

# Trends and Issues in the 1994 Education Professional Literature [issues]

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New trends in education are difficult to spot in the early stages. For example, "whole language" and "performance-assessment" emerged as grassroots movements that seemed to suddenly mushroom. Not until they were fully established were significant articles written about them in the most popular journals. Thus, trends can be considered in two categories: popular trends that have attracted followers and generated considerable publications and emerging trends that are not well known, those that may strengthen or fade. We have attempted to identify trends by examining the political and economic context of education and to find articles and data from various sources that report on developmental activities in education, not just mature fields. To find them, it is necessary to examine both the traditional literature and the online services of educational organizations. It seems certain that trends in the near future may be traceable to November 1994 because of the congressional elections and the "Republican contract with America."

Professional education literature in 1994 reflected a continuation of detectable trends and changes of direction in the nature of the school curriculum, teaching methods, and school organization that became evident in 1993. Published research and reports documented an authentic, fundamental paradigm shift in the philosophy of education toward learner-centered teaching, constructivism, reflective teaching, performance-based assessment, and site-based management, but this was cast against a background of top-down reform pressures and demands for centralized accountability measures.

## School Reform

By the end of 1994, it became apparent that the ambitious goals of "America 2000," begun in the Bush administration and reaffirmed in the Clinton administration, could not possibly be realized in another five years. The third annual National Education Goals Report,<sup>1</sup> released in the spring

by the National Education Goals Panel, said as much, indicating that the rate of progress was wholly inadequate to achieve the National Education Goals by the year 2000. Otherwise, the report concentrated on the need for establishing voluntary nationwide education standards. In March 1994, the "Goals 2000: Educate America Act" was signed into law, providing a framework for such academic standards.

The "Goals 2000: Educate America Act" provided \$3 million in fiscal 1994 for the National Education Standards and Improvement Council (NESIC), which will manage the certification of voluntary national education standards for all major subject areas. As of 1994, there were 12 active national standards projects in the various subject matter areas of the curriculum. The "Goals 2000: Educate America Act" also established the National Education Goals Panel, development of voluntary opportunity-to-learn standards, creation of an Office of Educational Technology in the Department of Education, and funding for the National Skills Standards Board, to coordinate a national plan for workforce skills.

### **National Standards**

With the trend in most businesses and many governmental agencies to decentralize, including the site-based management, charter schools movement, and other less bureaucratic models in education, it is interesting that there is still an effort to impose national standards. In fact, Elliot Eisner asks the question, "Do American schools need standards?"<sup>2</sup> The reason for posing the question, Eisner believes, is that standard levels of expected student performance or standard units for measuring outcomes constitute a serious oversimplification of a complex and subtle task. He argues that we free our children intellectually and that we should not spend time weighing or comparing them.

With conservative, Republican control of the U.S. Congress, there is likely to be support for the voucher system and accountability measures in education. Proposals for national standardized tests have been made by many groups, but the National Education Goals Panel called for a national examination system based on performance assessments. A national test would give politicians a weapon in accountability to use against schools. Critics of a national test fear there will be too much attention to "covering the content" and a lot of time spent drilling for questions, complaints already voiced in relationship to many state competency examinations.

The new National Standards for American History<sup>3</sup> were released in 1994 and immediately attracted scorn and criticism. Attacked for "political correctness," for sparse coverage of some topics and too much coverage of others, and for depicting the nation's history negatively, it became clear that national standards in any area would be difficult because consensus would be impossible to achieve.

Standards for mathematics were established in 1989, and those for science have been in the developmental process for several years and have enjoyed considerable support from the National Science Foundation. However, there are concerns that attempts to establish national science-education standards, such as the "Project 2061: Science for All Americans" proposed by the National Research Council, will impose unattainable goals and excessive federal regulations on public schools. The effort to develop standards for the teaching and learning of English

encountered a different problem.<sup>4</sup> A project at the University of Illinois received notification from the U.S. Department of Education that the Department would not continue funding the Standards Project for English Language Arts (SPELA). A joint project of the Center for the Study of Reading at the University of Illinois and the International Reading Association (IRA) was halfway through a three-year cycle when the funds were pulled.

### **School Choice**

Parental choice among schools became a prominent trend in education in 1994. It was clearly an issue in many gubernatorial and congressional election campaigns. Apparently fueled by the belief that public schools are failing, opinion polls show widespread support for school choice, although there is no apparent public understanding of the many related issues. By 1994 there were at least 14 states that had adopted some form of statewide choice plan and numerous local district plans, and many more states' districts are sure to follow in 1995. Choice is a major conservative political issue and a priority of advocates for private and religious schools who want to gain access to public educational funds, something which could be made possible under some form of choice, vouchers, or tuition tax credit.

An examination by Valerie Martinez<sup>5</sup> of reports on three publicly funded and two privately funded school choice programs in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Texas, and Indiana found that parents who chose to move their children to particular schools tended to be better educated, and presumably at higher income levels. In a further investigation of the Minnesota choice program, Joe Nathan and James Ysseldyke<sup>6</sup> reported that the expected desirable program effects and benefits to disadvantaged students were not realized.

Clearly, federal- and state-mandated parental options or choice plans are likely to spread because politicians can use choice, tuition tax credits, and vouchers as "free market" concepts, and they can claim that choice will improve education without significantly increasing taxes to support education, leading to the belief that inadequate schools will "go out of business." The danger is that many of the nation's poorest schools and economically disadvantaged children will suffer. Poor schools will be abandoned by some, and poor parents may not have the transportation to move their children to schools distant from home.

### **Charter Schools**

Related to choice and voucher movements, the charter school movement has all the indications of a trend, and it seems certain to continue with the new conservative control of statehouses. Starting in Minnesota, which implemented eight charter schools in the 1993-94 school year, many schools throughout the nation are considering adopting charter schools, and some are finding resistance from litigants who object to tax dollars for religious schools.<sup>7</sup> Charter schools are public schools sustained by tax dollars but organized around principles of site-based management, including a contractual agreement with the school board. Some 11 states now have charter school legislation, permitting individual schools to operate under separate charters that reduce or eliminate central office control, state regulations, and bureaucracy. Depending on the state, charter schools have wide discretion over the management, curriculum offered, and use of fiscal resources.

The underlying concept of charter schools is similar to that of site-based management or TQM, to free the school from the strictures of bureaucracy. Paul Hill<sup>8</sup> reported that the greatest hope of the charter school movement is to free schools from the "systemic" reforms that attempt to align public education with mandated goals and tests. Though educators at the local level find school choice and strict accountability to be incompatible, politicians espouse both simultaneously without regard for the apparent contradiction.

### **Outcome-Based Education and Performance Assessment**

From various reports it is evident that performance-based assessment is spreading throughout the nation, particularly the use of portfolio assessment. In Vermont, which pioneered the program on a statewide basis, there are encouraging reports about the successful use of performance measures.<sup>9</sup> Instructional and motivational results from performance assessment leads to important changes in classroom practices. Despite the successes, however, there have been setbacks, most notably in Littleton, Colorado, where traditional graduation requirements has been abandoned in favor of graduation portfolios.<sup>10</sup> Despite evidence of improved instruction, Alan Davis and Catherine Felknor report that a newly elected school board reinstated traditional graduation requirements.<sup>11</sup> Juniors who had previously earned average grades were confused by the graduation portfolios and requirements, causing the board to make the change.

One of the striking turnarounds of 1994 was the apparent demise of outcomes-based education (OBE). The most publicized case nationally was that of Pennsylvania, which failed to secure grassroots support, sustained considerable criticism, and ultimately implemented a watered-down version of OBE. This experience provided opponents with strategies for attacking OBE in other states. While advocates have considered opposition to OBE to be mainly a matter of misunderstanding and confusion about such terminology as goals, objectives, or standards, the critics, who demand accountability, regard OBE as contradicting religious beliefs and family values, or they characterize OBE as a plan for the state to seize control of education from local boards. While many educators had pinned their hopes on school reform through OBE, opposition to it by organized religious and conservative groups managed to result in defeats to implement OBE, and many gubernatorial candidates used anti-OBE rhetoric in their campaign speeches of 1994.

### **Political Gains of the Religious Right**

The efforts of conservative groups to gain control of education have been successful in local and state school board elections, textbook selections, choices of curriculum materials, and in influencing political platforms. This trend was of sufficient importance that the *Education Digest* devoted five articles to it in March 1994. George Kaplan argues that school administrators are required to take into account the views of the "Christian Right" because the issues they raise are also concerns shared by the general public.<sup>12</sup> The opponents of school reform are going to continue to use outcomes-based education and other issues that address concerns about values in education,<sup>13</sup> and schools will have to take this into account if they want to secure public support for reforms.

## **Safe Schools**

The public has not supported school reforms with the enthusiasm expected by educators. Believing that higher standards and innovative learning activities are important, and should be apparent to the public, public opinion polls have shown that support is lacking. Most public opinion polls of the last decade rank discipline as the most important need in schools, and with recent publicity about school violence and guns carried by children, the public is most concerned about school safety, according to a survey conducted by Public Agenda.<sup>14</sup> Clearly, the public does not believe that the typical school meets minimum prerequisites for safety. To secure support for reform, schools must first assure the public that effective discipline and safety standards exist.

## **Violence**

Accompanying the concern of the public about safety in schools is the attempt of schools to reduce violence and to mediate differences among students before conflict erupts into violent acts. Clearly, there is a trend for schools to beef up security and to install metal detectors. Jo Anna Natale, the senior editor of *The American School Board Journal*, wrote in a recent article that school violence had reached such frequency that it could no longer be attributed to chance.<sup>15</sup> Arguing that violence can be prevented, she says that intervention must begin at an early age, yet another responsibility for beleaguered teachers.

## **Conflict Mediation**

Susan Black,<sup>16</sup> reports that the best prevention and mediation programs are based on student involvement. Though patterns of aggression may be learned in early years, the highest incidence of conflict occurs among junior high/middle school students. Events that incite violence are gossip and rumors, arguments, dirty looks, breaking classroom rules, harassment, jealousy, actual or threatened fighting, and invasion of privacy. For students to become peacemakers, training in conflict-management is essential, but students may not intervene when threats are made to teachers and students. Students most likely to erupt don't listen well, have a history of conflict in school, aren't good at solving problems, and participate in few or no school activities. Girls' problems usually involve gossip and rumors, while boys' problems tend to center on harassment and fighting.

Scott Willis<sup>17</sup> reported that more than 5,000 schools nationwide offer some kind of conflict resolution program, the most popular being peer mediation. In peer mediation programs, a cadre of students is trained to help their schoolmates resolve disputes. Peer mediators do not impose solutions but, rather, help disputants work out solutions to conflict. The steps involve the mediator and disputants coming together, the mediator laying down ground rules, such as no interrupting or insults, then each disputant telling his or her side of the story to the mediator. The mediator paraphrases and summarizes the stories, asks pertinent questions, and attempts to get the disputants to generate alternatives. Willis reported that, according to one source, 80 to 90 percent of peer-mediated agreements hold better than a ruling imposed by the principal.

## **Defending Schools**

After a decade of absorbing sustained criticism and turmoil, reacting to shifting public and political expectations, and groping for practical methods they hope will work, educators have finally launched a counterattack by refuting statistical comparisons used to incriminate schools and scrutinizing American business, which has been elevated as the model for American school improvement. For example, Herbert J. Kiesling questions the reports of the Educational Testing Services, on the bases of faulty sampling procedures and simplistic reporting methodology.<sup>18</sup> There are many examples of articles that attempt to defend the schools and refute criticism, but the public isn't buying the argument. The major problem preventing significant change is public resistance.<sup>19</sup> Even in Kentucky, where a sweeping education reform act was passed in response to a school-equity lawsuit, public involvement is lacking in a system created to involve the public more fully.<sup>20</sup>

### **School Finance**

For many years, politicians have maintained that spending more money on schools will not improve them. The argument is that better use of resources and cutting waste will result in better schools. A basic premise in this argument is that financial inputs are not related to achievement, with family characteristics more predictive of achievement. The fundamental statistical models used in this line of investigation have been questioned, and data have been reexamined, controlling for student characteristics,<sup>21</sup> revealing a positive relationship between resources and outcomes significant enough to be of practical importance. This is counter to the arguments used by many conservative politicians, that better schools don't cost more money, and contradicts research dating back to the 1960s, upon which many educational fiscal policies have been based.

### **Adolescents and Children at Risk**

The problems of violence and the need for conflict resolution have caused a closer examination of childhood and adolescence. Richard Lerner and his colleagues examined adolescents, and the Casey Foundation studied children, in 1994.<sup>22</sup> The Lerner report indicated that half of all adolescents are at moderate or greater risk for engaging in unsafe sexual behaviors, teenage pregnancy, drug and alcohol use, underachievement, failure and dropout, and delinquency. This is a truly remarkable and startling conclusion, affecting an entire generation.

The Casey Foundation found nearly 4 million American children to be growing up in "severely distressed neighborhoods," where there were four or more of the following risk factors: poverty, female-headed families, high school dropouts, unemployment, and reliance on welfare. There has been a decline of critical institutions, according to the report, with weakening of churches, clubs, social organizations, neighborhood networks, and small businesses. One out of every six children lived in overcrowded housing. Black children constituted the majority living in severely distressed neighborhoods, and one in every five children lived below the poverty level. Facts such as these indicate an ominous trend for education and society.

### **Vocational Education**

One of President Bill Clinton's success stories in his native state of Arkansas was the use of

youth apprenticeship programs, and by all accounts he would have promoted this at the federal level much more aggressively had he not encountered other problems along the way. Nonetheless, vocational education has always been successful securing grant funds at the federal level. Approximately \$300 million were made available in 1994 for school-to-work programs.<sup>23</sup> While apprenticeship programs are spreading in public schools, there are warnings that approaches used in European nations so successfully cannot necessarily be imported to the United States as models.<sup>24</sup> In keeping with trends in the general school curriculum, vocational educators are calling for programming that teaches critical thinking, is learner centered, diversified, and emphasizes lifelong learning. Also of particular interest to vocational education is the technology explosion; many articles were published dealing with computers, the Internet, and the need for schools to adopt technology.<sup>25</sup>

The typical student, graduate or dropout, goes to work after leaving school and has a series of low-paying, dead-end jobs. With the decline in good-paying, low-skilled jobs, these are wasted young people who do not possess useful skills. The high school curriculum is geared to college-bound youth. The typical high school does not have a curriculum for non-college-bound students. The school-to-work emphasis, whether tech-prep or apprenticeship, is an attempt to fill the void for the large majority of students, partly because entry workers have no skills and the United States is lagging behind other industrialized nations in competitiveness. American education has difficulty with work preparation for many reasons. There is the belief that a broad, liberal education is the best preparation and that the school has no specific role to play in training workers. There is uncertainty about what should be the relationship between the business sector and education. It is unclear if schools should attempt to teach job-specific skills, which can be very expensive and change quickly with new technologies.

### **Teacher Evaluation**

Teacher evaluation, always a thorny issue, has become more important as accountability has become a significant factor in educational policy. One of the performance assessment techniques used in evaluation of students: portfolio assessment: has also become a trend in evaluating teachers. Portfolios are used for teacher certification, recertification, and annual evaluation. Vermont, which pioneered the use of portfolio assessment with children, requires teachers applying for a professional license to amass a portfolio.<sup>26</sup> Kentucky, which has held the attention of the nation because of its sweeping reforms in the aftermath of a school equity lawsuit, requires teachers who seek promotion to prepare a professional portfolio.<sup>27</sup> The National Board of Professional Teaching Standards, which seeks national standards for all teachers, is also planning the use of portfolio assessment.

### **Special Education**

Courts are taking the position that any placement or any school-related activities of children with disabilities must be determined in the best interest of the child on a case-by-case basis. Judges no longer defer to the expertise of school officials regarding what constitutes the least restrictive environment.<sup>28</sup> Because appeal courts issued rulings in favor of the inclusion of children with severe disabilities, it seems certain that 1994 marked the beginning of a new trend in education, one that promises to be highly controversial and divisive. All over the nation, children with

disabilities will be entering regular classrooms at all levels in unprecedented numbers. The field of special education is in disarray because of inclusion, and it is certain that implications will be felt in many segments of society, including teacher negotiations with school boards, parental relationships, and university training programs.

One category of special education, attention deficit disorder (ADD) and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), is the most common behavior disorder of American children, affecting 3.5 million children below age 18. ADD has captured considerable attention in the popular press and professional literature. As in the case of hyperactivity, ADD is highly controversial, as are treatment methods that include various kinds of medication. Arguments used today on both sides of the debate are similar to those used in the past when hyperactivity was first diagnosed in children.

### **Year-Round Schools**

Over 1,900 schools in the U.S. had year-round sessions in 1994, enrolling 1.4 million students. Year-round schooling is a steadily growing trend. As many as 42 percent of the students in the Los Angeles Unified School District were enrolled in year-round programs. It is predicted by the National Association for Year-Round Education that the number of such schools will more than double by the end of the decade.<sup>29</sup>

### **For-Profit Schools**

Another potential trend in education is the for-profit school (i.e., public schools turned over to private corporations). A few years ago there were some notable experiments, such as the Dade County Public Schools, in Florida. But the serious problems of some urban schools are causing a closer consideration of this concept on a broader scale. "In desperation," said Nancy Gibbs, writer for *Time* magazine, "the Hartford, Connecticut schools became the first school district in the nation to turn over all of their schools: 32 schools, 26,000 kids, and a \$200 million budget: to a private company, Education Alternatives, Inc (EAI) of Minneapolis, Minnesota. Under terms of a five-year contract, EAI will have full responsibility for running the entire school district and 'pocket half of every dollar' it saves the city of Hartford."<sup>30</sup>

### **Technology in Education and Training**

Despite fiscal problems, many public schools and universities are still acquiring computer technologies for administrative and educational uses. While the effectiveness of various applications have been debated, there is now a new, definitive source that reviews the research on computers in education and training, edited by Eva Baker and Harold F. O'Neil, Jr. Their volume is comprehensive and covers meta-analysis studies, software evaluation, assessment of distance learning, and many other aspects of technology.<sup>31</sup>

### **Conclusion**

Education has never been so embattled as it has for the last 10 years. While there have always been criticisms of education, and there have been at least 25 separate reform movements since



1900, this is the first time in history that the public believes that education is failing. It is also a period in which the majority of children entering schools come from poor families, those without the clout to affect local levies and board elections. The wealthiest people in America are elderly, retired, and have no children in school; therefore, they do not support tax increases for education.

Many school buildings are literally deteriorating across the nation, there are problems and public concern about violence and disruptive behavior, and there are numerous legal, fiscal, and ethical issues that detract from the daily business of teaching students. The year 1994 may not be as memorable for the movements within education as it will be for the beginning of a new conservative era that will shape educational trends in the future.

### Notes

1. *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1994) can be purchased from the U.S. Government Printing Office. Before the bill was passed, Linda Winfield and Michael Woodard described the bill as having an overreliance on top-down policy, distrust of professional judgment, and reassertion of political control over schools; their article is published as "Assessment, Equity, and Diversity in Reforming America's Schools," *Educational Policy* 8 (1994): 3-27.

2. Elliot W. Eisner's article "Do American Schools Need Standards?": in *School Administrator* 51 (1994) 8-11,13,15: is provocative because it clearly goes against the trend toward centralization of standards. However, it also illuminates the dilemma for schools, attempting to adopt decentralized models of management and instruction while being held accountable for a uniform set of expectations that may lead to a "test driven" curriculum. Donald Richard reports on "National Science-Education Standards: Around the Reform Bush . . . Again?," printed in the *Clearing House* 67 (1994): 135-36. With reference to the National Standards for Professional Teaching Standards, Bruce King maintains that the program will ultimately institute more controls on teachers, distance professionals from lay persons, and inhibit efforts for collaborative work among school personnel. This article is entitled "Locking Ourselves In: National Standards for the Teaching Profession," in *Teaching and Teacher Education* 10 (1994): 95-108. For a comprehensive discussion of standards and the school curriculum, see two articles: "The Governance of Curriculum, 1994 Yearbook of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development," edited by Richard F. Elmore and Susan H. Fuhrman (1994); "The Systematic Identification and Articulation of Content Standards and Benchmarks, Update," by John S. Kendall and Robert J. Marzano (January 1994: Mid-Continent Regional Educational Lab, Aurora, Colorado).

3. The critical attacks on the standards for American history, like the controversy over the Enola Gay exhibit in the Smithsonian Institute, indicate how difficult it will be for any group or committee to reach consensus on educational standards that will be satisfactory to the general public and numerous interest groups. The history standards attracted national media attention because of the \$1.75 million spent on the project and the parts that raised criticism; for example, the John Elson article "History, the Sequel" in *Time* (November 1994).

4. In March, the University of Illinois was notified by the U.S. Department of Education that support for the project would be withdrawn. In April, at a meeting in Washington, D.C., the NCTE's Executive Committee vowed to continue developing standards for the teaching and learning of English, without federal support. The target date for a joint standards document was set for June 1995.

5. See Valerie Martinez's article "Who Chooses and Why: A Look at Five School Choice Plans," in *Phi Delta Kappan* 75 (1994): 678-81.

6. The research is reported in "What Minnesota Has Learned About School Choice," *Phi Delta Kappan* 75 (1994): 682-88.

7. See both the articles by Valerie Martinez, about who chooses, and the article by John Nathan and James Ysseldyke, about the myths of choice, to get a balanced picture of the Minnesota Charter movement. In Michigan, a state law about charter schools was held unconstitutional because tax moneys were used to support a religious school (see David Van Biema's "The Great Tax Switch," in *Time* [March 1994]).

8. Paul T. Hill recommends freedom from bureaucracy in "Reinventing Urban Public Education," published in *Phi Delta Kappan* 75 (1994): 396-401.

9. Although there are active efforts in California, Illinois, and Virginia, among other states, portfolio assessment is famous in Littleton, Colorado because of the graduation requirements, and famous in Vermont because it was the first state to pioneer performance-based assessment on a statewide basis. Perhaps the greatest single influence on performance-assessment methods and terminology has been the work of Grant Wiggins, who published "Assessing Student Performance: Exploring the Purpose and Limits of Testing" in 1993 with Jossey-Bass. Most schools that adopt portfolio assessment and other methods of performance-based assessment use his writings as the primary source for training and inspiration, and for development of evaluation criteria use in performance assessment, called rubrics and anchors.

10. For a description of the Littleton, Colorado, board decision, read the article by Alan Davis and Catherine Felknor: "The Demise of Performance-Based Graduation in Littleton," in *Educational Leadership* 61 (March 1994): 64-65. The major problems, in addition to confusion of the students about expectations, included problems with validity and reliability of scoring rubrics and standards, raising technical and equity concerns. For performance-based assessment to be successful, it is apparent that much more training must be devoted to training teachers.

11. Although there are other schools using portfolios for graduation, the Littleton program was one of the best known, with national visibility, and is considered a setback by advocates of the movement. Regardless of problems, most teachers involved believed that instruction was improved. If the death knell sounds for performance-based assessment, as it has for so many educational innovations in the past that were hurried into classrooms by enthusiastic teachers and charismatic leaders, it may fail either because it was misunderstood or because it

was not implemented effectively. Although the Littleton, Colorado, experiment has failed, the Maryland Assessment Consortium has quietly developed a successful program that includes both performance measures and standard scores.

12. The so-called "Christian Right" or "Religious Right" has gained recognition over the last several years as an important political force in national elections and for its control of the Republican Party's platform. More significantly and less noticed, the "Eagle Forum" and other groups have supported in local and state school board elections candidates who oppose outcome-based education and other innovations in education. As George Kaplan explains, however, in his article "Shotgun Wedding: Notes on Public Education's Encounter with the New Christian Right," in *Phi Delta Kappan* 75 (1994): pk1-pk12, the issues they raise strike a sympathetic chord with the general public. Schools have been unable to "sell" reform to the general public because of the belief that schools are failing and that fundamental changes must be made first. Even without attacks from the conservative interest groups, OBE has sustained attacks from educational writers. For example, James Towers (see "The Perils of Outcome-Based Teacher Education," in *Phi Delta Kappan* 75 [1994]: 624-27) believes that OBE is totally unsuitable.

13. Marshall Fritz presented a middle-of-the-road approach to appease "traditionalists" and outcome-based proponents, saying that neither approach is appropriate because each is based on a "coercive" model. He believes that compromises can be made and describes a balanced approach between both points of view. As purely political issues, it is difficult to see how compromise can be achieved. In fact, it seems clear that the OBE trend is fading rapidly. The article is entitled "Why OBE and the Traditionalists Are Both Wrong," and is published in *Educational Leadership* 51 (1994): 79-82. Randy Zitterkopf compares schools and churches and says that both are goal oriented; he states further that OBE is neither public education's devil nor its savior, and that making social and affective values a top priority hinders achievement of all outcomes. This article is titled "A Fundamentalist's Defense of OBE," and is published in *Educational Leadership* 51 (1994): 76-78.

14. For a copy of the report, contact Public Agenda, 6 E. 39th St., Suite 900, New York, NY 10016.

15. Jo Anna Natale's article "Roots of Violence" is available in the *American School Board Journal* (March 1994), published by The National School Boards Association. Also, she has an article entitled "Your Life on the Line," in *Executive Educator* 16 (1994): 22-26, which recommends protective measures for school executives because of recent murders of school superintendents and an assistant principal.

16. Susan Black provided an excellent overview of conflict-management programs in "Handling Anger," published in the *Executive Educator* (June 1994).

17. Scott Willis is a frequent writer of editorials and special features for the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD). In "Helping Students Resolve Conflict: Schools are Teaching Negotiation, Peer Mediation Skills," he describes the kinds of conflict resolution programs, how peer mediation works, and the training processes involved. The article

is available via America Online in the ASCD service. Although there is much enthusiasm for peer mediation, he points out the importance of teachers, administrators, and students recognizing that certain kinds of conflicts cannot or should not be mediated by peers, namely those involving violence, weapons, and illegal activity. Dealing with conflicts over racism and sexism are also difficult for peer mediators. One expert is reported to have said that conflict resolution is "a basic skill for kids today." This is a sad commentary on modern society. Kathleen Shepherd reports that at least 5,000 elementary and secondary schools now use some form of peer mediation (see "Stemming Conflict Through Peer Mediation," in *School Administrator* 51 [1994]: 14-17).

To join ASCD's network on Conflict Resolution, ASCD asks that interested persons contact Mary Ellen Schaffer, Asst. Principal, Elsie Johnson School, 1380 Nautilus Lane, Hanover Park, IL 60103; (708) 830-8770 (tel.); (708) 893-5452 (fax).

Organizations recommended by ASCD are:

- Children's Creative Response to Conflict Program, Fellowship of Reconciliation (an interfaith, pacifist organization), Box 271, Nyack, NY 10960; (914) 358-4601.
- Community Board Program, 1540 Market St., Ste. 490, San Francisco, CA 94102; (415) 552-1250 (tel.); (415) 626-0595 (fax).
- Educators for Social Responsibility, School Conflict Resolution Programs, 23 Garden St., Cambridge, MA 02138; (617) 492-1764.
- National Association for Mediation in Education (NAME), 205 Hampshire House, Box 33635, Amherst, MA 01003-3635; (413) 545-2462.

18. Herbert J. Kiesling, in "Reading the Report Cards: What Do 'State of Achievement' Reports Tell Us About American Education? Review Essay," in *Economic Education Review* 13 (1994): 179-93, reports persuasively about the technical characteristics of research of the Educational Testing Service, but the information provided is the kind not easily understood by the general public.

19. Martin Haberman has created an interesting list of "The Top 10 Fantasies of School Reformers," printed in *Phi Delta Kappan* 75 (1994): 689-92.

20. Jane L. David reported that, two years into the five-year study of school-based decision making under the Kentucky Education Reform Act, the reform showed some disappointments. In "School Based Decision Making: Kentucky's Test of Decentralization," in the *Phi Delta Kappan* 75 (May 1994): 706-12, it was apparent that public acceptance and involvement of the new procedure were lacking. Although there is no clear way to attract public involvement, the few participants who were involved were said to be enthusiastic, and progress was being made. This is indicative of the problems throughout the nation. Although the public is critical of education, they are not involved. One explanation may be that the wealthiest people are the elderly, who, retired and with no children in school, are disinterested in school and

opposed to tax support. For an overview of finance-equity cases in several states, see Paul Minerini's article "Recent Developments in School Finance Equity and Educational Adequacy Cases," in *ERS Spectrum* 12 (1994): 3-11.

21. In an interesting article by Larry Hedges, entitled "Does Money Matter?" (a meta-analysis of studies of the effects of differential school inputs on student outcomes), in *Educational Researcher* 23 (April 1994): 5-14, data from studies done in 1981, 1986, 1989, and 1991 were reanalyzed using different synthesis methods. The findings were different from the original reports, indicating that the amount of input is significant for educational outcomes. Since 1969, much of federal policy has been based on correlational research that finds socioeconomic status to have greater effects than teachers or funding, causing some to believe that additional funding will not result in improved achievement. Critics of correlational studies of this type initiated the "outlier" studies to find schools that were succeeding in achievement despite undesirable characteristics. This body of research came to be known as the "effective schools" studies. Even then, however, the fact that good results could occur in poor schools continued to support the notion that money will not improve education.

22. One of the most distressing and alarming reports to appear in 1994 was the report of Richard M. Lerner, "The Crisis Among Contemporary American Adolescents: A Call for the Integration of Research, Policies, and Programs," in *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 4 (1994): 1-4, and in *Kidcount* (1994), published by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Baltimore, Maryland.

23. According to D. Hudelson in "School to Work Opportunities: How Vocational-Technical Educators Can Tap the New Federal Legislation," in *Vocational Education Journal* 169 (1994): 17-19, new legislation provided \$300 million in funding. Whether such funds will be curtailed by the new Congress is uncertain.

24. See M. Vickers "A New Take On-the-Job Training: Youth Apprenticeship Is Becoming a More Viable Option in the U.S.," in *Vocational Educational Journal* 9 (1994): 22-23. See also D. M. Buffamanti's and A. J. Paulter's article "How We Will Learn in the Year 2000: Reengineering Schools for the High Performance Economy," in *Journal of Industrial Teacher Educational* 31 (1994): 87-95.

25. For example, John F. Suddath describes how an industrial technology teacher teamed with employers and vendors of computer equipment to design a curriculum. See "Spotlight on Technology: The New Industrial Revolution," in *Vocational Education Journal* 69 (1994): 43-43.

26. The National Education Association, which carefully tracks trends impacting teachers, has published "Teacher Portfolios: An Emerging Trend?" in its electronic service, America Online. The information about Vermont was provided by Marlene R. Burke, president of. Noting that the portfolio is a useful form of documenting student growth, Vermont-NEA indicate that it is also being used for teacher licensure, relicensure, and personal documentation of professional growth in Vermont. In Vermont, a teacher-majority state standards board and local boards in the state's 60 school districts developed a plan to relicensure teachers. Requirements

for relicensure require nine credits every seven years, but a credit is not necessarily a college course. Thus, an Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP), based on the portfolio, is written and documents are presented for credit.

27. In Kentucky, under the terms of the Kentucky Education Reform Act, the state legislature established the "Kentucky Distinguished Educator" program, which requires documentation using portfolios. According to the report, 250 educators have applied.

Information for this section was obtained from the National Education Association, which reported the work of Diane L. Diatillo, classroom teacher from Campbellsville Elementary School, Kentucky, in "FastFasts" on the America Online NEA Forum.

28. A. G. Osborne and P. Dimattia, in "The IDEA's Least Restrictive Environment Mandate: Legal Implications," published in *Exceptional Children* 61 (1994): 6-14, report that most judges are weary of excuses used by schools in arguing against inclusion. They are actively placing children with disabilities in regular classrooms, based on the LRE tests. Inclusion, not mainstreaming, is now the basis for decisions. Schools must prove why students do not belong in regular classrooms, and with the broadening of the interpretation of the meaning of federal law to include social participation, it appears that inclusion will proceed at a fast pace.

29. See the article "Everyone into the School!" by Sophronia Scott Gregory in *Time* (July 1994).

30. Nancy Gibbs reported on the Hartford schools in "Schools for Profit," in *Time* (October 1994).

31. See *Technology Assessment in Education and Training* (1994), published by Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., in Hillsdale, New Jersey; edited by Eva L. Baker and Harold F. O'Neil, Jr.