> The
> highest reward
> for your
> work is not
> what you get
> for it,
> but what you
> become
> by it.
>
> *John C. Maxwell*

In this issue:

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- Five Approaches to Literacy in Correctional Education

- Innovative Programs

- Student Successes

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Journal Editor

Orange County Dept. of Ed.
(714)719-0488; FAX (619)222-0964

deni7@sbcglobal.net

Jacqueline Flowers, Asst.
Superintendent

San Joaquin County
(209)468-9107; FAX (209)468-4951

jflowers@sjcoe.net

Mary Lou Vachet, Principal

Orange County Dept. of Ed.
(714)826-5019; FAX (714)826-4097

marylou_vachet@access.k12.ca.us

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(619)222-0964

JCCASAC

Message from the President

Jeanne Dukes
Assistant Superintendent,
San Luis Obispo
County Office of Education

Many outstanding educators have served as Juvenile Court, Community and Alternative School Administrators of California (JCCASAC) President. It has been an honor to join these ranks during the school year 2004-05. JCCASAC continues to be my touchstone as a County Office administrator, charged with developing, implementing, and monitoring alternative educational programs for our at risk student population.

This *Journal* is unusual. It is unusual in that our wonderful and highly esteemed Editor, Jeannie Griffith, took a position in a district and thus was unable to lead the Editorial Board as it developed this year's Journal. We appreciate all of the outstanding work that Jeannie Griffith did on behalf of JCCASAC and the Editorial Board over the years, and will miss her very much.

However, I celebrate and admire our new Editor, Deni Baughn, who agreed to take on this challenge mid-year. With the help and support of her colleagues and the Orange County Office of Education, she demonstrated initiative, energy, enthusiasm, and capacity to serve as she stepped up to the plate. The JCCASAC Board members offer our gratitude to Deni Baughn and pledge to support her in any way possible.

This willingness to take on a challenge demonstrates the commitment and dedication that JCCASAC members have. As we address, again this year, high stakes testing, standards, ASAM and accountability, accreditation, curriculum development, research-based instructional strategies, independent study, laws and requirements… the collaboration and supportive collegiality of this group ensures that our students succeed.

While the Federal and State governments have focused on accountability for the past few years, JCCASAC members can look back and recall our roots. We were formed as an organization to develop alternative methods of delivering high-quality educational programs to students whose needs are the most intense in the state. Our students, whether expelled, truant, proba-tion-involved, homeless, or demonstrating a need for a more supportive environment, benefit from our knowledge base. But it is my contention that the most important benefits we offer these students are individualized attention, empathy and understanding, and a chance to succeed in school – possibly for the very first time – with high expectations for their future lives as contributing members of society. A positive future is still the most precious gift that we can give.

JCCASAC members communicate as partners through this *Journal* by keeping our students' best interests in mind, attending mini- and statewide conferences to learn and share, checking out the new Website, getting involved in the Executive Board and attending the open meetings, and encouraging your colleagues to join this very supportive organization. You'll see that alternative education can be not just a career, but a passion.

Collaborate, share, participate and serve. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve as your President this year.

> *You'll see that alternative education can be not just a career, but a passion.*

Message from the President-Elect

Paula Mitchell
Director
Santa Clara County Office of Education

Honoring the Past

As an African-American, much of the focus of my community is honoring our past. It is the expectation that we honor and respect those who have come before us. Our ancestors not only envisioned a path, but often cleared and paved it for us. As I look to assuming the enormous responsibility of JCCASAC President in May, I too am taking a walk down memory lane and a look at honoring our JCCASAC past.

JCCASAC was founded in 1969 as the Juvenile Court School Administrators of California (hence the acronym-JCSAC) which was actually under the California Youth Authority at that time. We have since evolved into JCCASAC, a professional organization that serves as a committee to the California County Superintendent's Education Services Association (CCSESA). As mandates for educating incarcerated youth began surfacing, JCSAC was at the forefront of pushing for higher standards and promoting the significant changes that were necessary. And as our organization grew, so did the need to help shape legislation, have a standard for all of our programs and establish a professional network for all of us working with educating at-risk and students in the Juvenile Justice system. Our programs and responsibilities have expanded over the years to include Community and Alternative schools and JCCASAC has been there to guide us every step of the way.

JCSAC was at the forefront of pushing for higher standards and promoting the significant changes that were necessary.

of the way.

As the incoming President, let us please take time to remember and thank all of the individuals listed on the next page for their numerous contributions and the outstanding professional support they have provided, and continue to provide, to each of us personally and to this organization. I have had the privilege of meeting some of you and have worked with others. You are the ones who have paved the way for each of us working in court, community and alternative schools.

We honor you!

Celebrating JCCASAC's Past

1970-71
Don Purdy
Santa Clara

1971-72
Chuck Lee
San Diego

1972-73
Doug Booth
San Mateo

1973-74
Joe De Mello
Contra Costa

1974-75
Marshall Lomax
Los Angeles

1975-76
John Hull
Sacramento

1976-77
Rocco Nobile
San Diego

1977-78
John Peshkoff
Santa Clara

1978-79
Jerry Matney
Orange

1979-80
Miltie Couteur
Butte

1980-81
Marty Familletti
Riverside

1981-82
Joe De Mello
Contra Costa

1982-83
Roy Savage
Riverside

1983-84
Ken Kammuller
Marin

1984-85
Wayne Toscas
Santa Barbara

1985-86
Greg Almand
Contra Costa

1986-87
Hedy Kirsh
Orange

1987-88
Shirl Schmidt
Shasta

1988-89
Chuck Lee
San Diego

1989-90
William Burns
San Mateo

1990-91
John Peshkoff
Orange

1991-92
Orene Hopkins
Contra Costa

1992-93
John Stankovich
Kings

1993-94
Bob Michels
Santa Clara

1994-95
Larry Springer
Los Angeles

1995-96
Claudette Inge
Alameda

1996-97
Ken Taylor
Kern

1997-98
Mick Founts
San Joaquin

1998-99
Dolores Redwine
San Diego

1999-00
Vic Trucco
Sonoma

2000-01
Janet Addo
Los Angeles

2001-02
Michael Watkins
Santa Cruz

2002-03
Jeanne Hughes
Kern

2003-04
Jacqueline Flowers
San Joaquin

2004-05
Jeanne Dukes
San Luis Obispo

The Transforming Power of a Learning Community

by Lindy Khan

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to describe a project undertaken in a court school to determine to what extent, after six years of school reform efforts, the school has been transformed into a learning community. Despite the fact that many significant reforms had been implemented in this school, an important question loomed: Will the impact on student learning be sustainable over time? There has been a great deal of literature written espousing the tremendous power of schools that operate as a learning community. Learning by teachers is connected to school improvement, which in turn results in increased student learning. However, a key factor seems to be the willingness of staff to be committed to continuous improvement, which is the goal of a true learning community. This endeavor attempted to determine if this school was currently exhibiting any of the five characteristics of a learning organization, as described by Peter Senge in <u>The Fifth Discipline, The Art & Practice of The Learning Organization</u>.

Background

There are immense barriers to school reform in juvenile correctional schools. Short-term enrollments, cognitive distortions, negative behaviors, emotional disturbances, and tremendous skill deficits can certainly diminish teachers' faith in the potential for making a positive impact. In the past, it was quite easy for instructional staff in court schools to feel a sense of isolation and futility. These schools were not held to high standards, and it was easy to assume that no one really cared about 'those students'. However, the staff and administration of one court school in Contra Costa County discovered that students in such learning environments could make great achievements when expectations are raised and there is a focus on continuous improvement.

A key factor seems to be the willingness of staff to be committed to continuous improvement, which is the goal of a true learning community.

Mt. McKinley School in Martinez, CA is one of two court schools administered through the Contra Costa County Office of Education. It is located in Juvenile Hall and two residential treatment programs – Summit Center and Chris Adams Center. The journey towards school reform began six years ago, and the staff has embraced many new challenges along the way. Like many typical court school students, some of the instructional staff welcomed these challenges as opportunities, while others exercised great effort to blockade any change. Four key components were phased in over time in an effort to improve the school: 1) use of initial and continuous assessment; 2) change from period to block scheduling; 3) implementation of school-wide standards-based curriculum; and 4) ongoing recognition of student achievements.

Assessment Center

All of the students in the Court Schools are initially enrolled in Juvenile Hall. Since they arrive suddenly and do not typically bring their educational records, the first question seemed to be, "How can one design a meaningful instructional program without any information regarding the students' needs or strengths?" This apparent void prompted the initiation

of the first step in the process, which was the design and implementation of the Assessment Center. The goals for the Assessment Center were apparent: 1) gather information regarding the students' academic levels, learning styles, and behavioral information to share with the student and the instructional staff; 2) provide a safe place to become oriented to the facility, the school, and all procedures and policies; 3) determine a baseline of data to measure academic growth; and 4) gather data regarding this student population in order to inform decisions regarding curriculum and other program planning. The development of the Assessment Center was completed with relative ease and became a significant foundation for program improvement. While the initial goals remain, some have been added, and the processes are continually refined to accommodate changing program and/or student needs. Currently, all students entering the facility are pretested within one week, and posttests are administered at regular 6, 9 and 12-week intervals.

Block Scheduling

The second step of reform proved to be one of the most daunting challenges. Aside from the few self-contained classes, the previous schedule included 6 periods each day with 6 different teachers. Each period was scheduled for 40 – 45 minutes; however, given the movement of students to and from class, the instructional time was actually closer to 30 – 35 minutes per class. This was hardly sufficient time to engage students in meaningful instruction. Additionally, since

each student had six teachers, and no teacher was specifically responsible for any particular student, this was not an effective model to foster learning or accountability. Thus, a modified block schedule with 90-minute instructional periods, and designated homeroom teachers, was eventually adopted.

Changing the school schedule was controversial. The process took two years of staff training and discussion, and three draft models prior to its first implementation. However, as with most changes, the anticipation generated far greater anxiety than the reality of a new block schedule. Continued challenges remain for teachers to plan a variety of activities within the block to ensure appropriate student involvement. However, the benefit that resulted was the opportunity to provide more meaningful, in-depth instruction and practice activities.

Standards-based Curriculum

Once the schedule was adjusted, the staff began to focus on curriculum. Statewide content standards had been adopted, and staff had spent considerable time in staff meetings, trainings, etc. struggling to discover a manageable method to incorporate these in multi-age, multi-grade and multi-level classrooms with an itinerant population. One thing was clear – the priority was language arts and that would be the starting point.

Fortunately, staff had been participating in training with Brother Steve Johnson from Santa Clara University regarding the nature of correctional educators and characteristics of students in Court Schools. At the same time, he was applying his tremendous

Statewide content standards had been adopted, and staff had spent considerable time in staff meetings, trainings, etc. struggling to discover a manageable method to incorporate these in multi-age, multi-grade and multi-level classrooms with an itinerant population.

expertise towards the development of a comprehensive Character Based Literacy (CBL) curriculum to teach the 9th and 10th grade language arts standards through literature, while promoting core values, such as respect, responsibility, integrity, etc.

Through the acquisition of a grant from the Walter S. Johnson Foundation, training on the initial implementation of this curriculum was provided free of charge, and one of its essential components is that training is ongoing. This curriculum was originally organized into 6 two-month units focused on a value theme and specific language arts standards, and has since been modified to include 5 units per year to coincide with each marking period. Teachers may develop their own lesson plans to teach the standards and promote the core concepts based on an extensive reading list of novels, short stories, etc. or utilize the lesson plans provided for each unit. A vast array of instructional strategies are employed which have been selected due to their ability to tap into the student strengths as auditory and visual learners. Two powerful examples of effective visual strategies foundational to the program are word walls and timelines, which also are great tools to assist new students as they enter classes at various times during the unit.

A standardized, school-wide curriculum adopted for language arts in a Court School? As expected, there was a great deal of resistance at first. Again, tremendous anxiety prevailed, with numerous reasons to delay implementation. However, books were selected and all were encouraged to just get started and try one new strategy.

The students' response to the new curriculum was an unexpected, yet very pleasant surprise. They became truly immersed in the stories. Students were excited about reading complete novels - many for the very first time. They frequently engaged in meaningful discussions about choices, decision-making and real life issues. These conversations began safely in the context of characters from the stories, but soon moved on to incorporate the real challenges students confront. Their positive involvement spurred teacher enthusiasm, and eventually became the primary topic of conversation and sharing in the school office.

Students positive involvement spurred teacher enthusiasm, and eventually became the primary topic of conversation and sharing in the school office.

Mt. McKinley School recently entered its fourth year of CBL implementation. Each teacher has reached a different level of comfort and expertise, but everyone developed an appreciation for its value and appropriateness in this school. Most of the teachers have presented at conferences or staff development trainings to other colleagues, which has promoted further staff buy-in and personal skill refinement.

The next most urgent curriculum priority was mathematics, especially due to the onset of two new high school graduation requirements: to earn ten credits in Algebra, and to pass the CA High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE). Due to the success with CBL, there was a desire to adopt a similar model for math. However, since there were no like packaged programs to address this need, a math experts committee was formed. They worked in conjunction with the curriculum specialist to design a curriculum and staff development model to increase staff and student skills related to these new standards. This resulted in the creation of a Math Matrix which includes the standards covered

> **The focused deployment of the curriculum specialist as a coach and mentor in the classroom was one very powerful strategy that helped to promote this change in thinking this year.**

on the CAHSEE. It is organized into monthly units tied to either the board approved Pre-Algebra or Algebra textbooks that were adopted for all of the court and community schools in the Educational Opportunities Department. Beginning with several staff in-services, this effort was initially launched in the fall of 2003.

Not surprisingly, the move towards standardization was initially met with tremendous resistance from most of the teachers. Even more so than with language arts, this requirement to teach higher-level math skills represented a huge philosophical shift. For years, most math instruction had been individualized with students repeatedly working on those skill gaps never mastered, such as fractions, decimals, etc. There was quite vocal and open resistance to the notion that students could benefit from these raised expectations, given these deficits. It was also clear that many of these teachers who are responsible for multiple subjects in self-contained classrooms were not very comfortable with these higher-level math skills themselves. The challenges were quite apparent, but once again staff was urged to get started with a promise of continuous staff development.

As of spring 2005, after about one and one-half years since this reform effort was launched, it has been determined that almost all of the teachers at Mt. McKinley School have integrated the standards from the Math Matrix into their routine math instruction. Some of the early 'resisters' have even acknowledged their philosophical shift that even students with skill deficits can learn these higher-level standards. The focused deployment of the curriculum

specialist as a coach and mentor in the classroom was one very powerful strategy that helped to promote this change in thinking this year. Often, as a result of observing the curriculum specialist model and/or co-teaching lessons, it became clear that students were thoroughly engaged and demonstrated an understanding of the concepts presented. With this most important barrier significantly broken down at Mt. McKinley, the efforts now are more focused on increasing teachers' competence and confidence in this subject area.

Award Ceremonies

The introduction of Award Ceremonies was the fourth key component along a consistent continuum of change leading towards meaningful school reform. These ceremonies are held in conjunction with the culmination of each Character Based Literacy unit. Between March 2002 and January 2005, there were 18 award ceremonies. Students have been honored for receiving their high school diploma, passing the GED, and achieving Student of the Week status. Many students have also earned certificates by demonstrating learning gains in reading, mathematics and writing, as measured by the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) pre and post tests administered in the Assessment Center. Additionally, students whose writing products successfully meet the criteria noted on the designated rubrics for autobiography, persuasive or expository essay, business letters, etc. receive certificates for this achievement, as well. During this time (March 2002 through January 2005), despite a consistently declining population, a total of 2139 certificates have been awarded to students at Mt. McKinley School.

Certificates Earned
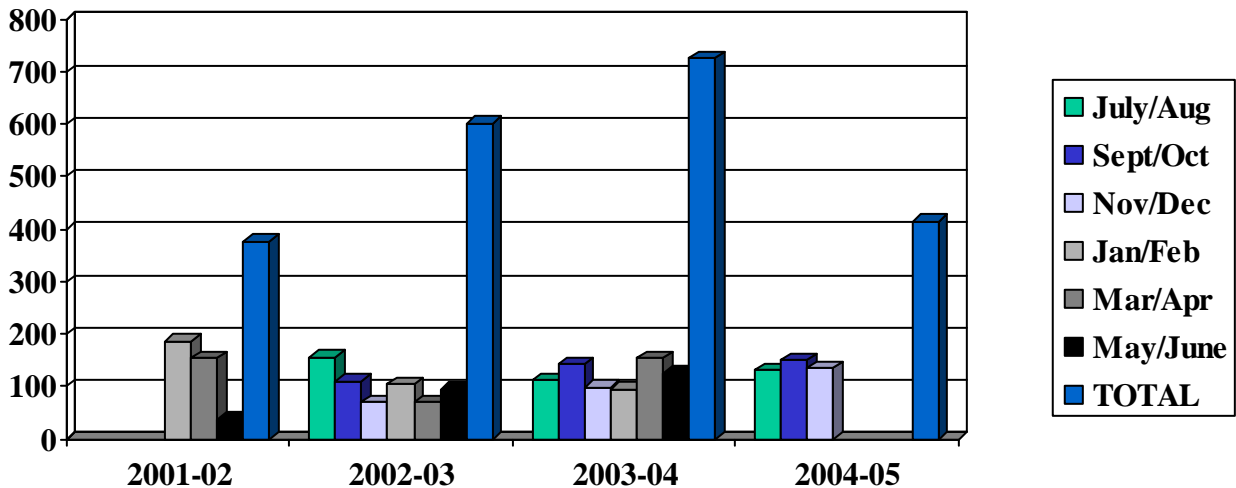
Note: 1/02 and 4/05 reflect a six month period

The opportunity to earn certificates and be recognized in front of peers and staff for a positive achievement has proven to be quite instrumental in motivating students who have a history of school failure, truancy and chronic lack of effort. It has also promoted a change in attitudes about students' own potential for learning, especially when these certificates are often the first positive recognition ever received in a school setting. It has also helped to debunk the myth that 'real learning' is not likely to occur in an itinerant court school setting.

Method

In March 2005, this author initiated a project to determine to what extent, after six years of school reform efforts, this court school had been transformed into a learning community. This inquiry was designed in such a way as to view these change efforts through the lens of a learning organization. As this school was preparing for a move into a new facility, it seemed an appropriate time to engage the teachers in a focused reflection on the significant school reform efforts in which they had been involved. If some characteristics of a learning organization were apparent, this would be powerful information in that it would demonstrate a true commitment to continuous improvement. Additionally, this inquiry had the potential to elicit valuable feedback which could be used to: a) inform future decisions regarding how to more effectively involve teachers in a shared leadership role, especially in making decisions about the new school environment; and, b) how to strategically build on what has worked to effect change and to ensure its sustainability; and c) how to create opportunities to enhance further growth as a learning community.

Although the ideal method for soliciting this information from teachers was probably through individual interviews because it could be a potential opportunity for richer dialogue, this was rejected for two reasons: 1) time – this project needed to be completed within a short time frame and there was simply no way to carve out at least 8 -

10 hours for this purpose; and 2) there was a concern that some individuals might not feel free to express their honest thoughts and opinions in a one on one conversation with their supervisor. Instead it was decided that a survey would be utilized. The questions would be developed with the five disciplines of the learning organization (according to Senge) in mind. These questions were written with an open-ended format, designed to allow for teachers to use their own language to freely express their ideas.

A brief meeting was held to introduce the purpose of this project and to request staff involvement in completing the survey. Their response indicated a keen interest in participating. They were told that there were several questions in five different categories and asked that they at least respond to one question in each. An offer to meet with some of them individually was also made to respond to their questions or if they would rather be interviewed directly. Several expressed an interest in having a meeting to discuss the questions as a group. As a result of their input, a focus group meeting was scheduled in addition to the request to respond to the individual surveys.

The teachers' response to this request and their involvement was quite positive and in fact, energizing. Most (64%) completed the surveys (and turned them in on time), and 82% participated in a one-hour focus group meeting (which had been scheduled for 40 minutes). In fact, the focus group meeting only ended when it became apparent that everyone would be late to a scheduled CBL training. And as the teachers were leaving, many commented on the value of this activity and expressed a desire to do it again, and perhaps regularly.

The teachers completed the surveys individually, and the number of questions answered varied. Some responded to one question from each section, some of them to all, and a couple responded in a narrative, which incorporated some or all of the questions from each section. In the focus group, all were asked to first reflect on what this school looks like when it is operating at its best and describe what is working well and why. Next, they were asked to envision this school working as well as it could and then describe what is currently missing, or what should look or operate differently. Answers were charted and then grouped into the five disciplines, where appropriate.

Data & Interpretation

The data collected from the survey and focus group will be presented in terms of the five disciplines of a learning organization, preceded by a brief definition of each discipline and the list of questions asked on the survey.

SYSTEMS THINKING	
Definition	**Questions Asked**
• Contemplating the whole, rather than the individual parts	✦ In what ways does this school operate as a cohesive system, in what way like a compilation of fragmented parts? What is your overall, bottom-line impression? ✦ To what extent do you feel you have a stake in how this school operates? Describe what that means to you. ✦ Have you ever been involved in helping to make important decisions? If so, how?

Systems Thinking:

The responses regarding systems thinking mentioned both curriculum and communication. There was a clear consensus that the school-wide Character Based Literacy (CBL) program had moved this school from "… a fragmented system with each teacher managing its own curriculum…" to one that "….blends a common curriculum throughout the schools…" The common language, training, resources, materials, focus on standards, and unit theme were all mentioned as having created academic cohesiveness for both staff and students. Another benefit that was mentioned was how it truly made it easier for students who moved from class to class or from this school to another court or community school to transition "… without feeling lost, behind, or out of place."

Most mentioned the value of the Math Matrix as similarly creating the opportunity for this same comprehensive school-wide cohesiveness, only focused on standards-based math. However, they recognized that the implementation of this curriculum is currently more fragmented with great variances between classes. Interestingly though, there was a stated desire to become more standardized in Math, as well as the other core subject areas, with Social Studies identified as the next best area to embrace. It was clear that with regard to curriculum, there was recognition of the effectiveness and value of CBL in promoting systems thinking, and there is a desire to further this in other core subject areas, as well. Yet, it is clear that this staff recognizes that this process has only begun.

Improved communication among staff was mentioned quite often. Two major reasons were given: the common curriculum and training; and monthly staff meetings and bi-weekly Single Issue Meetings (SIMs) in which a single topic is explored. With regard to training, many felt that the fact that all instructional staff (general education teachers, special education teachers, instructional assistants and tutors) are involved also helps to bring a solid uniform focus, as well as support communication.

While there seemed to be consensus that there is a systems thinking approach utilized in this school and with this staff, it was mentioned that it appeared that other parts of this school department were more fragmented with regard to curriculum and communication.

PERSONAL MASTERY	
Definition	**Questions Asked**
✦ Commitment to life-long learning	✦ In what ways is this school committed to the continued growth and learning of each individual? To what extent are you satisfied with the level of commitment?
	✦ In what ways do staff members have input into professional growth opportunities?
	✦ How would you describe the level of openness to feedback and growth among staff at this school?
	✦ How would you describe the Principal's role as a learning participant in this community?

MENTAL MODELS	
Definition	**Questions Asked**
✦ deeply ingrained assumptions, generalizations, or even pictures or images that influence how we understand the world and take action	✦ In what ways are new ideas valued at this school? Please give an example. ✦ What are some examples that illustrate a commitment to continuous improvement in this school?

Personal Mastery

It is quite clear that there is a strong staff commitment to doing what's best for students. Much appreciation was expressed for the fact that expectations have been raised for students, which has in turn raised them for staff. The notion of continuous improvement has apparently become quite ingrained into the culture of this school environment. As many noted, this has not always been true. One teacher said, "We used to be more resistant to change, but in the last year, with so many changes taking place, we seem to have adjusted well and now find 'change' to be the norm…" However, this does not mean that there is uncontroversial compliance. In fact, someone else remarked, "… with change come many differences of opinions and desires." Although many felt that this school provided a welcome attitude towards new ideas, a pertinent observation was that, in fact, the first reaction is frequently open resistance. Many noted the importance and value of the frequent staff meetings, during which time there is an opportunity to process and personalize changes. Another interesting observation by one teacher: "…I feel feedback is listened to …it's not always liked or appreciated….but that's what feedback should be…." All agreed that frequent communication and staff input is essential.

There was a definite feeling that staff has been given opportunity for input into professional development activities, and a great appreciation for those conducted by internal staff, as opposed to outside consultants. Many noted the importance of the principal's role as a contributor to lifelong learning. One teacher stated, "As a learning participant, our principal is committed to the growth and development of all staff members including herself. She is on the journey with us." And from another teacher, "Our principal seems deeply committed to providing the best program possible for our students, and she seems always willing to work towards towards improvement." Another key factor noted in support of continuous improvement is the cohesiveness and support among staff.

One measure of leadership is the caliber of people who chose to follow you.

-Dennis Peer

Mental Models:

Continuous improvement seems to be valued at this school, yet not always welcomed. There seems to be an appreciation for higher expectations for staff and students, but differences still exist as to the best means to achieve these goals. Some stated that new ideas are highly valued, and others mentioned that they felt that was not always true. Some believe that there is generally openness to feedback, while others perceived a great deal of defensiveness. Unlike some of the other areas, there was a good deal of inconsistency in the responses here.

I believe that this is the least understood discipline, and the questions raised did not elicit a meaningful reflection of staff's ability to honestly communicate with a willingness to suspend assumptions and listen openly. However, there were some very poignant remarks, such as: "Many times complaints are heard…but not addressed formally…..I believe some people would rather state their opinions or complaints anonymously rather than in a meeting, for fear of what?…" And another teacher stated: "There seems to be an initial resistance to new ideas, sometimes with lots of complaining, but after a while of trying things out, people find ways to make things work…."

SHARED VISION	
Definition	**Questions Asked**
✦ what binds people together around a common identity and sense of destiny	✦ To what extent is there a shared vision at this school? Could you explain what it is and what meaning it has for you? ✦ How are teachers involved in the hiring of new staff? Please describe any personal experiences you may have had in this process.

Shared Vision:

In the focus group meeting when asked to talk about what is working well now, the passion expressed for the students was extremely evident, as it was with their written responses. This staff is clearly and passionately connected around the desire to help students: succeed academically; develop a positive attitude about school and themselves; improve their lives and have better futures; and be prepared to make better lifestyle and choices. Also, there seems to be great consensus that students have greatly benefited from higher expectations, and an acknowledgment of the pleasant surprise that many are far more capable than previously believed. This is an obvious area of strength, as staff expressed a great deal of empathy for students and each other in this difficult environment.

TEAM LEARNING	
Definition	**Questions Asked**
✦ starts with dialogue to build the capacity of members of a team to suspend assumptions and enter into an arena of genuine 'thinking together'	✦ To what extent does the instructional staff have time, or make time to work / learn together? And, how is this supported, or not, by the school and district administration? ✦ When student needs and / or other instructional concerns are identified, to what extent are the teachers involved in ongoing work to address these? Explain

Team Learning:

Many again mentioned the ongoing meetings and trainings as vitally important, and an appreciation that support staff is included. Some expressed a desire for more unstructured time to work together. Staff involvement in planning, as well as providing trainings was deemed extremely valuable. Another tremendous asset noted is the staff informal collegiality and willingness to assist each other.

Another complex discipline not fully illuminated by the questions presented is collegiality and mutual assistance. In order to truly operate in the team learning discipline as envisioned by Senge, the group must have the ability to engage in dialogue to explore issues and concerns openly and honestly. Some of the comments noted earlier points to this as a potential area for growth.

Conclusion

Peter Senge's idea of a learning organization is "…where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns for thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together." (1990, p.3) Though he was speaking to businesses and organizations when these ideas were first published, it did not take long for these principles to resonante with educators. In educational arenas, this notion is more commonly referred to as learning communities or a professional community of learners, and is generally viewed as a powerful means to promote school improvement.

The purpose of this inquiry was to determine to what extent this school has been transformed into a learning community, and to use this information to inform future decisions and program direction. It appears that Mt. McKinley School has embraced many of the characteristics of a learning organization. The disciplines most obvious are:

Systems Thinking, particularly with regard to the school-wide implementation of CBL and the effective and ongoing meetings and trainings. The fact that there is a desire to replicate the standardization of CBL to other core content areas reflects the staff understanding and appreciation of this systematic approach.

Personal Mastery – there is tremendous pride in the improvements made at this school, as well as an acknowledgement that much more work needs to be done. The notion of continuous improvement resonates with staff, and although there does continue to be some resistance to new ideas and the need to make personal changes, there is obvious eagerness to 'do what's best for the students' as well.

Shared Vision – the passion and commitment to students at this school is exemplary. Teachers can clearly and uniformly express their mission, and this sense of caring is best evidenced by the heightened expectations that have been established for students. There is an abundance of tangible staff support, which alleviates to some extent the stresses of working within a locked facility.

The two disciplines that are least clearly understood, yet essential to becoming a true learning community, are Mental Models and Team Learning. While there is an appreciation for the frequent and varied structures in place to ensure continuous discussion around pending issues, this staff has not yet evolved to a place of trust where honest, open dialogue is more the norm. Also, team learning is dependent upon the ability to engage in dialogue so as to create new meaning together. This requires the

ability to suspend assumptions, values and beliefs and rather than defend one's opinion, listen openly in order to learn from one another in an attempt to come to a greater understanding.

In order to capitalize on these findings and at the request of many teachers, a plan of action will be created in order to further promote the evolution of a learning community in this school. Next steps will include at the least the following:

•Share these findings with staff and provide an opportunity to discuss them.

•If there continues to be interest, devise a time/plan to promote a greater understanding of the least understood disciplines – mental models and team learning. Information regarding these disciplines will come directly from Senge; however, there may be value in attempting to use some of the language strategies proposed by Kegan and Lahey. It seems most appropriate for this author to practice these personally first. Additionally, the fourth language regarding assumptions is one that would be particularly valuable to use with staff as one tool to promote a greater understanding of mental models. Learning how to identify and suspend assumptions is a necessary prerequisite for engaging in dialogue, which is essential to promote team learning.

•Work with interested staff to create an action plan to continue to involve staff in: a) furthering the development of a learning community; and b) creating opportunities for greater involvement and shared decision-making.

•Be sure to make time to celebrate staff / student / school successes!

This inquiry and subsequent analysis has solidified the belief that there is tremendous transformative power in schools that embrace the concept of continuous improvement. In order for staff to evolve into a learning community, there must be a shared mission, effective leadership, consistent and efficient communication strategies, and ongoing staff development. It is also important to remember that there is no end result to be achieved, but rather a lifelong journey. For school administrators to prepare for this, I would advise them to get out the raft, pack your head and your heart, dive into this 'permanent white water', and be prepared for an astonishingly memorable experience. Bon Voyage.

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About this Author

Lindy Khan is Principal of the central county Court and Community Schools with the Contra Costa County Office of Education, Educational Opportunities Department in Martinez, CA. Prior experience includes teaching traditional K-4, adult jail education students, and workplace literacy. She served as Director of CEA, Region VII from 1996 – 2000, and is currently a member of the JCCASAC Executive Board. Additionally, she is a doctoral student at St. Mary's College in Moraga, CA.

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Five Approaches to Literacy in Correctional Education
by Dr. Thom Gehring and Dr. Gary Sherwin

Abstract

This article introduces literacy from a few "big picture" perspectives, and then reviews five paradigms that have shaped the teaching and learning of literacy in residential confinement institutions for juveniles and adults. The paradigms are specific to correctional education, but they will be familiar to all alternative teachers and advocates of literacy instruction.

Introduction

The idea of education to improve the human condition is unique to the United States. The term "literacy" was coined in 1883 by the *New England Journal of Education* (Illich and Sanders, 1988, p. 87). The penitentiary was also invented in the United States, originally implemented by Quakers who wanted to end the brutal customs of European criminal justice (Teeters, 1955). In sum, North American correctional educators apply a unique rationale for helping incarcerated students become literate.

Yet literacy obviously predates North American emphases; it is intimately related to the human condition, and to progress. A few of its major benefits are suggested in Figure 1 below.

Culturally, there is always a lag between the acquisition of literacy by interested individuals and by their entire cultural group. Illich and Sanders (1988) reported that it takes 125-150 years—five to six generations—for a culture to become literate.

Mere acquisition of literacy cannot reverse hundreds of years of systematic constraint, such as has been experienced by Native Americans or African Americans,

DIRECT SOCIAL ELEMENTS	RELATED CULTURAL BENEFITS
Oral communication; language.	Identity as human beings.
Written text (first pictograms, then syllabic systems).	Civilization; origin of middle Class worldview; sacred texts.
Alphabetic text.	Legal and monotheistic worldviews
Mass produced text (printing with movable type).	Aspiration for secular and religious democracy; emphases on vernacular languages, mass education, libraries; individualism.
Electronic text (FAXs, modems, Internet, and e-mail).	End of traditional Cold War sentiment, at least toward former USSR and Eastern Block; emergent feminist and ecological perspectives.

Figure 1: Social and Cultural Dimensions of Literacy Acquisition

Figure 2: Service Delivery Patterns that Impact Literacy

PURPOSE	Obstructionist	Conventional	Transformative
	To ensure that students Rarely succeed in life, so they can be easily dominated or exploited.	To provide a level playing field, so students with initiative can succeed in life.	To provide the best education possible, thereby enhancing student life opportunities.
EXEMPLARY SYSTEM(S)	Traditional Bureau of Indian Affairs programs, some prison education.	Most local school programs, most university degree programs.	Some local school programs; private and specialized schools.
INSTRUCTIONAL ORIENTATION	"The most we can give these students is basic education—they can't handle any more than that."	"It's up to the student to take advantage of program opportunities."	"Our expectation is that all participants will give their best effort."
DEFINING ATTRIBUTES	Abiding resource inadequacy and schooling based on conventional prejudice; classes may be large or small.	Intermittent resource adequacy, and schooling based on fads and politics; large classes.	Fixed resource adequacy, and schooling based on the best research; small classes when possible.
TEACHER OUTLOOK	Although some teachers may be devoted to student learning, most have some other agenda—usually expanding their own career opportunities.	Teachers meet minimal job expectations; they may make some promises to students or the program, but do not necessarily deliver on them.	Teachers are enthusiastic about teaching and learning, often acquiring skills that are not required.

who are over represented in confined populations. Two examples will illustrate this point. First, consider the education experienced by Native Americans: children forcibly removed from their homes; denied access to their language, culture, and religion; taught through rote memory, with military precision. Or consider the slave codes, which forbade slaves from acquiring literacy under penalty of death because access to "the news" might politicize them.

This aspect of literacy acquisition, and its application in prisons, may be difficult for many teachers since education is often discussed as if it was always a "good" experience. Nevertheless, schooling can be structured to hurt and subjugate people as well as to help them, as portrayed in Figure 2.

Having established the overall context for potential benefits and concerns regarding literacy acquisition strategies, we can now discuss specific paradigms that shaped correctional education.

Five Paradigms that Have Driven Literacy in Correctional Education

Organized correctional education was first provided in the U.S. in 1787 at Philadelphia's Walnut Street Jail. Since then it has moved through five distinct paradigms. For this article we will call these five (1) the Monitorial Method, (2) Discipline, (3) Management, (4) Development, and (5) Reciprocity.

In this model Level 1 is the most immature (least consistent with our cur-

rent aspirations), and Level 5 is the most mature/ developed/consistent. Each level has its own purpose, pattern of teacher professional identification, and teaching strategies.

The Level 1 Monitorial emphasis was pursued in lockstep, without instructional options. Teachers identified as ministers or evangelists; their purpose was to help inmates read, so they could read the Bible and be saved for Christ. In the local schools this emphasis was associated with the Lancasterian system, which was used because of minimal public support for schooling. The system consisted of a teacher who trained several advanced learners, who in turn implemented rote memory exercises for their student peers. Noted for its mechanistic memorization procedures, it was inexpensive and therefore popular. (Monroe, 1912, p. 383).

In prisons the Sabbath school variation was pursued, often with church volunteers or seminary students who tutored many inmates. Student learning and program effectiveness were measured by the number of Bible verses memorized each year. Secular variations on Level 1 were evident in prisons and juvenile facilities until the mid 1960s. But since the monitorial method is no longer operational, some aspects of its instructional strategies may help modern readers grasp its intent.

A widespread method of Sabbath school literacy instruction was described by the Sing Sing Prison chaplain in 1828:

> Show the convict the first letter in the Bible, that is, I. Let him find the same, wherever it occurs in the first verse. Having done this, show him the second letter in the Bible, that is, n. Let him find every n in the first verse. Having done this and being told what I-n spells, he has already learned to read the first word in the Bible. Let him then find the first word in the Bible, wherever it occurs in the first chapter. Having done this he will probably never forget it. This is his lesson. Let his second lesson be the second word in the Bible, the letters of which and their combination should be taught as before. Let him proceed in this manner

> through successive lessons, til he has learned to read the first verse in Genesis—'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.' Having done this, he has got his reward. One of the most sublime ideas ever presented to the mind of man, he has obtained by diligent attention for a few hours in learning to read... (BPDS, 1972/1855, vol. #1, pp. 211-212).

This literacy teaching method was known as "Jacotot's plan" (Quick, 1916, pp. 116-117, 426).

Level 2 (Discipline) began in the last quarter of the l9th century. It is still operational and some accoutrements of Level 1 remain in place. However, there are more school programs, more secular teachers and texts, and a pervasive emphasis on classroom decorum. Although he was writing about a different setting, Tyack's description of the most popular Level 2 teaching strategy is applicable to education in confinement institutions.

> The proper way to read in the public school in the year 1899 was to say, 'Page 35, Chapter 4,' and holding the book in the right hand, with the toes pointing at an angle of forty-five degrees, the head held straight and high, the eyes looking directly ahead, the pupil would lift up his voice and struggle in loud, unnatural tones (1974, pp. 255-256).

This was the origin of the phrase "to toe the line"—there was actually a line painted on the floor where the students were required to stand when reciting.

The priority here is not student learning but classroom discipline and instructor convenience. The maintenance of

teacher authority and decorum, the appearance of learning, is the primary strategy and outcome. This priority corresponded precisely with the institutional purpose of control. Discipline-oriented (Level 2) teachers identify professionally as institutional employees who happen to be assigned to the education program; they would be just as happy overseeing the kitchen or being employed as guards. The focus on One God that characterized Level 1 simply resurfaced as a related focus on a monolithic and eternal institutional milieu.

And so we turn to Level 3 (Management), which emerged during the 1930s. Here much remains in place from Levels 1 and 2 instruction, but the preferred strategy for maintaining teacher authority is through classroom management. Still not organized to prioritize student learning, Level 3 instruction is dominated by what we today call "drill and kill" exercises. Like Level 2 and all the subsequent levels, this emphasis remains popular today. In classroom management institutional teachers identify professionally as instructors of the various disciplines of education: they see themselves as teachers of history, English, math, or as welders, carpenters, etc. They identify not as correctional educators, but as sojourners in a strange setting.

The generally accepted definition of learning as "changed behavior" is anchored in Level 3, whose advocates maintain that goal is precisely the same in education and penology. Level 3 practitioners are behaviorists who treat the mind like a "black box," focusing attention on observable (pertinent, measurable) student achievements to develop coping skills. The teacher navigates through many individual, incremental lesson plans, "managing" them all simultaneously. Everyone rejoices if students learn, but the real purpose of the system is classroom management.

The emphasis at Level 4 (Development), which really gained a foothold during the late 1960s and early 1970s, shifts from a behavioral to a cognitive psychological base. Strategies

aligned with the findings of Piaget, Loevinger, Vygotsky, Feuerstein, and Kohlberg permeate the Level 4 instructional landscape. Instructors frequently see themselves as correctional educators. They are participants in an eclectic school of thought that borrows heavily from related fields of education (adult and special education, etc.) but has its own unique core (history, literature, preferred strategies), that differs from those other fields.

Developmental teachers study learner cognitive functions so they can tailor lessons to the way the mind works. Activities are at the level of student functioning, or at a slightly more advanced level to promote development. Cognitive-moral and cognitive-

democratic strategies and outcomes enter the correctional educator's purview, often mixed with content in the humanities and social sciences. Some Level 4 advocates announce that these studies help learners become engaged democratically in community—a stark contrast from their earlier careers as criminals. However, true attainment of classroom democratic or participatory management is the feature of Level 5, not Level 4.

Level 4 correctional teachers are deeply concerned with student maturation; they apply holistic strategies, discuss the needs of the "whole student," and often pursue literacy instruction through whole language strategies. They are certainly concerned about much more than the mere Level 3 focus on behavior. Level 4 teachers pursue the entire repertoire of level 2-4 options (Level 1 is mostly defunct), but their preference is to foster demonstrable student maturation—personal growth and development.

At Level 5 (Reciprocity) all this is ex-

tended to include an "eye to eye," reciprocal approach, reminiscent of the best adult education. Level 5 correctional teachers are alert to the possibility that inmate students—despite their current, degraded condition in confinement—bring a host of relevant personal experiences to the classroom that can be applied to help them acquire literacy. Further, they expect students to participate to some extent in decisions regarding their own education—and, for their part, students tend to live up to these high expectations.

The "teacher as student and student as teacher" sentiment is operational here. Level 5 teachers discuss reciprocity with students, the ability to "put yourself in the other person's shoes," as an expression of the social maturation goal. Level 5 teachers are "universal citizens" in the broadest sense. Their standard operating procedures are complex and multi-leveled. Although they identify with the field of correctional education (as in Level 4), they are also quite comfortable transcending any specific pattern of

Figure 3: The Five Levels of Literacy Strategies in History

Level	Benchmarks that Indicate Implementation Period
1	**1787** (first Sabbath school—Philadelphia); **some elements remained operational in secular form until the mid 1960s.**
2	**1876** (Superintendent Zebulon Brockway's innovative program at NY State's Elmira Reformatory for men) **to the present.**
3	**1930** (first system wide correctional education bureaus in Federal Bureau of Prisons and NY State) **to the present.**
4	**False start—1909 to 1923** (NJ's first correctional education school district, more capable of statewide instructional improvement than Level 3 bureaus) **to the present.**
5	A **1895** (William George's Jr. Republic democratic management prototype started) **to 1929** Sing Sing's democratic management organization—the Mutual-Welfare League—outlawed). B **1974** (Doug Ayre's—and later Stephen Duguid's—Canadian Penitentiary Service program fully operational) **to 1993** (Canadian Federal Government stopped program funding). C **1990s** (implementation of Council of Europe's *Recommendations* on prison normalization—equal educational access in "inside" and "outside" communities **to the present.**

identification. Level 5 students who see that their earlier victims are real people (who bleed, suffer, and have dreams just like them) often decide to stop victimizing others.

In summary, the trajectory of classroom outcomes rolls up into a "big bag of tricks," in which Level 5 teachers have access to more alternative strategies and classroom themes than teachers at any other level. Thus, the teacher can match teaching/learning strategies with student attributes to promote learning success.

It is inappropriate to conceptualize these levels from a "one size fits all" perspective. The best teachers mix and match strategies, according to student ability and willingness to learn. For example, a successful, veteran Level 5 teacher can maximally structure student learning activities (as in Level 1, though secularized), emphasize teacher authority to make classroom decisions (as in Level 2), manage the student through incremental activities to enhance individual achievement (as in Level 3), focus on the community repercussions of whole student development (as in Level 4), or treat

venture of teaching and learning (as in Level 5). Figure 4 introduces when the five levels have emerged historically, and sketches some of the organizational dimensions associated with each.

Final Observations

Different purposes and assumptions shaped successive literacy paradigms in correctional education. These range from an emphasis on control of students as objects to the empowerment of students as subjects—community members with all the rights and obligations of citizens; from a narrowly religious outlook to one that is broadly universal. The functional "center of gravity" of correctional education is now between Levels 2 and 3, and history shows Level 5 has always been intermittent or temporary. If informed educators could stabilize Level 5, that would be a great step forward. In short, there is still a lot of work for literacy advocates in the field of alternative and correctional education.

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About the Authors

Drs. Thom Gehring and *Gary Sherwin* are professors in the Educational Psychology and Counseling Department at California State University, San Bernardino. Thom can be reached at (909) 880-5653 or tgehring@csusb.edu. Gary can be reached at (909) 880-5453, or at gsherwin@csusb.edu.

An Economic and Philosophical Justification of
Alternative Education

By Dr. Ted Price and Dr. Steve Loomis

Every principle that guides educational policy has a philosophical point of origin. These points of origin are aligned with belief systems, visions, and worldviews that, on the sociological level, attempt to answer questions as these: What obligations do human beings have toward one another? Of what relations does justice consist? What obligations do educational institutions have to ensure fairness? Should justice in the educational realm be defined as equality of opportunity or equality of results? What is the moral function of educational institutions to ensure a sense of fairness, equity, and social justice? What levels of compensatory education should an affluent community, state, or nation support? These questions will be addressed in this article.

the student as a full-fledged partner in the ad-

General Benefits of Education for At-Risk Youth

No one would seriously challenge the idea that education as an institution has as one of its cardinal functions to advance the knowledge and skill base in various domains of life of *all* participating youth. A significant uneducated underclass will foster resentment and uncertainty and will be an extraordinary drag on political and economic equality. Among the strengths of a great nation is the active compassion for those in our communities who by circumstance are less fortunate or disadvantaged in some fashion. For example, giving or voluntary service to non-profit charitable organizations that serve the poor, feed the hungry, heal the sick, and empower the disadvantaged is a hallmark of American national character. Indeed, thousands of organizations exist to offer such services domestically and internationally.

Americans are typically a generous and actively compassionate people which our collective affluence permits. But Americans are also a highly pragmatic people; they want both their charitable giving and tax contributions to have maximum social and economic effect. Indeed, the active compassion of giving and service, as well as basic tax contributions, is a form of investment that ensures the perpetuation of the social contract as well as the demonstrated effect of valuing certain social, economic, and moral goods. This social contract and promotion of the good also looks out for the disadvantaged among us.

An appropriate metaphor to use when describing compensatory education is that of a health care system, one that directs resources toward the early inoculation of children against viruses and diseases that invade the body's immune system. Directing health care dollars toward pre-natal,

post-natal, and pediatric prevention and care, are health care dollars saved later after the body's healthy maturation (all things being equal). A child who contracts a disease that could have otherwise been prevented is not only a moral tragedy in itself, it also bears a significant cost to his or her family and society in general[1].Similarly, Americans on the whole appear to understand the concept of directing resources to ensure the early inoculation of children against ignorance, poverty, and undeveloped talents. Over the decades Americans have generously supported both public and private educational institutions. As with preventative heath care, the public also expects a return on their educational investment. They desire schools to prepare students for virtuous and participative citizenship, economic productivity, and to teach kids to recognize other qualities associated with the good life.

During the twentieth century, the public school has provided expanded opportunities for education across all socio-economic levels, sex, and racial categories. However, it is one thing to provide expanding educational opportunities for all, and quite another to see them *realized* by all. Inequalities in educational attainment are a persistent problem that has many causes (including personal, familial, cultural, societal causes), and no easy solutions. Certain cultural data reveal a

Table 1.1
Civilian Labor Force and Participation Rates by Educational Attainment 1992-2000

Participation Rate/Year	1992	1995	2000
Less than H.S. diploma	60.3	59.8	62.7
H.S. diploma/no degree	78.3	77.3	78.4
Less than Bachelor's degree	83.5	83.2	83.2
College graduate	88.4	88.7	87.8

Data in Table 1.1 show lower rates of participation in the civilian labor force for non-diplomaed workers. Indeed, a correlation appears to exist between a lack of educational attainment in the labor force and the consumption of costly social insurance programs. Table 1.2 demonstrates that people without a high school diploma are twice as likely as their counterparts with a diploma to use social insurance programs[3].

They desire schools to prepare students for virtuous and participative citizenship, economic productivity, and to teach kids to recognize other qualities associated with the good life.

Table 1.2

1991 Social Insurance Program Consumption Rates

Among Adults, by Educational Attainment

Program Use Percentage/ Educational Attainment	<H.S.	H.S. Diploma	Some College	College Degree+
AFDC/Welfare	7.6	3.8	2.4	0.5
Food Stamps/WlC	16.4	7.4	4.2	0.9
Fed/State Unemployment Ins.	6.5	7.3	5.6	3.7
Fed/State Supp. Security Ins.	8.4	2.0	1.0	0.4
School Breakfast/Lunch	21.2	14.2	10.3	4.3
Social Security	42.3	20.8	12.6	10.6
Medicare	38.8	17.6	11.0	10.0
Medicaid	18.5	7.0	4.1	1.0
In Jail or Prison	0.7	0.4	0.2	0.1

Table 1.3
Unemployment Rates by Educational Attainment
1992-2000

Unemployment Rate/Year	1992	1995	2000
Less than H.S. diploma	13.5	10.0	7.9
H.S. diploma/no degree	7.7	5.2	3.8
Less than Bachelor's degree	5.9	4.5	3.1
College graduate	2.9	2.5	1.5

Unemployment rates are also aligned with educational attainment. Even during periods of strong economic growth (e.g., 1992-2000), those persons without a high school diploma are twice as likely to be unemployed.

A study by Harvard Law School researchers compared the characteristics of male juvenile delinquents and non-delinquents. This study of over 2,500 male adolescents revealed several interesting conclusions. Among these, over fifty environmental characteristics were determined to be of significance, the most significant of these being the role of the father in the boy's life. Of additional significance in this study were the discipline of the boy by the father, the supervision of the boy by the mother, as well as the general level of affection in the home and opportunity for family experiences. Non-delinquents typically came from healthy, loving, and disciplined two-parent families; delinquents typically came from malfunctioning families, e.g., father non-existent, too strict, or too passive, little supervision by the mother, and little family connection[6]. The decline in children growing up in two- parent households coincides with declining marriage rates, increasing divorce and co-habitation rates, an alarming increase in out-of-wedlock births, and steady percentages in rates of child poverty. It was once said of adversity that it ought to be taken where possible in small doses, no such luck for many children caught in a cascade of misfortune[7].

Given these troubling data, it is clear that many children are growing up in less than ideal environments, in circumstances starkly different in back-

ground from those of many education policy makers. For this reason (and others), educational policy makers shoulder the added burden to understand and to consider how it is, and to what degree, that a just, fair, and compassionate society can properly allocate educational resources to benefit the least advantaged students in our communities. Directors of educational policy are in a position to structure institutions of education such that students are provided a second chance to transcend their previous role as unsuccessful consumers of learning services (and other education goods) and, instead, have opportunities to morph into becoming producers of these goods within their families, communities, and the nation. This seems to be a public expectation of what schools ought to do[8]. Investing in educational services for disadvantaged students has a beneficial spill-over effect in terms of significantly reduced long-term social service costs, increased public revenues, increased personal disposable income, not to mention the incalculable benefit of improved individual lives.

It was once said of adversity that it ought to be taken where possible in small doses, no such luck for many children caught in a cascade of misfortune.

Marginality-Educational Opportunities for At-Risk Youth

We have thus far commented upon the general benefits of education, the costs associated with not attaining education, as well as the broad nature of moral obligations relative to education. Let us briefly consider how these benefits and obligations relate to marginal students. The concept of "marginality" means that a student is experiencing a strained relationship with the school environment. Marginality arises from many dimensions, including

the student's home environment, familial expectations, a student's psychology, the physical layout of the classroom or school, the culture and social conditions of the school and community, poor teaching practices from educators, and myriad other factors. The types of students who become marginal include the underachieving learner, the understimulated learner, students with learning disabilities, and students suddenly performing poorly for various reasons (e.g., the effects of divorce, geographic moves, victim of bullying, and hormonal changes). Becoming marginal is not necessarily an indicator that a student has low intelligence or cognitive potential. Rather, it is more often a case of environmental factors playing a significant role, producing a sequence of events for which the student is ill prepared to cope and has few assets to rely upon to guide the coping process. Hence, marginal students become alienated from the school and often drop out before they have obtained the requisite knowledge and skills (or requisite credential) to secure a reasonable economic future.

Our argument is that alternative education can provide the critical compensatory link necessary for children to reap empirically verifiable economic and social benefits to the community, state, and nation. Before turning to the empirical benefits, let us identify in further detail the philosophical ground of our argument.

Five Arguments for Compensatory Education for At Risk Youth

Five arguments exist whose collective force of reason would appear to obligate

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education policy makers to arrive at a particular conclusion. An argument is a statement of logic that provides reasons for a conclusion. An argument is deemed valid when the premises are true, and the conclusion logically follows. The common conclusion in these five arguments is to appropriately fund alternative and compensatory programs for economic, social and moral reasons. While education has become a data-driven enterprise, the force of reason continues to provide rationale for sound policy. By themselves, these arguments may not hold sway with a skeptic of allocating at the margins. Still, they are part of an overwhelming case for the broad benefits of alternative and compensatory education.

Economic Argument [10](1 of 5)

Premise 1:   Educational attainment results in higher earnings and greater economic self-sufficiency;

Conclusion: Therefore, in order to reduce the burden of social insurance costs (according to Rand Corporation, these programs are 1.5 to 2 times more costly than compensatory education costs), early investments in alternative and compensatory education for the 10 to 20 percent of students at-risk of educational failure is economically justified

Sociological Argument #1[11](2 of 5)

Premise 1:   A culture flourishes to the degree all segments of the culture benefit from educational opportunities;

Conclusion: Therefore, to promote one of the central elements of cultural advancement (or even mere stability) and avoid one of the central determinants of cultural decline, alternative and compensatory investment for educational attainment is warranted.

Sociological Argument [12] #2 (3 of 5)

Premise 1:   People who fail to obtain a high school diploma are statistically more likely to live in a condition of poverty;

Conclusion: Therefore, to help break the cycle of poverty, alternative and compensatory educational opportunities are warranted.

Moral Argument [13](4 of 5)

Premise 1:   Suppose that we were to place ourselves behind a hypothetical veil of ignorance such that we do not know our relative position in society (our economic or social positions) nor the fortunes of our natural abilities (intelligence, aptitudes, and talents) nor our respective educational opportunities;

Conclusion: Therefore, it would seem fair and just to allocate liberally for alternative and compensatory education.

Ontological Argument [14](5 of 5)

Premise 1:   Human beings are a particular kind or type of being endowed with the faculties of reason, emotion, and moral intuitions;

Conclusion: A just society will allocate an appropriate level of resources to ensure that alternative and compensatory educational opportunities exist for at-risk and marginal students in order to help develop their faculties and talents and help move them toward becoming as "complete" a human being as possible.

We are to be reminded that social science is instrumental in nature. As Leo Strauss observed fifty years ago, the method of social science cannot answer questions of value, hence the importance of social and educational philosophy in determining the moral value of alternative and compensatory education[15].

Having covered the philosophical and political influences affecting fiscal issues of alternative and compensatory education, let us now consider human capital theory and its relationship to education.

Human Capital Theory and Its Relation to Cost Allocation in Alternative Education Programs

The gradual expansion of the educational system since the industrial revolution has often been predicated on a theory of human capital[16]. Capital as an economic term can refer to machines, factories, crops, land, and financial institutions. Human capital is an economic concept that refers to human beings investing in themselves through education, training, and skill development[17]. It also refers to a person's collective talents, skills, and knowledge[18]. Human capital theory generally holds "investment that improves knowledge, skills, or health leads to higher productivity of workers which in turn causes higher earnings."[19] Under this theory, a central benefit of educational investment for society and individuals is economic. Among the private returns to individuals are: increased earnings, increased acquisition of private property, increased access to health care, increased access to quality educational institutions for one's children, and increased opportunities to give to charitable organizations, etc. Social returns are said to include increased human productivity, increased efficiency in the management of production, redirected costs to research and development, increased technological innovation, higher tax revenues for community infrastructure, a higher quality civil service, and lower long-term social insurance costs.

Research evidence reveals that (on average) individuals with higher education attainment earn more than individuals with less attainment. But does increased educational attainment *cause* an increase in the productive capacities of individuals? There are two competing answers. One theory suggests investment in educational attainment *makes* a person more productive through the acquisition of knowledge and skills. Another theory suggests that educational attainment does not make a person more productive; rather it merely acts as a screening device which allows employers to mark and select individuals with higher innate ability or more ideal personal characteristics that makes them more productive than others.

The first theory favors the view that education (potentially) is a great equalizer, that a high quality educational experience can lift people to maximize their native capacities and talents by imparting useful knowledge, skills, and experiences. This was the view of Horace Mann and John Dewey. The second theory posits a relatively fixed and static human nature, the quality of which is revealed over a lifetime in an escalating semi-rigorous academic sorting process. The kids with less on the ball in terms of talent will be sifted out and cast aside for more mundane work, and the kids with greater talent will advance until they too reach some terminal point (e.g., G.E.D., H.S. diploma, B.A., M.A., or Ph.D.). Education as a screening device in theory sends a signal to employers allowing them to identify characteristics of intelligence and trainability, attitudes toward authority such as loyalty, motivation, and reliability of potential employees. These qualities are highly valued by employers, and persons possessing these qualities tend to command

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Educational institutions are a society's investment instrument in the future.

higher wage earnings.

It is likely that both theories are true to varying degrees. Certainly high quality education has value by imparting useful knowledge, skills, and experiences. Likewise, employers can also be counted on to view potential employees through the screening devices of educational attainment and the personal characteristics and attributes inherent to or implied by such attainment. Research suggests that both environmental experiences (the first theory) and genetic predispositions and qualities (the second view) are true accounts of human nature in varying degrees.

Educational institutions are a society's investment instrument in the future. Decisions regarding educational investment occur on the individual and societal scale. Individuals make choices concerning their responsibilities as consumers and (later) producers of the educational good. These decisions are influenced, but not necessarily determined by a myriad of factors (family, SES, culture, etc.). Some individuals focus on seeing the future, their respective role in it, and how it is, and by which pathways, they can achieve their goals. These are the students who see the forest for the trees. Other individuals focus on the immediate, the temporary, and the momentary. By choice or circumstance, these students do not see their future as clearly and are unsure how to even begin choosing a pathway to success. Education is often viewed by these students as a source of frustration and waste of time. These are the students lost in the forest with no guide to lead them out. Such students are often ignorant of how the economic game is played (as discussed above) and consequently are at peril of living lives of virtual servitude.

This brings to mind the ancient Hebrew proverb, "The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender."

Given that a significant percentage of students are typically from the group lagging behind in long-range education and economic vision, these students are less likely to see their educational experiences as an investment in themselves, let alone as a costly societal investment in their respective futures. In turn, it is this group most at risk to discard these opportunities, exchanging them for perpetual membership in an economic underclass.

This brings us to the importance of an educational institution and the critical role of alternative education in particular. Under human capital theory, an alternative educational institution is intentionally designed to provide high-quality individualized educational services to students who, for whatever reason, were unsuccessful in their former schools. In an effort to counter the growing underclass, a central purpose of an alternative educational institution is to impart essential knowledge, skills, and experiences to students and assist the student in determining his or her talents, in order to compensate for an earlier set of lost opportunities. However, alternative educators must not view their task as one of mere credentialing. Rather, quality educational experiences and the successful imparting of knowledge and skills are high-cost production functions whose support is vital to a health economy and free society.

The true measure of the relative success of an educational institution can be found in a longitudinal evaluation of its par-

ticipants and graduates. The extent to which its former students are able to become productive and virtuous family and community members is the extent to which investment costs are mediated by individual and social benefits. If human capital theory is a correct model, the expansion of education drives wage labor upward in proportion to educational attainment (also having the effect of causing wages at the top to narrow), thus decreasing economic and social inequalities in a given society. Inasmuch as alternative educational programs play a compensatory role in the expansion of education (at least in terms of providing opportunities if not results), an educational institution is a critical component to education expansion by providing alternative pathways to attainment, thereby also allowing youth to have a shot at a reasonably successful economic life with its accoutrements.

The Social Benefits of Compensatory Education: A Cost-Benefit Justification

Rand researchers have introduced an approach toward estimating the benefits individuals receive from public programs. Variables such as educational attainment tend to offer (or at least can be correlated with) social insurance program utilization. This approach is called the Rand Program utilization model.

Using this model and formula, Rand researchers found that instances of educational attainment lead to savings in state-run social insurance programs "throughout a person's lifetime."[20] It would appear to follow that appropriately-funded and successfully managed compensatory education programs serve as fiscally valuable, critically-warranted support structures for educational attainment and the concomitant acquisition of high-quality educational experiences, knowledge, and skills that attainment infers.

Consider the estimated annual per-person (taxpayer) costs of welfare for selected groups of women, by level of education and age. While per-person welfare costs decline with age (and most dramatically for the non-high school diplomaed), the total per-person welfare costs for the non-diplomaed are substantial.[21] Annual per-person savings for many social insurance programs can also be correlated with educational attainment, leading Rand researchers to conclude that "the amount of public expenditures per-person declines dramatically as educational attainment increases for all ages up to retirement age."[22] Alternative educational institutions serve a vital social function by providing second-chance opportunities for marginal and at-risk students.

> **Alternative educational institutions serve a vital social function by providing second-chance opportunities for marginal and at-risk students.**

As important as this social function is, it may pale in comparison to the economic function alternative education provides to the culture when it helps students to achieve upward mobility through educational attainment (and those previously mentioned qualities attainment infers). Such students are likely to be more self-sufficient and less reliant upon social insurance programs. Hence alternative education units are positioned to help empower students to become independent producers of the education good and to save the tax-paying public thousands of dollars per-student, per-diploma (or GED).[23]

This phenomenon is complex and simple. It is complex in that causation is difficult

to establish due to a myriad of independent variables virtually incalculable, given human freedom and choice. Yet it is also simple in that reason suggests that greater attainment rates of education imply that people also obtain a level of knowledge and skill that allow them opportunities for greater self-sufficiency. Once again a paradox arises. Does educational attainment *make* a person more independent from state-run social insurance programs, or does educational attainment merely *reflect* a more independent person?

The guiding theory behind alternative education is that education can indeed equip a person to be economically independent (nurture theory). Whereas, if educational attainment is a reflection of one's nature (e.g., genetics), then expenditures for compensatory education might be viewed as wasted capital. What is needed is more data from a longitudinal examination of students to determine precisely what effect alternative interventions have. Still, the economic effects of educational attainment are clear in personal scope (increases in per-person disposable income) as well as societal in scale (increases in per-person public revenues).

What is more, higher educational attainment seems to possess two correlative effects. First, the more educated self-report higher levels of health than those whom are non-high school diplomaed. Second, the better educated report being more prepared and capable of managing an illness than the less educated, thus reducing health care costs.[24] Rand researchers have also shown that significant savings to social insurance programs would occur when education attainment levels of the popu-

> **It is also important for educational institution managers to come to understand that their programs, when managed effectively, have a consequential economic ripple effect in the future of the local, state, and national economy.**

lation increased. Indeed, the savings appear to be significant over time as Vernez et al. suggest below:

> [F]or every native-born Mexican woman who graduates from high school instead of dropping out, the nation would save $2,438 in social programs and would add $1,843 in public revenues annually over her lifetime. In addition, this woman would enjoy $2,588 more in disposable income during her 30th year. [25]

Given these data, we can form a rough idea of the social and private benefits achieved over time of a native-born Mexican woman when she earns a high school diploma. Even though a GED is less regarded than a diploma (and average earnings are somewhat less as well), there are presumable advantages for attaining a GED over being a dropout.

Conclusion

Were we to re-employ the medical metaphor used earlier, we could think of alternative education as a specialized health care team whose mission is to provide early inoculation services as well as remedial medical treatments. Health care costs of this nature are clearly outweighed by the future benefits of a healthy body. In a metaphor of this type, success is identified as an improved quality of life. This too is the over-arching mission of alternative and compensatory education. Alternative education units seek to improve the quality of participants' lives by inoculating them against the factors which tend to produce ignorance and poverty. While the criterion for success of such programs can be identified in a variety of ways (e.g., economical,

sociological, moral, and ontological), eventual educational attainment (and the qualities inferred by attainment) is, as we have suggested, the obvious one.

When successful, alternative education services and programs save significant future tax- payer monies, it is critical for educational policy makers to understand that such institutions are a hedge against increases in future social insurance costs. It is also important for educational institution managers to come to understand that their programs, when managed effectively, have a consequential economic ripple effect in the future of the local, state, and national economy. As with the butterfly in China, or the hurricane in the South Pacific, seemingly independent, small, and random events produce a cascade of sequentially connected consequences. This is no less true, and perhaps even more so, for human beings. Both chaos and human capital theories helps us to understand the relationship between education and economic quality of life, an important requisite for quality educational management.

Economist Lester Thurow observed that the progressive rise of economic inequality and growth of a permanent underclass threaten to destroy the social and political structure and institutions of America.[26] In so far as the economic underclass is a consequential effect of a lack of educational attainment (and the knowledge, skill, and experiences attainment implies) alternative education is a valuable educational institution and necessary for the preservation of the social contract.

End Notes

1 In these circumstances, a child is robbed of becoming a producer of goods (economic, moral, political, etc.), and society is robbed because it does not benefit from this child's talents.

2 Source: Statistical Abstract of the United States, 2001, Table No. 571.

3 It is important to keep in mind that there are myriad reasons why one does not complete a high school diploma. Nurture and nature explanations abound. The limited point here is to demonstrate correlation not causation.

4 Source: Rand Corporation, 1997

5 Source: Statistical Abstract of the United States, 2001, Table No. 604.

6 Sheldon Glueck and Eleanor Glueck, *Of Delinquency and Crime: A Panorama of Years of Search and Research* (Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas, 1974).

7 Information also cited in Steve Loomis, "A Review of the Central Principles and Literature of Moral Education,"
A Report for the Character Education Institute of OCDE, 2003.

8 Public opinion in the U.S. identifies as "essential" or "very important" for schools to help embed the following qualities (and percentages of public support): (1) Skills/knowledge to get a job---94%; (2) Skills/knowledge to continue studies/training-89%; (3) Self-confidence-89%; (4) Being a good citizen-86%. National Center for Education Statistics. *Public Attitudes Toward Secondary Education: The United States in an International Context,* NCES 97-595, Table 2.

9 R. Sinclair and W. Ghory, "Improving Conditions for Marginal Students," J. Goodlad and P. Keating, eds., *Access to Knowledge: An Agenda/or Our Nation's Schools* (New York: The College Board, 1990).

10 See George Vemez, Richard Krop, and Peter Rydell, *Closing the Education Gap: Benefits and Costs* (Rand Copoiration, 1999).

11 See Robert Barro, "Education as a Determinant of Economic Growth," Edward Lazear, ed., *Education in the Twenty-first Century* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 2002). See also Ingemar Fagerlind and Lawrence Saha, *Education and National Development: A Comparative Perspective* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1983).

12 We are equating educational attainment as a representation of the acquiring of all the knowledge, skills, and experiences implied by such attainment.

13 See John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999, revised edition).

14 This argument is rooted in the nature of what a human being is, as contingent beings. See Aristotle, *The Nicmachean Ethics,* Trans. J. Welldon (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1987), John Dewey, *Experience and Education* (New York: Touchstone, 1938), Jacques Maritain, *Education at the Crossroads* «New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1943), and C. S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man* (New York: Macmillan, 1947).

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[19] J. Rodriguez, *The Machineries of Inequality* (Claremont, CA: an unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, 1999).

[20] Ibid, p. 20

[21] Ibid, p. 21

[22] Ibid, p. 24

[23] Ibid, p. 25

[24] Dana Goldman and James Smith, "Can Patient Self-Management Help Explain the SES Health Gradient?"(Santa Monica: Rand, 2002), also available at www.pnas.org.

[25] Vernez, Krop, and Rydell, *Closing the Education Gap: Benefits and Costs* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 1999), p. 30

[26] Lestor Thurow, *The Future of Capitalism* (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1996).

About the authors:

Ted Price, Ph.D., is presently serving as the Assistant Superintendent of Alternative, Community, and Correctional Education Schools and Services (ACCESS) for the Orange County (California) Department of Education (OCDE). He is responsible for programs and services for at-risk, delinquent, incarcerated, and home-schooled youth and adults. Dr. Price has served as Chair of the Student Programs and Services Steering Committee of the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association, President of LeARN, Consultant for U.S. Department of Justice, and Superintendent of Schools for the Department of Correctional Education in Richmond, Virginia. He has also worked with the Los Angeles Office of Education as Director of Juvenile Court and Community Schools and is Past-President for the International Correctional Education Association, where he was instrumental in creating the strategic plan for this association.

Ted Price, Ph.D   E-Mail:ted_price@ocde.k12.ca.us
Assistant Superintendent   Telephone: 714-966-4000
Alternative Education Division
Orange County Department of Education
Adjunct Professor
School of Education
University of Redlands

Steve Loomis, Ph.D is a philosopher of education currently working as an assistant professor in the Department of Education at Wheaton College in Illinois and is visiting scholar in the School of Educational Studies at the Claremont Graduate University in Los Angeles, where he also received his doctorate (Ph.D., philosophy of education). His research covers institutional theory, the economics of information, as well as the philosophical and theoretical foundations of education.

Steven Loomis, Ph.D.   E-mail: steven.loomis@wheaton.edu
Visiting Scholar (Philosophy of Education)   Telephone: 630-752-5042
School of Educational Studies
Claremont Graduate University

Assistant Professor
Graduate Department of Education
Wheaton College

PEP UP PROGRAM

San Luis Obispo County Office of Education

San Luis Obispo County Office of Education has recently received a grant from the U.S. Department of Education to launch "PEP UP," a new physical education curriculum custom-designed to address the unique needs of students enrolled in the county's Community School program. Dr. Michael Sutliff, an Associate Professor of Kinesiology at Cal Poly State University and a recognized scholar in P.E. curriculum development for at-risk teens, will serve as lead consultant to the project.

PEP UP's ultimate goal is to offer Community School students a fun, healthy new approach to the PE experience that will motivate increased enthusiasm and positive behaviors, including improved nutrition, fitness and teamwork combined with a decrease in obesity, substance use, and violence.

The PEP UP curriculum integrates five research-based approaches that are ideally suited to at-risk youth -- Hellison's Model for teaching responsibility through physical activity, Sports Education Model (in which students learn and participate at all levels of sport, including coaching, scorekeeping, refereeing and playing), Nontraditional Games, Chumash Challenge (a cooperative team-building curriculum developed at Cal Poly), and an overarching focus on lifelong fitness.

The start-up design for the PEP UP Project is simple and straightforward. It uses existing staff resources by identifying "champion" teachers and site-based probation officers at each Community School site to participate in training and implementation of the PEP UP curriculum under the leadership of a certified P.E. training specialist and the Cal Poly consultant. New athletic equipment and fitness assessment technology are also being upgraded at all five Community School sites, and student field trips have been scheduled to local fitness clubs and a university ropes course.

For more information contact Jeanne Dukes, Assistant Superintendent, San Luis Obispo County Office of Education. Email: jdukes@slocoe.org

Pioneers in the Treatment and Education of Juvenile Delinquents

by Robert Tavonatti

Present day attitudes regarding the treatment and education of juvenile delinquents are the product of a colorful and controversial evolution. Before 1800, juveniles convicted of crimes in the United States were subject to the same penalties and placed in the same institutions as adult criminals. Orphans and other destitute children were generally indentured or placed in poorhouses. It took the work of individuals with strength, determination, and vision to spearhead advances in the treatment of juvenile delinquency in America. This is a story of several of these pioneers.

Initial changes to concepts of juvenile justice began early in the 19th century with the work of two Quaker philanthropists, Thomas Eddy and John Griscom. They founded the "New York Society for the Prevention of Pauperism" in 1817. The early work of this Society was aimed at what they considered to be the causes of adult pauperism: drinking, gambling, prostitution, and other vices. Although the major focus of their work was with adults, they soon became concerned with the treatment of children in prison. By 1824, the Society for the Prevention of Pauperism had changed its focus to concentrate on the reform of children and led to the first institution in the United States exclusively for the treatment of juveniles, called the "New York House of Refuge" (Rothman,1986).

This institution became a milestone of change in the treatment of juveniles. It marked the earliest American attempt to provide some alternative to the placement of juveniles in adult prisons. Other Houses of Refuge were quickly established in Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Louisiana.

Although these Houses of Refuge separated juveniles from adult prisons, they did little more than provide a separate but similar prison environment. Houses of Refuge were characterized by high walls, large populations, dormitory-type living units, regimentation, long work days in the workshops, and severe corporal punishment for rules infractions (Mennel, 1973).

During this period of time the term "juvenile delinquent" did not refer to all children in trouble, but only to the poor. Pauperism was the disease, and juvenile delinquency was the symptom. The founders of Houses of Refuge, therefore, attacked the causes of pauperism as a solution to juvenile

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delinquency. The philanthropists who founded the New York House of Refuge were even influential enough to persuade the New York Legislature in 1825 to place a tax on theaters and taverns to help support the Refuge, thus putting economic pressure on what they considered to be contributing factors in their struggle against pauperism (Mennel, 1973).

Although the work of these early philanthropists was undoubtedly honorable, the House of Refuge concept was doomed to failure because of its high escape rates and internal disputes regarding the use of physical punishment and the roles of work versus education. The House of Refuge did, however, provide the foundation for the evolvement of what would become the next generation of institutions established to help the juvenile delinquent: the Reform Schools.

The concept of the Reform School came from a fundamental difference of philosophies between the founders of the Houses of Refuge and a new group of philanthropists. These new people saw Houses of Refuge as merely prisons for children, and did not think that a prison environment was conducive to rehabilitation. They felt that more could be accomplished by providing a family-type environment rather than an institutional setting (Nalder, 1920)

One of the most influential supporters of this new thought was Mary Carpenter of England. In 1851, she led a movement to set up reformatory schools for destitute and delinquent children as an alternative to the prison-type confinement they were currently receiving. She believed that delinquent children were victims of environmental circumstances and were not "innately wicked" as was the common belief at the time. Her ap-

proach was to provide industrial, moral, and religious training in a small home-type setting. She promoted love rather than fear, and reward rather than punishment (Carpenter, 1851).

Mary Carpenter's approach to reforming juvenile delinquents was emulated in the United States by Charles Loring Brace, who in 1853 founded the New York Children's Aid Society. He too believed that the family was the best rehabilitative setting, and developed a procedure of "placing out" delinquent juveniles to rural farming homes. The removal of the juvenile from the city to the country provided relief from both the citizenry of the urban area and the juvenile himself (Stauts, 2000).

The concept of "placing out" was criticized by other groups who doubted that a Midwestern farmer, untrained in dealing with juvenile delinquents, provided an effective reforming environment. They also felt that sending a delinquent juvenile to another state only shifted the problem out of sight, but did not cure it. These philanthropists did, however, believe that Brace's ideas contained some merit, and although they did continue the existing practice of institutionalizing the juvenile, they supported the rural placement concept, and placed more emphasis on formal schooling- hence the name "reform school."

The chief differences between the house of refuge and the reform schools were the lower populations and the rural setting. The house of refuge was usually in a large city such as New York or Boston, and reflected the problems inherent in such: limited space, overcrowding, etc. Reform school locations, however, were generally away from the city in a simpler environment, where the work of reforming could be done on a more

Pauperism was the disease and juvenile delinquency was the symptom.

personal basis (Mennel, 1973).

As the nineteenth century continued, the movement grew to find alternatives to prison for youthful offenders. Although houses of refuge and reformatories provided to some degree this alternative, many still considered these places to be little more than prisons for children. Even the reform schools, with their smaller populations, rural settings, and emphasis upon education were criticized for continuing practices of corporal punishment and regimentation.

By the end of the nineteenth century, it was becoming increasingly obvious that the judicial system was becoming ill-equipped to adequately deal with cases of juvenile delinquents. It was no longer popular to simply commit a juvenile to prison, or even a reformatory, without severe and accurate criticism regarding the ultimate good of the system.

One man, John Augustus, made it his personal quest to improve this situation. He was a Boston shoemaker who in 1841, at the age of fifty-seven, began bailing drunkards from court to help them avoid prison. While in his custody, he counseled them to improve their behavior and habits. When it came time to appear back before the court, this improvement in behavior usually resulted in a small fine instead of imprisonment and disgrace (Augustus, 1852).

He soon expanded his philanthropic act of providing bail to include unfortunate women and juveniles. By 1858, he had bailed out 1,152 men and 794 women and helped another 3,000 homeless girls. He often had up to fifteen charges living with him at one time. His actions became popular and soon developed into a system we know today as probation. The first probation law was passed in Massachusetts in 1878 as a direct result of John Augustus' work, and history now regards him as the "first probation officer" (Parsloe, 1978).

Throughout these years, the same courts tried all cases of all defendants, regardless of the defendant's age. However, as society became more concerned about the welfare of the juvenile delinquent, concern also grew regarding the ability of the court system to effectively decide cases involving juveniles. Many innovations were taking place across the land gaining widespread support as their methods seemed to provide more efficacy to the problem of juvenile delinquency. The time was ripe for all these innovations to come together into one program, and it did, in 1899, with the establishment of the first juvenile court.

Cook County, Chicago is regarded as being the first to develop a judicial system exclusively for the juvenile. Legislation was developed which coordinated and integrated a program of adjudication, disposition, and treatment. The juvenile court now played a different and more varied role than the regular court judge, acting as parent and counselor, as well as judge. Probation became an important part of the program. All in all, the development of the juvenile court has been regarded as one of the most important improvements in the field of jurisprudence (Nyquist, 1974).

The juvenile court concept spread quickly. In 1900, Denver, Colorado established a juvenile court under the direction of Judge Benjamin Lindsey. Judge Lindsey's style was as revolutionary as the juvenile court he presided over. He would talk with delinquents as friends and equals. He actually acted as his own probation officer, trusting boys sometimes only on their word alone that they would behave. He acted as a father figure, which made him popular with the juveniles who came into his court, but not to the authorities of the Denver police:

Back in the days when I was beginning my work among juveniles, I had one boy

By the end of the nineteenth century, it was becoming increasingly obvious that the judicial system was becoming ill-equipped to adequately deal with cases of juvenile delinquents.

who was among the first I sent to Golden [State Reform School]. It took some nerve to stand by my guns, for the tradition was not yet established, and I had to break ground with every boy; also, this youngster was considered by the police to be the worst rapscallion that ever rapscalled; and I guess he was… Skinny was always running away from the cops. He had served time in the reform school, and had been the terror of that institution. He was the leader of several gangs, and had within him the imagination, the fire, the courage, and the talents for roguery that, in other walks of life, make Captains of Industry…

I shall never forget the day when two six-foot policemen… came into my chambers with the diminutive form of Skinny between them… One of these officers I knew to be hostile to my methods; and, as I learned, he had just tipped off a reporter that the Judge was going to try sending Skinny to Golden alone, and it was going to result in a good laugh on the Judge…

"Skinny," I said, "do you know what this officer has told this reporter? He has told him that there is going to be a good story in this because Skinny can't be trusted; and when I try to send you to Golden by yourself, and you run away, it will be a fine joke on the Judge. Now what do you think of that?"

Skinny… turned on the policeman with flashing eyes. "So dat's what yuh told de guy, did yuh! Yuh thinks yuh know a lot; but yuh don't know nuthin' at all." Then he turned to me. "Judge, gimme that writ an' watch me fool dis cop."

Skinny is a prosperous Denverite today instead of an inmate of the penitentiary. He has a happy wife and a thriving family. Occasionally he drops in to watch me deal with other Skinnys; he always votes for me. (Lindsey, 1925:335-337)

Judge Lindsey's personal touch was lauded by the new theorists of juvenile delinquency, and condemned as well by those who believed his lenient and comradely approach actually promoted crime. Lindsay was undaunted by these criticisms, however. He became a leading figure of liberalism, advocating birth control, trial marriage, and other controversial subjects, which he regarded as the "larger fight." (Lindsay, 1931).

His political foes succeeded in disbarring him in 1927 on a trumped-up charge of illegally accepting a gift. Although he was reinstated in 1935, he had by then moved to Los Angeles and been elected to the Los Angeles Superior Court.

The work of this man set a new tone in the treatment of juvenile delinquency. Although many agreed that much of Lindsay's success was because of his charismatic personality, his technique did develop into a professional probation system that would ultimately become the standard method of treatment of juvenile delinquency.

The efforts of these early pioneers to differentiate the treatment of juvenile offenders from adult offenders created the foundation for our present system of juvenile justice. Our society has benefited greatly by their efforts and it is important for today's professionals who work with the education and treatment of juvenile delinquents to know the historical pioneers of their profession.

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About this author:

Robert Tavonatti is Principal of Court and Community Schools for the Sonoma County Office of Education. He has worked in education for 25 years, including fourteen years as a teacher and administrator in court and community schools in Northern California.

The Juvenile, Court, Community, and Alternative Schools Administrators of California

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For questions call (714) 826-5019

Student Data

Name:_____ Social Security Number: _____
     Last   First   MI

Permanent Address:_____ City/State/Zip:_____
                    Street

Telephone Number:_____ Date of Birth:_____

Parent/Guardian:_____ Telephone Number:_____

School Data

Juvenile Court / Community School Attended:_____ Date of Graduation:_____

Name of Program Administrator:_____ Telephone Number:_____

School Address:_____City/State/Zip:_____
                    Street
Name of College/Trade School Attending:_____

Telephone Number:_____ Address/City/State/Zip:_____

Date of Enrollment:_____ Number of Credits: 3   6   9   12   15   18
                                             Circle One

Financial Data

Has student ever received an award from JCCASAC?   Yes   No   Amount Received/Date:
                                    Circle one

Tuition $_____

Books $_____

**Attach letter from the student
to this Scholarship Application**

_____   _____
JCCASAC Program Administrator   Date   JCCASAC Section Representative   Date

_____
Approved JCCASAC Treasurer   Date

Teacher Burnout and Toxic Cultures in Alternative School Prison Settings

by Randall Wright, Ph.D

Abstract

Alternative school settings often are highly strategic places where issues of control and risk create toxic institutional cultures that impact the professional lives of teachers (and administrators) creating alienation or burnout. In this paper, the sources of teacher stress are identified and the features of toxic cultures that accentuate feelings of burnout are described. Some recommendations for preventing burnout such as meaningful teacher induction programs are proposed. This essay concludes with the suggestion that school cultures are communicative phenomena. Practicing civil forms of communication so that schools become "spheres of civility," is a simple low cost and effective means to transform school culture from toxic to collegial and thus reduce burnout.

Burnout—An Overview

Naturally teachers find some days more trying and difficult than others, holding on until the weekend or a holiday to find a much needed break from their hectic professional lives. All of us have probably experienced and voiced the need to "get away from it all" at one time or another. Burnout or alienation however, is a more serious and crippling phenomena. Staff who experience burnout not only feel like skipping work, they actually do. And, while at school, they have difficulty concentrating on tasks. They are overwhelmed by the workload and feelings of inadequacy to accomplish it. They either withdraw from colleagues or argue with them. School (and everything about it) irritates them. Even their psychological and physical health suffers as they experience insomnia, digestive disorders, headaches, and heart palpitations. For self-preservation, some undergo an identity shift, attaching meaning and value to activities outside the classroom. Others simply leave the profession altogether. (Wood & McCarthy, 2002).

Burnout is evident when teachers are severely challenged with regard to their once-valued personal goals and the faith they have in the educational institutions that structured their professional lives (Bennett deMarrais and Lecompte,1999). Burnout or alienation is experienced as feelings of

powerlessness, or the sense that people have no control over their personal and work lives; *meaninglessness*, or a sense that the world has become absurd or incomprehensible; *normlessness*, or the feeling that the rules that structure the world have disappeared or become ineffective; *personal isolation*, or feeling apart from other human beings; *cultural isolation*, or being in opposition to or isolated from values held by one's community; and *self-estrangement*, or being forced to engage in activities that are intrinsically

unrewarding or counter to one's beliefs and self definition. (Bennett deMarrais and Lecompte 1999, p.333).

Alternative school settings may intensify the stressors common to the teaching profession as a whole and accentuate burnout because alternative settings differ from traditional settings not in kind, but in degree. Alternative settings intensify or magnify the working conditions that impact teachers in traditional settings. Furthermore, as these settings become more disciplinary in their orientation, they have a tendency to adopt authoritarian governance systems—top down administration systems—to meet objectives such as incapacitation that seem far removed from teaching. These authoritarian, bureaucratic institutions produce toxic cultures that precipitate the feelings of burnout described above. The link between toxic cultures and burnout is suggested in the following description:

> Toxic school environments exhibit a sense of hopelessness. Staff relationships are often hostile or antagonistic, and there are few, if any efforts to recognize the accomplishments of staff and students. They may lack a clear sense of purpose, discourage collaboration, and demonstrate hostile relationships and cliques amongst staff .
> (Posnick-Goodwin, 2004)

In the next section, I identify some of the working conditions that contribute to burnout in traditional and alternative schools. I then describe how alternative school settings produce toxic cultures and why.

There are a number of factors—"working conditions"—that contribute to burnout, and which are endemic to the teaching profession as a whole. However, these factors seem to be magnified by alternative school settings. Draw-

> There are a number of factors - "working conditions"- that contribute to burnout, and which are endemic to the teaching profession as a whole.

ing largely on the work by Bennett deMarrais and LeCompte (1999), I identify seven features of the teaching profession that may contribute to burnout, and I provide some interpretation and examples with regard to how these features play out in contemporary alternative and traditional school settings.

1. Status: Refers to expectations, rights and duties associated with teaching. This term is closely associated with the concept of role, which has wider currency. Teachers have experienced status anxiety for decades; this is implied in the well-worn adage: "Those who can't— teach." However, persistent attacks on the status of teachers and a moral panic regarding failing American schools and a "nation at risk" fueled by the schooling excellence movements of the 1980's, has further eroded the positive status of teachers, which continues to suffer a decline. The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation signed into law in 2001, proposes regulations and testing procedures to ensure that teachers are "highly qualified," (suggesting that, up to now, that they have not been). A teacher's status is directly impacted by that of their students, so teachers in alternative settings experience status anxiety more intensely because they teach the disenfranchised in less than prestigious settings. (As a senior administrator for a private contracting company responsible for prison education programs in Canada for many years, I cannot count how many times I was asked if the teachers I hired were "real" teachers.)

2. Deskilling: Refers to a process by which the level of specialized, professional knowledge and skill needed to carry out a task is progressively reduced until teachers' autonomy is diminished and authority over

their work is shifted upward to supervisors. Prompted by threats of reprisals and school closures under NCLB if the school is designated poor performing, school principals appear with increasing regularity in the classrooms to micromanage teaching. Teachers are directed to keep pace with their colleagues in the delivery of curriculum. They literally must be on the same page as their collegues. They are also handed corporately sponsored curricula that is more "teacher proof" in order to ensure the success of the student and the school on standardized tests; some of this curricula reflects essentialist, back-to-basic approach (such as phonics and basal readers), that usurp the teachers' autonomy to use what works in their classrooms. Teachers in alternative settings must somehow find a balance between teaching to the standardized test, and meeting the challenging needs of unique learners—with no additional resources. As a result, they experience intensification.

3. Intensification: Refers to the teachers' feelings that something else has been added to their plate, but nothing taken away. Issues of control and surveillance, along with the intensity of the students behaviors and needs, combined with the morass of legislation (current and historical) create this mood of where teachers feel there is simply "too much to do and too little to do it with".

4. Immediacy: Refers to the teacher's sentiment that they are always "on stage" or "on call." In traditional school settings, teachers find that they have few breaks from their classroom. Few have free periods. Teachers are emotionally and physically engaged, at the center of over 1,000 interchanges with students a day (Bennett deMarrais & LeCompte, 1999). In

prisons especially, there is no place to hide from the clamor of the institution, and sometimes there is no way out until the end of the day because it is simpler to stay in the school during lunch than to lose time at checkpoints.

5. Multidimensionality: This term is closely related to "multi-tasking". Teachers are expected to be counselors, police officers, gatekeepers for social services, coaches, parents, and lunch room monitors. These roles are a source of role conflict or at least, role ambiguity, and may lead to feelings of goal displacement.

6. Goal displacement: Refers to the perception (real or imagined) on the part of teachers that everything else seems to take priority over teaching and learning. In alternative settings this situation is more evident as the teachers' roles become peacekeepers in institutions, gatekeepers for their classrooms, partners with social services—and so on.

7. Fragmentation: Refers to interruptions in the flow of teaching. As noted above, there is so much going on in schools other than teaching, that teachers experience fragmentation. Again, this is a common problem for teachers in traditional settings, but in alternative settings students may interrupt the flow more often, as disciplinary and behavioral issues arise. When schools are located in prisons, the functions of the prison supplant schooling, so teachers are interrupted by the intercom, the movement of inmates and personnel to visits, health care, social services, by lockdown, searches, weather conditions and so on.

Toxic Organizational Cultures

The working conditions of teachers and

administrators that are stressful and contribute to burnout are intensified in alternative settings, especially when their primary institutional goal is to punish, isolate, incapacitate and control student behaviors. When the bureaucratic and physical control of persons for the good order of the institution becomes the primary objective, the conditions are ripe for a toxic culture to emerge and the school culture is infused with the prison culture. In prisons where this is clearly the case, the school culture may be so immersed in this foreign worldview and social practices that most teachers experience culture shock and have to develop different professional identities to work there (Wright, 2005). In some cases, the prison culture is so ideologically different and toxic that it robs teachers of a sense of purpose and agency, so that they experience burnout; some even leave (Wright, 2004).

Prisons for example, are schismatic cultures where there is an unequivocal distinction between the keepers and the kept (Gehring, Tremper, J., & Eggleston, C., 1991; Sykes, 1970)—"us" and "them". Prisons develop "fear-based cultures" that exhibit characteristics similar to toxic school cultures. In prisons there is a

> . . . cliqued, selective sharing of critical information, abuse of power and position, codes of silence, and even intimidation, among other factors. This negative prison culture permeates the environment, impacting both staff and inmates, and can be seen as the backdrop to a host of prison problems ranging from poor staff morale to abuse of inmates and high ration of inmate violence.

(National Institute of Justice, 2003, p. 3)

The orientation in many alternative, disciplinary institutions such as prisons, juvenile facilities, and some court schools is securing, sustaining and exercising power and control, so that interactions become more and more strategic—everyone is primarily interested in getting their own way (Wright, 2004). In organizations where toxicity is evident, there appears a zero-sum game mentality, where one person's success is experienced by another as a threat or a loss. These cultures are imbued with a cynicism that masks a (learned) hopelessness and where generally, a utopian energy or idealism that excites its inhabitants about the future is absent. The link between carceral cultures and toxic cultures becomes clearer when Posnick-Goodwin (2004) describes how, in toxic cultures:

> Students are viewed as problems rather than valued clients. Staff members feel swamped, believe they're doing the best they can under the circumstances and can't take on any more duties. Historical perspectives on the school are negative, discouraging and demoralizing. New ideas, approaches or suggestions for improvement bring complaints, criticism and distrust. Sharing ideas, materials or solutions to classroom problems is rare. Cliques are common (p.9).

Toxic school cultures generally are supported by a bureaucratic structure that erodes local autonomy and creativity as policy comes from above. Rules, regulations and standardization seem to take precedence over common sense (Posnick-Goodwin, 2004). Some alternative settings take on the characteristics of total

Toxic school cultures generally are supported by a bureaucratic structure that erodes local autonomy and creativity as policy comes from above.

institutions (Goffman, 1970) which are highly bureaucratic places designed to integrate both students and staff into the bureaucratic machinery, by effacing aspects of the identity they have developed in the "outside world". In prisons for example, prison cultures encourage burnout because they rob teachers of a sense of agency (promote powerlessness), isolate teachers from the outside world (cultural isolation), isolate teachers inside because of architectural and operational conditions, and involve them in activities that are foreign to their training and values, such as guard duty.

Administrators too, are subjected to stressful working conditions that afflict the profession causing stress, and so they too, experience burnout. In the next section, I briefly identify how their working conditions typical in the teaching profession contribute to burnout. I also suggest however, that administrators have the opportunity to mold positive school cultures.

A Brief Comment on the School Administrator and Burnout

Administrators too, experience the consequences of these public debates regarding American failing schools. These panics regarding teacher qualifications legislated under NCLB restricts their ability to recruit and retain staff that must be assessed as "highly qualified". They also must cope with the status anxiety and hence morale fallout with personnel who have been deemed unqualified by the new standards—despite their ability and success at the school site, or longevity in the field. School administrators attempting to comply with NCLB and countless state regulations,

and under threat of school closures, job loss, or privatization, are also experiencing a loss of autonomy as the "State" appears at their door. Given recent budget tightening, administrators experience intensification as they try to manage human and physical resources to keep Annual Performance Indexes high, despite shrinking budgets and increasing school populations, due to immigration, especially in southern California.

The stress caused by the conditions of immediacy is also experienced by school administrators. Until recently, school administrators had more control over their physical and social environment. They often had the luxury of creating an operational distance from the front line, or those in the field, as their assistants fielded calls, or managed the flow of traffic in the office. They were able to structure their exchanges—who they met, and when, and they were able to escape from the office for awhile for school visitations, or on the way to meetings in a distant city. Electronic technology-the fax, email and cell phone-has changed the working conditions of administrators, accelerating their pace and accentuating the immediacy of their workplace and limiting their autonomy. They too, are always on call—literally.

Administrators suffer from multi-dimensionality in the form of multi-tasking too. And, many school administrators, often former teachers, experience goal displacement as well, as they discover that their administrative work seems so far removed from the classroom. They may ex-

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Research shows that a well-designed induction program increases retention rates as well as reduces stress and burnout.

perience fragmentation as well, as a feature of shifting goals and agendas at the State, District, or school level, and address the demands of stakeholders in the community, as they find themselves on aboard another bandwagon.

Administrators play an important role in the development of organizational cultures. A poisoned atmosphere emerges in bureaucratic schools if positive school leadership is absent. Polluted organizations from a leadership perspective are places where promotions are based on favoritism rather than merit, where there is management by fear, where the leaders "lose it" because they are operating at high stress levels, and where the egos of the leadership outweigh the values, goals or objectives of the organization and its staff (Macklem, 2005). Leaders of polluted organizations do not generate visionary company narratives, stories or fantasy themes that empower and motivate staff with images of a better future and which promote cooperation and collegiality, in social interactions that resist the strategic, argumentative, schismatic, and bureaucratic culture of the school.

School leaders are responsible for generating policy, establishing guidelines for behaviors, and for creating as well as promoting vision. They set the tone and style of interaction in an organization. They can empower and motivate staff with images of a better future, and as they do so, create a healthier environment for themselves.

Anxiety Buffers—Preventing Burnout

To prevent burnout it is necessary to consider both individual and institutional factors that act as "anxiety buffers" (Wood &

McCarthy, 2002). At the institutional level, strategies include:

1. Consulting with teachers on matters such as curriculum development or instructional planning which directly impact their classrooms; providing adequate resources and facilities to support teachers' instructional practice.

2. Providing clear job descriptions and expectations to avoid role ambiguity and conflict. Empower teachers by opening lines of communication between teachers, school administrators and prison administration.

3. Encouraging professional development activities such as conferences, mentoring, solid induction programs with on-going support which establish a collective professional identity for teachers. (Wood & McCarthy, 2002, p. 4).

Research shows that a well-designed induction program increases retention rates as well as reduces stress and burnout. Schlechty (1985) suggests that teachers should be instructed in school norms and expectations rather than simply learn them on the job. Induction programs should cultivate mutual support with peers, be oriented toward long-term career goals, and be aligned with the goals of the school program. More supervision, coaching, demonstration, and assessment of novice teachers can support them in their professional development. It goes without saying that there must be resources made available for these programs.

There are however, other, low cost,

highly effective strategies at our finger tips. Organizational cultures toxic or otherwise are embedded and realized in the communication between its members (Wood, 2003). Therefore, changing and challenging toxic school cultures does not always require enormous resources, nor does it necessarily mean waiting for the administration to change or to empower. Each and every time teachers engage in exchanges with their students, colleagues, administrators, or other stakeholders, (about 1000 times a day) they are (re)creating and hopefully sometimes resisting the culture of the setting. Posnick-Goodwin (2004) proposes a model for collegial school cultures as a remedy for toxicity. In collegial school cultures:

1. Collegiality is paramount, and input from all comers is welcomed.
2. Teachers are involved in the decision-making.
3. Communication is open and honest.
4. Trust and confidence are common.
5. Staff develop information networks rather than trying to solve problems in isolation or assuming one person has all the answers.
6. Experimentation is encouraged.
7. Tangible support is available.
8. There's an atmosphere of appreciation, recognition, caring and good humor.
9. Student problems are seen as social rather than individual challenges (p.9).

If toxic school cultures are characterized by a poor communication climate (hostility that arises from strategic forms of interaction and reasoning), collegial school cultures can similarly be defined as communicative phenomena characterized by collegiality, participatory governance structures, experimentation and collective problem solving through information networks. In collegial school cultures, communication is open and honest. Furthermore "[t]here's an atmosphere of appreciation, recognition, caring and good humor" (Posnick-Goodwin, 1999). Because institutions exist in the patterned social relations its members establish with one another (mediated by the kind of talk they share), changing the toxicity level in schools becomes an individual as well as a collective responsibility. In other words, teachers, students, administrators are the mediators of institutional culture—institutions do not exist without the people in them.

A Proposal: Imagining/Realizing Schools as Spheres of Civility

A low cost, highly effective solution to overcoming toxic school cultures might be found as we imagine and promote schools as "spheres of civility" based on authentic and respectful communication. Civility describes a manner of communicating with others in a manner that is respectful, empathetic, and reciprocal; it signifies an ethical stance that conveys to others a confirmation of their worth and the value of the relationship (Billante and Sanders, 2004, p. 32-33). The spirit and practice of civility in schools counters toxic cultures which have their origins in distorted, and strategic social interactions.

Administrators must remember too, that they often set the tone and style of interactions, so that changing cultures that contribute to burnout begins in simple acts repeated in countless encounters with others every day.

This is not an unrealistic or idealistic suggestion with regard to a "simple cure" for toxicity. In 2001, Issaquah School District in Washington State developed a policy on civility to enhance learning and teaching in their schools and to promote a culture of respect. Uncivil conduct was described as directing vulgar or obscene gestures or words at another person, raising one's voice at another individual, repeatedly interrupting another who is speaking at an appropriate time or place, invading the personal space of an individual (an aggressive form of non-verbal communication), violating the privacy of another personal belongings and so on.

In civil conversations between teachers, students, and administrators an ethical space is created as speakers negotiate and prescribe with others, how they will live and work together—respectfully. Vanderber (1999) describes the ideal form of interactions as ethical conversations "characterized by authenticity, empathy, confirmation, presentness, a spirit of mutual equality, and a supportive climate (Vanderber, 1999, p.174-175). Conversations oriented towards understanding (rather than control and power) contribute to the creative fusion of horizons, acknowledge difference, and permit the negotiation of a mutual constitution of identities in a co-constructed world (Shapcott, 2002). In these conversations teachers will reestablish a sense of agency, meaning, norms, and purpose. "Ethical conversations" based on the interest in understanding others, overcome the toxicity and burnout that appears as forms of systematically distorted communication in the form of cliques, strategic interactions, and communication for the purpose of control. Good communication in schools practically speaking, overcomes the isolation, fragmentation, and meaninglessness experienced in burnout. In ethical conversations we take on the burdens of others, as if they were our own, and work to find mutually viable and organizationally sound solutions to professional prob-lems.

Conclusion

As teachers (and administrators) engage in confirming behaviors with others and thus create spheres of civility, they construct a social-psychological, ethical and even physical space that nurtures while it serves as a buffer for teacher burnout-manifested in a sense of powerlessness, normlessness, meaninglessness, personal and cultural isolation and self-estrangement. Burnout appears in places where teachers (and others) find themselves alone rather than actively engaged in creating a meaningful professional place of work. Teachers in alternative settings must deal with many of the typical stressors of the teaching profession. In alternative settings though, many of the conditions that afflict teachers are intensified. As alternative settings become more oriented towards the goals of control, punishment and incapacitation, they also seem to develop toxic cultures that provoke a sense of meaninglessness, powerlessness, and isolation, absurdity, and self-estrangement, because communication becomes systematically distorted by these objectives. Better communication is the key to overcoming the burnout of teachers, and to developing positive, collegial school cultures.

Changing the toxicity level in a school or district is both an individual and collective responsibility. It appears in the kind of talk that is heard in offices, hallways and classrooms, but it is communicative behavior that is sanctioned ultimately by school administrators. The transformation of organizational cultures should be considered a "bottom up" and "top down" process. Positive social interactions mediated by ethical and civil conversational styles can and should be practiced locally but they need administrator support though policies that promote civil interact-

tions and a climate of mutual support and respect. Administrators must remember too, that they often set the tone and style of interactions, so that changing cultures that contribute to burnout begins in simple acts repeated in countless encounters with others, every day.

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About this author:

Randall Wright has worked in over 25 prisons in Canada for the past 22 years. He holds a Master's Degree in Communication, and Ph.D in Education, from the University of Calgary. His dissertation focused on the professional knowledge of prison teachers. He continues to explore the social-psychological, and philosophical dimensions of being a teacher in alternative settings with a focus on prisons.
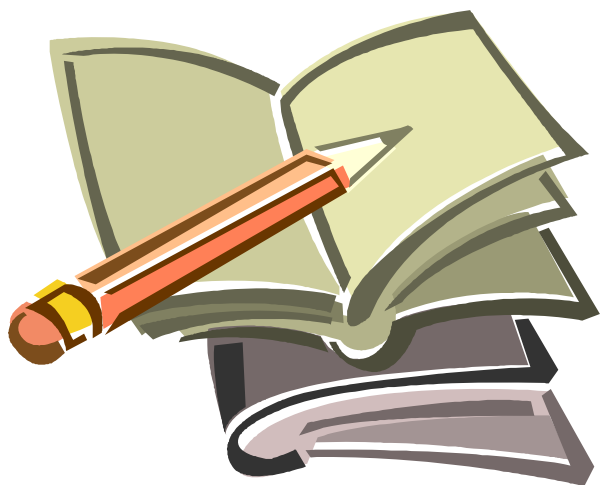
Do something wonderful, people might imitate it.

-Albert Schweitzer

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- Use the passive voice excessively (e.g., it was found, it's been reported)
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Ensuring that No Child is Left Behind: How Orange County is Reducing Dropout Rates

by Brad Darling and Ted Price, Ph.D

Abstract

In response to the increasingly important role that dropouts play for educators and the community at-large, the Alternative, Community, and Correctional Education Schools and Services (ACCESS) for the Orange County (California) Department of Education (OCDE) compiled a 14-California County Profiles and Dropout Rates Comparative Study: 02/03 – Secondary Education, Grades 9-12 (Gonzalez, 2005). Analysis of this study led to the conclusion that Orange County is leading the state in reducing the number of dropouts and increasing the overall graduation rate. A major factor in these improvements is credited to the alternative programs offered by the ACCESS alternative programs throughout Orange County. Some key factors are presented so that other alternative programs can follow the ACCESS model in continuing to lower the dropout rate and ensure that no child is truly left behind.

Introduction

In 2001, a bipartisan Congress signed the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) legislation and forever changed the overall landscape of education in America. Virtually overnight administrators and educators were exposed to a new set of terminology that focused on assessment and accountability. Principals and teachers have become preoccupied with the terms and issues of "highly qualified," "adequate-yearly-progress," "academic-performance-index," and "left behind." At the heart of ensuring that <u>NO</u> child is left behind is the confusing, controversial, and critical term, "dropout."

In response to the increasingly important role that dropouts play for educators and the community at-large, the Alternative, Community, and Correctional Education Schools and Services (ACCESS) for the Orange County (California) Department of Education (OCDE) recently released its 14-California County Profiles and Dropout Rates

Comparative Study: 02/03 – Secondary Education, Grades 9-12 (Gonzalez, 2005). The data used in this report was provided by the California Department of Education via Ed-Data (Education Data Partnership).

This 194-page comparative study included county profile data and dropout summaries for each of the six Southern and eight Northern California counties that comprise a student enrollment (K-12) of over 100,000 during the 02/03 fiscal year. Collectively, these 14 counties encompass 81.5% of the total K-12 student enrollment within California.

The primary discussion and data analysis for this article concentrates on the five largest counties by enrollment, which are all located in Southern California (Los Angles, Orange County, San Diego, San Bernardino, and Riverside). During 2003, the California Department of Education (CDE) adopted the National Center for Education

Statistics (NCES) dropout criteria. Unless otherwise noted, all figures were provided by the California Department of Education via Ed-Data.

Enrollments, Dropouts, and Graduation Data Explored

During the 02/03 school year, Los Angeles led all California counties with the highest (grade 9-12) student enrollment with 489,216 students. Orange County had 150,921, followed by San Diego with 147,683, San Bernardino with 118,026, and Riverside (101,762) rounded off the top five counties in total 9-12 enrollments. Over a ten-year period (93/94 – 02/03), all of California has enjoyed unprecedented growth rates in total enrollment, with the state averaging a growth of 18.6% (Figure 1).

When the total 9-12 student enrollment is divided by the total number of 9-12 dropouts, California averaged an overall dropout rate of 3.2% during the 02/03 school year. During this same time, Orange County had a dropout rate of 1.6% (Figure 2). The four-year derived dropout rate (each grade [9-12] dropout/enrollment) for Orange County was 6.7%, compared to the State average of 12.7%.

Data analysis of the dropout rate for a ten-year period (91/92 – 02/03) revealed that California has had an overall 2% decrease in high sch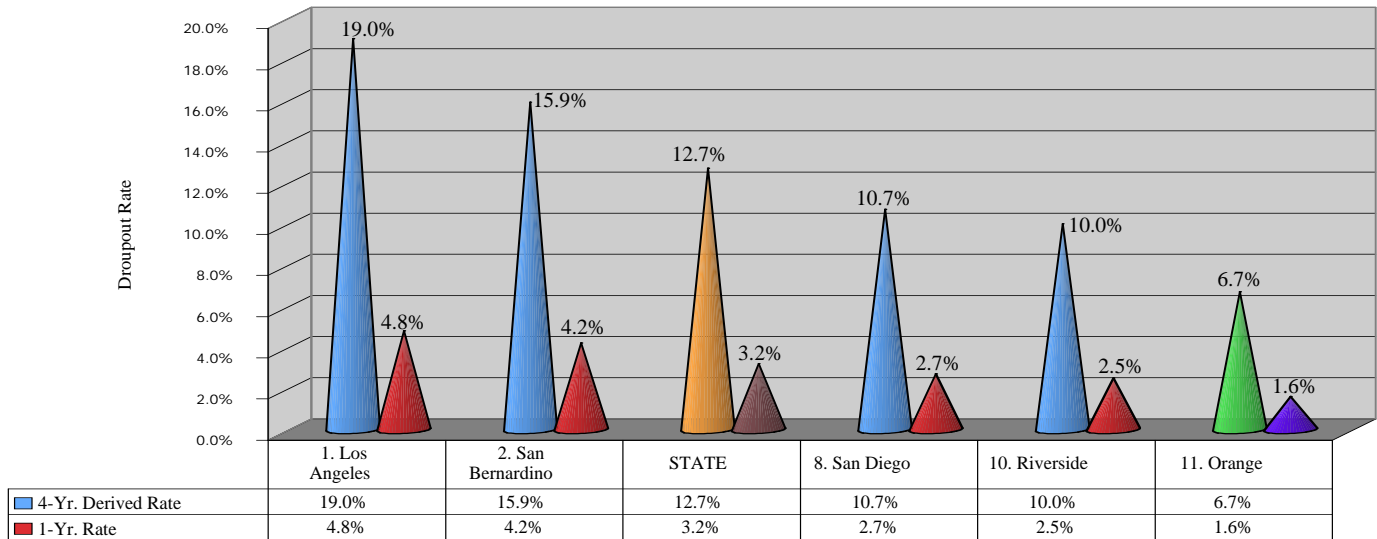ool dropouts. Orange County is in the middle of the pack, when compared to the 14 largest counties, with a slightly better-than state average of 2.1% (Figure 3A). However, during the past four years, Orange County has placed a greater emphasis on keeping kids in school while reducing their dropout percentage, and has lowered their dropout rate each successive year, including being the only county to lower their dropout rate when compared to the 01/02 school year (Figure 3B).

Data on expulsion rates revealed Los Angeles expelled 2,604 students, San Bernardino 1,949 students, Riverside 1,915 students, and San Diego 934 students. Graduation numbers for the 02/03 school year show that Los Angeles led all California counties with 82,229 graduates, followed by Orange County (30,265), San Diego (28,658), San Bernardino (21,034), and Riverside (18,576). Using the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) formula [number of graduates (Year 4) + Gr. 9 Dropouts (year 1) + Gr. 10 Dropouts (year 2) + Gr. 11 Dropouts (year 3) + Gr. 12 Dropouts (year 4) multiplied by 100], an overall graduation rate was established (Figure 4). The overall California graduation rate average is 86.6%, with Orange County possessing an almost 5% higher graduation rate at 91.2%.

RANK/COUNTY	93/94	02/03	Growth
1. Riverside	252,147	349,607	**38.6%**
2. Orange	402,314	512,105	**27.3%**
3. San Bernardino	321,316	407,228	**26.7%**
9. San Diego	421,790	499,750	**18.5%**
10. Los Angeles	1,465,597	1,736,248	**18.5%**
STATE	5,267,277	6,244,403	**18.6%**

Figure 1: 1-Year California Enrollment (93/94 - 02/03)

Figure 2: California Dropout Rates 2002-2003 Grades 9-12

	1. Los Angeles	2. San Bernardino	STATE	8. San Diego	10. Riverside	11. Orange
4-Yr. Derived Rate	19.0%	15.9%	12.7%	10.7%	10.0%	6.7%
1-Yr. Rate	4.8%	4.2%	3.2%	2.7%	2.5%	1.6%

1-Year Rate formula: (Grade 9-12 Dropouts/9-12 Enrollment) * 100

4-Year Derived Rate Formula: [1-((1-(9 Drop/9 enroll))]* (1-(10 Drop/10 enroll)) * (1-(11 Drop/11 enroll)) * (1-(12 Drop/12 enroll)) * 100

* Numbers in front of each county represent their overall standing within the 14-county comparison report.

RANK/COUNTY	91/92	02/03	Decrease
4. Los Angeles	7.6%	4.8%	**2.8%**
7. Orange	3.7%	1.6%	**2.1%**
8. Riverside	4.6%	2.5%	**2.1%**
10. San Bernardino	5.7%	4.2%	**1.5%**
13. San Diego	3.6%	2.7%	**0.9%**
STATE	5.2%	3.2%	**2.0%**

COUNTY	99/00	00/01	01/02	02/03
Los Angeles	3.5%	3.8%	3.7%	4.8%
Orange	2.0%	1.9%	1.7%	1.6%
Riverside	2.4%	2.4%	2.3%	2.5%
San Bernardino	3.1%	3.0%	3.3%	4.2%
San Diego	2.2%	2.0%	2.3%	2.7%
STATE	2.8%	2.8%	2.7%	3.2%

Figure 3A: 1-Year California Dropout Rate (91/92 - 02/03)

Figure 3B: 1-Year California Dropout Rate (99/00 - 02/03)

Questioning California's Data

In March 2005, The Civil Rights Project at Harvard University published a report entitled: "Confronting the Graduation Rate Crisis in California." According to their analysis, the California Department of Education uses the "flawed National Center of Educational Statistics (NECS) formula that dramatically underestimates the actual number of dropouts" (CRP, 2005). The report continues to assert "The most useful and accurate estimates of high school graduation rates currently available are those based on the actual enrollment data that each district provides annually to the nation's Common Core of Data" (CRP, 2005).

Building on this premise, Dr. Swanson of the Urban Institute developed the Cumulative Promotion Index (CPI), which is considered among the most accurate methods for

estimating graduation rates. According to Dr. Swanson, the value of the CPI is that it represents high school graduation as a stepwise process composed of grade-to-grade promotion transitions (9 to 10, 10 to 11, 11 to 12, and 12 to diploma). Furthermore, it only counts a high school diploma and not the completion of a certification program (GED), thus providing a much more accurate graduation rate (Swanson, 2001).

Using the CPI calculations, the overall graduation rate for California during 02/03 was 71.3% rather than the 86.6% reported by NCES, a drop-off of 15.3 points (Figure 5). CPI data further reported the graduation rate in

Orange County was 18.7 points lower, followed by a 25.7 points drop in San Diego, 34.5 points drop in San Bernardino, and 35.4 points in Los Angeles. Data for Riverside was not available.

Although the data provided by Dr. Swanson depicts a less successful picture for education throughout California, Orange County leads California in reducing dropouts and improving graduation rates. When taking the CPI data and applying it to the NCLB academic-yearly-progress (AYP) guidelines, Orange County remains at the top in meeting State mandated requirements.
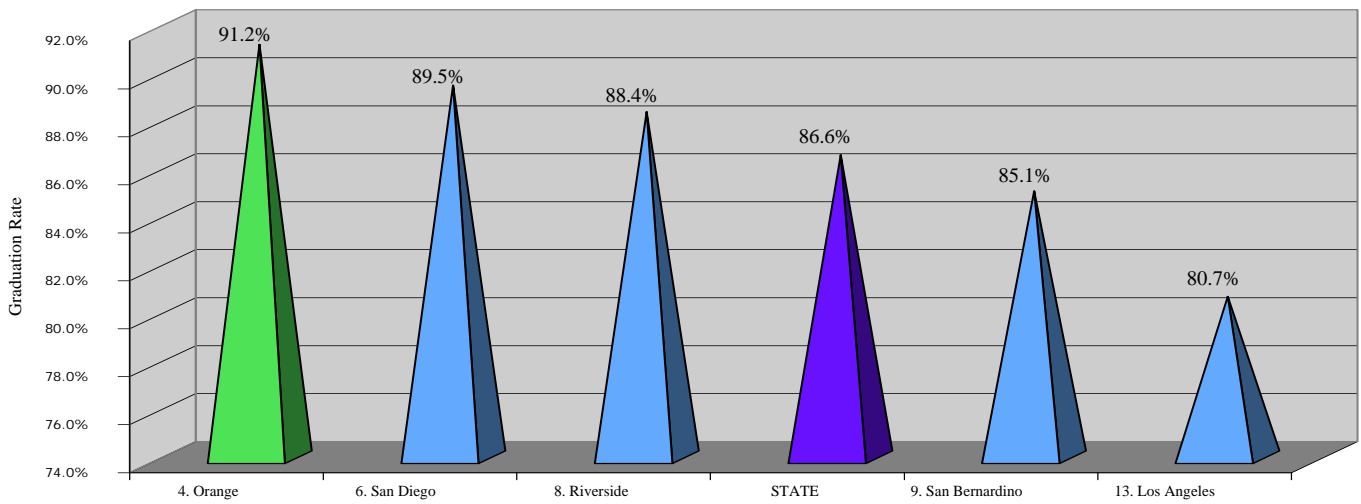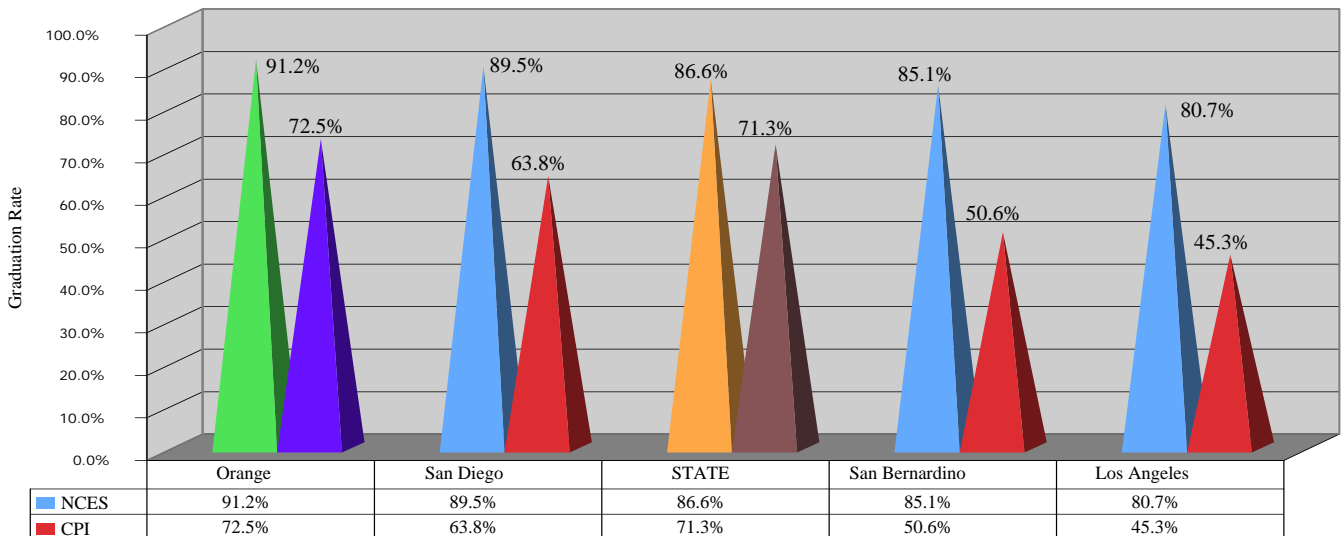
Figure 4: California Graduation Rates 2002-2003

Figure 5: California Graduation Rates 2002-2003

	Orange	San Diego	STATE	San Bernardino	Los Angeles
NCES	91.2%	89.5%	86.6%	85.1%	80.7%
CPI	72.5%	63.8%	71.3%	50.6%	45.3%

Conclusions

Over the past four years (99/00-02/03), Orange County made significant progress in lowering dropout rates and increasing the graduation rate of the students within Orange County. Although stakeholders attribute these improvements to the long standing commitment to hire, train, and develop highly qualified and credentialed teachers, additional data suggests that an equally important factor for this success is the alternative program (ACCESS) that serves all 28 school districts of Orange County. Throughout this period, the leadership of ACCESS and OCDE have made a conscious effort to provide a continuum of educational options for all students in Orange County. A careful review of the available data and a look at what changes and focuses led to the data suggests that the following specific strategies and modifications served as key steps to facilitate the positive changes:

- In 2000-2001, the infrastructure of ACCESS was reconfigured to create two new offices - Operations and Curriculum & Instruction. These changes allowed ACCESS to better serve the needs of teachers and staff. Specifically, Operations undertook the task of creating a central attendance and records database to better track students within the ACCESS programs and digitally networked all offices and sites. These changes allowed school administrators to better track and monitor the progress of students and better identify students who were at risk of dropping out. Curriculum & Instruction shifted the focus of instruction, placing greater emphasis on state standards and frameworks. Ultimately, a more unified curriculum of standards was adopted, which has led to an overall improvement in the academic expectations of students and satisfaction from all stakeholders.

- In 2001-2002, following continued recommendations of teachers and students, ACCESS administration increased the offering of job preparation, transition support, and services for special needs students. Through these efforts, ACCESS developed greater partnerships with community outreach groups, ROP services, and local social services agencies. These changes resulted in greater buy-in and attendance for a wide range of previously disenfranchised students, specifically the older, credit-deficient students who would normally leave school to work.

- In 2002, the office of Student Support Services was developed to better manage the services provided to special education students. This new office has allowed ACCESS to provide uninterrupted special education services to students who move within and exit the ACCESS programs. The ACCESS Assessment Center was also created to centralize, train, and analyze all aspects of mandated testing and assessment. The GED Testing Center was re-established to provide students within ACCESS and the districts of Orange County a centralized testing location. Through the efforts of the Assessment Center, teachers and administrators are better informed and trained on how to apply the data gleaned from mandated tests and to apply this information to improving specific instruction for each student.

- In response to the growing needs of the districts within Orange County, ACCESS expanded to over 100 sites and began working in greater partnerships with district personnel to better identify, place, and monitor student progress. A higher priority was placed on better assisting student transitions within, between, and exiting ACCESS. Class sizes were reduced, and the influx of Para-educators within classrooms led to an increased use of personalized learning plans for all students. These changes have allowed ACCESS to grow to one of the largest alternative pro-

grams in the state and to provide a more "fluid" program to meet the educational needs of those students who were previously overlooked.

- Beginning in 2003, ACCESS made the unified and strong commitment to imbed state standards and frameworks into all aspects of the ACCESS programs. Ultimately, this led to the first WASC Accreditation (6-year term) for the ACCESS community and court school programs. Through this process, ACCESS has continued to refine its programs to ensure that a quality education is equally accessible across all programs.

Through continued support and partnerships with the Orange County Department of Education, Orange County Probation Department, and local community groups, ACCESS continues to modify its programs and services with the ultimate goal of ensuring that, truly, no child is left behind. ACCESS provides the districts, parents, and students of Orange County a wider range of educational options and ultimately the promise of a quality education within a flexible and alternative setting.

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About these authors:

Brad Darling. Ed.D., serves as the Principal of Rio Contiguo School (an institutional drug rehabilitation camp) within the Alternative, Community, and Correctional Education Schools and Services (ACCESS) for the Orange County (California) Department of Education (OCDE).
Brad Darling, Ed.D
3030 Hesperian St.   714-836-2772
Santa Ana, CA 92706   brad_darling@access.k12.ca.us

Ted Price, Ph.D., is presently serving as the Assistant Superintendent of Alternative, Community, and Correctional Education Schools and Services (ACCESS) for the Orange County (California) Department of Education (OCDE). He is responsible for programs and services for at-risk, delinquent, incarcerated, and home-schooled youth and adults.
Ted Price, Ph.D.
200 Kalmus Dr.
P.O. Box 9050   714-966-4485
Costa Mesa, CA 92628   tprice@ocde.us

GBEs - one.Students Graduate with Pride

San Joaquin County Office of Education

Some schools call it Senior Project. In the San Joaquin County Office of Education **one.Program**, students, teachers, and parents call it Graduation by Exhibition (GBE). The GBE process is just that, a process. Students prepare extensively for their final measure of readiness for the world. The final product is a polished, personal, oral presentation based on the criteria that define the **one.** program. The GBE presentation is a powerful culmination of the journey each **one.** student has made.

2005 **one.**Law graduate, Daniel Walters, practices his GBE presentation with his counselor, Joni Kaufman.

Simply put, it is the "nutshell" as to why each is a part of **one.** students and staff alike. As our **one.** definition states, "it is when miracles occur."

There are seven criteria students must meet to prove they are "Ready for the World." They must convey an understanding of the "Concept of **one.**" and explain situations when they have personally used our concept. Students must use technology in their presentation, creating a video, a power point, or even an iMovie. Students must demonstrate their "Knowledge" by presenting two different knowledge pieces to the audience, based on the California State Standards. Students must explain their development in both "Personal Awareness" and "Communication Skills" by explaining their own strengths and weaknesses. Students must include a "Work" piece, showing a well thought out plan for their futures beyond **one.** Because the **one.** program so strongly believes that "Community Contribution" has an overarching positive impact, it is another criteria for GBE. Each student must spend a minimum of 75 hours providing service to their community. Last, students end their GBEs showcasing their unique talents and interests with a "Personal Celebration," celebrating their achievements. These are the seven components of the GBE process and the heart of the **one.** program.

Students hold their Graduation by Exhibition either at the county office or at their school site. A panel of stakeholders is present to evaluate the presentation, along with the student's friends and family. The panel consists of an advisor, a director, a student representative, a

community member, and a SJCOE representative. Each member is personally selected by the student.

When practiced and polished, GBEs provide an amazing culmination to the team effort and opportunity that **one.** provides its students. To all witnessing this "end" (future graduate, current students, teachers, parents, staff, and the community), the intrinsic value of hard work, of perseverance, and of integrity is clear. While it is a major challenge to push students to complete this intimidating process with quality and complexity, the results are truly what education is all about– it is when "miracles occur."

During the last three weeks of May, there will be many afternoon GBEs scheduled in the ESC building. If you'd like to see this wonderful process, contact Kathy Huebert or Debra Elsey at the San Joaquin County Office of Education in early May for the GBE schedule.

Teen Health Connections Initiative

San Luis Obispo County Office of Education

The Teen Health Connections Initiative is a new pilot effort in San Luis Obispo County to address the unique and serious health needs of high-risk youth enrolled in alternative Community Schools.

The project uses a multi-pronged strategy, including individualized support for youth and families by a team of qualified Family Health Advocates, an emphasis on customized health education geared to the unique challenges faced by high-risk youth, and an active cultivation of school-community health partnerships that foster improved clinical care and access to health information.
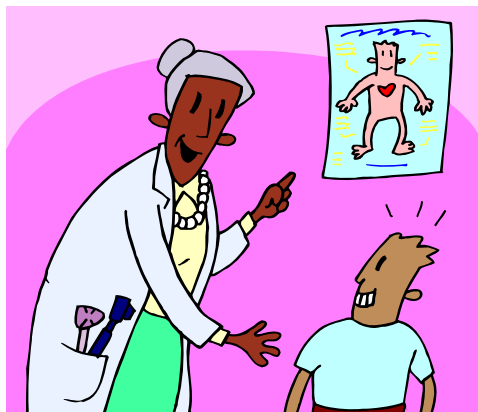
The Teen Health Connections Initiative will be launched later this year at two San Luis Obispo County Community Schools campuses that have been identified as being the county's most severely impacted by student health problems and barriers to care.

For more information contact Jeanne Dukes, Assistant Superintendent, San Luis Obispo County Office of Education. Email: jdukes@slocoe.org

Imperial County Increases Options for Students
by Patrice Larson

Introduction

Imperial County Office of Education, Alternative Education, Court and Community Schools has been working diligently to improve academic and high-risk youth programs in order to better serve students. Incorporating an efficient academic assessment program, providing appropriate academic options and expanding after school programs have been the focus of these efforts.

Assessment

In the area of academic assessment, the transition was made from a paper-and-pencil reading assessment, Diagnostic Assessment of Reading (DAR) to a new computer-delivered assessment, Measures of Academic Progress (MAP). The first testing session was completed in January 2005. Over 300 students were tested in the areas of reading, language and math within a 2-week testing window. Test results were available immediately which assisted with the placement of students in learning programs. The MAP also allows schools to identify GATE students and those performing significantly below grade level. The most exciting part of MAP is that it correlates to the California Standards Test (CST) and can be used as a predictor for student performance on mandated state assessments. Finally, the MAP creates growth reports for individual students as well as demographic populations which assists in gathering information necessary for overall program assessment .

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Reading and Language Arts:

We have learned to differentiate instruction based on a student's performance level and provide three placement options in the area of reading and language arts. The first placement is for the **Intensive Learner**, or a student who is reading more than two years below his/her current grade placement. The second strand is for the **Strategic Learner**, or student who is reading one to 1.9 years below his/her current grade level. The **Benchmark** program is for those students who are functioning at or above their grade level.

The **Intensive Learner** program utilizes the REACH program. REACH is a highly effective, research-validated intervention program comprised of four components: SRA Corrective Reading, SRA Comprehension, Reasoning and Writing and Spelling Through Morphographs. We have a 3-hour block for language arts in order to fully implement the program. Using REACH, we can accelerate the reading skills of struggling readers and move them closer to grade-level achievement.

For our **Strategic** and **Benchmark** students this year, we have implemented a core language arts program using the Holt Language Arts materi-

als, which most districts in our area have adopted. We currently have a much higher percentage of our students in these core programs than we have had in the past. For the **Strategic Learners**, or those who have mastered the intervention programs but are still slightly below grade level, we also incorporate the usage of the program's Universal Access materials which are designed to scaffold skills for struggling readers.

Students who are at **Benchmark** need to be challenged and encouraged to develop advanced skills. Many of these students are gifted and/or college-bound. In order to meet their needs, our next venture is to implement an SAT Preparation Course in hopes of encouraging our students to consider college. By fall, we hope to have a PSAT Prep course in place for sophomores.

Our writing program consists of using many of the REACH materials: Reasoning & Writing Extensions, Reasoning and Writing Levels E & F, as well as Expressive Writing 1 & 2. Our CELDT writing scores have shown strong improvement. Our student-passing rate for CAHSEE ELA has gone from 25% in 2004 to 33% in 2005.

Mathematics:

Two years ago, we implemented *Connecting Math Concepts*. We used this program district-wide and have seen dramatic results in CAHSEE scores. Our 2004 CAHSEE passing rate for Math was 7%. This past year the CAHSEE passing rate for Math jumped to 27%. This program targets students who are below grade-level in mathematics, which applies to nearly all of our students. Last year we had no students

able to test out of the Level E (Pre-Algebra course). This year, we have added a true Algebra I course to all three of our main sites using the McDougal-Littel materials. Additionally, we are piloting a new *Introduction to Algebra* course from the authors of Connecting Math Concepts. We found a need for a class between Connecting Math E and Algebra I. Finally, we also have a handful of students that have abilities above Algebra I. For these students, we are using PLATO (a computer-delivered curriculum) to provide access to Algebra 2 and Geometry.

PLATO:

In addition to using PLATO for upper-level math classes, students may also be allowed to access History and/or Science courses via the computer.

GED Preparation Classes:

In addition to the above academic offerings, we also have a GED Prep Class for those students who desire an alternative to the Community School Classroom setting. The GED class is small, intimate, and academically demanding. The goal of the class is to prepare students to pass the GED or CHSPE (California High School Proficiency Exam).

AFTERNOON PROGRAMS

Our afternoon programs operate for 3 hours after the regular program has ended. The focus of afternoon program is less academic and more concerned with social skills, self-esteem, community service, citizenship, and counseling services (drug & alcohol, anger management). Currently our continuum of afternoon program offerings include:

MESA:

Math, Engineering and Science Academy (MESA) is offered during the afternoon program to students who exhibit a desire to excel in these areas. Last year we offered the class for the first time. One activity required the students to design and build a bridge. We had a student place first with his bridge at the local contest, and 3rd at the Regional competition. This year, another team placed 1st in local competition with their glider, and were 2nd at Regionals. The pride this program instills in our youth is immeasurable.

Project Citizen:

This is a program for youth that promotes competent and responsible participation in state and local government. This program teaches
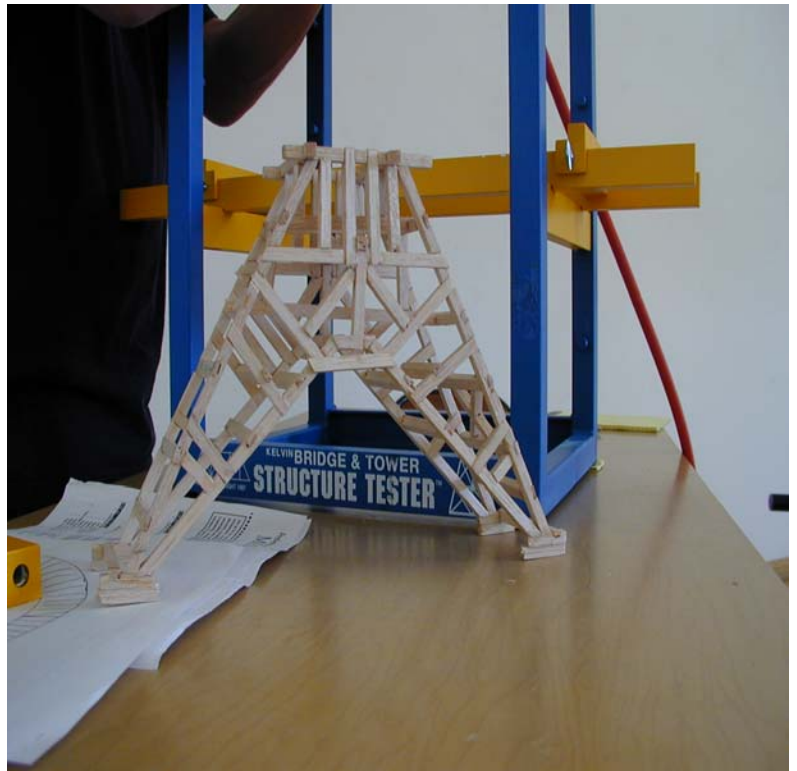
Students design and build a bridge as part of the curriculum.

young people how to monitor and influence public policy. In the process, they develop support for democratic principles, tolerance and political efficacy.

ROP Computer Classes:

Students are taught basic computer skills and educated in the use of programs such as Windows and Power Point. Students are also taught how to navigate the Internet and effectively use tools such as e-mail.

ROP Construction Class:

Students in this class are receiving hands-on instruction in the area of construction. They are currently demolishing a building that will be renovated for a new Community School Classroom. These students are taking pride in being a part of building their future school.

Instructors test the strength to weight ratio of a student's bridge.

Fair Art Projects:
Every year the afternoon program provides time for students to work on art projects which are entered into the local fair. Many of our students have won first place. A few have even taken the Supreme Ribbon for their efforts. As with many Court and Community School Programs, we have a lot of artistically talented students.

Chess:
Several of our classrooms are using a chess curriculum from the US Chess Center to teach our students the game. Students learn strategies, rules and etiquette of the game. We will be having a district-wide Chess Tournament this May.

Community Service:
Students in the afternoon program have had many opportunities to serve the community. A few of their endeavors include putting together Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets for needy families, Christmas Caroling at the local convalescent homes, making Valentine cards for residents of the local convalescent home, holding car washes to raise money for the needy and participating in anti-graffiti/painting work days.

In closing, while we have been making progress in our academic and after-school programs, we realize we still have a long way to go before we can be satisfied with our achievements. There are always obstacles along the road, setbacks, mistakes realized. Perseverance and a vision for our students provides the resolve necessary to continue to push towards greater heights.

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Character- Based Literacy (CBL) Program: Creating a Community that Supports Teaching and Learning

Orange County Department of Education

by Karen Medeiros and Tom Kostic

"Character-Based Literacy, a project of the Markkula Center for Applied Ethics at Santa Clara University, helps alternative educators integrate ethics into the language arts and social sciences curricula. The program operates on the premise that teachers are overwhelmed with multiple requirements and diverse student skill levels. Rather than adding another requirement to the school day, this program provides detailed lesson plans, literature recommendations, and concrete activities that address ethical questions within the parameters of California's language arts curriculum." (www.scu.edu) Varied literature and visual arts including plays, novels, short stories and poems are used not only to teach reading, writing and social science themes but also to have students reflect on and internalize values such as integrity, self-control, responsibility and respect. These values and skills are important to all alternative education students, and especially those identified as special needs students.

"Creating instructional programming that is relevant for the students we serve has always been a challenge. Most of our students come to us missing some of the basic social and academic skills required to be competitive with their peers in traditional school settings. Typically, our students have not acquired the skills for positive character formation. This underscores the need for an overarching instructional program that is standards-based, provides support for teachers, and fosters

shared expectations. An additional challenge has been providing instructional programming that aligns to the new accountability expectations for alternative education in the State of California." (www.alameda-coe.k12.ca.us) The mobility of our students further complicates our charge: court school students stay an average of 32 days before they are transitioned back into their district of origin. In the community school programs only forty percent of students were enrolled ninety consecutive school days or longer. We have a very narrow window of opportunity to make a meaningful impact.

Our Character Education Fellows (selected in 2002-2003) were instrumental in the selection and implementation of the Character-Based Literacy (CBL) Program in our court, community, and alternative schools to fulfill our need for standards-based English/Language Arts instruction while emphasizing socially appropriate values and behaviors. In consultation with Brother Steve Johnson through the Markkula Center for Applied Ethics at Santa Clara University, the CBL Program has been initiated into the ACCESS program.

ACCESS also participates in the Orange County Department of Education's Institute for Character Education (I.C.E.). This project is designed to provide character-focused training, resources, and materials for participating teachers and districts throughout the county. Selected teachers, designated as Character

Education Fellows, will continue to participate in this project throughout the coming year and benefit from additional training that is designed to infuse character-rich instruction into standards-based language arts instruction. ACCESS is represented in the Institute for Character Education (I.C.E.) by six Fellows who attend monthly I.C.E.Fellows' Meetings and incorporate new character-based instructional strategies in their classrooms.

Foundation of the Character- Based Literacy (CBL) Program

"The foundation of the Character-Based Literacy Program is built on reading literature, learning to analyze character, and developing literacy skills. This is accomplished through the following set of strategies designed to encourage socially appropriate values and behaviors, as well as coping and cooperation skills:

• Utilizing a wide selection of recommended readings and supportive materials that are relevant to the student population served and meet the California Reading-Language Arts Standards.

• Meeting states standards through reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing and visual representation.

• Creating a link between literacy and character-based instruction through two-month sequential, thematic units that reflect the goals of the CBL program. The themes include, "responsibility requires action, change requires effort, justice requires restraint, courage requires moderation, and integrity requires wholeness." (www.alameda-coe.k12.ca.us)

Guidelines for instruction are used to encourage class discussion and student reflections on their own behavior and thoughts in connection with anti-social and criminal behavior.

"An organized approach to staff training has become the foundation for implementation. It includes a menu of over 80 strategies and a list of over 50 novels, plays and short stories. For each thematic unit, teachers are given a lesson plan and the support necessary to empower them to make decisions based on their own strengths and the needs of their students. With a common curriculum and a common educational philosophy, an on-going dialogue continues among teachers, support staff and administrators." (www.alameda-coe.k12.ca.us) Common curriculum and shared philosophy provides the foundation for future decision-making, staff development and project implementation.

One Teacher's Story
by Tom Kostic

Then: It's 7:00 a.m. and time for class to begin. The students drag past as I check them in. They grab their books and sit down to begin their independent work. There is little interaction with me and no interaction between students as they struggle to get through the day's assignments. At 10:00 a.m., I "shift gears" and begin my lectures on character education – my voice droning on about Life Strategies for Teens or 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens. Still, there is little interaction between the students and myself. By 11:00 a.m., we're all ready to go home. That was my schedule for almost 5 years.

Now: I arrive at school by 6:00 a.m. and have students waiting for me. As they enter the room, they immediately look to see what is on the day's agenda for CBL. Sometimes a student will try and sneak a copy of the book and read ahead. Occasionally I even

> **Now, my intention is to impact as many students as I can get my hands on.**

over hear discussion as to what they think will happen next. Frequently, I notice students looking at the timeline, checking the word wall and taking in the Open mind portraits or visual representations that were created based upon yesterdays reading. The students rush through Algebra and press me to start reading. They are enthusiastic about what they think will happen next. Students who were absent ask if they can read what they missed instead of doing their Algebra assignment. At 7:45 a.m. I can't take it any more and we start the lesson.

CBL is more than just reading a book and doing writing prompts. It's read, react and predict, the dialog with the students bring the characters to life in situations where the students can relate to the struggles that occur, taking unit themes into their own lives and extending what they have learned back into the community. Fred, a 10th grade student, has this to say about the impact of CBL on his life, "The CBL program has changed a lot of things in my life. One is my ability to speak more because I was always very quiet in class." Asbai, an 8th grader, takes Fred's thought one-step further by saying, " I can go in front of the class and do my timeline presentation without even showing a flicker of nervousness." The impact on the students has been incredible. Mariana, another 8th grader, shares, "I like to read thanks to CBL. I also use decision making to think now before doing everything".

It is amazing the number of testimonies from students who recognize that change has occurred in their lives and also see the effort they have put forth to achieve it. But the greatest impact that CBL has had is upon my career as an educator. I have always said my goal of every year is to make the difference in one student's life. This goal was the easy way out. Now, my intention is to impact as many students as I can get my hands on. My job has become my career and my passion where I can't wait to get up in the morning and see how we, as a team, are going to attack the day's events in the book and in the lives of my students.

The CBL program, unit themes and the novels have become the vehicle to connect character education to the students in a format where they can relate. CBL has allowed me to provide my students with an engaging, standards based curriculum that incorporates the character education that I have always found so important with alternative education students into a language arts curriculum that allows the students to improve their deficiencies and help fulfill their academic requirements.

About these authors:

Karen Medeiros is the Director of the Curriculum and Support Services Department at the Orange County Office of Education. She has also served as a high school and middle school principal in a traditional school district.

Tom Kostic has been teaching for Orange County Department of Education, ACCESS, for 6 years. He spent 1 year as an Assistant Principal before returning to the classroom to pursue his passion of teaching character education. He was chosen as an Institute of Character Education fellow for the 2003-04 and 2004-05 school years. He was recently awarded the honor of Master Teacher in Character Education for the Markkula Center of Applied Ethics at Santa Clara University.

EMaZe Solution:
MY SO CALLED DIGITAL LIFE

Los Angeles County Office of Education
by Debra Dean

In January of this year, my class and I joined CTAP (California Technology Assistance Project), Region 11, Covina Valley Unified, and Cal State Pomona in a statewide writing and digital photography project. Participating classes focused on state standards for writing, research, language arts, and using technology as a tool for integration. Students from 31 middle and high schools throughout CA joined the project. The students had one month to photograph and write about their experiences in school. Using these photographs and writings, students compared their perspective of school today to perceptions of school life 100 years ago. The students conferred with professional photographers and historians throughout the project via e-mail. Digital photographs and writings of 1,000 student participants were compiled in order to create a published photography book and multimedia show.

As part of the curriculum, the students participated in research simulation to help teach state standards in the area of research. In an effort to bring a real world component to this, the research findings of the students will be used in a research project looking at the effects of technology on learning. CVUSD and CSU Pomona are conducting this research by aggregating the data from all 31 schools. As part of this research,

Reflective Strength
By Jesus R.

Lost Hope
By Pedro R.

Future Chef
By Cindy G.

the students took digital photographs, participated in discussion, categorized data and wrote narratives.

From my class, 20 photographs were chosen by a panel of professional photographers to appear in the publication. All of the schools will receive a final copy of the published photography book (EMaZe Solution: My So Called Digital Life). It is available for pre-sale now on Amazon. com.. All of my students who participated had work chosen for the publication and will be attending a gala multimedia presentation honoring the book at the Cerritos Performing Arts Center this May, with their families.

(Los Angeles County Office of Education, Division of Juvenile Court and Community Schools; Director, Larry Springer; Principal, Carolyn Donaldson.)

Dandylion
By Hailey F.

Chained From Within
By Amber M.

Broken Beauty
By Sonia V.

Electric Sound
By Manuel L.

About this author:
Debra Dean has been a teacher at Phoenix Academy Residential Community Education Center run by the Los Angeles County Office of Education since 2000. Prior to that she owned and operated two sports photography businesses. While at the Academy, she has began several programs such as a performing rock band, digital recording studio, and culinary science class where she teaches professional cooking. She has also staged several multimedia musical performances within the community.