Degree." *Miami Herald*. www.miami.com/mld/miamiherald/news/local/3263354.htm

Dixie State College of Utah. *Department of Elementary Education: Overview of the Program*. www.dixie.edu/education/program.html

Dixie State College of Utah. *General Information: Dixie State College History*. www.dixie.edu/gen/history.html

Education Commission of the States (2003). *Nevada Case Study: Report Draft* (in progress).

Evelyn, J. (2001, April 11). "Making Waves in Miami." *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.

Evelyn, J. (2002, March 8). "States Give Community Colleges a Role in Educating Teachers." *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.

National Center for Education Statistics. *Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Fall Enrollment Survey & Salary Survey*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.

University of Arkansas at Fort Smith. *Bachelor of Science*. www.uafortsmith.edu/Degrees/BachelorOfScience-BS

Utah Valley State College. *Factbook 2002-2003, General Information, Approved Bachelors Degrees*. www.uvsc.edu/ir/factbook03/general/page17.pdf

Utah Valley State College. *Catalog 2003-2004, Degrees Listed by Type*. www.uvsc.edu/catalog/degrees.html

Walker, K.P. (2001, April). "An Open Door to the Bachelor's Degree." *Leadership Abstracts*, vol. 14, no. 2. http://www.league.org/publication/abstracts/leadership/labs0401.html

Walker, K.P. (2000). *Reinventing the Community College*. www.accbd.org/articles/00000004.htm

Education Commission of the States

No Child Left Behind Policy Brief

700 Broadway, Suite 1200 • Denver, CO 80203-3460 • 303.299.3692 • fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

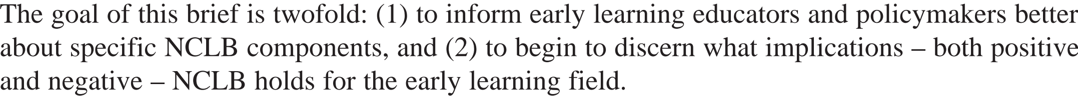
Implications for the Early Learning Field

By Kristie Kauerz and Jessica McMaken
June 2004

Many educators and policymakers are working hard to interpret and implement those provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) that impact the K-12 community. Often, however, the act's implications on early learning and early childhood educators are not fully considered or discussed.[1]

This policy brief focuses on three NCLB components that hold relevance for early learning:

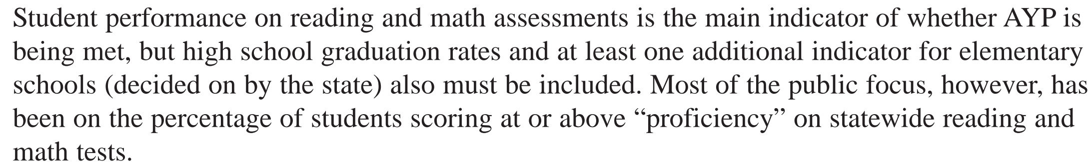
1. Adequate Yearly Progress
2. Highly Qualified Teachers
3. Reading/Literacy.



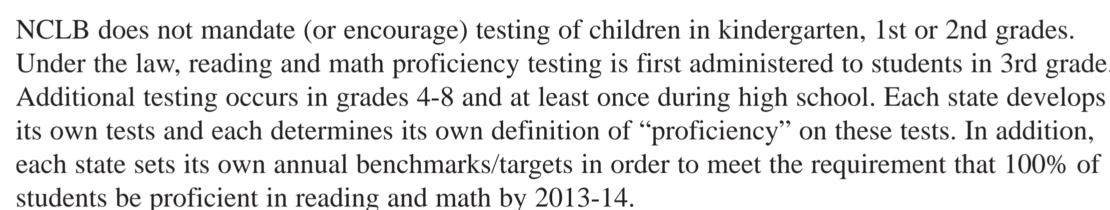
The goal of this brief is twofold: (1) to inform early learning educators and policymakers better about specific NCLB components, and (2) to begin to discern what implications – both positive and negative – NCLB holds for the early learning field.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

Adequate yearly progress, or AYP, is the heart of the NCLB accountability requirements. AYP requires schools, districts and states that receive Title I federal funding[2] to make annual progress toward the goal of bringing 100% of their students at least to "academic proficiency" by the end of the 2013-14 school year. Progress in reading and math must be shown for all students and all student subgroups, including economically disadvantaged students, limited-English-proficiency students, students with disabilities and students in major racial and ethnic groups.



Student performance on reading and math assessments is the main indicator of whether AYP is being met, but high school graduation rates and at least one additional indicator for elementary schools (decided on by the state) also must be included. Most of the public focus, however, has been on the percentage of students scoring at or above "proficiency" on statewide reading and math tests.



NCLB does not mandate (or encourage) testing of children in kindergarten, 1st or 2nd grades. Under the law, reading and math proficiency testing is first administered to students in 3rd grade. Additional testing occurs in grades 4-8 and at least once during high school. Each state develops its own tests and each determines its own definition of "proficiency" on these tests. In addition, each state sets its own annual benchmarks/targets in order to meet the requirement that 100% of students be proficient in reading and math by 2013-14.

Because each state defines what "proficient" means and develops its own set of benchmarks for improvement, proficiency is not the same across all states. Further, each state's standards and assessments vary in rigor and the degree to which they are aligned. Consequently, it is neither practical nor reliable to compare AYP measures across states.

"The trickle down of inappropriate testing of young children is a valid concern for early learning professionals"

Consequences if AYP Is Not Met

Each year states determine which schools did not meet AYP. The consequences for not making AYP vary based on a school's Title I status. For schools that do not meet AYP and do not receive Title I funds, the negative public relations created by appearing on a list of schools identified as "in need of improvement" is most likely the extent of their consequences.

In contrast, for schools that consistently fail to meet AYP and ***do*** receive federal Title I funds,[3] there is a progression of consequences outlined in NCLB. There are no consequences for failing to meet AYP for one year. If, however, a school does not meet AYP for two or more consecutive years, it is identified as "in need of improvement" and a series of corrective actions kick in. First, the state must provide technical assistance to the school needing improvement and must allow students in the school to choose to attend a higher-performing school.

The consequences become increasingly severe the longer a school remains on the "needs improvement" list. If a school remains on the "needs improvement" list for three or more consecutive years, the consequences range from the requirement to provide tutoring for low-income students to "major restructuring" of school governance, which may include reopening the school as a charter school. Under NCLB, there are no financial penalties for schools that fail to meet AYP.

Early Learning and AYP

What are the implications of NCLB's AYP requirements for early learning? NCLB has ***no*** direct accountability requirements that apply to classrooms or programs that serve children in 2nd grade and below.

Nonetheless, some early learning professionals are concerned the push for academic accountability in 3rd grade and above will trickle down to younger children, perhaps culminating in inappropriate assessment practices for these children. Others in the early learning field suggest that NCLB provides an opportunity to promote and expand early learning as a critical and viable solution for improving academic achievement, particularly for low-income and minority children. Both positions deserve attention; there are both challenges and opportunities created by NCLB in terms of accountability for early learning programs.

The Challenge

The trickle down of inappropriate testing of young children is a valid concern for early learning professionals. Although NCLB does not require accountability measures for early learning programs, there are other federal efforts that reflect the national focus on testing. In 1998, Congress required all Head Start grantees start collecting data on child outcomes, or what children know and are able to do. Consequently, the Head Start Bureau developed the *Head Start Outcomes Framework* that includes 100 indicators of what children in Head Start should know and be able to do. In 2002, President George W. Bush announced Good Start, Grow Smart, his national early childhood initiative. Under this initiative, states are encouraged to develop voluntary early learning guidelines on literacy, language and prereading skills. It is clear that early learning standards rapidly are becoming a part of a national standards-based climate.

This climate demands that early learning professionals be proactive and engaged in discussions about accountability. The challenge to early learning professionals is to ensure standards, guidelines or other accountability measures for young children are developmentally appropriate, and used to inform and improve curriculum and instruction, *not* to label or otherwise negatively impact children.

The Opportunity

As a result of NCLB's focus on accountability, the public and policymakers are focused on improving the quality of education and on increasing student achievement. With great urgency, they are seeking solutions. This presents a unique window of opportunity for early learning professionals to step forward and say, "we can help." With a solid foundation of empirical research that shows the

long-term benefits of high-quality early learning programs,[4] the time is ripe for asserting early learning as a critical contributor to academic success later on in school. By getting this message to decisionmakers who are struggling with issues surrounding AYP, attention can be drawn to the importance of early learning.

Additional Resources on Understanding AYP and Early Learning

The ABCs of AYP: Raising Achievement for All Students. This publication from The Education Trust summarizes the accountability requirements of Title I of the No Child Left Behind Act. http://www2.edtrust.org/NR/rdonlyres/9C974109-4A70-4F5E-A07F-6DC90D656F0F/0/ABCAYP.pdf

ECS StateNote: State Accountability and Consolidated Plans. Fifty-state chart providing links to each state's accountability and consolidated plan and to each state's NCLB Web site. http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/42/65/4265.htm

Council of Chief State School Officers Resources on No Child Left Behind. CCSSO's resources on NCLB and AYP. http://www.ccsso.org/federal_programs/NCLB/1759.cfm#AYP

Early Learning Standards: Creating the Conditions for Success. This joint statement by the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education and the National Association for the Education of Young Children addresses the educational, ethical, developmental, programmatic, assessment and policy issues related to early learning standards. The position statement outlines four essential features for early learning standards to be developmentally effective. http://www.naeyc.org/resources/position_statements/position_statement.pdf

Montgomery County Maryland's Early Success Performance Plan. Learn how one district successfully has targeted early learning to improve academic achievement for all students. http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/info/CTBS2003/earlysuccess.shtm

"With a solid foundation of empirical research that shows the long-term benefits of high-quality early learning programs, the time is ripe for asserting early learning as a critical contributor to academic success later on in school."

Highly Qualified Teachers

A central feature of The No Child Left Behind Act is an acknowledgement of the important role that teacher quality plays in promoting student achievement. There are two teaching quality provisions that hold potential relevance to the early learning community. First is the "highly qualified" teacher requirement. Second, there are a variety of professional development activities provided by the law that hold potential benefit for early childhood educators.

The Highly Qualified Teacher

After the first day of the 2002-03 school year, all *newly* hired K-12 teachers in programs supported with Title I funds were required to be "highly qualified" according to the definition set forth in NCLB. Teachers are considered "highly qualified" if they have a bachelor's degree, have full/continuing state certification and have demonstrated subject-matter competence in the areas taught.

By the end of the 2005-06 school year, all teachers in core academic subjects must be "highly qualified" in their areas of teaching assignment. Core academic subjects are defined by NCLB to be: English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history and geography.

While the federal definition of "highly qualified" lays the baseline below which states may not go, states have the option to develop their own definitions. The most flexibility lies in how states require teachers to demonstrate subject-matter competence. At the elementary level, all new teachers must pass a test to demonstrate content knowledge and teaching skills. For teachers who are already in the classroom, however, NCLB gives states the option to develop a "High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation" (HOUSSE) to determine subject-matter competency.

"The NCLB does not specifically include early childhood and pre-kindergarten teachers in the highly qualified teacher provisions. The law's definition, however, does not prohibit states from setting higher standards that include teachers of young children."

Some states' HOUSSE criteria allow teachers to meet competency requirements by participating in a specified amount of professional development. Other states determine competency based on a performance evaluation or a portfolio of evidence. Yet other states consider teachers' effect on student achievement. Some states use a combination of the above measures. States may not, however, use time spent teaching a subject as a primary criteria for determining competency.

The Highly Qualified Pre-kindergarten Teacher?

NCLB does not specifically include early childhood and pre-kindergarten teachers in the highly qualified teacher provisions. The law's definition, however, does not prohibit states from setting higher standards that include teachers of young children. According to non-regulatory guidance published by the U.S. Department of Education, the highly qualified teacher requirements "do not apply to early childhood or pre-kindergarten teachers unless a state includes early childhood or pre-kindergarten as part of its elementary and secondary school system."[5]

When is Early Learning Part of the Elementary and Secondary School System?

The U.S. Department of Education has **not** issued specific guidance about how to determine whether or not early childhood or pre-kindergarten is part of the elementary and secondary school system.

While states with large, state-funded pre-kindergarten programs administered by the state department of education are beginning to grapple with these issues, all states should proactively pursue opportunities to improve the qualifications of early childhood educators. It is important that children in all early learning programs (for example, child care, family child care, pre-kindergarten, Head Start) encounter classroom teachers who are well-qualified to provide a rich and appropriate learning experience.

High-quality Professional Development

NCLB recognizes that successful teaching requires lifelong learning. Each state receiving Title I funds must develop a plan to ensure all K-12 teachers are highly qualified by the end of the 2005-06 academic year. This plan must include measurable objectives for each district and school, including an annual increase in the percentage of teachers receiving professional development.

Under NCLB, states can use Title I funds to provide professional development for teachers. Such professional development must be high quality, sustained, intensive and classroom-focused. These activities should not be one-day or short-term workshops or conferences. The activities should be regularly evaluated for their impact on increased teacher effectiveness and improved student academic achievement, with the findings of the evaluations used to improve the quality of professional development.

Early Childhood Educator Professional Development Program

The Early Childhood Educator Professional Development (ECEPD) Program is the only teaching quality provision of NCLB that applies explicitly to early learning educators. This program provides competitive grants to partnerships providing high-quality professional development to early childhood educators working with children from birth through kindergarten entry who come from low-income families in high-need communities.

The ECEPD grants are highly competitive. Eligible applicants are partnerships that include at least one higher education institution or another entity that provides professional development for early childhood educators. A partnership must include one or more public agency, Head Start grantee or private organization.

Activities funded by the grant include professional development for early childhood educators in the following areas:

1. Application of recent research on language and literacy development and/or research on early childhood pedagogy
2. Working with parents to provide and support developmentally appropriate school readiness services
3. Working with children who have limited English proficiency, children with disabilities and children with other special needs
4. Selection and use of screening and diagnostic assessments to improve teaching and learning.

The Challenge

The importance of well-qualified teachers in early learning programs cannot be overstated. Unfortunately, the early learning field is plagued by high teacher turnover, low pay and a lack of meaningful career paths. These problems cannot be solved without significantly more public funding. NCLB does not provide substantial funding increases to improve the quality of teaching in early childhood and pre-kindergarten programs.

The Opportunity

As a result of NCLB, there is increased attention from policymakers and the public on better understanding what makes a teacher "highly qualified," as well as what resources it will take to get all teachers to that standard. This dialogue – going on at national, state and local levels – provides an opportunity for early learning professionals to reinforce what they have known for years. Namely, that (1) effective teachers are the key ingredient in high-quality early learning programs[6] and (2) high-quality early learning programs have shown long-term benefits in improving student achievement.

Early learning professionals can leverage NCLB's focus on highly qualified teachers to inform the public and policymakers better about the discrepancies in training and compensation between early childhood educators and K-12 teachers.

"No Child Left Behind does not provide substantial funding increases to improve the quality of teaching in early childhood and pre-kindergarten programs."

Additional Resources on NCLB and Teaching Quality

No Child Left Behind Policy Brief on Teaching Quality. States face many challenges in placing a high-quality teacher in each classroom. This policy brief presents what's ahead for states and key policy questions states must ask about their teacher recruitment and certification processes, how to ensure teachers have subject-content mastery and paraprofessionals meet standards, and professional development assistance. http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/34/63/3463.pdf

Early Childhood Educator Professional Development Program. This is the official link from the U.S. Department of Education's Web site. Application information currently is available. http://www.ed.gov/programs/eceducator/index.html

ECS HOUSSE Database. The information in this database references each state's interpretation and progress toward creating the "high objective uniform state standard of evaluation." It also contains each state's "highly qualified teacher" definition for existing teachers. http://www.ecs.org/HOUSSEdatabase

Improving Teacher Quality Non-Regulatory Guidance. This document from the U.S. Department of Education provides revised guidance for the teacher quality provisions of NCLB. http://www.ed.gov/programs/teacherqual/guidance.doc

Reading and Literacy

Improving children's literacy development is an important component of NCLB. The act significantly increases funding for two literacy initiatives – Reading First and Early Reading First – aimed at having all children achieve reading proficiency by the end of 3rd grade. Both are voluntary programs to help states and local education agencies use scientifically based reading research to improve reading instruction for young children.

Reading First

Reading First is designed to help states, districts and schools identify and implement scientifically based reading programs, and ensure classroom teachers (kindergarten through 3rd grade) can identify children at risk of reading failure and provide effective early instruction.

Every state is eligible to receive Reading First funds, but each state must clearly demonstrate how it will use the funds to meet the grant requirements. States are responsible for giving districts subgrants, with priority given to districts with at least 6,500 students or 15% of all students in families living below the poverty level.

Reading First grants have been awarded to all 50 states and four territories. Grant sizes range from $2.1 million to $130 million, based primarily on the number of low-income students and low-performing schools in the state.

States must use these funds to develop a research-based state Reading First program that builds on and coordinates existing literacy efforts in the state and targets children most at risk for reading failure. Following are key components for state Reading First programs:

1. **Reading Leadership Team.** States must assemble a high-level leadership team, which includes the governor, the chief state school officer and key legislators, to guide the development and implementation of the state's Reading First program and to align Reading First with the state's existing literacy efforts.
2. **Scientifically Based Reading Research.**[7] Each state must ensure all its Reading First program activities, including professional development, assessment and curriculum, are derived from scientifically based reading research as outlined in the legislation.
3. **High-quality Professional Development.** Reading First funds professional development efforts that prepare teachers to identify and effectively teach children at risk for later reading difficulties. This includes training on selecting and administering research-based assessment and instructional materials. NCLB allows states to use a portion of their Reading First funds to provide professional development programs.
4. **Assessment.** Districts with Reading First funds must select and administer screening, diagnostic and curriculum assessments based on scientifically based reading research so all children at risk of later reading failure can be identified and provided the necessary interventions.
5. **Technical Assistance.** The U.S. Department of Education provides technical assistance to state education agencies to implement state programs. In addition, NCLB allows states to use a portion of their Reading First funds to provide technical assistance to school districts.

"Early learning professionals can leverage NCLB's focus on highly qualified teachers to inform the public and policymakers better about the discrepancies in training and compensation between early childhood educators and K-12 teachers."

Early Reading First

Early Reading First is designed to prepare preschool-age children to start school with the language, cognitive and early reading skills they will need to become proficient readers. Like the Reading First grants, Early Reading First grants target children from low-income families, focus on professional development activities and require research-based curriculum and assessments.

Unlike the Reading First grants, Early Reading First grants are awarded directly to early learning programs or partnerships and do not flow through the state education agency. Grants are awarded

to school districts or to public or private organizations such as Head Start or a private child care provider. The applicant must be located in a district that is eligible for Reading First funds. Applicants first submit a pre-application and are then invited to submit a full application. Priority is given to full-day, full-year programs and to programs serving high concentrations of low-income families.

Early Reading First grantees located in school districts that have received Reading First subgrants must coordinate their early literacy efforts with the Reading First program. This requirement applies to few Early Reading First grantees, because few districts have received both Reading First and Early Reading First grants.

The Challenges

NCLB emphasizes the importance of reading and literacy competence as a cornerstone for academic success. Some early childhood educators are concerned other critical domains of childhood development – social and emotional development; physical and motor development; approaches to learning; and cognition and general knowledge – will be undervalued or overlooked altogether. The challenge to early learning professionals is to capitalize on the increased resources and opportunities for improving early literacy efforts, while also maintaining substantial focus on other domains of development.

The Opportunities

While there are a relatively small number of Early Reading First grantees, the grants represent an opportunity to begin thinking critically about how state early literacy efforts align with the state's overall kindergarten through 3rd grade literacy agenda. Important questions for state early learning leaders to ask themselves include:

1. Does the state have a clearly defined strategy for ensuring all children start school with the language, cognitive and early reading skills they will need to become proficient readers?
2. How do the state's early literacy efforts currently fit into the state's overall literacy agenda?
3. How can the early learning community partner with K-3 leaders to ensure all children are proficient readers by 3rd grade?

Additional Resources on NCLB and Literacy

No Child Left Behind Policy Brief on Literacy. Presents a summary of the literacy components of NCLB, as well as some of the law's major implications for states. http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/35/66/3566.pdf

State Reading First Plans. Any state's Reading First Web site can be accessed from this ECS Issue Site. http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/43/61/4361.htm

Early Reading First. This site from the U.S. Department of Education has detailed information on the purpose and activities of this grant program. Information for the upcoming funding cycle is available now. http://www.ed.gov/programs/earlyreading/index.html

Reading First. This site from the U.S. Department of Education has detailed information on the purpose and activities of this grant program. http://www.ed.gov/programs/readingfirst/index.html

"While there are a relatively small number of Early Reading First grantees, the grants represent an opportunity to begin thinking critically about how state early literacy efforts align with the state's overall pre-kindergarten through 3rd grade literacy agenda."

Conclusion

Aside from creating a few new grant opportunities, the No Child Left Behind Act is not directly focused on the early learning education sector. Looking toward the future, though, the law still presents some unique challenges and opportunities for early learning:

"State leaders should ask themselves: How can the early learning community partner with K-3 leaders to ensure all children are proficient readers by 3rd grade?"

- State concerns over adequate yearly progress may be used to develop a marketing strategy to proffer early learning as a solution for meeting 3rd-grade accountability benchmarks.
- The teaching quality components of NCLB bring attention to the importance of high-quality professional development and offer an opportunity to make policymakers and the general public more aware of current discrepancies in pay and training between early childhood educators and K-12 teachers.
- NCLB's reading/literacy components represent a unique opportunity to integrate early literacy into a state's overall literacy agenda.

Working in partnership, early childhood professionals and policymakers may be able to leverage No Child Left Behind to advance an agenda for high-quality early learning opportunities for all children.

Kristie Kauerz is program director of early learning at ECS; Jessica McMaken was a research assistant at ECS until March 2004.

Endnotes

1 Early learning is used here to define the variety of early childhood care and education settings that children encounter prior to school entry, including child care, family child care, preschool, pre-kindergarten and Head Start.

2 Title I is the largest federal program that provides more than $11 billion to participating states to help educate low-income and disadvantaged students. Title I funds are distributed by formula from the federal government to state education agencies (SEA), which then pass through most of these funds to their local education agencies (LEA). LEAs target the Title I funds they receive to public schools with the highest percentages of children from low-income families.

3 According to the General Accounting Office (GAO), approximately 45,000 schools received Title I funds in 2002. This is approximately one-half of the total public schools in the nation (*Disadvantaged Students: Fiscal Oversight of Title I Could Be Improved*. Washington, DC: U.S. GAO, 2003).

4 For a comprehensive overview, see:

- National Research Council and Institute of Medicine. *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development*. Edited by Jack P. Shonkoff and Deborah A. Phillips, Committee on Integrating the Science of Early Childhood Development. Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 2000. May be accessed online at http://www.nap.edu/books/0309069882/html/.
- National Research Council. *Eager To Learn: Educating Our Preschoolers*. Edited by Barbara T. Bowman, M. Suzanne Donovan and M. Susan Burns, Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 2001. May be accessed online at http://www.nap.edu/books/0309068363/html/.

5 *Improving Teacher Quality State Grants, Title II, Part A, Non-Regulatory Guidance*, U.S. Department of Education, January 16, 2004.

6 See footnote 4 for detail.

7 For a thorough overview of what constitutes "scientifically based research," visit ECS' Web site on the topic at http://www.ecs.org/ecsmain.asp?page=/html/issue.asp?issueid=195.

ECS is grateful to Rhode Island KIDS COUNT and the National School Readiness Indicators Initiative, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation and the Ford Foundation for their generous support for the production of this ECS Policy Brief.

© 2004 by the Education Commission of the States (ECS). All rights reserved. ECS encourages its readers to share our information with others. To reprint or excerpt some of our material, please contact the ECS Communications Department at 303.299.3628 or e-mail ecs@ecs.org. GV-04-02, $5, plus postage and handling)

Issue Paper
NCLB/Teaching Quality

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 1200 • Denver, CO 80203-3460 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

NCLB and Highly Qualified Teachers: Where We Have Been and Need To Be

By Jennifer Azordegan and Charles Coble

November 2004

Where We've Been: The No Child Left Behind Act

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) is the most significant federal education policy initiative in a generation. This law, a potent blend of new requirements, incentives and resources, poses enormous challenges for states. It sets deadlines for them to expand the scope and frequency of student testing, revamp their accountability systems and guarantee every classroom is staffed by a teacher qualified to teach in his or her subject area. It requires states to make demonstrable progress from year to year in raising the percentage of students proficient in reading and math, and in narrowing the test-score gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students. And it pushes them to rely more heavily on research-based approaches to improving school quality and student performance.

Among NCLB's many provisions and requirements, those pertaining to the preparation, recruitment and retention of teachers are possibly the most complex, challenging and far-reaching in terms of real state policy change.

Teacher-related Provisions of NCLB

"Highly qualified teacher" definition

NCLB acknowledges the important role teacher quality plays in promoting student achievement. It requires that teachers hired after the commencement of the 2002-03 school year in schools supported with Title I funds be "highly qualified" under the definition set forth in the law, and that by the end of the 2005-06 school year, *all* teachers be "highly qualified" in all core academic subjects they teach. A highly qualified teacher is defined as one who (1) has at least a bachelor's degree, (2) has full state licensure or certification and (3) demonstrates competence in each subject he or she teaches. In addition, no certification or licensure requirements may be waived on an emergency, temporary or provisional basis.

While the law doesn't prohibit states from setting higher standards or expectations for teachers – including teachers of vocational courses, who are omitted in the NCLB provisions regarding "highly qualified" teachers – states' definitions have rarely ventured from the base criteria set forth in the law.

Subject-matter competency

NCLB places an unprecedented federal focus on teachers' subject-matter competency. All teachers of core academic subjects – defined by NCLB as English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history and geography – must demonstrate competency in each subject, thereby eliminating out-of-field teaching.

New public elementary school teachers have just one option for demonstrating their subject knowledge: an examination. Most states have been testing new teachers for some time. Under NCLB, such tests must go beyond assessing basic skills; they must rigorously test subject knowledge and teaching skills in

reading/language arts, writing, mathematics and other areas of the elementary school curriculum. Some states, therefore, are finding it necessary to revise their tests or replace them with new ones.

Existing public elementary teachers must either meet the same testing requirements as new elementary teachers or demonstrate competency through a state-designed evaluation standard unique to NCLB. This evaluation standard, called the *high objective uniform state standard of evaluation* (HOUSSE), must provide objective information about a teacher's knowledge in the subject taught and can consider, but not use as a primary criterion, time spent teaching the subject. (More details on how states are interpreting the HOUSSE provision are provided below.)

As for *new* public middle/secondary school teachers, they must demonstrate competency in each of the academic subjects taught through a subject-knowledge test or have the additional options of an academic major or coursework equivalent to a major, graduate degree or advanced certification. *Existing* public middle/secondary teachers may use the above options or may choose to use the HOUSSE.

Professional development

NCLB requires each state to submit a detailed plan for ensuring all teachers of core academic subjects will be highly qualified by the end of the 2005-06 school year. This plan must include at least two major annual measurable objectives for districts and schools: one for an annual increase in the percentage of highly qualified teachers and the other for an annual increase in the percentage of teachers receiving high-quality professional development.

The NCLB provisions loosely guide states to encourage professional development that:

- Increases teachers' knowledge of the academic subjects they teach, and enable teachers to become highly qualified
- Improves classroom management skills
- Supports the recruiting, hiring and training of highly qualified teachers, including teachers who became highly qualified through state and local alternative routes to certification
- Advances teacher understanding of effective instructional strategies that are based on scientifically based research, and improve student academic achievement or substantially increase the knowledge and teaching skills of teachers
- Gives teachers and other instructional staff the knowledge and skills to provide instruction and appropriate language and academic support services to limited-English-proficient children
- Provides training for teachers and principals in the effective classroom use of technology
- Provides instruction in methods of teaching children with special needs
- Strengthens the ability of teachers and principals to use assessment results and other data to inform and improve classroom practice
- Improves the ability of school personnel to work more effectively with parents.

NCLB states that professional development activities should be sustained, intensive and classroom-focused to have a positive and lasting impact on classroom instruction – not an occasional daylong workshop or conference. These activities should be regularly evaluated for their impact on teacher effectiveness and student achievement, with the findings of the evaluations used to improve the quality of professional development. (ESEA Section 9101(34), 2000)

Tracking State Implementation of NCLB

Since the passing of the No Child Left Behind Act, it has been ECS' intention to track how the law is affecting policy in the states. In fall 2002, ECS created a 50-state database (www.ecs.org/nclb) to track states' policy responses to the major provisions of NCLB. In the area of teaching quality, the database uses the following five indicators to assess states' progress:

- Highly qualified teacher definition
- Subject-matter competence
- Test for new elementary teachers
- Annual measurable objective for increasing the percentage of highly qualified teachers in the classroom
- Annual measurable objective for the percentage of teachers receiving high-quality professional development.

Since teacher certification law often spans many agencies and jurisdictions within a state, the written policies in each of these areas have been exhaustively reviewed. ECS has sought out evidence that indicates the teacher quality provisions of NCLB have been fully integrated into the language of state policy. Sources include state legislation, statutes, administrative rules and regulations, and state board of education decisions, in addition to state superintendent and department of education directives.

In addition, in January 2004, ECS launched a database (www.ecs.org/HOUSSEdatabase) to store states' interpretations of the High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation, a critical piece in fulfilling the intent of No Child Left Behind's teacher provisions. Some findings are included below.

Emerging Issues and Trends

Since states began to grapple with the teaching quality provisions of NCLB, and as more guidance has been released at the federal level, a number of issues have arisen that may dramatically affect the full implementation of the law.

Data

The critical logistical factor for states in meeting the highly qualified teacher provisions – indeed, most of the provisions – of NCLB is the availability of data. The major challenge for states is to develop systems that allow them to determine where they stand in relation to the end goal of assuring all teachers are "highly qualified" by the end of the 2005-06 school year. Many states do not have the common coding and information systems in place to allow them to electronically collect – let alone analyze – data on the status of teacher qualifications across school districts.

High Objective State Standard of Evaluation

Most states' "highly qualified teacher" definitions resemble one another in the relatively straightforward areas of full state certification and educational requirements. But there are wide variations in states' approaches to assessing existing teachers' subject-matter competency using the critical high objective uniform state standard of evaluation (HOUSSE).

Under NCLB requirements, any standard states adopt for evaluating current teachers must "be aligned with challenging state academic content and student academic achievement standards" and provide "objective, coherent information about the teacher's attainment of core content knowledge in the academic subjects in which a teacher teaches." Each state's charge, then, is to create an evaluation that strikes a balance between rewarding experienced teachers for years of subject-specific knowledge, effort and service, while creating or maintaining rigorous but fair content standards for all teachers – whether novice or veteran.

According to a review and analysis by the Education Commission of the States (ECS) earlier this year, states' HOUSSEs fall loosely into the following categories.

- **Point system:** A teacher accumulates points for various professional activities, usually relating to the subject taught. Frequently used categories include coursework; professional development; service to the profession; student achievement data; and awards, recognition or publications.
- **Professional development:** A teacher can meet competency by participating in a certain amount of professional development. Typically, teachers determine what is needed to meet competency and submit those requirements in a plan to be completed by the end of the 2005-06 school year.
- **Performance evaluation:** In many cases, an existing performance evaluation system is used. It may include observation and review by peers, a panel or a supervisor, or self-evaluation. Major criteria include content knowledge, classroom management and instructional skills.
- **Portfolio:** A teacher assembles classroom-based evidence that demonstrates his or her competency in the subject taught. A portfolio is more likely than a point system to contain observation/evaluation notes, student work and classroom artifacts.
- **Student achievement data:** A teacher's subject-matter competency is evaluated on the basis of students' scores on particular assessments.

By far the most extensively used HOUSSE approach has been the point system, in which teachers' subject-matter competency is evaluated using an assortment of activities *usually* related to the content area. Over 17 states, including Arizona, Florida, Oklahoma and Utah, have chosen this route for their teachers.

The next most-popular approaches are the professional development-based HOUSSE (Arkansas, Illinois and Michigan, for example) and the performance evaluation-based HOUSSE (Georgia, New Hampshire and New Mexico, for example).

While nearly all states have now developed HOUSSE plans, a careful examination of the plans reveals a business-as-usual approach on the part of most states – not nearly enough objective, measurable criteria, and, with a few exceptions (North Carolina and Ohio, for instance), not explicitly tied to their content standards. In some cases, the various evaluation strategies and mechanisms built into states' HOUSSE plans appear unlikely to ensure the level of subject-matter competency called for in NCLB.

Rural school teachers

How to define, assess and deliver professional development to teachers to comply with the NCLB provisions on highly qualified teachers is a vexing issue in many rural states in the Midwest and West, including Alaska. In rural areas, to cover all courses while serving smaller numbers of students, it is common for a single teacher to instruct in various core subjects. These teachers need to submit to a test, additional coursework or the HOUSSE to demonstrate subject-matter competency not just in one core subject, but in all the subject areas they teach. These teachers are only highly qualified in a subject in which they meet all the requirements. Teachers teaching out-of-field are not highly qualified.

To ease the pressure, U.S. Secretary of Education Roderick Paige on March 14, 2004, announced that (1) teachers in small, rural and isolated areas will be considered highly qualified as long as they are highly qualified in at least one subject, (2) teachers will have three more years to become highly qualified in the additional subjects they teach, and (3) newly hired teachers will have until their third year of teaching to become highly qualified. This does not relieve states of their responsibility to make sure rural teachers receive academic assistance and high-quality professional development to help them become highly qualified, but it does give them more time to organize and deliver services. (U.S. Department of Education Fact Sheet on Flexibility for Highly Qualified Teachers, 2004)

Middle school teachers

It should be noted that NCLB, recognizing the unique needs of middle grades students, attempted to increase their teachers' level of content knowledge to that of secondary teachers, or at least to a higher level than has previously been acceptable. At the early stages of NCLB implementation, there was much anxiety over this change. Traditionally, many middle school teachers have been prepared and certified through an elementary or K-8 program. It was anticipated that states would lump middle school certification with elementary certification, and those states would be sent scrambling to review their levels of teacher licensure and would need to make adjustments to ensure middle school teachers have the required background to be considered highly qualified.

Over time, however, the federal guidance appears to have become more flexible than at the time the law was passed. While it continues to encourage states to "examine the degree of rigor and technicality of the subject matter that the teacher will need to know in relation to the state's content standards and academic achievement standards for the subjects that will be taught," the federal government effectively leaves it up to states to define which grades constitute elementary and middle school. This has, in effect, encouraged some states to retain their elementary/middle school groupings.

Still, in those states that have chosen to regroup their certification levels, it is those existing middle school teachers who trained under the elementary umbrella that are hardest hit by these new expectations for middle school teachers; they will likely be the largest segment of the teaching corps needing additional coursework or training to meet NCLB's highly-qualified teacher requirements.

Teacher preparation

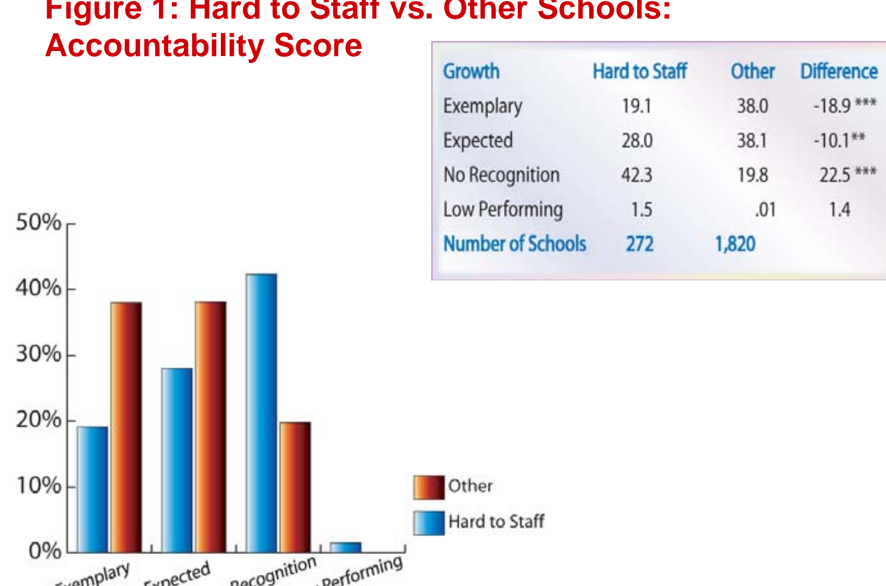
For the sake of current teacher candidates, teacher educators need to be considering the above requirements, and taking steps, if they haven't already, to ensure teacher candidates between now and 2006 leave their training program "highly qualified."

Where We Need To Be: A Focus on Hard-to-Staff Schools

In the realm of highly qualified teacher implementation, of primary interest to ECS is whether the highly qualified teachers are getting to where they are needed most: schools that are hard-to-staff.

It is widely conceded that hard-to-staff schools – whether designated by low student-performance rates, higher percentages of students who are free/reduced lunch eligible, high minority, and/or high poverty, high teacher turnover or other factors – are more likely to have under-qualified teachers. (See Figure 1.) It is known teacher turnover is far higher in low-wealth and at-risk schools; that low-wealth, high-minority schools have higher numbers of unlicensed, not fully licensed, emergency licensed, and/or out-of-field teachers; and that more teachers leave these schools for dissatisfaction or to get a better job than for retirement or family reasons.

Figure 1: Hard to Staff vs. Other Schools: Accountability Score

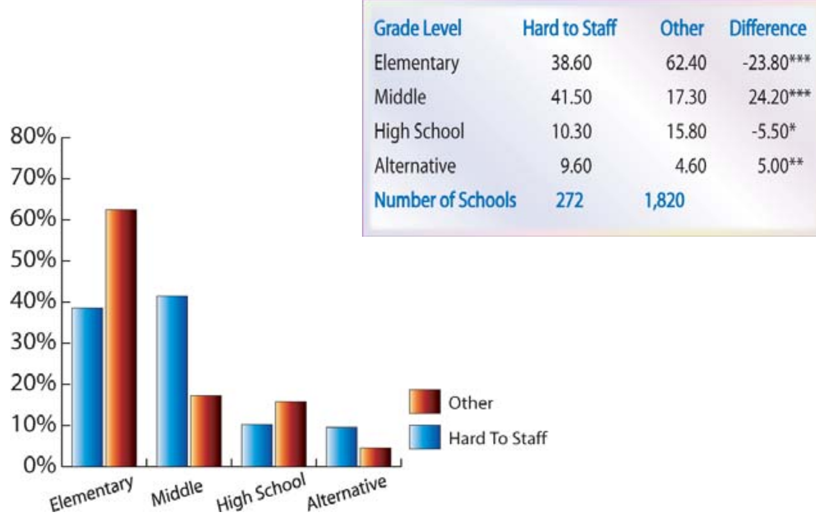


Growth	Hard to Staff	Other	Difference
Exemplary	19.1	38.0	-18.9 ***
Expected	28.0	38.1	-10.1**
No Recognition	42.3	19.8	22.5 ***
Low Performing	1.5	.01	1.4
Number of Schools	272	1,820	

Getting Help to Where It's Needed Most

The law attempts to address the concentration of unlicensed, not fully licensed, emergency licensed and/or out-of-field teachers in hard-to-staff schools and guarantees all children receive an adequately qualified teacher. But as confirmed by researchers and ECS' own in-depth work in North Carolina and Kansas, wide-scale teacher policies at the state level do not always "trickle down" to the neediest schools. If countless well-intentioned state teacher reforms have not made it to those schools that could benefit the most, it is doubtful the teachers in those schools are receiving the necessary assistance to meet the highly qualified requirements.

Figure 2: Hard to Staff vs. Other Schools: School Level



Grade Level	Hard to Staff	Other	Difference
Elementary	38.60	62.40	-23.80***
Middle	41.50	17.30	24.20***
High School	10.30	15.80	-5.50*
Alternative	9.60	4.60	5.00**
Number of Schools	272	1,820	

While ECS found that most of the hard-to-staff schools in North Carolina were in rural (56%) and urban (40%) schools, one of the most revealing findings of the hard-to-staff schools in North Carolina was the large percentage of middle schools identified. (See Figure 2.) While middle schools account for only 17% of the schools in North Carolina, they account for 41.50% of the 272 hard-to-staff schools identified by ECS. [ECS defined "hard-to-staff schools" as those with 15% above state average in these three categories: (1) percentage of teachers not fully certified, (2) percentage of teachers in the first three years of experience and (3) teacher turnover rate.]

Perceptions of Working Conditions

In a second study of the hard-to-staff schools in North Carolina, ECS found that teachers in these schools had lower perceptions of the working conditions in these schools. Teachers in the hard-to-staff schools reported significantly lower scores than their peers in nondesignated schools on their self-reported perceptions on all five domains of the North Carolina Working Conditions Survey: Time Management, Facilities and Resources, School Leadership, Personal Empowerment, and Opportunities for Professional Development. [See the newly released joint-ECS/Duke University report, *Teacher Perceptions of the Work Environment in Hard-to-Staff Schools* http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/55/87/5587.doc.]

Recommended Actions

State/Federal Relations

Federal officials should:

- Not allow the nation to retreat on the promises or possibilities of NCLB. Recognize the unique political and cultural contexts of states, and accord them the necessary flexibility to accomplish their goals. Keep pressure on states, but give them credit for moving forward on NCLB.
- Ensure the research and development opportunities NCLB affords are not overshadowed by the law's management challenges. Provide incentives that encourage states to serve as laboratories of research and development, thereby broadening the scope and deepening the impact of NCLB.
- Push for greater transparency in and comparability among data sets to better inform public debate, and challenge what appear to be limited or questionable public policy pronouncements.

Specific to Highly Qualified Teachers

Federal officials should:

- Provide clear, consistent and timely guidance regarding compliance with the highly qualified teachers provisions of NCLB.
- Insist that states provide accurate and accessible data on the qualifications and competence of teachers.

State policymakers should:

- Ensure state laws or board policies reflect an expectation that High Objective Uniform State Standards of Evaluation (HOUSSE), combined with the state's certification requirements, truly guarantee all teachers are knowledgeable in the subjects they teach.
- Develop data systems that provide a clearer picture of the quality and effectiveness of teacher preparation programs (where teachers are trained, where they are placed, their performance in the classroom and so on).
- Develop state policies that provide teachers – particularly those in hard-to-staff schools – with greater access to high-quality professional development.

Specific to Hard-to-Staff Schools

Federal and state policymakers should:

- See that changes to the law or creation of financial incentives should be targeted to teachers in hard-to-staff schools, and particularly teachers in middle schools.

Jennifer Azordegan conducts research on teaching quality policy for ECS, and Charles Coble is ECS vice president for Policy Studies and Programs.

© 2004 by the Education Commission of the States (ECS). All rights reserved. ECS is a nonprofit, nationwide organization that helps state leaders shape education policy.

To request permission to excerpt part of this publication, either in print or electronically, please fax a request to the attention of the ECS Communications Department, 303.296.8332 or e-mail ecs@ecs.org.

Helping State Leaders Shape Education Policy

Alternative Certification

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 1200 • Denver, CO 80203-3460 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

A Growing Trend To Address the Teacher Shortage

By Marga Mikulecky, Gina Shkodriani and Abby Wilner

December 2004

What is Alternative Certification?

"Alternative certification" is a general term for nontraditional avenues that lead to teacher licensure. Alternative teacher certification programs (ACPs) are generally geared toward aspiring teachers who already have a baccalaureate degree but who require additional education methods coursework and classroom experience. Such programs vary in requirements and sophistication and can be administered at the federal, state or district levels.

ACPs appeal to prospective teachers and to state education officials dealing with teacher shortages because they typically can be completed in a shorter timeframe and may be more affordable than traditional education-degree programs. A key component of most alternative certification programs is their flexible or compressed scheduling, with many courses offered in the evenings and on weekends, making them more accessible to participants who are currently working.

History

Since 1985, an estimated 200,000 candidates have pursued alternative routes to become certified teachers. Driven by teacher shortages and changing requirements – including passage of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 – close to one-third of all new teachers certified annually in the United States enter the field via alternative certification programs currently offered in 45 states and the District of Columbia.

Alternative certification programs for teachers began in the mid-1980s in two states, New Jersey and Texas. Program development increased with the NCLB provisions that recognized alternative certification programs as an effective method to train teachers; states were encouraged to become involved in this effort. Title II of the 2001 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (NCLB), *Preparing, Training, and Recruiting High Quality Teachers and Principals*, supports programs that recruit qualified professionals from other fields and provides them with alternative routes to teacher certification, including two in particular, Transition to Teaching and Troops to Teachers.

In the 2003 federal fiscal year, Congress appropriated $41.65 million for the Transition to Teaching program to enable mid-career persons to pursue alternative routes into the classroom. Troops to Teachers provides support to military personnel who have a bachelor’s degree to become a teacher through alternative certification programs. In addition, the Department of Education created the American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence (ABCTE), which has developed exams to provide nontraditional candidates a way to become certified as teachers.

Recent numbers from alternative certification programs across the nation show that significant interest in teacher training exists among professionals outside education. In the first year that New York offered an alternative certification program, 2,300 people applied for 250 spots; in the second year, 7,800 applied for 1,500 openings. Similarly, a Massachusetts ACP had more than 900 applicants for 105 slots.

Increasing Diversity in the Teaching Force

Programs often are targeted toward attracting potential teachers from underrepresented ethnic or racial groups, underserved geographic areas, or individuals with subject expertise in high-demand fields. Alternative certification proponents argue that, by drawing from the pool of people who have a variety of work and life experiences, the programs boost the quantity, diversity and quality of teachers at the same time.

Some alternative certification programs have increased the number of minorities in the teaching force:

- In Texas, 9% of all teachers are minorities and 41% of those who prepare through alternative routes are minorities.
- In New Jersey, 9% of all teachers are minorities; 20% of alternatively certified teachers are minorities.
- In the Troops to Teacher program, 90% percent of participants are male, compared with 26% of teachers nationwide, and 30% are minority compared with 10% nationwide.

Alternative certification programs also may address critical shortage areas:

- Twenty-nine percent of teachers who came to teaching through alternative routes end up teaching math
- Twenty-four percent teach in the sciences
- Eleven percent teach special education
- Twenty-five percent (compared with 16% overall) teach at inner-city schools.

Program Requirements

Individuals entering an alternative teacher certification program must have a bachelor's degree and usually an undergraduate major in the field for which they will be certified to teach. Eligibility requirements, including gradepoint average or other suitability standards, may be established by the ACP or the state. Candidates planning to teach at the elementary school level may qualify with a multi-disciplinary degree.

The length of alternative teacher certification programs ranges from a few months up to two years. Many deliver training through workshops scheduled throughout the year; others follow a more traditional course schedule. In some ACPs, candidates actually begin their assignment as a classroom teacher drawing a regular salary while still enrolled in the alternative program; others require training to be completed before the candidate starts teaching. Some ACPs require a person be offered a teaching contract before being accepted into the program.

Community College Involvement

Although ACPs can be found in nearly every state and are offered in a variety of formats through four-year colleges and universities, school districts, regional education service centers and for-profit education providers, a more recent development is the arrival of community colleges into the alternative certification marketplace. In 2000, Texas became the first state to formerly authorize community colleges to offer alternative certification programs for public school teachers. As of 2004, the Texas State Board for Educator Certification had approved 22 community college programs to offer ACPs. According to the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), 328 alternative certification programs currently are offered through four-year colleges and universities across the nation. The number of community colleges involved with alternative certification was not reported.

Community college proponents argue that two-year colleges are uniquely qualified to offer alternative certification teacher training programs based on their history of preparing nontraditional students to enter the workforce. Community college programs offer flexible scheduling, online courses and sometimes salaried classroom internships. In addition, ACPs at community colleges generally cost less and may allow potential teachers to become certified within a shorter time period than traditional full-time baccalaureate teacher education programs.

Quality of Alternative Certification Programs and Lack of Research

Many professionals in the education community are concerned too many policymakers see alternative certification programs as "quick and easy" substitutes for traditional teacher education programs. The growth of alternative certification programs has occurred simultaneously with demands to raise standards of teacher quality. Some observers worry that programs place too much emphasis on quantity – filling slots – rather than teacher quality. While more than 130,000 teachers have been trained nationwide during the past five years through alternative certification programs, sufficient research has not been conducted to answer lingering questions about the quality of such programs. This ambiguity makes it difficult to judge whether alternative certification programs provide quality preparation comparable to traditional routes to teaching.

Concerns over the quality of alternative certification programs can be further exacerbated when a community college is authorized to offer such programs. Many in the education community are unconvinced that a community college, with its emphasis on lower-division education, can offer the pedagogical and upper-division subject-matter content needed by classroom teachers. Community college teacher education proponents, however, argue that community colleges have a long tradition of developing and offering quality customized education to meet the needs of business and industry in a wide range of fields. That broad experience of educating and/or training working adults could make community colleges ideal providers of programs for nontraditional teacher candidates with college degrees and hands-on work experience.

Accountability and ACPs

The 1998 Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, Title II, created a national reporting system on the quality of teacher preparation in the United States. States are required to report test data to the U.S. Department of Education on candidates completing alternative certification programs, including those offered by community colleges. Performance data from ACPs in the past have been reported in the aggregate, making it impossible to examine the quality of individual programs at this time.

As the number of alternative certification programs increased, the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) reviewed its policies related to the types of organizations that may seek NCATE accreditation. In 2003, NCATE changed its constitution to include organizations or institutions that use alternative techniques to prepare new teachers. NCATE will soon begin considering applications to accredit community colleges to train teachers, in particular those with alternative certification programs.

As states consider the adoption of alternative certification tracks for teacher education, it is important that programs be built and approved on the basis of appropriate standards of teacher knowledge and performance. New alternative certification programs should be judged on whether they lead to desired outcomes. This should be the case whether the program is offered through a four-year college, school district, community college or other nontraditional provider.

Conclusion

The limited amount of research on whether alternative certification programs are equal, better or worse than traditional programs is inconclusive. What does seem apparent, however, is that alternative certification programs have the ability to recruit and deliver more minority, male and older teachers into urban and rural areas. With federal programs providing increasing support and oversight, and organizations such as NCATE accrediting community college programs, alternative certification programs are not only evolving, but also gaining wider acceptance.

State Examples

Arizona

Alternative certification programs were developed in Arizona after the state board of education revised its teacher certification policy in 1998. The revised policy allowed institutions other than four-year colleges and universities to offer certification programs. ACPs in Arizona provide both residents and out-of-state students with a path to teacher licensure in elementary, secondary or special education.

Students enrolled in **Pima Community College**'s Advanced Certificate in Teacher Education program can complete their Arizona teacher certification in two years. Courses are offered every six weeks and can be taken onsite, online or through television or video. A notable requirement of Pima's program is the development of an online teacher portfolio which demonstrates students' skills and comprehension. These portfolios can be shared with other students or used for job interviews or back-to-school nights. Pima's ACP costs approximately $1,500-2,000 for in-state residents, depending on the type of certification pursued (elementary or secondary).

Rio Salado College is one of 10 community colleges in the Maricopa County Community College District. Its postbaccalaureate teacher certification program has provided more than 800 participants with the skills and support to transition successfully into the public school system. Rio Salado's program is self-paced, with new courses offered every two weeks and an option to finish courses early. Participants are expected to complete online coursework, a nine-week internship and "master teacher seminars" before they are eligible for licensure. The seminars are available on videotape for out-of-state and international participants. Rio Salado's faculty are available to help teacher candidates identify local schools in the community where they can fulfill their classroom practicum requirements. Upon completion of the program, students receive an Arizona teaching certificate, which is recognized by many other states as valid teacher certification through reciprocal licensure agreements. Enrollment in Rio Salado's ACP is approximately $1,800-2,500 for in-state residents, again depending on the type of certification sought.

Texas

Since 1995, Texas has trained 19,000 candidates through alternative routes. In 2002, 27% of all teachers had completed an alternative certification program; and by 2004, 22 community colleges had approved programs in place. Alternative certification programs in Texas must demonstrate the ability to address standards required of all teachers, provide yearlong internships in the classroom on a full salary and collaborate with districts, institutions of higher education and regional education service centers. Texas does not require all ACPs offer the same number of credit hours, but all programs must include some combination of classroom instruction, observation and field experience.

References

U.S. Department of Education, Planning and Evaluation Service. *Preparing and Supporting New Teachers: A Literature Review,* 2000.

Collin County Community College District. *A Model Community College-based Alternative Teacher Certification Program: A Narrative.* August 2001.

Curry, Jennifer. *The Role of the Community College in the Creation of a Multi-Ethnic Teaching Force.* ERIC Digest, 1998.

Dill, V. and Delia Stafford-Johnson. *Why Alternative Teacher Certification Programs and Research-based Teacher Selection Together Are Uniquely Designed To Meet the Needs of At-Risk Students.* Haberman Educational Foundation National Center for Alternative Teacher Certification Information, March 25, 2003.

Evelyn, Jamilah. "States Give Community Colleges a Role in Educating Teachers," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, March 8, 2002.

Finn Jr., Chester E., M. Kanstoroom and Michael J. Petrilli. *The Quest for Better Teachers: Grading the States*. Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, November 1999.

Gallegos, Gilbert. "Education Unions Wince at Dem's Plan," *Albuquerque Tribune*, July 23, 2002.

Kwiatkowski, Michael. *Debating Alternative Teacher Certification: A Trial by Achievement*. Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, February 1998.

Lockwood, Anne Turnbaugh. *Who Prepares Your Teachers? The Debate Over Alternative Certification*. American Association of School Administrators, February 2002.

National Center for Education Information. *Alternative Teacher Certification: A State-by-State Analysis 2003.*

No Child Left Behind legislation, www.ed.gov/legislation/ESEA02.

Rodriguez, Esther M. *Preparing Quality Teachers: Issues and Trends in the States*. State Higher Education Executive Officers, July 1998.

Rose, Mike. "Another Way: Alternative Teacher Certification Ramps Up in States and Districts," *American Teacher*, May/June 2002.

Schuhmann, Ana Maria. *The Community College Role in Teacher Education: A Case for Collaboration.* American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, June 2002.

Thomas B. Fordham Foundation. *The Teachers We Need and How To Get More of Them.* September 2001.

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education. *Meeting the Highly Qualified Teachers Challenge. Chapter 2: Preparing and Certifying Highly Qualified Teachers: Today's Broken System and Its Alternative.* June 2002.

Funded by the Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers To Use Technology (PT3) grant from the U.S. Department of Education.

Marga Mikulecky is project manager for the ECS work on Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers To Use Technology. Gina Shkodriani, is a senior research associate with JBL Associates, Inc. Abby Wilner is a consultant in postsecondary educational research with JBL Associates.

© 2005 by the Education Commission of the States (ECS). All rights reserved. ECS is a nonprofit, nationwide organization that helps state leaders shape education policy.

ECS encourages its readers to share our information with others. To request permission to reprint or excerpt some of our material, please contact the ECS Communications Department at 303.299.3628 or e-mail ecs@ecs.org.

Helping State Leaders Shape Education Policy

Early Lessons from Colorado's Voucher Experience

EDUCATION COMMISSION OF THE STATES — *Helping State Leaders Shape Education Policy*

Sterling
Yuma
Greeley
Fort Morgan
Fort Collins
Loveland
76
70
Boulder
Winter Park
Denver
Limon
40
Colorado Springs
Pueblo
Conifer
25
Vail
Bailey
Cripple Creek
Glenwood Springs
Cañon City
Carbondale
285
70
50
Walsenburg
Alamosa
Montrose
Monte Vista
Delta
Center
160
Colorado
Del Norte

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments..1

Executive Summary 3

The Colorado Voucher Program 5

Hopes and Fears 7

Implementation and Evaluation Efforts..11

Voucher Debates and Evaluations: Looking Ahead..........................13

Conclusion...16

Early Lessons from Colorado's Voucher Experience

EDUCATION COMMISSION OF THE STATES — *Helping State Leaders Shape Education Policy*

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This report was written by Alex Medler, a Colorado-based education consultant, and Todd Ziebarth of Augenblick, Palaich and Associates, a Colorado-based education consulting firm. The report was produced for the National Center on Governing America's Schools at the Education Commission of the States, with funding from the Joyce Foundation.

The authors are grateful to the individuals – primarily state policymakers and local leaders in Colorado and voucher evaluators from across the country – who took the time to candidly share their thoughts about the on-again, off-again voucher program in Colorado. They are not responsible for any of the analysis or conclusions in the report, or any errors it may contain.

April 2004

© 2004 by the Education Commission of the States (ECS). All rights reserved.

The Education Commission of the States is a nonprofit, nationwide organization
that helps state leaders shape education policy.

Copies of this report are available for $7.50 plus postage and handling from the Education Commission of the States Distribution Center, 700 Broadway, Suite 1200, Denver, CO 80203-3460; 303.299.3692. Ask for No. GV-04-01. ECS accepts prepaid orders, MasterCard, American Express and Visa. All sales are final.

ECS encourages its readers to share our information with others. To request permission to reprint or excerpt some of our material, please contact the ECS Communications Department at 303.299.3628 or e-mail ecs@ecs.org.

Please add postage and handling if your order totals: Up to $10.00, **$3.00**; $10.01-$25.00, **$4.25**; $25.01-$50.00, **$5.75**; $50.01-$75.00, **$8.50**; $75.01-$100.00, **$10.00**; over $100.01, **$12.00**.

Generous discounts are available for bulk orders of single publications. They are:
10-24 copies, 10% discount; 25-49 copies, 20%; 50-74 copies, 30%; 75-99 copies, 40%;
100+ copies, 50%.

Colorado Springs ★ Pueblo

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In April 2003, Colorado passed H.B. 1160, thus becoming the first state to enact a school voucher law in the wake of the landmark ruling in favor of school vouchers by the U.S. Supreme Court in June 2002. As expected, the Colorado law was immediately challenged in court. In December 2003, a state court declared the voucher program unconstitutional and, shortly thereafter, halted its implementation. While appeals have been filed, the legal status of the law remains unresolved as of this writing. Nonetheless, there are certain aspects about the creation, implementation and evaluation of this fledgling effort worth sharing with policymakers in other states that consider voucher laws.

H.B. 1160 creates the Colorado Opportunity Contract Pilot Program. This program focuses on students from disadvantaged backgrounds who are enrolled in a low-performing school (in one of the state's 11 lowest-performing school districts) and who are themselves performing poorly on state tests. To participate in the program, an eligible student must first apply to his or her school district. After being accepted, he or she must then apply to a nonpublic school that has chosen to participate in the program.

Once a student is chosen to participate in the program and is accepted by a nonpublic school, the student's parents must enter into a contract with the school district covering the terms and procedures of payment made by the district to the parents. Students also must take the statewide assessments each year, at the nonpublic school's expense. H.B. 1160 places a participation cap on the voucher program, with no more than 6% of a school district's student enrollment for the previous school year allowed to participate at the height of the program. H.B. 1160 includes a sunset provision that repeals the law in 2008, unless the legislature decides to renew it.

State policymakers hope the program will improve the achievement of at-risk students who attend nonpublic schools, increase the satisfaction of at-risk students and their parents, stimulate public schools to improve the performance of remaining students, and increase support for public funding of schools. State policymakers also have several fears about the program, including that it will lead to a decrease in the achievement of at-risk students who attend nonpublic schools, fail to provide opportunities to targeted students, and have a negative impact on public schools as well as on society and democracy. Some of these attitudes are shared broadly, while others are not.

According to several state and local leaders in Colorado, H.B. 1160's delegation of authority for implementing and evaluating the voucher program is relatively weak. In some of the most interesting developments since the passage of the voucher law, such weaknesses have motivated state, local and private leaders to start three notable implementation and evaluation efforts. In one effort, the state board of education formed the Colorado Opportunity Contract Pilot Program Advisory Committee. This 16-member body is a diverse group of public, private and religious school representatives, some of whom support and some of whom oppose vouchers. Advisory committee members worked together to identify and solve practical implementation problems.

In another effort, the Colorado Association of School Boards (CASB), instead of joining the legal challenge to the law, worked to help the 11 participating school districts address common problems involved in implementing it. CASB also worked in partnership with the above-mentioned advisory committee to develop various documents, including the applications that nonpublic schools are required to submit to school districts in order to participate in the program.

Although H.B. 1160 contains some reporting requirements, many state, local and private leaders felt they were insufficient. In a particularly notable move, a coalition of voucher proponents and opponents – the Bighorn Institute for Public Policy, CASB and the

Colorado Alliance for Reform in Education (CARE) – formed a partnership to create an evaluation design that will provide transparent data about the voucher program.

As one of this partnership's first activities, it invited a panel of the nation's top voucher evaluators to provide advice on how to evaluate the newly enacted voucher program to a group of state, local and private leaders in Colorado. As a result of this meeting, and acting on a suggestion by the researchers, the Bighorn Institute, CASB and CARE, along with Colorado Commissioner of Education William Moloney, agreed to move forward together in creating the evaluation design.

Whatever evaluations are produced through this and other efforts, they are sure to play some role in future debates over the state's voucher program – assuming, of course, that it is eventually ruled constitutional. In the interviews conducted for this report, policymakers listed indicators that reflect all of the hopes and fears discussed above as data that will help inform future decisions. Several expressed skepticism, however, as to the ability or willingness of some policymakers – whether they support vouchers or oppose them – to change their position, regardless of the data such evaluations yield.

The policymakers interviewed also emphasized the importance of test scores, including baseline information on student performance before they enter nonpublic schools. Determining whether to expand or even continue the voucher program, they said, should depend largely on evidence of improved test scores for participants, or neutral test scores combined with increased parent and student satisfaction.

Surprisingly, several pro-voucher policymakers expressed opposition to expanding the program down the road, even with hard evidence of its success. Other voucher supporters can imagine supporting only a limited expansion, such as raising minimum income thresholds for participants or increasing the caps on the percentage of a district's students that can participate in the voucher program while using the same eligibility standards. Still others described circumstances that might lead them to favor ending or scaling the program. These included major mismanagement and fraud, a degeneration of local politics in which choice was "fracturing communities" or a general lack of interest on the part of parents and students.

Colorado's voucher law was created as a pilot program, and this report takes that into account. To understand how the program will ultimately be judged to have succeeded or have failed, questions explored are about what the program should achieve, how that achievement should be measured and what mechanisms are in place to provide necessary information.

Colorado's voucher law was created as a pilot program, and this report takes that into account.

This report begins by describing Colorado's voucher program, and then takes a look at what state leaders on either side of the issue hope it will accomplish – or fear it will lead to. The report also examines the implementation and evaluation processes that are being put into place for the Colorado program, and concludes with a look at how evaluations might converge with voucher debates in the future.

Strengthening the role of evaluations in future voucher programs will require crafting policies that call for:

- *Ensuring researchers have access to schools and students*
- *Involving a variety of researchers reflecting different ideological and methodological viewpoints*
- *Establishing an advisory board to provide continuity and long-term support for this research agenda.*

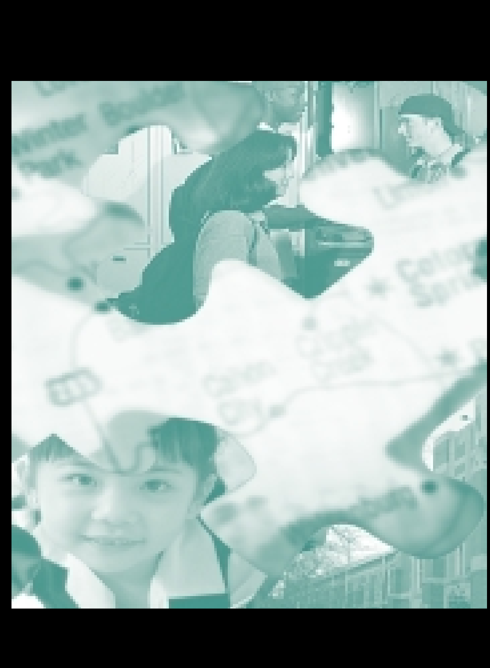
Doing so will improve the likelihood that policymakers ask important questions and that researchers provide credible answers, as well as generate a pool of information that all parties agree constitutes "what we know" about a given voucher program.

THE COLORADO VOUCHER PROGRAM

In April 2003, Colorado passed H.B. 1160, thus becoming the first state to enact a school voucher law in the wake of the landmark ruling in favor of school vouchers by the U.S. Supreme Court in June 2002. As expected, the law was immediately challenged in court. In December 2003, a state court declared the voucher program unconstitutional and, shortly thereafter, halted its implementation. While appeals have been filed, the legal status of the law remains unresolved as of this writing. Nonetheless, there are certain aspects about the creation, implementation and evaluation of this fledgling effort worth sharing with policy-makers in other states that consider voucher laws.

H.B. 1160 creates the Colorado Opportunity Contract Pilot Program, which builds upon several school reform initiatives in the state over the past decade, including standards, assessments, accountability, open enrollment and charter schools. As one voucher supporter put it, the voucher law is one piece in the larger puzzle of school reform in Colorado, rather than a separate effort.

H.B. 1160 applies to 11 school districts that had at least eight schools categorized by the state's accountability system as "low" or "unsatisfactory" in the 2001-02 school year. It also allows a district to participate voluntarily in the program if its school board adopts a resolution stating its desire to do so.



To receive a voucher in these 11 school districts, a student must be eligible to receive a free or reduced-cost lunch. There are also other requirements, depending on a student's grade level:

- **Students entering or enrolled in kindergarten** must lack overall learning readiness attributable to at least three significant family risk factors or their neighborhood school must be categorized as "low" or "unsatisfactory" in the state's accountability system.
- **Students entering or enrolled in grades 1-3** must have been continuously enrolled in and attended a public school during the previous school year and must lack overall learning readiness attributable to at least three significant risk factors. Their neighborhood school also must be categorized as "low" or "unsatisfactory" in the state's accountability system.
- **Students entering or enrolled in grades 4-12** must have been continuously enrolled in and attended a public school during the previous school year. They also must have performed at the "unsatisfactory" level in at least one academic area on the most recent statewide assessment, or in reading, writing or mathematics on the most recent college entrance exams.

To participate in the program, an eligible student must first apply to his or her school district. Nonpublic schools that choose to participate in the program also must apply to a school district. After a student is accepted into the program, he or she must then apply to a participating nonpublic school.

Once a student is chosen to participate in the program and is accepted by a nonpublic school, the student's parents must enter into a contract with the school district covering the terms and procedures of payment made by the school district to the parents. Students also must take the statewide assessments each year, at the nonpublic school's expense.

School districts must pay parents the lesser of either the nonpublic school's per-pupil cost or:

- *37.5% of the school district's per-pupil operating revenues (PPOR) if the eligible child is enrolled in kindergarten*
- *75% of the school district's PPOR if the eligible child is enrolled in grades 1-8*
- *85% of the school district's PPOR if the eligible child is enrolled in grades 9-12.*

H.B. 1160 places a participation cap on the voucher program. For the 2004-05 school year, no more than 1% of a school district's student enrollment for the previous school year may participate. The cap increases to 2% in 2005-06, 4% in 2006-07 and 6% for each school year thereafter.

H.B. 1160 includes a sunset provision that repeals the law in 2008 – unless the legislature chooses to renew it. It requires the state auditor to produce a performance and financial audit of the program by January 1, 2008. It also requires participating school districts to provide a report to state policymakers by January 1, 2008. Finally, H.B. 1160 requires school districts to report the voucher program's financial impact on them.

With the passage of H.B. 1160, there are now six states that have enacted publicly funded voucher programs across the country – Colorado, Florida, Maine, Ohio, Vermont and Wisconsin. In addition, the U.S. Congress recently enacted a publicly funded voucher program for the District of Columbia. In reviewing the similarities and differences between Colorado's program and the previously existing programs, several things stand out.

Colorado's program… focuses on students from low-income families enrolled in low-performing schools.

First, Colorado's program targets students differently from the other voucher programs. Florida targets students in low-performing schools across the state as identified by the state's accountability system. Ohio and Wisconsin target students from low-income families in one struggling school district (Cleveland and Milwaukee, respectively). And Maine and Vermont target students in communities without a public school, across the state. Like Florida's voucher program, Colorado's is part of the state's accountability system. Colorado's program, however, focuses on students from low-income families enrolled in low-performing schools – in one of the state's 11 lowest-performing districts – or who are themselves performing poorly on state tests.

Second, H.B. 1160 is the first voucher law to be enacted since the federal government passed the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act in 2002. While NCLB requires school districts to provide students in low-performing schools with the opportunity to attend a higher-performing public school, it is apparent in Colorado – and elsewhere – that the potential population of students eligible for these opportunities in low-performing schools far exceeds the supply of seats in high-performing public schools. Although NCLB is silent on nonpublic-school choice, H.B. 1160 is the first attempt in light of NCLB to expand the supply of opportunities for these students to include seats in nonpublic schools.

Third, a key component of accountability in any voucher program is expressed by parents "voting with their feet." Beyond this, though, there is scant accountability for student performance in most of the previously existing voucher programs. Perhaps in recognition of the increasing demands for accountability for student results in NCLB, Colorado's voucher program, like Florida's and Vermont's, requires students to take the statewide assessments each year. In Colorado, though, these assessments will be taken at the nonpublic school's expense.

Fourth, while many states claim to be "local control states," there is state constitutional language in Colorado, as there is in Florida, that provides a legal basis for such a statement. According to Colorado's constitution, local school boards "shall have control of instruction in the public schools of their respective districts." This provision has been cited in several court cases over the years as a legal foundation for preserving the power of local school boards in several areas (including the recent state court decision that halted the voucher program).

Given the legal context in Colorado, H.B. 1160 requires the direct involvement of school districts in ways that do not exist in voucher programs in other states. The law grants a considerable role to school districts in the student and nonpublic-school application processes. In addition, once a student is admitted into a nonpublic school, the law requires his or her parents to enter into a contract with the school district that covers the terms and procedures of payment made by the school district to the parents.

HOPES AND FEARS

To understand how a pilot program and its evaluations should be designed to inform subsequent debates about the program, this section discusses the most significant hopes and fears that policymakers have for voucher programs, which encompass both direct and indirect effects of either a positive or harmful nature. This section also looks at the ways in which program evaluations may seek to measure the extent to which these hopes and fears are realized.

HOPES

Improve Student Achievement for At-risk Students Who Attend Nonpublic Schools

The primary hope for the voucher program is that it will improve student achievement for at-risk students who attend nonpublic schools as part of the program. A related hope is it will decrease the achievement gap between higher- and lower-performing students.

Based on the interviews with policymakers, it is apparent they hold a variety of definitions of the at-risk students that the program should target. While some see vouchers directly helping low-income children, others hope to target Colorado's minority population. Most policymakers, though, describe the target population as children who are currently doing poorly in school. This last point is often couched in terms of students who are enrolled in schools where the performance is low, regardless of the individual voucher recipient's previous performance. In the aggregate, these student characteristics often overlap, which means that student performance is strongly correlated with family income, race and ethnicity, and the concentration of low-income, minority and low-performing students in a particular school.

The desired measures of student achievement for the voucher program are as multi-layered as its target population. In the current climate of expanding testing and accountability, almost all policymakers interviewed believe performance on state assessments must be the primary measure of student achievement for voucher recipients. But a number of alternatives also are supported, including multiple measures of student achievement (e.g., grades or private schools' standardized tests that are different than the state tests), measures of life outcomes for older students (e.g., college attendance and college graduation) and measures of student engagement (e.g., attendance or participation in school activities). These measures include raw gains by the targeted population as well as decreases in the performance gaps between targeted populations and other groups.

Based upon the interviews, it seems that opponents look for a greater number of measures of a voucher program's success, which leads some voucher supporters to question whether they are looking not just for information on how a program is implemented, but also hunting for ammunition for later political fights. Regardless of the intention, as one person opposed to vouchers explained, policymakers need "more than test scores, like how did the kids get there… how were they transported, if they were eligible for free and reduced-price lunch, did they eat lunch, and how did they eat it, and who paid for it, and who bought books, and paid other fees – a whole bunch more than simply state tests."

Increase the Satisfaction of At-risk Students and Families

Some voucher advocates argue the only necessary measure of the voucher program's direct impact is the satisfaction of the parents of children receiving vouchers. Other observers

believe that measures of student and family satisfaction are a necessary addition to student performance measures. Still others contend the best measure of a voucher program's success will be the continued demand of families for vouchers. Thus initial rates of participation, the rates of continued participation by families once they enter the program and the number of families that seek vouchers over and above the limits established by law are all posited as measures of program success.

Regardless of whether measures of satisfaction are sufficient, one voucher supporter believes parental satisfaction is the best indicator of success: "The most important evaluator is the parent of the student. There can be positive outcomes for families and kids whether or not there is an increase in test scores." These hopes for higher degrees of satisfaction tie into a philosophical belief that choice is a good worth pursuing for its own sake. Within this framework, the results of those choices for student performance are secondary to the benefit that comes from providing families with choice.

Stimulate Public Schools To Improve Performance of Remaining Students

The primary indirect hope for the voucher program is it will create competition between public and nonpublic schools, and thus stimulate public schools to enact reforms to improve the performance of the students that do not receive vouchers, or at least provide services and an environment that attracts parents back to public schools. In addition, some hope this increased "responsiveness" by public schools will discourage families from seeking vouchers in the first place. As one voucher supporter put it: "The more students they lose, the more money they lose. So they'll be motivated to increase (performance)."

"The more students they lose, the more money they lose. So they'll be motivated to increase (performance)."

To aid these school improvement efforts, a few voucher supporters hope the voucher program will increase the amount of money available per child in public schools. For example, if a district's PPOR is $4,000, according to this line of reasoning, the value of the voucher for a 4th grader – $3,000 (i.e., 75% of the district's PPOR of $4,000) – is less than the costs of teaching the average child in most public schools. Thus if the students receiving vouchers are average students, their departure will leave the traditional public schools better off financially than if they had stayed – in this example, by $1,000 per student. A basic premise of this argument is if districts do not release or fire teachers as voucher recipients leave, the exit of voucher students will produce smaller class sizes for the remaining students.

Discerning the direct and/or indirect impact of vouchers will be an extremely difficult enterprise. First, researchers will have to determine whether the voucher program pressures districts to improve. If districts actually "gain" money when they lose students through vouchers, and thus have no incentive to improve, the districts' responsiveness will be undercut. Researchers will have to examine the extent to which districts and schools gain or lose money, as well as perceptions to any gain or loss on the part of leaders, administrators and teachers.

If there is a sense among districts that vouchers provide an impetus for improvement, questions will emerge about whether the districts and their schools have the resources or capacity to improve after losing students to the voucher program. There also will be debate about how or whether aspects of public school administration or governance interfere with schools' ability to make the changes they believe will facilitate their self-improvement. Finally, with the broad range of education reforms already underway (beyond vouchers), if public schools do improve, researchers and policymakers will still have a difficult time determining which reforms are responsible for the public schools' improved performance.

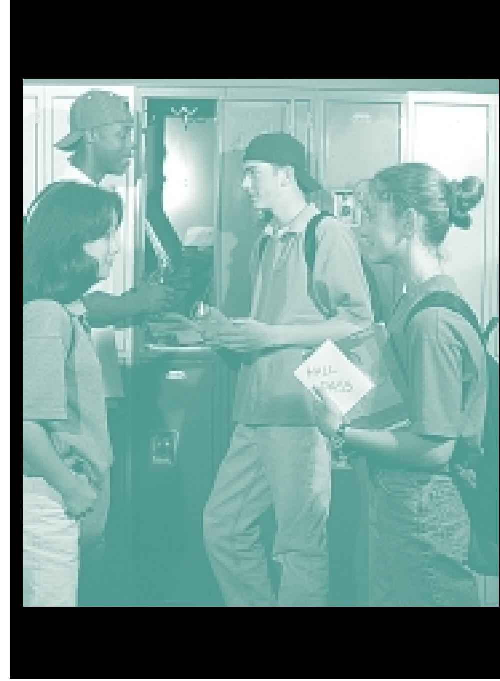
One interviewee expressed the concern that basic data on the presence of pressures on districts to improve is not enough. The important question is whether districts respond to these pressures by performing better or worse. "[I need] to know the hard data," he said. "Whether kids are learning, and not just learning, but they're doing better than they would have in public schools and that the provision of services for children in the traditional public schools has not been negatively impacted."

The primary fear is that students receiving vouchers might not improve their achievement.

Increase Public Support for Public Funding of Schools

A final set of hopes for the voucher program involves the assertion that it will increase public support for public funding of schools. While this may appear paradoxical for those accustomed to arguments that vouchers will undermine public institutions, several observers, including those outside the voucher advocacy community, hope the provision of public funding for families to attend private schools will increase the population that has an interest in the public funding available to all schools – both public and nonpublic.

According to one state-level official, "Not only will voucher recipients' families want more money for public education, but parents of nonvoucher kids in private schools will also see the benefit of public dollars going to their children's school, even if it comes through more voucher kids, and will become invested in public education."



FEARS

Decrease Student Achievement for At-risk Students Who Attend Nonpublic Schools

Fears about the Colorado voucher program include both direct and indirect harm that some believe it may generate. The primary fear is students receiving vouchers might not improve their achievement. This fear is exacerbated by anxieties that the private schools receiving voucher students will be lower in quality than the public schools that students leave, and that the value of the vouchers will not be enough to compensate private schools for the full costs of educating the new students.

On a related note, some voucher proponents and opponents express concern that a disproportionate focus on parental satisfaction will limit information on other program measures such as student achievement. While acknowledging the importance of parental satisfaction, these individuals do not want to lose sight of the program's effect on student performance.

Fail To Provide Opportunities To Targeted Students

Some individuals fear that students receiving vouchers, regardless of their performance, will not be the student population that policymakers had targeted to participate in the program. These concerns about whether voucher recipients will be the "right" students are shaped by fears of discrimination by private schools, as well as the inability, or unwillingness, of private schools to provide all the services that particular students may need to succeed.

In particular, voucher opponents fear that students with disabilities or those who do not speak English will be denied access to private schools – or, if private schools enroll them, these students will not be provided with the level of service to which they are entitled in traditional public schools. Eventually, if students with special needs do not get the necessary

services, they may struggle and be encouraged to leave the private schools. Additional concerns over equitable access are based on broader fears of discrimination based on student characteristics like race, religion, income, performance or sexual orientation.

Negatively Impact Public Schools

Many voucher opponents argue public schools losing children to private schools will be unable to achieve any cost savings because of the difficulty of adjusting staffing patterns or otherwise reducing fixed costs. The fear is public schools will be so overwhelmed by such losses they will be irrevocably damaged, and unable to improve as a result. A related concern involves the extent to which existing governance arrangements and rules and regulations that constrain public institutions limit the ability of school districts to respond effectively to parental desires. With these obstacles still in place, the absence of resources could become more of a hindrance to success than a stimulus to improvement.

Opponents also fear that the students receiving vouchers likely will be those with highly engaged parents, and that the students remaining in public schools will be those whose parents are less engaged in their education (or else they would have applied for vouchers themselves). This could leave the public schools with a student population that is more difficult to teach than was the case before the voucher program.

"Public education is this democracy's greatest good."

For some opponents, these concerns add up to fears about the long-term viability of public education. In their view, if public schools are unable to respond to vouchers by improving their performance, a cycle of disengagement and accelerating failure will emerge. The worse the public schools perform, the more the public will support further privatization, which in turn will lead to even fewer resources.

Other fears are based not so much on the possible negative impacts of a targeted program as on the potential for expanding the program to a much larger, perhaps universal, scale. These fears are fueled by a suspicion that the initial program is a mechanism for beginning a process that will only end when a universal program is implemented. According to one voucher opponent, vouchers are "politically motivated to destroy the education system by showing that the public system is doing a bad job and people want vouchers. And this pilot program is designed to make vouchers palatable to people so they'll accept a broader voucher program."

Negatively Impact Society and Democracy

Some fear that vouchers will undermine the traditional concept of the public schools as protectors of a common heritage and a socialization process in which children of all backgrounds learn to work and live with other types of people – as opposed to a system in which parents choose schools where all the children are similar to their own and where diversity and community are limited.

One person interviewed summed up this fear. In her view, "Public education is this democracy's greatest good. The public aspect will be harmed in a way that will greatly detract from public education's opportunity to serve all kids…. "Education of children for and in a democracy – that is the public good that public education provides, and I'm not sure we can fulfill that if we have a fragmented system."

IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION EFFORTS

According to several state and local leaders in Colorado, H.B. 1160's delegation of authority for implementing and evaluating the voucher program is relatively weak. Such weaknesses have motivated state, local and private leaders to undertake three notable implementation and evaluation efforts.

Colorado Opportunity Contract Pilot Program Advisory Committee

For the most part, H.B. 1160 is silent on who administers the voucher program. This was a somewhat deliberate decision by legislators to leave the state department of education out of the bill to avoid a fiscal note. This silence created a leadership vacuum that the state board of education decided to fill. As one person said, "H.B. 1160 didn't say the state board can't administer the program, so we unanimously decided to do it." This decision partly grew out of the state board's desire to become more active in the state's school reform efforts.

After gaining informal approval for this decision from the governor and key legislators, the state board formed the Colorado Opportunity Contract Pilot Program Advisory Committee. This 16-member body is a diverse group of public, private and religious school representatives, some of whom support and some of whom oppose vouchers. As one person interviewed pointed out, the state board was inclusive in forming this group, but they kept it small enough to get work done.

Advisory committee members aired their opinions and concerns at the outset, and then worked together to identify and solve practical implementation problems. One of the first problems it tackled was the need to develop an application for nonpublic schools to submit to school districts in order to participate in the voucher program. Other issues came up, such as what attachments to include with the application and how to handle building inspections for nonpublic school applicants. Several individuals interviewed said that the work of the advisory committee helped depoliticize implementation issues and built trust among people who typically don't work together.

Implementation Effort by the Colorado Association of School Boards

The Colorado Association of School Boards (CASB) was opposed to H.B. 1160. Once it passed, however, CASB decided to help the 11 participating school districts implement the law, instead of joining the lawsuit against it. In an interesting turn of events, some voucher supporters provided financial assistance to this effort. As part of this deal, both CASB and these voucher supporters agreed to work together on a major evaluation effort (see "Evaluation Partnership" below).

CASB's work with the 11 participating school districts focused on addressing common problems in implementing the voucher program. It also worked in partnership with the Colorado Opportunity Contract Pilot Program Advisory Committee to develop various documents, including nonpublic school applications to school districts.

Evaluation Partnership (Bighorn Center for Public Policy, Colorado Association of School Boards, Colorado Alliance for Reform in Education)

H.B. 1160 contains some reporting requirements. It requires the state auditor to produce a performance and financial audit of the program by January 1, 2008. It also requires participating school districts to provide a report to state policymakers by January 1, 2008. The report must evaluate the academic performance of each eligible child who is enrolled in a nonpublic school, and include non-identifying individual student data on state tests and an analysis of individual student achievement, as well as similar data for those eligible children not selected in the lottery process to participate in the voucher program. Finally, H.B. 1160 requires school districts to report the voucher program's financial impact on them.

While these efforts will be helpful to enhancing people's understanding of the impacts of the voucher program, many state, local and private leaders felt they were insufficient. In a particularly notable move, a coalition of voucher proponents and opponent – the Bighorn Institute for Public Policy, CASB and the Colorado Alliance for Reform in Education (CARE) – formed a partnership to create an evaluation design that will provide transparent data about the voucher program.

As one of this partnership's first activities, it invited top voucher evaluators to provide state, local and private leaders advice on how to evaluate the new program.

As one of this partnership's first activities, it invited top voucher evaluators to provide state, local and private leaders advice on how to evaluate the new program. The evaluators were Paul Peterson and William Howell of Harvard University, Kim Metcalf of Indiana University, John Witte of the University of Wisconsin-Madison and William Sanders of the SAS Institute Inc.

The consensus among the researchers was that the "gold standard" in education research – the randomized field trial – is probably impossible to use in evaluating Colorado's program because of certain aspects of the program's design. They agreed that the "silver standard" in education research – a comparison study – is probably the best evaluation model in this case.

The researchers also stressed the importance of providing evaluators with access to the private schools. For the evaluations of the Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and Cleveland, Ohio, voucher programs, such access was guaranteed in state policy. The researchers expressed concern about the impact of Colorado's failure to do the same. The researchers also provided advice on various issues and challenges involved in evaluating voucher programs in general, including suggested measures of program failure and success.

As a result of this meeting, and at the suggestion of the researchers, the Bighorn Institute, CASB and CARE, along with the Colorado commissioner of education, volunteered to move forward together in creating an evaluation design for the voucher program.

One positive aspect of the evaluation partnership is the bringing together of people with different viewpoints about the voucher program. In so doing, it has done a lot to take politics out of the evaluation design. The members of the evaluation partnership are listening to and working with people on both sides of the issue, not just their side. It will be interesting to see how the coalition continues to work together to support the evaluation without influencing it. If the evaluation design establishes fair and measurable indicators, and compares apples to apples, it may prove to be a beneficial effort.

VOUCHER DEBATES AND EVALUATIONS: LOOKING AHEAD

Whatever evaluations are produced through this and other efforts, they are sure to play some role in future debates over Colorado's voucher program – assuming, of course, that it is eventually ruled constitutional. This section examines that issue, and presents some ideas for how policymakers and other leaders might strengthen the role of evaluations in future voucher programs.

Policymakers' Views on the Role of Evaluations in Future Voucher Debates in Colorado

If a voucher program is enacted as a pilot program, as it was in Colorado, it stands to reason that eventually state leaders will examine the initial experience and decide whether to stop, continue or expand the program – based, ideally, on program evaluations. In the interviews, policymakers were asked to predict how these debates might play out in Colorado if the voucher program eventually is implemented. They were not asked to predict whether the program will succeed or fail. Instead, the information sought, regardless of their initial position on the law, was what outcomes or data will lead them to vote to stop, continue or expand the program if they revisit it five years later. Their responses reflect many of the challenges discussed earlier about evaluating such a complex program.

Policymakers listed indicators that reflect all of the hopes and fears discussed above as data that will help inform future decisions. Several of them voiced skepticism about the ability or willingness of some policymakers to change their positions on vouchers – regardless of what the evaluation data shows. One policymaker – who considered himself open-minded – said: "Most policymakers are biased. There aren't that many policymakers willing to have [a substantive debate]…. There's no room for the formation of good science in the policymaking process."

Policymakers emphasized the importance of test scores, including baseline information on the performance of students before they enter private schools. Many policymakers hope to base future decisions on performance by particular types of students. For example, one person suggested disaggregating results for the various "triggers" that make students eligible, such as performing poorly on particular state tests or being enrolled in a low-performing neighborhood school.

Determining whether to expand or even continue the voucher program, policymakers said, should depend largely on evidence of improved test scores for participants or neutral test scores combined with increased parent and student satisfaction. But some believe higher test scores for children with vouchers must be viewed within the larger context of overall student performance. If a handful of voucher recipients have higher scores, but many more students without vouchers perform worse, several state officials believed that would provide a reason to limit or end the program. Policymakers opposed to vouchers also said future decisions should be based on the performance of, support for and resources available to public schools generally.

Many pro-voucher policymakers believe high rates of participation and high levels of satisfaction for parents and students are enough reason to continue the program indefinitely, and that a level of demand that outpaces the availability of spots might justify expanding the program.

Surprisingly, several pro-voucher policymakers expressed opposition to expanding the program down the road, even with hard evidence of its success. Other voucher supporters can imagine supporting only a limited expansion, such as raising minimum income thresholds for participants or increasing the caps on the percentage of a district's students that can participate in the voucher program while using the same eligibility standards. Still others described circumstances that might lead them to favor ending or scaling the program. These included major mismanagement and fraud, a degeneration of local politics in which choice was "fracturing communities" or a general lack of interest on the part of parents and students.

Strengthening the Role of Evaluations in Future Voucher Programs

To strengthen the role of evaluations in future voucher programs, policymakers should incorporate certain elements into the design of policies for these programs. These elements should ensure researchers have access to schools and students, those researchers have different ideological and methodological viewpoints, and an advisory board provides continuity and long-term support for this research agenda. By putting in place these elements, state, local and private leaders will improve the likelihood that policymakers ask important questions and that researchers provide credible answers, as well as generate a pool of information all parties agree constitutes "what we know" about the voucher program.

Guarantee Access: Researchers need access to private schools, to the students participating in a voucher program and to the students' families. While the evaluators interviewed gave credit to Colorado for including a broad group of stakeholders in the early discussions regarding evaluations, they also were alarmed at the lack of authority for data-gathering in Colorado's voucher law. They said researchers will need access to performance data from private schools, including the assessments private schools give to their students. In addition to test scores, researchers also will need the ability to survey voucher recipients and voucher applicants, as well as their families. They also will need to spend time in the private schools to see what they do and how they do it.

If researchers must rely on the private schools' voluntary participation in these research projects, the results will probably be suspect. Regardless of the results, opponents will discount them by alleging that only private schools that knew they were succeeding chose to give researchers data about, as well as access to, their schools.

Guaranteeing access does not mean schools will necessarily be overwhelmed by researchers pursuing data. As one researcher noted, it is important to collect the right data, not all possible data. "You can collect bad data from millions of kids, and not say anything." But researchers will need access, and it will be most effective if that access is granted early so that evaluations are designed with the best chances of answering key questions and establishing key baseline data.

Involve Experienced Researchers: One strategy to ensure the right data is gathered is to involve a variety of researchers in designing the evaluation from the outset of the voucher program.

As previously discussed, Colorado leaders brought together a broad set of researchers, stakeholders and policymakers to talk about program evaluation a few months after the voucher law was enacted. The scholars included people with broad experience researching vouchers, several of whom had initially reached different conclusions about the impacts of vouchers in their research. They also included evaluators with credibility outside the voucher debates who are respected for their methods of measuring student progress.

While researchers may not be any more likely than policymakers to agree about all of the details of program evaluation, there are significant areas in which they will agree, as well as areas where their early involvement can strengthen later research.

Form Evaluation Advisory Board: While researchers are used to long-term evaluations of complex programs, policymakers can often give intense attention to complex problems only for brief periods of time. Specific reforms or problems usually receive episodic attention. As one policymaker explained, "We can't babysit them after we pass them, and as much as I'm interested, I can't monitor everything."

Obviously, there is a conflict between the timeframe researchers will need to do a good job of answering policymakers' questions and the attention span of the policymakers who both frame the questions and whose support is necessary to guarantee backing for the ongoing research work. To maintain support for difficult research, and to keep such efforts focused on the right questions, state, local and private leaders should form an evaluation advisory board. This group should include senior and respected policymakers with a variety of positions on vouchers. Reputable scholars with appropriate experience should either serve on such a board or participate regularly in an advisory role.

One state leader offered two recommendations. First, the board's leaders should be senior politicians, preferably retired, to ensure board members do not use the board as a position from which to posture for later office. Another way to ensure open-mindedness is to include policymakers who previously voted in ways that were at odds with their party on vouchers.

Second, an evaluation advisory board should include community leaders whose voices are valued in the state. These voices can include representatives of the business sector, as well as leaders from the Denver area's minority communities.

Colorado's two efforts to convene diverse stakeholders around the voucher program were well-received. But it is unclear at this point whether either the implementation advisory committee or the evaluation partnership will have staying power, or whether they might wind up competing with each other. Still, both efforts are strong steps in the right direction.

CONCLUSION

When the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of the Cleveland voucher program, it cleared away a federal constitutional cloud that had hovered over voucher debates for a long time. Uncertainties remain, though, over whether vouchers will pass muster under individual state constitutions, as is currently occurring in Colorado.

Over the next several years, as state budget crises recede and as policymakers respond to pressure from No Child Left Behind to expand choices for students in low-performing schools, the voucher debate will likely pick up steam. Notwithstanding the final legal verdict on Colorado's voucher program, the program's emphasis on low-income students in low-performing schools and districts, as well as the various implementation and evaluation efforts that have sprung up in response to it, may serve as a useful example for these emerging efforts.

Colorado Springs
Pueblo

40
70
Glenwood Springs
Carbondale
Fort Collins
Loveland
Winter Park
Boulder
Greeley
Montrose
Vail
285
Bailey
Conifer
76
Denver
Fort Morgan
50
25
Cañon City
Cripple Creek
Limon
Center
Colorado Springs
Monte Vista
Walsenburg
70
Burlington
160
Pueblo
Alamosa
287
La Junta
50
Lamar
Trinidad

Education Commission of the States

700 Broadway, Suite 1200

Denver, CO 80203-3460

Tel: 303.299.3600

Fax: 303.296.8332

email: info@ecs.org

www.ecs.org

Policy Brief

Takeovers

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 1200 • Denver, CO 80203-3460 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

State Takeovers and Reconstitutions

Updated March 2004

Introduction

Many policymakers, educators and parents are deeply concerned about the performance of the nation's public schools. They cite subpar test scores, unruly student behavior and dilapidated school buildings as evidence that public schools are failing. Although some people question the extent of this failure, there is general agreement that public schools must improve, especially those performing at the lowest levels.

To ensure school districts, schools, administrators, teachers and students meet acceptable performance levels, many states and school districts are implementing a variety of accountability policies. Two of the more controversial accountability approaches are state takeovers of school districts and schools, and reconstitutions of schools. For each approach, this policy brief presents an overview, discusses opposing perspectives, examines effects and offers key policy questions for state leaders to consider.

State Takeovers

Overview of State Takeovers

In a state takeover, the state legislature, the state board of education or a federal court charges the state department of education or another designated entity, such as a mayor, with managing a school district.

Presently, 29 states have enacted policies that allow them to take over a school district, usually due to a combination of inept administration, fiscal mismanagement, corrupt governance and academic problems within the school district. For a list of these states, please see Appendix A. Many state policies provide a succession of sanctions for academic problems, with takeovers as the ultimate sanction. Other state policies target a single troubled school district for an immediate state takeover.

The level of state control and local influence in takeovers varies from state to state. In some cases, such as New Jersey, state officials relieve school board members and high-level administrators of their duties and appoint others to manage the school district in their place. In other cases, such as West Virginia, school board members and high-level administrators remain in place; they advise state-appointed decisionmakers on fiscal and budgetary matters, but still make curricular and instructional decisions. In other instances, such as Boston, Chicago, Cleveland and Detroit, the state places governance authority over the school district in the hands of a city’s mayor. For a list of examples of state takeovers, please see Appendix B.

Several states have broadened the takeover notion to allow state takeovers of schools. In total, 23 states have enacted policies that allow them to take over a school. For a list of these states, please see Appendix C. For examples of states, school districts and schools that have been involved in a state takeover of a school, please see Appendix D.

Opposing Perspectives on State Takeovers

According to proponents, state takeovers:

- Are a necessary extension of a state's constitutional responsibilities
- Provide a good opportunity for state and local decisionmakers to combine resources and knowledge to improve children's learning
- Allow a competent executive staff to guide an uninterrupted and effective implementation of school improvement efforts
- Are a catalyst for creating the right environment for the community to address a school district's problems
- Allow for more radical, and necessary, changes in low-performing school districts
- Place school boards on notice that personal agendas, nepotism and public bickering have severe consequences
- Use achievement data collected from school districts and schools to bolster accountability efforts.

Opponents assert that state takeovers:

- Represent a thinly veiled attempt to reduce local control over schools and increase state authority over school districts
- Imply that the community has the problems and the state has the answers, and thus falsely assume states have the ability to effectively run school districts
- Place poorly prepared state-selected officials in charge, with little possibility of any meaningful change occurring in the classroom
- Use narrow learning measures (i.e., standardized test scores) as the primary criterion for takeover decisions
- Usually focus on cleaning up petty corruption and incompetent administration, and do not go to the root of the social problems facing disadvantaged students in urban school districts
- Foster negative connotations and impressions that hinder the self-esteem of school board members, administrators, teachers, students and parents
- Produce showdowns between state and local officials that slow the overhaul of management practices, drain resources from educational reforms and reinforce community resentments.

Effects of State Takeovers

There is a limited, but growing, amount of research on the effects of state takeovers. For the most part, they seem to be yielding more gains in central office activities than in classroom instructional practices. As evidence, state takeovers are credited with the following:

- Eliminating nepotism within a school district's decisionmaking processes
- Improving a school district's administrative and financial management practices
- Upgrading the physical condition of schools within a school district
- Implementing innovative programs within a school district, such as small schools programs and cooperative arrangements between schools and social service agencies.

Despite these positive results, state takeovers have produced results to the contrary, such as the $70 million deficit incurred by state-appointed administrators in Newark, New Jersey.

Perhaps more importantly, student achievement still oftentimes falls short of expectations after a state takeover. In most cases, academic results are usually mixed at best, with increases in student performance in some areas (e.g., 4th-grade reading) and decreases in student performance in other areas (e.g., 8th-grade mathematics). The bottom line is that state takeovers, for the most part, have yet to produce dramatic and consistent increases in student

performance, as is necessary in many of the school districts that are taken over.

Still, a recent study by Vanderbilt University and Harvard University researchers produced four broad conclusions regarding the relationship between state takeovers and academic performance:

- State takeovers placing mayors in charge of school districts are linked to increases in student achievement at the elementary grades.
- Gains in achievement are especially large for the lowest-performing schools in these districts, suggesting that state takeovers involving mayors include a special focus on these failing schools.
- State takeovers placing mayors in charge of school districts seem less effective for the upper grades, where the cumulative effects of many years of poor schooling are not easily reversible.
- When state takeovers placing the state department of education in charge of school districts produce administrative and political turmoil, student achievement suffers. After a period of adjustment, however, these takeovers also may be able to produce positive achievement gains.

As with most policies, the implementation of state takeovers has produced unintended consequences. Most dramatically, certain states are facing questions concerning the federal Voting Rights Act of 1965. In essence, the U. S. Department of Justice views state takeovers as potentially violating local voter rights to elect local officials and is requiring certain states to obtain the department's clearance before taking over a school district. The state of Texas filed a lawsuit against the department, with the intention of freeing Texas from obtaining department clearance for a state takeover. The U.S. Supreme Court, however, refused to hear the suit, primarily because there was no test case for them to review. Thus, this issue remains unresolved.

Key Policy Questions for State Leaders

In considering the enactment or enforcement of state takeover policies, state policymakers should consider the following questions:

Criteria

■ What are the characteristics of high- and low-performing school districts and schools? How can these factors be measured?

■ What criteria are used to identify school districts and schools eligible for state takeovers? How often is school district and school performance monitored (e.g., every year, every 3-5 years)?

Takeover Decisions

■ Should a state take over a low-performing school district or school? If so, at what point does a state intervene? Are there other approaches that are more effective and efficient than a state takeover in improving school district and school performance?

■ Do state education departments have the expertise and resources to run a school district or school? Can the state provide the necessary support and assistance to low-performing school districts and schools? How do state departments of education balance their oversight role with their operating role in a credible and objective manner?

■ If officials in low-performing school districts and schools are given the same authority as state-selected officials, such as the ability to alter collective bargaining agreements and change staff, can they improve the school district's or school's performance?

Implementing State Takeovers

■ How does a state set goals for its takeover efforts? How does a state fund a takeover?

■ How can the state focus its efforts toward generating and sustaining improved instruction?

■ Will the state involve school district policymakers, administrators, teachers, students and parents in their reform efforts? Within a state takeover, what are the roles of these various groups?

Ending a State Takeover

■ How do states determine whether students are making sufficient progress to allow control to revert back to local officials?

■ How much time should states give school districts and schools to improve? When and under what conditions should a state withdraw from a school district or school?

■ If a state takeover fails to yield sufficient improvement in student achievement in the specified time, what is the next step?

■ Once a state ends a takeover, how does it prevent the school district or school from backsliding?

Long-term Changes

■ Beyond the immediate crisis, how does a state improve the ability of local people, from school board members to teachers, to work more effectively?

■ What is the state's role in assisting school districts and schools before they are in crisis?

Reconstitutions

Overview of Reconstitutions

In 1983, the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) implemented a school improvement pilot program, primarily as a result of a court ruling on a desegregation case involving SFUSD. This program aimed to improve the performance of some of the school district's lowest-performing schools. One of the program's more controversial aspects was a reconstitution provision, which allowed the school district to create new philosophies and curricula, and replace principals, teachers and other staff at several schools.

Generally speaking, a reconstitution involves creating a new philosophy, developing a new curriculum and hiring new staff at a low-performing school. Some states and school districts include other components within this approach as well, such as reducing teacher/student ratios in a low-performing school. State and school district officials cite the following chronic problems as the basis for reconstitutions:

- Low attendance rates and graduation rates, and high dropout rates
- Poor performance on standardized tests, as well as a failure to show significant improvement in such performance
- Poor morale among school community members (e.g., discouraged staff, disgruntled parents and alienated students)

- Deteriorating school buildings.

Before a state or school district resorts to such a dramatic action, it usually notifies a poorly performing school of the need for improvement. After a given time period, if the school fails to improve its performance, the state or school district steps in and reconstitutes it. Displaced principals and teachers sometimes may reapply for their old jobs, but they and other candidates have to accept the new philosophy at the school in order to be hired.

Presently, 28 states have enacted policies that allow them to reconstitute schools. For a list of these states, please see Appendix E. For examples of states and school districts that have been involved in reconstitutions, please see Appendix F. A vast majority of reconstitutions have been implemented by school district officials as opposed to state policymakers.

Opposing Perspectives on Reconstitutions

Advocates believe reconstitutions:

■ Can improve the learning environment for students through changing both administrators and teachers in an ineffective school

■ Bring in a staff eager to take on the challenge of working in chronically unsuccessful schools, and thus give a fresh start to these schools and their students

■ Immediately stop “bad education” from happening to kids in low-performing schools

■ Foster a new, student-focused culture in schools where failure was once acceptable

■ Are an indictment of a school's organization and culture (not its individual staff members)

■ Use achievement data collected from school districts and schools to bolster accountability efforts, and redirect instructional practices

■ Are the only remaining solution for schools that face problems of crumbling buildings, discouraged employees and alienated students.

Opponents contend that reconstitutions:

■ Are implemented within a set of inconsistently enforced standards

■ Too often focus on “bad people” instead of “bad practices,” and thus are a simplistic response to a complicated problem

■ Stigmatize and demoralize everybody in a school, including those who are doing a good job

■ Place a new principal and a mostly new teaching force into a difficult situation

■ Discriminate against poor and minority children by failing to take into account the challenges of their

communities

- Undermine reform efforts already under way

- Will not make a difference unless the ineffective school's instructional approach is changed as well.

Effects of Reconstitutions

As with state takeovers, there is a limited amount of research about the effects of reconstitutions. On the one hand, anecdotal evidence suggests they have brought a much-needed sense of order and stability to some schools, along with an increase in parent and community involvement. They also have allowed state and school district officials to remove ineffective staff members from a low-performing school, although they often remain within the school district. The number of teachers who are rehired at a reconstituted school ranges from only a handful to as many as two-thirds, depending on the school district.

Again, much like state takeovers, academic progress, as measured by standardized test scores, is uneven in reconstituted schools. For example, a 1992 study of the SFUSD school improvement program of the 1980s found improved student achievement in reconstituted schools with large numbers of poor or minority students. In the eight schools reconstituted since 1994 in SFUSD, however, there has been very little, if any, improvement in standardized test scores.

Key Policy Questions for State Leaders

In considering the enactment or enforcement of reconstitution policies, state policymakers should consider the following questions:

Criteria

- What are the characteristics of high- and low-performing schools? How can these factors be measured?

- What are the criteria for identifying schools eligible for reconstitution? Are clear standards enforced consistently across a state or school district? How often is school performance monitored (e.g., every year, every 3-5 years)?

Reconstitution Decisions

- Are other steps, such as remediation or probation, necessary before reconstitution? How much time should be given to schools to correct their problems before being reconstituted?

- Can the state or school district provide the support or assistance the schools need?

- Are there different results in state- vs. school-district-initiated reconstitutions?

- Are there other approaches that might be more effective and efficient than reconstitutions in improving the performance of low-performing schools?

Implementing Reconstitutions

- How are reconstitution efforts financed?

■ How can reconstitutions generate and sustain improved instruction?

■ Can teachers reapply for their jobs? What happens to displaced teachers? Should they be allowed to work elsewhere in the school district?

Long-term Changes

■ Beyond the immediate crisis, how do states and school districts improve the ability of school staff to work more effectively?

■ How can states and school districts attract top-quality staff to high-need schools?

Conclusion

As with many potential solutions to problems within public education, the effects of state takeovers and reconstitutions on student achievement are debatable, partly because of the lack of strong research evidence about this relationship.

State takeovers and reconstitutions are not a silver-bullet solution, in part because of the diverse conditions prevailing in troubled school districts and schools.

In the end, a more effective intervention process may evolve from states' and school districts' experiences with state takeovers and reconstitutions, which may include any number of previously unthinkable solutions to the problems within public education. Many of these solutions are becoming allowable under state policy and include converting low-performing schools into charter schools, creating performance contracts between states and low-performing school districts and schools, and breaking up low-performing school districts.

This undertaking will undoubtedly test the resolve of policymakers, educators and parents to more consistently meet the needs of students in these school districts and schools.

Appendix A

Legal Citations
State Takeovers of School Districts

The following table presents the states that have enacted policies that allow them to take over school districts. It also presents the appropriate legal citations.

State	Statute	Administrative Code
Alabama	Ala. Code § 16-6B-3	-
Alaska	-	4 AAC 06.840
Arkansas	Ark. Stat. Ann. § 6-15-403	ADE 162

California	Cal. Ed. Code § 52055.5 (f) Chapter 455, Statutes of 1993 [Compton Unified School District] A.B. 38 (2003 Regular Session) [West Fresno Elementary School District] S.B. 39 (2003 Regular Session) [Oakland Unified School District]	-
Connecticut	Special Act 97-4 (1997 Regular Session) [Hartford School District]	-
Delaware	14 Del. C. § 155	DE ADC 103 6.0
Idaho	-	IDAPA 08.02.03
Illinois	105 ILCS 5/2-3.25f 105 ILCS 5/34-1 – 34-1.1 [Chicago Public Schools]	-
Iowa	Iowa Code § 256.11	-
Kentucky	K.R.S. § 158.6455, 158.780, 158.785	703 KAR 3:205, 5:130
Maine	-	Maine Department of Education Regulation 125, Section 14
Maryland	Senate Bill 795 (1997 Regular Session) [Baltimore City Public Schools] House Bill 949 (2002 Regular Session) [Prince George's County Public Schools]	COMAR 13A.01.04.08
Massachusetts	Mass. Ann. Laws ch. 69, § 1J - § 1K Chapter 133 of the Acts of 1989 (1989 Regular Session) [Chelsea Public Schools] Chapter 108 of the Acts of 1991 (1991 Regular Session) [Boston Public Schools]	603 CMR § 2.01 - § 2.04
Michigan	Senate Bill 297 (1999 Regular Session) [Detroit Public Schools]	-
Mississippi	Miss. Code Ann. § 37-17-6, 37-18-7	CMSR § 36-000-069
Missouri	Mo. Rev. Stat. § 160.538, 162.081	5 CSR § 30-340.110, 30.345.010
Nevada	S.B. 1 (2003 Regular Session)	-
New Jersey	N.J. Stat. § 18A: 7A-14 – § 18A: 7A-15 S.B. 428 (2002 Regular Session) [Camden School District]	-
New Mexico	N.M. Stat. Ann. § 22-2-2, 22-2-6, 22-2-14, 22-2-15, 22-2A-7	6 NMAC § 3.2.9
New York	N.Y. Educ. Law § 2590-h [New York City Public Schools] Assembly Bill 8330 (1995 Regular Session) and Senate Bill 6617 (2002 Regular Session) [Roosevelt Union Free School District] Senate Bill 7456 (2002 Regular Session) [New York City Public Schools]	8 NYCRR § 100.2
North Carolina	N.C. Gen. Stat. § 115C-105.39, § 115C-325	-
Ohio	Ohio Rev. Code Ann. § 3302.04 House Bill 269 (1998 Regular Session) [Cleveland Public Schools]	-
Oklahoma	70 Okla. St. § 1210.541	-

Pennsylvania	24 P.S. § 6-691 – § 6-696 24 P.S. § 17-1701-B – § 17-1716-B	-
Rhode Island	R.I. Gen. Laws § 16-7.1-5	-
South Carolina	S.C. Code Ann. § 59-18-1580	-
Tennessee	Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-1-601 - § 49-1-602	-
Texas	Tex. Educ. Code § 39.131	-
West Virginia	W. Va. Code § 18-2E-5	W. Va. Code State R. 126-13-1 – 126-13-12

Appendix B

State Takeovers of School Districts

The following table presents examples of states and school districts that have been involved in a state takeover of a school district. These takeover decisions have been based on a number of problems within a school district, including academic bankruptcy, fiscal mismanagement, inept administration, corrupt governance and crumbling infrastructure.

State	School District(s)
Alabama	In 1996, the state took over the **Barbour County School District** due to financial problems within the school district. In 1997, state officials gave control back to the school district. In 1999, the state again took over the school district due to financial problems within the school district. In 1996, the state took over the **Macon County School District** due to financial problems within the school district. In 1997, state officials gave control back to the school district. In 1996, the state took over the **Wilcox County School District** due to financial problems within the school district. In 1997, state officials gave control back to the school district. In 2000, the state took over the **Jefferson County School District** due to financial problems within the school district.
Arkansas	In 2002, the state took over the **Altheimer School District** and the **Elaine School District** because low student performance on state tests had not improved in six years.
California	In 1991, the state took over the **Richmond Unified School District** (now known as the **West Contra Costa Unified School District**) due to financial problems within the school district and hired an administrator to run the school district. In 1992, the state removed the administrator, and designated a trustee to monitor the financial performance of the school district. In 1992, the state took over the **Coachella Unified School District** due to financial problems within the school district and hired an administrator to run the school district. In 1996, the state removed the administrator and designated a trustee to monitor the financial performance of the school district. In 1993, the state took over the **Compton Unified School District** due to financial problems within the school district. In 1993, the state

	legislature passed a law that required the takeover to also address inadequate student performance within the school district. In 2001, the state removed the administrator, and designated a trustee to monitor the academic and financial performance of the school district. In 2001, the state took over the **Emery Unified School District** due to financial problems within the school district and hired an administrator to run the school district. In 2003, the state took over the **West Fresno Elementary School District** because of financial problems within the school district and hired an administrator to run the school district. In 2003, the state took over the **Oakland Unified School District** because of financial problems within the school district and hired an administrator to run the school district.
Connecticut	In 1988, the state took over the town and school district of **Bridgeport** due to financial problems. Power was returned to the town and school district in 1996. In 1992, the state took over the town and school district of **West Haven** due to financial difficulties. Power was returned to the town and school district in 1995. In 1997, due to a variety of problems within the **Hartford School District**, the state legislature enacted a law to abolish the locally elected school board and empower the governor to appoint a new one. In 2002, the state handed power over the district to a seven-member local school board – four of which are elected and three of which are appointed by the mayor. In 2001, the state took over the town and school district of **Waterbury** due to financial problems.
District of Columbia (U.S. Congress)	In 1995, the U.S. Congress created a financial control board to operate the District of Columbia's government. Due to a range of problems within the **D.C. Public Schools**, the financial control board created a board of trustees to oversee the school district and appointed a new superintendent. In 2000, D.C. voters approved a proposal to decrease the size of the D.C. school board from 11 elected members to nine members, five of whom will be elected and four of whom will be appointed by the mayor. In 2001, the financial control board returned oversight of the school district to the D.C. school board.

Illinois	In 1994, due to financial mismanagement within the **East St. Louis School District,** state officials appointed a three-member panel to assume financial oversight of the school district. In 1995, due to a variety of problems within the **Chicago Public Schools** (CPS), the state legislature shifted control of CPS to the mayor of Chicago and charged him with appointing school board members, the school board president and the school district's chief executive officer. In 2002, the state appointed a school finance authority to assume financial oversight of the **Hazel Crest School District 152-5** due to financial problems within the school district.
Kentucky	In 1988, state officials took over the **Pike County School District** due to financial problems within the school district. In 1990, the state returned control to the school district. In 1998, the state board of education voted to place the school district under a declaration of financial emergency because the school district ended the fiscal year with a deficit budget. In 1999, the state released the school district from the declaration of emergency. In 1989, state officials took over the **Whitley County School District** and the **Floyd County School District** due to financial and management problems within the school districts. In 1990, the state board of education returned control to the school districts. In 1997, state officials again assumed control of the **Floyd County School District** due to financial and management problems within the school district. In 1992, state officials assumed control of the **Harlan County School District** due to financial and management problems within the school district. In 1996, state officials returned control to the school district. In 1994, state officials assumed control of the **Letcher County School District** due to financial and management problems within the school district. In 1997, state officials returned control to the school district.
Maryland	In 1997, due to a variety of problems within the **Baltimore City Public Schools** (BCPS), the state legislature entered into a partnership with the city of Baltimore to run BCPS. From this partnership, a new, nine-member board of school commissioners was created, with members jointly appointed by the governor and the mayor. In 2002, the state intervened in the **Prince George's County School District.** The state enacted legislation that abolished the locally elected school board and created a nine-member school board appointed by the governor and the county executive.

Massachusetts	In 1989, due to a range of problems within the **Chelsea Public Schools,** the state legislature enacted a law that allowed the school district to enter into a long-term management contract with Boston University. In 1991, due to a variety of problems within the **Boston Public Schools,** the state legislature enacted a law that abolished the elected Boston School Committee and gave the mayor of Boston the right to appoint school committee members. In 1996, the citizens of Boston voted to maintain the mayoral-appointed school committee. In 1998, due to a range of problems within the **Lawrence Public Schools,** state officials intervened in the school district. The state entered into a joint selection process with the school district for a new superintendent, and opened an office in the school district to oversee daily operations and provide technical assistance to school administrators.
Michigan	In 1999, due to a variety of problems within the **Detroit Public Schools,** the state legislature enacted a law that removed the locally elected school board. The law also gave the mayor the authority to appoint six of seven members on a new school board, with the seventh member appointed by the governor.
Mississippi	In 1996, the state took over the **North Panola School District** because of financial problems within the school district. In 1998, state officials returned control to the school district. In 1997, the state took over the **Oktibbeha County School District** because of problems within the school district, including inadequate academic performance. In 1997, the state took over the **Tunica County School District** because of problems within the school district, including inadequate academic performance.
New Jersey	In 1989, the state took over the **Jersey City Public Schools**, charging school district administrators with patronage in hiring, violation of state contract-bidding laws, political interference in the schools and general mismanagement that affected students and their abilities to learn. In 1991, after years of performing poorly in state assessments and reviews, the **Paterson Public Schools** were taken over by state officials. In 1995, state officials took over the **Newark Public Schools**. The state ruled that the school district had failed to give its students a minimum education for decades and would be taken over by a state-supervised management team. In 2002, the state enacted legislation that abolished the local school board for the **Camden Public Schools**. In its place, the state created a nine-member board composed of three elected members,

	three members appointed by the mayor and three members appointed by the governor. The state also gave the governor veto power over the board's actions.
New Mexico	In 1999, state officials assumed control over the financial decisions in the **Santa Fe Independent School District** because of financial problems within the school district.
New York	In 1995, the state legislature enacted a law that authorized a state takeover of the **Roosevelt Union Free School District**. In January 1996, the state board of regents voted to remove the locally elected board of education and approve a state takeover of the school district. As a basis for its actions, the state cited unsafe schools and low-performing students within the school district. In May 1996, a new board of education was elected, although the state continued to oversee the district. In 2002, state policymakers enacted a law that abolished the locally elected board of education and put into place a board appointed by the state board of regents and a superintendent appointed by the state commissioner of education. In 2002, the state altered the governance arrangements for the **New York City Public Schools**. Among other things, the state gave the mayor the authority to appoint eight of the 13 members of the school board, with one of these appointments being the schools chancellor. The other five members are appointed by the five borough presidents.
Ohio	In 1995, due to a variety of problems in the **Cleveland Public Schools** (CPS), a U.S. federal court charged state officials with running CPS through a state-appointed superintendent. In 1997, the state legislature shifted control of CPS to the mayor and charged him with appointing the school board and the school district's chief executive officer. In 2002, the citizens of Cleveland voted to maintain the mayoral-appointed school board. In 1996, state officials assumed control over the financial decisions in the **Youngstown City School District** because of financial problems within the school district.
Pennsylvania	In 1994, state officials took over the **Chester-Upland School District** due to financial problems within the school district. In 2000, the state legislature passed a law that charged the state superintendent with appointing a three-panel board to oversee the school district due to inadequate student performance within the school district. In 2000, due to a range of problems within the **Harrisburg School District,** the state legislature enacted a law that shifted control of the school district to the mayor and charged him with appointing the school board. In 2001, the state took over the **Philadelphia School District** due to academic and financial problems within the school district. The governor and the mayor jointly appointed a five-person school reform commission to run the school district.

Rhode Island	In 1991, state officials took over the **Central Falls School District** due to financial problems within the school district.
South Carolina	In 1999, the state took over the **Allendale County School District** due to academic problems within the school district.
Texas	In 1995, state officials appointed a management team to run the **Somerset Independent School District** due to problematic financial and student performance. In 1997, state officials returned control to the school district. In 1996, state officials appointed a management team to run the **Wilmer-Hutchins Independent School District** due to problematic financial and student performance. In 1998, state officials returned control to the school district.
West Virginia	In 1992, state officials took over the **Logan County Schools,** after many years of poor management and personnel practices and low student achievement results within the school district. In 1996, state officials returned control to the school district. In 1998, state officials took over the **Mingo County Schools** after determining that "extraordinary circumstances" existed in the school district such as continuing budget deficits, low student achievement and a lack of leadership. In 2000, state officials took over the **Lincoln County Schools** due to a number of problems in the school district involving management, financing, facilities and academics. In 2001, state officials took over the **McDowell County Schools** based on an audit report that indicated the county was failing to provide a high-quality education for students, and unhealthy and unsafe conditions exist in many schools that place employees and students in danger.

Appendix C

Legal Citations
State Takeovers of Schools

The following table presents the states, along with the appropriate legal citations, that have enacted policies to take over schools.

State	Statute	Administrative Code
Alabama	Ala. Code § 16-6B-3	-
Alaska	-	4 AAC 06.870
Arizona	A.R.S. § 15-241	-
Arkansas	Ark. Stat. Ann. § 6-15-403, § 6-15-421	ADE 162
Delaware	14 Del. C. § 154	DE ADC 103 6.0
Georgia	Ga. St. § 20-14-41	-
Idaho	-	IDAPA 08.02.03

Illinois	105 ILCS 5/2-3.25f, 105 ILCS 5/34-8.3 (Chicago Public Schools), 105 ILCS 5/34-8.4 (Chicago Public Schools)	23 IAC § 1.80
Indiana	Ind. Code Ann. § 20-10.2	-
Louisiana	La. R.S 17:10.5	
Maryland	Md. Education Code Ann. § 7-203	Md. Regs. Code 13A § 01.04.07
Michigan	MCL § 380.1280	-
Nevada	S.B. 1 (2003 Regular Session)	-
New Mexico	NMSA § 22-2-2, § 22-2-6, § 22-2A-7	NMAC 6.19.2
New York	-	8 NYCRR 100.2 (p)
Ohio	Ohio Rev. Code Ann. § 3302.04	
Oklahoma	70 Okl. St. § 1210.541	-
Rhode Island	R.I. Gen. Laws § 16-7.1-5	-
South Carolina	S.C. Code Ann. § 59-18-1520	-
Tennessee	Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-1-601 to § 49-1-602	
Texas	Tex. Educ. Code § 39.132	-
Vermont	16 V.S.A. § 165	CVR § 22-000-003
West Virginia	W. Va. Code § 18-2E-5	-

Appendix D

State Takeovers of Schools

The following table presents examples of states, school districts and schools that have been involved in a state takeover of a school because of academic problems within the school.

State	School
Alabama	In 1999, the state took over **Litchfield High School** in Gadsen City School District because of academic problems within the school. In 2001, the state returned control over the school to the district. In 2000, the state took over **Lowndes County Middle School**, **Cloverdale Junior High School** in Montgomery County School District; **Russell County High School**, **Cobb Elementary School** in Anniston City School District; and **Jess Lanier High School** in Bessemer City School District because of academic problems within the schools. In 2001, the state returned control over these schools to their respective districts.
Maryland	In 2000, because of persistent academic problems, Maryland seized control of **Montbello Elementary School**, **Gilmor Elementary School** and **Francis L. Templeton Elementary School** in the Baltimore City Public Schools, and hired Edison Schools, Inc., a private, for-profit organization, to run them.

Appendix E

Legal Citations
Reconstitutions of Schools

The following table presents the states, along with the appropriate legal citations, that have enacted policies that allow the state to reconstitute schools.

State	Statute	Administrative Code
Alaska	-	4 AAC 06.870
Arkansas	Ark. Stat. Ann. § 6-15-403, § 6-15-421	ADE 162
California	Cal. Ed. Code § 52055.5	-
Connecticut	Public Act 99-288 (1999 Regular Session)	-
Delaware	14 Del. C. § 154	DE ADC 103 6.0
Florida	Fla. Stat. § 1008.33	-
Georgia	Ga. St. § 20-14-41	-
Illinois	105 ILCS 5/2-3.25f, 105 ILCS 5/34-8.3 (Chicago Public Schools), 105 ILCS 5/34-8.4 (Chicago Public Schools)	23 IAC § 1.80
Indiana	Ind. Code Ann. § 20-10.2	-
Kansas	K.S.A. § 72-6439	K.A.R. § 91-31-28
Kentucky	KRS § 158.6455	703 KAR 5:120
Maryland	Md. Education Code Ann. § 7-203	Md. Regs. Code 13A § 01.04.07
Massachusetts	Mass. Ann. Laws ch. 69, § 1J	603 CMR § 2.03
Mississippi	Miss. Code Ann. § 37-18-7	-
Missouri	Mo. Rev. Stat. § 160.538	5 CSR § 30-340.110
Nevada	S.B. 1 (2003 Regular Session)	-
New Hampshire	NH Rev. Stat. Ann. § 193-H:4	-
New Mexico	NMSA 22-2-14, 22-2-15, 22-2A-7	NMAC 6.19.2
New York	N.Y. Educ. Law § 2590-h (New York City Public Schools)	8 NYCRR § 100.2
North Carolina	N.C. Gen. Stat. § 115C-105.39	-
Ohio	Ohio Rev. Code Ann. § 3302.04	-
Oklahoma	70 Okl. St. § 1210.541	-
Pennsylvania	24 P.S. § 17-1704-B (Education Empowerment Districts)	-
Rhode Island	R.I. Gen. Laws § 16-7.1-5	-
South Carolina	S.C. Code Ann. § 59-18-1520	-
Tennessee	Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-1-601 to § 49-1-602	
Texas	Tex. Educ. Code § 39.132	-
West Virginia	W. Va. Code § 18-2E-5	-

Appendix F

Reconstitutions of Schools

The following table presents examples of states and school districts where reconstitutions of schools have occurred. Some of these have been initiated by states, and some have been initiated by school districts.

State	District
California	The **San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD)** began reconstituting schools in 1983, as part of a court order to desegregate the school district and improve the academic performance of minority students within the school district. In 1983-84, SFUSD reconstituted six schools. Throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s, SFUSD reconstituted more schools, including eight schools since 1994.

Colorado	In 1997, **Denver Public Schools (DPS)** officials implemented a school evaluation process that considers student achievement levels, writing samples, suspensions, participation in the gifted and talented program, parent involvement, building maintenance and allocation of resources. A school deemed in need of "redesign" could be placed on probation for a year and given a chance to reform itself, or if the situation is bad enough, be closed over the summer and restaffed for the following fall. In its first drastic step under this process, DPS reconstituted two elementary schools, rehiring only a few original teachers. Although the teachers' union initially balked when news of the possible overhauls broke, union leaders then took the unusual step of cooperating closely with DPS administrators. Still, all but a handful of teachers at each school were required to find positions elsewhere in the school district.
Illinois	In 1997, the **Chicago Public Schools** chief executive officer ordered the reconstitution of seven poorly performing high schools. Reconstitution in Chicago requires all employees – principals, teachers and classified staff – to reapply for their jobs. Those who receive a poor evaluation will be removed from the schools. Teachers who are not rehired have 10 months to find another job in the school district before they are taken off the payroll. They are expected to work as substitutes during that time, with one day off a week for job hunting. In June 2000, the Chicago Board of Education announced it will take direct control of five of the city's worst high schools, including two schools reconstituted in 1997, and impose for the first time a severe sanction that allows the summary firing of tenured teachers deemed to be incompetent. New management teams will take over and evaluate the staff at each school during the next school year and then determine which teachers and other personnel should be retained, laid off, fired or reassigned.
Maryland	**Prince George County Public Schools** administrators ordered the staffs of four elementary schools and two middle schools to reapply for their jobs in June 1997. In the end, new principals were brought in for five of the six schools, and slightly more than a third of the teachers and administrators returned to their original schools. Officials said they were trying to boost achievement at the schools before they became candidates for reconstitution by the state.
New York	State officials told the **New York City Public Schools** to improve certain schools or risk state takeover of those schools. In response, the district assigned these schools to a separate school district directly under the school district chancellor's control. Although students were not transferred, the chancellor ordered the redesign of 13 of the district's worst schools, with eight getting new principals. In June 1999, the New York City Public Schools announced that it was closing 13 failing schools over the next two years. Newly organized schools will eventually open in the same buildings, but up to half of the teachers and many principals from the 13 current schools may be removed or reassigned.
Ohio	Just three weeks before the start of the 1997-98 school year, the state-appointed superintendent of the **Cleveland Public Schools** announced that he was cleaning house at two elementary schools. Despite protests from parents and labor grievances by the teachers' union, more than two-thirds of the teachers at the schools were replaced when classes resumed in August 1997.
Texas	In 1993, the **Houston Independent School District** reconstituted Rusk Elementary School and reassigned the school's principal, declared all the teaching positions vacant and told the teachers they would have to reapply for their jobs or transfer elsewhere in the school district. Also, the **San Antonio Independent School District** has reconstituted four schools.

Sources

Bryk, Anthony S., Thum, Yeow Meng, Easton, John Q. and Luppescu, Stuart (1998, March). *Academic Productivity*

of Chicago Public Elementary Schools. Chicago, IL: The Consortium on Chicago School Research.

Bushweller, Kevin (1998, August). “Under the Shadow of the State.” *The American School Board Journal*, pp. 16-19.

Community Training and Assistance Center (2000, May). *Myths and Realities: The Impact of the State Takeover on Students and Schools in Newark*. Boston, MA: Community Training and Assistance Center.

Fixing Failing Schools: Reconstitution and Other High-stakes Strategies Meeting Summary (1997, May 12-13). Summary of a meeting convened by the Consortium for Policy Research in Education and the Pew Forum on Standards-Based Reform, Baltimore, Maryland. Unpublished.

Diegmueller, Karen (1994, November 16). “Progress, Problems Outlined in State-run N.J. District.” *Education Week*, p. 5.

Dolan, Margaret (1992, April). *State Takeover of a Local District in New Jersey: A Case Study*. New Brunswick, NJ: Consortium for Policy Research in Education.

Education Writers Association (1998, March). “Reconstitution.” *Education Reform*, pp. 60A-60D.

Fuhrman, Susan H. and Elmore, Richard F. (1992, April). *Takeover and Deregulation: Working Models of New State and Local Regulatory Relationships*. New Brunswick, NJ: Consortium for Policy Research in Education.

Green, Robert L. (1999, April 24). *A Reform Strategy for Troubled Times: Takeovers of Urban School Districts in the 1990s*. Paper presented to the Leadership Policy Institute of the National Alliance of Black School Educators, Washington, D.C. Unpublished.

Hendrie, Caroline (1996, June 12). “Ill Will Comes with Territory in Takeovers.” *Education Week*, pp. 1, 12-13.

Hendrie, Caroline (1996, December 11). “S.F. Reforms Put on the Line in Legal Battle.” *Education Week*, pp. 1, 30.

Hendrie, Caroline (1997, September 24). “Reconstitution Gaining New Momentum.” *Education Week*, pp. 1, 12-13.

Hendrie, Caroline (1998, July 8). “A Mixed Record for Reconstitution Flashes a Yellow Light for Districts.” *Education Week*, pp. 1, 17.

Hoff, David J. (1996, September 18). “W.Va. Leaves District Better Than It Found It.” *Education Week*, p. 17.

Hunter, Richard C. and Brown, Frank (1999, November). “School Takeovers: The New Accountability Strategy.” *School Business Affairs*, pp. 22-29.

Johnston, Robert C. (2000, April 26). “State Audits Find New Budget Shortfalls in Newark.” *Education Week*, p. 3.

Kirst, Michael and Bulkley, Katrina (2000, March). “‘New Improved’ Mayors Take Over City Schools.” *Phi Delta Kappan*, pp. 538-546.

McRobbie, Joan (1998, Spring). *Can State Intervention Spur Academic Turnaround?* San Francisco, CA: WestEd.

Newman, Maria (1999, March 21). “New Jersey Finds No Simple Solutions in School Takeovers.” *The New York Times*, p. 37.

Olson, Lynn (1996, September 11). “State Takeovers Run Afoul of Voting Rights Act.” *Education Week*, p. 22.

Reinhard, Beth and Hendrie, Caroline (1997, September 24). "At Two Cleveland Schools, Overhauls Mark A Dramatic Response to 'Desperate Times.'" *Education Week*, p. 13.

Reinhard, Beth (1998, January 14). "Racial Issues Cloud State Takeovers." *Education Week*, pp. 1, 18.

Saiger, Aaron (1999, November). "Disestablishing Local School Districts as a Remedy for Educational Inadequacy." *Columbia Law Review*, vol. 99, no. 7, pp. 1830-1870. New York City, NY: Directors of the Columbia Law Review Association, Inc.

Schmidt, Peter (1993, June 23). "Interest Grows in New Policy Tool: Replacing Staffs of Failing Schools." *Education Week*, pp. 1, 22-23.

Seder, Richard (2000, March). *Balancing Accountability and Local Control: State Intervention for Financial and Academic Stability*. Los Angeles, CA: Reason Public Policy Institute.

"Several Urban Districts Go for the Clean Sweep" (1997, July 8). *School Board News*, p. 3.

Walsh, Mark (1998, January 21). "High Court Takes a Look At Takeovers." *Education Week*, pp. 1, 29.

Walsh, Mark (1998, April 8). "Court Avoids Deciding on Interventions." *Education Week*, pp. 1, 24.

Wertheimer, Linda K. (1999, March 14). "School District Takeovers Get Mixed Grades: Suits, Continued Low Scores Among Woes." *The Dallas Morning News*, p. 37A.

Wilson, Laval S. (1994, December). "Takeover: The Paterson Story." *The American School Board Journal*, pp. 22-26.

Wong, Kenneth K., Dreeben, Robert, Lynn, Jr., Laurence E. and Sunderman, Gail L. (1997, January). *Integrated Governance as a Reform Strategy in the Chicago Public Schools*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago.

Wong, Kenneth K. (1998, May). *Transforming Urban School Systems: Integrated Governance in Chicago and Birmingham (UK)*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago.

Wong, Kenneth K. and Shen, Francis X. (2001). *Does School District Takeover Work? Assessing the Effectiveness of City and State Takeover as a School Reform Strategy*. Paper prepared for delivery at the 2001 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, San Francisco, CA.

Todd Ziebarth, policy analyst at Augenblick, Palaich and Associates, wrote this ECS Policy Brief*, with funding from the Joyce Foundation.*

© 2004 by the Education Commission of the States (ECS). All rights reserved. ECS is a nonprofit, nationwide organization that helps state leaders shape education policy.

To request permission to excerpt part of this publication, either in print or electronically, please fax a request to the attention of the ECS Communications Department, 303.296.8332 or e-mail ecs@ecs.org.

Helping State Leaders Shape Education Policy

Briefing Memo
Economic/Workforce Development

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 1200 • Denver, CO 80203-3460 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

Career and Technical Education

By Carl Krueger
October 2004

The economic and social realities of the 21st century necessitate that nearly every American have access to some form of postsecondary education. One increasingly important pathway to education and training beyond high school is career and technical education. Once considered an option only for low-achieving, noncollege-bound students, career and technical education programs now serve students looking for high-technology jobs and good salaries, which in turn contribute to a state's economic development. It also serves a growing adult population seeking additional job skills or retraining. This briefing memo is designed to provide policymakers with an overview of the issues surrounding career and technical education in the states, including governance structures, recent legislation and research highlights.

State Governance Structures

In most states, authority over career and technical education lies with either higher education governing or coordinating boards, or with the state board of education. There are, however, two notable examples of governance of career and technical education (CTE) being split between the K-12 and postsecondary sectors.

Shared Governance

California: The Joint Committee on Vocational Education, with equal representation from both the state board of education and the board of governors of California's community colleges, has authority over the system of career and technical education in the state.

North Carolina: The state board of education nominally functions as the state board of vocational education, but it shares this authority with the state board of community colleges.

In some states, career and technical education is housed in the state board of education, although the actual authority over CTE programs lies with postsecondary or institutional governing boards. **Arizona, Delaware** and **Vermont** use this governance structure.

State Board Authority

The state board of education has authority over career and technical education in 26 states (**Alabama, Connecticut, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania,**

Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia). In **Rhode Island**, the Board of Governors for Higher Education has authority over for-profit occupational education providers.

Postsecondary Governing Boards

Postsecondary governing boards have authority over career and technical education in 11 states (**Alaska, Colorado, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, Minnesota, Montana, New Hampshire, New York, Utah, Wyoming**).

Career and Technical Education/Workforce Training Boards

Seven states have specific governing boards for career and technical education or workforce training and economic development (**Arkansas, Florida, Indiana, Kentucky, Oklahoma, Washington, Wisconsin**).

Career and Technical Education Finance

Most states finance career and technical education in one of two ways: (1) a unit-cost-based funding mechanism, in which funding is based on the amount of courses offered and the number of teachers employed, or (2) a weighted, per-pupil funding formula that distributes money based on the number of students enrolled in each district. Some states, however, are experimenting with performance-based funding formulas tied to economic development. Examples include the following:

Indiana: Indiana's performance-funding formula is tied to student participation in career and technical programs that serve high-demand fields. Specifics of the program include:

- Districts earn $550 for each student who completes a certificate of achievement in a technical field.
  - Districts earn $1,000 for each student enrolled in programs linked to high-demand fields.
  - Districts also receive $230 for each student enrolled in an apprenticeship program.

Florida: The state instituted a performance incentive system in 2000 that rewards local education districts based on the number of students who complete career and technical education programs and enter the workforce.

Career and Technical Education Legislation

Several states recently have passed legislation to improve career and technical education and employment opportunities. Examples include:

Virginia: House Bill 769, signed in 2004, directs local school boards to include curricula that promote knowledge of entrepreneurship and small business ownership. Current programs are to address "all types of employment opportunities," such as apprenticeships, the military and career education schools. The bill also requires students and parents be notified of dual enrollment opportunities between high schools and community colleges.

Senate Bill 553, also signed in 2004, authorizes school boards to create joint or regional schools offering a specialized curriculum leading to a high school diploma and a postsecondary credential, such as industry certification, career certificate or a degree. School boards may establish alternative school day and year schedules, subject to any necessary board of education waivers.

Michigan: The 2004 House Bill 4401 contains multiple provisions related to career and technical education and workforce development. Highlights include the development of a three-year regional career preparation plan that will be aligned with the state workforce development board's strategic plan. These plans are designed to increase the amount and quality of career and technical education, as well as career opportunities in the state.

Washington: Senate Bill 5505, signed in 2003, requires all public high schools in the state to provide a program for students who plan to pursue career or work opportunities after receiving their high school diploma. These programs are in partnership or cooperation with a community or technical college, skills center, apprenticeship committee or another school district. They are designed to help students demonstrate the application of essential academic learning requirements to the world of work, develop occupation-specific skills, and gain employability and leadership skills. Another goal of the legislation is to help students demonstrate the knowledge and skills they need to prepare for industry certification and/or have the opportunity to enter postsecondary education and training programs.

Wyoming: Senate Bill 59, signed in 2003, establishes a cost-based block grant model for vocational education by providing grants to districts to help initiate and expand vocational education programs. A school district may apply to the state department of education for assistance with expenses incurred in the planning, development and implementation of a new or expanded career-vocational education program within any high school.

Vermont: The 2001 House Bill 495 enables technical center regions to establish alternative governance structures that meet regional technical education needs, ensure equal educational opportunities to technical education students throughout Vermont, and prepare these students to "enter high-skill jobs which pay a high salary."

P-16 Education/Dual Concurrent Enrollment Legislation

A major problem states face is a lack of alignment between the K-12 and postsecondary sectors. *P-16 education* is the shorthand term for an integrated system of education that links all levels of education from preschool to a baccalaureate degree, fostering collaboration and helping raise student achievement at all levels. A few pieces of recent P-16 legislation have focused on adding a workforce development component. Some examples include the following:

North Carolina: Senate Bill 656, signed in 2003, establishes the Education Initiatives Act that seeks to develop cooperative relationships between the state's K-12 and postsecondary systems. Highlights include:

- Cooperative efforts and programs between high schools and community colleges such as the creation of a school within a school or a high school or technical center located on a community college campus
- Flexible, customized curriculum for students who would benefit from accelerated learning or early graduation from high school
- Joint support between K-12 and postsecondary education for student learning and success
- A college-preparatory academic core that will lead to advanced programs or employment opportunities in engineering, health sciences or teaching.

Maryland: House Bill 661, signed in 2004, establishes the Education Initiatives Act which requires the formalization of a K-16 Leadership Council through a Memorandum of Understanding signed by K-12 and

postsecondary officials. Highlights include the establishment of a K-16 Research and Development Institute.

Dual/Concurrent enrollment programs afford high school students the opportunity to earn college credit either by enrolling in college-endorsed classes taught by their high school teachers at their regular schools or by taking those classes on college campuses. This strengthens the connection between K-12 and higher education, and offers students more opportunities to pursue education and training beyond high school. Many states have added a career and technical education component to their dual enrollment programs. Some notable state activity in this area includes:

Wisconsin: The 2004 Assembly Bill 184 provides payments to institutions of higher education for technical college courses. For each pupil attending a technical college, the school board provides funding to the technical college district board to cover the expense of courses taken for high school credit. Payments cover the cost of tuition, course fees and books for the pupil at the technical college.

Michigan: House Bill 5534, signed in 2000, provides a wider variety of postsecondary education options to high school pupils by encouraging and enabling students to enroll in career and technical preparation programs at eligible nonprofit postsecondary educational institutions.

Washington: The Running Start Program, started in 1996, allows students in the 11th and 12th grades to take college-level courses at any of Washington's community and technical colleges, as well as Washington State, Eastern Washington and Western Washington universities. This program saves students and the state money by reducing both the amount of time students spend in school. It is estimated that in 2001, parents saved $14.6 million in tuition and taxpayers saved $28.8 million because of the Running Start program.

Utah: The New Century Scholarship program, created by the Utah Legislature in 1999, allows students to complete the requirements for an associate of arts or science degree while they are enrolled in high school. Students who complete these degrees by the fall following their high school graduation are offered a scholarship that pays for 75% of their tuition at a Utah institution of higher learning.

Research Highlights

***Financing Vocational Education* –** This report explains the various funding strategies states use to fund vocational education. Whether funding is based on student participation, cost reimbursement, instructional units, student weights or performance incentives, this report discusses all options for supporting the provision of equitable, quality vocational education in high schools. (Steven Klein, National Association of State Directors of Vocational Technical Education Consortium and National Conference of State Legislatures, June 2001)
http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/27/12/2712.pdf

***Multiple Pathways and State Policy* –** Almost all Americans need at least two years of postsecondary education to compete and be successful in today's economy. This report from the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education (NCPPHE) addresses public policy challenges and identifies key education reforms in the areas of finance, accountability and governance to help states achieve the economic goals associated with education and training beyond high school. (Patrick Callan and Joni Finney, NCPPHE, 2003)
http://www.ecs.org/html/offsite.asp?document=http%3A%2F%2Fwww%2Ehighereducation%2Eorg%2Freports%2Fmultipath%2FMultipathstate%2Epdf+

***Putting Lessons Learned to Work* –** State and local leaders create the conditions and policies that support schools' efforts to improve student achievement. This research brief answers three basic questions that will help leaders take actions to raise vocational students' academic achievement: What progress is being made? What factors matter in raising achievement? What can states do to improve high schools for vocational students? The report is based on lessons learned in *High Schools That Work*, since its inception in 1987. (Gene Bottoms, Southern Regional Education Board, January 2001)
http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/briefs/lessons_learned.asp

***State Dual Enrollment Policies: Addressing Access and Quality* –** In most states, dual-enrollment programs only recently have become the subjects of legislation. This report includes a 50-state matrix of existing dual-enrollment policies, with information on issues ranging from state oversight to admissions requirements and funding. The authors find that state policies related to dual and concurrent enrollment range from very detailed to non-existent. With this policy scan, they hope to provide a template for policymakers seeking to effectively address the issue of dual enrollment and access in the states. (Melinda Mechur Karp, Thomas R. Bailey, Katherine L. Hughes and Baranda J. Fermin, U.S. Department of Education, DTI Associates, Inc., March 2004)
http://www.tc.columbia.edu/ccrc/PAPERS/CBT_State_Dual_04.pdf

***What is P-16 Education? A Primer for Legislators* –** This primer serves as a practical guide to an integrated public education system. It offers a basic orientation to P-16 education, beginning with an overview of the varying definitions of P-16 and concluding with specific questions for legislators to consider. (Gordon [Spud] Van de Water and Terese Rainwater, Education Commission of the States, April 2001)
http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/24/28/2428.pdf

Carl Krueger is assistant policy analyst in the Information Management & ECS Clearinghouse. Contact him at 303.299.3670 or ckrueger@ecs.org for more information on career and technical education issues.

© 2004 by the Education Commission of the States (ECS). All rights reserved. ECS is a nonprofit, nationwide organization that helps state leaders shape education policy.

ECS encourages its readers to share our information with others. To request permission to reprint or excerpt some of our material, please contact the ECS Communications Department at 303.299.3628 or e-mail ecs@ecs.org.

Helping State Leaders Shape Education Policy

Policy Brief

Charter Schools

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 1200 • Denver, CO 80203-3460 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

Charter School Laws and Partnerships: Expanding Opportunities and Resources

April 2004

Introduction

For the past 100 years, the public sector has been the primary provider of social services and often is viewed as the most reliable sector for ensuring broad, uniformly provided services across households of different economic levels. Frequently, however, public-sector agencies lack the capacity to provide these services in effective and efficient ways. In response, some public organizations are leveraging resources by developing partnerships with nonprofit, for-profit and other public organizations.

The emergence of charter schools across the nation offers one example of the growing trend to enhance the capacity of public institutions with outside resources. With the need to obtain their own resources and expertise, many charter schools have used their autonomy to create partnerships with social service agencies, churches and community groups. These partnerships provide a host of essential goods and services – curriculum and instruction, facilities, administrative support and funding – as well as intangible benefits such as increased publicity, enhanced reputation, help with getting charter applications approved and expertise.

The Center on Educational Governance (CEG) at the University of Southern California's Rossier School of Education investigated the existence of provisions in state charter school laws that facilitate or inhibit the schools' ability to partner with organizations across the economic sectors – for-profit, nonprofit and public. In addition to reviewing all state charter school laws, the study's research team conducted telephone interviews with administrators from state department of education charter school offices and state charter school resource centers to obtain their perceptions of the laws' impact on the formation of charter school partnerships. The U.S. Department of Education's Public Charter Schools Program funded the two-year study.

Types of Charter School Partnerships

Because charter schools are required in many cases to secure their own facilities, develop codes of governance, devise curricula and obtain funding to pay for educational enhancements or salaries, many charter school leaders seek innovative opportunities to meet their resource needs. The research revealed such opportunities often come in the form of partnerships with complementary nonprofit, for-profit or public organizations. As seen in Table 1, charter schools seek partnerships with a variety of organizations across the economic sectors. The findings also suggest that the extent to which these partnerships form and evolve often is facilitated by provisions in state charter school laws, as described below.

Table 1

Charter School Partnerships

Sector	Types of Organizations (Examples)
Nonprofit	• Community-based organizations (recreational centers, neighborhood outreach agencies) • Cultural institutions (museums, local performance groups) • Educational institutions (private colleges, universities) • Faith-based organizations (churches) • Nonprofit educational management organizations (EMOs) • Race/ethnic-based organizations • Social service providers (child and family welfare agencies) • Private foundations
For-profit	• Education management organizations (EMOs) • Local businesses
Public	• Cultural institutions (art museums, science museums) • Education institutions (school districts, community colleges, universities) • Public health providers (hospitals) • Government/municipalities (city offices, mayor's offices) • Police departments

Legislative Provisions Facilitating Charter School Partnerships

As of April 2004, nearly 3,000 charter schools were operating throughout the country, and 41 states and the District of Columbia had enacted charter school laws. Past analyses of these laws have focused primarily on the extent to which states encourage or impede the establishment of charter schools – termed respectively "strong" or "weak" laws. While these analyses have shed light on the prevalence of charter schools in some states compared to others, they have added little knowledge about charter schools' operations. This study focused on how provisions affect decisions related to who governs and manages charter schools.

The review of charter school legislation revealed that all but four states – Arkansas, Kansas, Iowa and Mississippi – include provisions related to alliances. For example, New Hampshire's charter school law states: "A charter school may be located in part of an existing public school building, in space provided on a private work site, in a public building or any other suitable location. A charter school may own, lease or rent its own space, or utilize space based on other innovative arrangements."

Many states approached the concept of partnerships with a set of policy objectives in mind. Some tailored their laws to encourage specific goals, such as increasing community involvement or helping defray construction costs, while others stated an interest in fostering parental involvement. A state's policy objectives were often evident in the charter school application requirements; 10 state charter school laws include provisions that require applicants to describe their intended partnerships. For example, New Jersey's applications require "information on the manner in which community groups will be involved in the charter school planning process." Wyoming's law states that

applications must include “the governance structure of the school, including but not limited to the process to be followed by the school to ensure parental, teacher and community involvement.”

Further, charter school laws in three states – Florida, New Mexico and Rhode Island – specify that part of the purpose of the legislation is to encourage partnerships. For example, Florida’s law states an intent “to increase business partnerships in education … to encourage developers of residential and other projects to provide school infrastructure … [and] to promote and encourage local communities to participate in and advance the cause of neighborhood schools.” The laws in both New Mexico and Rhode Island state that one aim of allowing charter schools is to “encourage parental and community involvement with public schools.”

Charter school laws also contain provisions describing with whom charter schools can partner. As shown in Table 2, 13 charter school laws include provisions that permit charter schools to contract with any entity for any services or resources. For example, the Colorado law stipulates: “A charter school may negotiate and contract with a school district, the governing body of a state college or university, or any third party for the use of a school building and grounds, the operation and maintenance thereof, and the provision of any service, activity or undertaking that the charter school is required to perform in order to carry out the educational program described in its charter.” Similarly, the charter school law in Missouri states: “The charter school may contract with any other entity for services. Such services may include but are not limited to food service, custodial service, maintenance, management assistance, curriculum assistance, media services and libraries.”

Table 2

Legislative Provisions Facilitating Partnerships

Law specifies charter schools can contract with any entity for any goods or services.	Arizona, California, Colorado, Delaware,[1] Illinois, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Tennessee, Virginia, Wyoming[2]
Law specifies charter schools can contract for any goods or services without specifying with whom.	Connecticut, Indiana, Massachusetts, Michigan,[3] New Jersey, Ohio, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Wisconsin
Law specifies charter schools can contract with any entity for facilities.	Arkansas, District of Columbia, Idaho, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas
Law specifies charter schools can contract with any entity for transportation services.	Florida, Utah

[1] *Can contract with a faith-based organization if resources provided are nonreligious in nature and if prior approval is received from the secretary of state and state board of education.*

[2] *Must have prior consent of district board to enter a contract with an independent management company.*

[3] *Must not enter into contracts with a religious entity.*

Additionally, as shown in Table 2, nine state laws include language permitting charter schools to contract for any services or resources, but do not specifically indicate with whom they can contract. Indiana’s law, for example, states that a charter school is permitted to “enter into contracts in its own name, including contracts for services.” In addition to those states mentioned above that permit contracts with any entity for any service, other states specify that charter schools may contract for particular services. For example, policymakers in eight states and the District of Columbia provided provisions specifically related to contracts for facilities, such as the District of Columbia’s law that grants charter schools the power to “acquire real property for use as the public charter school’s facilities, from public or private sources.” Also, two states – Florida and Utah – allow for contracts for transportation services.

Finally, five states – Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Massachusetts and New Hampshire – include provisions explicitly for workplace charter schools. For example, Delaware's law allows for the establishment of "an on-site charter school proposed by a business as an extension of an on-site early learning or day care center," and Massachusetts' state law states that "a charter school may be located … in space provided on a private work site."

Legislative Restrictions on Charter School Partnerships

In spite of the prevalence of provisions that facilitate partnerships, the study also found evidence of provisions that restrict their formation. As Table 3 shows, restrictions are primarily concentrated around two areas: for-profit and sectarian involvement. More than one-third of the state charter school laws – 15 – prohibit for-profit organizations from applying to start a charter school. For example, Indiana's state charter school law says, "A sponsor may not grant a charter to a for-profit organizer," and Massachusetts' law says, "No for-profit business or corporate entity shall be eligible to apply for a charter." Also, a number of states further prohibit for-profits from managing or operating charter schools. Rhode Island's law states: "The Board of Regents shall not approve a charter to a school whose overall operation or education program is managed by a for-profit entity."

Table 3

Legislative Provisions Restricting Partnerships

For-profit organizations cannot apply for charter schools.	Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, Nevada, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Wyoming
For-profit organizations cannot operate or manage charter schools.	Arkansas, Hawaii, Idaho, New Mexico, Rhode Island, Tennessee
Charter schools cannot contract with faith-based organizations.	Delaware,[1] Idaho, Michigan, Minnesota
Faith-based organizations cannot apply for charter schools.	Arkansas, Delaware, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Massachusetts, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, New Mexico, Oregon, Tennessee, Utah, Wyoming

[1] *Can contract with a faith-based organization if resources provided are nonreligious in nature and is prior approval is received from the secretary of state and state board of education.*

As shown in Table 3, partnerships with faith-based organizations likewise are limited. Restrictions of this nature are generally very specific, with language such as a "charter school shall be a public, nonsectarian, nonreligious, non-home based and nonprofit school" in Illinois' law, and "an open-enrollment charter school shall not be religious in its operations or programmatic offerings" in the Arkansas legislation.

Some states, however, such as Delaware make allowances for contracting with faith-based institutions for services and facilities to be used in "a non-religious manner." Minnesota's law makes special exceptions for facility scarcity, stating, "If the school is unable to lease appropriate space from public or private nonsectarian organizations, the school may lease space from a sectarian organization if the leased space is constructed as a school facility."

Conclusion

Although research is still in the early stages of evaluating the impacts of charter school legislation, it appears that the diverse state policy contexts described here have a noticeable effect on both the prevalence and types of

charter school partnerships that exist. Interviews with state-level administrators suggest that states with permissive partnering guidelines are fostering a wide range of charter school partnerships with nonprofit, for-profit and public entities. Other states are more restrictive when it comes to allowing charter schools to partner with for-profit and faith-based organizations, and the resulting partnerships in those states have been constrained by those limits.

On a final note, the study showed that states with established charter school resource centers also tend to have more partnerships. State-level administrators indicated that the prevalence of partnerships in these states is likely due to resource center staff advising schools to develop partnerships as one way to access financial, physical and human resources.

The work in this area suggests that partnerships hold promise for leveraging resources, enhancing the delivery of educational services and, ultimately, for improving student achievement. State policymakers interested in leveraging resources across the nonprofit, for-profit and public sectors may want to consider incorporating incentives for partnering into state charter school laws and offering support to charter school resource centers that can assist charter schools in partnering with other organizations.

Questions for Policymakers

As state policymakers consider if and how to encourage the development of charter school partnerships, they may want to consider the following questions:

- What are the needs of charter schools? What are the reasons charter schools fail? Can partnerships help address charter schools' needs and reasons for failure?
- What are the potential advantages/benefits of allowing charter schools to partner with nonprofit, for-profit or public organizations?
- Are there legal problems involved in allowing charter schools to partner with for-profit or faith-based organizations?
- Should partnership provisions in charter school laws be crafted to promote a particular policy or social agenda?
- Should charter school applications require schools to include partners as part of the chartering process?
- Should charter school legislation offer incentives to schools that partner with nonprofit, for-profit or public organizations?
- Should states provide financial support to charter school resource centers specifically for the purpose of facilitating partnerships between charter schools and other organizations?

The Center on Educational Governance (CEG) wrote this policy brief for the ECS National Center on Governing America's Schools. For more information about charter schools and partnerships, please contact CEG at:

Center on Educational Governance
Rossier School of Education
University of Southern California
Waite Phillips Hall 901
Los Angeles, CA 90089-4039
213.740.0697
www.usc.edu/education/cegov

© 2004 by the Education Commission of the States (ECS). All rights reserved. ECS is a nonprofit, nationwide organization that helps state leaders shape education policy.

To request permission to excerpt part of this publication, either in print or electronically, please fax a request to the attention of the ECS Communications Department, 303.296.8332 or e-mail ecs@ecs.org.

Helping State Leaders Shape Education Policy

Citizenship Education

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 1200 • Denver, CO 80203-3460 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

Voting Age

By Susan Vermeer

May 2004

Forty state constitutions mention the importance of an educated citizenry, and 13 constitutions assert that promoting citizenship, democracy and a free government is a central purpose of education.[1] Making civics part of the curriculum and helping students understand their role as citizens is central to the mission of public education in the United States.

Given that voting is an obvious first step toward democratic participation, legislators and education leaders are concerned that young people are going to the polls in decreasing numbers. Numerous reports show that since the voting age was lowered to 18 in 1972, the rate of participation among people under the age of 25 has declined by about 15%, compared with about 4% in the general population.[2] With the goal of helping students become more civically engaged after high school graduation, legislatures have employed a variety of strategies, such as passing bills that require civics courses and establishing commissions to study youth civic engagement in their states.

Another possible solution, proposed by a few legislators nationwide, is to allow students to vote earlier so schools can help them register and get in the habit of voting before they leave high school. For example, some 17-year-olds in Maine will have a new opportunity during future primary seasons. Maine's Legislature recently approved a bill that allows 17-years-olds to vote in the primary if they turn 18 by the general election date. Nine other states have proposed legislation or are collecting signatures on initiatives to lower the voting age. Even though only one has passed (Maine), four are still in the early stages of passage, two states are collecting votes, and three have either failed or been left in committee, the idea has generated interest on the part of legislators, researchers, education leaders and young people nationwide.

In order to initiate the process of changing the voting age in a state, a variety of strategies are taking place. Depending on the political structure of the state, the first step can begin either with legislators or with citizens. In North Dakota and Florida, for example, youth-led coalitions are in the process of getting enough signatures to put the issue before voters. California, Hawaii and Michigan legislators have introduced legislation that, if passed, will result in a request for voter approval.

Michigan State Representative Doug Hart introduced legislation because he believes that lowering the voting age can help students get more involved in elections. ". . . 17-year-olds are smart, capable citizens and democracy would be better served if they were more fully enfranchised in our state and local electoral process. Also, since they are still students, schools would have the opportunity to prepare them to competently exercise their new right to vote in state and local elections." [3]

California Senator John Vasconcellos sponsored legislation to include even younger students as voters. In a proposed constitutional amendment (SCA 19), called "training wheels for citizenship," young people ages 14-15 would have one-quarter of a vote, and the votes of 16- and 17-years-olds would count as one-half a vote. Senator Vasconcellos explains that this effort will "engage our fellow Californians at a younger age, and provide them the apprentice-like preparation and experiences that will help better develop them into fully able and regularly voting adults. In addition, our younger Californians with many forms of instant communication are better informed than were any of us at their age."[4] According to Terri Mosqueda, a staff member, it would be ideal to connect the lowering of the voting age to the school curriculum,

although it is not included in this legislation.

In Pennsylvania, instead of proposing a change to their state constitution, legislators passed a resolution urging Congress to give 17-year-old citizens the right to vote. Pennsylvania legislators give a variety of reasons, which include policymakers make decisions that affect young people who deserve to be heard, 17-year-olds are able to enlist in the armed services (with parental consent) and the political process could benefit from the energy of young people.

While changing the U.S. Constitution to allow all 17-year-olds to vote would take a tremendous amount of effort and momentum, the local level seems to be a logical place to gauge the potential of younger voters to get involved in the electoral process. An election fluke in the most recent Baltimore mayoral election provided some 16-year-olds and all of the 17-year-olds in Baltimore the opportunity to vote in a local election. After the election results were tallied, 16- and 17-year-olds voted in almost the same rates as adults. Thirty-five percent of registered 16- and 17-year-olds in Baltimore voted in the election, compared to 36% percent of adults 18 and over. According to Ed Horowitz, communications professor at the University of Oklahoma (he is preparing a CIRCLE research study entitled, “The Political Socialization of Adolescents and the 2003 Baltimore Primary Election”), there were no significant efforts to recruit youth to vote in this election. Unintentionally, through a series of election laws, Baltimore provides an example of whether 16- and 17-years-olds will vote, given the opportunity.[5]

Other municipalities, swayed by youth activist campaigns, have considered lowering the voting age for city elections. In Cambridge, Massachusetts, the city council voted to lower the voting age for local elections to 17, now pending legislature approval.[6] Anchorage, Alaska, advocates were almost successful, but missed by one vote in the Anchorage Assembly to lower the voting age to 16 in city elections.[7]

Because the voting age for general elections has not been lowered in any states, conclusive research on its effects is not available. Data on related programs, however, is available and points to the possible effect of lowering the voting age.

Kids Voting USA, a national organization that provides students with a classroom experience connected to a mock voting process, has relevant research that offers a variety of outcomes from their program. In Kansas, researchers found a strong correlation between student’s participation in Kids Voting and registration, and voting for the first time as 18-year-olds. In communities with the Kids Voting program, registration for 18-year-olds was 14% higher than for students who did not participate. Kids Voting research also shows that this program can have a “trickle-up” effect for parents. Based on parent data, communities with Kids Voting USA programs have seen adult voting turnout increase by 3-5%.[8]

This debate also is taking place across the world. Great Britain is currently entertaining a proposal to lower their voting age from 18 to 16. The Germans are also considering a more radical proposal, giving children the right to vote from infancy, and allowing their parents to vote for them until age 12, at which children could decide if they will continue to let their parents vote for them.[9]

As cities, states, Congress and the international community are being asked to consider lowering the voting age, a variety of voices are strongly for or against its approval. The chart below lists the pros and cons that have been cited for or against lowering the voting age. Until more evidence exists, the question of whether lowering the voting age will engage more youth in the voting process is unresolved.

Pros and Cons

Pros	Cons
Young people will have more time in school to learn about voting and to register. Schools may pursue a more vigorous civics curriculum if young people are allowed to vote.	Young people do not have adequate knowledge to understand the complexity of ballot issues. Many will not have even had a civics class before the age of 16.
Age 18 is a poor time to allow young people to start voting because they are often in transition.	If young people ages 18-24 do not vote, lowering the voting age even more will not make any difference

Young people often work, and can join the military at age 17 with their parent's permission, so they should be granted the right to vote.	Young people under the age of 18 do not have a stake in democracy because they typically do not own property or pay taxes on a full-time income.
Young people will bring an energy and passion to politics that will increase accountability from policymakers.	There is an additional cost of preparing two ballots for young people to be able to vote in state elections.
Voting is more likely to become a habit if young people are allowed to vote at a younger age.	Legislators may believe that young people will be persuaded to vote for certain candidates, based on the influence of their teachers.

The following states have considered legislation or initiatives to lower the voting age in the past five years.

State	Bill Number	Lower Voting Age To	Bill or Initiative	Year	Result
Arizona	HCR 2011	16	Bill	2001	Failed
California	SCA 19	14[i]	Bill	2004	Pending
Florida	n/a	16	Initiative	2004	Collecting Signatures
Hawaii	HB 2079	17	Bill	2004	Pending
Maine	LD 640	17	Bill	2003	Passed[ii]
Michigan	HB 5506	17	Bill	2004	Pending
Minnesota	HF 1250	16	Bill	1999	Failed
North Dakota	n/a	16	Initiative[iii]	2004	Collecting Signatures
Pennsylvania	SR 170[iv]	17	Bill	2003	Pending
Texas	HB 482	16	Bill	2003	Failed

[I] This bill allows 14- and15-year-olds one-fourth of a vote, and 16- and17-year-olds one-half a vote.

[ii] Maine passed an amended version of their first bill, allowing 17-year-olds to vote in primary elections if they will be 18 by the general election.

[iii] North Dakota is very early in the process of collecting signatures.

[iv] The Pennsylvania legislature is considering a resolution to urge the U.S. Congress to give 17-year-olds the right to vote. This legislation is being considered during Pennsylvania's 2003-04 legislative session.

For more information:

National Youth Rights Association
The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE)
Kids Voting USA

Susan Vermeer is a project manager and policy analyst with the ECS National Center for Learning and Citizenship.

© 2004 by the Education Commission of the States (ECS). All rights reserved. ECS is a nonprofit, nationwide organization that helps state leaders shape education policy.

ECS encourages its readers to share our information with others. To request permission to reprint or excerpt some of our material, please contact the ECS Communications Department at 303.299.3628 or e-mail ecs@ecs.org.

Helping State Leaders Shape Education Policy

---

[1] Carnegie Corporation of New York and the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) (2003). *The Civic Mission of Schools*. New York: Carnegie Corporation of New York and CIRCLE.

[2] Levine, Peter and Lopez, Mark Hugo (2002). Fact Sheet: *Youth Voter Turnout Has Declined, by Any Measure*. College Park, MD: CIRCLE. Retrieved from the World Wide Web April 16, 2004, http://civicyouth.org/research/products/fact_sheets_outside.htm.

[3] Hart, Doug (2004, April 11). "Lowering the Voting Age." Personal e-mail.

[4] Vasconcellos, John (2004, March 8). *Training Wheels for Citizenship.* Speech given in Sacramento, CA.

[5] Horowitz, Edward (2004, April 13). Phone interview by Susan Vermeer, Denver, CO.

[6] "Voting Age Bill Stuck in State Legislature," *The Tech*, vol. 122, no. 48. Retrieved May 13, 2004, from the World Wide Web: http://www-tech.mit.edu/V122/N48/48vote.48n.html.

[7] "Assembly Foils Try to Lower Voting Age," *Anchorage Daily News*. Retrieved May 5, 2004, from the World Wide Web.

[8] Kids Voting USA. Kids Voting USA Research Summary, http://www.kidsvotingusa.org/news/downloads/ResearchSummary2003.pdf.

[9] "Too Young To Vote?" *ABC News*. Retrieved May 22, 2004, from the World Wide Web, http://www.abcnews.go.com/sections/us/Politics/youngvoters030917.html.

ECS Research Review
Teaching Quality

Education Commission of the States • 700 Broadway, Suite 1200 • Denver, CO 80203-3460 • 303.299.3600 • Fax: 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

The Impact of Mentoring on Teacher Retention: What the Research Says

By Richard Ingersoll and Jeffrey M. Kralik
February 2004

Executive Summary

In recent years there has been a growth in support, guidance and orientation programs – collectively known as induction – for beginning elementary and secondary teachers during the transition into their first teaching jobs. While the particulars of such programs vary widely, they are generally intended to increase the confidence and effectiveness of new teachers, and thus to stem the high levels of attrition among beginning teachers, which estimates place as high as 40-50% within the first five years.

Over the past two decades, numerous studies have been done on a variety of different types of induction programs, and this research has been widely cited by both advocates and reformers. It is unclear, however, whether the soundness of much of this research truly justifies the conclusions often taken from it. To help address this issue, the Education Commission of the States commissioned the present effort as a comprehensive and critical review of existing empirical studies on induction programs.

This reports's primary objective is to provide policymakers, educators and researchers with a reliable assessment of what is known, and not known, about the effectiveness – the value added – of teacher induction programs. In particular, this review focuses on the impact of induction and mentoring programs on teacher retention.

While the literature search located some 150 empirical studies of induction and mentoring programs, in the end only 10 studies could be included for this ECS review because all studies had to satisfy three criteria:

1. Quantitative Data – The studies had to involve quantitative research because the task was to determine the value added of induction programs.

2. Evaluation and Outcomes – The studies had to evaluate the effects of induction in terms of well-defined, verifiable outcomes for the teachers who were mentored.

3. Comparisons – The studies had to compare those individuals who were mentored with those who were not in order to provide unambiguous conclusions about the value added (or not) of the induction programs.

While the impact of induction and mentoring differed significantly among the 10 studies reviewed, ***collectively the***

studies do provide empirical support for the claim that assistance for new teachers and, in particular, mentoring programs have a positive impact on teachers and their retention.

The findings of the studies are seriously limited, however, by the fact that most of them were not able to control completely for other factors that also might have affected the outcomes noted. Also, the content, duration and delivery of the programs studied were so varied from one site to another that it is not clear to what extent general conclusions about mentoring and induction can be drawn from any given study.

Although the studies point to the likely value of some induction and mentoring programs in decreasing the attrition of new teachers, there remain a number of pressing questions concerning mentoring and induction that require more controlled and systematic research than currently exists in order to be answered with confidence:

1. What kinds of teachers are helped most by induction and mentoring programs?
2. Which elements, supports and kinds of assistance make induction and mentoring programs most helpful in addressing the various weaknesses among new teachers with differing backgrounds?
3. Which aspects of induction and mentoring programs contribute most to the increased retention of new teachers? Do these differ from the factors that contribute most to teachers' enhanced classroom effectiveness?
4. Do the selection, preparation, training, assignment and compensation of mentors make a difference?
5. Is it possible to document links between teacher participation in mentoring and gains in student outcomes?

Developing carefully controlled studies to answer these key questions will be crucial to allow policymakers and educators to make informed decisions regarding the implementation of mentoring and induction policies and programs for their schools.

Introduction

Historically, the teaching occupation has not had the kind of structured induction and initiation processes common to many white-collar occupations and characteristic of the traditional professions (Waller 1932; Lortie 1975; Tyack 1974). In recent years, however, there has been a growth in support, guidance and orientation programs – collectively known as induction – for beginning elementary and secondary teachers during the transition into their first teaching jobs.

Although elementary and secondary teaching involves intensive interaction with youngsters, the work of teachers is largely done in isolation from colleagues. This can be especially difficult for new entrants who, upon accepting a teaching position in a school, are often left on their own to succeed or fail within the confines of their own classrooms – an experience likened to being "lost at sea." (Sizer 1992; Johnson 1990; Johnson and Birkeland 2003). Indeed, critics have long assailed teaching as an occupation that "cannibalizes its young" and in which the initiation of new teachers is akin to a "sink-or-swim," "trial-by-fire" or "boot-camp" experience.

Perhaps not surprisingly, teaching also traditionally has been characterized as an occupation with high levels of attrition, especially among beginners (Lortie 1975). All occupations, of course, experience some loss of new entrants – either voluntarily because newcomers decide to not remain or involuntarily because employers deem them to be unsuitable. But teaching has long had alarmingly high rates of attrition among newcomers. A number of studies have found between 40-50% of new teachers leave within the first five years of entry into the occupation (e.g., Murnane et al. 1991; Ingersoll and Smith 2003; Huling-Austin 1990; Hafner and Owings 1991; Grissmer and Kirby 1987, 1992, 1997; Veenman 1985). Moreover, several studies have found a significant correlation between a teacher's likelihood of retention and their scores on exams such as the SAT. The "best and the brightest" appear to be those most likely to leave (Murnane et al. 1991; Schlecty and Vance 1981; Henke et al. 2000).

Recent research also has documented what many educators have long suspected – a strong link between the perennially high rates of beginning teacher attrition and the teacher shortages that seem to perennially plague schools. An analysis of national data has shown that widely publicized school staffing problems are not solely – or even primarily – the result of too few teachers being recruited and trained. Instead, the data indicate that school staffing problems are to a significant extent a result of a revolving door, where large numbers of teachers depart teaching long before retirement (Ingersoll 2001).

These are the kinds of occupational ills that effective organizational induction programs are supposed to address and, accordingly, in recent decades a growing number of states and school districts have developed and implemented a variety of such programs. Teacher induction, it is important to clarify, is distinct from both preservice and inservice teacher training programs. Preservice refers to the training and preparation candidates receive prior to employment (including clinical training such as student teaching). Inservice refers to periodic upgrading and additional training received on the job, during employment. Theoretically, induction programs are not additional training per se, but are designed for those who have already completed basic training. These programs are often conceived as a "bridge" from student of teaching to teacher of students. Of course, these analytic distinctions can easily become blurred in real situations.

Like the induction processes common to other occupations, there are a number of different, and sometimes conflicting, purposes behind teacher induction programs. Among them are support, socialization, adjustment, development and assessment. Moreover, teacher induction can refer to a variety of different types of activities – classes, workshops, orientations, seminars, and especially, mentoring. The latter refers to the personal guidance provided, usually by seasoned veterans, to beginning teachers in schools. Over the past two decades, teacher mentoring programs have become the dominant form of teacher induction (Fideler and Haselkorn 1999); indeed, the two terms are currently often used interchangeably.

The overall objective of teacher mentoring programs is to provide newcomers with a local guide, but the particulars in regard to character and content of these programs themselves widely vary. Duration and intensity are one set of variables; mentoring programs can vary from a single meeting between mentor and mentee at the beginning of a school year, to a highly structured program involving frequent meetings over a couple of years between mentors and mentees who are provided with release time from their normal teaching schedules.

Programs also vary according to the numbers of new teachers they serve. Some include anyone new to a particular school, even those with previous teaching experience, while others focus solely upon inexperienced candidates new to teaching. In addition, programs vary according to their purpose. Some for instance are primarily developmental and designed to foster growth on the part of newcomers; others are also designed to assess, and perhaps weed out, those deemed ill-suited to the job.

Finally, mentoring programs also can vary as to how they select, prepare, assign and compensate the mentors themselves. How carefully mentors are selected is an issue for programs, as is whether selection to be a mentor is truly voluntary or a semi-mandatory assignment. Some programs include training for mentors; some programs do not. Programs differ according to if and how they pay mentors for their services. Some programs devote attention to the match between mentor and mentee. For instance, some programs strive to see that new secondary math teachers are provided with mentors who have had actual experience teaching secondary-level math; others do not.

What kinds of induction and mentoring programs exist, and under what circumstances they help are clearly fundamental questions for the field and for policymakers faced with decisions about supporting such programs. Accordingly, with the growth of induction and mentoring programs, there also has been a growing interest in empirical research on the variety and effects of these initiatives. Over the past two decades, numerous studies have been done on a variety of different types of programs. In turn, education advocates and reformers frequently

cite examples drawn from this research to secure additional funding, to garner political support or to confirm a particular educational perspective.

It is unclear, however, how much of this research warrants unambiguous conclusions about the particular value added by the induction and mentoring program being considered. Some studies appear to lack methodological rigor and draw conclusions that reach beyond what their data truly support. And there has been little research investigating possible negative effects of mentoring. For instance, if mentors simply pass on their own teaching practices, regardless of whether they are effective or not, programs might tend to stifle innovation or the implementation of new approaches on the part of beginning teachers. Moreover, the content, duration and delivery of programs are so varied from one site to another that it is not clear to what extent general conclusions about mentoring and induction can be drawn from the extant research.

Currently, there is need for assessment of the existing empirical research on teacher induction and mentoring in order to determine its scope and merit, and the conclusions that may be drawn from it. To be sure, a number of useful reviews of theory, research and policy on teacher induction and mentoring have been published (e.g., Arends and Rigazio-DiGilio 2000; Holloway 2001; Feiman-Nemser et al., 1999; Feiman-Nemser 2001; Ganser 2002; Hegsted 1999; Fideler and Haselkorn 1999; Scherer 1999; Serpell and Bozeman, 1999; Gold 1999; Wang and Odell 2002). But, to date, there has been no comprehensive and critical review of existing empirical studies on induction and mentoring programs.

The Project

The primary objective of this project is to provide policymakers, educators and researchers with a reliable assessment of what is known, and not known, about the effectiveness – the value added – of teacher induction programs. A secondary objective here is to identify important research questions concerning teacher mentoring that have not yet been addressed and the kinds of research that would be required to yield significant implications for policy.

This review focuses, in particular, on studies that seek to evaluate the effects of beginning teacher mentoring programs; that is, empirical studies that address the question: does mentoring matter? The interest of citizens and policymakers is in whether such programs matter, ultimately, for the growth and learning of students. Typically, however, researchers focus on the effect of mentoring on teachers. In existing empirical studies, teacher outcomes usually fall into two categories: teacher attitudes (e.g., teacher's job satisfaction, efficacy and commitment); and teacher retention or turnover.

Methods

Because the objective here was to provide a thorough and comprehensive review, an attempt was made to locate as wide a range of studies of teacher mentoring as possible. To accomplish this, a number of leading researchers in the field were contacted, as well as analysts in state governmental agencies. Existing systematic, narrative or traditional reviews of research were examined and extensive online searches of numerous databases were conducted, including Dissertation Abstracts, Educational Resources Information Clearinghouse (ERIC), Psychological Abstracts and Sociological Abstracts.

Combinations of the following key words were used in online searches: Beginning Teacher Induction; Mentoring Programs; Teacher Mentors; Statistical Data; Educational Policy; Beginning Teachers; Faculty Development: Program Evaluation; and Teacher Improvement. Searches included both published and unpublished documents on teacher mentoring and studies both from the United States and other countries. Interest in teacher induction and mentoring appeared to gain momentum in the mid 1980s; hence, this review focuses on studies from that period to the present.

The search initially located over 500 documents concerned with teacher induction and mentoring. These included

essays, reviews, reports, studies and articles. In a second sequence of steps, all documents were excluded that were not empirical studies reporting data on beginning teacher mentoring programs. First, abstracts were reviewed with this criterion in mind – a step that trimmed the list to about 150 documents (see References section). Second, a closer look was taken at the articles, reports and papers themselves – which resulted in a further reduction to 57 documents. Finally, a third step excluded any of the studies that failed to meet each of three specific criteria. This third step yielded a total of 10 studies. The results and limitations of these 10 studies are described further below in the Results section. The three criteria used to cull the list of studies down to 10 are as follows:

1. Numeric/quantitative data

The focus here is on studies that attempt to quantify the effects of mentoring. Hence, in general qualitative or ethnographic studies were excluded. Studies in which quantitative data on mentoring programs and outcomes were collected via qualitative methods – such as field research, interviews or focus groups – were, however, considered for inclusion. Also considered for possible inclusion were qualitative studies embedded in a controlled research design, however, no examples of this type of research were found.

2. Evaluation and Outcomes

This analysis only included empirical studies that sought to evaluate the effects of mentoring using one or more outcomes. Therefore studies that were descriptive, rather than evaluative were excluded; i.e., studies that solely sought to summarize or describe the extent, content or character of mentoring programs (e.g., Fideler and Haselkorn 1999; Ganser 1991, 1994, 1996, 1997; Schaffer et al.1992; Wollman-Bonilla 1997). Also excluded were studies with outcomes that were not designed to evaluate the effects of mentoring programs on mentees (e.g., Olsen and Heyse 1990). This excluded studies that solely evaluated the effects of mentoring programs on mentors themselves (e.g., Veenman et al. 1998; Ganser 2000). Finally, studies were excluded whose outcomes were not sufficiently well-defined, measured or presented to be able to assess the accuracy of the results (e.g., Freiberg et al. 1994; Bradley and Gordon 1994; Odell and Ferraro 1992; Perez et al. 1997).

3. Comparisons

Studies were only included here if they provided for comparison of those mentored with those who did not receive mentoring. The majority of empirical studies examined were reports of program evaluations that collected data on outcomes solely from those who had participated in the mentoring programs being evaluated (e.g., Wilson, Darling-Hammond and Berry 2001; Adkins and Oakes 1995; Yosha 1991; Marso and Pigge 1990; Mitchell and Scott 1998, 1999; Wilkerson 1997; Gregson and Piper 1993; Strong and St. John 2001; Villeme et al. 1992; Stroot et al. 1999; Scott 1999; Tushnet et al. 2000; Shields et al. 2001). Such studies can provide valuable feedback to both providers and participants of such programs. But unless a study collects similar outcome data from both participants *and* nonparticipants in a program, it cannot provide unambiguous conclusions about the value added (or not) of that program. In other words, to establish whether participants perform differently than nonparticipants, one must empirically compare both groups. Studies varied in their use of terms like “control,” “comparison,” “treatment” and “experimental” to refer to the groups they examined. Rarely, however, were control groups used in the strict technical sense where participants are randomly assigned to treatment and nontreatment groups.

This third criterion had implications for research from states like California where statewide teacher mentoring programs cover almost all new teachers and, hence, preclude such comparisons. As a result, the authors of this ECS review did not use some otherwise highly informative evaluative work on the California teacher mentoring program (e.g., Fletcher, Strong and Villar 2004; Strong 1998; Strong and St. John 2001).

Results

The 10 studies reviewed include:

1. California Mentor Teacher Induction Project

In the late 1980s Brown and Wambach (1987) conducted an evaluation of the California Mentor Teacher Induction Project (MTIP) – a state program whose primary objective was to increase the retention of new teachers. The MTIP program consisted of two phases. In Phase 1 preservice student teachers were matched with master teachers for a seven-week program, and in Phase 2 first-year teachers were matched with master teachers for yearlong mentorships. Preparation of the mentors involved prior participation in preservice seminars with the student teachers. Efforts were made to match mentor and mentee according to grade level and curricular emphasis. The Phase 2 program involved regular ongoing contact and classroom visitations between mentors and mentees.

The review for ECS focused on the results obtained from Phase 2 of the study. In this phase, the experimental group (the mentees) and a control group (a "group of first-year teachers not in the project") were administered a questionnaire at the end of the first year that asked, "Will you continue teaching?" The question had four possible responses: (1) no, (2) unsure, (3) yes, probably and (4) yes, definitely. The analysis of these responses showed a slight positive effect for mentoring and the experimental group was more likely to report that they were going to continue teaching. The mean score for the experimental group was 3.0 and for the control group, 2.3 – a difference that was marginally statistically significant ($p = .069$). Notably, on a second question (a self-evaluation on the part of the teacher whether their first year was a success) the analysis found group differences to not be statistically significant.

This study did provide some useful data on the effects of the state mentor program. There were, however, several serious limitations. First, sample selection was unclear. The study did not include the total number included in either group, how the control group was selected, the total number of questionnaires returned or whether the questionnaire was required as part of the program (although the report seemed to imply it was voluntary).

Second, the study looked at first-year teachers' *intentions* to continue teaching – no data on actual retention or turnover were collected. Teachers' reports of their future plans can provide useful information, but it is unclear how closely self-reported intentions mirror actual behavior. Third, no data were presented on the distribution of responses for the key question on retention – clouding any information that could be drawn from the results. For example, if the experimental group answered primarily (1) and (4) and the control group answered primarily (2) and (3), it might indicate the program was more effective in solidifying participant's decisions on whether to continue teaching, but not, necessarily, on what these decisions may or may not be.

2. *New York City Retired-Teachers-as-Mentors Program*

Gold and Pepin (1987) conducted a study in the late 1980s of a New York City program that used retired teachers as mentors for a sample of the city's beginning teachers. While the study's primary focus was the selection of the mentors (both the process and the rationale behind the use of retired teachers), the retention of those teachers involved in the program also was addressed.

The mentor program was one year in length and involved a total of 66 hours of contact time between mentor and mentee. Mentors received program training through a four-day summer workshop and in three additional seminars during the year. At the end of the program a questionnaire was sent out to 160 mentees and also a comparison group of 113 non-mentored teachers. It appears that Gold and Pepin defined retention as those who remained in the district. Hence, both those who left teaching altogether and those who moved to private schools and other districts were defined as turnover. Along with retention, Gold and Pepin looked at the amount of assistance with daily tasks (e.g., planning lessons, preparing assignments, discipline, etc.) that the teachers received. Mentees received the bulk of their assistance from their individual mentors, while the non-mentored had to rely on "normal school support services."

Gold and Pepin found some positive effects of the program. First, mentees had slightly higher retention than did the non-mentored, although no statistical analysis was provided. They also noted that the same year the study was conducted a new school district pay scale was introduced, which increased salaries "significantly." This may

have had a leveling effect on retention rates, and could have affected differences between the two groups (mentored and non-mentored). As for the assistance with various daily activities, the results showed that mentees received more direction from their mentors than the non-mentored received through normal interaction with peers.

It is difficult to come to solid conclusions about these data because questionnaire nonresponse may have been a serious shortcoming. The number of respondents to any given question ranged from 22 to 110 (of the 160 mentored) and from 9 to 57 (of the 113 non-mentored).

3. Toronto Teacher Peer Support Program

In the early 1990s Cheng and Brown (1992) conducted an evaluation of the Toronto Teacher Peer Support Program – a pilot mentoring program undertaken by the Toronto school district for two years. The program placed mentors with mentees from similar grade levels or programs and from the same school for a year. Most of the participants met at least weekly during the first semester of the school year. By the last three months of the school year, however, only about half of the participants continued meeting on a weekly basis. Mentor training included an orientation early in the school year, followed by a series of workshops throughout the year. Participants were given five full days of release time to be used when and as they chose, for "dialogue and sharing." This resource, however, was not always used; only about two of the five full release days were used per participant in each year of the study.

The study incorporated both an experimental group (those teachers with mentors) and a control group (the non-mentored). In the program's first year, the control group was selected from those new teachers who did not qualify to be in the program. In the second year, since almost all of the first-year teachers qualified for the program, a random sample of teachers new to the district who did not receive mentors was used as a control group. Some of these appeared to have had some prior teaching experience. In the study's first year, there were 17 teachers in the experimental group and 17 in the control group. In the second year, there were 29 teachers in the experimental group and 43 in the comparison group.

Data were collected by questionnaires sent to all of the mentored and non-mentored teachers, as well as to the principals and the mentors. The questionnaires for the new teachers included items on: how the new teachers rated their overall experience, whether the decision to become a teacher was the right decision, whether they would choose teaching as a career again, their plans to stay in teaching and areas of difficulty they had in their first year of teaching.

Cheng and Brown found positive effects of the program. For the year one cohort, mentees more often rated their overall experience as positive than did the non-mentored (88% to 53%). The non-mentored group was also more likely to rate their experience as negative than was the experimental group (24% to 6%). For the year two cohort, however, the gap between the groups narrowed. Of the mentored teachers, 86% rated the experience positively as compared to 76% of the non-mentored. The second-year cohort also saw a drop in the gap for teacher's ratings of their first year as negative (6% of non-mentored to 3% of mentored).

Similar results were found for the question concerning whether respondents felt that it was the right decision for them to become a teacher. In the first cohort, 100% of the mentored and 73% of the non-mentored felt it was the right decision (of the non-mentored, 7% felt it was the wrong decision and 20% were unsure). Again in the second cohort, the two groups' responses somewhat converged; 90% of mentored teachers and 88% of non-mentored thought it was the right decision, while 10% and 12%, respectively, were unsure (there were none in either group that felt it was the wrong decision). The results for the question concerning whether respondents would again choose teaching as a career were virtually identical to those concerning whether it was the right decision to go into teaching.

When asked if they planned to stay in teaching, 76% of those mentored in the first cohort and 60% of the non-mentored answered yes, while 8% and 13% indicated they would not stay, and 18% and 27% reported they were

unsure. In the second cohort 97% and 91% said yes, and 3% and 9% were unsure (none said no).

These results are informative, but there were no tests of statistical significance. Moreover, a serious limitation of this study was a lack of discussion of the criteria and process of choosing participants for the program, leaving open the question of selection bias. Differences in the characteristics of participants and nonparticipants, rather than the program itself, might account for differences in outcomes. A lack of information on, or controls for, these characteristics limits the ability of the authors of this ECS review to judge the reliability of the conclusions.

4. Mentoring Program in an Unspecified District

Odell and Ferraro (1992) produced a relatively brief report based on the retention rates of two cohorts of beginning teachers in an unspecified district and state (although it is never explicitly stated, it is assumed the state in question is New Mexico since the comparison group is statewide data provided by the New Mexico State DOE). The yearlong program was administered to all of the beginning elementary teachers "from the 76 elementary schools in the school district for two successive years…." This amounted to 81 teachers in the program's first year cohort and 79 teachers in the second year cohort. Support was provided "both inside and outside of the classroom" by a total of nine mentors (who presumably traveled from school to school to provide assistance). Mentors were experienced teachers "selected by the collaborating university and school district on the basis of their classroom teaching excellence, effectiveness in working with adults, and demonstrated commitment to being an active and open learner."

Retention of mentored teachers was the primary focus and outcome of the study. To that end, all participants were sent a questionnaire four years after their mentoring experience. Odell and Ferraro state that "concerted efforts were made to locate and contact the teachers." All of the teachers who were located were asked to complete and return a 12-item questionnaire. Teachers were defined as "retained" if they were still teaching in a classroom after the four years had elapsed. The article provides no indication of whether those retained were in the same school or district or state. It appears that some of those retained may have switched schools within the district. It is unclear if those who moved to teaching jobs in other districts or other states were counted as retention or turnover.

Odell and Ferraro were able to locate a rather high percentage of the teachers who participated in the program. Of the 81 participants in the year one cohort, 70 were located, and of the 79 in the year two cohort, 71 were located. This resulted in an overall location success rate of 88%. After four years, 96% of the total teachers located (from both groups) had been "retained."

They then compared the retention rate from the mentored teachers to five-year statewide data on retention of all beginning teachers and found a large difference. The statewide turnover rate for beginning teachers was in "excess of" 9% per year. In contrast, the mentored teacher turnover rate was 4% for four years.

Even when those teachers who were not located by Odell and Ferraro are factored in, the turnover rate for mentored teachers over the four-year period comes to 16% for the two groups combined (4% turnover + 12% nonresponse). According to this calculation, the rate still falls below the state figure (assuming a constant rate of 9% per year) of 31-36%.

There are some limitations to the study, most of which are pointed out by Odell and Ferraro. First, there was no control group, nor was there an attempt to find similar, or matched districts to serve as the comparison. This is important since the districts in question might have already been higher-retaining districts (or at least higher than the state average). Second, Odell and Ferraro do not indicate how or why the districts were selected to participate in the study. Lastly, information about the districts themselves is woefully lacking.

5. Montana Beginning Teacher Support Program

In the early 1990s Spuhler and Zetler (1993, 1994, 1995) conducted an evaluation of the Montana Beginning

Teacher Support Program (BTSP). The program lasted three years (1992-95). Volunteer mentors were placed with mentees for a year. Efforts were made to match mentor and mentee according to grade level and subject. But mentors were not provided with training in mentoring, nor was release time provided for either mentor or mentee.

Spuhler and Zetler's objective was to try to isolate the effects of mentoring from other aspects of new teacher support. In the first year of the study, there was no control/comparison group of non-mentored teachers, but a comparison group was added for the second and third year of the program. Each year the sample size was small, either 11 or 12 mentored teachers. Among the outcomes examined were retention rates for both mentored and non-mentored teachers. Data were collected via pre-and post-program questionnaire, which were sent to the participants, and retention data were supplied through a survey of individual schools and districts. As defined in the study, retention appears to have included all those who remained in teaching, even if in another school or state.

The study found positive effects of the program on retention – retention rates were higher for those who participated in the mentoring program than for the non-mentored comparison group. After the second year (there was no comparison group in the first year), 92% of the mentored teachers continued teaching, compared to 73% of the non-mentored. After the third year of the study, 100% of the new mentored teachers continued teaching the following year, while only 70% of the non-mentored remained in teaching.

This was an informative study, but its generalizability is limited by its small sample size. Moreover, and perhaps related to the small sample size, Spuhler and Zetler did not publish any information on the statistical significance of their data findings.

6. Texas Study of New Teacher Retention

In the late 1990s Eberhard, Reinhardt-Mondragon and Stottlemyer (2000) conducted a study of beginning teacher attrition in South Texas that included data on the effects of mentoring on beginning teachers. They sent a survey questionnaire to all new teachers (defined as those with three years teaching experience or less) in South Texas. The questionnaire included items on four aspects of mentoring: (1) whether the respondent was provided a model teacher (a veteran teacher observed by the new teacher); (2) whether the respondent was provided a mentor teacher; (3) if so, the number of hours spent per week with the mentor (less than one hour, 1-3 hours, more than three hours); (4) the new teacher's ratings of their satisfaction with the mentor program, if they were participants. Participation in the survey was voluntary, not all beginning teachers were included and the sample size was 228. Like the Brown and Wambach study of the California teacher induction program, this study looked at whether first-year teachers intended to remain in teaching the subsequent year – no data on actual retention or turnover were collected.

The study found some positive effects of mentoring programs, but these diminished with teachers' experience. That is, mentoring had more impact on new first-year teachers than those who had already had a year or two of experience. Those who had a model teacher in the first and second year were more likely to report they planned to continue than those who did not have a model teacher. Third-year teachers who did not have a model teacher were just as likely to continue teaching as those third-year teachers who did have a model teacher. Ninety percent of first-year teachers who had a mentor reported they planned to continue teaching, while only 61% of the non-mentored planned to continue. With second-year teachers, the numbers converged somewhat; 78% of those with mentors planned to continue, and 63% of those without mentors planned to continue. The third-year teachers were about the same (72% of those with mentor, 73% of those without).

Those who reported spending more than one hour per week with their mentor were more likely to say they planned to continue (90%) than were those who had less than one hour per week of contact time (76%). Not surprisingly, those satisfied with the mentor program were also more likely to say they planned to continue in teaching (85%) than those who said they were dissatisfied with the program (79%).

Overall, there seems to be quite a bit of useful data embedded in this study, but like some of the other studies reviewed, the statistical analysis was rudimentary. There appeared to be no attempt to control for teacher and school characteristics that might confound the results. Since participation in the study was voluntary, the data might not be an accurate representation of all beginning teachers. Moreover, there is no indication whether the findings were statistically significant or not. And, lastly, the survey only asked whether teachers intended to stay in the profession. While this is informative, the findings might have been more solid if some actual retention data had been collected.

7. Analyses of the 1993 Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Survey

In 2000 Henke et al. published an analysis that used the National Center for Education Statistics' 1993 Baccalaureate and Beyond Survey (B&B) to examine the experiences of new teachers, including the relationship between beginning teachers' participation in induction programs and their attrition. The B&B is a longitudinal survey that followed a nationally representative sample of those who graduated from undergraduate institutions in the 1992-93 academic year. This cohort was first interviewed during their senior year in 1993, then one year later in 1994 for a "First Follow-up" and a third time in 1997 for a "Second Follow-up." The base sample that participated in all three interviews comprised 7,294 students. Henke et al's analysis focused on the experiences of those college graduates from the class of 1992-93 who entered elementary or secondary teaching.

Among other things, the B&B questionnaire in both 1994 and 1997 asked those who had entered teaching whether they had participated in an induction program, such as mentoring, since becoming a teacher. Forty-six percent of those who entered teaching reported they had participated in a school induction program. The analysis examined the proportions of these new teachers from the graduating class of 1992-93 who were still teachers at the end of the 1997 academic year. The report found a 21% rate of new teacher attrition by spring 1997 – that is, about one-fifth of recent college graduates who had entered teaching between 1993 and 1997 were no longer teaching by July 1997.

The analysis also showed that participation in induction was significantly and negatively related to attrition from the occupation. Fifteen percent of those who had participated in induction had left teaching, compared with 26% of those who had not participated in such a program. These findings provide evidence from a national survey that teacher induction seems to decrease teacher attrition.

There are, however, several important limitations to the B&B data and to the Henke et al. analysis. First, the item on teacher induction was a simple yes/no dichotomous question and provided no detail on the type, characteristics or components of assistance provided. There is, for example, no way of knowing whether the induction program actually included a mentoring component or not.

Second, the B&B survey focused on new teacher hires that were fresh out of college and had no prior teaching experience. It is important to note that this group represents only a subset of all those hired into teaching jobs in any given year and, hence, only a subset of all those who did or did not participate in induction programs in any given year. Besides recent college graduates, there are, for instance, entrants coming from other occupations, delayed entrants (those who had completed their teacher training but delayed teaching) and re-entrants (those who had taught in the past) (Ingersoll 2001). It is not known if the B&B subset of recent college graduates has similar or different induction needs and attrition rates than other types of new hires.

Third, the Henke analysis of the relationship between induction and attrition is based on bivariate correlations of one factor with the other. There are, of course, numerous factors that could account for differences in teacher attrition and also for any apparent connection between teacher induction and teacher attrition. It is reasonable, for example, to expect that particular kinds of schools have more teacher attrition than others, regardless of the degree of assistance provided to new hires. Alternatively, any relationship between induction and teacher attrition could be spurious, that is, the result of other, more fundamental, factors related to both. For instance, the affluence of a school's community might impact both whether it provides induction services and its amount of

teacher attrition. In order to determine whether there is, in fact, a relationship between induction and attrition, it is necessary to control for, or hold constant, these other kinds of factors – something which the analysis did not do.

8. Analyses of the 1990-91 Schools and Staffing Survey

Using data from the National Center for Education Statistics' 1990-91 Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) and its supplement, the 1991-92 Teacher Followup Survey (TFS), Ingersoll (1997, 2000, 2001) conducted a series of statistical analyses of the prevalence of school mentoring programs, the extent of effective assistance provided to new teachers and the effects on job satisfaction and teacher turnover.

The 1990-91 SASS was a nationally representative survey of 11,582 principals and 53,347 teachers from both public and private schools. Twelve months after the administration of the SASS questionnaires, the same schools were again contacted and all those in the original teacher sample who had moved from or left their teaching jobs were given a second questionnaire to obtain information on their departures. This latter group, along with a representative sample of those who stayed in their teaching jobs, constituted the 1991-92 TFS. The sample contained 6,733 elementary and secondary teachers.

The SASS school questionnaire asked principals whether their schools had a formal program to help beginning teachers such as a master or mentor teacher program. The SASS teacher questionnaire asked respondents about their degree of agreement with the statement "this school is effective in assisting new teachers" for four related items: student discipline, instructional methods, curriculum and adjusting to the school environment. Analysis of these data indicated that formal programs to help new teachers were common in schools, but that effective assistance, as reported by teachers, was not.

About 60% of principals reported their school offered some kind of formal mentoring program to help beginning teachers, but in only about one-fifth of schools did the teachers "strongly agree" that, on average, assistance for newcomers, from either mentoring programs or other sources, was effective. Indeed, the data showed that having a formal mentor program appeared to have little to do with whether teachers reported their schools to have provided effective assistance. That is, there was little correlation between teachers' reports of the effectiveness of assistance and whether a school had a mentor program or not. In either case, in only about 20% of schools did the staff strongly agree that assistance was effective (Ingersoll 1997, 2000).

Ingersoll (1997) then examined the effects of both of these school-level measures – having a mentor program and effective assistance – on teacher job satisfaction, while controlling for a number of background characteristics of both teachers and schools. The measure of teacher job satisfaction was based on a survey question that asked all teachers, "If you could go back to your college days and start over again, would you become a teacher or not?" The answer scale ranged from 1 (certainly would not become a teacher) to 5 (certainly would become a teacher).

The analysis found that the existence of a mentor program in schools had a small inverse relationship to overall teacher job satisfaction. Teachers, including both beginners and veterans, in schools with mentoring programs reported slightly less satisfaction overall. On the other hand, the analysis showed effective assistance had a strong positive effect on job satisfaction. Teachers reported more job satisfaction in schools where the faculty on average reported more effective assistance for new teachers. One interpretation of these results is that having a mentoring program per se is less important than whether effective assistance is provided to newcomers, regardless of whether from formal or informal mechanisms.

In a second analysis, Ingersoll (2001) examined the relationship between the measure of effective assistance and actual teacher turnover. This analysis found a strong relationship between the degree of effective assistance for new teachers and the likelihood of teacher departures. The latter included both those who moved to teaching jobs in other schools and those who left the occupation altogether and included both beginners and veterans. After controlling for the characteristics of teachers and schools, the analysis showed that the odds of a teacher departing from their school were 92% lower in schools where the teachers, on average, strongly agreed that

assistance was effective, than in schools where the teachers strongly disagreed.

The advantage of this kind of "multivariate regression analysis" of large-scale data is its breadth. The survey data represent a wide range of teachers and schools across the nation and also allow the analysis to control for a wide range of other factors that might conceivably affect the outcome of interest. The disadvantage of this kind of large-scale data analysis is its lack of depth and specificity. The survey questionnaire items were very general and provided little detail on the characteristics and components of either mentoring programs or of "effective assistance."

Moreover, the objective of this particular project was not to focus on beginning teachers and the effects of assistance on their job satisfaction and their turnover. Instead, its objective was to examine the relationship between school characteristics (including having a mentoring program and having effective assistance for newcomers) and the job satisfaction and turnover of all teachers. As a result, there are serious limits to the degree to which this study addresses the question of mentoring effectiveness.

9. Analyses of the 1999-2000 Schools and Staffing Survey

In a follow-up analysis, Ingersoll and Smith (2003) used more recent SASS/TFS data to focus on the effects of participation in various mentorship and induction activities on the turnover of first-year teachers. The 1999-2000 SASS included a new expanded battery of items in its' teacher survey questionnaire on the content and character of teacher induction and mentoring programs in schools. Ingersoll and Smith used these data, linked with preliminary data from the 2000-2001 Teacher Followup Survey (as of summer 2003 the most recent TFS had not yet been entirely released) to undertake an analysis of the impact of participation in various mentorship and induction activities on the likelihood that beginning teachers left teaching at the end of their first year, moved to a different school or stayed in the same school to teach a second year.

This review for ECS focused on the results pertaining to attrition – those who left teaching altogether before their second year. The 1999-2000 SASS sample was comprised of about 52,000 elementary and secondary teachers. Ingersoll and Smith focused solely on beginning teachers – those without prior experience and in their first year of teaching in 1999-2000 – a national sample of 3,235.

The analysis examined the impact of three sets of induction-related measures drawn from survey questionnaire items. The first set of measures concerned participation in mentorship activities. These items asked teachers whether or not they were working closely with a master or mentor teacher and if so, whether or not the mentor was in the same subject area. The new teacher also was asked to report the extent to which their mentor was helpful.

The second set of measures focused on participation in collective induction activities. These items asked teachers whether or not they participated in some kind of formal induction program, as well as whether or not they had any of the following specific collective supports: (1) common planning time with other teachers in their subject area; (2) seminars or classes for beginning teachers; (3) regular or supportive communication with their principal, other administrators or department chair; (4) regularly scheduled collaboration with other teachers on issues of instruction; and (5) participation in a network of teachers (e.g., one organized by an outside agency or over the Internet).

The third set of measures focused on the provision of extra resources. These items asked teachers whether or not they received additional assistance to help ease their transition, including (1) a reduced teaching schedule, (2) a reduced number of preparations or (3) extra classroom assistance (e.g., teacher aides).

Ingersoll and Smith began by examining whether any of these variables were individually associated with attrition, after controlling for the background characteristics of the teachers and their schools. They found that while most of the induction-related activities were linked to attrition in the expected direction – that is, with a decrease in attrition

– only a few were statistically significant at a 90% or higher level of confidence.

The results of the analysis showed that having a mentor in the same field reduced the risk of leaving at the end of the first year by about 30%, a result that was statistically significant at a 93% level of confidence. On the other hand, having a mentor outside of one's field did not reduce the likelihood of leaving to a statistically significant degree.

Ingersoll and Smith also found that, by themselves, neither participation in a general induction program nor participation specifically in seminars or classes for beginning teachers reduced the risk of leaving teaching at the end of the first year at a statistically significant level. Having common planning time with other teachers in their subject area, however, reduced the risk of leaving by about 44%, at a statistically significant level. Participating in regularly scheduled collaboration with other teachers on issues of instruction reduced the risk of leaving by 27%, at a statistically significant level. Participation in an external network of teachers (e.g., one organized by an outside agency or over the Internet) reduced the likelihood of leaving by about 44%, at a statistically significant level. Finally, the effect of regular supportive communication with their principal, other administrators or a department chair was not statistically significant.

For the third set of induction-related activities – additional resources for new teachers – Ingersoll and Smith found that while none had a statistically significant impact on attrition, two of the three variables – a reduced teaching schedule and having a teacher aid – had an association in an unexpected direction. That is, both were associated with increases in attrition. Ingersoll and Smith also found, however, that these activities were relatively uncommon in schools compared to other induction activities or components.

The data also showed that few of the above various activities or practices operate in isolation. To get a sense of the joint impact on attrition of participating in multiple related activities, Ingersoll and Smith calculated the additive effect of several induction "packages," each involving progressively more components. They found that because the impact of a number of these activities was not strong enough individually to be statistically significant did not necessarily mean they are of no value as components in a more comprehensive induction program.

The data showed the predicted probability of attrition among teachers who did not participate in or receive any of the induction-related activities was about 20%. Those teachers who received a minimal package of just two components – some kind of mentor (in or out of the mentees' field; helpful or unhelpful from the beginning teacher's perspective) and participation in a beginning teachers' seminar – had an 18.4% probability of leaving, which is a difference that was not statistically significant. Forty-eight percent of beginning teachers in 1999-2000 received only these components.

In contrast, first-year teachers who received a more enhanced package of three components – a helpful mentor in their field, common planning time and collaboration with other teachers on instruction – had an 11.8% predicted probability of leaving, which turns out to be a statistically significant reduction. Twenty-two percent of beginning teachers received the components in this package.

A third package contained six components: (1) a helpful mentor from the same field; (2) an induction program; (3) a seminar for beginning teachers; (4) common planning time with other teachers in their subject area; (5) regularly scheduled collaboration with other teachers on issues of instruction; and (6) regular or supportive communication with their principal, other administrators or department chair. This package was experienced by 13% of beginning teachers in 1999-2000 and was also associated with a large and statistically significant reduction in turnover. Those participating in this third package had a predicted probability of leaving of 11.6% – a result only slightly better, however, than for the three component package.

A fourth and even more comprehensive package consisted of eight components: all those in the third package, with the addition of participation in an external network of teachers and having a reduced number of course

preparations. Participation in these activities, collectively, had a very large and statistically significant impact – the probability of leaving at the end of their first year for those receiving all the components of this package was 7.1% – less than half the rate of those who participated in no induction experiences. This comprehensive program, however, was also scarce – less than 1% of beginning teachers in 1999-2000 experienced all its components.

This analysis offers some strong findings, especially for the advantages of bundles and packages of multiple induction components. As with the earlier-reviewed secondary analyses, the advantage of using large-scale data is that it allows general assessments of whether induction and mentoring are associated with teacher attrition, after controlling for some of the key background characteristics of teachers and their schools. Moreover, the 1999-2000 SASS/TFS included far more survey questions on teacher induction and mentoring programs than did earlier databases.

Nevertheless, the 1999-2000 SASS items provide limited depth and detail on the content and character of teacher induction and mentoring. For example, while the survey did ask teachers to indicate which kinds of supports were provided by their schools, little information was obtained on the intensity, duration, cost or structure of induction and mentoring programs – information of vital importance to policymakers who must decide among many alternative models. The analysis tells us, for example, that beginning teachers with mentors from the same field were less likely to leave after their first year, but no doubt lumped together indiscriminately in the responses for the mentoring question were many very different kinds of programs. Some of these programs are probably highly effective, some are probably moderately effective and others probably not effective at all. The analysis, unfortunately, cannot tell us which are which.

Similarly, while the 1999-2000 SASS did ask teacher mentees to evaluate the helpfulness of their mentors, there was little else obtained on the characteristics of the mentors. Some observers have argued that the mere presence of a mentor is not enough; the mentor's knowledge of how to support new teachers and skill at providing guidance are also crucial (e.g., Kyle, Moore et al. 1999; Evertson and Smithey 2000). These are important policy issues that SASS data cannot address.

10. Texas Beginning Educator Support System

The State Board for Educator Certification (Fuller 2003) along with the Charles A. Dana Center (2002) at the University of Texas at Austin, conducted evaluations of the Texas Beginning Educator Support System (TxBESS) in 2002 and 2003. Begun in 1999, TxBESS was a statewide comprehensive program of instructional support, mentoring and formative assessment to assist teachers during their first years of service in Texas public schools. Teacher mentors, along with other support-team members such as school and district administrators, education service center staff members and faculty members from teacher preparation programs, offered guidance and assistance to beginning teachers during their first years on the job. One key program objective was to improve beginning teacher retention in Texas. About 15% of new teachers in the state were involved in the program.

The study obtained information from participants through an annual mailed survey questionnaire. Among other things, the survey sought information on the nature of the relationship between the individual mentors and mentees, including: time spent with mentor, whether release time was granted (both to mentor and mentee) for these meetings, whether a mentor was desired by the mentee and the nature of the meetings with the mentor (e.g., formal vs. ad hoc, to provide assistance with classroom management, to assist with learning the "unwritten rules" of the school, etc.).

Data on teacher retention were obtained from a state personnel database. Retention included those who remained in Texas public schools for the following year, including those who moved from one Texas public school to another. Turnover included those no longer employed in a Texas public school the following year, including those who left Texas but took a teaching job in a public school in a neighboring state. The study compared annual retention rates of the TxBESS participants with those of all beginning teachers in the state from the 1999-2000 through the 2002-03 school years.

The study found program participation had positive effects on beginning teachers' retention. In an analysis of the cumulative retention of the first cohort that entered in the 1999-2000 school year, Fuller (2003) found that TxBESS participants left teaching at lower rates than beginning teachers who had not participated in TxBESS for each of their first three years on the job. After year one, 89.1% of beginning teachers who went through the TxBESS program returned for a second year of teaching, while 81.2% of nonparticipant new teachers did so – a difference that was statistically significant. After their second year, 82.7% of participants remained, while only 74.3% of nonparticipants did so – again, a statistically significant difference. After their third year, 75.7% of participants remained, while only 67.6% of others did so – again, a statistically significant difference.

Several aspects of the Fuller study make it particularly valuable. First, Fuller found similar program effects (in both magnitude and statistical significance) on retention in both high-poverty and high-minority enrollment schools. This was important because these schools generally have higher attrition of new teachers. Such schools also had higher numbers of their beginning teachers in the TxBESS program. Second, Fuller found that these effects held up across all school levels. In fact, elementary, middle and high schools all had significantly higher retention of TxBESS participants. Finally, Fuller found that TxBESS appeared to be especially helpful for underqualified teachers. TxBESS participation by beginning teachers who did not hold full certification or those who were assigned to teach subjects out of their certification, was related to improved retention over similarly underqualified teachers who had not participated.

TxBESS is a well-known example of a state teacher induction program. Among the many studies examined for this ECS review, the above-discussed research and evaluation stands out for its usefulness and the findings provide a strong endorsement for the TxBESS program.

There are also several limitations worth noting. First, school districts had discretion in the selection of participants for the program. Differences in retention rates could be due to selection bias if the participants were either self-selected or if they "qualified" for inclusion. Second, for the purposes of this review, it is not possible to separate out the effects of mentoring programs themselves, since they were only one component of the larger TxBESS program and school districts had discretion over which components they used. The data do indicate a large degree of variation across the state in what the program entailed.

For instance, some program participants had a mentor, some did not and some mentors had more than one mentee. Some mentees met with their mentors weekly, others met once a month (or less), and some mentors taught the same subject as their mentee, while others did not. There were some districts in which all beginning teachers had a mentor and other districts with very few (if any) mentors for the beginning teachers.

Conclusions and Implications

All 10 studies reviewed here provide some empirical support for the claim that assistance for new teachers – and in particular, teacher mentoring programs – have a positive impact on teachers and their retention. These findings should indicate to policymakers and education leaders that there is promise in the use of induction and mentoring as a means of reducing high rates of teacher turnover. It is important to consider, however, that some of the research indicates the impact of induction and mentoring may be minimal unless these programs either include or are supplemented by other important elements.

At the same time, it must be recognized that all the studies examined here also have some serious limitations. And these limits have implications for the kinds of conclusions that can be collectively drawn from them. As discussed, most of these studies do not or are not able to control for other factors that also could impact the outcomes under investigation. For example, it is reasonable to assume that the type of school in which teachers are employed will have an effect on outcomes such as teacher job commitment and retention, regardless of the existence of an induction or mentoring program. In order to determine whether there is a relationship between induction and these outcomes, it is necessary to control for, or hold constant, these other kinds of factors.

Moreover, most of these studies do not or are not able to clarify the criteria for selection and program participation. As with school characteristics, the persons who do or do not participate in programs also could have an impact on outcomes, regardless of the effect of the program itself. For instance, in the case of a voluntary program, the same individuals who choose to participate may also be individuals who are more committed to teaching.

Finally, the content, duration and delivery of programs are so varied from one site to another it is not clear to what extent general conclusions about mentoring and induction can be drawn from any given study. As a result, there remain a number of pressing policy questions that cannot yet be answered with confidence. Among these are:

1. **Who gets helped most?** For example, are induction and mentoring programs particularly helpful for new teachers whose formal preparation is relatively weak, or are they helpful regardless of the quality of pre-classroom preparation?

2. **Which components or sets of components are best?** Which elements, supports and kinds of assistance make induction and mentoring programs most helpful in addressing the various weaknesses among new teachers with differing backgrounds?

3. **Which components are best for which outcomes?** Which aspects of induction and mentoring programs contribute most to the increased retention of new teachers? Do these differ from the factors that contribute most to teachers' enhanced classroom effectiveness?

4. **Do the selection, preparation, training, assignment and compensation of mentors make a difference?** Is there a significant difference in effectiveness between induction and mentoring programs depending upon who does the mentoring and how they are chosen and treated? Are there negative effects of some mentors? Do some mentors, for example, implicitly or explicitly stifle innovation on the part of beginning teachers?

5. **How much contact time is necessary between mentor and mentee?** Is there a significant difference in effectiveness depending upon the amount of contact between new teachers and their mentors?

6. **How long do mentoring programs need to be?** Is there an optimum program length for induction and mentoring programs, beyond which additional time is of diminishing value?

7. **Does mentoring matter for student growth and achievement?** Is it possible to document links between teacher participation in mentoring and gains in student outcomes?

All these questions warrant investigation. What is *not* needed, however, are more studies that do not involve the kind of careful control that would allow unambiguous conclusions about the particular value added by the program component being considered. This review has found many such studies already exist. In contrast, conspicuous by their absence in this field are careful, randomized or quasi-randomized experimental studies involving random-assignment procedures and controlled trials with a no-treatment control group. This kind of approach is perhaps the most expensive, but also is potentially the most fruitful.

Addressing the above questions will not always require new data collection. State induction programs such as the TxBESS program in Texas and the BTSA (Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment) program in California have entailed extensive data collection that could possibly support more advanced statistical analyses than have thus far been conducted. The same applies to some existing national databases, such as NCES' 1993 Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study, discussed earlier, and two lesser-known sister surveys also undertaken by NCES – the 1998 Teacher Survey on Professional Development and Training and the 2000 Survey on Professional Development and Training in U.S. Public Schools (see Smerdon et al. 1999 and Parsad et al. 2001). These databases are limited by a small number of items on teacher induction, but their advantage, so far underutilized, is their ability to control for other factors and to support conclusions that can be widely generalized. Both involve large nationally representative samples and both collected data on many teacher and school characteristics in addition to information on participation in induction programs.

While current research does not yet provide definitive evidence of the value of mentoring programs in keeping new teachers from leaving the profession, it does reveal that there is enough promise to warrant significant further investigation. At the very least, the findings of this paper indicate that policymakers and education leaders should consider investing more time and resources into developing carefully controlled studies to better identify the links between mentoring and teacher retention.

References

Adkins, K.R. and P.B. Oakes (1995). *Inside the Kentucky Teacher Intern Program: Impressions of the Participants*.

Alvermann, D.E. and G.G. Hruby (2000). "Mentoring and Reporting Research: A Concern for Aesthetics." *Reading Research Quarterly*, 35(1): 46-63.

Arends, R.I. and A.J. Rigazio-DiGilio (2000). *Beginning Teacher Induction: Research and Examples of Contemporary Practice*.

Bainer, D.L., G.A. Kramer et al. (1999). "Mid-Western Educational Researcher, 1999." *Mid Western Educational Researcher*, 12(1).

Bell, R.H. (1999). "On Becoming a Teacher of Teachers. Voices Inside Schools." *Harvard Educational Review*, 69 (4): 447-55.

Bennett, N. et al. (1995). *The Impact of Training and Role Differentiation on the Nature and Quality of Mentoring Processes*.

Boe, E.E., S.A. Bobbitt et al. (1998). *National Trends in Teacher Supply and Turnover for Special and General Education*. Data Analysis Report No. 1998-DAR1. Philadelphia Center for Research and Evaluation in Social Policy, Pennsylvania University.

Bradley, L. and S.P. Gordon (1994). "Comparing the Ideal to the Real in State-mandated Teacher Induction Programs." *Journal of Staff Development*, 15(3): 44-48.

Brock, B.L. and M.L. Grady (1996). *Beginning Teacher Induction Programs*.

Broughman, S.P. and M.R. Rollefson (2000). *Teacher Supply in the United States: Sources of Newly Hired Teachers in Public and Private Schools, 1987-88 to 1993-94*. Statistical Analysis Report. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

Brown, J.G. and C. Wambach (1987). *Using Mentors To Increase New Teacher Retention: The Mentor Teacher Induction Project*. Annual Meeting of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, Arlington, VA: Department of Elementary Education, San Francisco State University.

Bullard, C. 1998. *Qualified Teachers for All California Students: Current Issues in Recruitment, Retention, Preparation and Professional Development*, CRB-98-012. Sacramento, CA: California Research Bureau.

Burns, D. (1980). *The Evaluation of Student Teaching Practice – An Occupational Analysis Approach*.

Burns, D. (1982). *Trainers in Industry and Teachers in Schools: A Comparative Analysis of Two Teaching Professions*.

Buttery, T.J. et al. (1990). "First Annual ATE Survey of Critical Issues in Teacher Education." *Action in Teacher Education*, 12(2): 1-7.

Carter, P. and R. DiBella (1982). *Follow-up of 1980-81 Graduates at the Ohio State University's College of Education Teacher Certification Program*. Technical Report No. 7.

Charles A. Dana Center. (2002). *Texas Beginning Educator Support System Evaluation Report for Year Three – 2001-02*. Austin, TX.

Cheng, M. and R.S. Brown (1992). *A Two-year Evaluation of the Peer Support Pilot Project: 1990-1992*. Toronto, Ontario, Canada: Toronto Board of Education, Research Department.

Colbert, J.A. and D.E. Wolff (1992). "Surviving in Urban Schools: A Collaborative Model for a Beginning Teacher Support System." *Journal of Teacher Education*, 43(3), 193-199.

Cyphert, F.R. and K.A. Ryan (1984). "Extending Initial Teacher Preparation: Some Issues and Answers." *Action in Teacher Education*, 6(1-2): 63-70.

Danielson, C. (1999). "Mentoring Beginning Teachers: The Case for Mentoring." *Teaching and Change*, 6(3): 251-57.

DeBolt, G. (1991). *Mentoring: Studies of Effective Programs in Education*.

DeBolt, G.P. (1989). *Helpful Elements in the Mentoring of First Year Teachers. A Report to the State Education Department on the New York State Mentor Teacher-Internship Program for 1988-1989*.

deVoss, G. and R. DiBella (1981). *Follow-up of 1979-80 Graduates at the Ohio State University's College of Education Teacher Certification Program*. Technical Report #6. Columbus, OH: Ohio State University.

Durbin, D. (1991). *Review of Pre-1980 and Post-1980 Induction Programs*. Induction Program Review.

Eberhard, J., P. Reinhardt-Mondragon et al. (2000). *Strategies for New Teacher Retention: Creating a Climate of Authentic Professional Development for Teachers with Three or Less Years of Experience*. Corpus Christi, TX: South Texas Research and Development Center, Texas A&M University.

Evertson, C.M. and M.W. Smithey (2000). "Mentoring Effects on Proteges' Classroom Practice: An Experimental Field Study." *Journal of Educational Research*, 93(5): 294-304.

Feiman-Nemser, S. (1996). "Teacher Mentoring: A Critical Review." *ERIC Digest*. Washington, DC: ERIC Clearinghouse on Teaching and Teacher Education.

Feiman-Nemser, S. (2001). "From Preparation to Practice: Designing a Continuum To Strengthen and Sustain Teaching." *Teachers College Record*, 103(6), 1013-55.

Feiman-Nemser, S. et al. (1992). *Are Mentor Teachers Teacher Educators*? East Lansing, MI: National Center for Research on Teacher Learning.

Feiman-Nemser, S. and M.B. Parker (1992). *Mentoring in Context: A Comparison of Two U.S. Programs for Beginning Teachers*. National Center for Research on Teacher Learning (NCRTL) Special Report. East Lansing, MI: NCRTL.

Feiman-Nemser, S., S. Schwille et al. (1999). *A Conceptual Review of Literature on New Teacher Induction*. Washington, DC: National Partnership for Excellence and Accountability in Teaching, 47.

Fideler E. and D. Haselkorn (1999). *Learning the Ropes: Urban Teacher Induction Rrograms and Practices in the United States*. Belmont, MA: Recruiting New Teachers.

Fletcher, S., M. Strong and A.Villar (2004). *An Investigation of the Effects of Teacher Experience and Teacher Preparedness on the Performance of Latino Students in California*. Santa Cruz, CA: New Teacher Center, University of California, Santa Cruz.

Freiberg, M. et al. (1994). *Perceptions of Beginning Teachers in an Urban Setting: Does Mentoring Make a Difference*?

Fuller, E. (2003). *Begining Teacher Retention Rates for TxBESS and Non-TxBESS Teachers*. Unpublished paper. State Board for Educator Certification, Texas.

Furtwengler, C. (1995). "Beginning Teachers Programs: Analysis of State Actions during the Reform Era." *Education Policy Analysis Archives*.

Ganser, T. (1991). *Beginning Teachers' and Mentors' Perceptions of Effective Mentoring Programs (Draft)*.

Ganser, T. (1994). "The Perceptions of School Principals about a Mentoring Program for Newly Hired Urban School Teachers." *Educator*, 30(2): 13-23.

Ganser, T. (1996). "What Do Mentors Say about Mentoring?" *Journal of Staff Development*, 17(3): 36-39.

Ganser, T. (1997). *The Contribution of Service as a Cooperating Teacher and Mentor Teacher to the Professional Development of Teachers*.

Ganser, T. (1999). *Areas of Advice Seeking among Beginning Teachers in a Mentoring Program*.

Ganser, T. (2000). *Evaluating a University Mentoring Program for K-12 Teachers: The University of Wisconsin-Whitewater Beginning Teacher Assistance Program*.

Ganser, T. (2001). *Beginning Teaching in Jamaica: Challenges and Assistance*.

Ganser, T. (2002). "Building the Capacity of School Districts To Design, Implement and Evaluate New Teacher Mentor Programs: Action Points for Colleges and Universities." *Mentoring and Tutoring*, 10(1), 47-55.

Ganser, T. (2002). "The New Teacher Mentors: Four Trends That Are Changing the Look of Mentoring Programs for New Teachers." *American School Board Journal,* 189(12), 25-27.

Giebelhaus, C. (1999). "Leading the Way . . . State Initiatives and Mentoring." *Mid-Western Educational Researcher*, 12(4): 10-13.

Giebelhaus, C. and M. Bendixon-Noe (1997). "Mentoring: Help or Hindrance? Research Alive." *Mid-Western Educational Researcher*, 10(4): 20-23.

Giebelhaus, C.R. and C. Bowman (2000). *Teaching Mentors: Is It Worth the Effort?*

Gold, M. (1987). *Retired Teachers as Consultants to New Teachers: A New Inservice Teacher Training Model*. Final Report. Washington, DC: American Association of State Colleges and Universities, 54.

Gold, Y. (1999). “Beginning Teacher Support.” In J. Sikula, T. Buttery and E. Guyton (Eds.), *Handbook of Research in Teacher Education (*2nd ed.): 548-594. New York: Macmillan.

Gregson, J.A. and J.W. Piper (1993). "The Ohio Induction Process: Perceptions of Beginning Secondary School Trade and Industrial Teachers." *Journal of Industrial Teacher Education*, 30(2): 30-43.

Grissmer, D. and S. Kirby (1987). *Teacher Attrition: The Uphill Climb To Staff the Nation's Schools*. Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation.

Grissmer, D. and S. Kirby (1992). *Patterns of Attrition among Indiana Teachers, 1965•1987*. Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation.

Grissmer, D. and S. Kirby (1997). "Teacher Turnover and Teacher Quality." *Teachers College Record*, 99: 45-56.

Hafner, A. and J. Owings (1991). *Careers in Teaching: Following Members of the High School Class of 1972 In and Out of Teaching* (NCES Report No. 91-470). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

Harding, B., McLain et al. (1999). *Teacher Preparation and Development*. Olympia, WA: Washington State Institute for Public Policy.

Hare, D. and J.L. Heap (2001). *Effective Teacher Recruitment and Retention Strategies in the Midwest: Who Is Making Use of Them?* Naperville, IL: North Central Regional Education Laboratory.

Harper-Jones, G. (1994). "The Induction of Newly Qualified Teachers in Wales." *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, 2(2): 33-47.

Harris, M.M. and M.P. Collay (1990). "Teacher Induction in Rural Schools." *Journal of Staff Development*, 11(4): 44-48.

Hawkey, K. (1997). "Roles, Responsibilities, and Relationships in Mentoring: A Literature Review and Agenda for Research." *Journal of Teacher Education*, 48(5): 325-35.

Hegstad, C.D. (1999). "Formal Mentoring as a Strategy for Human Resource Development: A Review of

Research." *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, 10(4): 383-90.

Hendrick, L., L. Sanada, Z. Franco and D. Huston (2001). *A Study of the Elements of Induction Support and Assessment That Facilitate Skill and Self-Confidence in New Teachers*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association.

Hendrick, L. and L. Childress (2002). *The RIMS Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Partnership: A Study of Eight Years of Collaboration*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association.

Henke, R.R., X. Chen et al. (2000). *Progress through the Teacher Pipeline: 1992-93 College Graduates and Elementary/Secondary School Teaching as of 1997*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

Holloway, J. (2001) "The Benefits of Mentoring." *Educational Leadership*, 58(8): 85-86.

Huling-Austin, L. (1990). "Teacher Induction Programs and Internships." In W.R. Houston (Ed.) *Handbook of Research on Teacher Education*. Reston, VA: Association of Teacher Educators.

Ingersoll, R.M. et al. (1997). *Teacher Professionalization and Teacher Commitment: A Multilevel Analysis*. Statistical Analysis Report. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

Ingersoll, R. (2000)." The Status of Teaching as a Profession." In *Schools and Society: A Sociological Approach to Education*. Edited by Jeanne Ballantine and Joan Spade. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Press.

Ingersoll, R. (2001). "Teacher Turnover and Teacher Shortages: An Organizational Analysis." *American Educational Research Journal*, 38(3): 499-534.

Ingersoll, R. and T. Smith (2003). "The Wrong Solution to the Teacher Shortage." *Educational Leadership*, 60(8): 30-33.

Ishler, P.F. and M.J. Selke (1994). *A Study of the Involvement of NCATE Institutions in the Support of Beginning Teachers*.

Johnson, S. (1990). *Teachers at Work: Achieving Success in Our Schools*. New York: Basic Books.

Johnson, S. and S. Birkeland (2003, Forthcoming). "Pursuing 'a Sense of Success': New Teachers Explain Their Career Decisions." *American Educational Research Journal*, 38.

Jones, L., D. Reid et al. (1997). "Teachers' Perceptions of Mentoring in a Collaborative Model of Initial Teacher Training." *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 23(3): 253-61.

Kamii, M. and S. Harris-Sharples (1988, August 1-5). *Mentors and New Teachers: Reshaping the Teaching Profession in Massachusetts*. Report of the Wheelock College Conference on Mentor Teacher Training. Boston, Massachusetts.

Karge, B.D. and M.R. Freiberg (1992). *Beginning Special Education Teachers: At Risk for Attrition*.

Klug, B.J. and S A. Salzman (1991). "Formal Induction vs. Informal Mentoring: Comparative Effects and Outcomes." *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 7(3): 241-51.

Kowalski, J.P.S. (1977). "Orientation Programs for New Teachers." *ERS Report*. Arlington, VA, Educational Research Service.

Kyle, D.W., G.H. Moore et al. (1999). "The Role of the Mentor Teacher: Insights, Challenges and Implications." *Peabody Journal of Education*, 74(3 and 4): 109-22.

Looney, J. (1997). *Mentoring the Beginning Teacher: A Study of Influencing Variables*.

Lortie, D. (1975). *Schoolteacher: A Sociological Study*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Mager, G.M. et al. (1987). *A Report to the State Education Department on the New York State Mentor Teacher-Internship Program for 1986-1987*.

Mager, G.M. et al. (1990). *A Follow-up on the Experiences of Intern Teachers: A Report to the State Education Department on the New York State Mentor Teacher-Internship Program for 1986-1987 and 1987-1988*. New York: School of Education, Syracuse University.

Marso, R.N. and F.L. Pigge (1990). *Teacher Mentor Induction Programs: An Assessment by First-Year Teachers*.

McKee, J.G. (1991). *Toward an Agenda for Induction: Perceptions of Beginning Teachers and Student Teachers*.

Mills, H., D. Moore et al. (2001). "Addressing the Teacher Shortage: A Study of Successful Mentoring Programs in Oakland County, Michigan." *Clearing House*, 74(3): 124-26.

Mitchell, D., L. Scott et al. (1998). *The California Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program: 1998 Statewide Evaluation Study*. Riverside, CA: California Educational Research Cooperative, Graduate School of Education, University of California, Riverside.

Mitchell, D., L. Scott et al. (1999). *The California Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program. 1998 Statewide Evaluation Study*. Riverside, CA: California Educational Research Cooperative, Graduate School of Education, University of California, Riverside.

Moskowitz, J. and M. Stephens (1997). *From Students of Teaching to Teachers of Students: Teacher Induction Around the Pacific Rim*. Singapore: Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Secretariat, BBB32706.

Murnane, R., J. Singer, J. Willett, J. Kemple and R. Olsen (1991). *Who Will Teach? Policies That Matter*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Norton, C.S. (1988). *Mentoring: A Representative Bibliography*. New York: Teachers College, ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education, Columbia University.

Odell, S.J. (1990). *Mentor Teacher Programs: What Research Says to the Teacher*. Washington, DC: National Education Association.

Odell, S.J. and D.P. Ferraro (1992). "Teacher Mentoring and Teacher Retention." *Journal of Teacher Education*, 43(3): 200-04.

Odell, S.J. and L. Huling (Eds.) (2000). *Quality Mentoring for Novice Teachers*. Indianapolis, IN: Kappa Delta Pi.

Ohio State Department of Education (1999). *Ohio Teacher, Principal and Superintendent 1999 Supply and Demand Information*. Columbus, Ohio: Author.

Olebe, M. (1999). "California Formative Assessment and Support System for Teachers (CFASST): Investing in Teachers' Professional Development." *Teaching and Change*, 6(3): 258-71.

Olsen, D.G. and K.L. Heyse (1990). *Development and Concerns of First-year and Reentry Teachers with and without Mentors*.

Pardini, P. (2000). "Data, Well Done." *Journal of Staff Development*, 21(1): 12-18.

Parsad, B., L. Lewis and E. Farris (2001). *Teacher Preparation and Professional Development*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

Perez, K., C. Swain et al. (1997). "An Analysis of Practices Used to Support New Teachers." *Teacher Education Quarterly*, (Spring): 41-52.

Peterson, K. and J. Bercik (1995). *Frame Theory Analysis of the Cultures of Three Outstanding Teacher Induction Programs*.

Peterson, K.M. (1996). *The Importance of Support through Induction Programming in the Teacher Socialization Process*.

Pultorak, E. (1999). *Powerful Teacher Education: A Shared Decision Making Approach To Impact Public Policy*.

Reid, D. and L. Jones (1997). "Partnership in Teacher Training: Mentors' Constructs of Their Role." *Educational Studies*, 23(2): 263-76.

Reiman, A.J. and R.A. Edelfelt (1990). *School-based Mentoring Programs: Untangling the Tensions between Theory and Practice*. Raleigh, NC: Raleigh Department of Curriculum and Instruction, North Carolina State University.

Reiman, A.J. et al. (1995). "Counselor- and Teacher-led Support Groups for Beginning Teachers: A Cognitive-Developmental Perspective." *Elementary School Guidance and Counseling*, 30(2): 105-17.

Riggs, I.M. (2000). *The Impact of Training and Induction Activities upon Mentors as Indicated through Measurement of Mentor Self-Efficacy*.

Robinson, G.W. (1998). *New Teacher Induction: A Study of Selected New Teacher Induction Models and Common Practices*.

Runyan, K., V. White et al. (1998). *A Seamless System of Professional Development from Preservice to Tenured Teaching*.

Russell, S.C. et al. (1994). *Teachers Teaching Teachers: The Art of Working Together and Sharing*.

Rutherford, J. (2002). *How Do Teachers Learn To Teach Effectively? Quality Indicators from Quality Schools*. A Report to the Rockefeller Foundation from Just for the Kids and the Southeast Center for Teaching Quality.

Saurino, D.R. and P.L. Saurino (1999). *Making Effective Use of Mentoring Teacher Programs: A Collaborative*

Group Action Research Approach.

Schaffer, E. et al. (1992). "An Innovative Beginning Teacher Induction Program: A Two-year Analysis of Classroom Interactions." *Journal of Teacher Education*, 43(3): 181-92.

Scherer, M. (Ed.) (1999). *A Better Beginning: Supporting and Mentoring New Teachers*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Schlecty, P. and V. Vance (1981). "Do Academically Able Teachers Leave Education? The North Carolina Case." *Phi Delta Kappan*, 63: 105-112.

Schwab, R.L. (1989). *Stress and the Intern Teacher: An Exploratory Study*.

Scott, N.H. (1997). *Beginning Teacher Induction Program in New Brunswick, 1996-97*. Report. Fredericton (Canada), New Brunswick Department of Education.

Scott, N.H. (1997). *PFD's for Beginning Teachers: A Report on the Teacher Induction Program in New Brunswick*.

Scott, N.H. (1998). *Careful Planning or Serendipity? Promoting Well-Being through Teacher Induction*.

Scott, N.H. (1998). *Off to a Good Start: Report on the 1997-98 Beginning Teacher Induction Program in New Brunswick*. Fredericton (Canada), New Brunswick Department of Education.

Scott, N.H. (1999). *Supporting New Teachers: A Report on the 1998-99 Beginning Teacher Induction Program in New Brunswick*.

Scott, N.H. (2000). *Building a Strong Foundation for Teaching: The Fifth Annual Report of the Beginning Teacher Induction Program in New Brunswick*. Saint John, New Brunswick University.

Scott, N.H. (2000). *Four Years Later: Issues in Teacher Induction*.

Scott, N.H. (2001). *Mentoring New Teachers: A Report on the 2001 Beginning Teacher Induction Program in New Brunswick*. Saint John, New Brunswick University.

Scott, N.H. and E. Compton (1996). *Report on the 1995-96 Beginning Teacher Induction Program in New Brunswick*.

Serpell, Z. and L.A. Bozeman (1999). *Beginning Teacher Induction: A Report on Beginning Teacher Effectiveness and Retention*. Washington, DC: National Partnership for Excellence and Accountability in Teaching.

Shapley, K.S. and H.D. Luttrell (1992). "Effectiveness of Mentor Training of Elementary Colleague Teachers." *Journal of Elementary Science Education*, 4(2): 1-12.

Shields, P. et al. (2001). *The Status of the Teaching Profession, 2001*. Santa Cruz, CA: Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning.

Sizer. T. (1992). *Horace's Compromise: The Dilemma of the American High School*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Smerdon, B., L. Lewis, B. Parsad et al. (1999). *Teacher Quality: A Report on the Preparation and Qualifications of Public School Teachers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

Smith, T., Ingersoll, R. (2004). "What are the Effects of Induction and Mentoring on Beginning Teacher Turnover?" *American Educational Research Journal*, 41 (2).

Smithey, M.W. and C.M. Evertson (1995). "Tracking the Mentoring Process: A Multimethod Approach." *Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education*, 9(1): 33-53.

Spuhler, L. and A. Zetler (1993). *Montana Beginning Teacher Support Program*. Helena, MT: Montana State Board of Education.

Spuhler, L. and A. Zetler (1994). *Montana Beginning Teacher Support Program*. Helena, MT: Montana State Board of Education.

Spuhler, L. and A. Zetler (1995). *Montana Beginning Teacher Support Program*. Helena, MT: Montana State Board of Education.

Spuhler, L. and A. Zetler (1995). *Montana Beginning Teacher Support Program. Final Report*. Helena, MT: Montana State Board of Education.

Storms, B., J. Wing, T. Jinks, K. Banks and P. Cavazos (2000). *CFASST (Field Review) Implementation 1999-2000: A Formative Evaluation Report*. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service.

Strong, M. (1998). *Study of Reading Performance among 1-3 Grade Students in Classes Taught by SCNTP Teachers*. Santa Cruz, CA: New Teacher Center, University of California, Santa Cruz.

Strong, M. and L. St. John (2001). *A Study of Teacher Retention: The Effects of Mentoring for Beginning Teachers*. Santa Cruz, CA: University of California, Santa Cruz.

Stroot, S.A., J. Fowlkes et al. (1999). "Impact of a Collaborative Peer Assistance and Review Model on Entry-year Teachers in a Large Urban School Setting." *Journal of Teacher Education*, 50(1): 27-41.

Sweeny, B. (1994). *A New Teacher Mentoring Knowledge Base of Best Practices: A Summary of Lessons Learned from Practitioners*. Mentor Center.

Sweeny, B. (1998). *What's Happening in Mentoring and Induction in Each of the United States?* Mentor Center.

Taylor, S. (1986). "Mentors: Who Are They and What Are They Doing?" *Thrust for Educational Leadership*, 15(6): 39-41.

Thies-Sprinthall, L.M. (1990). "Support Groups for Novice Teachers." *Journal of Staff Development*, 11(4): 18-22.

Thomsen, S.R. and R.L. Gustafson (1997). "Turning Practitioners into Professors: Exploring Effective Mentoring." *Journalism and Mass Communication Educator*, 52(2): 24-32.

Tushnet, N. et al. (2000). *Final Report of the Independent Evaluation of the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program (BTSA)*.

Tyack, D. (1974). *The One Best System*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Utah State Office of Education (1993). *Status of Teacher Personnel in Utah 1992-1993*. Salt Lake City, UT: Author.

Van Thielen, B. (1992). *Tutoring Beginning Teachers through a Mentor Teacher Program*. Monograph No. 16. Saskatoon College of Education, Saskatchewan University.

Veenman, S. (1985). "Perceived Problems of Beginning Teachers." *Review of Educational Research*, 54(2): 143-178.

Veenman, S., H. de Laat et al. (1998). *Coaching Beginning Teachers*.

Villeme, M.G. et al. (1992). "Are Teachers Receiving Adequate Support from Their Beginning Teacher Programs? The Florida Experience." *Teacher Educator*, 28(2): 10-16.

Vonk, J.H.C. (1996). *Conceptualizing the Mentoring of Beginning Teachers*.

Wagner, U. (1992). *Environments of Support*. Washington, DC: Office of Minorities in Higher Education, American Council on Education.

Waller, W. (1932) *The Sociology of Teaching*. New York: Wiley.

Wang, J. and S.J. Odell (2002). "Mentored Learning To Teach According to Standard-based Reform: A Critical Review." *Review of Educational Research*, 72(3), 481-546.

Wilkerson, T. (1997). *The Preparation of Teachers for Kentucky Schools: A Survey of New Teachers*. Summary Report. Louisville, KY: Wilkerson (Tom) and Associates, Ltd.

Wilkinson, G.A. (1997). "Beginning Teachers Identify Gaps in Their Induction Programs." *Journal of Staff Development*, 18(2): 48-51.

Wilson, S., L. Darling-Hammond and B. Berry (2001). *A Case of Successful Teaching Policy: Connecticut's Long-term Efforts To Improve Teaching and Learning*. Seattle, WA: Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy.

Williams, E. et al. (1994). *Training Teachers To Plan Staff Development Programs for Rural Schools*.

Williams, E.U. et al. (1991). *A Teacher Training Mentor Model in Rural Special Education*.

Wollman-Bonilla, J.E. (1997). "Mentoring as a Two-Way Street." *Journal of Staff Development*, 18(3): 50-52.

Yosha, P. (1991). *The Benefits of an Induction Program: What Do Mentors and Novices Say?*

Zeichner, K.M. and J.M. Gore (1990). “Teacher Socialization.” In W.R. Houston (Ed.), *Handbook of Research on Teacher Education*, 329-348. New York: Macmillan.

Richard Ingersoll is on the faculty of the Graduate School of Education at the University of Pennsylvania. He is one the nation's leading researchers on teacher demographics and mobility, and he received the 2004 Outstanding Writing Award from the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education for his recent book Who Controls Teachers' Work? Power and Accountability in America's Schools.

Jeffrey Kralik is a doctoral candidate in the University of Pennsylvania's Graduate School of Education.

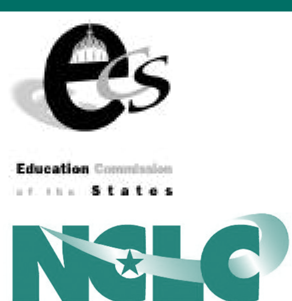
© 2004 by the Education Commission of the States (ECS). All rights reserved. ECS is a nonprofit, nationwide organization that helps state leaders shape education policy.

The contents of this review were developed under a grant to the Education Commission of the States (ECS) from U.S. Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement of Education, award number R215U000010. The contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education and should not be viewed as endorsed by the federal government.

The views of the authors do not necessarily reflect those of ECS.

To request permission to excerpt part of this publication, either in print or electronically, please fax a request to the attention of the ECS Communications Department, 303.296.8332 or e-mail ecs@ecs.org.

Helping State Leaders Shape Education Policy



CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Issue Paper

Citizenship Education in 10 U.S. High Schools

February 2004

700 Broadway, Suite 1200 • Denver, CO 80203-3460 • 303.299.3600 • Fax 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

Introduction

Public schools are often criticized for failing to reduce the achievement gap between white and minority students, for not holding all students to high academic standards and for failing to adequately prepare many students for jobs or college. These criticisms reflect a common belief that the mission of public education is to prepare students for college or the workplace, and that "preparation" means academic and vocational training. Schools are less often criticized for failing to prepare students to participate in the decisions that govern their communities, state and nation.

Yet one of the original purposes for public education was the training of citizens. Thomas Jefferson, who is credited with establishing in Virginia the first system for American public education, stated often his belief that the way to safeguard American democracy was to educate the people about their rights as citizens. More recently, the American philosopher John Dewey advocated an approach to education that supported students' moral development, and he argued that education should not be seen as *preparation* for life, but rather as an extension of civil society, and that students should be encouraged to operate as members of a democratic community.

With more and more emphasis on academics and job training, citizenship education has been given less and less space in the public school curriculum. Until the 1960s, high school students studied civics, government and "problems of democracy" for up to three semesters. Today most high schools require only one semester of civics or government. And the rates of civic participation reflect the decline in the importance of civics instruction. According to *The Civic Mission of Schools*,

> Americans under the age of 25 are less likely to vote than either their older counterparts or young people of past decades. Surveys have shown that they are not as interested in political discussion and public issues as past generations were at the same point in their lives. In addition, there are gaps in young people's knowledge of fundamental democratic principles and processes. As a result, many young Americans are not prepared to participate fully in our democracy now and when they become adults.

Yet even as civic engagement declines and many schools deemphasize their civic mission under the pressure of the academic accountability movement, there are reasons for hope. A number of state legislatures have recently established commissions to study civic education within their states. The Bush administration has convened two White House meetings on civic education. Young people are volunteering at historically high rates, and more and more schools and school districts are adopting service-learning as a means of involving young people in their

> The National Center for Learning and Citizenship draws a distinction between "civics" and "citizenship education." In our view, citizenship education means the values, knowledge, skills and sense of commitment that define an active and principled citizen. State civics or government standards generally place a greater emphasis on knowledge of democratic concepts, institutions and rights than on the practical application of such knowledge to everyday public policy issues.
>
> While the importance of teaching students about American history and institutions, constitutional rights and the obligations of citizenship is undeniable, it is equally important that students have opportunities to practice complex civic skills such as problem solving, leadership, persuasive writing and building consensus, as well as simpler skills like communicating with public officials about an issue of concern.
>
> These skills, as well as the dispositions of effective citizenship – belief in liberty, equality, civil and human rights, personal responsibility and the common good; traits of courage, fairness, honesty, integrity; and many others – do not necessarily emerge from classroom instruction. Schools can, however, cultivate them in many ways, including creating democratic schools and classrooms, involving students in service-learning and linking discussion of democratic values to current policy debates.
>
> A comprehensive effort to educate effective citizens should include strategies for fostering students' civic skills, knowledge and dispositions, and should be the responsibility of the entire school, working closely with the community.

communities.

A number of schools across the country have moved beyond the occasional use of service-learning and mock elections to embrace a more comprehensive approach to citizenship education. This issue paper describes 10 high schools in nine school districts across the country where students are given many opportunities to develop citizenship skills. These high schools differ in their approaches to citizenship education, and in the kinds of civic knowledge, skills and dispositions fostered by their programs. Some offer more opportunities for students to participate in service-learning, while others have dramatically changed the way they organize instruction and governance to create a more democratic atmosphere. A few emphasize individual student development while others encourage partnerships and collaborative work. All represent agreed-upon beliefs among educators and their communities about the purposes of education – that while academic and vocational training are important, young people also must learn to be ethical, responsible, contributing members of their communities now and in the future.

The 10 high schools profiled in this paper are:

Fowler High School, California

Sterling High School, Colorado

Greely High School, Maine

Ridge View High School and Spring Valley High School, South Carolina

Nestucca High School, Oregon

New Vista High School, Colorado

Peoples Academy, Vermont

Irvington High School, California

Hudson High School, Massachusetts

The Schools

The paper concludes with a look at promising citizenship education strategies and a summary of policy implications for states, local governments, districts and schools.

Fowler High School (California)

The Fowler Unified School District is located in Fresno County, California, in the central San Joaquin Valley. In 2002-03, 632 students were enrolled at Fowler High School, the only regular high school in the district. The student body was 69% Hispanic, 22% white and 7% Asian; about 17% of students were classified as “English learners.” Like most towns in the San Joaquin Valley, Fowler is an agricultural community.

In 1995 the Fowler school district began work on a strategic plan. According to Superintendent John Cruz, community members wanted the plan to include a character education component. So with the help of a committee that included teachers, the superintendent and a few parents and students, the district developed “the Big 10,” an initiative organized around character traits such as honesty, integrity, responsibility, respect and citizenship. One of these 10 core values is addressed across the district during each month of the school year, and teachers are asked to discuss that theme at least once a week.

Although the Big 10 program is not mandatory, teachers are asked to report on their use of each theme in the classroom so good ideas may be shared across the district. Because the program resulted from a demand from the community, teachers and community members have embraced it. Even extracurricular activities and sports programs have been influenced by the program. For example, the middle school awards a “Wildcat Character Award” to student athletes who embody the characteristics of the Big 10.

The district has recently begun to make service-learning a priority. The character education committee sponsored a community forum at the beginning of the 2002-03 school year and developed a list of possible service-learning projects. The results of a Character Education Partnership (CEP) assessment completed by teachers the previous year indicated that the district should provide more opportunities for service-learning. And the school board in February 2003 passed a resolution supporting – but not requiring – the use of service-learning.

The CEP assessment also indicated a need for the district to get its noncertificated staff more involved in the character education program. So each noncertificated staff person at the middle school became a mentor to one student who was struggling in some way and used that opportunity to discuss character with the student. A need for more teacher professional development in character education was also indicated by the assessment, but preparing teachers for a new K-5 reading program in 2002-03 made it difficult to find time for additional in-service teacher training.

Fowler High School Principal Joanne Abhold wants students to see themselves as members of a community

within the school and as members of the larger local community. She wants students to be proud of the school and to represent it well in public by behaving responsibly. The school offers a number of leadership opportunities to students through student council, a leadership class, school site councils and safe school committees. Students have participated in interviews of applicants for teacher positions in the district, and in the accreditation process. Students sit on school board committees and the character education committee, and there is a student representative on the board of education. The school encourages students to be involved in local elections by giving them opportunities to work at the polls.

Yet despite all the emphasis on community, English Teacher Cindy Millen says students learn more about local politics and the community in the Human Relations Club she advises than in her classroom. Students in the club learn citizenship skills through activities such as fundraisers, hanging yellow ribbons on Main Street for soldiers in Iraq and attending Lions Club and Mothers Club meetings. Millen says she assesses students' character development mostly through observation rather than formal assessment. She admits the pressure to meet state standards, teach a particular book or prepare students for a state test sometimes keeps her from focusing as much as she would like on character education in the classroom. But she believes as the district promotes greater use of service-learning, she will be able to meet the standards and continue to support character education.

Students at Fowler High School seem to support the character education initiative. Not surprisingly, however, the students interviewed for this study had a slightly different take on the opportunities for leadership provided by the school. They characterized student government as a popularity contest. One student, who had been a class senator, said, "I went to almost all of [the meetings] and it wasn't very orderly. It was just yelling and trying to keep order, and everyone was in their own discussions about what's going on."

The students interviewed pointed out that government is taught in the 8th grade, and again as part of a 12th-grade economics/civics course. They identified one teacher at the high school as being particularly good about engaging students in discussion of current events, but it does not appear students at Fowler feel they are encouraged to learn about local government or to participate in local politics.

Sterling High School (Colorado)

The city of Sterling, with a population just under 14,000, is the seat of rural Logan County, located in the South Platte River Valley on the plains of northeastern Colorado, 125 miles from Denver. The largest individual employers are the Sterling Correctional Facility, the hospital, the school district and the local Super Wal-Mart, though most working adults in the area are employed in agriculture or ranching. Sterling High School is one of three high schools in the RE-1 Valley School District. In 2002-03 the school enrolled 716 students. The student body was 87% white and 13% Hispanic, and 19% of the school's students were eligible for free or reduced-price lunches. The student population for the RE-1 Valley district was 84% white and 15% Hispanic (a number which is growing), with 35% of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunches.

The story of citizenship education at Sterling High School began when the district's superintendent, James Bailey, was principal of the district's alternative high school. Bailey and his staff recognized that students in the school were disenfranchised. Students complained of police harassment and a lack of recreational opportunities, and the school staff decided one way to help students learn to effectively address these complaints was through community service. They organized the school's educational program around four "pillars": academics, character, work and service.

Students complained of police harassment and a lack of recreational opportunities, and the school staff decided one way to help students learn to effectively address these complaints was through community service.

At around the same time, students in a first-year government class taught by Teacher Joe Skerjanec at Sterling High were complaining about similar issues. Skerjanec also encouraged them to do something about it, and the result was a program called "Get Everyone To Make a Difference" (GET-MAD). When Bailey became an assistant superintendent, he and Skerjanec began to advocate for more service-learning across the district. Service-learning has since been written into the district's accreditation plan, and Bailey has encouraged teachers to think of service-learning as a methodology that provides learning experiences with the high intellectual quality called for in the accreditation plan.

Skerjanec wrote a resolution supporting service-learning and submitted it to the school board. He encouraged his students to attend the board meeting at which the resolution was considered, and he believes their presence at the meeting helped influence the board, which passed the resolution in May 2003. The resolution includes language supporting professional development in service-learning, collaborative planning, leadership development for teachers and others, and "strong administrative support of a district policy framework necessary to create and sustain

a service-learning culture within the district and the communities it serves."

RE-1 Valley had a 12th-grade government requirement in place long before the 2003 passage of a Colorado state law requiring school districts to offer a course in "civil government." According to teachers, Sterling High split its existing government course in two: 9th-grade civics and 12th-grade American government. Two years ago the district completed a review of its social studies offerings and used the findings to make sure civics content is offered at every grade level. To support this effort, the district developed instructional guidance and curriculum maps based on the state standards. Service-learning is part of Sterling High's American government curriculum framework within the area of "Choices and Responsibility." The expectations for this section are that students understand "the necessity and responsibility of civic participation for the survival of democracy," and "the government that affects citizens most is the government in which they have the most influence."

Greely High School staff are very responsive to students' ideas, according to a group of students involved in the "inclusion" program, which was started as a result of a student's suggestion about the need to address diversity issues.

Both Bailey and Sterling High School Principal Doug Stutzman offer cautions about using policy to promote citizenship education. Stutzman supports GET-MAD and the use of service-learning as a teaching strategy because it grew out of the interests of his staff, students and the community. Stutzman is adamant, however, that although his school has been successful in using its government course as a vehicle for encouraging good citizenship among students, he does not believe this is necessarily the best strategy for every school. He says the important thing is to get everyone involved and interested in making a difference, and other vehicles such as student council or an ethics course might be what work best in another school. According to Superintendent Bailey, establishing a service-learning requirement won't necessarily lead to civic engagement or high-quality instruction, but it provides an opportunity to come to some agreement on what civic engagement is and a starting point for getting there. "You never truly mandate what matters. What you do is you try to set up environments that allow things to be successful," says Bailey. The key is to do it in such a way that it allows latitude to schools to determine how best to meet the the policy.

Greely High School (Maine)

Greely High School is part of Maine School Administrative District #51, which serves the towns of Cumberland and North Yarmouth, Maine. The high school, which serves approximately 700 students, is located in Cumberland, a northern suburb of Portland. In 2001-02 the district served a student population that was 98.6% white, 0.8% Asian/Pacific Islander and the remainder black or Hispanic. The school serves a community of roughly 10,000.

Maine was one of five demonstration states funded through a four-year Kellogg Foundation initiative called "Learning In Deed" (LID) which sought to expand the use of service-learning in those states through the development of supportive state and district policies and infrastructure. Although the district had received federal Learn and Serve America funds to support service-learning prior to its involvement in LID, it is now what Director of Volunteer Services Melissa Skahan characterizes as "high-performing" in its use of service-learning. The high school was designated a National Service-Learning Leader School in 2002. As part of the district's administrative team, Skahan works with every new teacher hired by the district to develop a service-learning project.

Superintendent Robert Hasson believes as students experience different ways of learning, discover what kind of learners they are and become advocates for their own learning, they will demand a more democratic environment in the schools. While teachers in other school districts are often hesitant to discuss politics with students, Hasson says classroom discussion of politics is legitimate, as long as it is done in an unbiased, intellectually rigorous way. In fact, he says, there are very few classrooms in his district in which politics are *not* discussed.

Greely High School staff are very responsive to students' ideas, according to a group of students involved in the "inclusion" program, which was started as a result of a student's suggestion about the need to address diversity issues. Students in the school can start a club addressing nearly any interest they have, as long as they can find a faculty member to serve as an advisor. According to one student, "Students have a really big say in what goes on . . . . I think the teachers do have faith in us [and] that they do give us the responsibility to kind of make decisions and . . . be leaders."

Students say, in general, the school does a good job of encouraging voting and involvement in local politics. Although students felt not all teachers encouraged discussion of current events, one student claimed that teachers like to hear students' opinions. "I think they like that. I mean . . . every class – even English – we'll talk about current events, which is pretty cool." According to teachers, the school has been visited by Maine's U.S. senators,

gubernatorial candidates and state legislators, and students are generally well-prepared for these guests and not afraid to ask challenging questions. Students confirm the superintendent's claim that discussion of politics is common in their classrooms.

Teachers echo students' appreciation for the democratic environment in the school and district. Frances Stone and John Day, who team-teach a 12th-grade humanities course they created, say there are many opportunities for teachers to get involved in district and school decision-making. They believe that by participating in such opportunities they are modeling good citizenship for students. Stone and Day suggest, however, that because there is no reduction in classroom duties for those who participate in school and district leadership, it is difficult for many teachers to take full advantage of these opportunities.

The school-based planning team includes student members, as do hiring committees for new teachers, principals and superintendents. Day recalls, "I remember sitting there, looking at a 9th grader, thinking that 'You have the same vote for staff that I have.' That's amazing."

Stone describes the connection between the humanities and citizenship education:

> "One of the things that makes our class . . . so successful is that we do relate it to what's happening outside the classroom. When I'm teaching the late 18th-century French painter David, I'm making connections between the concept of civic virtue in 18th-century France and the Republic of Rome, and Pericles in Athens, and the Founding Fathers and the United States today. And the kids generally understand that dialogue. They understand those connections, and so they begin to see an interconnectedness between Machiavelli and the paintings of the 18th century, and the ideas of the Founding Fathers, and the inspiration of the Greeks and Rome."

Stone and Day's course also requires students to complete a "master work" or culminating project. Stone and Day say more and more often, students are choosing projects through which they "give back" to the community. This may be a reflection of the district's increasing use of service-learning. Master works are presented to the community over two days, and these presentations are attended by 200-300 parents and community members.

Ridge View and Spring Valley High Schools (South Carolina)

Richland School District 2 is located in Columbia, the state capitol of South Carolina. Columbia's population is approximately 117,000, and the Richland 2 district serves 18,592 students in 2003-04. The district was 55% African American, 39% white, 3% Hispanic and 2% Asian. The district operates three comprehensive high schools, with another set to open in 2005. Ridge View High School serves 2,318 students, with 52% African American, 44% white, 2% Hispanic and 1% Asian. The enrollment at Spring Valley High School was 1,889 and 47% African American, 46% white, 3% Hispanic and 4% Asian.

Like Maine and California, South Carolina was involved in the Kellogg Learning In Deed initiative that began in 1998. The state also has benefited from a federal Community, Higher Education and School Partnerships (CHESP) grant designed to support partnerships around service-learning. Although Richland 2 received financial assistance for service-learning through both of these programs, in the mid-1990s Ridge View and Spring Valley high schools were already being led by administrators who supported experiential learning and community service. Spring Valley was designated a National Service-Learning Leader School in 1999 and 2001.

One of Richland 2's strategic goals is "every student will demonstrate ethical behavior and interpersonal competence as a contributing member of our democratic society." But unlike most other districts, Richland 2's strategic plan actually includes the number of students participating in service-learning as a measure for this goal.

Because the district is very diverse, teachers say they must use a variety of teaching methods to engage all their students. The district has used service-learning with great success while earning two "excellent" ratings on its school report card in 2003 – one of only three districts in the state to earn such an honor. Both Spring Valley and Ridge View also received two "excellent" ratings.

As in any school district, leadership is critical to Richland 2's success. State Superintendent Inez Tenenbaum, Richland 2 Superintendent Steve Hefner and River Ridge Principal Sharon Buddin have all been recognized within the state and nationally for their leadership and their support for service-learning. According to Hefner and other staff, Spring Valley Service-learning Coordinator Beverly Hiott has been the driving force behind the district's success with service-learning. Hiott, in turn, says support from both the superintendent and her current and previous principals have helped her get teachers interested in service-learning.

But strong leadership does not necessarily lead to institutionalization. Richland 2 has taken steps toward institutionalization of service-learning through policy. Similar to many districts, one of Richland 2's strategic goals is "every student will demonstrate ethical behavior and interpersonal competence as a contributing member of our democratic society." But unlike most other districts, Richland 2's strategic plan actually includes the number of students participating in service-learning as a measure for this goal. Service-learning also is included as a strategy for the goal that "students will demonstrate positive school citizenship." And service-learning participation is used as a measure for the district's goal to "continuously develop and promote full partnerships among students, parents, schools and community."

According to Kelli Ramsey, director of Nestucca Connections, an alternative program for at-risk students, place-based learning helps students "find a place for themselves right here in the community."

Students may be elected to student government or they may participate by enrolling in a leadership course. The district also runs a youth philanthropy board, funded by the Kellogg Foundation. Teachers describe district leadership as being open to student involvement in decisionmaking. In the 2002-03 school year the school board passed a new dress code policy. Student government leaders were ultimately successful in influencing the language of that policy, but were frustrated by the apparent apathy of many of their peers.

Hefner meets quarterly with the high school student government leaders and says he makes it clear they may contact him at any time, but says they seldom do. Hefner cites Buddin as being particularly good at involving students in school leadership. When Buddin returned to the school after being named 2002 High School Principal of the Year by the National Association of Secondary School Principals, the students had organized a parade for her, and the student body president drove her through the halls in a golf cart. When the school won a state award in 2002-03, Buddin immediately called the student body president to her office to celebrate, making it clear to students the award was the result of a partnership between students and staff.

Students say they learn about the community through service-learning, but they are not encouraged to get involved in local politics and do not learn about government until their senior year. And even then the emphasis is on state and national government. Those who are involved in student government say they learn how to work with adults and other students to get things done, but those who are not involved say they don't have the same opportunities to learn those skills.

To help meet the challenge of rising enrollment, Ridge View High School has attempted to create smaller learning communities through the establishment of four schools-within-a-school and three 9th-grade academies. According to the student handbook description of one of these, the Academy for Civic Engagement, "Yearlong participation in service-learning projects is required. Projects reflect current issues and concerns and introduce students to their potential to be vital members of their school and communities."

Nestucca High School (Oregon)

Nestucca High School serves the town of Cloverdale in southern Tillamook County, on the coast of Oregon a picturesque 2-hour drive from Portland. In 2002-03, Nestucca High School enrolled 235 students, of whom 40% were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, and 9% were minorities. Nestucca Valley School District #101 enrolled a total of 637 students, of whom 46% were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, and 11% were minorities.

Several years ago a few teachers at Nestucca High School were trained in "place-based learning" by staff of the Rural School and Community Trust. This approach uses the place where students live – its history, land and people – as the focus for their learning. Nestucca Valley's location – on the Oregon coast and the Nestucca River, and surrounded by the Siuslaw National Forest – offers students an array of opportunities to learn about environmental issues and the fishing and timber industries.

According to Kelli Ramsey, director of Nestucca Connections, an alternative program for at-risk students, place-based learning helps students "find a place for themselves right here in the community." Ramsey says her students are asked to assist federal agencies with fisheries and forestry work that would otherwise not be done because of reductions in the agencies' funding. According to Ramsey, students are "doing work that's real work. It's not made-up stuff that doesn't have to happen."

Oregon was one of the five states funded through the Kellogg Learning In Deed (LID) initiative. Unlike the Richland 2 district in South Carolina, however, Nestucca Valley had not been practicing service-learning extensively prior to the district's involvement in LID. Nestucca High School Principal Randy Wharton says that as a result of the district's participation in that initiative, most teachers have had some training in service-learning. But according to Nestucca Valley Superintendent Roger Rada, the district has since spent much more on service-learning than the LID funding it received through the state.

Many of the service-learning projects done by students are linked to public policy. Students learn about the federal government through their work with the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service. They learn about local watershed politics by working with the Nestucca-Neskowin Watershed Council, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and private landowners.

Other partners include the local water conservation district, the county health department, the county library, the local anglers club, county museums and the Tillamook Estuaries Partnership. Students make presentations to local agencies and community groups on the economic importance of protecting local resources as a source for local jobs and tourism. Students in a wellness course conducted a campaign to publicize broken plumbing and other repairs needed in the high school, and made a presentation to county commissioners.

Nestucca High School offers a course in current events and, according to Wharton and Guidance Counselor Duke Hammond, students are "lining up" to get into it. Students like the course because the teacher, John Elder, encourages them to express their opinions on issues like the spotted owl, gun control, abortion or "whatever's on the front page." Elder challenges students' views and helps them understand different perspectives on the issues. Yet despite the controversial topics covered in the course, there has been no resistance from the community.

The district has a policy encouraging discussion of controversial issues. The only limitation on such discussion is that teachers refrain from offering their own opinions on issues until students have had an opportunity to do their own research and form their own opinions. Controversial speakers, politicians and candidates are also welcomed, as long as their presentation is relevant to the course of instruction. Students interviewed for this report cited as an example a county commissioner who visited the school to discuss a local issue, and teachers mentioned a local candidate forum that was held in the school in 2002 and attended by about 35 students (15% of the student body). The district encourages students to attend school board meetings and allows a student representative to be appointed to the board, but the majority of student leadership opportunities take place through service-learning.

A few years ago the district's curriculum council developed a "Portrait of a Nestucca Valley Graduate," which articulates eight traits the council believed every graduate ought to possess, including responsible citizenship and the ability to solve problems. While many school districts maintain a similar list, the council posted the portrait throughout the community to raise local awareness, and the district ties educational programming closely to it. Superintendent Rada rarely fails to mention the portrait when he talks about his district, and it serves as the foundation for the district's nationally recognized work in service-learning. The district is currently developing a rubric to assess its success in meeting the objectives in the portrait, and the school board already has a policy supporting service-learning. Rada has instituted what he calls "the big yellow bus policy," which requires that any teacher seeking transportation for a field trip must include a service-learning component.

The district's emphasis on active learning has not hurt students' academic achievement. Rada says when compared with other Oregon school districts with a similar proportion of students receiving free or reduced-price lunches, Nestucca Valley's standardized test scores are among the highest in the state.

Service-learning that links young people to the community and to important public policy issues is a way of life in the district. According to Rada, "If I were to go into the middle school and say, 'Hey, no more service-learning,' I would have teachers and kids, and to some extent parents, who would just come unglued . . . and say, 'No way! You're not taking that away from us!' . . . It makes learning a lot more meaningful to kids."

New Vista High School (Colorado)

One teaching strategy often used at New Vista is the Socratic seminar. This strategy is meant to help students work together to understand new concepts, and to get them to practice the skill of "having a voice" or taking a stand, defending it and learning more from conversations with other students.

New Vista High School, part of the Boulder Valley RE 2 School District in Boulder, Colorado, is a "high school of choice," which students may elect to attend instead of the school in their attendance area. Boulder is about 30 miles northwest of Denver, at the foot of the Rocky Mountains. In 2002-03 the school enrolled 348 students. Seven percent were Hispanic, 2% African American, 5% Asian/Pacific Islander and 1% American Indian. The district enrolled a total of 27,764 students that year, of whom 12% were Hispanic, 2% were African American, 6% were Asian/Pacific Islander and less than 1% were American Indian. Three percent of New Vista's students were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, compared with about 12% for the district.

In 2001 the Boulder Valley School District, like Nestucca Valley, began a project to determine the skills, knowledge and personal characteristics that future graduates of the

district should possess. In 2002 a steering committee produced "Profile of the New Century Graduate," which described these characteristics. They include knowledge of traditional academic subjects; mastery of skills such as communication, literacy, thinking and reasoning; and personal characteristics such as self-respect, courage, citizenship, ethical behavior and open-mindedness.

Yet the profile was not mentioned at all by New Vista staff interviewed for this study. This probably reflects the fact New Vista was designed to provide a unique educational program, and staff choose to work there precisely because of its uniqueness within the district. New Vista, which opened in 1993, offers students a significant amount of flexibility to determine the course of their high school education, so it attracts students for whom the traditional high school experience is too restrictive, not challenging or simply not engaging.

New Vista's educational approach involves helping students choose an "Individual Student Path" and assisting them in selecting educational opportunities that help them along their chosen path. The school's schedule reflects its unique approach, with a modified block schedule that includes options for shorter class periods; extended advisory periods; "seminar/intensives"; teacher-student conference time; workshops; and "Community Experience" (CE), which is an unpaid weekly placement in a local business, government agency or community-based organization.

The desire of New Vista staff to create a sense of community in the school is reflected in its responsiveness to problems. When student drug use during off-campus activities became a problem, staff reworked the daily schedule, brought in a facilitator and held a "community conversation" about how to resolve the issue. In addition, opportunities for student choice are not limited to selecting from a given menu of courses and extracurricular activities; Principal Rona Wilensky says students understand that they can create new opportunities – such as a volleyball team or a dance company – by working with staff.

New Vista's vision statement begins, "Graduates and staff of New Vista High School are thoughtful, proficient, respectful and creative individuals who actively participate in shaping the future of their communities," and every Wednesday afternoon is reserved for community-based activities. Most students enroll in CE, while others attend workshops on a variety of topics that reflect the interests and skills of the community members who teach them. Students also may enroll in in-depth, community-based learning experiences called "Learning Unit Contracts" (LUC). In the case of both CE and LUC, students must arrange the learning experiences and recruit adult mentors and sponsors, though they are assisted by New Vista staff.

Students at New Vista must take a number of courses to meet the "Common Learning" requirements in traditional academic disciplines, as well as courses on inter- and intra-personal skills. They use what they learn in these courses to determine their path. Once the path is established, students must work with an advisor to develop a graduation proposal and identify a graduation committee consisting of the advisor, a community expert, a fellow student, a significant adult (usually not a parent), a 9th- or 10th-grade student observer and an optional "ad hoc" resource person. Finally, students must complete a Culminating Project that reflects their ability to carry out self-directed, rigorous work.

Social studies Teacher John Zola explains one teaching strategy often used at New Vista is the Socratic seminar. This strategy is meant to help students work together to understand new concepts, and to get them to practice the skill of "having a voice" or taking a stand, defending it and learning more from conversations with other students. Zola says they learn through these seminars that "the coin of the realm in a democracy is conversation." Because social studies teachers at the school believe an essential civic skill is the ability to take and defend a position, they agreed all social studies courses would require students to complete position papers.

Students may teach courses on topics in which they are interested, and may even co-teach core subjects with faculty members. The course catalog reflects the diverse interests of faculty. Wilensky provides an example of a math teacher in the school who has an MBA and is working on a novel, and teaches business courses and a course on writing personal narratives. Despite New Vista's nontraditional approach, students do well on state tests.

The staff makes decisions by consensus, and they try to cultivate in students the sense that New Vista is a participatory community. Wilensky believes a democratic decisionmaking process among staff encourages democratic practices in the classroom. When the Colorado Legislature passed a new Pledge of Allegiance requirement, the staff agreed to read *Barnett v. West Virginia*, a Supreme Court case brought by Jehovah's Witness parents against a similar pledge requirement. Wilensky saw the decision as an opportunity for civic education and hoped to have students read the case too, and use what they learned to decide how to respond to the Pledge requirement.

According to Community Experience Program Coordinator Sophia Stoller, New Vista does not formally assess what students learn through their community experience, though they are evaluated by their community-placement supervisors who must complete a final report. Stoller says feedback from the community indicates students interact well with adults in the community, and they are good at "navigating systems in the community." The fact that this

particular experience is not assessed as rigorously as other learning experiences at New Vista seems less important than that students' placement in the community contributes to their overall learning experience (their path) and helps them prepare for their culminating project.

Peoples Academy (Vermont)

Located in Morrisville, Vermont, 30 miles north of Montpelier and 45 miles east of Burlington, Peoples Academy (PA) is part of the Morristown School District in rural northern Vermont. Peoples Academy, the district's only high school, enrolled 387 students in 2002-03, while the district enrolled a total of 1,051 students. The ethnic/racial breakdown and free/reduced-price lunch numbers were unavailable for either the school or the district. The total percentage of minority students in Vermont in 2002-03, however, was only about 4%, and state assessment reports indicate there were fewer than 10 students in any of the three state-recognized minority groups reported for PA.

PA was part of Project 540, a national initiative to encourage students to discuss and take action on issues of concern within their schools. PA participated in the New American Schools initiative in the early 1990s, and was a demonstration site for the High Schools on the Move initiative, an effort to reinvigorate the state's high schools. Like Nestucca Valley, teachers at PA were trained in place-based education through the Vermont Rural Partnership. Dorinne Dorfman, coordinator of the school's Individualized Studies program, says PA has in recent years moved from a fairly traditional educational approach to one much more encouraging of student voice, and the school has made a greater effort to reach out to the community.

PA, like New Vista High School, aims to meet students' individual learning styles and educational goals, while linking them to the larger community. The result is a variety of programs to suit students' needs, including the Career Academy of the Arts, Learning Through Internship and the Individualized Studies program. All three programs require students create personal learning plans and arrange learning activities that support their plan. All three programs are designed to build personal relationships between students and adults, both in the school and in the community.

PA includes both a middle and high school, and students in grades 7-12 may complete Individualized Studies (IS). Students seeking to complete an IS must develop a Learning Activity Proposal that includes the goals of the study, a timeline, resources that will be used and tools for evaluation. Students must select a teacher advisor with whom they will meet weekly and document their progress in a journal. Every student must complete a final project based on research conducted during the study and make an oral presentation to an audience chosen by the student. The teaching load for teachers who agree to serve as IS advisors is reduced, and every teacher in the school has participated, though Dorfman says the real incentives for teachers are the opportunity to work more closely with individual students and to explore topics about which they are passionate.

People's Academy has in recent years moved from a fairly traditional educational approach to one much more encouraging of student voice, and the school has made a greater effort to reach out to the community

PA students also may arrange and receive credit for Community Based Learning (CBL), but only if they are enrolled in IS and have an advisor and a study plan. CBL may include job shadowing, internships, paid work experience, service-learning, short-term community projects or other experiences determined by the student. Finally, students can take on a Capstone Project, which is an opportunity to engage in in-depth career exploration or service-learning. Capstone requirements are similar to those for IS, but students also must complete an internship or a service-learning project and a Capstone Thesis. Through a Capstone Project, students can earn at least 10 credits and receive a Capstone endorsement on their transcripts, denoting completion of an extensive, rigorous, community-based learning experience.

All these study options at PA are designed to help students meet Vermont's state standards. Students who enroll in IS are provided with copies of the state standards to use in writing their Learning Activity Proposals. The standards are divided into two areas: the Fields of Knowledge (academic subject areas) and the Vital Results. The Vital Results are sets of skills and dispositions that cut across all Fields of Knowledge. They are described under the headings of "communication," "reasoning and problem solving," "personal development," and "civic and social responsibility."

According to students, PA's participation in Project 540 led to the redesign of the school's student government program. Previously, student government had been an extracurricular activity that provided little opportunity for student input in policy decisions. In 2003-04, student government was to be co-facilitated by Dorfman and a student. In preparation for the course, Dorfman and the student facilitator received training in youth-adult partnerships and democratic processes through the Vermont Rural Partnership and the Rural School and Community Trust. Part of students' involvement in the course will be to design the course itself. Students are to be graded on their level of participation and will serve as an advisory body for Principal Otho Thompson.

Another objective of the student leadership course will be to determine how to carry out the action plan developed through the school's participation in Project 540. Additional goals in the plan include getting the school board to include students as nonvoting members and developing a school leadership team that would include administration, faculty and students. According to Dorfman, the school already involves students in hiring decisions, and the foreign language department has involved students in curriculum development.

Place-based learning is important at Peoples Academy. Social studies Teacher Trevor Putnain does a Community History Project through the Vermont Historical Society in which students interact with community members and work with the local historical society. In 2002-03 they examined the effects of U.S. foreign policy on Morrisville by interviewing veterans and their wives, and reviewing historical artifacts. Students are using what they have learned to better understand and assess current U.S. foreign policy. French Teacher Van Carr has encouraged students to learn about Quebecois cultural influences on the community by interviewing community members who have emigrated from Quebec to get their advice in building a French Quebec bread oven and designing a French garden.

Irvington, which began a restructuring effort in 1990, organizes its instructional program around four School Wide Outcomes (SWOs) for students: personal responsibility, social responsibility, communication and critical thinking.

According to Assistant Superintendent Bob Stanton of the Lamoille South Supervisory Union, which provides services to schools in Morrisville and two other nearby communities, administrators have been trained to create school environments in which teachers feel free to offer their opinions on school policies and are willing to subject their own practice to public scrutiny. Principals have been trained to facilitate public dialogue to encourage community involvement (including students) in school planning and decisionmaking. Stanton gives much of the credit for the support for multiple learning pathways in Vermont's schools to the state's three most recent commissioners of education and the state board of education, and to the fact that Vermont is a small, rural state in which policymakers and citizens can speak with one voice on many issues.

Irvington High School (California)

Irvington High School is a large, urban high school located in Fremont, California, which lies on the east side of the San Francisco Bay. In 2002-03, Irvington enrolled a total of 1,965 students. Enrollment was 44% white; 38% Asian, Pacific Islander or Filipino; 13% Hispanic; 4% African American and 1% American Indian. The Fremont Unified School District enrolled a total of 31,452 students, with Asian, Pacific Islander and Filipino students representing 46% of district enrollment, white students 33%, Hispanic 14%, African American 6% and American Indian 1%. Eight percent of Irvington's students were eligible for free or reduced-price lunches, compared with 14% for the district as a whole.

In 2000, the Fremont Unified School District adopted a policy that requires all high school students to complete 40 hours of service-learning to graduate. In 2001, the district's efforts were given a boost by the city of Fremont, which adopted a Community Building and Engagement Initiative to encourage resident involvement in the community. One of the initiative's four primary strategies was to support service-learning to strengthen youth involvement in civic life. In 2002, the school district and the city established a Service-Learning Partnership that included students, parents, teachers, school administrators and community members. This group developed a service-learning strategic plan for 2002-07 that includes numerous goals and objectives in the areas of community collaboration, staff and curriculum development, and resource and organizational development.

Yet despite these collaborative efforts by the city and the school district, Claudia Albano of the city's Office of Neighborhoods says it is sometimes difficult to penetrate school district bureaucracy. Despite the service-learning graduation requirement, says Albano, there is no clear process for community-based organizations seeking to work with students at schools other than Irvington on a given project. For this reason, Albano plans to develop a pamphlet for community members that explains service-learning and provides contact information and directions on how to work with the district.

According to the school's 2000 Service-Learning Leader School application, more than half of the school's full-time faculty offered at least one service-learning project that year. Irvington has attempted to institutionalize the use of service-learning by giving social science Teacher Nate Ivy an extra daily class period to coordinate the school's service-learning efforts (in addition to the period the district funds at each high school).[1] And because the district uses

[1] While I was interviewing a district staffer, however, Irvington faculty were meeting to discuss whether increased enrollments and declining funding would require them to increase their class sizes in 2003-04 in order for Ivy to maintain the additional period for service-learning work.

a site-based management system, Irvington is able to tailor its daily schedule to facilitate the use of service-learning and other community-learning activities.

Like New Vista, Irvington High requires a culminating project for graduating seniors, called "QUEST." QUEST includes five components: question, understand, experience, service and testimony. Students must develop an essential question on a topic of their own choosing; investigate, research and reflect on the question; create an experience plan (job shadowing, volunteering, etc.); design and implement an activity through which they share their knowledge with the community by providing a service; and present the project to a panel of staff, parents and community members. In addition to the district's 40-hour service requirement, graduating seniors may receive 2.5 credits for their service.

Irvington High provides opportunities for student leadership beyond the typical student council and co-curricular activities. According to Principal Pete Murchison, a student runs the high school's site council. The school also operates a service board made up of students who help teachers design service projects and make connections within the community, introduce new students to service-learning and assist other students in finding opportunities to meet the service-learning graduation requirement. And the district operates a service board with representatives from each high school. One member of that board reports to the school board.

According to Linda Garbarino, director of educational resources for the district, Fremont Unified has a school board and a community that expect schools to offer a variety of learning opportunities to students. One manifestation of this expectation is the district's service-learning policy, and the one-hour preparation for service-learning coordination at each high school, which is supported through the district's general fund. Garbarino says during recent budget discussions, preparation time was on the list of possible cuts. But through a number of budget hearings with various community groups, it was clear the community never considered eliminating it.

As at New Vista, a state patriotism law provided a vehicle for a lesson in civics at Irvington. In California, schools are required to offer some sort of patriotic activity every day. Murchison played Kate Smith's version of "God Bless America" over the public address system one day, and a student reacted angrily, charging a violation of the constitutional separation of church and state. Murchison responded by inviting the student to form a committee to develop strategies to meet the law's requirements. She agreed and with the help of Social Studies Department Chairman Cheryl Cook-Kallio, the committee has generated a number of unique strategies to engage both students and staff in reflection on the nature of patriotism.

In another example of the administration's efforts to share decisionmaking with students, the school received a state award of $100,000 one year for performing well on state tests. Murchison decided to allow the students to determine how to spend half of the award, and aside from $1,000 for a Viking mascot uniform, they spent it on educational materials. Murchison says if a principal with a more authoritarian style took over, he or she would have a difficult time at Irvington because staff are used to having a role in major decisions, and students are used to being listened to. According to Vice Principal Dave Howell, "I think the real key is we aren't afraid to listen to kids. We aren't afraid to say . . . kids have opinions that are valuable, which to me sends the citizenship message from the very beginning: They are not outsiders. They are not people who have no voice in what's going on. They have a profound voice in what's going on around here."

Hudson High School (Massachusetts)

Hudson High School is located in Hudson, Massachusetts, about 28 miles west of Boston. In 2002-03 the Hudson Public Schools enrolled 2,769 students, and 980 students attended the high school. The high school's student body was 96% white, 1.8% Hispanic, 1.2% African American, 0.7% Asian and 0.2% Native American. The district numbers were 93.8% white, 2.9% Hispanic, 1.4% Asian, 1.4% African American, and 0.4% Native American. About 9% of the high school's students were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, compared with 12% of students across the district.

Since 1993 the Hudson Public Schools have been shaped by the vision of District Superintendent Sheldon Berman. New teachers, elite private-school teachers and retired teachers alike come to Hudson because they want to work for Berman. He publishes widely, has authored a book on the development of social responsibility in children, is a co-founder of Educators for Social Responsibility, and has a national reputation as an innovator.

Berman is a prolific fundraiser. The district has received funding to support student involvement in decisionmaking from the Pew Charitable Trusts and the Freedom Forum. Like Peoples Academy, Hudson High was part of Project 540 through the district's membership in the ELNA Collaborative (Education and Leadership for a Nonviolent Age), a regional coalition of schools and districts to support youth civic participation, leadership and social responsibility. Hudson High is also a First Amendment School and a National Service-Learning Leader School (as is the middle school), and the district was designated a National District of Character by the Character Education Partnership in 2001-02.

The use of service-learning in Hudson is widespread, but the district's real uniqueness is in its use of democratic

governance to organize instruction. Hudson does not have a typical student council because Berman, a former social studies teacher with a background in moral education and the development of "social consciousness," believes many young people are not developmentally able to appreciate representative democracy without first experiencing direct democracy. Hudson, which includes grades 8- 12, organizes 10th- through 12th-grade students and staff into four multigrade clusters (based on career pathways) to facilitate dialogue, and uses a schedule that includes one hour a week for discussion of school governance issues. Students remain in these clusters for three years, though they may take courses in other clusters. The school also utilizes a community council, which is made up of delegates from every cluster and the community. The council coordinates suggestions from the clusters and makes school governance decisions and recommendations.

Hudson, which includes grades 8-12, organizes 10th-through 12th-grade students and staff into four multigrade clusters (based on career pathways) to facilitate dialogue, and uses a schedule that includes one hour a week for discussion of school governance issues.

The 8th and 9th grades are each self-contained clusters separate from the 10th- through 12th-grade governance clusters. Ninth-grade English and social studies teachers collaborate on a yearlong course based on the essential question, "What is a just society and an individual's responsibility for creating a just society?" Students study the conditions and events that gave rise to the Holocaust and the Armenian genocide, using the *Facing History and Ourselves* curriculum. Ninth-graders learn about the formation of personal identity and how cultural and political institutions influence and shape people, and about the human potential (including their own) for passivity and complicity in state-sponsored violence. At the same time, service-learning is used to help students understand their obligation to the community, and to build basic civic skills such as writing press releases and letters, and making phone calls to seek information and assistance.

Civics is at the core of the social studies program at Hudson High. But rather than the traditional emphasis on the structures and functions of government, the orientation is toward "developing conceptions of justice and visions of how our community and world could be," understanding human behavior and "developing the capacity and the skills necessary to participate actively as a citizen in our democracy and in our world." The social studies curriculum is organized around inquiry, with service-learning as a central instructional methodology, and voting, volunteerism and activism as the primary modes of assessment.

Alternative forms of assessment are encouraged in all disciplines, across the district, to allow students to demonstrate their mastery of content knowledge and skills. Yet the percentage of students at Hudson High who received "advanced" or "proficient" scores on the state's 2003 standardized assessment was slightly higher than the state average in three out of the four subjects tested in the 8th and 9th grades.

Although much of Hudson's success in recent years is a product of its superintendent's unique vision (the new high school building was built to accommodate the cluster system and provide students with opportunities to experience direct democracy), the district's experience does offer lessons for other districts – though not without some fairly serious rethinking of the traditional high school model. The transformation of Hudson from a fairly average district in an aging industrial New England town to one of the most innovative districts in the country has not happened overnight. More than half of the teachers in the district and three-quarters of those in the high school have been hired since Berman came to Hudson in 1993. Those same teachers sit in on interviews with job applicants, and the recruitment and hiring process (down to the advertisements for teaching positions in the district) ensures that new hires support the district's emphasis on fostering social responsibility in students. Berman says it has taken a number of years to gain the support of both the high school principal and the school committee (Massachusetts' version of the school board), and with new members joining the school committee and the principal's approaching retirement, that effort continues.

Citizenship Education Strategies

High schools across the country approach the task of educating students for citizenship in a variety of ways, reflecting diverse beliefs about the role of schools and the nature of citizenship. Many school districts maintain mission statements that include language about the importance of preparing students for citizenship, yet clear instructional goals and strategies that might help teachers translate this language into practice are relatively rare. Rarer still are mechanisms to hold schools and teachers accountable for the development of students' civic skills and dispositions.

A number of the schools described here have more directly addressed citizenship than most high schools, yet their approaches to the task vary considerably. And even in

these schools, staff admit that most of their assessments of students' civic skills and dispositions – as opposed to civic knowledge – are informal. In other words, teachers can easily gauge students' knowledge of history, civics, economics and other social studies subject areas through paper-and-pencil tests. But because assessment of students' skills and dispositions is a more complex task, teachers are less likely to be held accountable for enhancing them, and therefore less likely to prioritize them. And because many states are reducing the use of standardized tests in the social studies to make room for increased testing in mathematics and reading, it is difficult to get a handle on these schools' success in improving even students' civic knowledge.

This study's purpose is to highlight some promising practices in citizenship education. Because of the difficulty of measuring the most important outcome of citizenship education – namely, effective civic participation after high school – a case for the practices used in these schools cannot definitively be made. But there is a growing consensus in the field of civic education on a number of strategies, and these schools can enhance one's understanding of how such approaches look "on the ground."

The Civic Mission of Schools recommends six strategies for enhancing civic knowledge, skills and attitudes; and encouraging political and community participation. They are classroom instruction in government, history, law and democracy; discussion of current events and issues; service-learning; extracurricular activities that support students' involvement in their schools and communities; opportunities for student participation in school governance; and simulations of democratic processes and procedures. The schools in this study have together embraced all these strategies, though not all schools have used every approach.

Not surprisingly, all schools discussed here provide classroom instruction in the social studies. State standards and testing requirements have a significant impact on instructional practices, but social studies teachers still have plenty of room for creativity. John Zola at New Vista High School uses Socratic seminars and position papers as well as textbooks and lecture to teach history, civics and political philosophy. Peoples Academy's Trevor Putnain has taught U.S. history and foreign policy by having students interview local elders and study documents at the local history museum. Nestucca Valley students providing service for elderly residents stopped to visit with one of these residents and were riveted by her description of her experience in a Nazi prison camp. Cheryl Cook-Kallio at Irvington High School helps students understand the U.S. Constitution and their rights as citizens by examining contemporary public policy issues such as California's "three-strikes" law for repeat offenders and the Patriot Act.

It is likely students in all these schools discuss current events at some point. According to *The Civic Mission of Schools*, 88% of high school seniors reported on the 1998 NAEP Civics Assessment that they discussed current events in class. Sometimes events themselves make such conversations nearly unavoidable. Teachers and students at several of the schools in the study reported that the events of September 11, 2001, required a significant amount of discussion. Nestucca High School offers a course in current events that is very popular among students, while a student at Greely High School reported discussing current events in every class. In the other schools, however, such discussions seemed to be less common.

There is a growing consensus in the field of civic education on a number of strategies, and these schools can enhance one's understanding of how such approaches look "on the ground."

All but two of these 10 high schools have embraced service-learning as a vehicle for involving students in the community. Although they do not engage in service-learning, students at New Vista High School work with community members in one way or another every week through Community Experience or other school programs. And although Fowler High School has not used service-learning extensively, Superintendent John Cruz anticipates increasing use of this strategy to support the district's character education goals.

Extracurricular activities are available in all these schools. In some cases, student government is extracurricular, but the trend seems to be toward creating leadership courses that are open to elected class officers and anyone else who wishes to be involved in school decisionmaking. Irvington High School's Cheryl Cook-Kallio is a strong advocate of the Center for Civic Education's We The People program, which involves students in the study of civics and government both in class and through extracurricular work. Students in Cook-Kallio's program are clearly knowledgeable about government and current political issues, and demonstrate an encouraging enthusiasm for politics and civic engagement.

The most common extracurricular activities – after-school sports – are available in all these schools. Sports are often seen as exercises in character building. Indeed, team sports can help foster leadership skills and the willingness to work and sacrifice for the larger group. But after-school sports in the schools in this study do not appear to be deliberately used as a strategy for building citizenship skills or attitudes.

A number of the schools in this study have made significant modifications to their systems of student, school or district governance to involve students more directly in decisionmaking. Several school districts have student members on the school board – though most do not have voting rights. As mentioned above, several schools have linked student government to a leadership course to involve more students, while also providing the opportunity for more intensive faculty guidance and leadership skill development. The most radical redesign is clearly at Hudson High School, which has made student involvement in school decisionmaking the centerpiece of its efforts to develop students' sense of social and civic responsibility.

As reported in *The Civic Mission of Schools*, empirical support for a link between participation in simulations of democratic processes and procedures (such as mock trials) and actual increases in civic participation is less robust than for the other recommended strategies. But simulations can help increase students' civic knowledge and interest in politics. Social studies teachers interviewed for this study, however, did not indicate that simulations were a major part of their instructional approach.

While these 10 schools differ in terms of classroom practice, organization of the curriculum and the school day, and the extent to which citizenship goals are made explicit, all the schools offer community-based learning to students. They also partner with community-based organizations and local, state and federal agencies to do so. Adult community members act as teachers, mentors, allies and partners for students. Through partnerships, students in these schools to varying degrees learn about the diversity of roles that community members play in maintaining the community, and the importance of being engaged in the community.

Two of the schools examined here – Irvington and New Vista High Schools – require completion of culminating projects for graduation. Peoples Academy also gives students the opportunity to complete a culminating project for credit, though it is not required for graduation. Culminating projects provide a good vehicle for students to demonstrate a variety of civic competencies such as planning, organizing and public speaking. When such projects include a community component such as a service project, students can acquire such skills as recruiting and working with adult partners, while they learn about local politics and public policy. When they include public demonstration of students' skills and knowledge, they can provide a wonderful way for schools to connect with their communities and reinforce the idea that education is about more than academics.

Policy Implications

One theme that became clear in studying these schools is that much of what schools do can be seen as education for citizenship, even if staff do not necessarily use that terminology. All public high schools teach civics, all good teachers try to model good character for their students, and all schools seek to encourage personal responsibility. Most schools attempt to provide opportunities for student leadership, and to cultivate good decisionmaking skills. A critical question, however, is whether all these efforts result in active civic participation by young people *after they leave high school*. Even with respect to the promising practices described here, the results are unclear.

One reason this study emphasized process rather than outcomes is that the most important outcomes of citizenship education – students' ability and willingness to participate effectively in the political process, as well as their actual participation in it after graduation – are difficult to measure. Students' knowledge of American history, economic systems and the structure and functions of government can be easily measured through paper-and-pencil assessments. Real civic engagement, however, requires a variety of skills, including the ability to weigh the consequences of particular public policy options, to speak publicly and be persuasive, to lead or follow as the situation merits and to identify partners and seek their support. Such skills can certainly be assessed, but not without a significant investment of time. And because time is limited and state assessments focus primarily on knowledge, the choice for most teachers is clear.

As long as the public continues to accept the idea that the primary purpose of K-12 education is the preparation of young people for college or jobs, without recognizing the role of schools in maintaining American democracy, and as long as policymakers believe the best way to fulfill this mission is through state accountability systems that emphasize standardized reading and math assessments and sanctions for schools that do not measure up, civic engagement will continue to decline.

If, on the other hand, policymakers and local education and community leaders do wish to support the civic mission of schools, there are a number of actions they can take.

States Can:

- Include understanding of local government, politics and issues in state standards, curriculum resources and teacher professional development programs

- Include school-community collaboration and partnerships in the state's school and district accountability programs (e.g., require schools to provide the number of students involved in service-learning or list community partners in their annual reports)
- Recognize and reward outstanding school and district civic education programs and governance models that give students a legitimate role in decisionmaking, and establish mechanisms for sharing such programs statewide
- Recognize that not all learning can be measured on a standardized test; encourage and support alternative assessments, and include the results of such assessments in state accountability systems.

Local Government Can:

- Provide internships and other opportunities for students to participate in and learn about local government agencies and governance. Because such efforts will require staff time to be effective, create an expectation among staff and local policymakers that cultivating future leaders is part of the job, and provide the time and incentives for doing so.

Elected Officials Can:

- Regularly visit schools to discuss the legislative process and answer students' questions
- Provide internships and other opportunities for young people to learn about legislation and public policy firsthand.

Schools of Education Can:

- Teach teachers that citizenship is as important as academics and the responsibility of every teacher to encourage students' citizenship skills
- Teach teachers how to work with community members, agencies and community-based organizations to provide students with learning opportunities to learn in and from the community
- Teach teachers how to design and use alternative assessments such as portfolios, public demonstrations and culminating projects
- Teach teachers to work collaboratively across discipline areas.

Schools and School Districts Can:

- Require culminating projects that include evidence of community-based learning and service to the community, as well as public demonstration of skills and knowledge
- Cultivate community members as educators inside and outside the school
- Encourage community-based learning strategies such as service-learning
- Teach students about local government, politics and issues; encourage students to participate in public meetings and to contact local officials on issues they are concerned about; and prepare them to do so effectively
- Provide time and incentives for teachers to collaborate with one another and with community members to plan lessons and assessments that foster in students an orientation toward community involvement and the skills to participate effectively
- Cultivate a democratic climate by providing opportunities for student and teacher participation in school and district decisionmaking such as principal advisory boards and designated student positions on curriculum committees, hiring committees, site-based planning teams or the school board.

While all these recommendations are important and promising strategies for reinvigorating the civic mission of schools, the first and most important step is for schools and school districts to come to agreement on the skills, knowledge and dispositions necessary for effective democratic citizenship. Most states have developed academic standards for civics, and these documents should serve as a starting place for local efforts. Several high-quality national standards, such as those created by the Center for Civic Education, can also be useful.

Once local educators and community members agree on what they want students to know and be able to do, they will likely realize that much of what already happens in schools can and does support citizenship education. By making more explicit the connections between those teaching strategies and the community's agreed-upon civic outcomes, by encouraging teachers to share best practices with their colleagues and by working to create opportunities for more student involvement in decisionmaking in school and the community, communities and schools succeed together in preparing the next generation of community and civic leaders and active citizens.

This policy brief was written by Jeffery J. Miller, policy analyst, ECS National Center for Learning and Citizenship. Support was provided by the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE). Miller may be reached at 303.299.3665 or jmiller@ecs.org.

The Education Commission of the States (ECS) National Center for Learning and Citizenship (NCLC)

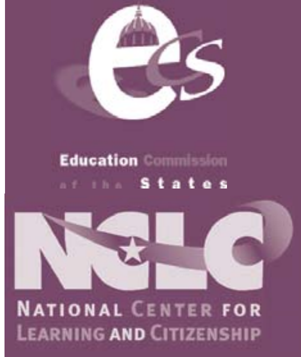
The ECS National Center for Learning and Citizenship (NCLC) assists state and district policymakers and educators who are developing policies that support K-12 school-based service-learning opportunities. These educational experiences help students acquire the skills, values, knowledge and practice necessary to be effective citizens. NCLC identifies and analyzes policies and practices that support effective citizenship education, creates and disseminates publications for education stakeholders, and convenes meetings to develop a collective voice for citizenship education and civic mission of schools. NCLC also encourages policy support and system structures to integrate service-learning into schools and communities. For more information, contact Terry Pickeral, NCLC executive director, 303.299.3636 or visit www.ecs.org/nclc.

© 2004 by the Education Commission of the States (ECS). All rights reserved. ECS is a nonprofit, nationwide organization that helps state leaders shape education policy.To request permission to excerpt part of this publication, either in print or electronically, please fax a request to the attention of the ECS Communications Department, 303.296.8332 or e-mail ecs@ecs.org. To order a copy of this report, please call the ECS Distribution Center at 303.299.3692 and ask for publication SL-03-05, available for $5.00 and includes postage and handling.

Helping State Leaders Shape Education Policy

Education Commission of the States
700 Broadway, Suite 1200
Denver, CO 80203-3460

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Denver, Colorado
Permit No. 153



CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Policy Brief

Involving Students in Governance

November 2004

700 Broadway, Suite 1200 • Denver, CO 80203-3460 • 303.299.3600 • Fax 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

Introduction

Although the vast majority of K-12 teaching in the United States takes place in classrooms, children learn from peers, their parents and other adults, and they learn in and out of school. Recognizing the value of experiential learning, high schools often place students in internships or provide job-shadowing opportunities in the community. Science teachers involve students in local environmental projects such as water or soil testing. Civics teachers encourage students to attend city council meetings to learn about local politics. And nearly every high school offers students opportunities to participate in vocational student organizations, student government, team sports and other extracurricular activities aimed at giving students opportunities to learn, and apply their learning, outside the classroom.

Most state and local school systems include language in their mission or vision statements about cultivating active, involved community members and future leaders. The extracurricular activities mentioned above can provide many opportunities for leadership training, with student government probably the most clearly aimed at fostering student leadership. And civics or government courses can certainly provide opportunities for students to learn – and in some cases observe directly – how politics and government work. Yet the widely held belief that a quality education should include real-world experiences rarely leads school systems to involve students in governance and policymaking. Students are rarely involved in decisions about school or district programming, state or district graduation requirements, faculty hiring, teacher licensing or even the lunch menu – decisions that clearly affect them.

Many policymakers might argue that educational governance should be left to adults. But if the mission statements of many state and district boards of education are any indication, education is as much about fostering citizenship as it is about preparing students for college and the workplace. The skills of citizenship – including leadership and informed decisionmaking – must be learned. Involving students in governance is one way to provide opportunities for students to acquire and practice these skills. And while there are challenges for leaders to consider in bringing students into the decisionmaking process, there also are important benefits for the students, the community and the policymaking body itself.

The skills of citizenship – including leadership and informed decision-making – must be learned. Involving students in governance is one way to provide opportunities for students to acquire and practice these skills.

This policy brief presents some of these benefits, with examples from across the country. Discussion also centers on the challenges of involving young people in governance and a set of questions for state and local policymakers to consider. The conclusion provides recommendations for those considering this strategy and the useful resources helps you locate additional information on this issue.

Why involve students in governance?

Most secondary schools offer students the opportunity to participate in some sort of student government. And where student government was once restricted mostly to a few popular students elected by their peers, many schools now offer the opportunity for any student to participate. This is sometimes done through a student government course, in which students learn leadership and decisionmaking skills.

Some principals and superintendents have created student advisory groups with which they meet regularly. These groups offer the administrator an opportunity to explain policies and decisions to students, to hear directly from students about their concerns and to seek their insights. Some school boards devote a portion of their meetings to reports from students. Most administrators and board members report these arrangements are generally positive for students and board members, and are helpful in making policy decisions.

Yet none of these models really involves students in school or district policymaking. While students may be able to offer advice to principals, superintendents and board members, it is ultimately the adults who make the decisions about the issues that really matter.

Decisionmakers at the school, district and state levels might respond that children and teens do not have the maturity or breadth of experience to fully comprehend school budgets, staffing, instruction, facilities and legal matters that must be addressed by education leaders, and that involving young people would only slow things down.

It is true that involving students in the process may initially require extra time for both adults and students to become comfortable. But with proper training and some patience by adult policymakers, students are often able to contribute a great deal. In some cases the dynamic within a policymaking body may be changed for the better by the presence of

"For our nation's public schools to continue their vital role in our democracy, we need to develop our students' commitment to and understanding of that role.

These young citizens will eventually elect our replacements on school boards, as well as make critical decisions regarding the funding and purposes of public schools." (Morales and Pickeral 2004)

students, since members may feel obliged to be less confrontational, to articulate their arguments about the issues more clearly and to come to agreement through honest deliberation.

Larry Davis, executive director of the Washington State Board of Education, says students offer adult board members an immediate understanding of how a particular decision will affect students. According to Bill Keys, school board president for the Madison Metropolitan School District in Wisconsin, this takes much of the guesswork out of policymaking, especially for those board members who may not have much experience working directly with students.

There are other potential benefits of student involvement in governance to various stakeholders (Mantooth n.d. (a) and Zeldin, et. al 2000).

Benefits to student decisionmakers:

- Development of leadership and public-speaking skills, dependability and responsibility
- Better understanding of public policy and democratic processes
- Exposure to diverse people, ideas and situations
- Availability of more resources, support and role models
- Increased self-esteem, sense of personal control and identity.

Benefits to adult decisionmakers:

- More confidence working with and relating to youth
- Better understanding of the needs and concerns of youth, and increased sensitivity to programming issues within the organization
- Increased energy and commitment to the organization
- Stronger sense of connectedness to the community.

Benefits to organizations and their governing bodies:

- Increased clarity and focus on organizational mission
- More connected and responsive to youth, resulting in better programming
- More inclusive and representative, leading to better programming
- More attractive to funders.

Adolescents often complain that adults do not take their concerns seriously. While this may be true in some cases, young people often make this assumption even when their preferred policy option is rejected for legitimate reasons. Giving student representatives a place at the table and a genuine role in decisionmaking – and developing a process to ensure they accurately represent the concerns of their constituents – may help convince skeptical students that their voices are being heard by policymakers even when they do not get exactly what they want.

Another group that benefits from student involvement is the community as a whole. Young people who participate in governance learn leadership skills, develop habits of civic participation and become fluent in policymaking. Through experiences such as these, they are poised to become the next leaders in their communities. And even students who do not serve in leadership positions may become less cynical about politics if their very first experiences with representative democracy are positive.

Finally, involving students in policymaking may be one way to both ensure the long-term success of educational systems and preserve the legacy of current members. Students who participate in governance while attending school under the policies they help create and support can provide an important perspective on the efficacy of those policies and can help ensure more effective policies in the future. In addition, these students may be more likely to run for the school board when they become eligible to do so. What they learn from education leaders and policymakers with whom they work now will inform their decisions as future policymakers.

What do we mean by student involvement?

While little research exists on student involvement in school governance, there is significant literature on youth involvement in the governance of other types of organizations – typically those that serve youth. While community-based youth service providers are not subject to the same level of government oversight as public education, they can offer important lessons to schools, districts and states considering how best to involve students in decisionmaking.

Because they constantly struggle for funds to hire and retain staff, small youth service agencies often must rely on young people to help maintain the day-to-day operation of their programs. Because they see the development of leadership skills as an important component of youth development, these providers routinely create opportunities for youth leadership within the programs they offer and involve young people in programming decisions. In addition, foundations and other funders of youth programs have begun to require that

applicants demonstrate youth involvement in the development of funding proposals, and in overseeing and implementing the programs supported by whatever funding is awarded.

From youth involvement in operations, program design and fundraising, it is a short step to involving young people in planning and governance. The youth development field, as a result, has a history of involving students in decisionmaking that may be instructive. The quality of youth participation, however, varies. In some cases, young people are full partners with adults, offering ideas, discussing issues and working side by side with their adult colleagues. In others, youth act primarily as "window dressing" to make the organization more attractive to funders. Most models of youth engagement, however, fall somewhere between these two extremes. Figure 1 shows a typology representing one view of youth-adult partnerships in governance, with models deemed least inclusive and supportive of youth leadership at the bottom, and the best, most equitable models at the top.

While state law will determine the extent to which a district or state may involve students in actual policymaking, most of the differences in the levels of student involvement described in Figure 1 have to do with the comfort level of the adults involved. The quality of student participation depends, to a great extent, on the support given to the students by the adults, and the extent to which the students feel their contributions are valued by those adults. When young people are given opportunities to participate, they can surprise us with their maturity, acuity and wisdom. Yet like any of us, they also need the support and affirmation of mentors and role models.

Figure 1: Ladder of Youth Participation

- **Youth-adult shared decisions:** Youth and adults offer and accept each other's ideas, and young people's input on decisions is as valued as that of the adults.
- **Adult-initiated, shared decisions with youth:** Projects or programs are initiated by adults but decisionmaking is shared with youth.
- **Consulted and informed:** Youth give advice, but decisions are made by adults. Youth are informed about how their input will be used and the outcomes of the decisions made by adults.
- **Assigned but informed:** Youth are assigned specific roles and informed about how and why they are being involved.
- **Tokenism:** Young people appear to have a voice, but in fact they have little choice about their roles and responsibilities.
- **Decoration:** Youth are given symbolic but ultimately meaningless roles to make the organizations look good.
- **Manipulation:** Adults use youth to support causes and pretend the causes are inspired by youth.

(Adapted from Hart 1992)

Student involvement in district governance

One arena in which students are rarely involved in a substantive way – and one that affects them most directly – is school and district governance. On the one hand, it is not surprising that students are not more involved in decisions about such mundane topics as budgets, insurance and facilities. For example, college student Shreya Mehta, a 2004 graduate of Irvington High School in Fremont, California, worked on several political campaigns, interned with a state assemblyman during high school and plans to major in political science in college. Yet Shreya describes the only school board meeting she ever attended as "pretty boring."

But not all students share Shreya's sentiments. Danielle Kimble, another member of the class of 2004 from Charlevoix, Michigan, attended many school board and township board meetings during high school. Danielle participated in a signature drive to keep Wal-Mart out of her small town and worked with fellow students to get the state Legislature to adopt a law restricting the number of passengers that may ride with a driver holding only a learner's permit. Danielle says, "Local government intrigues me . . . immensely! They make decisions constantly that affect my life.

Another reason school boards do not involve students more often in decisionmaking is that under state law they are usually ineligible for public office. Yet many districts have found ways to include youth voices. The policy of the board of the Teton County School District #1 in Jackson, Wyoming, for example, states that student board members "shall not have an official vote in Board matters, but shall be entitled to an unofficial vote recorded in the minutes." The board of the Cumberland County School System, in Crossville, Tennessee, includes student members in the official roll call, invites students to participate in all discussions and gives student members an "honorary vote" that is not counted in the official tally.

Under Maryland state law, county boards of education may allow students to vote on some matters. In Baltimore County, for example, the student board member may vote on all matters except those relating to suspension or dismissal of teachers, principals and other professional personnel; collective bargaining; capital and operating budgets; school closings, reopenings and boundaries; and special education placement appeals.

A number of other states and territories explicitly provide for student membership in local school boards through state law (though none requires it), including Montana, Nebraska, New York, Puerto Rico, Utah and Virginia.

As described above, some districts seek student input through less direct means than seating students at the table with the school board such as student reports to the board and advisory groups to the superintendent. Some districts include students on curriculum committees, site-based management teams and even hiring committees. John Day, a veteran teacher at Greely High School in Cumberland, Maine, was a member of a hiring committee that included students. "I

remember sitting there, looking at a 9th grader, thinking that 'You have the same vote for staff that I have.' That's amazing."

Since most boards do not allow students to vote, many adult school board members believe the importance of students' participation lies in their contributions to board deliberations. Kim Goossens, a board member for the Garfield Re-2 School District in Rifle, Colorado, believes students' presence at her board's meetings helps keep conversations on track and more respectful. "We try to have the kind of meetings we're expected to be having, and should be having." Goossens and the other board members and staff interviewed for this paper agreed the most important consequence of student involvement is that it helps boards stay focused on the students they serve.

Student involvement in state policymaking

Though there are clearly many more opportunities for student involvement in decisionmaking at the school district and building level, a few states have established formal mechanisms for soliciting student voice on educational issues. A number of states provide for student representation on their respective state boards of education, and some have developed other strategies to secure student input on education and other areas in which young people have a stake.

Alaska, California, the District of Columbia, Hawaii, Iowa, Maryland, New Jersey, Tennessee and Washington all maintain student positions on their state boards of education. A typical example is Washington, where the state board has maintained nonvoting student positions for 27 years, according to executive director Larry Davis. There are two student positions on the board, and student board members are selected by the all-student board of directors of the Washington Association of Student Councils. Once selected, a student board member begins a two-year term in his or her junior year. The terms of the student board members are staggered, with the senior student serving as a mentor to the junior member. Davis is enthusiastic in his support for student involvement saying, "They're a constant reminder of why we're in this business."

The board of the District of Columbia Public Schools includes two student members, elected by the citywide Student Advisory Council and confirmed by the board. As members of any board committee, student members "have the right to vote, to make a quorum, and to participate as fully as any other member of the committee" (5 DC ADC s 116). Student votes during meetings of "the committee of the whole," however, are counted only for purposes of establishing a voting record and do not become part of the official vote.

Maryland's state board includes one student member, but in this case the governor selects one of two students nominated by the Maryland Association of Student Councils. The student board member is allowed to participate in executive sessions, but may not vote on dismissal or disciplinary action involving personnel, on budgets or on appeals under certain sections of the state education code.

Some states include students in state policymaking in other ways. Oregon's Youth Advisory Team, described above, is one example. A quick search of state codes provides three other examples of bodies that require student members, though there are probably many others: the California Child Nutrition Advisory Council, the New Hampshire Health Education Review Committee and the New Jersey Commission on Environmental Education. Not coincidentally, the work of these entities concerns education and children's issues.

Oregon State Superintendent's Youth Advisory Team

Oregon's State Board of Education does not have a student member. Yet Oregon offers a wonderful example of the seriousness with which students are willing to approach important governance issues when given the opportunity, and the high-quality work they are capable of producing. State Superintendent of Public Instruction Susan Castillo has established a Youth Advisory Team (YAT), with which she and her staff meet four times per school year. The YAT is made up of 20-25 students, 8th grade through college freshmen.

Prior to YAT meetings, members are sent relevant information and readings on the issues to be considered. At the meetings, YAT members hear from expert guests and are asked to make recommendations. In the past two years, the YAT has addressed issues such as high school reform and Oregon's Certificate of Advanced Mastery, changes in graduation requirements to better prepare students for college and work, and school safety. YAT has made recommendations on all these topics to the Oregon Department of Education (ODE), and the department publishes reports on the YAT meetings and recommendations, as well as the steps the department is taking to follow up on YAT recommendations.

In February 2004, for example, YAT considered the issue of school and district consolidation. The group heard from the administrator for the Oregon House Education Committee, the administrator for the State Board of Education and other ODE staff. Students learned about district mergers in Oregon and Arkansas, and about the effects on school districts of a property tax bill passed in the early 1990s and Oregon's 21st-Century Schools Act. The YAT recommended the development of a set of questions to be considered in making a consolidation decision (such as whether current course offerings are limited by the district's size, and the distance students would have to travel in a consolidated district). The students also suggested that students' current academic achievement be considered. According to the YAT report on this meeting, the state superintendent asked that the Legislature, the governor's office and the State Board of Higher Education consider the YAT recommendations, and the Senate Education Committee did indeed consider the issue and the YAT recommendations.

For more information on YAT, see www.ode.state.or.us/superintendent/yat.

Discussion

In a few states, student board members are allowed to vote on certain matters. In most, however, students' status as minors means that boards and other policymaking bodies have had to find other ways to elicit student voices on important policy issues and decisions. A few have settled on some form of unofficial vote, while for others students' most important contribution comes during board deliberations. In some cases, board policy limits students' ability to influence the board's deliberations. For example, board policy for the Gibbon-Fairfax-Winthrop Schools, in Minnesota, states that student board members do "not have the right to vote or make or second a motion." Other districts seek to actively encourage student participation. The board bylaws of the Davenport Community Schools, in Iowa, give student members "the privilege of submitting items for discussion on the board agenda except those items relating to personnel."

One issue boards need to consider, then, is their real purpose for involving students in governance, and whether their policies actually accomplish that purpose. An approach in which students come to meetings but are not allowed to initiate discussion on the issues that are important to them (or those they represent) falls near the bottom of the Ladder of Youth Participation in Figure 1. Such an approach is not likely to engage students fully. If a board genuinely seeks to design policy that is responsive to students' needs, it must create a process that encourages student input.

Another issue to consider is that of board diversity and representativeness. The students who are appointed or elected to school boards are likely to be the most motivated, high-achieving members of the student body. In a few places, attempts have been made to reach beyond the typical student leaders and involve a more diverse set of students in decisionmaking. Tennessee state law, for example, requires that if a school board includes student members, it must include four students, two of whom are enrolled in the college track and two in the technology track. The Davenport school board includes a student member from each of the district's three high schools and a special education student position, which rotates among the high schools.

One related finding, though anecdotal, is that for many of the state and district boards examined here student representatives are the only nonwhite members. Because the population of U.S. schools is becoming increasingly diverse, it is important that boards reflect this diversity. Students of any background must believe that leadership opportunities are open to them both now and when they are adults. Thus processes for student involvement that are fair and equitable can serve as strategies for making boards and other governing bodies more representative, and for cultivating leaders from minority communities.

Like any other innovation, student involvement in governance is more likely to be sustained if there is a policy in place to support it. But the specifics of the policy are critical. The policy of the Garfield Re-2 School District, for example, describes the rationale and goals for student participation in the district's board of education, the duties of the student representative, length of terms and voting restrictions, and the Student Ambassador program. But the policy does not spell out how the district will support the student representative. As a result, Kim Goossens, the board member responsible for getting the policy adopted, spends a significant amount of her own time providing support for student board members and the Student Ambassador Program. Goossens enjoys working with the students, but when she was ill recently, she says the program "stumbled." She has asked other board members for help, but worries the program is not sustainable.

Selection or Election of Student Representatives?

Policies designed to include representatives from certain student subgroups (e.g., special education, vocational track) do not necessarily mean student decisionmakers truly represent their constituents' interests. In some cases students are elected, and so are, theoretically, answerable to the students they represent. In Madison, Wisconsin, for example, the student representative to the board is one component of a two-part system designed to represent students' interests to the board. Any Madison high school student may run for a regular or alternate position on the board. A candidate forum is held for all students, and the candidates tour all the district's high schools, giving speeches and answering students' questions prior to a districtwide election.

The second part of Madison's system is the Madison Student Senate (MSS), which operates as a medium for communication between students and the school board. Members of the MSS include eight representatives from each high school, the student board member and alternate, and the losing candidates from the final election for the board. MSS members report to their respective student councils and fellow students. The alternate student board member is the MSS chair. Student groups may present information or concerns to the MSS, and the student board member may share these concerns with the school board as appropriate.

The student representative to the Madison school board receives one pass/fail credit for participation, with the school board determining whether to pass or fail the student. The student representative to the board may be impeached by a two-thirds vote of both the MSS and the school board.

In other cases, student representatives are not directly elected, but students are involved in the selection process. In Maryland, for example, student applicants for the state board of education are interviewed by officers of the Maryland Association of Student Councils (MASC), the current student member of the board and an adviser. Five candidates are selected to address about 800 students at the MASC Legislative Session and answer questions. Students attending the session cast ballots and select two finalists, and the governor selects one of the finalists to serve on the board.

By contrast, staff for the Washington State Board of Education provide support to student board members, briefing them prior to meetings and answering questions afterward if necessary. Larry Davis, executive director of the board, schedules a home visit each year with the new student member and his or her parents, and encourages student members to ask questions whenever they need help. In addition, the board's strategy of having an older, second-year student member mentor the first-year student member reduces the burden on staff and adult board members while also providing an opportunity for the elder student to be an "expert." The result, says Davis, is that while first-year student members do not contribute a great deal to board deliberations, by the second year they are very involved and contribute a great deal.

The student board member policy of the Teton County School District in Wyoming spells out a similar mentoring system. Student board members also are required to meet with the superintendent on a regular basis to discuss school board agenda items and matters to be discussed with the Student Impact Committee, which is comprised of students from the district's middle and high schools. Finally, new student board members must participate in board orientation and training throughout their first month on the board. By including these provisions in district policy, the board ensures student members will continue to be supported without placing a burden on a single board member.

Questions for policymakers

Before deciding to involve students in governance, boards and other governing bodies must assess their priorities and clarify their mission. For a variety of reasons, schools are focused more than ever before on improving the academic achievement of all students, especially in the areas of literacy, math and science. For many districts and states, the pressure to demonstrate constant improvement in these areas is intense. As such, many boards may find it difficult to justify what they perceive as the added responsibility of cultivating young leaders.

Most policymakers and education leaders would probably agree that one of the essential functions of public education in the United States is the preparation of citizens who understand and exercise their rights and responsibilities, and who are capable of participating in their own governance. Involving students in educational governance can be an effective way to serve this function. But policymakers must determine whether they have the commitment and capacity to involve students in a meaningful and productive way. A poorly designed program that does not effectively engage student representatives, or causes them to feel their contributions are not taken seriously (such as the approaches described at the lower end of the Ladder of Youth Participation in Figure 1), may actually increase student cynicism.

For those education leaders seeking to contribute to the civic mission of education by providing opportunities for students to participate in decisions about their own education, the following questions should be considered.

1. Does the state or district mission include the preparation of democratic citizens? Do policymakers believe it is their role to support this mission?
2. Are policymakers willing to adjust their culture and procedures to make youth feel welcome and supported? Are they willing to discuss student input on the merits, even when it conflicts with their own views?
3. What are the legal restrictions on student involvement in policymaking? If students may not vote, are there other ways policymakers can include student voices in decisionmaking?
4. Is creating student positions on the board of education the best approach? Would another model involving more students, such as an advisory group, provide students as valuable an experience in genuine decisionmaking?
5. What kind of training will student decisionmakers need to serve effectively? What kind of training will adult decisionmakers need to support student decisionmakers and get the most out of student involvement?
6. Will meetings be scheduled at times and locations that will allow student representatives to participate?
7. Does the policy provide students with the support they need to be successful (such as training, staff support, mentor(s) and formal and informal opportunities to ask questions and communicate with their adult colleagues)?
8. Does the policy ensure student representatives accurately reflect the interests and concerns of the student body, and effectively communicate policymakers' decisions to the student body?

Conclusion

All board members and staff interviewed for this paper were positive about their experiences involving students in decisionmaking. When asked specifically whether student involvement changed the dynamics of board meetings and deliberation, these education leaders responded that students' presence, in fact, improved board meetings by giving members a clearer understanding of the effects of their policy decisions on students, by helping focus the conversation and by reminding board members to behave in a respectful way.

Including students in governance provides opportunities to learn many of the essential skills of citizenship such as researching an issue, asking probing questions, developing and defending a position, negotiating, discussing and debating. Through participation in educational governance, students learn that public policy is made by the public, and that as citizens – even after they leave school – they have the skills, the knowledge and the right to participate in developing the policies that govern their lives.

Because of their history of involving youth in leadership and decisionmaking, professionals in the youth development field can serve as important partners for educators and policymakers in designing and supporting student leadership opportunities. Strong partnerships between education policymakers, teachers and community-based youth service providers can ensure programs designed to involve students in educational governance are well designed, are linked to classroom-based civics instruction, and students receive ongoing support and opportunities for reflection on the leadership lessons they learn.

While further study is needed to fully understand the effects on policy of different levels of student participation in policymaking, existing research on youth participation in the governance of youth-serving agencies indicates that greater involvement is better for youth, for the governing body and for the organization. Those already engaging students in decisionmaking appear to support this finding. Thus, if one of the goals of public education in a democracy is to prepare citizens to participate in their own governance, it seems logical that classroom-based civic education should be augmented with opportunities for young citizens to develop the competencies and practice the skills needed for effective participation.

Resources

Publications

Bernard, H. (n.d.). *The Power of an Untapped Resource: Exploring Youth Representation on Your Board or Committee*. Juneau, AK: Association of Alaska School Boards. www.aasb.org/publications/untapped_resource.pdf.

Fletcher, A. (n.d.). *Total Infusion: District Scores 100% on Student Involvement in Decision-Making*. www.soundout.org/features/annearundel.html.

Hart, R.A. (1992). *Children's Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship*. Florence, Italy: UNICEF International Child Development Centre.

Jacobson, L. (2004). "Students Bring Youthful Perspective to State Ed. Boards." *Education Week*, January 21, 2004. www.edweek.org/ew/ewstory.cfm?slug=19Politics.h23&.

Kersten, B. (2004). "Responsible Party." *Teacher Magazine* 15(4): 18-22. www.teachermagazine.org/tmstory.cfm?slug=04Party.h15.

MacGregor, M. (2001). "Engaging Emerging Leaders: Working with Young and Nontraditional Student Leaders." *Leadership for Student Activities.* www.nasc.us/leadershipmag/1203_emerging_leaders.cfm.

Mantooth, L.J. (n.d.). (a) *Youth in Governance: A Guide for Involving Youth as Decision Makers on Boards and Committees* and (b) *Youth in Governance: How To Be a Decision Maker in Your Community.* Agricultural Extension Service, The University of Tennessee. www.utextension.utk.edu/4H/ythgov/resources.htm.

Marques, E.C. (1999). *Youth Involvement in Policy-Making: Lessons from Ontario School Boards*. Ottowa, ON (Canada): Institute on Governance. www.iog.ca/publications/policybrief5.pdf.

Morales, J. and T. Pickeral (2004). "Guest Viewpoint: Citizenship Education Should Be a Critical Focus of Public Schools." *School Board News*, August 3, 2004. www.nsba.org/site/doc_sbn_issue.asp?TRACKID=&VID=55&CID=682&DID=34237.

Project 540 (2004). *Students Turning into Citizens: Lessons Learned from Project 540*. Providence, RI: Providence College.

Young, K.S. and J. Sazama (1999). *14 Points: Successfully Involving Youth in Decision Making*. Somerville, MA: Youth on Board. www.youthonboard.org/publications.htm.

Zeldin, S., A.K. McDaniel, D. Topitzes and M. Calvert (2000). *Youth in Decision-Making: A Study on the Impacts of Youth on Adults and Organizations*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Extension. www.atthetable.org/images/Details/03130216081398_YouthinDecisionMakingReportRevised9-01.pdf.

Organizations

At The Table, www.atthetable.org.

The Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development, www.theinnovationcenter.org.

Youth on Board, www.youthonboard.org.

Sample District Policies

Culver City Unified School District, Culver City, CA. Board Bylaw 9150, *Student Board Members*, www.ccusd.k12.ca.us/Board/Policies/9000/9150bb.htm.

Davenport Community Schools, Davenport, IA. Board Policy 901.6, *Student Board of Directors*, www.davenport.k12.ia.us/schoolboard/bpolicy/901.asp#901.6.

Gibbon-Fairfax-Winthrop Schools, Winthrop, MN. Policy 2.18, *Student Representative on the School Board*, www.gfw.k12.mn.us/board/GFW%20Policy%20Handbook.pdf

Madison Metropolitan School District, Madison, WI. Board of Education Policy 4501, *Student Representation on School Board*, www.madison.k12.wi.us/policies/4501.htm. Overview: www.madison.k12.wi.us/topics/senate/.

Milwaukee Public Schools, Milwaukee, WI. Administrative Policy 8.18, *Student Involvement in Decision Making*, www2.milwaukee.k12.wi.us/governance/rulespol/policies/PDF/CH08/8_18.pdf.

Prince George's County Public Schools, Upper Marlboro, MD. Board Bylaw 9271, *Individual Members: Student Board Member*, www.pgcps.org/~board/policy/9000bylawsofthe_/bylaw9271student/office2k/office2k.htm.

Teton County School District #1, Jackson, WY. *Student School Board Member Job Description,* www.tcsd.org/Board/Student_Board_Info/Student_BOE_Job_Description.pdf.

Sample State Policies

California Education Code 33000.5: *Appointment of student members to State Board of Education*; and 35012: *Board members; number, election and terms; pupil members*.
California Government Code 3540-3549.3: *Meeting and Negotiating in Public Educational Employment*.

Code of District of Columbia Municipal Regulations, Title 5, Chapter 1, § 116: *Student Member of the Board*.

Consolidated Laws of New York (Education Law), Chapter 16, Title II, Article 35, § 1702: *Board of education; election; terms of office*.

Tennessee Code, Title 49, Chapter 2, Part 2, § 202: *Boards of Education – Members and Meetings*.

Jeffery J. Miller is a Denver-based educational consultant and writer, and a former policy analyst with the Education Commission of the States – National Center for Learning and Citizenship. He can be reached at 303.377.0509 or JefferyJMiller@yahoo.com.

The Education Commission of the States (ECS) National Center for Learning and Citizenship (NCLC)

The ECS National Center for Learning and Citizenship (NCLC) assists state and district policymakers and educators developing policies that support K-12 school-based service-learning opportunities. These educational experiences help students acquire the skills, values, knowledge and practice necessary to be effective citizens. The NCLC identifies and analyzes policies and practices that support effective citizenship education, creates and disseminates publications for education stakeholders, and convenes meetings to develop a collective voice for citizenship education and civic mission of schools. NCLC also encourages policy support and system structures to integrate service-learning into schools and communities. For more information, contact Terry Pickeral, NCLC executive director, 303.299.3636 or visit www.ecs.org/nclc.

© 2004 by the Education Commission of the States (ECS). All rights reserved. The Education Commission of the States is a nonprofit, nationwide organization that helps state leaders shape education policy. Copies of this policy brief are available for $5 plus postage and handling from the Education Commission of the States Distribution Center, 700 Broadway, Suite 1200, Denver, CO 80203-3460; 303.299.3692. Ask for No. SL-04-05.

ECS encourages its readers to share our information with others. To request permission to reprint or excerpt some of our material, please contact the ECS Communications Department at 303.299.3628 or e-mail ecs@ecs.org.

Helping State Leaders Shape Education Policy

Education Commission of the States
700 Broadway, Suite 1200
Denver, CO 80203-3460

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Denver, Colorado
Permit No. 153

Policy Brief

Citizenship Education and Service-Learning

700 Broadway, Suite 1200 • Denver, CO 80203-3460 • 303.299.3600 • Fax 303.296.8332 • www.ecs.org

Senior and Culminating Projects

November 2004

Introduction

Much of education policy in recent years has focused on the development of high academic standards and better assessments to ensure students are meeting the standards. Concerns about gaps in achievement between various groups of students within the U.S., combined with fears that other nations are producing students who are "out-competing" American students, have led to increased calls for educational accountability. The 2001 No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) responded to these calls by creating tough new accountability requirements for states seeking federal education funding.

While statewide standardized tests have been part of public education for decades, NCLB has led states to focus much more intensively on assessment. But critics argue that the law's emphasis on reading, writing and mathematics (and eventually science) has contributed to a narrowing of the curriculum, and that Americans should be provided with a broader, more comprehensive education that includes the arts and humanities, foreign languages, history and the social sciences.

Many critics of standardized assessments also claim that – especially in high schools – the pressure to demonstrate constant improvement in student test scores has contributed to an atmosphere in which efficiency and conformity trump human relationships and authentic learning, and in which students see school as increasingly irrelevant to their daily lives. The standard approach to secondary teaching, in which learning is broken down into discrete subjects (what critics call "the factory model") makes it difficult for students to synthesize the knowledge and skills acquired in the classroom and apply their learning to situations outside of school. The effect of these outdated and dehumanizing approaches to teaching and learning, the critics contend, is students feel increasingly disengaged from school and uninterested in the curriculum.

Another critique of current educational practice is the emphasis on education as job training or college preparation – rather than as preparation for citizenship – has contributed to a decline in civic engagement among Americans. As schools become more focused on academics and test preparation, less and less time is available to learn about contemporary issues and problems, and to interact with community members.

Even the strongest testing advocates agree that standardized tests cannot measure everything students learn, and other measures are needed to assess students' ability to synthesize existing knowledge and skills and to apply their learning in different contexts. Both advocates and critics agree that students learn best when they believe what they are learning is both important and relevant to their lives, and when they feel supported and valued by adults in the school and the community. Education reformers of nearly every stripe agree that a school climate that does not provide such support is one in which the prospects for student learning are limited.

Service-learning – community service tied to academic learning – has become a common instructional strategy in schools across the country. Senior and culminating projects – multi-dimensional projects through which graduating high school seniors demonstrate their accumulated knowledge and skills – are becoming increasingly common as well. This paper explores the challenges and benefits of combining these two educational strategies, provides examples of existing high-quality programs, and offers some questions for consideration by educational leaders and policymakers.

Senior and Culminating Projects

While standardized tests are not likely to disappear anytime soon, the recognition that they can function as a blunt-edged sword has led many reformers to advocate for other kinds of assessments to compensate for the tests' limitations. Two such models – which like any good assessment also function as teaching tools – are the culminating project and its less comprehensive cousin, the senior project.

Senior and culminating projects, completed by students in their senior year of high school, are usually designed to give students the opportunity to synthesize knowledge and skills they have gained over time, and to demonstrate what they have learned by creating something of lasting value to themselves or the community. Usually students are encouraged to use the project to conduct an in-depth study in a particular area of interest such as a career they are considering. Senior and culminating projects may include a number of different

“At their best, senior and culminating projects motivate students to take control of their own learning and give them a sense of accomplishment and an awareness of what they have learned and how far they have progressed.”

components, including the product created or the service they have provided, a research paper, a portfolio and/or a public demonstration or exhibition.

Senior and culminating projects are similar in that both are meant to give students the opportunity to investigate a topic of personal interest and demonstrate they have mastered certain skills and concepts. Although the terms are sometimes used interchangeably, the term “culminating project” generally implies students are expected to demonstrate knowledge and skills gained over a longer period of time – throughout high school or even their entire K-12 career – and across academic disciplines. To do this, students begin preparing for the culminating project long before their senior year. The senior project, on the other hand, is begun in the senior year and may or may not be interdisciplinary.

At their best, senior and culminating projects motivate students to take control of their own learning and give them a sense of accomplishment and an awareness of what they have learned and how far they have progressed. Upon completion of the project, students have a product that serves as evidence of their mastery of a particular topic and of their overall learning that can be used for job or college applications.

Senior and culminating projects are a good fit with current efforts to make the senior year more meaningful for students. This strategy also aligns well with the small schools movement, which often emphasizes collaborative, project-based learning. Senior and culminating projects provide the context for *authentic learning* – the pursuit of knowledge and skills for solving specific problems encountered in the process of accomplishing a larger task – rather than the kind of decontextualized learning that takes place in most classrooms.

As with any teaching strategy, quality is key. A focus group of seasoned senior project coordinators in Washington state developed the following list describing the elements of a high-quality senior project program:

1. Clear and aligned purpose – Student learning outcomes are aligned with school, district and state mission and goals.
2. Explicit, rigorous criteria – Performance is assessed by application of established criteria.
3. Student-directed learning and youth engagement – The student takes leadership for selecting, planning and implementing his/her own learning goals.
4. Clear scaffolding of skills – Students need instruction, guidance and practice for the skills that will be required in the culminating project. Some schools provide a 9-12 sequence; others include a culminating project in the elementary and middle school levels as well as in high school.
5. Learning stretch – The project poses a challenge that requires significant new learning.
6. Authentic project – Student applies core academic knowledge and skills beyond the traditional classroom setting to address a real problem or fulfill a genuine need.
7. Community involvement – Members of the broader community play an important role in culminating projects as mentors, panelists, advisors and/or resources.
8. Authentic audience – Expert individuals and community organizations knowledgeable and committed to the project’s content are critical members of the audience to hear and review the project.
9. Coordination and comprehensive communication – Students, parents, community members and agencies, teachers and administrators need to clearly understand the purpose and process so they can support its success.
10. Adequate staffing and supervision – Sufficient staff to coordinate the program and provide logistical and other support to teachers, parents and community partners.
11. A mechanism for training community partners – Community partners are provided high-quality training to understand and perform their role as co-educators and authentic partners in the project.
12. A mechanism for parent involvement – Specific expectations are developed for parents and corresponding processes are available to engage them in the design, implementation and celebration of the project.
13. Ongoing professional development and program improvement – School leaders and community partners organize and support formal training sessions, reflection activities and opportunities to continuously improve the program.
14. A plan for risk management and liability – Schools and communities ensure the project takes place in a safe environment and risk is effectively managed.
15. Celebration and recognition – All collaborators are provided opportunities to be recognized and celebrate the success of the project.

While senior and culminating projects can help students become more engaged in their learning and provide teachers with a broader assessment of that learning than standardized tests, their use does not guarantee better, more supportive relationships between students and adults in the school, or that students will become more connected to and engaged in their communities. One way of making such connections more likely, however, is to include a service-learning component in senior and culminating projects.

Service-Learning

Service-learning (community service designed to help students meet specific learning objectives) is an especially effective teaching strategy that can lead to increased community involvement and deeper student engagement. Students design and implement service projects aligned with specific learning objectives, while also engaging in ongoing reflection designed to help them understand the serendipitous lessons that experiential learning provides.

Teachers and students enjoy service-learning for similar reasons: it makes learning come alive, gets them out of the classroom, allows them to work with community members and enhances the school's and the students' image in the community. Service-learning allows students to apply what they learn in the classroom to real-world problems, and it helps them become aware of and responsible for their own learning.

The very recent research on best practices in service-learning and institutionalizing service-learning (Billig, 2004, 2002; Billig and Klute, 2002; Meyer, Billig and Hofschire, 2004; Billig and Welch, 2004; Billig, Root and Jesse, 2004; Mintz and Abramovitz, 2004; and others) is beginning to show convergent results. The research collectively shows the factors within the service-learning experience that have the strongest correlations with results for K-12 students in the areas of academic performance and civic engagement are: alignment with content standards; reflection that includes multiple teaching and learning strategies for addressing advanced thinking skills within the reflection activities; direct contact with clients being served; and youth voice in planning, action, reflection and demonstration of learning.

Service-learning is an excellent strategy for reaching students at both ends of the achievement spectrum because it provides challenges and opportunities for leadership that is unavailable in the classroom. For bored and struggling students it offers an opportunity to be successful in ways that do not only depend on "book smarts." Service-learning allows these students to demonstrate they have the ability to learn and apply knowledge in different ways. Service-learning also provides students with the motivation to work harder both in and out of the classroom, as it offers some control over the content and pace of their learning and provides students with a new, ever-changing arena in which to apply their skills.

Like any teaching strategy, service-learning must be done well to be effective. High-quality service-learning includes several unique elements:

- *Youth voice/ownership*. Depending on their developmental level, students take leadership (with teacher guidance, not direction) in identifying a problem to be addressed, contacting community partners, developing a strategy and evaluating the project. This helps students recognize their own power and their responsibility to use it.
- *Genuine community need.* The service meets a legitimate need in the community. To determine the community's needs, students consult and work with community members – including those being served – rather than simply identifying an issue on their own. Working on genuine community needs helps ensure students take the work seriously because the stakes are higher and the community is watching.
- *Clear learning objectives.* Teachers help students select projects that can be linked to academic objectives and standards. The project serves as a theme around which classroom lessons are built, and as a vehicle for applying and testing knowledge and skills acquired in the classroom. Due to the interdisciplinary nature of most service-learning projects, several teachers may work together, reinforcing concepts across academic and grade-level boundaries.
- *Reflection.* Teachers engage students in discussion and written reflection on community needs, proposed solutions, challenges and successes throughout the duration of the project, not just at the end. Students are able to ask questions, voice concerns and work together to solve problems. Reflection helps teachers assess what students are learning and builds student awareness of their own development. Reflection also includes overall evaluation of the project and celebration of success.

By including these components, teachers can ensure students develop leadership skills such as planning, communication and decisionmaking, as well as academic skills specific to the project.

Service-Learning and Senior/Culminating Projects

Service-learning, as explained above, is particularly effective as a pedagogy that can be used across grades and academic subject areas to help students combine knowledge and skills with community action. Senior and culminating projects can help students take ownership of their own learning, pursue in-depth study of a topic in which they are interested and integrate what they have learned over time. The combination of these two strategies can provide a powerful learning experience for students.

Quest High School, in Humble, **Texas**, provides a good example of how these two strategies can be effectively combined. At Quest, a magnet school with a maximum enrollment of 285 students, the curriculum is based on three sets of integrated standards: "Academic Foundations," "Essential Learner Behaviors" and "Workplace Tools." To graduate, students must work in groups to complete a semester-long Senior Exhibition during their last semester at Quest. The exhibition integrates public speaking, technology and multi-

media skills, in-depth research and action on an important social issue. For the social action component, students work together to identify an issue, conduct research, consult with community-based organizations and government agencies and design, implement and evaluate a social action plan aimed at addressing their issue. Students must make a multimedia presentation of the exhibition – including the service project – to educators, students, parents and community members. Students must document the plan, its implementation, their reflection and the evaluation through a group service-learning portfolio.

Each student in the group also must complete a number of assignments related to the exhibition, including a self-portrait (in a format of the student's choice such as poetry, a video, a painting, etc.), a speech about the portrait, a journal, an analysis of their group's dynamics as related to the "workplace tools" standard, a research paper, academic samples from each discipline and several reflection assignments, including a "social action directory" and a project evaluation sheet that describes the learning objectives practiced and mastered.

Some projects completed by students include:

- Hosting a volunteer fair for students and a service-learning seminar for teachers
- Working with law students to overturn wrongful convictions
- Working with a local television station to highlight the achievements of several local minority leaders and address several issues of concern to local minority communities
- Hosting a seminar, in conjunction with Eating Disorder Awareness Week, for pre-teens, adolescents, parents and teachers on the dangers many young women face in trying to look beautiful.

At Greely High School, in Cumberland, **Maine**, students may take a humanities course during their senior year, during which they must complete a "Master Work." For some students the Master Work is a senior project, and for some it is the culmination of their four years at Greely High School, according to humanities teachers Frances Stone and John Day. The expectation for the Master Work is students must challenge themselves in some way and learn something new. A service component is not required, but Stone and Day say more and more students are choosing projects that allow them to give back to the community.

The humanities students at Greely High School present their Master Works to the community, and between 200 and 300 community members attend the presentations over two days. Among the projects completed recently: two students designed and built a new finish line for the school track; two others built a warming hut at a local cross-country ski trail area; one student conducted a land-management and conservation study; another administered a survey and conducted a study of ways the school district could conserve money.

Washington state, which requires students to complete a project to graduate, provides a number of examples of the integration of service-learning with senior/culminating projects. Students at Gig Harbor High School, for example, must engage in service that is related to their project. There is no required number of service hours, but the service must have a measurable impact on the community and students must provide evidence they have successfully completed their service. At Ridgefield High School, students must complete 20 hours of community service to graduate. In addition, they must produce a 10-page paper, give a 15-minute presentation before community judges and develop a portfolio on their project, which includes a journal, a daily activity log, pictures, reflections and an evaluation from each student's mentor.

Washington state's graduation requirement (WAC 180-51-061) is relatively rare. **Pennsylvania** is the only other state in which a culminating project is required for graduation (22 PA ADC § 4.24). **Oregon**'s State Board of Education recently established a requirement that, starting with the class of 2007, graduates must provide evidence they are "able to apply and extend academic and career-related knowledge and skills in new and complex situations appropriate to the student's personal, academic, and/or career interests and post-high school goals." A few other states, including **Kentucky** and **Hawaii**, offer special diplomas or certificates for which projects are required. In all cases, the state may provide guidance, but specific requirements for the project are left up to local school districts.

Challenges

No teaching or assessment strategy is without challenges. Some of the challenges of incorporating service-learning into senior/culminating projects are similar to those faced by any new educational strategy:

- *Time* – Teachers are frequently assigned new tasks when the latest educational reform strategy is adopted at the school or district level, often without being relieved of any of their existing responsibilities. Giving teachers responsibility for supervising students working on their senior or culminating projects and assessing those projects without also providing administrative and logistical support and a reduction in instructional or administrative responsibilities is likely to affect the quality of program implementation. It may be necessary to set aside time for teachers and coordinators to work together, especially if the culminating project is interdisciplinary or truly cumulative across grades. Whether a coordinator is assigned or teachers are given extra preparation time, the program is much more likely to succeed if teachers have the time to learn about best practices and fulfill their responsibilities.

Students also need time designated for project work. If the project is associated with a course, time can be provided for students to work and consult with teachers and one another. This also makes it easier to reinforce the links between the project and the learning goals.

At Quest High School students engage with the community each Wednesday while teachers work together on planning, implementing and sustaining high-quality projects. Teachers are provided this formal opportunity to reflect and continuously improve their practices.

- *Capacity for student support* – A senior or culminating project will likely be the most complex and difficult academic task students have undertaken. Schools and teachers will need to help students understand the importance and scale of their task. Students will need help developing a plan and a timeline and sticking to it. They will need help identifying and initiating relationships with mentors and community partners who have expertise in their topic area. They will need help gathering the components of the project over a semester, a year or even several years. Some students may choose topics for which they will need help identifying or creating relevant service opportunities. If a public exhibition or presentation is required, students will need help preparing and practicing.
- *Ensuring equal support for all students* – Some students are privileged to have parents with social networks that students can engage; other students are less connected to their community. Schools and teachers will need to provide diverse support systems for students, so every student has an opportunity to explore many community opportunities and select a project that has meaning to them and the community.
- *Clear expectations* – Without clear project guidelines and assessment criteria, students may not produce quality work that is meaningful for them and useful to the community. Evidence from Washington indicates that in programs that do not provide strong guidance, and in which the connections to standards are not clear, students often consider culminating projects a waste of time. Assessment criteria also must be clear and applied equitably, especially if multiple teachers or community members are involved in the assessment process.
- *School and community collaboration* – The culture of schooling is not generally collaborative. The organization of most high schools into departments does not support interdisciplinary work, and in many cases high school teachers view their own subject area as something that must be protected from those who seek to dilute it. Many veteran teachers at all levels, having experienced numerous reform initiatives and a succession of administrators throughout their careers, attempt to preserve some measure of control over their work by focusing on their own classrooms and shutting out what they see as outside attempts to influence their teaching. Many teachers simply do not have time to figure out how to collaborate across subject area lines. And although the developmental nature of education would seem to invite collaboration among teachers from grade to grade, this often does not happen either, especially when the elementary, middle and high schools are in different buildings. To ensure quality, school districts should emphasize the integrative and cumulative aspects of senior/culminating projects, and should find ways to support teacher collaboration.
- *Student resistance* – For some students, a service component may make the experience of developing a senior or culminating project more meaningful. Others may resent being “forced” to do service. The key is to make sure to connect the service experience to students’ job or higher education aspirations, and to help students understand that while volunteering is optional, service to one’s community is the duty of every citizen.

  Students also may resist if they believe teachers are not allowing them enough control over the project. Teachers and other staff should understand their role is to provide guidance, not direction. This means negotiating a difficult balance between ensuring students choose a topic that gives them a lasting sense of accomplishment and allowing students to make their own choices.

While these challenges are not insignificant, they can be addressed by involving teachers, administrators, staff, students, parents and community members in the development of the senior/culminating project initiative. With these challenges in mind, a well-designed program should include the elements listed in the previous section, with particular emphasis on:

- Time for teachers to learn, collaborate with each other and provide support to students; and time for students to work on their projects and seek assistance from teachers and community partners.
- A clearly defined process, including benchmarks and expectations for students, and specific staff assigned to provide support to students. Benchmarks and assessments should be pegged to academic standards and the district’s mission.
- Professional development to help teachers learn to facilitate rather than direct student learning.

Questions To Consider

Education decisionmakers should consider a number of questions when deciding how to implement a senior/culminating project program that includes service-learning. Because Washington has instituted a statewide culminating project requirement, the Washington State Board of Education offers several "essential questions" for districts to consider when developing their culminating project policy. The following are based on the Washington questions, but also include important considerations for districts contemplating a service-learning component.

1. Will the purpose of the program be a senior project or a culminating project?
2. How will you ensure students, parents and teachers are aware of students' responsibility to accumulate evidence for the project over an extended period of time?
3. How will the senior/culminating project support students' transition to work or postsecondary education?
4. How will the senior/culminating project showcase students' academic competencies? Will students be allowed to work together?
5. How will you involve your community? Do teachers understand how to cultivate community partnerships? How will you train community partners?
6. Do your students, teachers and parents have sufficient understanding of and experience with project-based, student-driven learning to support senior/culminating projects that include a community-based learning component? If not, how will you ensure they acquire the necessary knowledge and skills?
7. How will you ensure:
   - Project assessments are valid (that they accurately measure the effects of the project on student learning) and reliable (that the criteria for grading student work are uniformly applied by different teachers)?
   - There is an effective student or parent appeal process in place?
8. What are the components of the project, and who is responsible for assessing each of the following:
   - Research paper
   - Service project
   - Portfolio
   - Public presentation/exhibition.
9. Who will manage the program at the building and district levels?
10. Will students with special needs be required to complete a project? Will there be different requirements for these students?

Recommendations

To address the above questions and challenges districts may encounter in creating a senior or culminating project program, the following recommendations are offered:

- Make sure students have access to adult mentors with expertise in the students' area of interest. Do not assume mentors understand how to work with students; make sure mentors are properly trained.
- Seek input from the community on issues that students might address through the service component of their projects to ensure the service meets a genuine community need. Provide guidance and support to students in conducting a community needs/assets assessment.
- Provide clear, consistent guidelines for students while allowing them as much autonomy as possible in choosing a topic and developing a plan to implement the project.
- Project guidelines should reflect an emphasis on the cumulative nature of learning. Students and parents should be made aware the project must demonstrate learning acquired throughout students' K-12 education. Teachers from elementary through high school should understand their roles in helping students provide evidence to demonstrate students' accumulated learning.
- Teachers must make sure students have a clear understanding of what they want to learn and how the project will help them learn and demonstrate it. Students' project plans should include clear learning objectives, benchmarks and strategies for using the final products and exhibition to demonstrate what they have learned. Thus, the projects should align with state and district content standards and civic outcomes.
- Develop clear assessment criteria, and make students and parents aware of the criteria. Make sure these assessments accurately measure student learning and are applied equitably to all students.
- Make sure the service component is not an add-on (e.g., a 40-hour community service requirement), but is connected to standards and to students' own learning objectives.

Conclusion

Most Americans agree that today's competitive global economic system requires students be equipped with strong academic and workplace skills. To ensure young people acquire these skills, schools must maintain high standards, and they must continue to monitor students' progress toward those standards through a variety of assessments. And standardized tests are probably necessary to ensure all schools hold students to high standards.

But as more and more pressure is placed on schools to prepare young people to compete with one another in college and the job market, it is important to remember public schools serve an additional function, which some would say is even more important, to bring together American citizens and immigrants of all backgrounds to learn what it means to be an American. One uniquely American tradition is our system of representative democracy, and the success of that democracy depends on the active participation of citizens. The strength of our communities depends on the active participation of the members of those communities. To preserve our democracy and our communities, schools must provide every generation with the opportunity to acquire the knowledge, skills and dispositions of citizenship.

The combination of senior and culminating projects with service-learning offers one way to help students acquire high-level intellectual skills and to apply academic knowledge and skills to real-world problems. It offers students an opportunity to engage in in-depth investigation of important issues, and to take action on those issues. It offers teachers a more interesting and challenging alternative to traditional methods of assessment. Finally, the combination of senior and culminating projects and service-learning offers communities an opportunity to help cultivate engaged community members and future leaders.

References

Billig, S.H. "Heads, Hearts, and Hands." In *Growing to Greatness* by J. Kielsmeier. St. Paul, MN: National Youth Leadership Council, 2004.

Billig, S. "Adoption, Implementation, and Sustainability of K-12 Service-Learning Programs." In *Service-Learning: Essence of the Pedagogy* by S.H. Billig and A. Furco. Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishers, 2002.

Billig, S. and Klute, M. *The W.K. Kellogg Foundation Retrospective of K-12 Service-Learning Projects, 1990-2000*. Denver, CO: RMC Research Corporation, February 2002.

Billig, S.H., S. Root and D. Jesse. *The Impact of Service-Learning on Students' High School Civic Engagement, A Report to the Carnegie Corporation of New York.* Denver, CO: RMC Research Corporation, 2004.

Billig, S.H. and M. Welch. "Service-Learning as Civically Engaged Scholarship: Challenges and Strategies in Higher Education and K-12 Settings." In *New Perspectives in Service-Learning: Research to Advance the Field* edited by M. Welch and S.H. Billig. Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishers, 2004.

Meyer, S., S.H. Billig and L. Hofschire. "The Impact of School-Based Service-Learning on Academic Achievement and Student Engagement in Michigan." In *New Perspectives in Service-Learning: Research to Advance the Field* edited by M. Welch and S.H. Billig. Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishers, 2004.

Mintz, P. and A. Abramovitz. "Teacher Perceptions on Implementing Schoolwide Service-Learning." In *New Perspectives in Service-Learning: Research to Advance the Field* edited by M. Welch and S.H. Billig. Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishers, 2004.

Resources

Corporation for National and Community Service – Learn and Serve America, www.learnandserve.org

Learning In Deed, http://learningindeed.org

National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, www.servicelearning.org

National Service-Learning Partnership, www.service-learningpartnership.org

National Youth Leadership Council, www.nylc.org

Project Service Leadership, www.projectserviceleadership.org

Quest High School, Humble, Texas, www.humble.k12.tx.us/QHS_profile.htm

Senior Project at SERVE, Inc., www.serve-inc.org/seniorp

Washington State Board of Education – Statewide Culminating Project Guidelines and Resources, www.sbe.wa.gov/culminating%20projects/guidelines.htm

Wee, Patricia H. *Independent Projects Step by Step: A Handbook for Senior Projects, Graduation Projects, Culminating Projects.* Lanham, MD: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2000.

Thanks to Kate McPherson of Project Service Leadership in Vancouver, Washington, for assistance with this brief.

Jeffery J. Miller is a Denver-based educational consultant and writer, and a former policy analyst with the Education Commission of the States – National Center for Learning and Citizenship. He can be reached at 303.377.0509 or JefferyJMiller@yahoo.com.

The Education Commission of the States (ECS) National Center for Learning and Citizenship

The ECS National Center for Learning and Citizenship (NCLC) assists state and district policymakers and educators developing policies that support K-12 school-based service-learning opportunities. These educational experiences help students acquire the skills, values, knowledge and practice necessary to be effective citizens. The NCLC identifies and analyzes policies and practices that support effective citizenship education, creates and disseminates publications for education stakeholders, and convenes meetings to develop a collective voice for citizenship education and civic mission of schools. NCLC also encourages policy support and system structures to integrate service-learning into schools and communities. For more information, contact Terry Pickeral, NCLC executive director, 303.299.3636 or visit www.ecs.org/nclc.

© 2004 by the Education Commission of the States (ECS). All rights reserved. The Education Commission of the States is a nonprofit, nationwide organization that helps state leaders shape education policy. Copies of this policy brief are available for $5 plus postage and handling from the Education Commission of the States Distribution Center, 700 Broadway, Suite 1200, Denver, CO 80203-3460; 303.299.3692. Ask for No. SL-04-06.

ECS encourages its readers to share our information with others. To request permission to reprint or excerpt some of our material, please contact the ECS Communications Department at 303.299.3628 or e-mail ecs@ecs.org.

Helping State Leaders Shape Education Policy

Education Commission of the States
700 Broadway, Suite 1200
Denver, CO 80203-3460

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Denver, Colorado
Permit No. 153