

**THE
POLICYMAKERS'
PROGRAM**

The First Five Years

**IMPLEMENTATION
Tools**

Volume II

Statewide Strategies for Improving
the Well-Being of Children and Families



JULY 1998

Sponsored by

THE DANFORTH FOUNDATION

In partnership with

Education Commission of the States

National Conference of State Legislatures

National Governors' Association

The Policymakers' Program: The First Five Years

*Strategies for Improving the Well-Being
of Children and Families*

Volume II: Implementation Tools



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FOREWORD

Working with a blue-ribbon advisory board, the Danforth Foundation, in cooperation with the Education Commission of the States, the National Conference of State Legislatures, and the National Governors' Association, has created a careful balance of "top-down" support for "bottom-up" reform of state education and human services systems. The Policymakers' Program is designed to help state and local leaders create a vision for children and families—and to define a process for achieving their vision that respects the unique traditions of each state and its communities. As a ten-year initiative, launched in 1992, the Policymakers' Program will end in 2002.

At the heart of the Policymakers' Program is a new way of thinking about how states and communities can best provide services. This new way of thinking emphasizes customers instead of clients, results as opposed to resources, prevention in place of correction, decentralization and deregulation instead of control and compliance, and collaboration and coordination in place of turf-protection and buck-passing. Above all, it insists that the family is the customer, not solely the child or an individual parent. And it seeks large-scale institutional change in how government operates rather than isolated demonstration projects designed to provide protective cover for on-going failure. This new way of thinking is not for the faint of heart.

Now in its sixth year, the Policymakers' Program has helped more than 300 legislators, agency heads, and governors and their advisors from some 40 states rethink education and human service organization and delivery in their communities. From those 40 states, the program selected 15 state teams (ranging in size from 12 to 27 people) and helped them develop comprehensive and coordinated community action plans tailored to their specific needs.

This approach has required a broad vision, included many participants, and developed new and important collaborations—new arrangements between state agencies, municipal and county governments, frontline service providers, and families. The program that is described in this report is based not only on good research but also on the reflections and experiences of friends and colleagues with years of experience in service design and delivery. Whether active in government—as executive staff, legislators, agency heads, superintendents, teachers, or social workers—or community consumers of state and local services, these colleagues fully understand the "Catch-22" nature of government organization and the frustrating variety of ambiguities and complexities accompanying service delivery.

This two-volume report describes the origins and development of the Policymakers' Program in its first five years. Volume I explains why and how the Policymakers' Program was created. It also describes how the program operates and includes brief overviews of state action plans—descriptions of how states and communities organized themselves and what they accomplished. It addresses how individual states and communities have benefited from the program. Finally, it draws some lessons from the history of the effort

in the hope they may prove useful to philanthropic groups, state leaders, and others interested in supporting comprehensive community efforts to improve services for children and families. This volume is rounded out with five appendices describing the highlights of the program's introductory meetings in each of the first five years.

The companion Volume II provides detailed information on how the program was implemented, accompanied by tools for those who might want to replicate it, including letters inviting participation, meeting agendas, and a variety of frameworks related to large-scale institutional change.

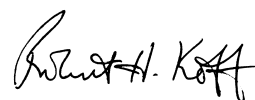
Section A contains an Executive Summary of the report of the first five years of the Policymakers' Program given in Volume I.

Section B contains operational information for the January Legislative Chairs' and Governors' Meeting and the Policymakers' Summer Institute. An example letter of invitation and agenda for the Legislative Chairs' and Governors' Meeting are provided. An example application (if a competitive process is used), a letter of invitation (if an invitational process is used), agenda, briefing book contents, and a team facilitator's guide for the Summer Institute are also provided.

Sections C–F contain documents used with the teams prior to the Institute. The document in Section C describes the relationship of state policy to student achievement in one state. David Grissmer of the RAND Corporation was commissioned by the Danforth Foundation to develop a report specific to each state that sent a team to the Institute. The report in Section D is an example of the demographic report Harold "Bud" Hodgkinson of the Center for Demographic Policy developed for each Institute state team. Both Grissmer and Hodgkinson typically attended a pre-Institute team meeting, often with additional policymakers in attendance, to present the state-specific reports.

Sections E and F contain documents developed by Beverly Parsons of InSites for use with the teams at a pre-Institute meeting. "Analysis of State-Level System Change in Education and Human Services" (Section E) provides team facilitators with a guide to a one-day seminar to orient teams to what is meant by "system change." This document is particularly intended for teams that are focused on state-level system change. Section F contains a complementary document oriented toward system change at the local level.

The state-specific student achievement and demographic reports are intended to give team members a state-wide picture of the conditions and context of their state. The system-change documents are intended to help teams develop a framework for action planning within their particular context.



Robert H. Koff
Vice President
The Danforth Foundation

PREFACE

Every policymaker in every branch of government wants better results for every child. That the promises of life have not been fulfilled for all of our children is not for lack of interest or lack of trying. It is this basic understanding that has made the commitment of the Danforth Foundation to the Policymakers' Program so very important.

This is a program that has pursued a simple belief that there is nothing we can not accomplish for our kids and their families if we start out together and stay together. And so year after year and state after state, the Policymakers' Program has worked to bring the right people together in a way that permits them to reach the right results—as they see them. The blueprint for this process follows. I have led and attended many hearings, meetings, and conferences. I believe that this is the single best process yet developed to allow state and local policymakers to do all that they can do to deliver on the promises of birth in America.

It is a program and a process that has evolved throughout its life, as should we all. Much more can and must be done. Because of the Policymakers' Program, the support of the Danforth Foundation, the good work of the cosponsoring organizations, and the participation of hundreds of policymakers, I am confident it will be.



Bill Purcell
Advisory Board Chairperson and
Policymakers' Program Director
The Child and Family Policy Center
Vanderbilt Institute for Public



SECTION A
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Why aren't our children learning more? Why are so many young people in trouble in so many different ways—experimenting with drugs and alcohol, performing poorly in school, dropping out, becoming parents when scarcely more than children themselves, or running afoul of the juvenile justice system?

A big part of the answer to these questions is that many American families are in trouble. They are in trouble everywhere, and in the inner-city, they are in crisis.

Another part of the answer is less obvious but equally significant: The service delivery system itself is in trouble. It has become so fragmented and diffuse, cumbersome and inefficient, that it's hard to make it work, and it often fails to meet the needs for which it was designed.

The Policymakers' Program is designed to help state and local leaders create a vision for children and families—and to define a process for achieving their vision that respects the unique traditions of each state and its communities. As a ten-year initiative, launched in 1992, the Policymakers' Program will end in 2002. Now in its sixth year, the program has helped more than 300 officials from some 40 states rethink service delivery in their communities. From those 40 states, the program selected 15 state teams (ranging in size from 12 to 27 people) and helped them develop comprehensive community action plans tailored to their specific needs.

THE MISSION

The Policymakers' Program has an ambitious mission: **engaging state policymakers in the task of ensuring that all children and youth succeed in developing into healthy and productive citizens, capable of learning not only in school but throughout their lives.** Within that broad umbrella, the Policymakers' Program was designed to create five results for children and families:

1. A safe environment for children
2. Children coming to school ready to learn
3. Improved student achievement
4. Healthy families
5. Healthy and productive communities

Within this mission, the Policymakers' Program recognizes four key realities about today's policy environment:

1. The education and human service systems are under enormous stress and have difficulty coping with today's demands.

*The service
delivery system
is in trouble.*

State and local agencies and personnel need to become more entrepreneurial, active, and flexible.

2. Neither schools nor social service agencies can assume full responsibility for the development of young people and effective education for all. Policy has to be grounded in the assumption that the first responsibility in these areas rests on the family
3. To provide first-rate services and education to children, youth, and families, new patterns of inter-relationship and responsibility among federal, state, and local levels of government must be developed.
4. Although the problems are universal, most solutions are local.

After five years of program operations, it is increasingly clear that a major reorientation of policy thinking is required to improve the delivery of education and other services. State and local agencies and personnel need to become more entrepreneurial, active, and flexible.

In many ways, according to the research presented to program participants, the attributes that characterize effective programs are undermined by the attributes of most existing government systems. Research consistently shows that effective programs in many education and social service areas are comprehensive and flexible, responsive and individualized, and provided by frontline workers encouraged to exercise a great deal of discretion. But most programs are the reverse—fragmented and categorical, rule-driven and standardized, and delivered by front-line workers who are hemmed in by so many restrictions they have hardly any discretion at all. It is no accident that although effective programs continually reinvent themselves because they are relentlessly oriented toward solving problems, existing systems change little over time.

A UNIQUE STRUCTURE

The Policymakers' Program consists of two parts, both supported by the Danforth Foundation and implemented with its three cooperating partners, the Education Commission of the States, the National Conference of State Legislatures, and the National Governors' Association. The first part is comprised of a series of meetings on an annual cycle; the second part includes financial support and technical assistance, also funded by the Foundation. With this support and these resources, state teams and state-and-community teams are encouraged to develop action plans to reinvent service delivery in their areas.

States have developed and implemented a broad array of change strategies in response to the Policymakers' Program. One of the attractive features of the program is that it makes no effort to impose a template or blueprint on state actions. There is no attempt to force a "one-size-fits-all" solution on state leaders.

- **New York** recently passed legislation on school-community collaboration, supported by pooled funding from six state agencies and full-time staff.

- **Utah**, through its FACT (Families, Agencies, and Communities Together) initiative, has implemented collaborative funding for communities to better serve at-risk children and their families.
- **Vermont** initially built statewide public ownership over improving outcomes for children, youth and families and then helped the city of Barre identify areas in need of attention by packaging data in a user-friendly fashion.

PROGRAM BENEFITS

Program participants invariably describe the value of their participation in glowing terms. Over the years, participants have identified five major program benefits in their states:

1. Building relationships among key leaders who, in their own arenas, can support the new directions
2. Establishing a shared conceptual framework among leaders regarding what must be changed to achieve better results for children and families
3. Helping leaders produce concrete action plans
4. Providing leaders with specific examples of what works
5. Beginning to document the effects on children

The most successful participating states demonstrated most of these major benefits during the life of the program.

The most successful participating states demonstrated five major benefits.

KEY ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS

Over the five years of the program, nine significant steps appeared most critical to advancing state action plans. Program planners began thinking of these as key elements of success.

1. **Start with Numbers.** The use of data to aid decision making and evaluate results has been an integral part of the Policymakers' Program from the outset. The most effective teams turned out to be those which built data usage into their plans to monitor the conditions of children and families and to tie data to specific benchmarks of achievement.
2. **Think of Systems, Not Programs.** "If you are building a house and you leave a plank out, the house is basically all right. But if you leave a plank out of a boat, it sinks," one expert told program participants. Build boats, not houses, was his advice—that is to say, think comprehensively about government systems, not narrowly about government programs.

Key Elements of Success

- Start with Numbers
- Think of Systems, not Programs
- Adopt Collaboration as a Way of Life
- Engage the Public in Terms It can Understand
- Develop Capacity in Local Communities
- Create a Critical Mass of People Who Care
- Beg, Borrow, and Steal Effective Policy Ideas
- Follow the Money
- Insist on Results

3. **Adopt Collaboration as a Way of Life.** Collaboration is not just a question of “What can you do for me?” or “What can I do for you?” It is more than simply coordination and cooperation. Collaboration implies shared budgets, joint accountability for results, integrated professional development activities, and the development of new relationships across branches of government, between government agencies, and between state and local units of government. The most effective collaboration is grounded in the question: “What together can we do for the people we are supposed to serve?”
4. **Engage the Public in Terms It Can Understand.** The most effective programs demonstrated strong, clear communication strategies, both within and across agencies and between government and the public. The Policymakers’ Program has consistently emphasized that engaging the public on its own terms—using communication as “public engagement”—is vital to the service reform agenda. It is a method for involving the public in designing system change.
5. **Develop Capacity in Local Communities.** As experienced in most of the participating states, persuading state agencies to collaborate is child’s play compared to the challenge of creating a system of “devolution,” designed to put authority and decisions for the same programs in local hands. It is the difference between “horizontal” service integration at the state level and a combination of “vertical” integration between state and local agencies and “horizontal” integration at the community level.
6. **Create a Critical Mass of People Who Care.** Creating and sustaining the conditions for successful systems reform involves human resources in a big way. The human side of the equation has at least two dimensions: first, finding the right people and investing in them, and second, finding enough of them. Most state teams discovered they had to create a critical mass of people who understood what needed to be done, and they had to expand the size of the state team dramatically when it returned from Policymakers’ Program events.
7. **Beg, Borrow, and Steal Effective Policy Ideas.** “There are very weak patent-infringement laws prohibiting state governments from stealing ideas from each other,” one state official told his peers at a Policymakers’ Program meeting. His advice: beg, borrow, and steal good ideas from every source. As this participant’s comments make clear, when leaders from Missouri, Pennsylvania, and Iowa describe shared ideas about governance, statewide congresses, or budgeting for results, their colleagues from other states sit up and pay attention.
8. **Follow the Money.** Talking about systems reform is cheap and easy. The real action occurs when you budget resources to put behind the rhetoric. Several states in the Policymakers’ Program are

addressing one of the biggest political and programmatic challenges in the change process—budgeting and reallocating financial resources. Too often, changes are piloted with somebody else’s money. Unfortunately, when the outside money disappears, the changes generally disappear too. If reform is to take root and grow, the official systems of the state, and the financial resources backing them up, must be redesigned to nourish change.

9. **Insist on Results.** Finally, one of the foundation themes of the Policymakers’ Program from the outset was the need to insist on results, assess progress, and be accountable to the public. One expert told participants they needed to worry about five major outcome and assessment measures: (1) outcome measures on the status of children; (2) self-evaluating delivery systems with ongoing evaluation; (3) systematic and timely performance assessment; (4) a reliable information system; and (5) public information about children’s welfare and the performance of the system. “If you’re going to get into this,” he said, “you have to be serious about it.”

LESSONS LEARNED

In addition to those key elements of success, important lessons have been learned about mounting these efforts. How should they be initiated? Who should be involved? When is the right time to begin? If another foundation or association wanted to start something similar, what could it learn from the experience of the Policymakers’ Program? Eleven lessons appear to be most important:

1. **Give Ownership Away.** At the program design level, no single individual or organization possesses all of the relevant knowledge and expertise required. Program design is improved immeasurably when the circle of ownership is expanded so that more people feel they have a stake in the program’s success. Similar considerations apply to program implementation—both at the state and community levels. State officials have a much better understanding of what is required to assist communities within their borders than national program designers; and nobody understands community needs better than community leaders, either civic or elected. It is not an abrogation of responsibility to give program ownership away to state and local leaders, but an act of faith in the basic good sense of democratic decision-making at the community level.
2. **Work with Intermediary Organizations.** One of the keys to getting the Policymakers’ Program off the ground quickly was the Foundation’s ability to work with several respected organizations representing key state-level constituencies. The Education Commission of the States, the National Conference of State Legislatures, and the National Governors’ Association each

brought their own expertise and point of view to bear, and each of them helped provide instant credibility for the effort.

3. **Model the Behavior You Seek.** Two convictions are essential to the Policymakers' Program. First is the notion that state agencies and leaders need to be much more open to new ideas. Second is that new styles of cooperation and collaboration must be developed. Danforth and its partners found their behavior needed to model both of these convictions.

In being open to new ideas, Danforth and its three partners wound up with a Policymakers' Program in the fifth year that they had not envisioned in the first. It includes a state and community Summer Institute, on-site technical assistance, convening teams prior to participating in the Institute, and state-specific briefing papers.

Moreover, Danforth and its partners often found themselves engaged in the same tug-of-war with each other (and within their own organizations) that they were trying to diminish or eliminate at the policy level. Working through these challenges was time-consuming and difficult. Although not always successful, it was always time well spent.

4. **Rely on Peers to Carry the Message.** Without a doubt, the most successful aspect of the Policymakers' Program was its reliance on a mix of experts to describe problems and to frame solutions while state officials and legislators described how they had approached the problem. The extent of cross-fertilization of policy ideas from state to state was one of the more visible aspects of the program's success, an aspect directly attributable to the program's decision to rely on peers to make the case and carry the message.
5. **Build the Capacity to Support Collaboration.** Sustained collaboration occurs only when funds, time, and personnel are allocated to its accomplishment. State and local policymakers need to understand the power of data in creating a climate conducive to change, supporting new policies, and sustaining change agendas over time. Improving outcomes for children is dependent on measuring, tracking, and reporting outcome data. Policymakers and foundations should not underestimate the importance and the difficulty of this challenge. Building this capacity in states and communities is critical if changes in practice and policy are to continue.
6. **Understand that Different Communities Are at Different Stages.** It is impossible to overstate the need for flexibility in initiating and supporting an effort such as this. Each of the participating states is at different stages of development in terms of collaboration and cooperation, and a program such as the Policymakers' Program needs to respect that diversity. In the end, respecting the process required to move the change-agenda along became almost as important as the agenda. Change takes time. Here, process became the vehicle for developing shared understandings and a commitment

to a vision of new possibilities; for clarifying who was responsible for what and why they were responsible for it; for holding individuals and agencies accountable; and for helping governors and legislators get their policies aligned.

7. **Collaboration is Simply a Means to an End.** Although process is important, the program had to continuously guard against letting the process become the point of the whole exercise. Collaboration (or the process of collaboration) is not an end in itself; it is simply a means to an end. Attaining the end, that is, delivering services more effectively so that state and community agencies can actually demonstrate results for children and vulnerable families, required going beyond the vocabulary of cooperation to address the practical difficulties of collaborative implementation. It required taking up tough and difficult issues such as joint budgeting, shared accountability, and assessment of results. But after all, that was the point—improving results for children by delivering services more effectively, not collaborating simply for the sake of collaboration.
8. **Focus Relentlessly on Practice, Data, and Results.** One of the most effective strategies the Policymakers' Program developed was a means of sidestepping partisan and ideological disputes by concentrating on best practice, poring over data, and insisting on meaningful results. Most of this strategy, particularly the emphasis on data and results, was conscious and planned.

When data and results are presented in a user-friendly fashion, policymakers immediately see their value. The lessons learned here are that data need to be comprehensible; evaluations need to be related to policy questions; and policymakers need to participate in selecting the indicators, because that way they come to understand what is being measured and why it is important.
9. **Stability is Essential.** The need for continuity amidst change is a paradox; nonetheless, stability is critical to the systems-change agenda. The continuity required is not stability in the system, but stability in the change agenda and the reform impulse. The loss of powerful champions in either the legislative or executive branches can be fatal to the reform effort, hence there is a significant need to bring on board mid-level employees capable of keeping change on track, regardless of what happens at the top. Unless the bureaucracy is on board, whenever turnover occurs at the top, the most regressive features of the status quo will almost inevitably resurface.
10. **Visionaries Have to be Practical Too.** A second paradox of the change process is that while vision is important, reformers who don't have their feet on the ground aren't likely to get very far. Visionaries have to be practical too. To get anything done in a public environment, reformers need to make sure they bring the right people to the table. In an environment that is not only public but also political, the plan must be something that provides for some

Lessons Learned

- Give Ownership Away
- Work with Intermediary Organizations
- Model the Behavior You Seek
- Rely on Peers to Carry the Message
- Build the Capacity to Support Collaboration
- Understand that Different Communities Are at Different Stages
- Collaboration is Simply a Means to an End
- Focus Relentlessly on Practice, Data, and Results
- Stability is Essential
- Visionaries Have to be Practical Too
- Don't Underestimate the Power of Leadership

demonstrable results within two years. Vision was one of the most important attributes the Policymakers' Program tried to develop during its processes. But to move forward, the vision needed to be harnessed to an effective plan. In the end, it turned out the visionaries had to be practical, too.

11. **Don't Underestimate the Power of Leadership.** Over the years, states that have been the most successful in moving forward in their education and human services collaboration have had powerful leaders as advocates within the legislative and executive branches of government. In particular, progress appeared to be enhanced by a supportive governor, bipartisan legislative leadership, and a history of collaborative leadership on the part of the heads of state agencies responsible for such areas as education, human services, and health. Leaders willing to create and expand such a history is essential.

A FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE

Danforth and its partners have put down a sturdy foundation for future success with the Policymakers' Program. Several hundred state leaders from dozens of states have been exposed to the ideas underlying the program. Teams from 15 states have completed a detailed process for developing statewide plans. Two communities in two states have become formally involved in the effort. As the program has moved forward, the partners have learned a great deal.

What remains to be seen is whether the promise at the state level can be duplicated in local communities. It also remains to be seen if success in a relative handful of communities can be brought to scale and replicated broadly elsewhere. Finally, it is of paramount importance that participating teams and state personnel become self-sufficient. They must develop their own capacity to handle data, to develop good reports, to become team facilitators, and generally to move consistently toward the changes they seek on their own—after the Foundation and all its consultants have left. These remaining challenges will define the agenda of the Policymakers' Program for the next five years.



SECTION B
PROGRAM OPERATIONS

B

Section B: Program Operations

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B

LEGISLATIVE CHAIRS' AND GOVERNORS' MEETING IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

The first meeting of the program's yearly cycle is the January Legislative Chairs' and Governors' Meeting. Three tools are important to the success of this meeting.

The first tool is a letter of invitation to the meeting. The education director of the National Conference of State Legislatures sends this letter to the education and human service chairs. The education director of the National Governors' Association sends a similar letter to the education and human services advisors of the governors.

The second tool is the agenda for the Legislative Chairs' and Governors' Meeting. Key features of the agenda include:

- Topics are related to program goals and are of high interest to the expected attendees. (High-interest areas are determined by the staff of the cosponsoring organizations and based upon constituent requests and priority issues in states.)
- Flexible time for informal conversations is included as well as structured time for interaction among participants. (Program evaluations indicate that the relationships established and information exchanged through this type of interaction is highly valued by participants.)
- Presenters are people who can share their expertise in a way that is interactive and relevant to policymakers.
- Researchers, other state policymakers, and local implementors of state policy are all included as presenters.
- Legislators and governors' advisors serve as moderators and presenters.
- A former or current legislator serves as overall moderator for the program.
- The meeting is scheduled to best fit the legislative cycle in most states (Thursday through Sunday in late January).

The third tool is printed materials. Participants at the January meeting receive a briefing book and resource materials developed specifically around the topics on the agenda.

**LEGISLATIVE CHAIRS' AND GOVERNORS' MEETING
EXAMPLE OF LETTER OF INVITATION**

B

National Conference of State Legislatures

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Denver, Colorado 80202
303-830-2200 Fax: 303-863-8003
www.ncsl.org info@ncsl.org

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: October 15, 1997
TO: Education and Human Service Legislative Chairs
FROM: Julie Davis Bell, Education Program Director, NCSL
SUBJECT: Annual Legislative Chairs' and Governors' Meeting

I am writing to invite you to participate in the annual seminar for state education/human service legislative chairs and governors/governors' aides. The meeting will be held Thursday through Sunday, January 22-25, 1998 at the Marriott Hotel in Orlando, Florida.

The Policymakers' Program is an initiative cosponsored by the National Conference of State Legislatures, the National Governors' Association, and the Education Commission of the States and funded by the Danforth Foundation. The purpose of the program is to support system change and greater integration between education and human service policy to improve outcomes for all children.

Those of you who have attended a previous chairs' meeting know that it is one of the most valuable experiences of the year. Please take a close look at the enclosed agenda. The theme is improving results for children through better integration of education and human service policy and program. We have again assembled an outstanding group of national figures to serve as speakers and facilitators.

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO ATTEND, PLEASE READ THE
FOLLOWING INFORMATION CAREFULLY.**

States are asked to assemble as state teams. State teams may range in size from three to six individuals, but must have education and human service legislative representation, and legislative and gubernatorial representation.

- The *minimum* state team is three individuals: one education chair and one human service chair and one governor's/executive branch representative. Chairs may be from the same or different chamber.
- The *maximum* state team is six individuals: four legislators (i.e., one education chair and one human service chair from each chamber), and two governor's executive branch representatives (i.e., one from education and one from human services.)
- We would encourage you to assemble and bring a six-person team, and take maximum advantage of this opportunity to intensely discuss education and human service reform with your state colleagues.
- We realize that there are legislators and other education and human service chairs who are key to the development and implementation of children's policy, for example, a chair of an appropriations or budget committee. As long as education and human services are represented on your team, you may wish to invite other legislators. Still, four is the maximum number of legislators that may attend from one state.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN ATTENDING THIS YEAR'S MEETING, PLEASE DO THE FOLLOWING:

- Contact your legislative counterpart(s) immediately to make sure they have received this correspondence and to assess their interest in participation.
- Contact your governor's chief education and/or human services advisor. Invitations to this meeting were sent directly to each governor, but it is assumed that aides will attend if the governor him/herself cannot. In some instances, the chief state school officer may serve as the governor's education representative to this meeting.
- Select one individual to complete and return the enclosed registration form. NOTE: WE ONLY NEED TO RECEIVE ONE FROM EACH STATE.
- The deadline for receipt of your state team form at NCSL is November 15, 1997.
- We will contact you to confirm your state's participation and to provide travel information by November 24.
- Participation is limited to approximately 20 states, therefore a timely response will increase the likelihood of your state's place in the seminar. Depending upon the number of states that respond, states may be considered for inclusion in the seminar based upon past participation in the Policymakers' Program.
- The Danforth Foundation will pay for travel and accommodations.
- Participants will need to arrive in time for dinner on Thursday, January 22 and schedule departure for early afternoon on Sunday, January 25.

Feel free to call any of the following staff if you have questions:

Julie Bell or Jack Tweedie at NCSL (303) 830-2200

John Barth at NGA (202) 624-7808

Gerrit Westervelt at ECS (303) 299-3612

Bill Purcell or Karen Edwards at the Family Policy Center
(615) 343-9865

I hope you will be able to attend what should be an exciting and productive meeting.

B

LEGISLATIVE CHAIRS' AND GOVERNORS' MEETING EXAMPLE OF MEETING AGENDA

Improving Results for Children: Building State and Local Capacity for System Change

January 22-25, 1998

Orlando, Florida

Marriott Hotel

Sponsored by:

The National Conference of State Legislatures

The National Governors' Association

The Education Commission of the States

The Danforth Foundation

AGENDA

The overall goal of the Policymakers Program is to help policymakers design state policy that will ensure that all children and youth succeed as healthy, productive citizens and learners—in school and beyond.

The goals of this seminar are:

- to stimulate dialogue between education and human service policymakers and governors about changing systems that serve children and discuss what each needs to do to achieve better results for kids
- to develop strategies for building state-community connections and to help state policy benefit by better understanding of community-based change
- to explore the impacts of new fiscal and budget policy on state education and human service reform
- to provide opportunities for states to share experiences, difficulties, and accomplishments in implementing system reform
- to introduce state policymakers to the goals, objectives, and process of the Policymakers' Program and the opportunity to begin and/or reinforce state work through continued involvement in the Program

Thursday, January 22

- 3:00 pm - 6:00 pm **Registration**
- 3:00 pm - 6:00 pm **Hospitality**
- 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm **Reception**
- 7:00 pm **Dinner and Keynote Address**

Introductions:

Julie Davis Bell, NCSL

*Bill Purcell, Child and Family Policy Institute,
Vanderbilt University*

Speaker:

*Lisbeth Schorr, Harvard University “Strengthening
Families and Neighborhoods to Rebuild America”*

Friday, January 23

- 8:00 am - 9:00 am **Continental Breakfast**

- 9:00 am - 10:00 am **Introductions**

Discussion of Meeting and Agenda

Discussion of Policymakers’ Program

During this time, we will review the agenda for the days ahead and discuss the goals and structure of the Policymakers’ Program. Individuals who coordinated state teams participating in previous Policymakers’ Institutes will share information and experiences.

Speakers:

*Bill Purcell, Child and Family Policy Center at
Vanderbilt Institute for Public Policy Studies*

Bob Koff, Vice President, The Danforth Foundation

Rep. Ron Cowell, Pennsylvania

Rep. Lloyd Frandsen, Utah

- 10:00 am - 10:15 am **Break**

- 10:15 am - Noon **Building Effective State Policy: Lessons about
Community-Based Change**

This year, the Policymakers’ Program added a new dimension—one that intensely focuses on building state and community collaboration. Two veteran states of the Policymakers’ Program, Missouri and Vermont, participated in a pilot Institute for state and community policymakers. This session reports on some of the lessons for state education/human service policy learned from this initial experience.

Moderators:
Bob Koff, Vice President, The Danforth Foundation
Speakers: Gary Stangler, Director, Department of Human Services, Missouri
Lynn Beckwith, Superintendent, University City Schools
Betty Walls, Director of Special Projects, University City Schools
Cheryl Mitchell, Deputy Secretary, Office of the Governor, Vermont
Paul Dupre, Mayor, Barre, Vermont

Noon - 2:00 pm

Lunch and Individual Meetings of Education Chairs, Human Service Chairs, and Governors' and Governors' Staff

During these informal roundtable meetings, participants will discuss current policy issues with their colleagues from other states. The dominant issues confronting each group will be reported to the full group during this evening's dinner.

Facilitators:
Rep. Ron Cowell, Pennsylvania
John Barth, NGA
Sheri Steisel and Jack Tweedie, NCSL

2:00 - 2:30 pm

Break

2:30 pm - 4:00 pm

State Fiscal/Budget Policy

This session highlights findings from a recent NCSL/NGA report on state budgets and tax policy. We will particularly discuss the report's assertions that state tax policy is not well structured to support policy that integrates education and human services.

Moderator: John Barth, NGA

Speaker: Tom Bonnett, author, Is the New Global Economy Leaving State and Local Tax Structures Behind?

4:15 pm

Afternoon and Dinner on Your Own

Participants are welcome to explore area attractions. Staff will provide information about local sites.

Saturday, January 24

8:00 am - 9:00 am

Buffet Breakfast

9:00 am to 10:30 am

New Developments in Welfare, Work, and Schools

States have established the foundations for work-based

welfare. These reforms are contributing to the decline in caseloads and the increasing number of recipients going to work. States are now addressing the remaining barriers that recipients must overcome if they are to find work and be able to support their families without welfare. And they have the money to work with. Declining caseloads have resulted in states having resources to expand support services to recipients. This session will discuss some of the new programs states have developed, including programs to help hard-to-serve recipients, identify jobs in the area that pay more than minimum wage and train participants for those positions, increase transportation access to recipients, and extend support services to poor working families.

Moderator: Rep. Lloyd Frandsen, Utah

Speakers:

Mike Switzer, Enterprise Florida, Tallahassee
Susan Dustin, Bureau of Family Independence, Maine

10:30 am - 11:00 am **Child Care**

Thirteen million American children spend all or some of their day being cared for by someone other than their parent. As evidence accumulates about the importance of brain development during a child's first three years and more young children enroll in child care and preschool programs, state policymakers are focusing on promoting comprehensive early childhood services, with implications for welfare reform, education, and the economy. This session will feature current child care proposals before Congress as well as innovative state legislative initiatives that improve the early childhood education component of child care.

Moderator:

Sheri Steisel, Senior Committee Director, Human Services Committee, NCSL

Speakers:

Anne Mitchell, author, Financing Child Care in the US

Sen. Pat Piper, Minnesota

Jacqueline Romer-Sensky, Governor's Deputy Chief of Staff (Ohio)

12:30 pm - 1:30 pm **Lunch**

1:30 pm - 5:00 pm

Site Visit to Celebration School

The Celebration Community in Orland, Florida is a bold experiment in public/private collaboration, community planning, and school/community integration. Celebration School is at the center of the community, and administrators and teachers are experimenting with many innovative education reforms. We will visit this innovative community and discuss the Celebration experiment with school administrators and community leaders.

Speakers:

- Dot Davis, Principal, Celebration School*
- Donna Leinsing, Curriculum Specialist, Celebration School*
- Scott Muri, Technology Specialist*
- Terry Wick, Education Liaison, Celebration School*
- Kathryn Hattaway, Manager of Government Relations and Community Relations, Walt Disney Imagineering*

6:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Reception

7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Dinner and Discussion

Moderator: Gerrit Westervelt, ECS

Speaker:

- Dr. John Medina*
- Department of Bioengineering*
- University of Washington School of Medicine*
- “How Science Can Inform Policy”*

Sunday, January 25

8:00 am - 9:00 am

Breakfast

9:00 am - 10:30 am

Aligning State Capacity to Accelerate Student Improvement

This session will examine how states are beginning to use quality criteria, with business support, to assess and accelerate long-term community performance and improvement.

Moderator:

- Susan Traiman, Director, Education Initiative, Business Roundtable*

Speakers:

- Peggy Siegel, National Alliance of Business*
- Jim Shipley, Executive Director, Quality Academy, Pinellas County Schools*

10:30 am - 11:00 am **Next Steps/Evaluation**
Facilitator:
Bill Purcell, Child and Family Policy Center,
Vanderbilt University

11:00 am **Adjourn**

B

POLICYMAKERS' SUMMER INSTITUTE IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

B

The Policymakers' Summer Institute is typically held in August. The Summer Institutes have two orientations. One emphasizes building collaboration among state-level agencies and branches of government. The other emphasizes local implementation of new modes of service delivery and support for children and families. Two methods have been used for selecting states for participation—an application process and a letter-of-invitation process. The application approach has the advantage of opening up the process to many states but results in some states being rejected. If this approach is used, consider having an alternative means to assist these states.

This section contains both an example of a request for applications and a letter of invitation. When the invitation method is used, it is preceded by a meeting with key leaders from the states being considered for inclusion to explain the purpose and process of the Institute. This meeting is usually held in conjunction with the Legislative Chairs' and Governors' Meeting. If the leaders agree that they would like to participate, an official letter of invitation is issued by the program director.

The agenda for the Summer Institute includes extensive time for team work. Resource people are also available to assist the teams. Time for relaxation is also an important feature.

Sample agendas—one for an institute that emphasized statewide collaboration and one that emphasized local implementation—are provided on the following pages. A description of the contents for the briefing book for participants and a list of suggested readings are also included.

Each participating state is assigned an experienced facilitator who is knowledgeable about working with state and local policymakers and practitioners. The facilitators are provided a guide for their work with the team. A sample is included in this section.

POLICYMAKERS' SUMMER INSTITUTE EXAMPLE OF REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (STATE-LEVEL COLLABORATION EMPHASIS)

Context and Problem

Why aren't our children learning more? And why are so many young people in trouble in so many different ways? Part of the answer is that the family unit, which should provide the support these young people need, is often in trouble.

Another part of the answer: Over the years, well-intentioned state policymakers—governors, legislators, and agency officials—have created so many programs to meet the needs of children and families that the delivery system has become fragmented and diffuse. It often fails to meet the needs for which it was designed.

Paradoxically, the very programs designed to support families and protect children often work at cross-purposes. Education, health, human services, and early childhood programs are budgeted separately, administered independently, and are provided to clients through different delivery systems. The results are predictable. During a program review, one state identified a family that in a single 30-month period experienced:

- 40 referrals to different community providers
- 17 separate evaluations
- 13 different case managers
- 10 independent treatment plans, including three family-support plans, a foster care plan, and a protective services plan

During tough fiscal times, such inefficiency and duplication must be addressed. Many states and communities recognize these problems and have implemented various strategies for making services more responsive to the needs of children and their families. The majority of these efforts focus on moving decision making down to communities and working collaboratively across agencies and organizations. Still, many children and families are not being well served.

The Policymakers' Program

Families have the primary responsibility for the care of their children. Neither schools nor social service agencies can replace parents. Nor can state or local government. But families often need help.

Working with a blue-ribbon advisory board, the Danforth Foundation, the Education Commission of the States, the National Conference of State Legislatures, and the National Governors' Association have created a careful balance of "top-down" support for "bottom-up" reform.

The Policymakers' Program has been designed to help state leaders create a vision that describes desired results for children and families—and define a state process for achieving that vision—that respects the unique traditions of each state and its communities. State teams receive support to:

- Collect data that helps to identify state factors which have negative and positive effects on the well-being of children and families.
- Encourage collaborative relationships among education, health, labor, legal, and human service systems.
- Develop comprehensive approaches for improving children's school readiness and school performance.
- Rethink funding systems and finance systems.
- Gain relevant information, resource people and materials, new skills, and the confidence needed to build coalitions for comprehensive reform.

The initial meeting of the Policymakers' Program is held in January. About 20 states join in a three-day meeting to explore the issues. From the 20, three states are selected competitively each year to participate in a one-week Policymakers' Institute in August. At that meeting, attendees develop and refine state plans. Danforth covers all expenses for these state teams—both in January and during the summer institute.

This document calls for proposals from states interested in participating in the Summer Policymakers' Institute.

The Summer Institute

The Institute is an intensive five-day work and decision-making process to create an action agenda for change. It provides a series of activities designed to challenge traditional thinking about policies that affect the delivery of education and human services. Participants will have an opportunity to work with nationally known individuals who have different views of how educational and human service systems should function. During the Institute, each state team will develop its own action agenda for continuing work. A preliminary agenda for the 1997 Institute is attached as Appendix A3-3, Sample Agenda.

The 1997 institute will be held in St. Louis, Missouri, August 16-21, 1997. The Danforth Foundation covers the travel and lodging expenses for three state teams—approximately 15 members each—who represent various levels of education and human service policymaking and service provision.

The major outcome for the Institute is a written state-action plan that the team is committed to implement. The plan is expected to:

- Define the problem(s) the team will address.
- State a long-term vision.
- Identify specific goals, strategies, action steps, proposed timelines, and assignment of responsibility for implementation.

- Articulate short- and long-term results expected from the team's efforts.
- Describe the criteria which will be used to measure the effectiveness of the intended actions.

Competitive Selection Process

Three state teams will be selected from among those applying to participate in the Policymakers' Institute. Only those states whose representatives participated in the Legislative Chairs' and Governors' Meeting in January 1997 are eligible to apply. Staff from the three cosponsoring organizations (ECS, NCSL, and NGA) will provide assistance to states that wish to apply. Completed applications must be submitted by the state team leader, and be received at the Danforth Foundation by the close of business on Friday, February 28, 1997. States will be notified of their acceptance by Friday, March 14, 1997.

How to Apply

States interested in applying for the Institute must submit the following materials to Robert Koff at the Danforth Foundation:

- **Statement of Interest, Commitment and Capacity** — Provide an overview of the state's interest in and commitment to participating in the Institute. Address the following items. Please consider each area carefully and respond in a clear and concise manner (no more than five pages please):
 - **State Goals for the Institute** — What does the state hope to accomplish by participating in the Institute?
 - **Status of State Education/Human Services Policy** — Describe current education and human services reform initiatives both at the state and at the community level (include any ties to national education reform networks), the extent of interagency collaboration, and the extent to which these priorities are reflected in recent budgets.
 - **Status of State Education/Human Services Planning** — What planning efforts are currently underway in your state to improve outcomes in education and human services (task forces, legislative committees, etc.)? How are those efforts funded and coordinated?
 - **Information Needs** — To what extent do policymakers use relevant and objective data to make decisions about the education and human services systems? What information is needed to make those decisions?
 - **Barriers** — What are the major impediments to systemic reform in education and human services? How and by whom are these barriers currently being addressed?

- **Accountability Mechanisms** — How does the state assess its progress on systemic reform in education and human services? What standards or measures of effectiveness are used to determine the quality of education and other children’s services?
- **Public Involvement** — How does the state involve the public — parents, community members, business representatives, local government, and the education and human services practitioners — in its systemic reform agenda?
- **Team Composition and Strengths** — Experience has shown that selection of the “right” team to participate in the Institute is one of the most critical factors in successful implementation of the state’s plan. Please consider these criteria in determining the right team for your state. Include:
 - Key state decision makers from education, human services, and appropriations
 - Leaders, both at the state level and at the local level, who have primary responsibility for carrying out policy decisions in those areas
 - Key influencers in the policy-making process
 - Leaders who can help build community capacity for redesigning the service delivery system
 - Direct service providers and “customers” of the education and human services systems. Be clear on the role that each member of the team will play.

For example, if you include local policymakers, service providers, and consumers, are they there to inform the state folks of the potential impact of the plan at the local level, or are they there to learn how to build capacity in their own communities?

Be sure that the team reflects the cultural, racial, ethnic, and gender diversity of your state.

Consider including people serving in the following capacities:

- legislative chairs from education, human services, and appropriations committees
- governor’s education, human services, and budget advisors
- education and/or human services commissioners or representatives
- state and/or local board of education members
- representatives of county and/or municipal government
- school superintendents and/or local human services agency heads
- direct service providers, e.g., teacher, principal, social worker, school counselor

- consumers, e.g., parents, students, other stakeholders or service providers, e.g., business representatives
- corrections or legal services, health departments

The application must propose a team leader who will coordinate assembly of the Institute team and serve as a liaison between the state and the Institute program staff. The application must describe the qualifications of the team leader and provide a description of the proposed team membership, describing the skills, strengths, and experience that each brings to the team. If it is not possible to include names of all team members in the application, describe the position or stakeholder group that will be represented on the team. The Institute program staff members are available to help team leaders with the selection process.

Upon acceptance to the Institute, each state team will be assigned a facilitator from the Policymakers' Program staff who will help the team leader determine the final composition of the state team. The team composition must be determined by April 30, 1997, and a complete list of those who plan to attend the Institute, including names, titles, addresses, telephone and facsimile numbers, should be submitted to the state team's facilitator. Alternates for team members should also be specified in case a designated team member cannot attend due to unforeseen circumstances.

Preparation for the Institute

Prior to the August institute, each state team must make a commitment to assemble its entire team for a sufficient number of team meetings to accomplish the following:

- Establish group processes and develop understanding of the planning process to be used at the Institute.
- Build a common understanding of the data that has been compiled about the state and determine how that data will be used in the planning process.
- Develop a shared vision of desired outcomes for children and families in the state.

States applying to the Institute must agree to select one of the following dates for their first two-day, pre-institute retreat: May 9-10, May 16-17, or May 30-31, 1997. Experts who have been contracted by Danforth to gather data about the respective states will present their reports to each of three state teams (and others the team wishes to invite) on the chosen date. The state team's facilitator and other appropriate staff from the Policymakers' Program will assist the team leader in preparing for and conducting these meetings. The purpose is to ensure that all members of the team are adequately prepared for the work the team will be engaged in at the Institute. A proposed agenda for the pre-institute meetings is attached.

Application Contact Person

Provide the name, title, address, and telephone and facsimile numbers of the contact person for this application.

Selection Criteria

Each application will be reviewed for demonstration of the state's commitment to systemic reform in education and human services across all levels, i.e., between the legislative and executive branch, between education and other services to support children and families, and between state and local government.

Applications also will be evaluated based on clearly stated reasons for participation, including:

- how participation in the Institute will help the state move forward in improving outcomes for children and youth
- team composition (i.e., have the appropriate stakeholders been included to ensure that decisions and recommendations can be implemented?)
- team commitment to adequate preparation for the Institute through a sufficient number of in-state meetings between May and July
- the state's ability and commitment to following through with the plan developed at the Institute (Support from the governor and the legislative leadership will strengthen the application.)

The Policymakers' Program staff will try to select states that will provide a mix of regional, demographic, and political characteristics, as well as different levels of policy development on systemic reform in education and human services.

Mail completed applications to:

Robert Koff, Program Director
The Danforth Foundation
231 South Bemiston Avenue, Suite 1080
St. Louis, Missouri 63105-1996

(After September 1997, the Danforth Foundation address will be: 1 Metropolitan Square, 211 N. Broadway St., St. Louis, MO 63102.)

Applications must be received by the close of business on February 28, 1997, in order to be considered.

**POLICYMAKERS' SUMMER INSTITUTE
EXAMPLE OF LETTER OF INVITATION
(LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION EMPHASIS)**

The Danforth Foundation

February 19, 1997

Cornelius Hogan
Secretary Vermont Agency of Human Services
103 S. Main
Waterbury, Vermont 05676

and

Marc Hull
Commissioner of Education
120 State Street
Montpelier, Vermont 05620

Dear Con and Marc:

I am writing to invite you to participate in the state-community component of The Danforth Foundation's Policymakers' Program. The Policymakers' Program is designed to help state leaders improve service delivery to children and families. The state-community component is being established so that state and community leaders can, together, develop and implement a process for improving services—a process that respects the unique traditions of each state and its communities. The program emphasizes collaborative policymaking between state and local educators and human service providers to improve the well-being and academic achievement of all children, but especially children who are most at risk of not succeeding in school. It also emphasizes the importance of leadership in carrying out state and local policy.

As the Policymakers' Program enters its fifth year of operation, we are piloting an approach to strengthen state-community collaborations. This activity will involve local community teams from two states—Missouri and Vermont. Each team will explore how to improve the well-being and academic achievement of children and the well-being of families in their communities.

You are invited to develop a team from one Vermont community (e.g., city, school system, or school) to participate in this pilot effort. The team is expected to represent and reflect a range of people in the community who will work together to increase the life chances of children. State policymakers should also be represented on the team to enable them to develop a deeper understanding of how change occurs at the local level, help the local team navigate

state policy and administrative structures, and consider how the lessons learned can enhance other efforts.

Your response to this invitation will indicate your agreement to address the following in your team strategy:

- Focus on outcomes by measuring efforts in terms of results for children (e.g., collect and analyze baseline data for desired results).
- Describe expected results for children including procedures that will be used to document lessons learned, and data and procedures that will be used to assess the degree to which (1) program components have been put into place and (2) expected student results have been achieved. In this context, each team will be expected to gather and make available to their communities good information about the current status of children's well-being and academic achievement.
- Develop strategic plans and identify and describe specific strategies that will be used to achieve desired results for children.
- Develop ways information about the well-being and academic achievement of children will be used to (1) guide program development and implementation, (2) increase the efficiency and effectiveness of services provided to children, and (3) accept accountability for performance.
- Link budget and activities to community priorities.
- Establish or strengthen existing school and community-based structures to increase school and community capacity to engage in and sustain public conversations.

The Program

The focal point of the program is a Summer Institute (Saturday-Tuesday, July 26-29, 1997) in Vermont. Prior to and at the Institute, the team will develop and refine an action plan. The team will have access to resource people who can assist in the team's work. See the attached general agenda (Appendix A4-3) for the Institute. The Foundation will pay the travel and per diem expenses for 15 team members to attend the Institute. The team can bring additional members if it pays for transportation and hotel expenses. Because of the complex issues that the team will consider, it is expected that team members will attend all team meetings including the Institute.

Prior to the Institute, it is expected that each team will meet at least three times with a facilitator arranged through the program. The Danforth Foundation will pay 20 percent of the cost of the facilitator up to a maximum of \$2,500. In addition, the Foundation will pay for the cost of a consultant prior to the Institute (honorarium up to \$1,000 in addition to travel and per diem expenses). The purpose of these meetings is to develop a statement of expected results, develop consensus on strategies that will be used to achieve the results, and gather baseline data concerning current conditions in the community and the academic performance of children. The Foundation will also provide a budget of up to \$5,000 to help defray costs of team pre-

Institute meetings. Finally, the Foundation will pay for the cost of a joint team meeting in St. Louis for five people from each team. The meeting will be held May 28-29, 1997.

After completion of the Institute, teams will have an opportunity to apply to the Foundation for a “minigrant” (\$5,000 to \$20,000) to help implement their action plans.

Response

I will need a letter from you by March 1, 1997, indicating your response to this invitation. If you accept, please provide the following information:

- Explain what you hope to learn and accomplish from your participation.
- Identify the community you want to work with.
- Provide the criteria that will guide your efforts to identify individuals who will serve on the team.
- Identify who will serve as the team contact person(s) and/or convenor(s).

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Robert H. Koff
Program Director

POLICYMAKERS' SUMMER INSTITUTE

EXAMPLE OF INSTITUTE AGENDA

(STATE-LEVEL COLLABORATION EMPHASIS)

State Policymakers' Institute
The Doubletree Hotel & Conference Center
St. Louis, Missouri
August 16-21, 1997

B

Overall Program Goal

To help state leaders create a vision that describes desired results for children and families and develop a process for achieving that vision, a process that respects the unique traditions of each state and its communities

Objectives

- To help state teams collect data that identifies factors which have positive or negative impacts on the well-being of children and families
- To encourage collaborative relationships among education, health, labor, legal, and human service systems
- To help state teams develop comprehensive approaches for improving children's school readiness and school performance
- To encourage state teams to rethink funding methods and finance systems
- To help teams enhance their skills, knowledge, and relationships to better support long-term reform in education and social service systems in ways that improve educational, economic, and social outcomes for children and families

Outcomes

State teams will leave the Institute with an action plan that incorporates current research and theories about how best to improve educational, economic, and/or social outcomes for children and families.

State teams will have mechanisms in place to gather evidence of improvements in educational, economic, and/or social outcomes for children and families within a year from when they participate in the program.

State teams will have concrete examples of how service delivery systems and/or state policies have been changed to better support educational, economic, and/or social outcomes for children and families within a year.

State teams will have evidence of improvements in educational, economic, and/or social outcomes for children and families within two years from when they participate in the program.

Meeting Agenda

Saturday, August 16, 1997

- 12:00 - 3:00 **Program Staff Meeting**
Staff will review final details for the week's program.
- 3:00 - 4:00 **Participant Registration for the Institute**
Participants will pick up name tags and updated program information at the registration table.
- 4:00 - 5:30 **Introduction to the Institute**
The purpose of this session is to review the goals and expectations of the program, introduce participants and staff, and provide each team an opportunity to share what they hope to accomplish by the end of the week.
- 5:30 - 7:30 **Reception & Dinner**
Participants will have the opportunity to interact with the institute faculty and team members from other states.
Master of Ceremonies:
William Purcell, Advisory Board Chairman
Host: *Robert Koff*, Danforth Foundation
- 7:30 - 9:00 **State Team Meetings**
Teams will meet to review where they are in the planning process and to establish their work plan for the week.

Sunday, August 17, 1997

- 10:00 - 10:45 **Brunch**
- 10:45 - 12:30 **Discussion of Strategies for Achieving Positive Educational Results**
The purpose of this session is to review various school reform initiatives and to discuss the key factors that lead to success.
Bob Koff, Vice President, Danforth Foundation
- 12:30 - 1:00 **Break**
A light lunch will be available outside team rooms at 1:00.
- 1:00 - 4:00 **Team Work Time**
Teams will use this time to work on their action plans.

- 4:15 - 4:45 **Institute Faculty/State Team Conveners' Meeting**
This group will meet daily to review the day's activities and consider any possible revisions to the following day's agenda.
- 5:00 Buses leave the hotel for sightseeing and dinner at Bob Koff's home

Monday, August 18, 1997

- 8:00 - 8:30 **Buffet Breakfast**
- 8:30 - 10:00 **Systems Change: A Case Study**
The purpose of this session is to help participants assess the ways in which state government can contribute to community capacity building.
David Hawkins, Director
Social Development Research Group,
University of Washington
- 10:00 - 10:30 **Break**
- 10:30 - 3:00 **Team Work Time**
Teams will use this time to continue work on their action plans. Dr. Hawkins will be available to consult with teams, if desired.
- 12:00 - 1:00 **Buffet Lunch Available outside Team Rooms**
- 3:00 - 4:30 **Building the Infrastructure to Support Collaboration**
The purpose of this session is to learn more about systems reform from two states—Missouri and Vermont—that are working with local communities to build capacity for improving outcomes for children and families. Representatives from the states of Missouri and Vermont and from the communities of University City, MO, and Barre, VT
- 4:30 - 6:00 **Team Flex Time**
Teams may use this time for recreation or for continued planning.
- 5:30 - 6:00 **Institute Faculty/State Team Conveners' Meeting**
- 6:00 - 7:00 **Reception**

7:00 - 8:30 **Dinner/Roundtable Discussions at the Hotel**
Participants are encouraged to sit with other state participants who have similar roles; i.e., legislators, agency staff, local service providers, etc.

Tuesday, August 19, 1997

8:00 - 8:30 **Buffet Breakfast**

8:30 - 9:30 **Team Progress Reports**
The purpose of this session is to provide an opportunity for teams to share with program staff and other teams what they have accomplished to this point in the planning process and to discuss any particular problems or issues where they would like advice or assistance.

9:30 - 11:00 **Aligning Core Systems**
The purpose of this session is to review methods of funding programs and to consider new approaches to linking budgeting and finance systems to desired outcomes.
Mark Friedman, Fiscal Policy Studies Institute

11:00 - 4:30 **Team Work Time**
Teams will use this time to continue work on their action plans. Mr. Friedman will be available to consult with teams, if desired.

12:00 - 1:00 **Buffet Lunch Available outside Team Rooms**

4:30 - 6:00 **Team Flex Time**
Teams may use this time for recreation or for continued planning.

5:00 -5:30 **Institute Faculty/State Team Conveners' Meeting**

6:00 Buses leave hotel for dinner at Botanical Gardens

Wednesday, August 20, 1997

- 8:00 - 8:30 **Buffet Breakfast**
- 8:30 - 5:00 **Team Work Time**
Teams will use this time to continue work on their action plans. Individual teams can determine when they need to take breaks for recreation or relaxation. Plans should be complete by the end of the day, with details about what specific actions will be taken when you return to your respective states, complete with time lines and assignment of responsibility.
- 1:00 - 3:00 **Team Presentations to Institute Faculty**
Institute faculty will visit each team for a preliminary review of their action plans. This session is designed to give the teams some feedback so they can make necessary adjustments prior to the final presentations on Thursday.
- 5:30 - 6:00 **Institute Faculty/State Team Conveners' Meeting**
- 6:00 - 9:00 **Social Time and Awards Banquet**
This is a time for celebration and recognition of the teams and individual participants for their hard work and commitment to children and families.

Thursday, August 21, 1997

- 7:00 - 7:30 **Buffet Breakfast**
Participants should give their completed institute questionnaires to a member of the program staff during breakfast.
- 7:30 - 11:00 **State Teams Present Their Action Plans**
Each team will have 30 minutes to present the key points of their action plan and 30 minutes to respond to questions and get feedback from other participants and institute faculty. Short breaks will be taken between presentations.
- 11:00 - 12:00 **Eye on the Institute Focus Groups**
Participants will be assigned to focus groups for the purpose of providing additional feedback regarding the planning, design, content, and utility of the Institute.
- 12:00 **Adjournment**
Lunch will be available for those who have later flights.

POLICYMAKERS' SUMMER INSTITUTE EXAMPLE OF INSTITUTE AGENDA (LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION EMPHASIS)

State/Local Policymakers' Institute
The Sheraton Hotel
Burlington, Vermont
July 26-29, 1997

Overall Program Goal

To assist local policymakers and practitioners to improve educational, economic, and social outcomes for children and families that result in (1) increased academic achievement and well-being of children, especially children who are at risk, and (2) good state and local policies that guide the delivery of efficient and effective education and related services to children who are most at risk

Objectives

- To provide conceptual frameworks and practical examples that help community teams develop results-based service delivery systems for education and social services
- To help local community leaders, in collaboration with state policymakers, develop a plan that serves the unique needs of their communities
- To help teams enhance their skills, knowledge, and relationships to better support long-term reform in education and social service systems in ways that improve educational, economic, and social outcomes for children and families

Outcomes

Local teams will leave the Institute with an action plan that incorporates current research and theories about how best to improve educational, economic, and/or social outcomes for high-risk children and families.

Local teams will have mechanisms in place to gather evidence of improvements in educational, economic, and/or social outcomes for children and families within a year from when they participate in the program.

Local team members, along with state leaders, will have concrete examples of how service delivery systems and how state/local policies have been changed to better support educational, economic, and/or social outcomes for children and families within a year.

Local teams will have evidence of improvements in educational, economic, and/or social outcomes for children and families within two years from when they participate in the program.

Meeting Agenda

Friday, July 25, 1997

Missouri team members, program staff, and consultants arrive in Vermont.

Saturday, July 26, 1997

- 8:30 Missouri Team Leaves Hotel for City of Barre
- 9:00-12:00 Missouri Team Meeting at Barre City Elementary School
- 12:00-4:00 Missouri Team Joins Members of Vermont Team at Barre Festival
Lunch on your own at the food stands
- 4:00-6:00 Opening Session at Barre City Elementary School
Introduction to the Institute
- Goals and expectations of program
 - Introduction of participants & staff
 - Expectations of teams—what they want to accomplish
- 6:00-8:00 Social & Dinner at Barre Legion
- 8:00-9:00 Both Teams Return to Burlington

Sunday, July 27, 1997

- 7:30-8:30 Buffet Breakfast
- 8:30-10:00 General Session
The purpose of this session is to review various school reform initiatives and to discuss the key factors that lead to success. *René Gonzalez, Ph.D*
- 10:00-10:15 Break
- 10:15-12:30 Team Planning Time
Lunch served in team rooms @ 11:45
- 12:30-7:00 Group Social Activity & Dinner
(To be determined by Vermont team)
- 7:00-9:00 Team Planning Time

Monday, July 28, 1997

- 7:30-8:30 **Buffet Breakfast**
- 8:30-3:00 **Team Planning & Flex Time**
- 3:00-5:00 **Team Presentations**
Each team will present and receive feedback on their action plans.
- 6:00 **Celebration Dinner/Awards**

Tuesday, July 29, 1997

- 7:30-8:30 **Buffet Breakfast**
Give completed evaluation forms to program staff.
- 8:30-10:30 **Team Planning Time/Determine Next Steps**
Teams determine what actions need to be taken when they return home.
- 10:30-11:00 **Evaluations/Focus Groups**
Participants will be divided into small groups to debrief the Institute.
- 11:00-12:00 **General Session — Reflections from State Leaders**
The purpose of this session is to have state education and human service leaders reflect on the state's vision and goals for children and families and discuss how the local plans contribute to those goals.
Gary Stangler/Bob Bartman (MO) & Con Hogan/Marc Hull (VT)
- 12:00 **Box Lunches Available**

POLICYMAKERS' SUMMER INSTITUTE

EXAMPLE OF BRIEFING BOOK CONTENTS

(STATE-LEVEL COLLABORATION EMPHASIS)

Institute Goals, Objectives, Outcomes

Institute Agenda

List of Participants

Program Staff, Facilitators, Consultants

Framework and Tools for Planning

- Overview of the Planning Process
- Action Plan Outlines
- Team Work Plan
- Program Benchmarks
- Action Planning Worksheets
- Instructions for Presentation of Action Plans

Background Information on State A

Background Information on State B

Background Information on State C

Program Evaluation Tools

- Participant Questionnaire
- Focus Group Questions

Selected Readings — Collaboration/Capacity Building

Selected Readings — Education

Selected Readings—Social/Economic Support Systems

**POLICYMAKERS' SUMMER INSTITUTE
EXAMPLE OF SELECTED READINGS (1997)
(STATE-LEVEL COLLABORATION EMPHASIS)**

Collaboration/Capacity Building

- *Some Surprising Things About Collaboration—Knowing How People Connect Makes It Work Better.* Henry Mintzberg, Jan Jorgensen, Deborah Dougherty, Frances Westley. *Organizational Dynamics*. Spring 1996, pp. 60-71.
- *Getting to YES: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In.* Roger Fisher, William Ury, Bruce Patton. Audio-Tech Business Book Summaries.
- *Choosing A Common Language, First Words About Language Discipline.* Discussion Materials. Fiscal Policy Studies Institute.
- Introductory section to *Raising Our Future: Families, Schools, and Communities Joining Together.* Harvard Family Research Project, Heather B. Weiss, Director.
- “Educational Opportunity, House of Representatives.” August 1996. *The Tipping Point.* Malcolm Gladwell. *The New Yorker*. June 3, 1996.
- *Communities That Care.* Developmental Research and Programs. 1997.
 - “Risk and Protective Factor-Focused Prevention Using the Social Development Strategy”
 - Appendix A: “Risk Factor Indicator Index and Cross Reference”

Education

- *A Summary of Findings from Public Agenda’s Getting By: What American Teenagers Really Think About Their Schools.* 1997.
- *School Reform and Student Achievement.* Rene Gonzalez, Consultant, Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed At Risk, Johns Hopkins University.
- *Effective Methods: School District Strategies to Support School Change.* Robert E. Slavin. Johns Hopkins University
- *Effective Dropout Prevention and College Attendance Programs for Students Placed at Risk.* Olatokunbo S. Fashola, Robert E. Slavin. Johns Hopkins University. January 1997.
- *Summary of Research on Achievement Outcomes.* Robert E. Slavin, Nancy A. Madden, Barbara A. Wasik. Johns Hopkins University. 1996.
- *Academic Performance and School Success: Sources and Consequences.* J. David Hawkins. Social Development Research Group, University of Washington.

- *Reducing Violence Through the Schools*. J. David Hawkins (University of Washington), David P. Farrington (Cambridge University), Richard F. Catalano (University of Washington). August 1996.
- *A Policymaker's Guide to Standards-Led Assessment*. Robert L. Linn, Joan L. Herman. National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards and Student Testing. Education Commission of the States. February 1997.

Social/Economic Support Systems

- *Choosing A Common Language: First Words About Language Discipline*. Discussion Materials. Fiscal Policy Studies Institute.
- *Moving Toward Results: An Emerging Approach to Community Accountability for Child and Family Well-Being*. Mark Friedman.
- *Organizing by Outcomes: A Different Organization Chart for State/Local Partnerships to Improve Outcomes for Children and Families*. Mark Friedman. Fiscal Policy Studies Institute, Baltimore, Maryland. January 1997.
- *From Outcomes to Budgets: An Approach to Outcome Based Budgeting for Family and Children's Services*. Center for the Study of Social Policy. July 1995
- *A Strategy Map for Results-Based Budgeting: Moving from Theory to Practice*. Mark Friedman. The Finance Project. September 1996.

POLICYMAKERS' SUMMER INSTITUTE STATE TEAM FACILITATOR'S GUIDE (STATE-LEVEL COLLABORATION EMPHASIS)

Facilitator's Role Description

Facilitators for the Policymakers' Program provide support for the state teams that are selected to participate in the Summer Institute—an intensive five-day work and decision-making process to create an action agenda for change. Facilitators are assigned to a team in March and work with the team leader to assemble the team and to conduct several in-state meetings (March through July) to prepare the team for developing an action plan at the Institute. Facilitators continue their work with the team at the Institute in August, guiding the group process in the development and presentation of an action plan. Some follow-up work in the state after the Institute may be necessary. Approximate time commitment is 20 days.

Evaluation is an integral part of the Policymakers' Program. Facilitators will be evaluated by team members and program staff in terms of expected outcomes.

Responsibilities

Team facilitators are expected to accept these responsibilities:

1. Provide assistance to state team leader in developing a process for selection of the Institute team.
2. Provide assistance to state team leader in planning an appropriate number of in-state team meetings prior to the Institute.
3. Plan and facilitate appropriate team building activities at the team meetings.
4. Apply appropriate group process and planning procedures to help the team brainstorm ideas, use data, consider alternatives, and make decisions through consensus.
5. Provide support to the team and facilitate the planning process at the Summer Institute.
6. Maintain a journal to help document lessons learned.
7. Facilitate post-institute meetings if necessary and desired by the team.
8. Provide feedback to the Policymakers' Program staff on the team's progress.

Essential Knowledge, Skills, and Experience

Facilitators must have:

1. Excellent facilitation skills and knowledge of group-process procedures and techniques

2. Training and experience in facilitating mixed-role groups, including policymakers
3. Understanding of and experience in using strategic planning processes
4. Understanding of the policy-making process in the public sector
5. Knowledge of the education and human services systems
6. Excellent communication and organizational skills
7. Ability to commit necessary time, and flexibility to adapt to the team's schedule

Schedule of Activities and Responsibilities

January

- Attend staff meeting (usually third week—prior to winter meeting).
- Attend Policymakers' Program winter meeting (usually third weekend—Thursday through Sunday).

February

March

- Attend staff meeting or participate in conference call (usually first week) to help select institute teams. After selection, a facilitator is assigned to each team.
- Contact the state team leader and make arrangements to meet with the core team to review expectations, complete team selection process, and plan the pre-institute team meetings.

April

- Work with team leader and core team² to finalize agenda for first pre-institute retreat.
- Contact consultants who will be participating in the retreat.
- Complete Team Progress Report and send to Policymakers' program director.

May

- Attend staff meeting or participate in conference call (usually first week) to finalize agenda for summer institute.
- Facilitate first pre-institute retreat with state team.
- Get complete list of names, affiliations, addresses (mail and e-mail), phone and fax numbers of all team members.
- Send participant evaluations of retreat.
- Complete Team Progress Report.

² Core team is defined as the team that attended the January meeting (ideally, four legislators—two from each chamber, one each from education and human services committees; and two governor's policy advisors—education and human services).

June

- Facilitate second pre-institute meeting with state team.
- Finalize any program assignments for the Summer Institute.
- Submit Team Progress Report.

July

- Maintain contact with team leader to finalize the team's preparation for the Institute.
- Submit Team Progress Report.

August

- Attend staff meeting prior to the Summer Institute (usually third week).
- Greet team members when they arrive at the Summer Institute and develop the week's work plan.
- Work with team throughout the week to facilitate their planning process.

September

- Attend staff meeting (usually third week) to debrief Institute and begin planning for next year's program.
- Provide a summary of the "Lessons Learned" from your facilitation experience as part of the evaluation process.
- Contact state team leader to inquire about team's progress.

October

- Maintain contact with state team leader and provide assistance or advice, if requested.

November

- Maintain contact with state team leader and provide assistance or advice, if requested.

December

- Provide a brief report on the state team's progress in implementing the plan developed at the Institute.
- Work out arrangements for any continued facilitation with the state team.

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE TEAM LEADER

The team leader is typically a legislator, governor's policy advisor, or agency head who assumes the leadership responsibility of assembling the team and

making application to the Institute. This person or his/her designee is the primary liaison between the state and the Institute program staff. It is important for the facilitator to establish rapport and to define mutual expectations with the team leader during the first visit to the state. Some points that you may want to cover during the initial conversation:

- Explain the different roles you will assume as you work with the state team throughout the next several months—neutral facilitator, guide, mentor, prodder, devil’s advocate, cheerleader, information source, etc.
- Clarify the goals of the program and what is expected of the state team as they proceed with the process, i.e., a strong team that has a shared understanding and vision of what they want to accomplish before the Institute, a comprehensive plan of action by the time they leave the Institute, and a commitment to follow through in the months and years that follow.
- Learn more about the team leader’s expectations and how participation in this program will connect to other initiatives in the state.
- Find out who the major players are in the state in education and human services—those who will help the effort and those who could block it.
- Review team membership with the team leader to make sure the right people are part of the team. This is a very important point. Experience has shown that selection of the “right” team to participate in the Institute is one of the most critical factors in successful implementation of the state’s plan. Consider these criteria in helping the leader select the most appropriate team. Include:
 - Key state decision makers from education, human services, and appropriations
 - Leaders, both at the state level and at the local level, who have primary responsibility for carrying out policy decisions in those areas
 - Key influencers in the policy-making process
 - Leaders who can help build community capacity for redesigning the service delivery system
 - Direct service providers and “customers” of the education and human services systems.

Be clear on the role that each member of the team will play. For example, if you include local policymakers, service providers, and consumers, are they there to inform the state folks of the potential impact of the plan at the local level, or are they there to learn how to build capacity in their own communities?
- Be sure that the team reflects the cultural, racial, ethnic, and gender diversity of the state.
 - People serving in the following capacities should be considered for inclusion: legislative chairs from education, human services, appropriations committees; governor’s education, human services, and

budget advisors; education and/or human services commissioners or their representatives; state and/or local board of education members; representatives of county and/or municipal government; school superintendents and/or local human services agency heads; direct service providers, e.g., teacher, principal, social worker, school counselors; consumers, e.g., parents, students; other stakeholders or service providers, e.g., business representatives, corrections or legal services, and health departments

- Suggest the possibility of having a home team that is larger than the number of people who will attend the Institute. That allows for last-minute substitutions with people who are familiar with the work of the team, and there will be more people within the state who feel some ownership of the process and can help with implementation.

At the initial meeting with the team leader, you should also determine a schedule of in-state meetings with the team and develop a list of tasks that need to be accomplished by each of you prior to the next meeting.

Some final points to consider:

- Keep the lines of communication open.
- Be a good listener.
- Be flexible.
- Keep your sense of humor.

Team Building and Preparation for the Institute

One of the most difficult tasks in this process is helping a diverse group of individuals who are “unequal” in terms of positional authority, influence, knowledge, and skills become a team of “equals” in their abilities to contribute to the process and the eventual outcomes that they will achieve in their state.

That is why the pre-institute state team meetings are so critical to the team’s success. Experience has shown that teams which come to the Institute with a common understanding of each other and of what they want to accomplish make significantly more progress. At least two pre-institute meetings should be held within the state. Recommended agendas for those meetings are:

Session 1 — Team Retreat

Proposed Agenda Day 1 (Institute team only)

1. Provide overview of program goals and expectations.
2. David Grissmer’s report on student achievement and state policy.³
3. Develop team-building activities to enable team members to get to know each other and to understand their individual roles and potential contributions to the team effort.

³See Section 3 of Volume II: Implementation Tools.

4. Develop team guidelines for how they will work together and make decisions.

Day 2 (Include larger group of stakeholders with team.)

1. Harold Hodgkinson's report on the state demographics.⁴
2. Group process to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the current systems in the state.
3. Develop vision of where they want to go in the future.

Session 2 — Follow-Up Meeting for Team Only

(Six weeks before Institute)

Proposed Agenda

1. Reflect on vision that was drafted at last meeting and reach consensus on where they want to go. This will serve as the starting point for planning at the Institute.
2. Presentation from another state that is in the process of implementing a collaborative system of service delivery (e.g., Missouri, Iowa, Vermont, Utah).
3. Review institute agenda and develop work plan for the use of team time.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

The action plan that you and your state team develop should include the following:

- description of where you want to be
- description of where you are now
- priority goals
- strategies and actions
- benchmarks and indicators

We have included two approaches that can be used to develop your action plan. Ultimately, it is up to the team, with guidance from the facilitator, to decide how to develop a plan that will meet the state's specific needs.

The team should come to the Institute with a well-defined vision of the outcomes or results that they want for children and families in their state. They should have begun to gather data that will help them identify the current situation in their state. This will have been accomplished during and between the pre-institute meetings. Since it's important that there is consensus among the team members on where they want to go before they start

⁴ See Section D of Volume II: Implementation Tools.

planning how to get there, it may be wise to review that vision and make sure that it's shared and supported by all members of the team. Then, the team can move forward to determine specific goals, strategies, and actions.

To help guide the team members in developing the action plans, the chart entitled "Team Work Plan," provides the suggested purpose and emphasis for each Action Plan oriented module. It may be helpful to use the work plan chart to allocate the amount of time that the team should spend on each component of the plan.

The program benchmarks are presented in the next section. This is included as an example of some of the systems change levers that the team may want to consider as they develop strategies to implement changes in their state and determine how they will measure the impact of those changes. This is a very important step. Please make sure that the team devotes time to determining benchmarks and indicators. They are keys to helping the team monitor its progress. They also will be used by program staff for monitoring the results of the program.

Following the benchmarks are work sheets that may be helpful in developing the plan.

Action Plan Outline — Version 1

- I. **Your Vision for Education and Human Services** (What you want it to be, not what it is now. Describe your benchmarks or successful results.)
 - What are the outcomes for children and families?
 - What does the state support system look like?
 - What does the community support system look like?
 - How does state policy allow for differences among communities?
- II. **Your Current Reality** (What the system looks like now.)
 - To what extent are communities in the state positioned to empower families and local support systems to improve outcomes for children?
 - How are they held accountable?
 - What impact does state policy have on local support systems?
 - What are the compelling problems that suggest you need to change the state support system?
 - Are communities ready to move forward? How can you assist them?
- III. **Priority Goal(s)** (What you want to accomplish in order to move toward your vision.)
 - What results do you want to achieve in the next three to five years?
 - What evidence or milestones (indicators) do you need to see in order to know that you are making progress?

- What can you realistically expect to accomplish in the short term (six months to two years)?
- How will the achievement of your short-term goals help you realize your long-term vision?

IV. **Strategies and Actions** (What you are going to do to accomplish your goals.)

- What do states and communities need to do in order to reach the desired outcomes for children and families?
- What specific actions must you take to overcome identified barriers and move toward your vision?
- Who is responsible for taking action?
- What is your timeline for completing the actions?

Action Plan Outline — Version 2

I. **Identify the Issues**

- What are the issues and factors that are likely to affect the success or failure of our education and human services systems in the next five years?

II. **Refine Vision**

- What is (are) the current vision(s)/mission(s) of our education and human services systems?
- How should it (they) be modified?

III. **Refine Stakeholders**

- Who are our key stakeholders?
- What are their goals and strategies that we need to support?
- What are their measures of success?

IV. **Alternative Strategies**

- What strategies might we use to support our key stakeholders?

V. **Future Scenarios**

- What are three likely scenarios of the future against which our strategies must be strong? (e.g., state economic conditions, federal policies, community opposition/support for reform)

VI. **Select Goals and Strategies**

- Given the above analyses, what should our goals and strategies be for the coming year?

VII. Select Measures of Success

- What are the key variables we need to monitor to determine our success?
- What patterns of change do we anticipate on these variables during the year?

B

TEAM WORK PLAN

PLANNING STEPS

Where we want to be

- Determine desired benchmarks.
- Describe ideal support system to accomplish results.

Where we are now

- Develop team's understanding of the current system in state and local communities.
- Describe strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

Establish goals

- Consider likely scenarios of the future.
- Determine what we want to accomplish in next six months to five years.
- Determine criteria for measuring progress on goals.

Develop strategies

- Determine how we will achieve goals.
- Identify potential barriers and options to overcome.

Develop communications plan

- Identify key stakeholders.
- Determine actions to build support among stakeholders.

Action steps

- Determine specific actions to be taken when we go back home.
- Determine timelines.
- Assign responsibility.

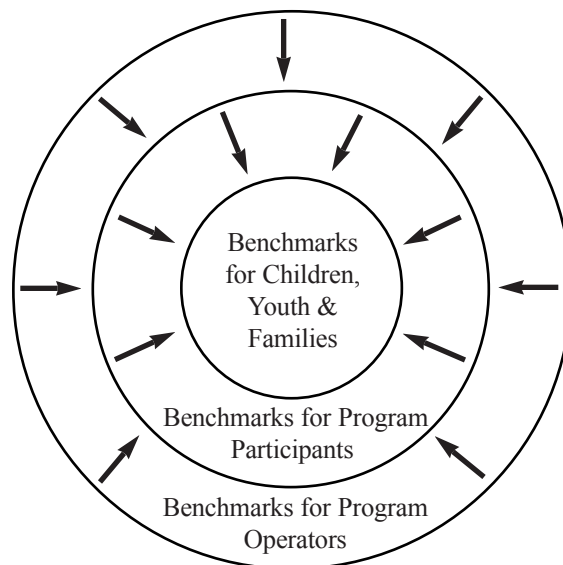
Program Benchmarks

We use the term “benchmark” to mean “descriptor of successful actions or results.” For this program it is necessary to have three types of benchmarks:

- benchmarks that define successful actions on the part of **program operators**
- benchmarks that define successful results for **children and families**
- benchmarks that define successful actions on the part of **program participants**

A key criterion of any benchmark for program operators and participants is that it can be reasonably linked to the benchmarks for children/students and families. This relationship is depicted below:

Relationships Among Types of Benchmarks



Using this example as a guide, we first identify the benchmarks for children and families since it is toward this set of outcomes that the program is ultimately directed.

Benchmarks for Children and Families

Although each state has a different set of outcomes for children and families as the focus of its work, these outcomes tend to fall in one or more of five areas:

- a safe environment for children
- children coming to school ready to learn
- students’ learning with improved student achievement
- healthy families
- healthy and productive communities

States vary considerably in how clearly they have identified their outcomes for children and families. Based on information collected, we urge that participants first articulate clearly their benchmarks so that the changes they make in the design of their systems can be logically (if not yet empirically) shown to support accomplishment of these benchmarks by children and families.

Once states have their children and family benchmarks, it is also essential that they identify a set of indicators that their full range of stakeholders will accept as evidence that the benchmarks have been accomplished or satisfactory progress is being made toward the benchmarks. All stakeholders may not accept all indicators, but all stakeholders should find within the set ones that are satisfactory to them. It may be necessary to have several sets of indicators with some exemplifying early stages of progress and others showing full, or nearly full, accomplishment of the benchmark.

Benchmarks for Program Participants

Working back from the outcomes for children and families, we propose that the program emphasize the following benchmark areas for the program participants. That is, these are the “levers for leaders” to include in their action plans to modify their social systems to better support the outcomes for children and families.

- **Conceptual framework** — Leaders develop and articulate a conceptual framework for change that emphasizes features such as a focus on results for children and families, connections or collaboration, and ongoing learning by all participants.
- **Collaboration** — Leaders, across social systems, model collaboration when building their plans and encouraging/requiring collaboration at other points throughout the system.
- **Systems thinking and action**—Leaders understand and consciously take advantage of the interconnections and relationships within and across systems to create ripple effects that support the desired results for children and families.
- **Communications**—Leaders build into their plans communication strategies that are cross-role and interactive (not primarily one-way delivery of information) and designed to build ownership and commitment among the full range of stakeholders.
- **Community building** — Leaders develop plans that emphasize helping communities build their capacities for self-determination and responsibility rather than emphasizing delivery of services.
- **Finance reallocation**—Leaders focus on ways to redesign the way finances are allocated from categorical programs and services to results-oriented budgeting and allocations that may need to cut across agencies or programs.

- **Human resource development** — Leaders include ways to ensure that people at all levels of the social systems are given opportunities to develop an understanding of the new conceptual framework and apply that understanding to redesigning their roles and responsibilities.
- **Data use**—Leaders build into their plans ways to gather, present, and use data both to monitor achievement of results for children/students and families and to make decisions based on systemic thinking and action.
- **Policy** — Leaders identify and use mandates, incentive policies, and other types of policies to restructure their systems to be congruent with their new conceptual framework.

We recommend that these benchmark areas serve as a starting point for participants to consider as they develop their action plans. They will need to select benchmark areas that they believe the people that are involved are most committed to use and can logically and politically be related to outcomes for children and families.

If participants are to choose wisely from among these (and others), it will be important that the levers are well-understood and that participants have an understanding of how the levers may have differential appeal and effectiveness for different actions in the system. It will be necessary for the program to ensure that participants have an opportunity to gain this understanding. For example, it may be useful to update the continuum of system change⁵ used in the pre-institute meetings and accompanying materials to focus specifically on this set of benchmarks.

Benchmarks for Program Operators

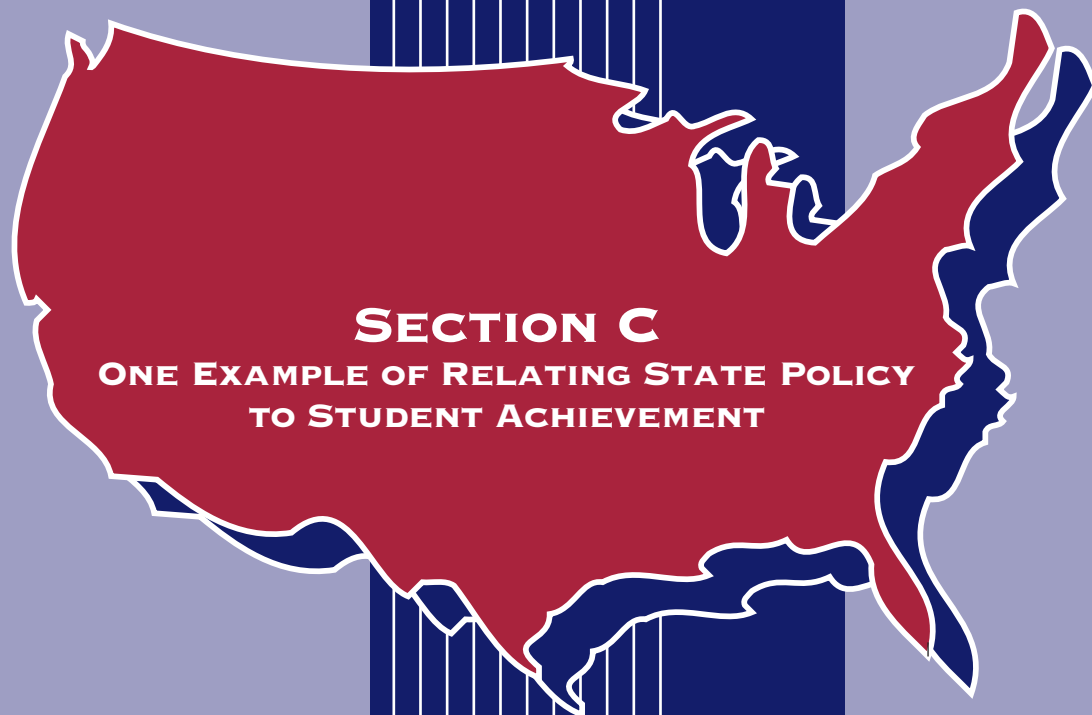
The purpose of the benchmarks for program operators is to guide them in what they do to support participants as they leverage their systems for better outcomes for children and families. Based on the reports of participants about what they found to be most useful from the program, the program is currently emphasizing the following features:

- connections among leaders within the state
- new conceptual frameworks
- action plans
- practical examples
- links from state work to local results

Program developers are designing the program to ensure that the five features are addressed in a way that helps institute teams choose the levers that are most likely to support desired outcomes for children and families. The program designers are becoming increasingly explicit about how these benchmarks link to outcomes for children and families, and identifying indicators that a benchmark is achieved or is progressing toward being achieved. These indicators are used to design the evaluation for the program.

⁵ See Section E of Volume II: Implementation Tools.

B



SECTION C

**ONE EXAMPLE OF RELATING STATE POLICY
TO STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

C

Using Data to Evaluate and Improve the Performance of the Maine Education and Human Resource System

A Preliminary Analysis*

Prepared by
David Grissmer, Stephanie Williamson
RAND
Washington, DC

Prepared for
The Danforth Foundation
St. Louis, MO

* The results in this paper with respect to regional and state test scores are preliminary and should not be quoted until peer review is completed. Final results for state scores are scheduled to be published by RAND in Spring, 1998. The regional score analysis will be included as chapters in two books to be published in summer, 1998. The first is *The Black-White Test Score Gap*, eds. Christopher Jencks and Meredith Phillips, Brooking Institution, Washington D.C. The second is *The Rising Curve*, ed., Ulric Neisser, American Psychological Association, Washington D.C.

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C

SUMMARY

Maine—like all other states—seeks to determine the effects of its spending on education and social welfare programs on its children and families. Do higher levels of spending on education bring higher performance? Which type of spending is most efficient and effective? Are family support programs more effective than increased education spending? Are early intervention programs more effective than later remedial programs? Is the well-being of our children declining due to changing families? Are children performing at lower levels today than in previous years? Answering these and similar questions is at the center of efforts to improve our schools, our families, and our children’s well-being through public policy and programs.

Such questions have challenged researchers for decades and little consensus was achieved about answers. Such questions are difficult to answer because little statistically valid data has been collected directed toward answering such questions. Separating out the effects due to families and public policies and programs is difficult and appropriate cost data to link the purpose of spending and the desired effects is usually not available. The absence of solid research findings has meant that public perceptions about the effects of educational and social welfare spending has been left to advocacy groups and the press. Table 1 shows several popular perceptions about these issues.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• THE ACHIEVEMENT SCORES OF YOUTH ARE DECLINING• AMERICAN FAMILIES AND SCHOOLS ARE DETERIORATING• MASSIVE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES HAVE BEEN PROVIDED TO THE SCHOOLS THAT SHOULD HAVE RAISED TEST SCORES• PROVIDING EVEN MORE MONEY FOR SCHOOLS IS CLEARLY A WASTE OF RESOURCES: WE NEED TO RESTRUCTURE THE WHOLE SYSTEM TO MAKE IMPROVEMENTS• SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS (INCLUDING EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROGRAMS) DIRECTED TOWARD LOW INCOME OR MINORITY FAMILIES HAVE FAILED— AND EVEN BEEN COUNTERPRODUCTIVE—TO THEIR CHILDREN’S WELL-BEING AND SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT• K-12 SCHOOLS IN NORTHERN STATES ARE BETTER THAN SCHOOLS IN SOUTHERN STATES

These public perceptions about the effectiveness of educational and social welfare spending is generally neutral to negative. It is these perceptions that are partially fueling the taxpayer revolt against public education and social welfare spending and the demand for fundamental restructuring. Taxpayer resistance to increased spending may be appropriate if their perceptions are correct. However, if this resistance is based on misperceptions, the lack of support can become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Fortunately, much better data is becoming available to analyze such issues and new analytical techniques hold promise of better measurements of the effects of educational and social welfare spending. More recent research using new data and techniques may be converging to results which challenge the conventional wisdom of deteriorating families, deteriorating student achievement and schools, and the ineffectiveness of public investment in education and social welfare programs.

The results of some of this new research is presented in this report. The research shows that student achievement levels of American students have been increasing over the last 20-25 years for all racial/ethnic groups, but much larger gains have been registered by minority groups. Moreover, the research shows that American families—rather than deteriorating—are generally better able to support student achievement today than 20 years ago. In fact, the changes that have taken place in the families over the last 20 years would be expected to boost achievement scores, and these changes account for much of the gains by white students. However, the very large gains for minority students must be attributed to factors outside the family—probably increased investment in education, equal opportunity educational programs, and increased social spending.

Recent research also shows that the additional resources provided to schools to achieve higher scores has been less than one-third as large as indicated by simple per-pupil expenditure measures (adjusted by the Consumer Price Index). In addition, this research shows that most of the additional funds were directed in a way that would be expected to benefit minority students. Experimental evidence also shows that lower class sizes in early grades boosts achievement scores—with much higher gains being registered by minority students due to lower class sizes. Some new evidence also shows the effects of desegregation to be positive on minority achievement. So a consistent story appears to be emerging that achievement gains were seen among groups where resources and policies were targeted—but further research is needed on these topics.

Each state takes different approaches to its educational and human resource policies. So states may serve as an ideal unit to try and measure the effectiveness of different policies. However, despite wide publicity about the state of our children and families, there are few direct indicators of the well-being of children or youth that have been collected consistently from representative state samples. The measures that are collected on health, educational attainment, labor market status and deviant behavior, tend to focus more on teens than younger children. Thus, we have measures of suicide rates, teen pregnancy, sexual behavior, rates of incarceration, drug and alcohol usage, involvement with juvenile justice system, high school completion, college entrance and completion, and early labor force behavior. Direct measures of the well-being of younger children tend either to be collected at birth (such as low birth weight) or collected indirectly by interviewing parents (for example, health status).

Currently the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) test scores given in fourth and eighth grade to students in over 40 states provides

perhaps the best direct comparative measure of the status of children among states. Scores on achievement tests reflect family characteristics and environment, the quality of schools and communities, the level of educational and social investment in children and families and social and educational policies governing access to schools, jobs, and health care. It is certainly desirable to collect many more measures of children’s well-being, but a single test-score measure does reflect much about the family, school, and community environment of children and overall investment in children.

However, the raw NAEP scores have little meaning in evaluating educational policies and social welfare programs—and caution should be exercised in attaching any significance to the raw scores. However, utilizing techniques to eliminate the differences attributable to different demographics and family characteristics can yield measures comparable to other states about the effectiveness of educational and social welfare policies. Recent analysis of comparable state NAEP tests shows some surprising initial findings about the relative effectiveness of educational and human resource policies in states.

The raw unadjusted test scores show traditional patterns of high scores for northern states and low scores for southern states. However, these results primarily reflect the different demographic mix and family characteristics of students within states. When these differences are taken into account, and a measure of the “value added” due to educational and social service policies is estimated, then some southern states rank very high and some northern states rank very low. The states that have policies and programs that add the most value to achievement scores tend to be those with smaller class size, smaller school size, more stable population, and a greater proportion of children in pre-school programs.

Based on our preliminary analysis of demographics and family characteristics alone, we find that Maine NAEP test scores would be expected to be approximately 12th in the nation. However, the actual scores on the NAEP tests show Maine to rank much higher on all four tests given to date. Thus, the performance of the Maine educational and human resource system ranks much higher on measures of “value added” than on raw test score rankings. Maine ranks first in value-added measures among states on two tests, third on another, and seventh on the fourth test. Maine’s high rankings partly reflects its lower class sizes. Other factors, yet undiscovered, are probably also involved in Maine’s performance. For instance, we have not yet tested the effects of social welfare policies for families and children. Further analysis of the NAEP scores may identify some of these factors.

Another valuable analysis would utilize the statewide tests given in Maine—utilizing similar techniques—to determine to what extent differences in scores among school districts are attributable to demographics/families or to different policies and programs in each district. Such analysis can reveal the effects of larger and smaller class sizes, increased levels of spending, and effects of other specific educational policies in districts.

Maine should also explore early retirement offers to teachers in order to generate funds for other programs. A better analysis of this problem can be

done utilizing the Schools and Staffing Surveys done by the Department of Education in 1986, 1991, and 1994. The data includes large representative samples of teachers from each state and contains a wide range of data on teaching conditions, salaries, attitudes, student behavior, and propensity to stay in teaching. The survey also contains a follow-up after two years to track teachers who left teaching or changed states or school districts. Such data could be used to study Maine teachers in some detail and better understand teacher retirement patterns.

BACKGROUND

We began research about four years ago to determine why achievement scores were apparently declining despite massive real increases in educational spending. Our original hypothesis was that the overlooked factor was the apparent deterioration in the American family. We hypothesized that test scores would be expected to decline due to changes in the family—and that additional educational spending was preventing an even steeper decline that would be expected from family changes.

Almost all our information about these topics was gleaned from the press—since we had done no in-depth review of research in this area of education research. However, as we read the educational and sociological literature about schools and families we discovered many similar conclusions with little solid research evidence. It was not only the press, but also much of the social science research community which believed the story of deteriorating schools and families despite massive investments in education and social programs. Some even suggested that investments in social programs were counterproductive to minority children’s well-being. A final perception from the press and literature was that generally northern states provided better K-12 education than southern states.

Four years ago we would probably have generally agreed with most of the statements in Table 1, which I think are still widely believed by the American people. Today we think the best research evidence indicates that each statement is wrong, and that a much more coherent—and positive—picture is emerging of what has taken place in American schools and families over the last 25 years, and whether governmental investment and intervention has been effective in improving the well-being of children.

Some of the research evidence has come from our work, and some from that of others. I want to briefly go over that research this morning.

TABLE 1
COMMON PERCEPTIONS ABOUT AMERICAN EDUCATION AND FAMILIES AND THE EFFECTS OF PUBLIC INVESTMENT AND PROGRAMS

- THE ACHIEVEMENT SCORES OF YOUTH ARE DECLINING
- AMERICAN FAMILIES AND SCHOOLS ARE DETERIORATING
- MASSIVE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES HAVE BEEN PROVIDED TO THE SCHOOLS THAT SHOULD HAVE RAISED TEST SCORES
- PROVIDING EVEN MORE MONEY FOR SCHOOLS IS CLEARLY A WASTE OF RESOURCES: WE NEED TO RESTRUCTURE THE WHOLE SYSTEM TO MAKE IMPROVEMENTS
- SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS (INCLUDING EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROGRAMS) DIRECTED TOWARD LOW INCOME OR MINORITY FAMILIES HAVE FAILED— AND EVEN BEEN COUNTERPRODUCTIVE—TO THEIR CHILDREN’S WELL-BEING AND SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT
- K-12 SCHOOLS IN NORTHERN STATES ARE BETTER THAN SCHOOLS IN SOUTHERN STATES

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EVALUATING THE LAST 25 YEARS

The last 25 years of American educational and social policy have been largely directed at changing the environment for disadvantaged children and families. As such, this period represents a major “experiment” in determining whether changing environmental influences through governmental policy can affect the well-being and performance of children perceived to be at risk of educational failure. There exists a widespread perception that this experiment was a failure—and even produced counterproductive results (Herrnstein and Murray, 1995). This has led to attempts to both scale back and restructure many of these programs.

Trying to sort out the relative contributions of families, schools, and social and educational policies and programs to student achievement over the last 25 years is a complex exercise for several reasons. Explaining trends is difficult because several factors perceived to affect student achievement have all changed dramatically: the family environment, demographic mix of students, school quality, public policies directed toward providing equal educational opportunity, and public investment in schools and social programs. Second, assessing the effect of public policies and investment is problematic partly because empirical evidence indicates that family and demographic changes probably have the largest effects on test scores; thus, family/demographic effects on student achievement need to be taken into account before making assessments of the effect of public policies and investment. Nonetheless, unless we understand how our families and schools have changed, the impact of these changes on student performance, and whether public policies and investment make a difference, we cannot hope to provide critical answers to some of the most important public policy questions affecting the future of our society.

Despite wide publicity about the state of our children and families, there are few direct indicators of the well-being of children or youth that have been collected consistently from nationally representative samples over the last 25 years. The measures that are collected on health, educational attainment, labor market status, and deviant behavior, tend to focus more on teens than younger children. Thus, we have measures of suicide rates, teen pregnancy, sexual behavior, rates of incarceration, drug and alcohol usage, involvement with juvenile justice system, high school completion, college entrance and completion, and early labor force behavior. Direct measures of the well-being of younger children tend either to be collected at birth (such as low birth weight) or collected indirectly by interviewing parents (for example, health status).

The status of children tends often to be inferred indirectly from the characteristics of the families and communities in which they live. Thus, concerns are often expressed about what are perceived to be negative changes in family characteristics because of their likely effect on the well-being of children. The press and the public tend to focus on such trends as decrease in income, and higher numbers of single parent families, working mothers, and births to

teen mothers and/or out of wedlock births. In the general rush to deliver bad news, other important, but less publicized, family changes such as better educated parents and smaller families tend to be largely ignored or forgotten.

Perhaps the best direct measure of the status of children is the test administered by the Department of Education to nationally representative samples of 9-, 13-, and 17-year-old students. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) tests have been given to children in reading, mathematics, and science approximately every 2-4 years between 1971 and 1994, with consistent items since 1971. Indicators on race are available since 1971, on race/ethnicity since 1975.

Scores on achievement tests reflect family characteristics and environment, the quality of schools and communities, the level of educational and social investment in children and families, and social and educational policies governing access to schools, jobs, and health care. Cross-sectional studies of student achievement show strong associations between family characteristics and higher test scores. For example, children in households with high parental educational attainment and income tend to score higher on tests. Other characteristics that have a positive effect are smaller family size and older age of mother at birth of the child, and a better and more stimulating home environment (which in itself is a product of many of the previously mentioned factors). While achievement scores have been associated with characteristics of families, schools, communities, and public policies, the specific mechanisms through which these characteristics work to foster higher achievement is still somewhat elusive. These so-called proximal processes¹ range from theories of how different environments can result in more or less permanent differences in brain developmental patterns or differences in emotional development to simple theories of different exposure, access, and learning opportunities. Until these mechanisms are more precisely identified, research on student achievement will lack a key element that would allow us to identify and implement effective and efficient social and educational policies aimed at increasing achievement.

An important question regarding trends in test scores is their permanence. Evidence indicates that some interventions, while effective in the short- and near-term, tend to be less so in the long-run.² Indeed, the research seems to indicate that it is easier to achieve long-term changes in other outcomes (such as high school completion, labor force participation, no criminal involvement) than in achievement scores.³ Thus, it is important to determine whether gains in scores are permanent or temporary.

The NAEP scores offer some important evidence on this question because they encompass three groups of children of different ages. Unfortunately, the associated data collected along with the scores are inadequate for analyzing reasons for changes in scores. Ideally, one would like to have, for each child, measures of family characteristics and home environments as well as school and community characteristics. The NAEP is quite

¹ See Brofenbrenner and Ceci, 1994.

² See Mosteller, Winter 1995.

³ See Mosteller, Winter 1995.

limited in the measures it collects.⁴ As a result, while the NAEP scores have been extensively utilized in research in assessment, they have been less often used to study broad policy issues concerning the well-being of children, the quality of schools, or the effectiveness of educational and social investments and policies.

This paper uses the NAEP reading and mathematics scores from 1971 to 1992 to analyze:

- whether significant changes have occurred over time for any racial/ethnic group;
- whether these trends hold for both younger and older children; and,
- whether these trends show regional differences.

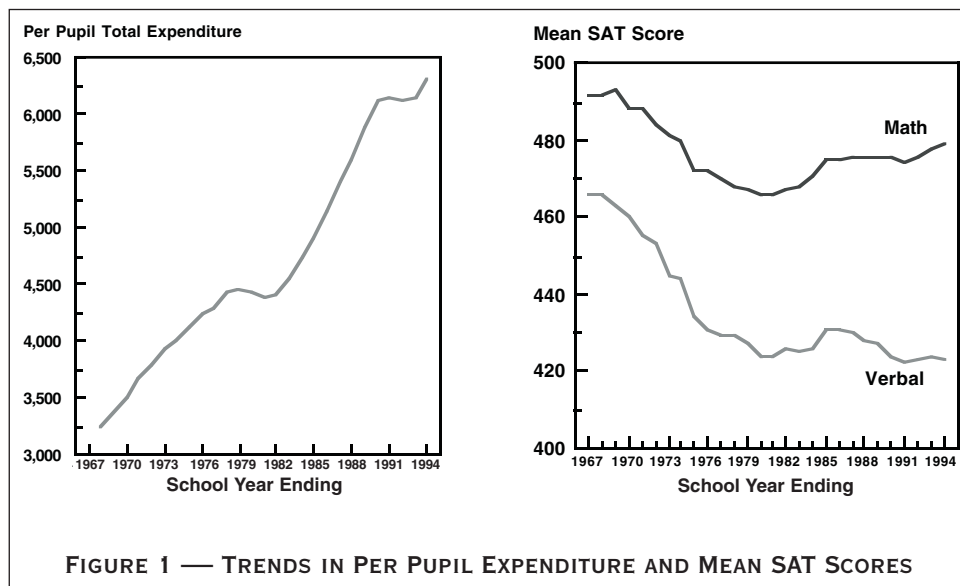
We then investigate several possible reasons for the changing trends in national scores. We examine the role of desegregation policies and smaller class sizes in explaining regional trends by race. These latter results are fairly preliminary and represent a first cut at analyzing and explaining regional trends.

This work is part of an ongoing effort to use the NAEP scores to address broader social and educational policy issues concerning children and youth. While the NAEP scores and their associated data have severe limitations, analyses of these scores is important because they offer perhaps the best broad measures of the social, economic, and educational environments in which our children are being raised. Without such efforts to sort out trends in important aspects of children's well-being, and family, community, and school environments, we may fail to understand or measure the effectiveness of our social and educational policies and programs over the last 25 years.

MISPERCEPTIONS ABOUT TRENDS IN ACHIEVEMENT SCORES AND EDUCATIONAL FUNDING

The data presented in Figure 1 has been largely responsible for the national perception that the condition of K-12 education in the United States is in serious decline. First, the data shows that overall per-pupil spending—adjusted by the Consumer Price Index (CPI)—has risen dramatically in the last 25 years. In 1992-1993, the average per-pupil expenditure was about \$5,600, which is almost twice as much as was spent in the 1960s in real terms as measured by the CPI. Second, Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) mathematics and verbal scores have declined over the past several decades. Even though the mathematics SAT scores have rebounded in recent years, the nation's average SAT scores remain markedly below those of 25 years ago.

⁴ See Berends and Koretz, 1996.



Because educational spending has increased and SAT scores have declined, the perception is that the nation has received a very poor return on its educational investment. Moreover, this data has partially fueled the tax revolt and the conclusion that further increases in educational spending is a waste of resources. This has led many to conclude that nothing short of fundamental changes are needed to produce improvement in our educational system. Even though these indicators have had a significant impact on the perceptions about the state of education in this country, they are simply wrong.

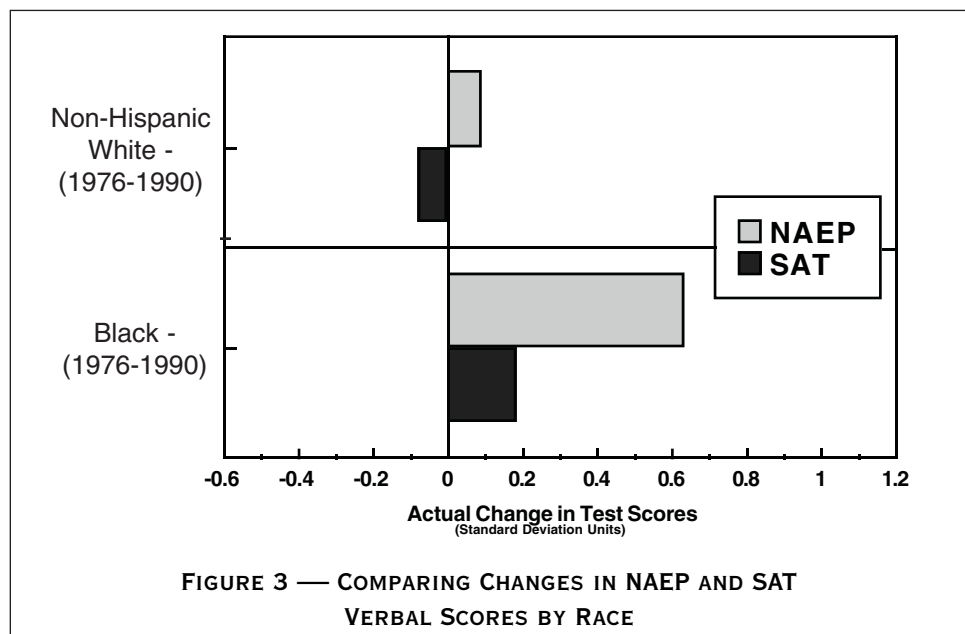
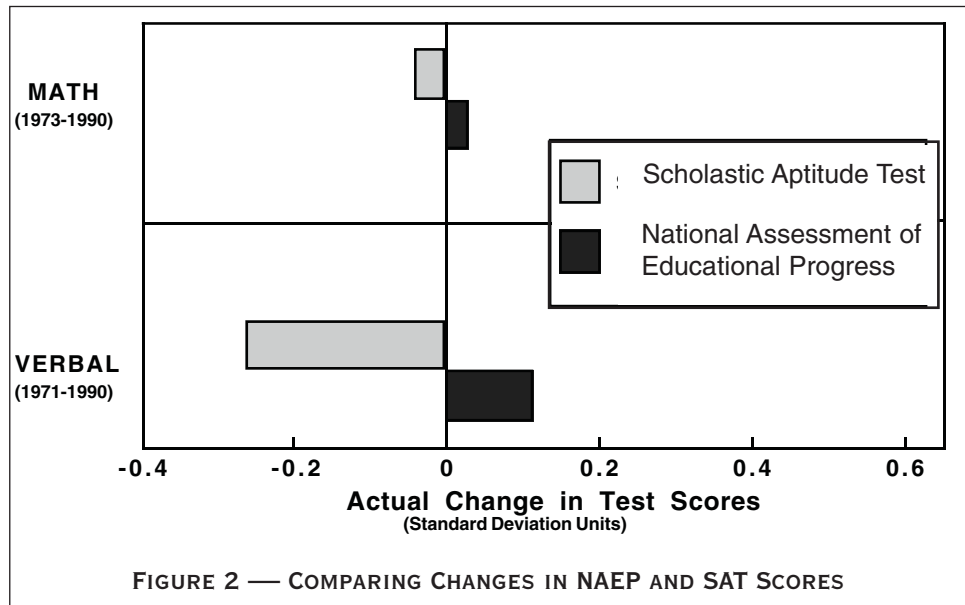
SAT vs. NAEP Scores

Figure 2 compares the change in the SAT score with the change in the NAEP scores for 17-year-olds over similar time periods. The two tests show conflicting results for verbal scores, with the SAT scores showing a decline of nearly 0.3 of a standard deviation while the NAEP shows a gain of about 0.1 of a standard deviation. The mathematics trends are in closer agreement but still show a difference of about 0.1 of a standard deviation. Figures 3 and 4 show comparisons of NAEP 17-year-olds and SAT verbal and mathematics scores for black and non-Hispanic white students.⁵ The data show that there is substantial disagreement between the NAEP and the SAT over the size of overall and black score gains. Which scores, then, should be used for tracking student achievement trends over the last 25 years?

Analyses of a wider set of test score measures that have more statistically reliable samples than the SAT leave little doubt that test scores of representative samples of American youth probably declined during the 1960s and somewhat into the 1970s, but overall have not declined and probably increased over the last 20 years (Koretz, 1986, 1987, 1992; Linn and

⁵ The comparisons are between 1976 and 1990 because SAT scores by ethnic group are not available prior to the 1976 test. Also the Hispanic scores are given separately by country of origin and may not be comparable over time, so Hispanic comparisons have been excluded.

Dunbar, 1990). In addition to the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) of 9-, 13-, and 17-year-old students, the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills and the norming tests for the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Tests show higher scores (Linn and Dunbar, 1990). This latter test is administered by the College Board to a nationally drawn sample at approximate six-year intervals, and the results show no evidence of declining test scores.



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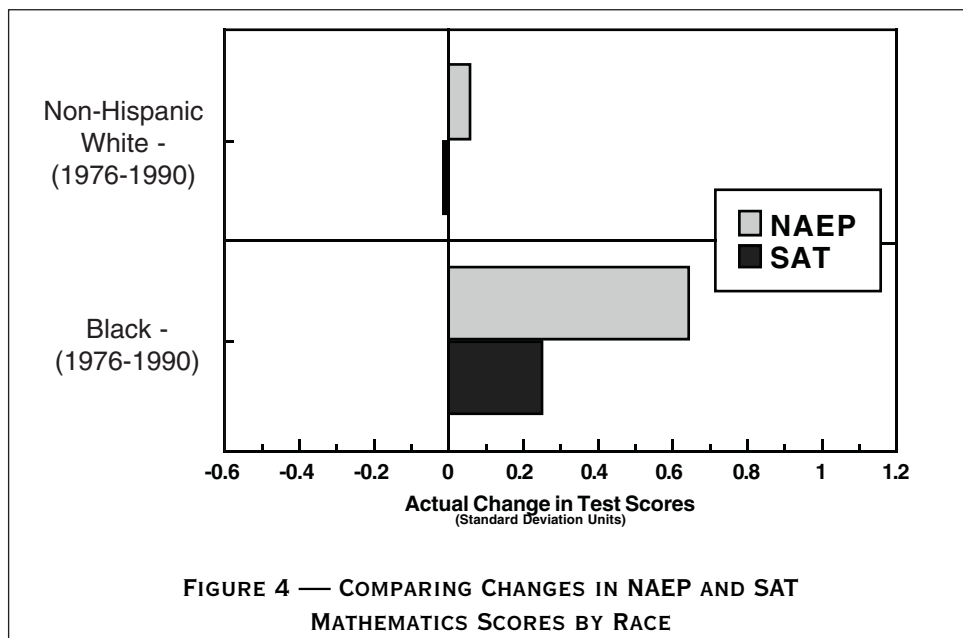


FIGURE 4 — COMPARING CHANGES IN NAEP AND SAT MATHEMATICS SCORES BY RACE

Problems with the SAT Tests for Monitoring Trends

The SAT trends are misleading as indicators of achievement trends for American youth for three reasons. The first is that the sample of youth taking the test is not selected by the College Board to represent any particular sample of U.S. youth. Rather, the SAT sample is self-selected, meaning that whoever applies to take the SAT test determines the sample for that year. As a result, each year the sample changes in size and composition. The size and composition have changed markedly over time and primarily reflect the increasing proportion of seniors wanting to apply to and enter college. In general, the effect of changing sample size and composition has been a downward bias in test score trends. However, the size of this selection bias cannot be accurately estimated since the College Board does not collect several important control variables that could be used to estimate year-to-year corrections.

The shifting size and composition of the SAT population is significant. In 1967 about 30 percent of high school seniors took the test; by 1992, this proportion had increased to 40 percent. Researchers believe that this increasing proportion may account for part of the decline in test scores during the late 1960s and early 1970s since the additional students taking the tests generally have come from a lower achieving population (Rock, 1987; Murray and Herrnstein, 1992). However, the effect of changing size since the early 1970s is more uncertain.

In addition to changing sample size, the composition of the test population has changed, with increasing proportions being minorities and women. Minorities—on average—score lower on achievement tests; women have significantly different patterns in verbal and mathematics scores than men. Changes in year-to-year SAT scores can reflect changing sample size and changing sample composition as well as real changes in student achievement,

and it is not possible to separate these effects. Thus, changes in SAT scores should not be used to measure achievement trends.

While the bias in the SAT due to self-selection has been the most publicized and studied, the SAT scores are subject to an even more potentially serious bias. The SAT is taken by only about 40 percent of high school seniors—those who plan on applying to college. Since other tests have shown that the primary gains in achievement over the last 20 years has probably occurred among lower scoring and minority students (Linn and Dunbar, 1990; Johnson and Allen, 1992), the SAT probably misses those students that have registered the largest score gains. The combined effect of self-selection and failure to include these lower scoring students—both of which downwardly bias the SAT scores—makes the SAT trends highly misleading indicators of trends in achievement among American students.

SAT Scores and Public Opinion

Despite convincing analytical evidence of the SAT's inherent downward bias, public opinion continues to rely on the SAT scores. However, this may not be as puzzling as it first appears. Theories regarding how people make inferences concerning statistical data help explain why an impression of declining test scores might develop and persist. For example, Nisbett and Ross (1980) review evidence showing that people make inferential judgments from data that are more salient, vivid, emotionally interesting, and frequently reported than from data that are more statistically accurate, but not as widely reported.

Since the SAT tests have been taken by one-third to one-half of American students annually for over 30 years and the results are quite critical to the college admissions process, these tests have much greater exposure, and leave vivid impressions on students and parents alike. They are often reported several times a year in different forms—national results, state results, school district, and school results. In addition, local school scores are often used as a basis for judging school quality, desirability, and even real estate values.

In contrast, the NAEP tests, that provide a more statistically accurate picture of test score trends, are taken approximately every four years by small samples of American students, and have virtually no impact on the lives of individual students who take them. Thus, it is not surprising that people tend to give more weight to the SAT results, rather than the NAEP scores.

Research also indicates that mixed evidence—for example, evidence that NAEP scores are moving in an opposite direction from the SAT scores—often results in stronger, not weaker trust in the originally held belief (Nisbett and Ross, 1980). This is partly because people tend to select and read information that agrees with prior expectations. As such, the more frequently reported SAT will tend to reinforce people's beliefs, while the less frequently reported NAEP scores might easily be dismissed. In addition, the understanding required to make judgments about the statistical validity of samples

is not widespread. Thus, despite their superior sampling procedures, the NAEP or similar tests simply will not be used by most people to make judgments concerning test score trends as long as SAT scores are available.

The potential damage from public opinions based on SAT performance is exacerbated if individuals believe that lower scores reflect the declining quality of schools. Nisbett and Ross (1980) also suggest that such naive inferences are consistent with evidence about how people form such inferences. In particular, people have strong tendencies toward “single cause” explanations and tend to choose those that resemble the effect. Thus, the commonly held association between schools and test scores would lead to naive judgments such as declining test scores being the result of declining school quality. Actually, studies of achievement repeatedly show that family and demographic characteristics have stronger effects on scores than differences in schools or teachers (Coleman, et al., 1966, Coleman and Hoffer, 1987; Gamoran, 1987). Variables measuring school, teacher, or community characteristics are nearly always far weaker and more inconsistent in explaining the variance in test scores than are demographic or family factors. Unfortunately, the SAT tests do not collect essential family characteristics needed to account for their effects. Since they cannot account for changing demographic and family characteristics, changes in SAT scores can provide no sound evidence concerning the quality of American education.

While the SAT test might provide useful information concerning an individual student’s college performance, any reporting of aggregated unadjusted scores across schools, districts, states, or the nation appears to not only serve no useful public purpose, but contributes to misleading impressions about schools and students. I believe that the press should not give the SAT scores undeserved credibility by routinely reporting their results. I also believe that the College Board should consider terminating the publication of unadjusted aggregated SAT scores to serve the public interest by removing these misleading data that are so influential in shaping public opinion.

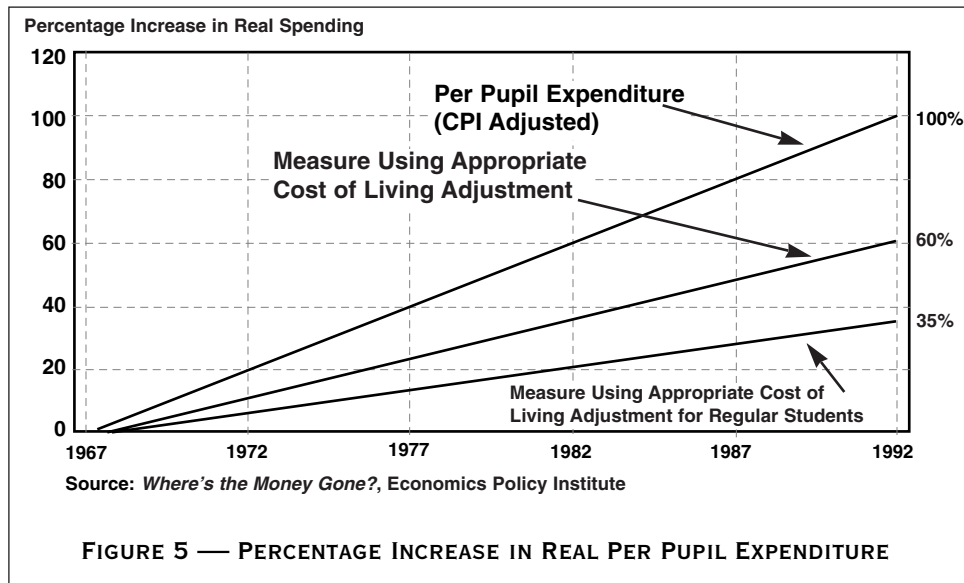
MISPERCEPTIONS ABOUT INCREASES IN K-12 FUNDING

We turn first to normally published per pupil expenditure data which is adjusted by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) to convert to real dollars. This is the data cited by most analysts to emphasize how much money has been poured into education over the last 25 years. Figure 5 shows this commonly cited increase in per-pupil spending from 1967-1992 as the top line of the graph. This common measure shows that between 1967 and 1992 school spending has increased by 100 percent in real terms.

However, recent research (Rothstein, 1995) points out two problems with this data. First the CPI should not be used to adjust educational expenditures because education is a very labor intensive activity. The costs of labor intensive services rise much faster than the CPI because it is easier to achieve productivity gains in capital intensive activities than labor intensive activities. The costs of goods of equivalent quality tend to go down in real terms over

time, but the costs of labor does not. Since the CPI reflects both the costs of goods and services, it overstates the real increase for labor intensive services. Using a more appropriate service sector costs of living adjustment show total per-pupil expenditures increased by only 60 percent between 1967 and 1992 (the middle line in Figure 5) (Rothstein, 1995).

The second problem is much of the 60 percent real increase went to activities that would not be expected to raise achievement scores. The largest part of this was directed toward special education students. When additional adjustments were made to estimate the increase in spending for regular students (e.g., not special education students), per-pupil expenditures increased by only 35 percent over the past 25 years as shown in the bottom line in the figure. These adjustments more accurately describe the real increase in resources provided to schools that should have led to achievement score increases. This educational spending is significantly lower than the frequently cited figure by the press and researchers of 100 percent increase in per-pupil spending.



RISING NAEP SCORES—A COMPLEX STORY

Figures 6 and 7 show simple differences in standard deviation units for black and non-black reading and math scores from the early 1970s to 1992. Overall the data show small changes for non-black students, but very large gains for black students for each age group. The average black gains are smaller for age 9 than for age 13 and age 17.

Figures 8 and 9 show similar data for black, Hispanic, and non-Hispanic white students.⁶ Hispanic gains tend to fall in between black and non-Hispanic white gains.

⁶ These data begin with 1975 since that is the first year Hispanic students were identified.

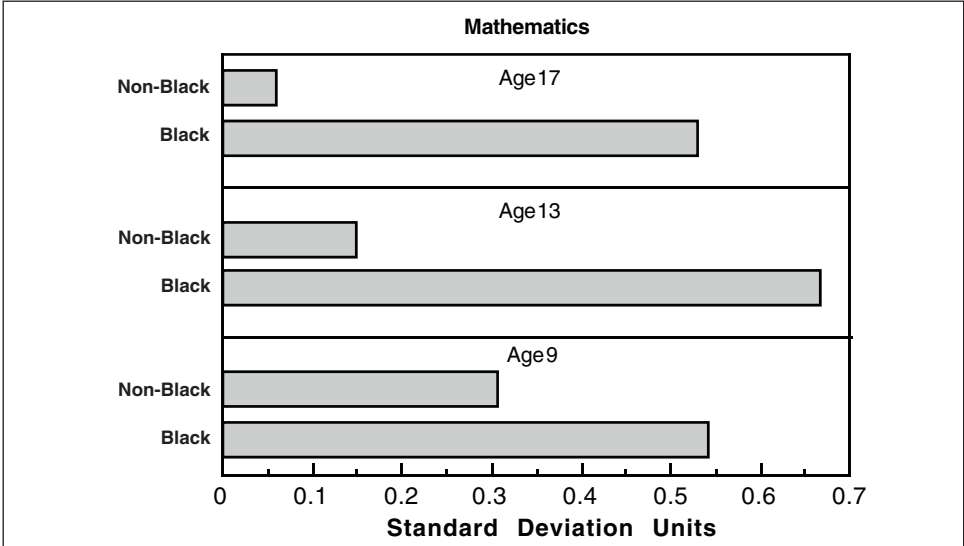


FIGURE 6 — CHANGE IN NAEP MATHEMATICS SCORES BETWEEN 1973 AND 1992 BY RACE AND AGE

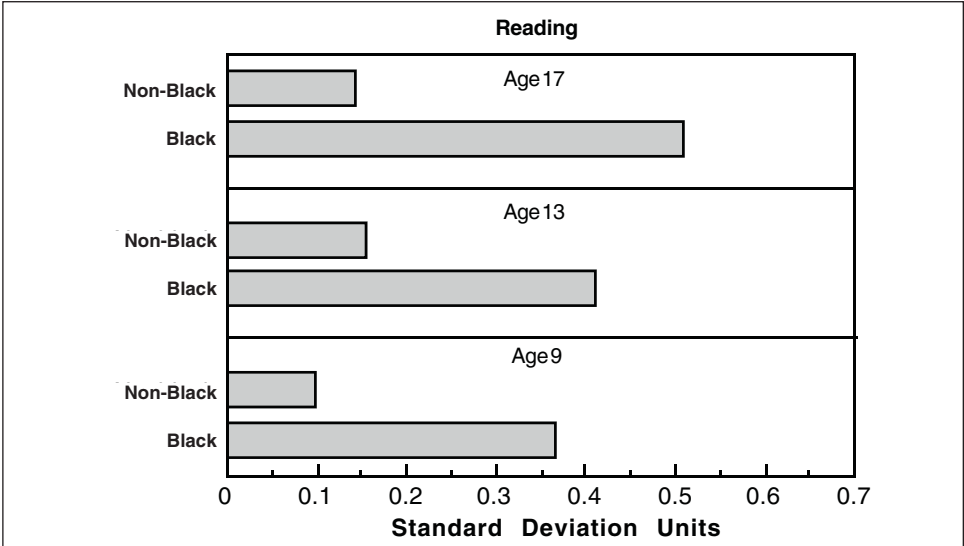


FIGURE 7 — CHANGE IN NAEP READING SCORES BETWEEN 1971 AND 1992 BY RACE AND AGE

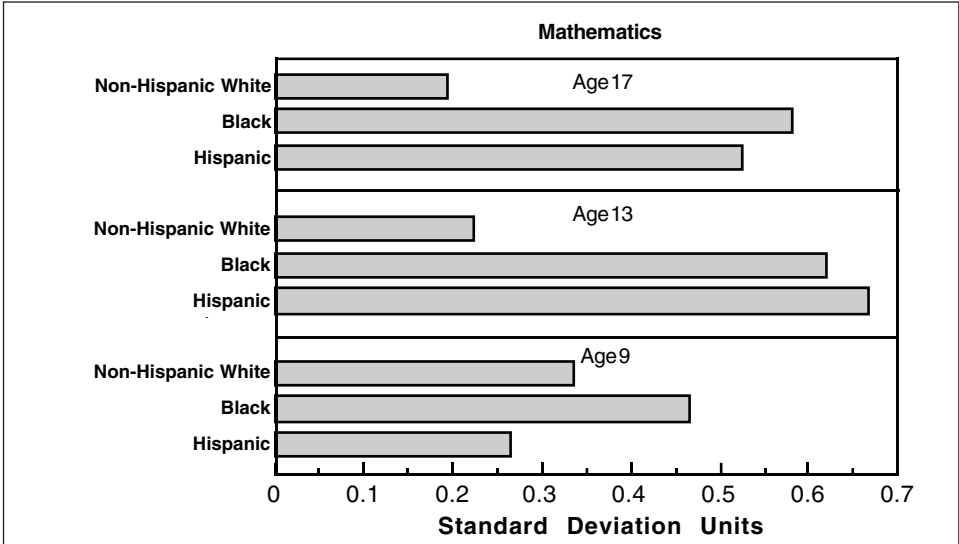


FIGURE 8 — CHANGE IN NAEP MATHEMATICS SCORES BETWEEN 1978 AND 1992 BY RACE/ETHNICITY AND AGE

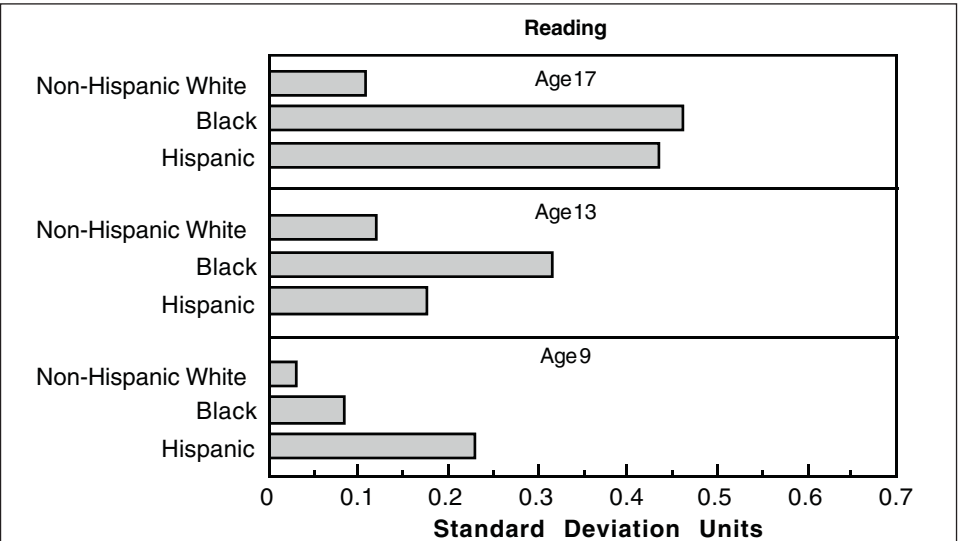


FIGURE 9 — CHANGE IN NAEP READING SCORES BETWEEN 1978 AND 1992 BY RACE/ETHNICITY AND AGE

Figures 10 and 11 show the decline in the gap between minority scores and non-Hispanic white scores. Gains made by minority students have resulted in a closing of the gap between the groups by one-fourth to one-half.

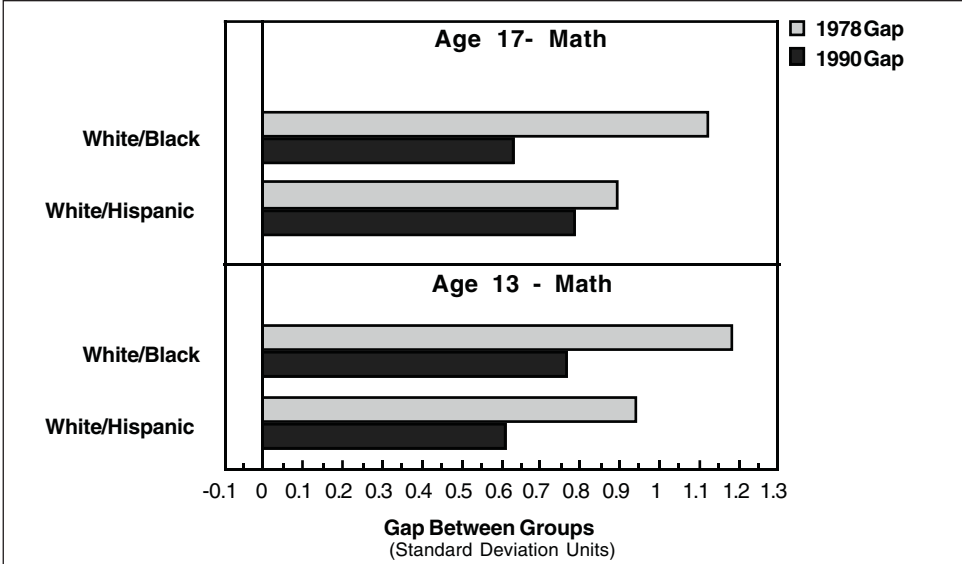


FIGURE 10 — GAP IN NAEP MATHEMATICS SCORES IN 1975 AND 1990 BY RACIAL/ETHNIC GROUP

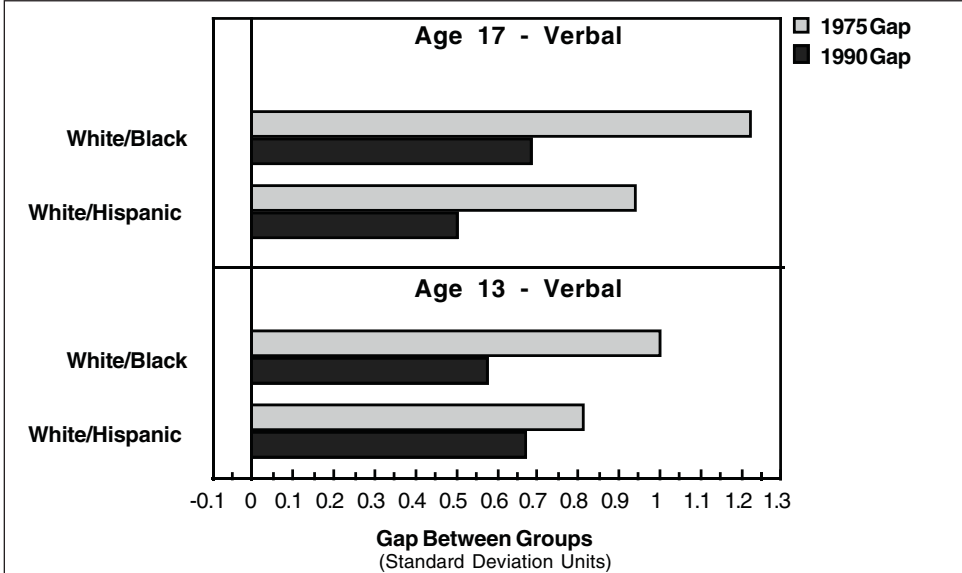


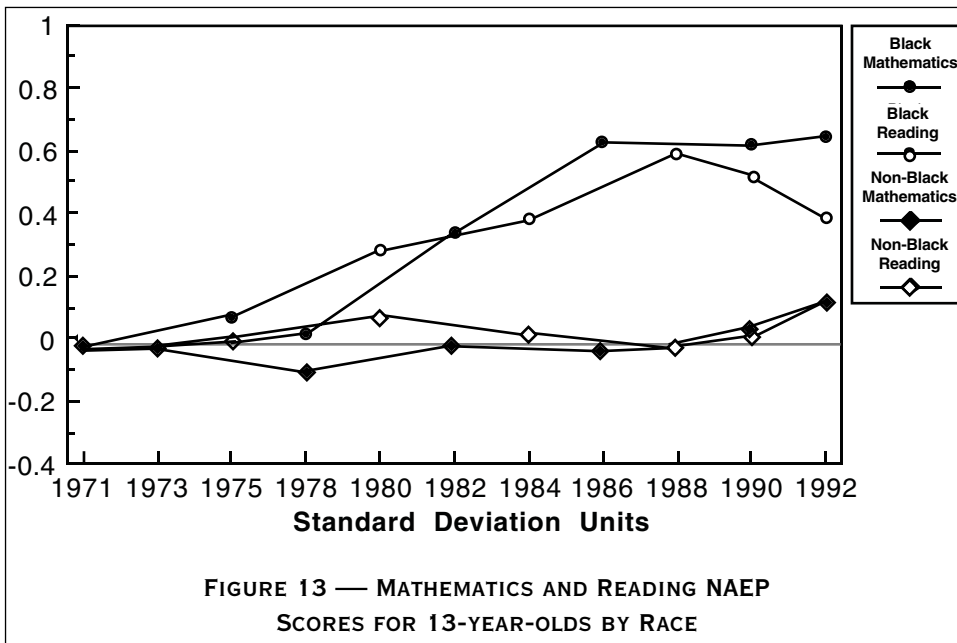
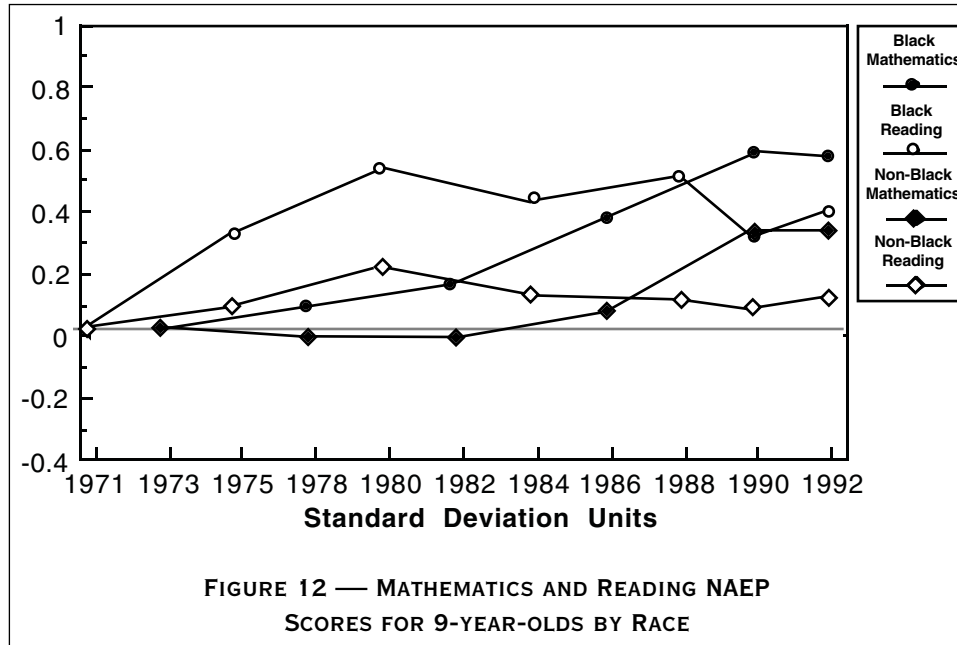
FIGURE 11 — GAP IN NAEP VERBAL SCORES IN 1975 AND 1990 BY RACIAL/ETHNIC GROUP

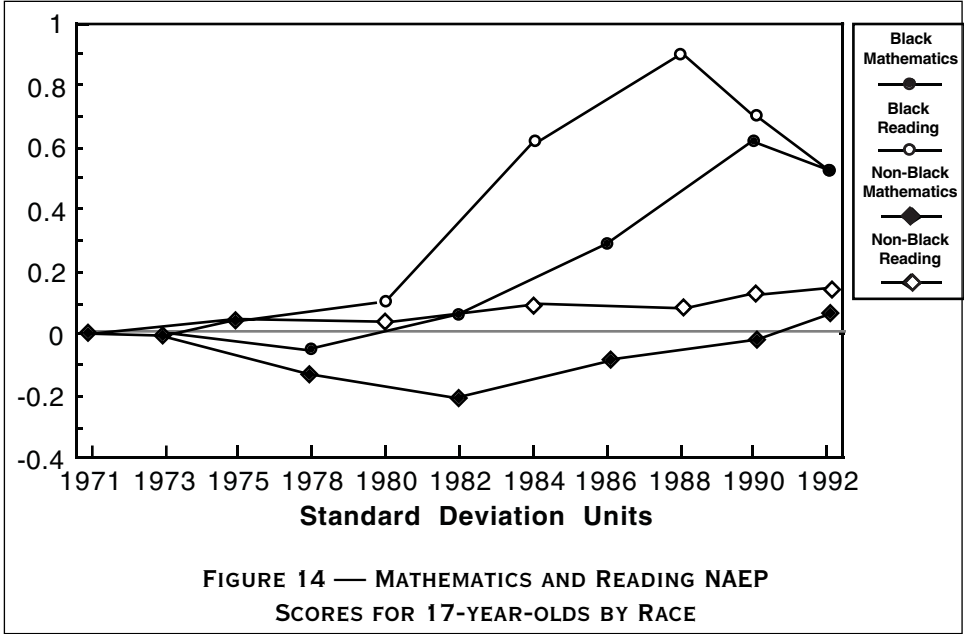
In the remainder of the paper we will focus on only black and non-Hispanic white scores.⁷

⁷ The Hispanic trend scores tend to be less reliable because of the lack of consistency in identifying Hispanic children, and in identifying children with insufficient language skills to take the test. The NAEP tests were given only to youth with a certain level of language skill and this was determined locally. In addition, the regional sample sizes for Hispanic students are smaller than the other groups.

Trends Among Different Age Groups

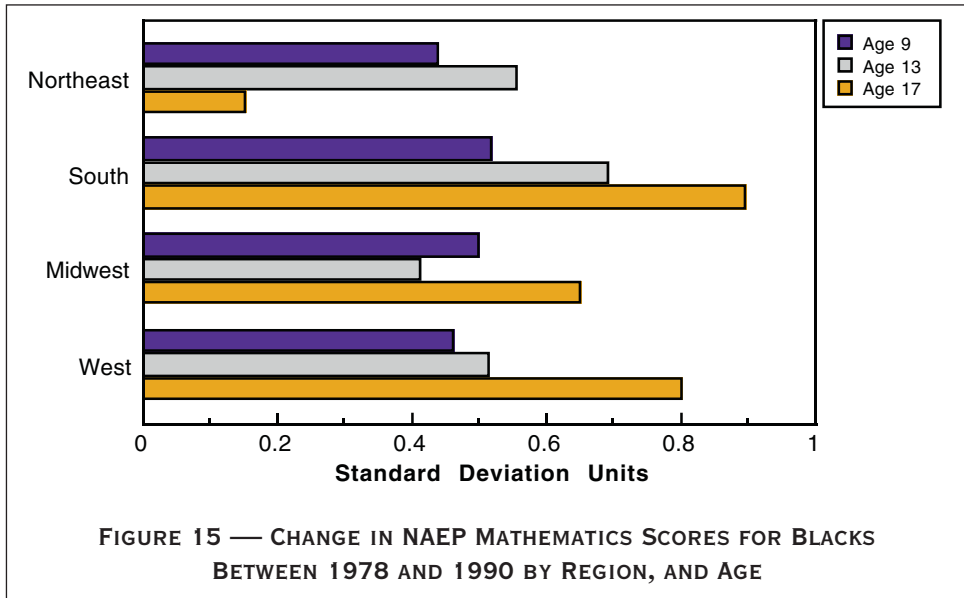
Figures 12-14 show time series data by age group for all years in which the tests were administered. For black students, the gains are not uniform over time and tend to occur mostly within a smaller period of time. However, the period of rising scores is different for each age group while some groups also show some decline in scores.

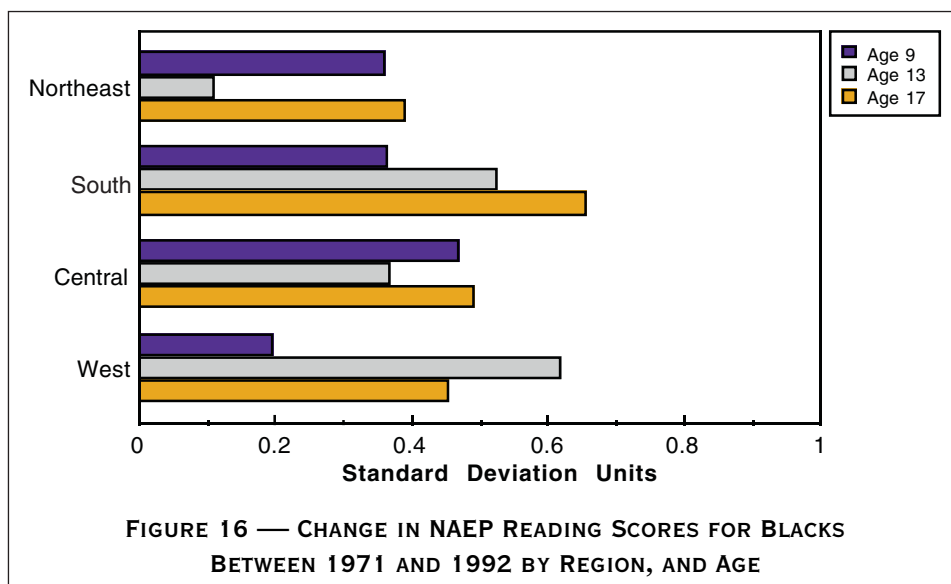




Regional Trends

Figures 15-16 present changes in NAEP mathematics and reading scores for blacks disaggregated by region. In almost every region and in both tests, blacks made larger gains than whites over the time period. The regional pattern of gains is different across the three age-groups for mathematics. For example, 17-year-old blacks made the largest gains in the South and West while those aged 13 made larger gains in the South and Midwest. For the youngest age group, the gains are in the South, with the West showing the smallest gains.





In reading, blacks experienced enormous gains, especially in the South but the gains are much smaller in the youngest age-group, suggesting that these gains may be tapering off.

Analyses of NAEP data using a cohort perspective offer several useful insights, as we show later.⁸ Figures 17-18 present the NAEP reading scores by entering school cohort. These data allow us to compare scores of a single cohort at age 9, 13 and 17. The data for blacks display an interesting pattern of little gain in scores for cohorts entering school before 1968, rapid gains for cohorts entering approximately between 1968-1976, and little or no gain or some decline for cohorts entering school in 1978 and after. The data generally show that score gains at age 17 in a cohort were preceded by gains at age

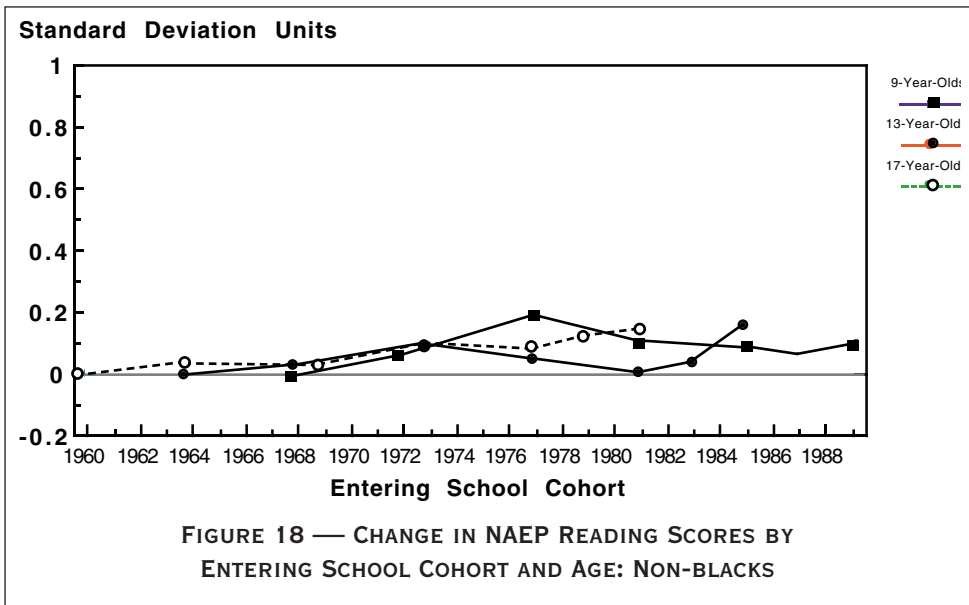
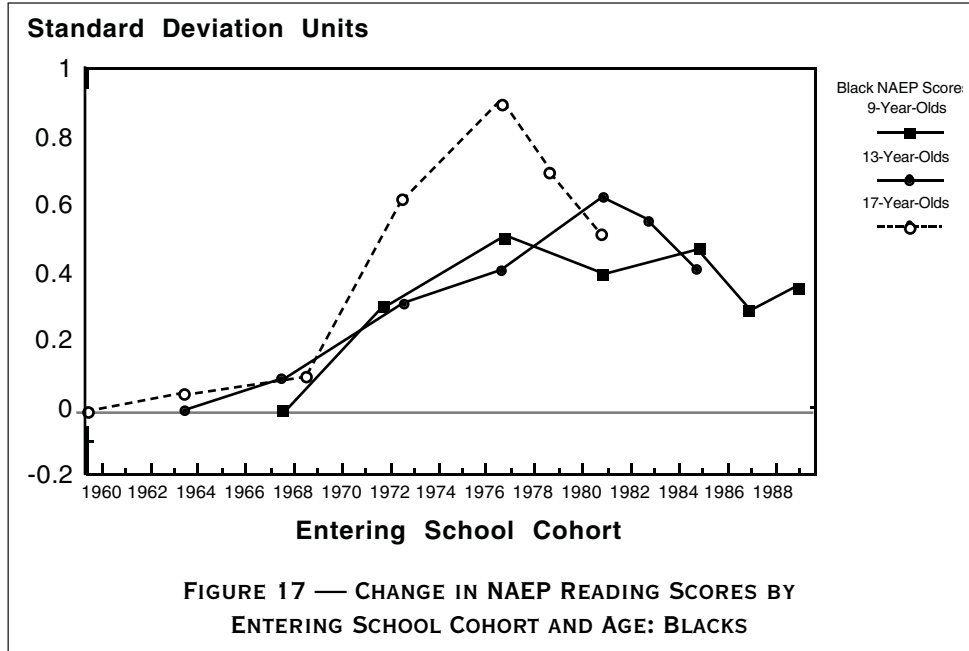
⁸ Test scores at a given age represent family environments, the quality of schools and communities, and social and educational policies and investment made over the entire child's lifetime up to the time of test taking. Thus, test scores need to be viewed from a cohort perspective and variables explaining test scores need to recognize their possible effect over the entire pre-test life of the cohort.

For example, assume that desegregating schools is likely to affect test scores—and beneficially so—for some subset of the student body. Then a policy completely desegregating schools in a single year would have a different pattern of effect on 9-, 13-, and 17-year-old time series test scores. One would hypothesize that the full effect of this policy action would be greatest for children who experienced the effects of desegregated schools throughout their schooling. For example, a fourth grader who was in desegregated schools only in the fourth grade would be unlikely to benefit as much from this policy change as a child who was in desegregated schools for the third and fourth grades, or from the first to the fourth grade. Thus a plausible effect hypothesis might be a pattern of increases over the four consecutive cohorts and then a flattening out of the effect. Whether this increase is linear or nonlinear depends on assumptions made about the relative importance assigned to first grade vs. second vs. third vs. fourth grade in determining the fourth grade scores. For instance, a more developmentally based hypothesis might suggest that school quality in earlier grades is more important than later grades, and that very small gains would be seen until the child had been in desegregated schools over the whole period prior to the test. On the other hand, some might hypothesize that the learning occurring closest to the test application should be weighted more heavily, and large gains would be seen in the first year of testing with much smaller gains in the other three years. A final hypothesis might assign equal importance to all grades, resulting in a linear increase.

For 17-year-olds, one could hypothesize a different pattern, assuming that the full effect of a permanent policy change in a single year would not be realized for 11 years. Again, the functional form of the increase depends on the importance assigned to the effect of earlier vs. later grades for 17-year-olds. Thus, in modeling the effects of family, schools, communities, and social and educational policies, one needs to take account of the program differences existing over a cohort's lifetime and make assumptions about the relative importance of environmental changes at different ages and/or grades.

13 and 9, and gains at age 13 were preceded by gains at age 9. However, the pattern of gains by age are certainly not uniform across cohorts.

A later section of the paper attempts to explain these trends in a multivariate framework, although these results are quite preliminary.



EXPLAINING TRENDS IN NATIONAL TEST SCORES

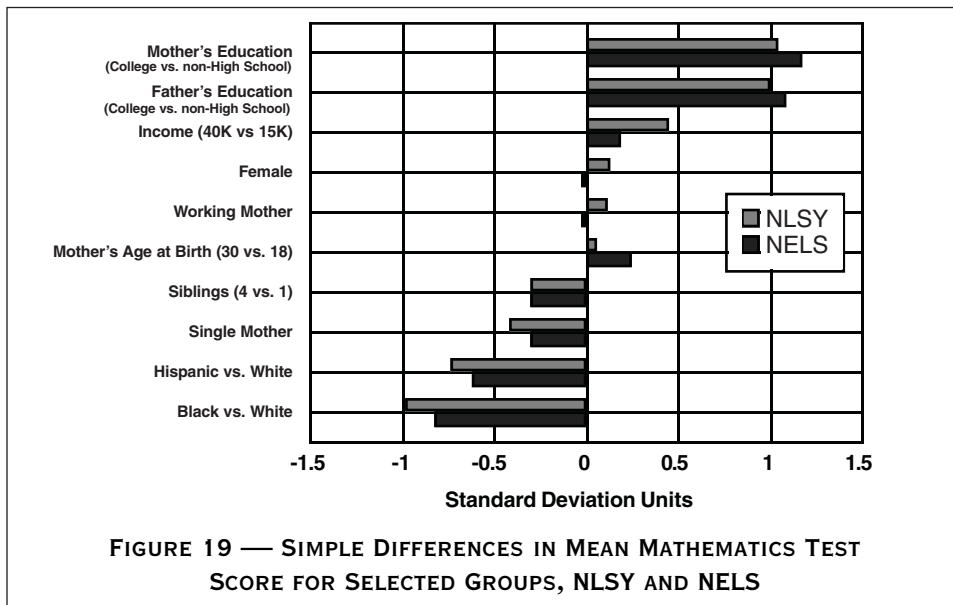
The methodology used here is described in Grissmer et al. (1994). In that study we developed estimates of the net effect of the changing family and demographic environment on student verbal/reading and mathematics test scores over time, and an estimate of the effect of factors not associated with family and demographic changes. The methodology consisted of three steps: (1) developing equations relating student achievement to family and demographic characteristics using two large nationally representative datasets: The 1980 National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY) and the 1988 National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS); (2) utilizing these equations to predict test scores for each student in a national sample of children (from the Current Population Surveys) in 1970, 1975, and 1990 using their family and demographic characteristics; and (3) comparing the mean differences in these predicted test scores (estimates of the effect of changing family and demographic characteristics) to actual scores from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). This procedure provides an estimate of how much changing family and demographic changes contributed to actual changes in test scores, and the residual changes in test scores (actual - family and demographic effect) provides an estimate of the effect factors not related to family and demographic effects had on changing test scores.

HOW MUCH DO FAMILY AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS AFFECT TEST SCORES?

The results from the NELS and NLSY both show large differences in test scores for family/demographic characteristics and great similarity in the direction and relative significance of these differences. Figure 19 shows simple comparisons of mathematics test scores⁹ among youth in different types of families from the NLSY and NELS.¹⁰

⁹ The mathematics and verbal/reading test score differences reported in Grissmer et al. (1994) show fairly similar patterns and sizes of differences.

¹⁰ We utilize a consistent measure—proportion of a standard deviation—throughout to measure differences in test scores. A measure that is also commonly used in reporting test scores is the percentile. This shows the relative standing of a particular score and measures the proportion of children scoring lower than that score. A 0.10 of a standard deviation difference in test scores is approximately 3.4 percentile points for most children. So two groups of children whose average scores differ by 0.10 of a standard deviation would indicate that one group scores—on average—3.4 percentile points higher than the other group.

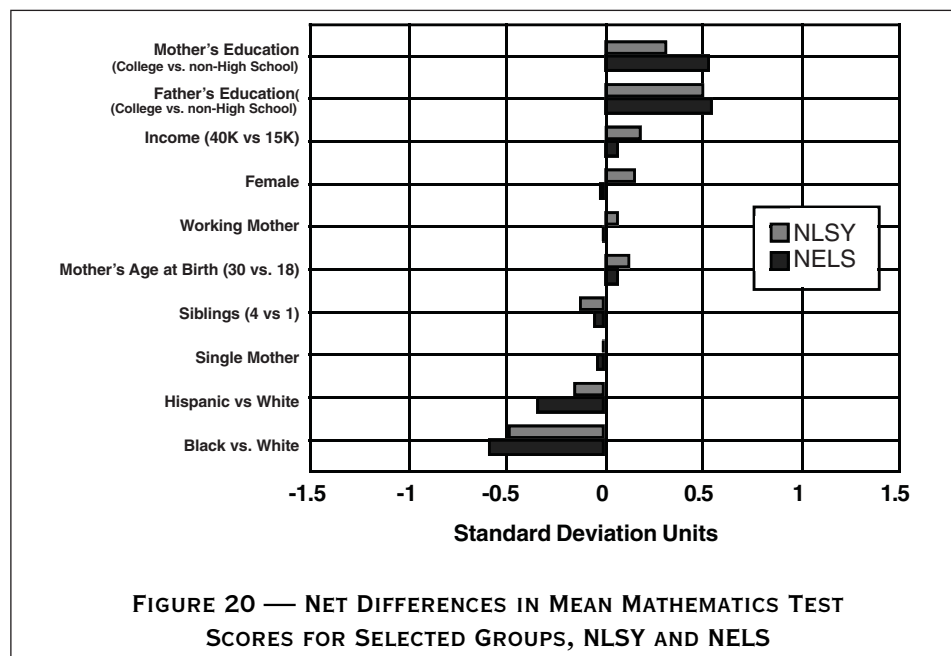


The figure shows large differences among the average test scores of children living in families with different levels of parental education or of different racial/ethnic background. For instance, a child whose mother or father graduated from college scores approximately 1.0 standard deviation higher than a child whose mother or father did not graduate from high school, while black and Hispanic youth score between 0.50 to 1.0 of a standard deviation lower than non-Hispanic white youth.

Somewhat smaller test score differences are evident among young people living in families with different levels of annual income (\$40,000 versus \$15,000), families of different size (four siblings versus one sibling), having younger versus older mothers (age 30 at birth versus age 18) and living in two parent versus single mother families. For instance, children living in two-parent families score about 0.30 to 0.40 of a standard deviation higher than youth living in single mother families, while children in large families score approximately 0.30 of a standard deviation lower than children from smaller families. There is little difference in test scores between those with working versus non-working mothers.

Public debate and the press often focus on these simple comparisons of achievement scores for different family and demographic characteristics and mistakenly attribute the difference in scores between two groups to the particular characteristic in which the groups differ. However, these comparisons and inferences are misleading because the students being compared usually differ in several characteristics, not just the one being cited. For instance, young people in higher income families are also more likely to have parents with higher levels of education and to be non-minority. Thus, the difference in average test scores between children from high versus low income families is probably due to a combination of factors, not just income alone. A better measure of the effect on test scores of income is a controlled comparison of two groups of young people who have similar family characteristics except for income. This is true for other characteristics as well.

Figure 20 summarizes these controlled comparison differences for mathematics scores.¹¹



This figure shows that the net effect of each factor is considerably smaller than the simple comparisons in Figure 19. However, the controlled differences remain significant for certain characteristics. For example, youth whose parents are college graduates score about 0.50 of a standard deviation higher than youth who are otherwise similar but who have parents who did not graduate from high school. In addition, controlling for other family characteristics, the difference between blacks and non-Hispanic whites is 0.50 of a standard deviation and the difference between Hispanics and non-Hispanic whites is somewhat smaller. Youth with different levels of family income or different family sizes show much smaller differences in test scores. Controlled test score differences due to family structure and labor force participation of mother appear to be negligible. These results suggest that the simple differences between youth scores in single and two-parent families arise from other differences in family characteristics, such as family income, parental education, or previous family environment rather than the structure of the one versus two-parent family itself.

¹¹ These effects are derived by using the estimates from our multivariate model of student achievement. Multivariate models allow us to examine the effect of a particular characteristic, holding constant other important variables.

HOW MUCH WOULD CHANGING FAMILIES AND DEMOGRAPHICS CHANGE TEST SCORES?

We use the estimates from the multivariate models (which formed the basis for Figure 15 above) to predict the changes in test scores that would be expected due to the changes in family and demographic characteristics that occurred between 1970/75 and 1990.

We find that 14- to 18-year-olds living in U.S. families in 1990 would be predicted to score higher, not lower, on tests compared to youth in families in 1970. The size of the shift in mean scores is approximately 0.20 of a standard deviation. This means that youth in 1990 would be expected to have higher scores by about 7 percentile points than their counterparts in 1970 based on combined changes in demographic and family characteristics. It should be emphasized that these findings estimate average effects when taking account of all American families with 14- to 18-year-olds.

Our analysis suggests that the most important family influences on student test scores are the level of parental education, family size, family income, and the age of the mother when the child was born.

Of these variables, the two that have changed most dramatically in a favorable direction are parental education levels and family size (see Table 2). Children in 1990 are living with better educated parents and in smaller families. These factors are the primary reasons that changes in family characteristics would predict higher test scores. For example, 7 percent of mothers of 15- to 18-year-old children in 1970 were college graduates compared to 16 percent in 1990, while 38 percent did not have high school degrees in 1970 compared to only 17 percent in 1990. Similar, but somewhat smaller, changes occurred in the educational attainment of fathers. Changes in family size were also dramatic. Only about 48 percent of 15- to 18-year-old children lived in families with at most one sibling in 1970 compared to 73 percent in 1990.

TABLE 2
SELECTED FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS OF 14-18 YEAR-OLDS, 1975-1990

	NON-HISPANIC		
	BLACK	HISPANIC	WHITE
	PERCENT CHANGE (1975-1990)		
MOTHER'S EDUCATION (%)			
LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL	-53	-12	-44
COLLEGE DEGREE	154	61	76
FATHER'S EDUCATION (%)			
LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL	-58	-11	-54
COLLEGE DEGREE	221	-12	42
NUMBER OF CHILDREN (%)			
1-2	111	38	42
4 OR MORE	-71	-43	-66
MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME (\$)	-2	-21	-1

The Hispanic family changes have been less positive when compared to the other racial/ethnic groups. The family income levels among Hispanics declined in real terms by about 12 percent, and the changes in parents' education levels and family size were less dramatic.

Our analysis indicates that average family income changed little over the period 1970 to 1990 (in real terms), so it would not be expected to affect average test scores. However, the decline in family size coupled with unchanged average family income means that family income per child actually increased from 1970 to 1990.

One change that has had a slight negative effect on test scores is the small decline in the average age of mother at birth of child. This is partly due to increased births to younger mothers, but also due to the decline in family size.

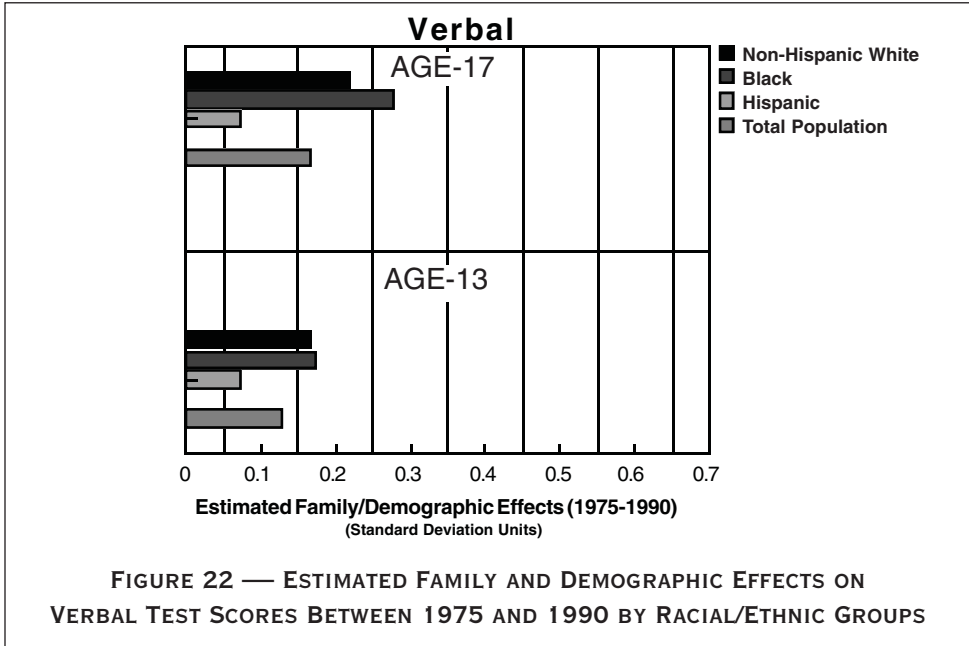
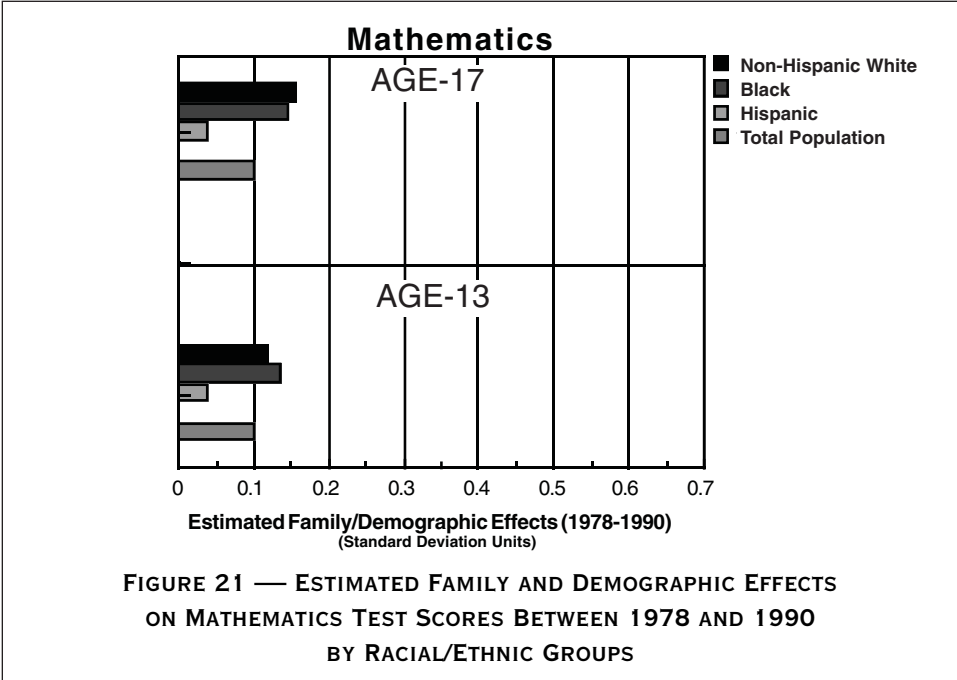
The effect of the large increase in working mothers and single parent families is more complex (discussed in more detail in Grissmer, et al, 1995). Our equations imply that the large increase in working mothers would—other things equal—have a negligible or small positive effect on youth test scores. However, mother's labor force participation is measured when the youth was approximately 14 years old, so our results may not apply to younger children.

In the case of the increase in single mothers, our models imply no negative effects from the changed family structure alone. However, such families tend to have much lower income levels, so the predictions for youth in these families incorporate a negative impact due to increasing numbers of poor, single parent families.¹²

We turn now to the results by racial/ethnic group between 1975 and 1990. Figures 21 (mathematics) and 22 (verbal) show the estimated family effects separately for non-Hispanic whites, blacks, and Hispanics as well as the total youth population between 1975-1990. Higher mathematics scores in 1990 would be expected for 13- and 17-year-olds for each racial/ethnic group based on changing family characteristics. The data show that non-Hispanic white and black youth have similar predicted family gains of approximately 0.15 of a standard deviation, but Hispanic youth show smaller gains of approximately 0.05 standard deviation. Verbal/reading score comparisons show slightly higher gains than for mathematics although the pattern is similar by racial/ethnic groups. The positive changes in the black family in terms of increased parental education and reduced family size are actually greater than those for non-Hispanic white families, but there were offsetting increases in births to younger and single mothers. The smaller gains for Hispanic youth are explained by smaller increases in parental education, falling family income, and smaller reductions in family size compared to black families. This is probably due to the continuing immigration of large number of Hispanic families into the population, many of whom may have lower levels of educational achievement and fewer labor market skills than previous waves of immigrants.¹³

¹² A more technical discussion of these complex effects is given in the main report, Grissmer et al. (1994), chapter 5.

¹³ George J. Borjas, *Friends or Strangers: The Impact of Immigrants on the U.S. Economy*, New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1990.

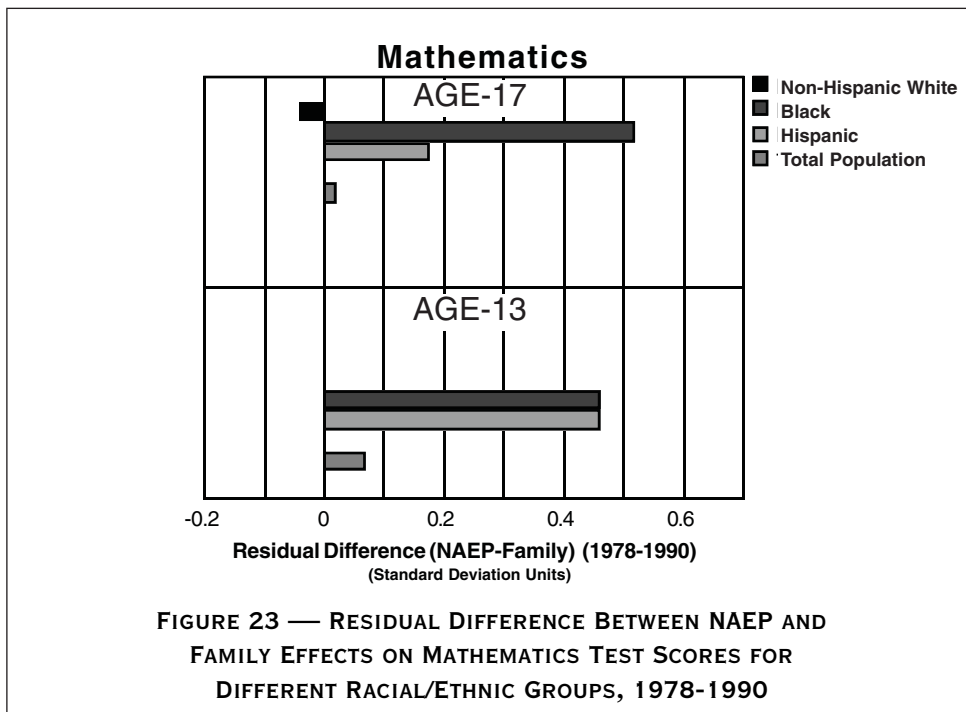


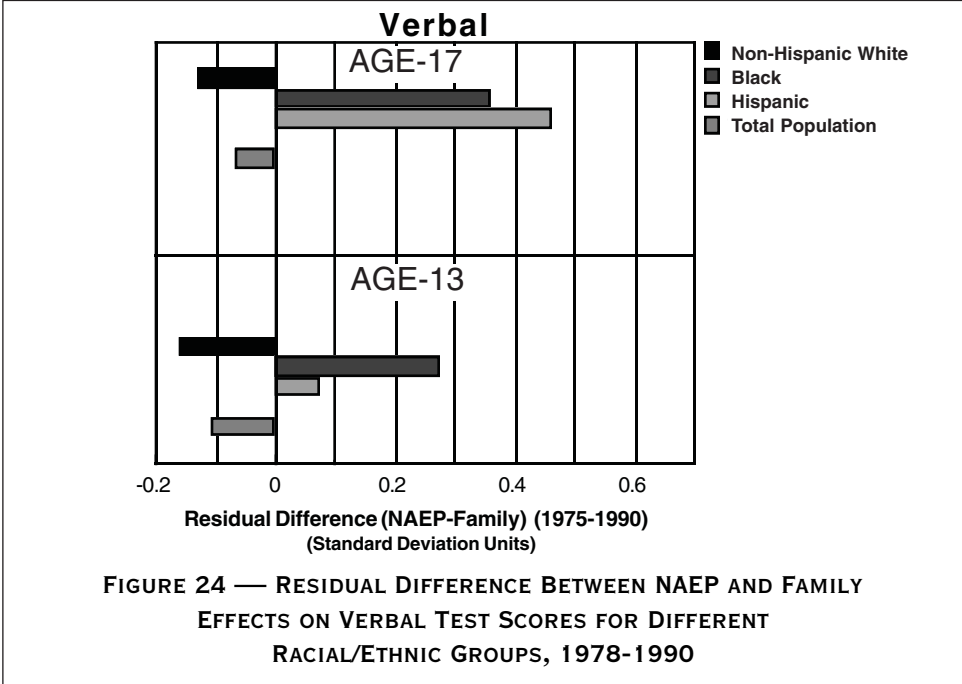
HOW MUCH OF TEST SCORE CHANGES CAN BE ACCOUNTED FOR BY CHANGES IN FAMILY AND DEMOGRAPHICS?

We compare our projected family/demographic effects on test scores to actual trends in NAEP test scores over similar time periods and for similar age groups to see how much of the actual changes might plausibly be attributed to changes in family/demographic characteristics.

We subtracted the predicted change in test scores (due to family/demographic effects) from the actual change in NAEP scores to compute a residual effect. Figures 23 (mathematics) and 24 (verbal/reading) show these residuals. The data for mathematics show no residual gain for non-Hispanic white students indicating that their gains in test scores could be accounted for entirely by family effects. However, there are large positive residuals for Hispanics and black students, suggesting that changing family characteristics alone cannot explain the large gains made by these students. In fact, changing family characteristics account for only approximately one-third of the total gain.

For verbal/reading scores, the data generally indicate smaller residual gains than for mathematics, but still show substantial black and Hispanic residual gains not accounted for by family effects. The verbal/reading data also show that non-Hispanic white students have a small negative residual for both age groups, indicating that their NAEP gains were not as large as would be expected from family changes.



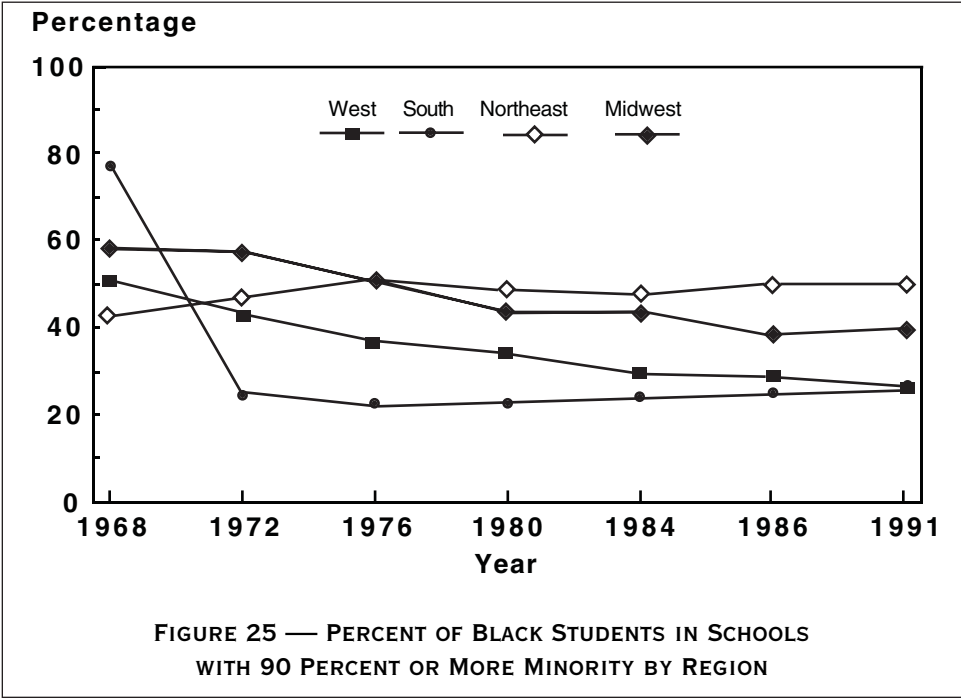


EXPLAINING REGIONAL TEST SCORE TRENDS: EFFECTS OF INCREASED EDUCATIONAL INVESTMENT AND DESEGREGATION

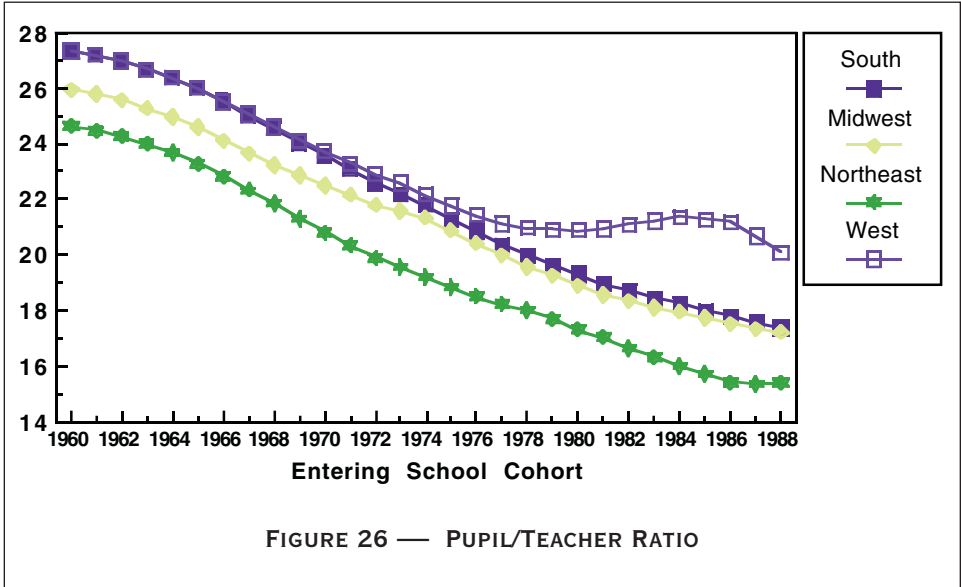
In an effort to test the effects of increased educational investment and equal opportunity policies, we modeled NAEP scores (by age group and region) as a function of age dummies, regional dummies, a time trend, desegregation policies, and one key variable—pupil/teacher ratio. Our measure of desegregation for each year is the percentage of black students in schools with 90 percent or more minority students in that region.¹⁴ Figure 25 shows the regional time series for this variable. The data show that massive desegregation occurred in the south very rapidly over a 7-year period between 1968 and 1975. The trends in the other regions are more gradual and far less dramatic. As we argued earlier, we believe a plausible effect hypothesis is that the potential effect of the dramatic desegregation in the South will be fully seen only in cohorts that attended desegregated schools during their entire school attendance up to the age of the test. This means that differences in test scores (assuming that desegregation does have an effect on test scores) should be seen first for 9-year-olds who took the test in 1971 (who entered school before desegregation occurred) as opposed to 1975 (who were likely to have experienced desegregated schools for all four years), for 13-year-olds taking tests in 1971 and 1975 as compared to those taking the test in 1980 and later, and for 17-year-olds taking tests in 1971-1975-1980 and those in 1984-1988-1990. Since greater weight is assigned to the earlier grades, we have implicitly assumed that a larger part of the effect is pushed forward in time.

¹⁴ The four geographical regions used for analysis in this report include the following states:
South: *Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Rhode Island, Texas, Virginia*
Northeast: *Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia*
Midwest: *Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin*
West: *Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Rhode Island, Oregon, Texas, Utah, Washington, Wyoming*

The regional division of states differs between the desegregation data and the NAEP data. States shown in italics indicate states that are included in the NAEP data and not the desegregation data. NAEP divides Virginia into two parts. The part of Virginia that is included in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan statistical area is included in the Northeast region; the remainder of the state is included in the South (Johnson and Carlson, 1994). Hawaii and Alaska were excluded from the desegregation data because of unique ethnic compositions and geographic location (Orfield, 1983).



Our measure of educational investment is pupil/teacher ratio since this represents a real resource increase over time. Figure 26 shows this measure by region over time.



We utilize this measure rather than per pupil expenditure for several reasons. First, research has shown that class-sizes have significant effects on student achievement. A carefully designed experiment revealed significant positive effects of lower class sizes in the early grades, and that lower scoring and minority students appear to particularly benefit from smaller classes (Mosteller, 1995). Reducing class sizes from 22 to 15 resulted in effect sizes

overall of approximately .20-.25 standard deviation increase in test score by grade four. Effects for minorities were twice that: .40 to .50 standard deviation. The effects tended to be reduced when the smaller class sizes were terminated after fourth grade, but a significant effect of approximately .10 standard deviation was still present at grade 8 from the earlier reduction in class size. The increased minority effect, however, disappeared by eighth grade.

Second, the effect of per-pupil expenditures largely depends on how the money is spent. Without more detailed data and given the aggregated level of our analysis, we cannot hope to capture the true effect of such expenditures. For instance, hiring more teachers to reduce class size may be more effective than raising teacher salaries in raising student achievement. Third, a recent paper (Rothstein, 1995) shows that the commonly used per pupil expenditure data adjusted with the CPI overstates the increase in educational expenditures for regular students between 1967 and 1991 by between 60-75 percent.

Our analysis supports a role for desegregation and lower class size in boosting black achievement scores. The timing and regional pattern of pupil/teacher ratios and desegregation mirrors the timing and regional pattern of black score gains. Our data suggests—like the earlier experiment—that lower class size boosted minority scores almost twice as much as majority scores—although lower class size had a positive effect for both groups. We are now analyzing the role of spending on social programs to see if its regional and trend pattern also supports the hypothesis that it influenced black score gains. However, further progress past this analysis will need to utilize more recently available state NAEP scores.

ASSESSING STATE NAEP SCORES

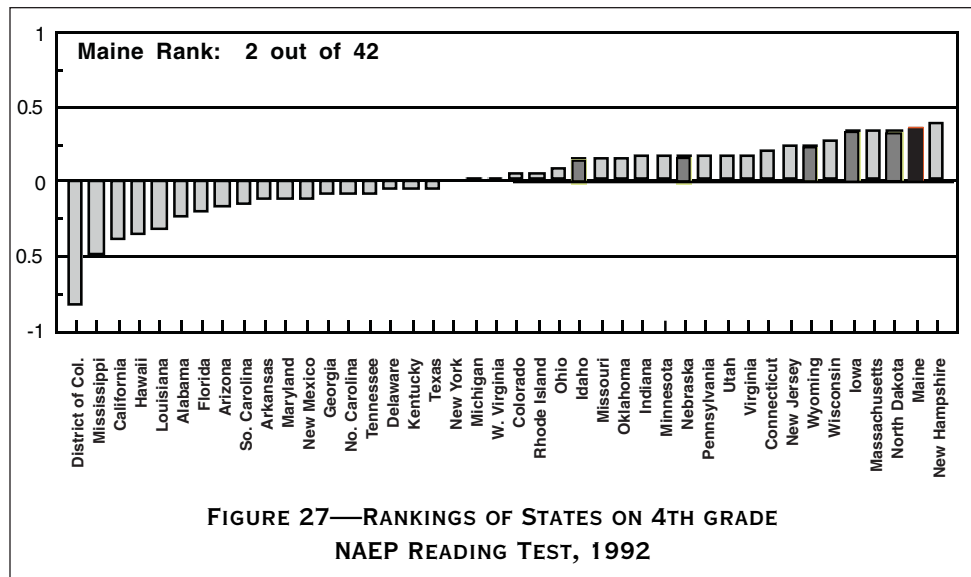
In assessing state educational performance, we utilize four sets of test scores that were administered to representative samples of students in over 40 states. We first compare state performance on the simple, unadjusted scores. However, these unadjusted test scores do not provide good measures of the effectiveness of schools or state education/human resource policies because the states differ markedly in demographic composition and the characteristics of their families. Instead, we derive adjusted test scores which take account of these demographic and family differences. These adjusted scores provide better measures of the “value added” due to state differences in schools and education/social policies assuming that all states had similar demographic and family characteristics.

We believe that test scores are only one measure of the outcome of the educational and human resource system, and should be looked at in conjunction with other measures to obtain a more complete picture of the effectiveness of education/social policies. However, test scores do reflect the quality of families, communities, and schools.

DATA

Four NAEP tests, given to representative samples of children in approximately 40 states, can be used to compare state educational performance (several states chose not to participate in the NAEP state assessments). These state samples were collected in 1992 and 1994 for fourth and/or eighth grade students using either reading or mathematics tests. In 1992, approximately 2,500 fourth-grade students from 40 states were administered reading and mathematics tests. In 1994, reading scores are available for a similar sample of fourth graders (the 1994 mathematics results are not yet available). These tests are the only statistically state-representative samples of students that provide a description of student achievement across states.¹⁵

Figure 27 and 28 shows the state ranking on fourth-grade reading scores given in 1992 and 1994. This scale is in standard deviation units (one standard deviation equals 34 percentile.)

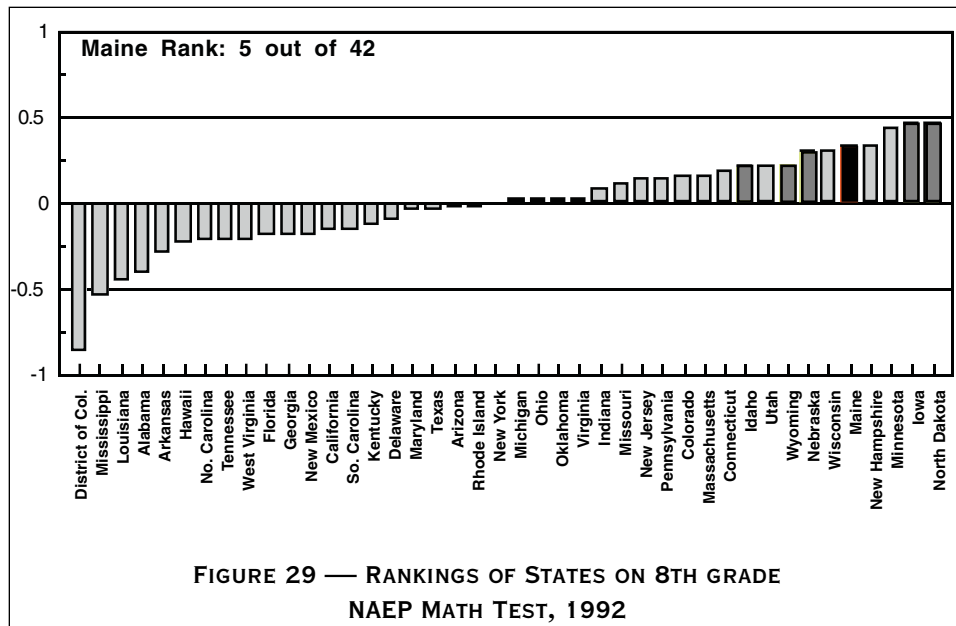
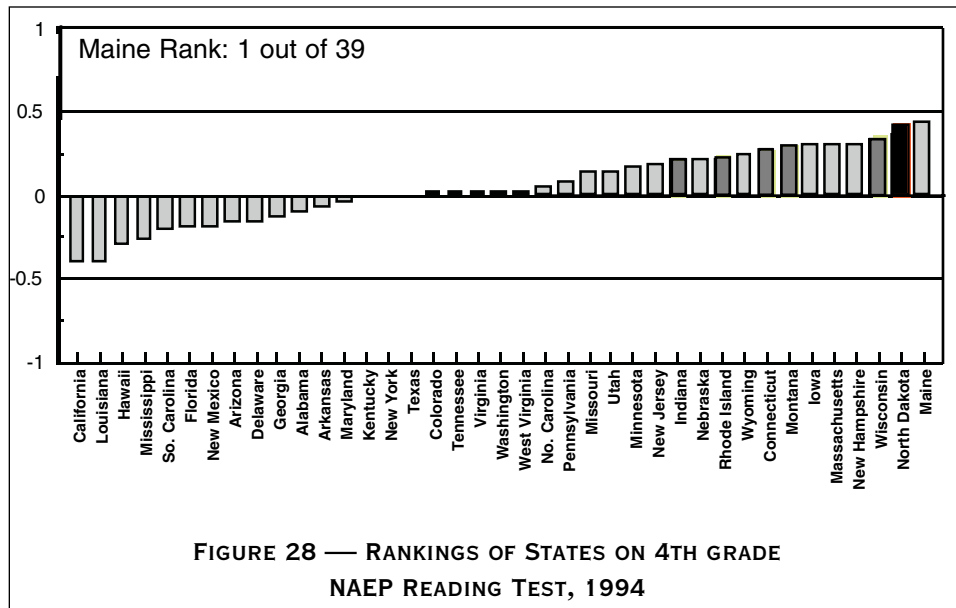


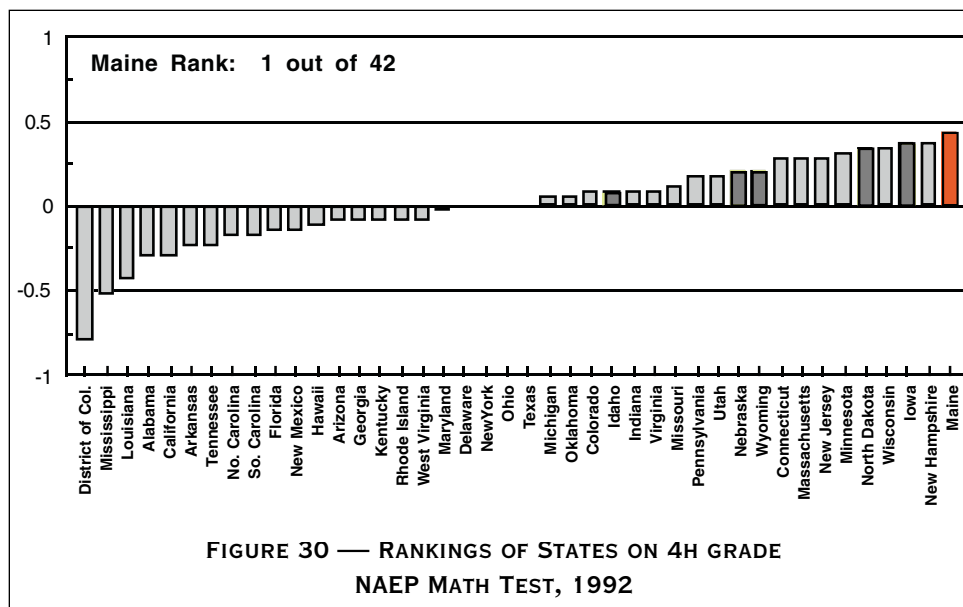
¹⁵ A thoughtful note by Daniel Koretz in the *Educational Researcher*, April 1991, warns against simple comparisons of states based on the state NAEP (Koretz, 1991). First, he points out that although states can be ranked (given sufficient sample sizes), the differences between states would not be robust and would change if the test were altered. Second, he questions the usefulness of the state NAEP particularly if differences among states simply confirm what we already know (he refers to them as “grandmother differences”). Third, he warns that state NAEP cannot by itself tell us what programs and policies are effective because of the many factors that affect student achievement.

There is little we can do with respect to the first point. We believe, however, that it is instructive to examine average differences between states in mathematics and reading. These are important in themselves and provide an overall indicator of how the states ranked in the two subjects. With respect to the second and third points, we believe that our analysis adds a new dimension and goes well beyond merely documenting “grandmother differences.” Our methodology offers a way of adjusting the scores on the state NAEP for family and demographic differences, leaving behind a residual that can be attributed to non-family factors such as schools, social and educational expenditures and policies, and other unmeasured factors. Although this does not identify particular policies/programs that have been effective, the second step in our methodology allows us to identify various state characteristics that appear to be related to the residual and so offer some important and fruitful areas of research. We should warn, however, that the models and results are still very preliminary.

The scores show the typical pattern of southern states being clustered near the bottom and northern states (close to Canada) clustered near the top. There are notable exceptions: for example, California ranks near the bottom of the states sampled.

The results for the 1994 fourth grade reading tests show similar patterns (see Figure 23). The results of the other two state tests are shown in Figures 29 and 30.





Maine ranks between first and fifth among the 42 (or 39) states taking the tests. This shows a fairly consistent ranking on the four tests and indicates that the state rankings are fairly robust across tests and grade levels. However, a ranking based on unadjusted, raw test scores is an unfair comparison of the effectiveness of the education system or human resource system in a state. Since a significant part of differences in test scores is due to family/demographic differences, states with more highly educated and/or higher income populations or smaller proportion of minority students will score higher than states with populations that have lower education and income levels and larger minority populations. As a result, these higher scores reflect not only the effectiveness of their education systems, but also demography and the characteristics of families, communities, and other factors. Indeed, the National Academy of Education in its 1990 Evaluation pointed out:

“Although NAEP can be used to measure changes in academic performance at the national and state levels, it is important to emphasize that *NAEP cannot be used by itself to infer that any observed changes were caused by the reforms.* For example, even in cases where NAEP suggests improvement over time, such results cannot taken as definitive evidence that the change is due to any specific reform. The changes might just as well be due to changes in the demographic composition of the state...or due to a combination of both causal and non-causal factors” (p. 66).

Koretz (1991) makes much the same point. Our methodology adjusts test scores for the family and demographic differences among states.

A key question in measuring the effectiveness of schools and state/local policies is how different state educational systems would compare if each state had similar family/demographic characteristics. In other words, how much would an educational system add to student achievement over and above what would be expected based on different family/demographic characteristics? We

have developed a methodology that can obtain a residual measure that captures the effect of non-family factors including the state and local educational system and other public investments in social programs and policies.

Figure 31 shows our estimates of state test scores based only on the family/demographic characteristics of the state. A high ranking indicates mainly that a state has high parental education and income and low minority percentage. The figure shows that based on family/demographics Maine would be expected to score about 12th in the rankings of states. This ranking indicates that Maine has a more difficult population to educate than some states.

We have chosen states that most similar to Maine in terms of family and demographic characteristics and other characteristics relevant to educational performance. These states are North Dakota, Montana, Iowa, Nebraska, and Wyoming. These states match Maine more closely than Vermont and New Hampshire. We will utilize these states in future comparisons

Figures 31 and 32 show that Maine’s adult population has a lower percentage of college graduates than the national average and also a lower percentage who have had some college. However, Maine has a much higher than average number who have completed high school only. Thus Maine has fewer college graduates, but also fewer who have not finished high school than the national average.

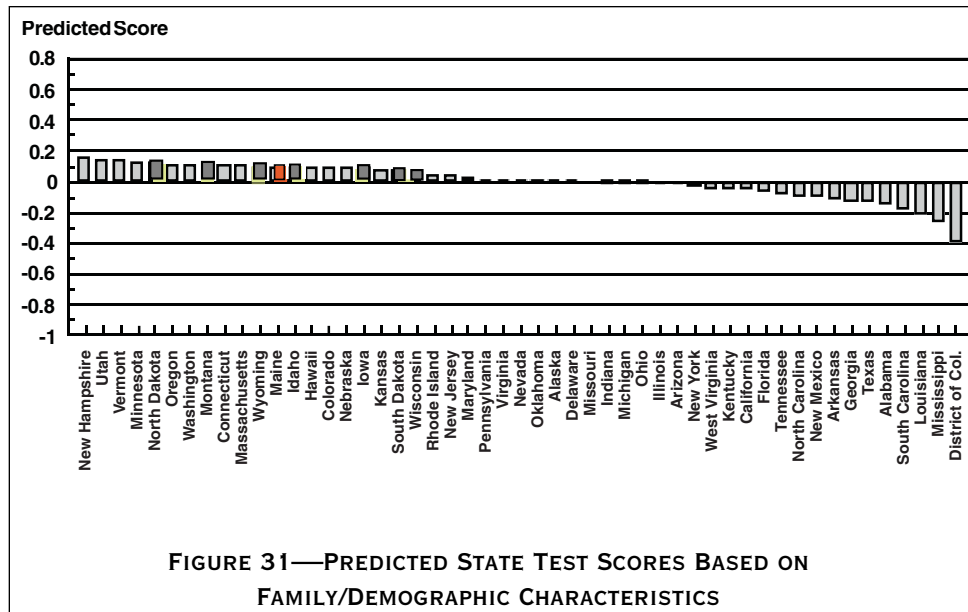


FIGURE 31—PREDICTED STATE TEST SCORES BASED ON FAMILY/DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

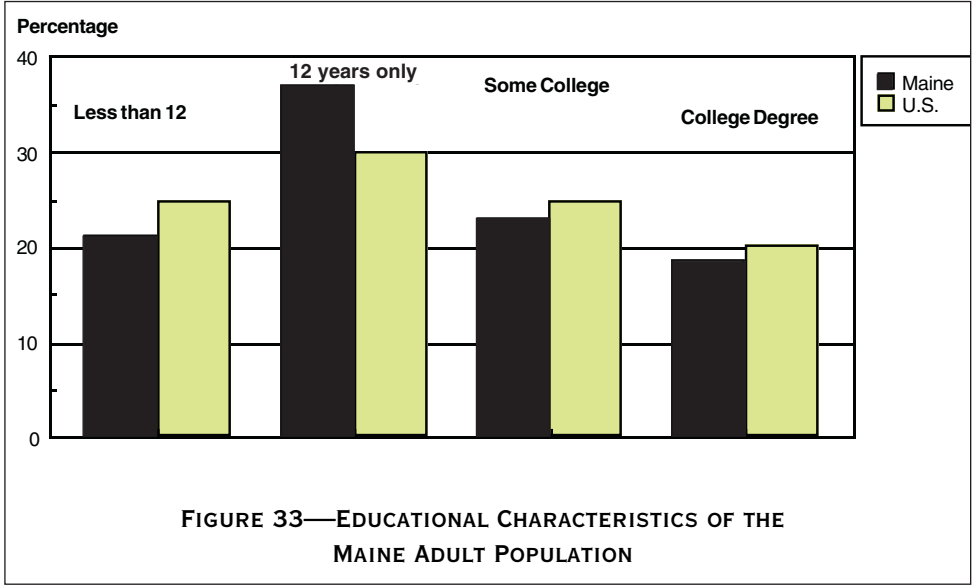
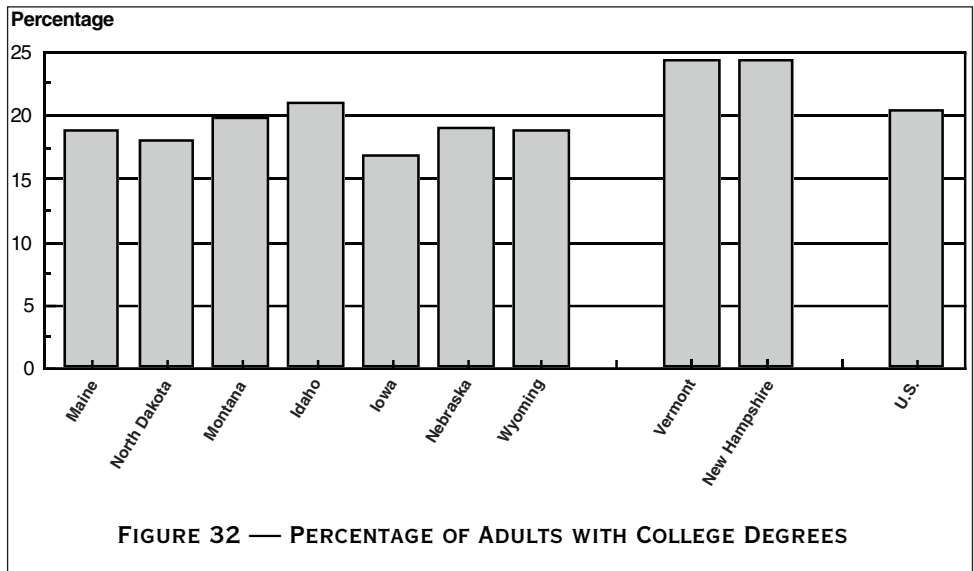
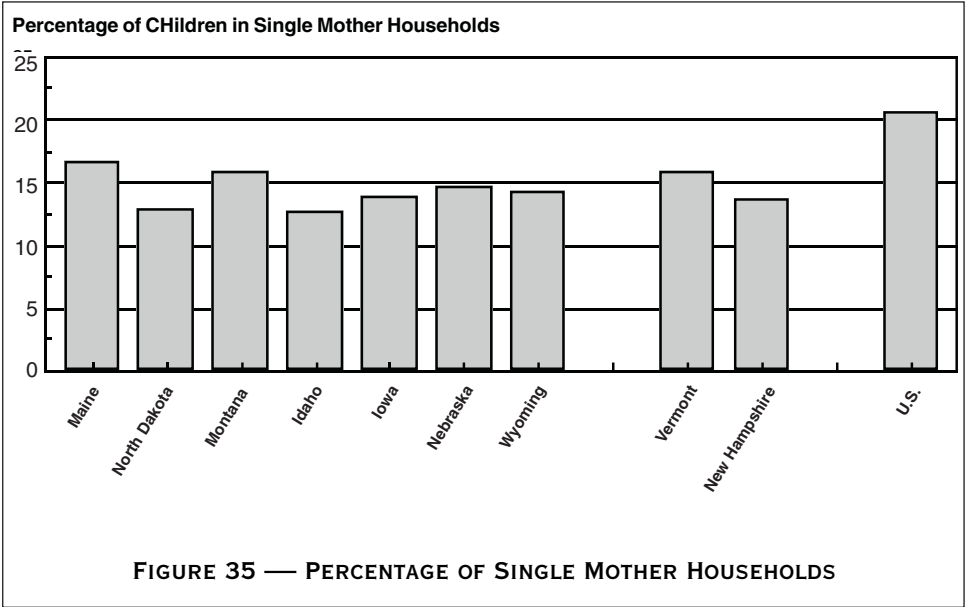
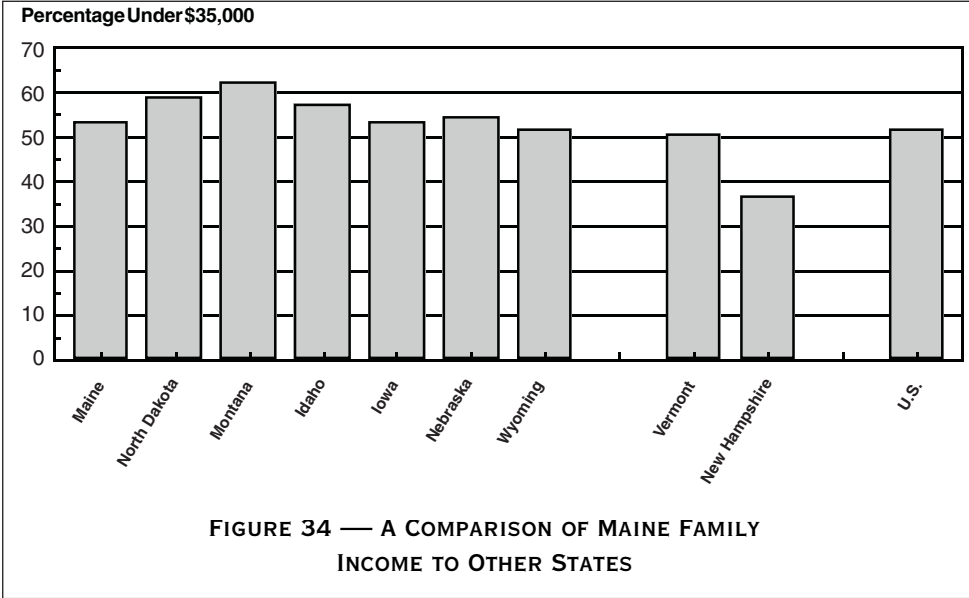
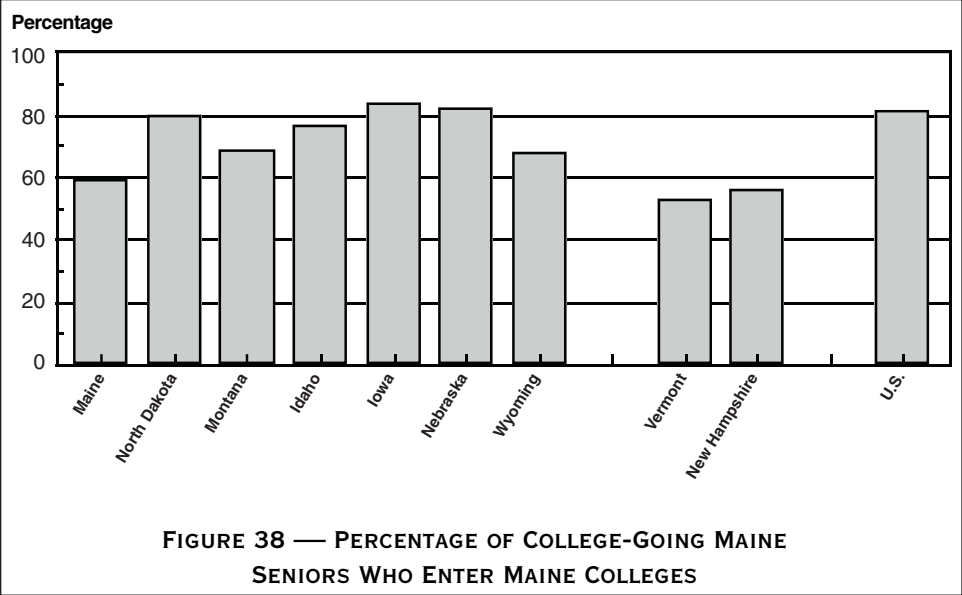
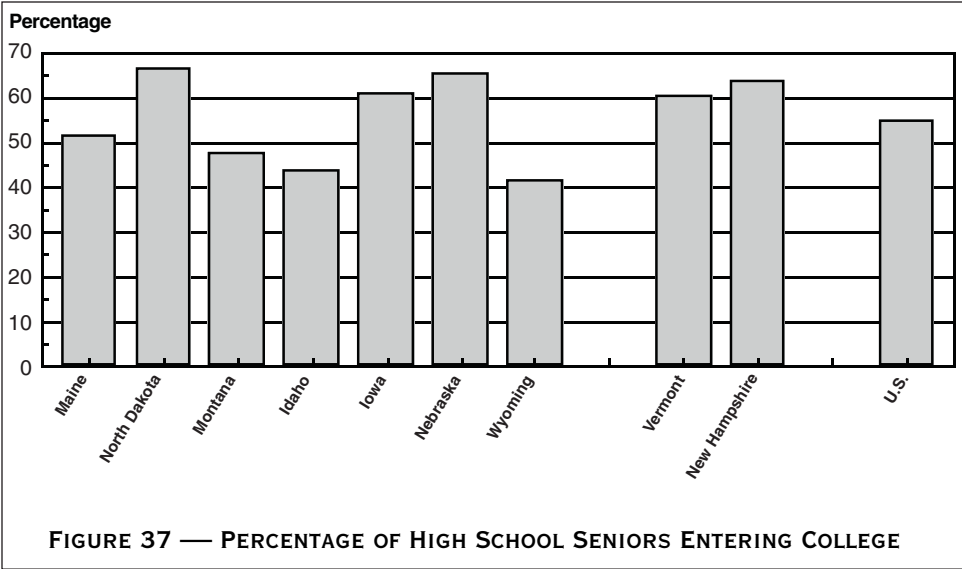
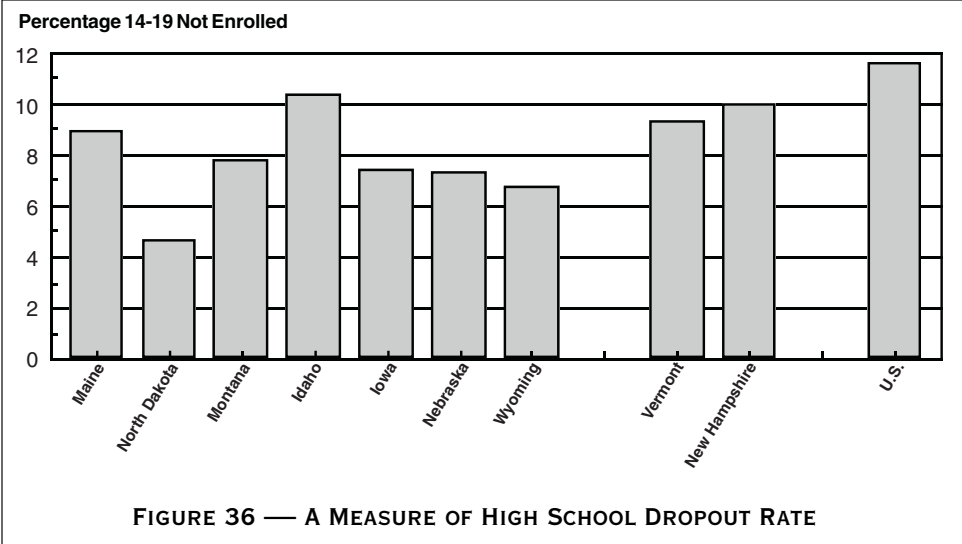
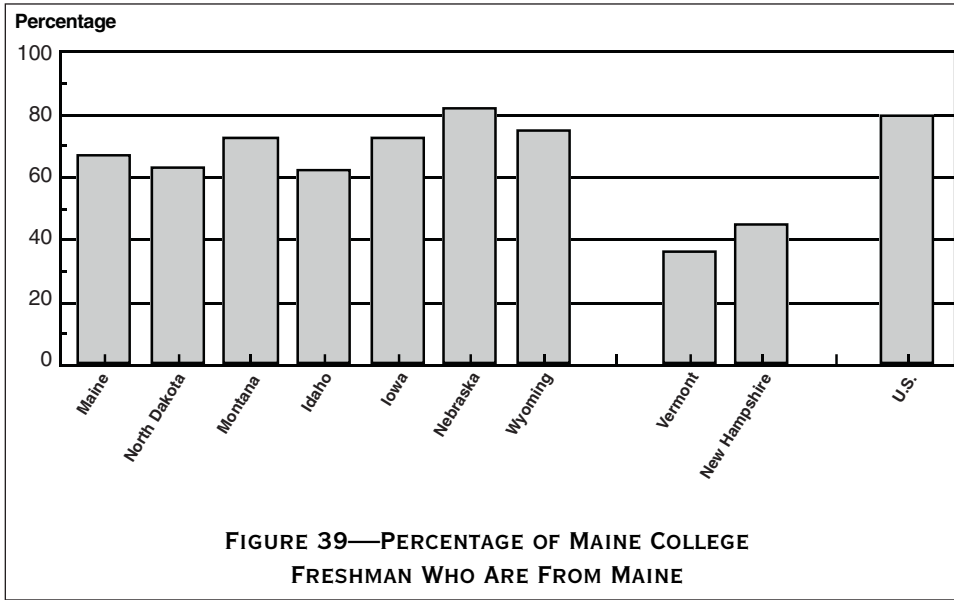


Figure 34 shows that Maine’s family income is around the national average. Figure 35 shows that while Maine has a lower percentage of single mothers than the national average, it is somewhat higher than states similar to Maine. This is one factor which lowers Maine family income. It is primarily these two factors- parental education and income which place states above Maine in expected educational performance.

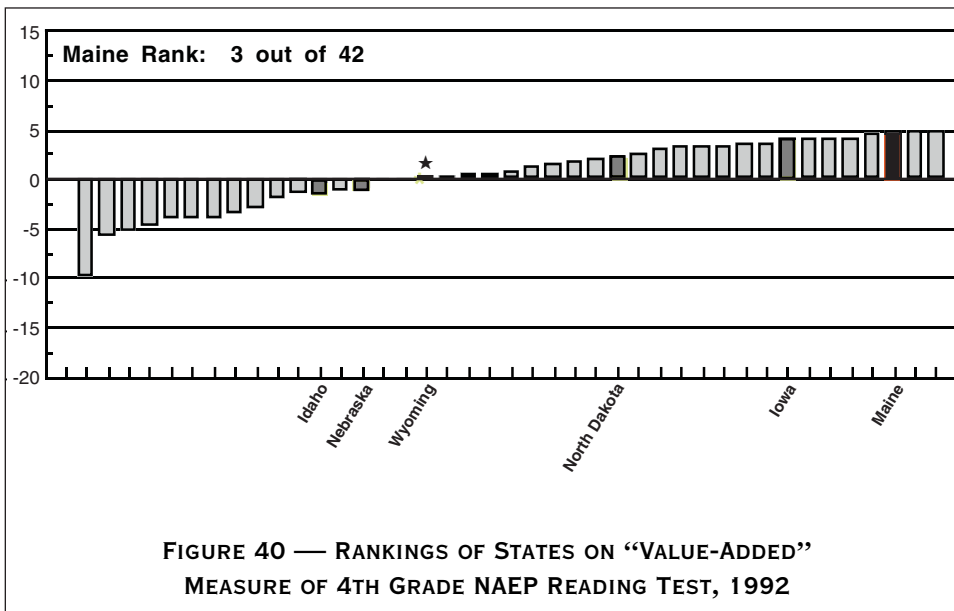


We look at two other educational achievement measures in Maine—high school dropout and college entrance. Maine has a high school dropout rate (Figure 36) much below the national average, but above most comparison states. Figure 37 also shows that Maine high school seniors enter college at a lower rate than the national average. Maine seniors who do go to college attend Maine colleges in lesser proportion than the national average (see Figure 38). Finally, the proportion of Maine college freshman who are from Maine is also below national averages. These figures paint a picture of superior performance at elementary school level, but perhaps some underachievement at higher levels. Current students seem to be duplicating the educational levels of their parents. It is not clear whether the lower college-going rates are connected to college entrance standards in Maine or its policies on accepting out-of-state students to the exclusion of Maine students.

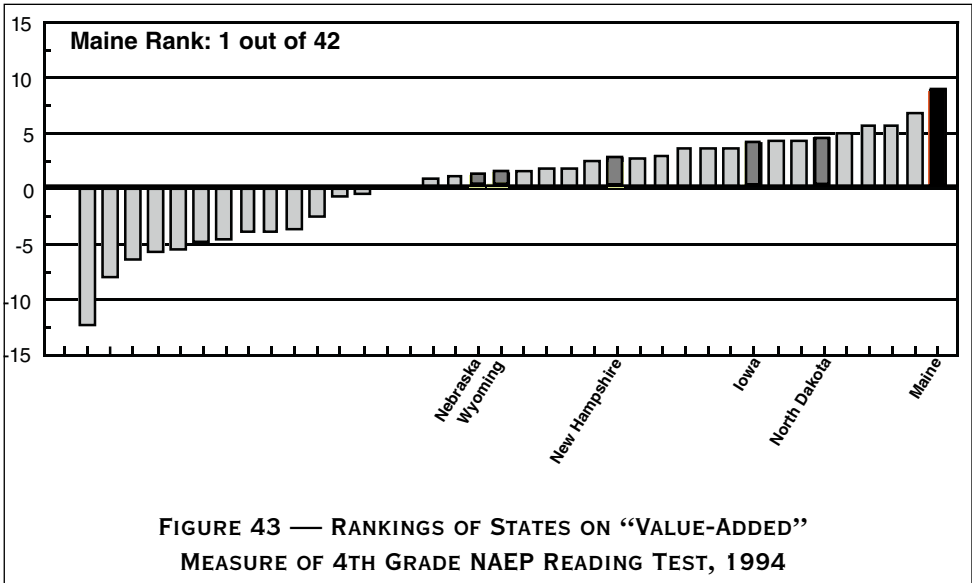
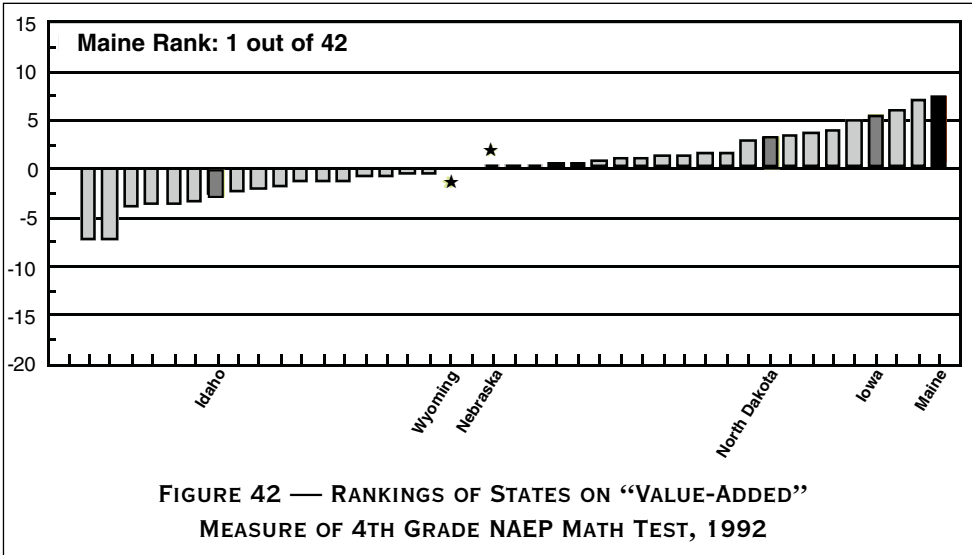
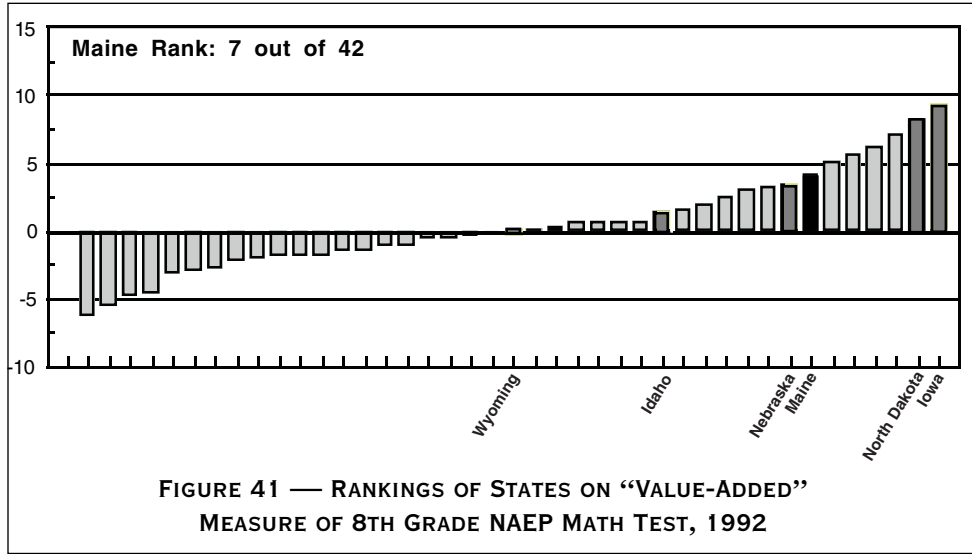




We now utilize these predicted family scores to derive a “value added” measure due to non-family factors in the state. To estimate this value-added measure, we first need to sort out that part of the scores that are due to family and demographic differences. The difference between the actual test score and the predicted score based on family/demographic characteristics can provide one estimate of this value-added measure.¹⁶ Figure 40-43 show estimates of this value added measure for the four tests.

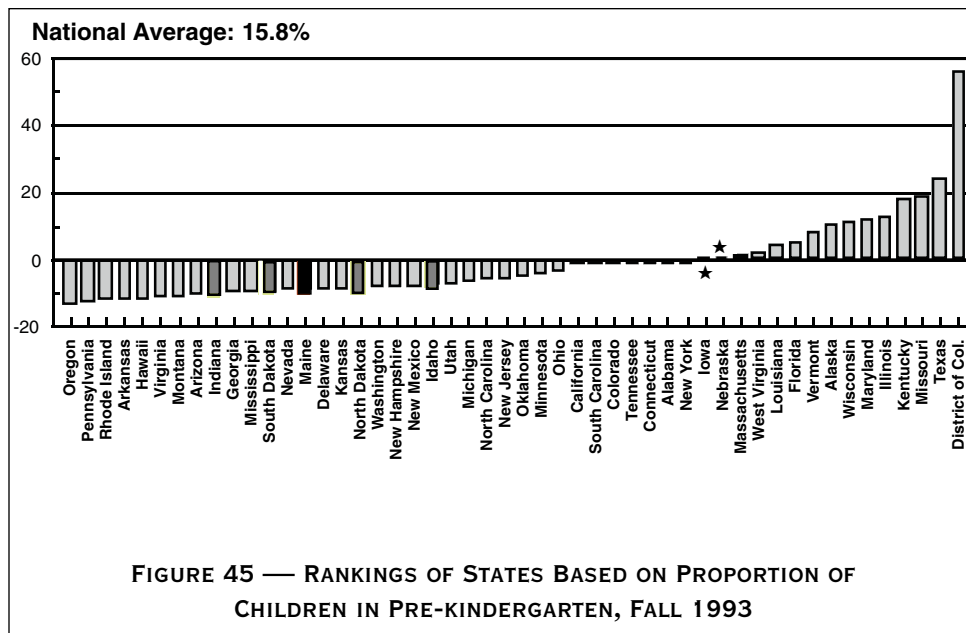
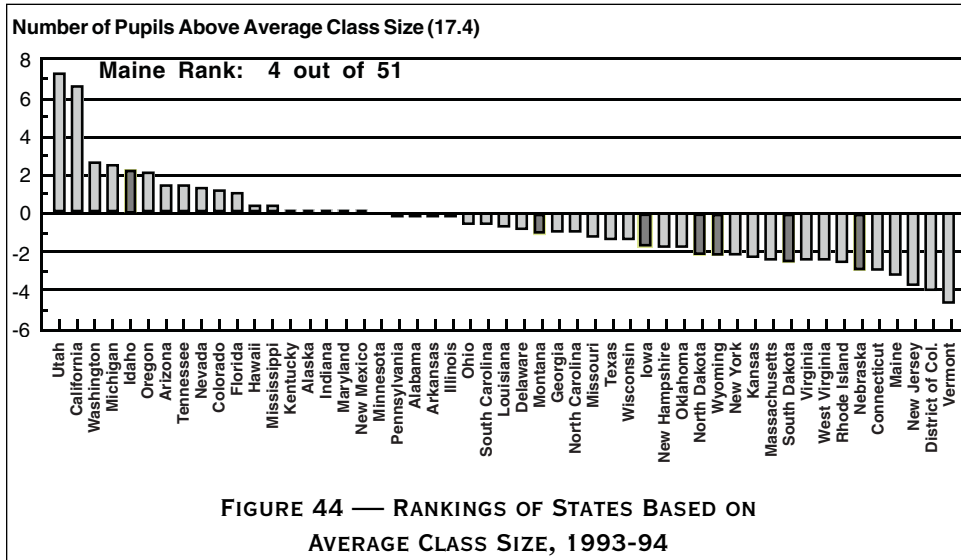


¹⁶ The results are preliminary and should not be quoted. Final results will be published in a RAND report in Spring, 1998.



Maine ranks near the top of states on our measures of value added. It ranks between first and seventh on the four tests. These rankings provide some evidence that the Maine educational and social welfare policies rank highly among the states in terms of value added. Thus Maine's high test scores are not just due to its family characteristics and demographics, but also to effective policies and schools.

Maine also ranks high with respect to states with similar characteristics. It always is ranked third or above among the six states with similar characteristics whose names are shown on the charts.

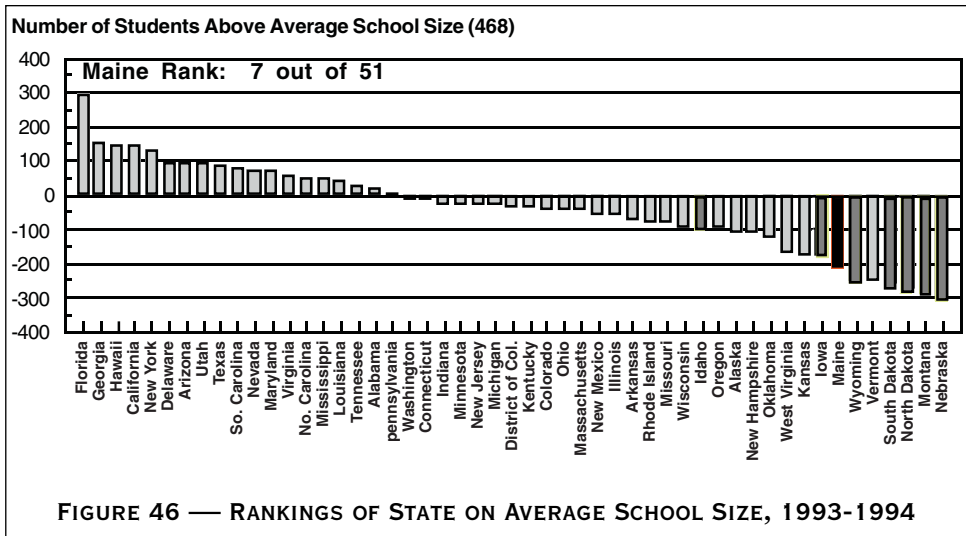


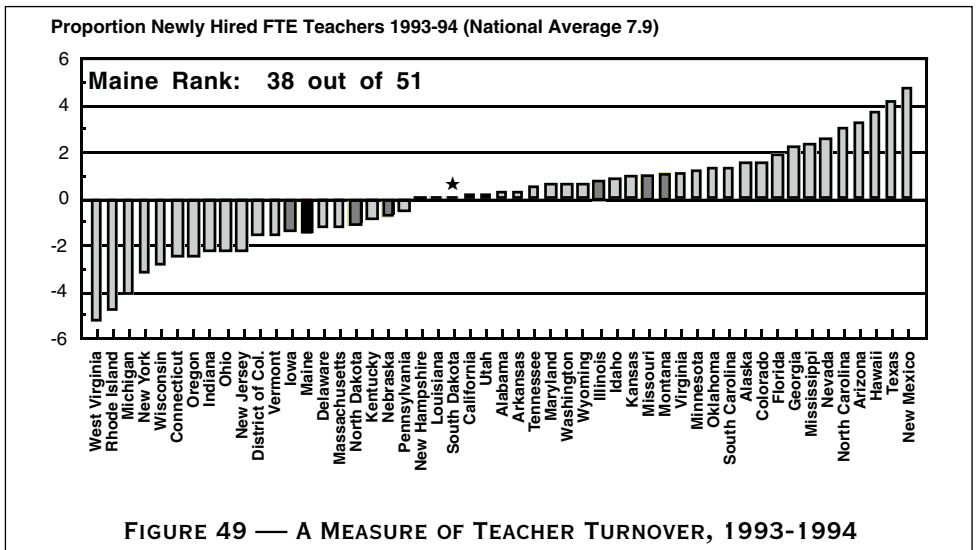
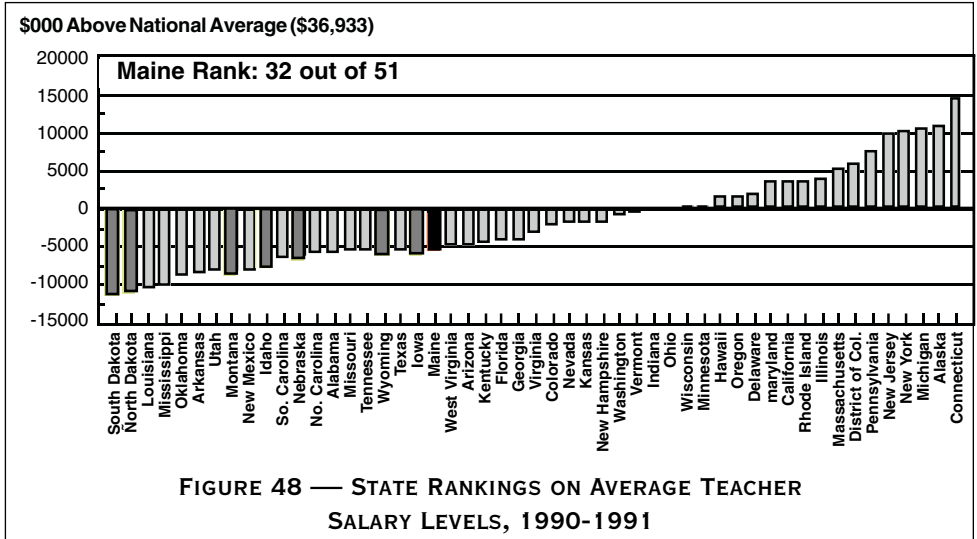
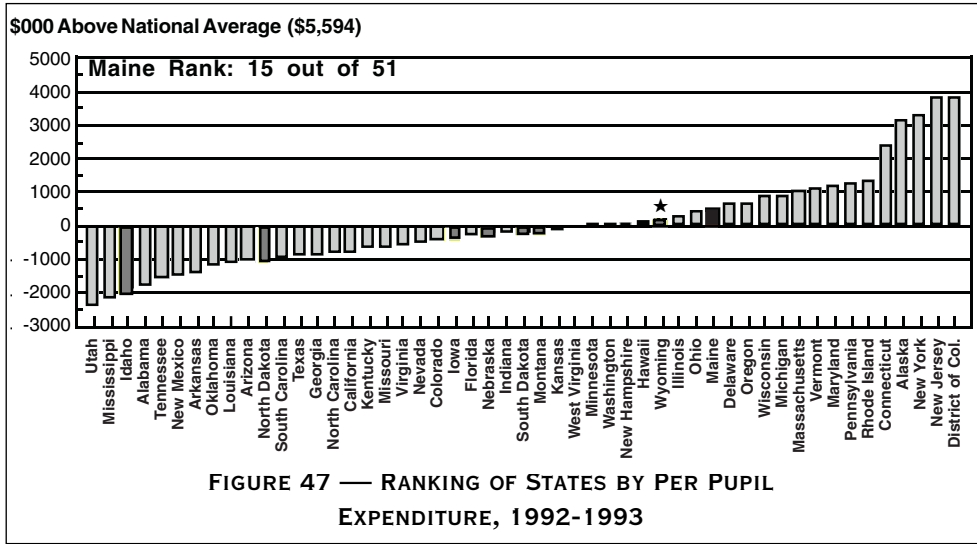
One reason states rank high in value added is lower class size. Maine ranks 4 out of 51 in elementary pupils per classroom teacher and this likely contributes to its higher value-added measures.

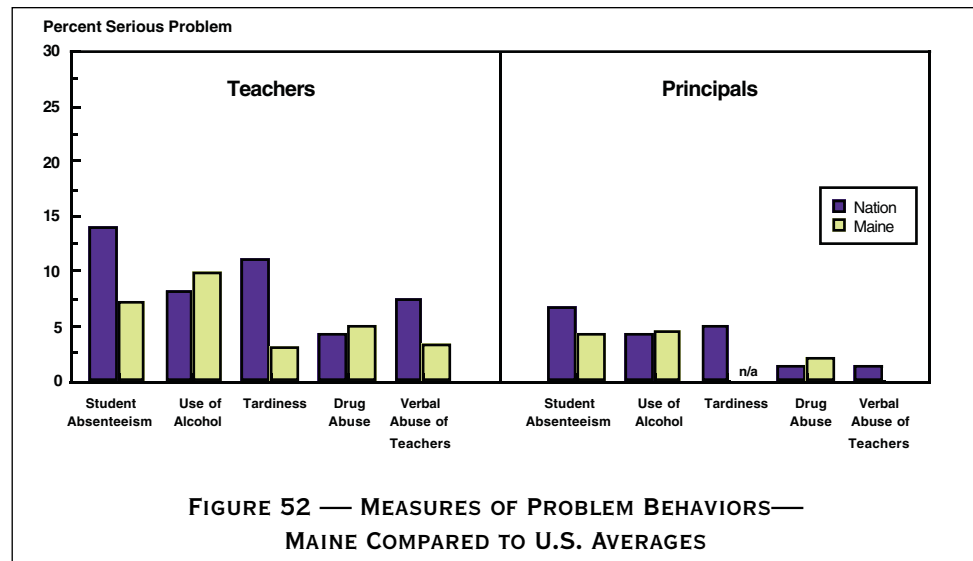
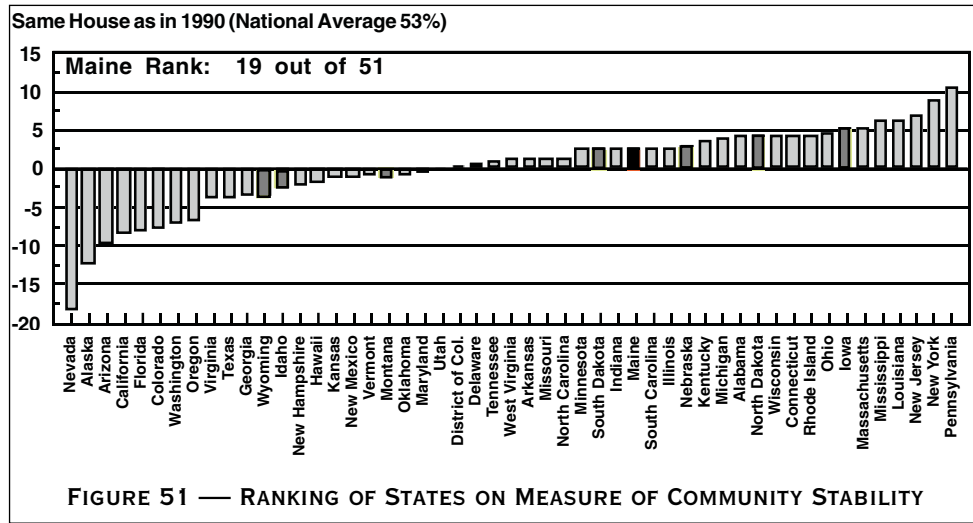
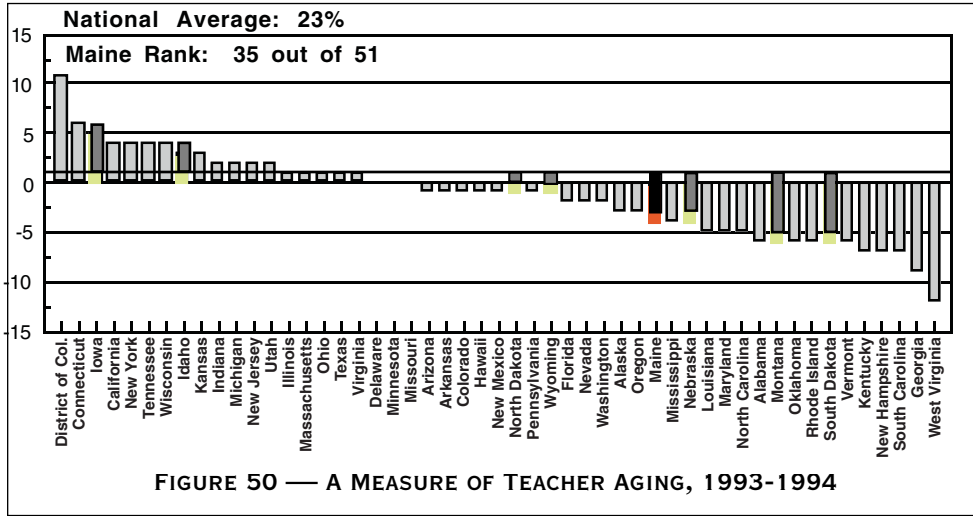
Other measures that we are examining that may help explain measures of the value-added include social welfare spending in the state, average school size, teacher salary, age of the teaching force, measures of student behavior, measures of community stability, and overall levels of spending. Figure 46 shows state ranking on average school size and Figure 47 shows ranking by per pupil expenditures. Maine schools are among the smallest in the nation, and its expenditures per pupil ranks 15th. However, Maine spends more per student than each of the comparison states—probably a factor in its success.

Figure 48 shows teacher salary levels which again shows Maine to have relatively low teacher salaries—but higher than all comparison states. Figure 49 shows its teachers also have a much lower level of turnover than most states- and also lower than almost all comparison states. Maine also does not have a high percentage of teachers over 50 (see Figure 50). Many states have high teacher salaries because of having a high percentage of older teachers.

Figure 51 shows a measure of community stability—the percentage of individuals living in the same house the previous year. Maine ranks 19 out of 51 on this community stability measure. Finally, student behavior is an important component of achievement. A nationwide survey of teachers with representative samples in each state were asked about the extent to which various types of problem behavior were present. Maine ranks far below national averages on absenteeism and tardiness, but higher on drug and alcohol usage. This higher than average perception of problems relating to drugs and alcohol may be due to actual usage, or to the fact that Maine teachers are more aware or sensitive to the problem.







DISCUSSION

The analyses discussed here of NAEP scores certainly do not support the more negative perceptions of declining student achievement, deteriorating families and schools, and failed educational and social programs. Rather it is consistent with a more positive picture of the average well-being of children, the quality of schools and families, and the likely effectiveness of certain equal educational opportunity policies and educational investment.

There is little doubt that achievement scores for black children made very significant gains between the early 1970s and 1992, while scores for non-Hispanic white students registered small gains. The black score gains cannot be accounted for by estimated gains that might be due to changes in the families. Black cohorts entering school in 1968 or before showed larger gains than cohorts entering school in approximately 1975-77. Since then, there have been no significant gains in black test scores—and some evidence of slight declines. However, the gains were for both reading and math and have persisted across age groups—and have been sustained for the most part. The score increases were larger in the South, but occurred across all regions. There is also little doubt that the family, school, and community environments improved for black students in this period.

National policies to desegregate schools, to address poverty, and increase investment in education all occurred in this period. Our regression analyses, despite being preliminary, suggest that the timing and regional pattern of the score gains were consistent with the expected timing and regional pattern of the effects of some of these programs. The analysis suggests that governmental efforts directed toward minority populations to provide equal opportunity in education and to invest through social and educational programs may provide gains in achievement scores. Clearly, much further work needs to be done to refine and extend these analyses.

Comparing states based on the raw, unadjusted NAEP scores also provides a misleading picture of the effectiveness of state educational policies and programs. This comparison places northern states near the top and southern states near the bottom. However, when differences in family and demographic characteristics are taken into account, a more complex pattern emerges. Measures of “value added” independent of family/demographic characteristics show some southern states ranking high and some northern states ranking low.

Maine does very well on ranking of value added—between first and seventh among the states participating in NAEP. It also does well when compared against states with similar rural populations.

The bottom line of our study is that more progress has been made in supporting children’s achievement than is typically believed. However, this does not mean that there are not distressed families and troubled schools that place children at risk. It is essential to paint an accurate picture of what we have achieved in the last 20 years, and what we have not, so that we can build on what has worked and make appropriate investments in families, schools, and children for continued progress.

C

IMPLICATIONS FOR MAINE

There are many implications of this new research for Maine in its effort to evaluate and improve its schools and social welfare system. First, new methods of analysis combined with new sources of data are beginning to show a consistent story of what has been accomplished over the last 25 years by American education and social policies. These results show that educational and social welfare policies are the most likely reason for significant increases among minority students. These results—if supported by further research—would indicate that the problems of educating at-risk students may be tractable, and that achievement scores may be one good measure of the effectiveness of educational and social policies directed toward families. Better research can also lead to more cost-effective use of funds by separating programs and spending that seem to be more effective.

Currently the NAEP test scores given in fourth grade to students in over 40 states provide perhaps a good direct comparative measure of the status of children among states. Scores on achievement tests reflect family characteristics and environment, the quality of schools and communities, the level of educational and social investment in children and families¹⁷ and social and educational policies governing access to schools, jobs, and health care. It is certainly desirable to collect many more measures of children's well-being, but a single test score measure does reflect much about the family, school, and community environment of children and overall investment in children.

Maine raw test scores place them near the top of states. However, the raw NAEP scores have little meaning in evaluating educational policies and social welfare programs—and caution should be exercised in attaching any significance to the raw scores. However, utilizing techniques to eliminate the differences attributable to different demographics and family characteristics can yield better measures comparable to other states about the effectiveness of educational and social welfare policies. On these adjusted value-added measures, Maine ranks near the top of all states in both math and verbal scores. This provides evidence that the superior performance appears to be not just due to Maine's demographic and family characteristics, but also due to its educational and social welfare policies. Maine's commitment to smaller class sizes is certainly a contributing factor to its success. The people, educators, and those involved with the social welfare system in Maine should take a great deal of pride in the performance of Maine's children compared to other states on the NAEP tests.

An equally valuable analysis would utilize the statewide tests given in Maine—utilizing similar techniques—to determine to what extent differences in scores among school districts are attributable to demographics/families or to different policies and programs in each district. Such analysis can reveal the effects of larger and smaller class sizes, increased levels of spending, and effects of specific other educational policies in districts. This value-added

¹⁷ We group maintaining minimal levels of nutrition, sanitation, and other basic health-related factors (birth weight) shown to affect achievement levels under social investment.

analysis has never been done at a state level in order to compare school districts or even schools—and Maine has the required data to support such an analysis. Such an analysis would probably reveal why differences occur in scores across districts—and what policies seem to be effective in boosting achievement scores.

Finally, some specific analysis directed toward what appear to be specific issues in Maine may be needed. The issues identified by our preliminary analysis of state data shows that Maine's high school dropout rate—while lower than the national average—is higher than most states with similar characteristics to Maine. Maine's youth also have lower college entrance rates than would be expected. Finally, like many states with large rural population, the teacher-reported problems from drug and alcohol use are higher than the national average. This may occur either because of actual higher usage or because teachers in Maine are more sensitive to perceived problems than in other states. These issues would take further research to arrive at firmer conclusions.

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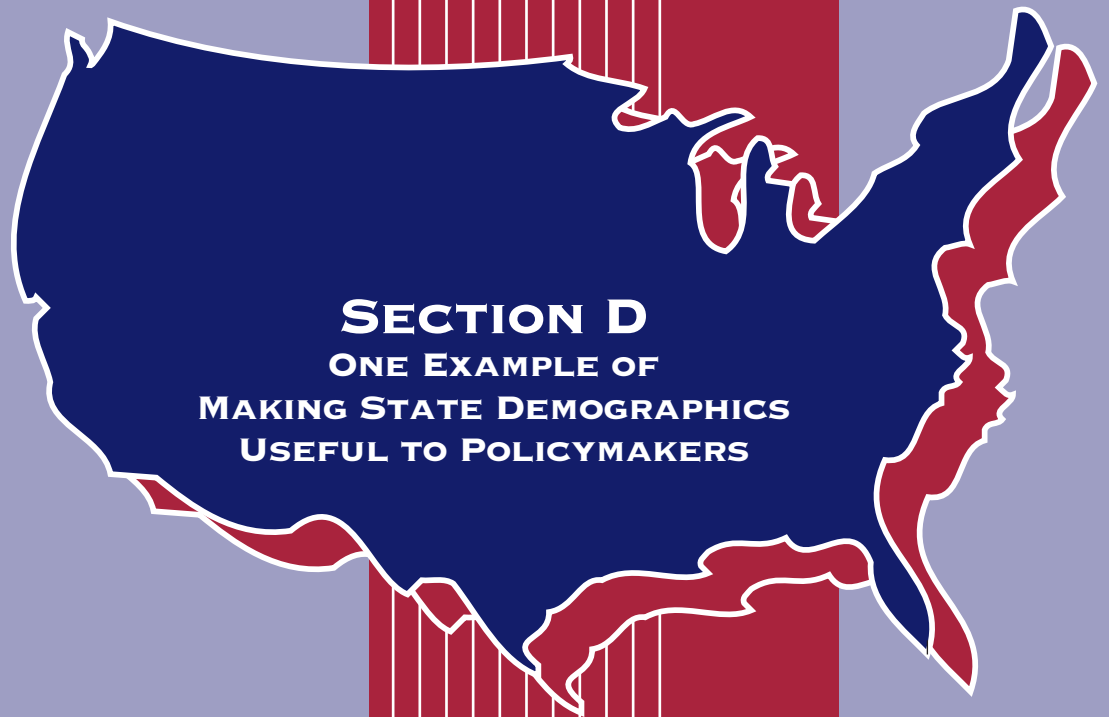
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SECTION D
ONE EXAMPLE OF
MAKING STATE DEMOGRAPHICS
USEFUL TO POLICYMAKERS

D

Alaska: The Demographic Context

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Prepared for
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Alaska: The Demographic Context

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A paper prepared for presentation to members of the Alaska State Legislature, May 24, 1996. This report was made possible with funds made available from the Danforth Foundation, St. Louis, Missouri. The information and recommendations, however, are the sole responsibility of the author. The author may be reached at the Institute for Educational Leadership, 1001 Connecticut Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 (202-822-8405)

D

INTRODUCTION

The point of this short paper is to attempt to organize a wide variety of information about Alaska into some new perspectives about the state that can be useful to leaders and policy makers. In that the data from demographics are non-debatable (if you were not born, you don't count), the field is very useful in this specific way.

For example, 80 percent of Pennsylvania's residents were born in Pennsylvania, while only 30 percent of Alaska's residents were born in Alaska. The difference is as night and day. People tend to bring their heritage to Alaska; Pennsylvanians have no other heritage. While there is a "clash of cultures" in Pennsylvania, it is tiny compared to states like Florida, Nevada, and Alaska. The higher the percent of residents who were born in the state, the greater the cohesion, the less the sense of transiency, the lower the crime rate, the easier to get consensus, the easier it is to trust your neighbor and raise your kids, the easier it is to trust political leaders, etc. In addition, the 30 percent of Alaskans who are native to the state represent an amazing diversity of tribal, ethnic, language, and community heritage. This diversity, spread over a giant geography, plus the diversity of in-migrants, makes consensus extremely difficult to achieve in the state.

Second, Alaska has the smallest percentage of older people in their population of any state—only 4.4 percent of Alaskans are over 65, while the U.S. average is 12.7 percent and Florida is almost 20 percent—one out of every five people. This means that the conflict between the needs of different generations is minimized in Alaska, as funds can be concentrated on the dependent young, given the small numbers of dependent elderly. (It also means that elderly voters, who tend not to favor programs for youth, are a smaller political force in Alaska than they are in Florida).

While no state is unique, Alaska comes very close. The two nondebatable facts above give a sense of how a reliable portrait can be developed from demographic data. The rest of this paper will attempt to complete the portrait.

D

POPULATION SIZE AND GROWTH: 1994

One of the reasons that Alaska tends to be either 1st or 50th in state ratings is that it has (a) a very small population, (b) growing very rapidly, and (c) spread out over a vast area. If a small number of Alaskans engage in any activity, the percentage goes up far more than the number of people. In 1970, Alaska ranked 50th in total population with 303,000 people, by 1980 it had grown 32.8 percent to 402,000, but still ranked 50th. By 1990, Alaska had 550,000 people, a growth rate of 36.9 percent, and had moved to 49th largest, Wyoming becoming 50th. By 1994, Alaska had 606,000 people, growing 10.2 percent in the four years, and ranking 48th, with Vermont now 49th and Wyoming 50th. Even though the number of people added to Alaska was tiny compared to people added to California, Texas, and Florida, the “big three,” the percentage of increase was greater in Alaska (except for 1970-1980 Florida).

POPULATION DENSITY AND URBAN-RURAL ISSUES

When we look at people per square mile, we also find very large differences—the U.S. went from 57.5 people per square mile in 1970 to 73.6 in 1994, New Jersey went from 966.6 in 1970 to 1,065.4 in 1994, while Alaska went from one-half person per square mile in 1970 to 1.1 persons in 1994! No mountain state comes close to this low density. Population density is an important factor in the cost of social service delivery—the lower the density, the higher the cost per delivery. If you are delivering Meals on Wheels in New Jersey, you can deliver 30 meals in 30 minutes in a large condo building. In many parts of Alaska, it would take three days to deliver 30 meals, given the distances and hard travel between places. In very low density areas, one building may serve as school, social center, counseling area, and health clinic as well as city hall. Similarly, one person may have to serve as teacher, counselor, social director, and nurse. The problem of delivering high-quality youth and family services in areas of very low density at a reasonable cost is as difficult in southern Utah or rural Arkansas as it is in non-metro Alaska—except that in Alaska, the “school bus” may have to be a light plane or hovercraft, and “school consolidation” is not the solution as it was, in part, in Texas.

Although in the U.S. about 80 percent of people live in metro areas, in Alaska it's only half as many—41.8 percent, leaving 60 percent of Alaskans in low density areas, difficult and expensive for the provision of services. (“Rural” usually connotes “farm,” which is incorrect, as only 1.8 million of our 60 million nonmetro citizens in the U.S. have a connection with farming, and in Alaska only 1,160 people are working the state's 574 farms, 539 of which are in Anchorage, Fairbanks, North Star, and Kenai Peninsula). By the year 2,000 (not far away), Alaska will have 699,000 citizens, and most of the over 100,000 new residents since 1990 will probably live in Fairbanks, Anchorage, or Juneau.

FERTILITY AND AGE

If Alaska has the smallest percentage of people over 65, it is likely to have the nation's highest birth rate, which indeed is the case! Of every 1,000 women in Alaska, there are 20.5 births per year. (The U.S. average is 16.3). There is no increase in people over 65, as is the case in most of the U.S., meaning that the state can plan on resources for the dependent young and dependent elderly at about the present proportion. From 1990-1994 in Alaska there were 49,000 births and 9,000 deaths, almost one death for five births. In the U.S., there is one death for every two births. Alaska's population is expanding not only because of young people moving in, but because of the number of babies produced by the residents. There is also variation in total number of babies born in 1992 between various ethnic groups in Alaska: 7,934 births to white mothers, 542 to black, 373 to Hispanic mothers. While NCHS does not give a number for Native Americans, total births were 11,726. The above three categories total 8849, leaving 2,880 for Asian mothers (a small number) and probably 2,500 for American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut.

HEALTH CARE

It also follows that if you have the youngest population, you will have the lowest death rates from cancer and heart disease, two disease groups that attack older people, and this also turns out—only 83 heart deaths per 100,000 people (50th) while the nation averages 286, and 88 cancer deaths (also 50th) with 204 as the national average. This has little to do with the quality and availability of health care, and almost everything on demographics! Health care is expensive in Alaska. The average cost of a patient per day is \$1,116 in 1992, the second highest rate in the nation. (California, the winner, had a cost of \$1,134 per day, not that far ahead of Alaska). One reason for the cost is the small number of beds actually occupied in hospitals—only 53.7 percent of hospital beds in Alaska are occupied on average, compared to 65.6 for the nation. Every unoccupied bed is also generating costs, but there is no one to bill these costs to. (New York, which is among the most expensive states for social services, has an 80 percent hospital bed occupancy rate; their costs for a hospital bed per day rank 24th, while costs for a student, a prisoner, an AFDC recipient, are among the top five). In addition, 14.9 percent of Alaska's citizens had no health insurance in 1992, the 17th highest in the nation. (In Hawaii, only 6.8 percent of residents have no health insurance.)

Health care is more expensive to deliver in sparsely populated areas than in high-density places. With 60 percent of Alaska's people living in low density areas, the cost of health care should go up more rapidly than the nation, regardless of what position the federal government (finally) takes on health care insurance and delivery. At the moment, the data look very good on quality of care, although many of the smaller jurisdictions in Alaska may not be reporting. It should be added that while Alaska had the lowest rates of cancer and heart fatalities in 1992, it also had the highest rate of deaths from "accidents and adverse effects," many of them involving alcohol, as well as a suicide in the top ten and a liver disease fatality rate which is the 5th highest in the U.S. Alcoholism remains the number one health issue in Alaska.

FINANCE

Alaska, while being the 48th largest state in population, has the 40th largest Gross State Product (GSP). The GSP is the total of all goods and services (wealth in the broadest sense) produced by the state, and this suggests that the state is doing well comparatively. Thus, Alaska ranked 6th in 1993 in disposable income per person, at \$20,306. (Most states with a lot of children are penalized on per capita measures, as you are dividing total income into a lot of "capitas" who are too young to work, making Alaska's high disposable income per capita even more positive). And on increase in disposable income from 1990-1993, Alaska ranked 46th. Other measures include the second highest labor force participation rates for men in 1993, at 81.2 percent of eligible males, and the 3rd highest rate for females, at 66.2 percent of eligibles.

On the other hand, Alaska also had the sixth highest unemployment rate in 1993, at 7.6 percent! In a very small state population, these can both be correct, as we indicated earlier. The business failure rate is half the U.S. average. Retail sales per household ranked 3rd in 1992, but on percent increase 1991-1992 in retail sales, Alaska ranked only 45th. What cannot be told from these numbers is the number of small Alaskan villages and tribal sites that are not represented in the Current Population Survey, the annual update of the decennial census. It seems safe to say that most of the economic indicators are favorable for Alaska, even given our caution as to ranks with small populations (on any rate per 100,000 in Alaska, you can only do five cuts and you have the entire state!) and possibility of undercounts in extremely isolated areas.

DIVERSITY

Much of the census counts only white, black and Hispanic, which is not a helpful situation in Alaska! Even when we can get a more comprehensive view, American Indian, Eskimo, and Aleut are usually lumped together into a single number. It would be useful to separate each of these three, but this is not always possible.

The 1992 Data Book indicates that of the 550,043 Alaskans in that year, 415,492 were white; 22,451 were black; 85,698 were Amerindian, Eskimo, or Aleut; 19,728 were Asian/Pacific Islanders; and 17,803 were Hispanics, who can be of any race.

In the Kids Count special publication on Asian, American Indian, and Hispanic children aged 0-18 but not including blacks, Alaska is reported as having 172,200 children in 1990; 6,200 are Asian/Pacific Islanders; 12,700 American Indians; 21,900 Alaskan Natives; and (surprisingly) 6,500 Hispanics of whom 2,800 were Mexican and 1,100 were Puerto Rican in origin; and about 124,000 non-Hispanic whites. (The ERC study shows 146,000 white children in 1993; 9,000 black kids; 9,000 Hispanics; 9,000 Asian/Pacific Islanders; and 44,000 Amerindians, Eskimos, and Aleuts.) With these data, the basically optimistic view of the state's entire population begins to shift.

While all 172,000 Alaskan children live in homes with family income averaging \$40,800, there is great variation. Asian kids live in families with income levels averaging \$45,900 (Japanese at \$72,100, Vietnamese at \$36,400), while Amerindians are in \$30,700 families and Alaskan Natives are at only \$27,200. (There is no way to break out Eskimo/Aleut populations.) Ten percent of all Alaskan children are below the poverty line, but only 2 percent of Asian kids (Vietnamese are 40 percent poor, however), 19 percent of Amerindians, 24 percent of Alaskan Natives, and 10 percent of Hispanics (Cuban kids, only 300 of them, are 53 percent below the poverty line). ERS reports that there are 4,788 white school age kids in poverty, and 4,911 Amerindian, Eskimo, and Aleut children. While the numbers are about the same, the population of white children is three times that of Amerindians and Alaskan natives.

While 10 percent of all Alaskan kids age 16-19 are high school dropouts, 14 percent of Amerindians, 13 percent of Alaskan Natives, 3 percent of Asian (but 70 percent of the 500 Chinese kids), and 17 percent of Hispanics have dropped out of school.

One of the most important indicators of childhood poverty is being raised by a single mother who is usually working (one or more) part-time and low paying jobs. Twenty percent of all Alaskan kids are in female-headed households, but 36 percent of Amerindian and 30 percent of Alaskan Native children are, along with 17 percent of Hispanic and 14 percent of Asian kids.

It is clear that poverty is not distributed equally by ethnicity in Alaska or anywhere else. However, all poor Alaskan children are not in rural villages, as we shall see in the next paragraph. In fact, of the state's 587,766 people in 1992, 245,866 live in the city of Anchorage (the 65th largest city in the U.S.), while 33,221 live in Fairbanks City, and 28,364 are in Juneau City. Of the state's 587,766 people, 307,451 live in our three cities. All three cities grew more than 40 percent from 1980-1992. Of the 415,492 whites in the state, 226,622 lived in the three cities, with Anchorage alone getting 182,736. Of the 22,451 blacks in Alaska, 18,833 lived in the three cities, while of the 19,728 Asians in Alaska, 13,077 lived there.

When we get to Amerindian, Eskimo, or Aleut, things change, as a majority do not live in the three cities—of 85,6698 Alaskans with this ethnicity only 20,861, or about a quarter, live in our three cities. School enrollments are also about half in cities—of the state's 103,827 school enrollments in 1990, 49,530 were in Alaska's three cities. Of Alaska's 245,379 workers in 1990, 137,149 were in cities, but Anchorage alone was 111,242. Although crime is usually thought of as a city matter, of the 32,499 serious crimes known to the police in 1991, 19,559 occurred in the three cities, with Anchorage at 15,686. Of the 47,906 Alaskans below the poverty line in 1990, 15,614 lived in Anchorage, 2963 in Fairbanks, and 1,468 in Juneau—20,045 or about half of Alaska's poverty citizens. While 10.9 percent of Alaska's children under 18 were in poverty, 8.9 percent of Anchorage's children were, 12.6 percent of Fairbanks' kids and 6.9 percent of Juneau's. On the other side, while 18.6 percent of Alaska households had

more than \$75,000 in household income, Anchorage had 21.5 percent, Fairbanks only 9.7, and Juneau 22 percent. Both wealth and poverty can be found in Alaska's cities, but not in extreme amounts.

Because education is usually strongly related to household income, it is worth pointing out that while 23 percent of Alaska's people have a B.A. degree; 26.9 percent of Anchorage adults, 18.3 percent of Fairbanks, and 30.7 percent of Juneau adults possess the B.A. Because female-headed households are likely to be poor, there is concern for the children in the 17,565 female-headed households in the state. Anchorage has 7,983 female heads, Fairbanks has 1,023, and Juneau has 1,048, or 10,054 of the state's 17,565 female heads. Over 75 percent of Alaska's 17,565 female-headed households have children under 18 living in them, while only 59 percent of Alaska's 109,100 married couple households have children at home. The three cities reflect this statewide trend almost exactly.

D

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

Alaska is a state with enormous differences in population density. There is also considerable population diversity by ethnicity and culture, plus vast geographical distances between people. No “cookie cutter” approach to coordinating social services, with a single state model implemented by a top-down structure, would work in Alaska. The conviction to improve the lives of families and children should be statewide; the carrying out of that conviction should be tailor-made to the needs of individual communities. On the other hand, things are not total chaos—the three largest cities have rather parallel problems and issues, there is probably some commonality in the Aleutian peoples and those in Nome, Yukon, and many other sectors. (Only those living in the state can have this kind of knowledge, outsiders can only speculate. The number of cultures, languages, and communities is as vast as the geography).

While the state looks healthy on most indicators—educational level of the people, jobs, household income, physical health, crime rates, birth rates for starters, there is a sense that in Alaska, some people fall through the cracks without anyone knowing about it. In the cities the needs of various ethnic groups, of those in poverty, of families coming apart, of abused children, etc., are probably easier to recognize, problems can be prevented, patterns of successful service delivery can be developed. While the provision of social services gets more complex in very small, isolated areas with unique cultures and traditions, the urgency for having high-quality services may also be greater, in communities with limited physical, fiscal, and staff resources as well as the tradition of “We keep our problems to ourselves, we don’t share them with outsiders.” Alcohol-related problems remain a crucial issue for the state, its families, and children, creating violence and death, domestic strife, poorly performing workers, and a variety of other problems. While there are tribal issues here, alcoholism rates appear to be higher for a variety of Alaska populations, and should not be seen exclusively as “the Indian problem.” In addition, the teen pregnancy rate is above the U.S. average, as is the percent of 16- to 19-year-olds “without portfolio”—not in school, not in the military, not working. The teen violent death rate (probably alcohol related) is the second highest in the U.S.; the percent of single parent households is the 9th highest in the U.S. and increasing.

All of these problems respond to the prevention agenda, cheaper and more effective than “cures” like hospitals, jails, detox centers, and juvenile detention facilities. While the state should, and must, spell out the prevention agenda, local communities must implement the prevention agenda consistently with the people, languages, and cultures in each local setting. If you think prevention is expensive, try “deferring maintenance” on Alaska’s human resources and check out the costs!

D

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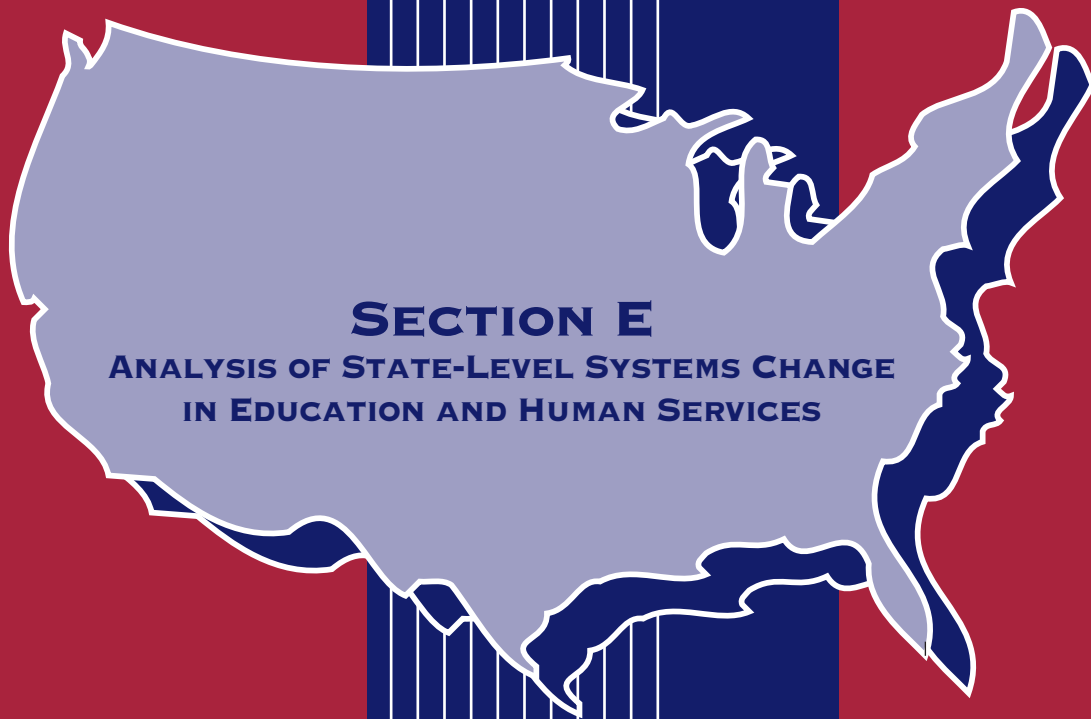
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D



SECTION E
ANALYSIS OF STATE-LEVEL SYSTEMS CHANGE
IN EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES

E

Analysis of State-Level System Change in Education and Human Services

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E

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This guide was prepared under funding from the Danforth Foundation. The guide was prepared by Beverly Parsons, Executive Director of InSites with contributions from the staff of the Education Commission of the States, especially Alex Medler. Appreciation is expressed to the staff of the Education Commission of the States, the National Conference of State Legislatures, the National Governors' Association, and the Danforth Foundation for their review and input throughout the development process. The continuum of system change presented in the document builds on a continuum developed by Parsons in 1991 for the Education Commission of the States under NSF Grant TPE 9150166 directed by Jane Armstrong. InSites is a Colorado-based non-profit 501(c)3 organization that conducts research and evaluation and provides technical assistance to educational and social institutions/agencies and policymakers engaged in major change within their social systems.

E

INTRODUCTION

The materials in this guide are intended for seminar use by teams seeking to bring about fundamental change in education and human services in state systems. The materials assume that the seminar facilitator is quite familiar with system change concepts, and is well-versed in effective group process practices. The guide provides some background materials on system change, but does not provide specific materials regarding group process practices, since they are quite readily available from other sources. Building effective teams is a major purpose of the seminar. The materials also assume that the team members represent a broad mix of roles within the systems under consideration, including the beneficiaries of the systems.

The materials are designed with the expectation that they will be used in a one-day intensive team seminar. However, they are formatted in segments to allow the facilitator to readily adapt them to other time arrangements. They are also formatted with the expectation that facilitators will differ considerably in the amount of time they think is appropriate to spend on a given topic for their particular group. *It is further assumed that a facilitator would observe a seminar or receive training prior to using these materials.*

The materials are presented in four sections:

- **Facilitator's Guide:** The Guide presents a suggested format for organizing a one-day session with a team responsible for bringing about change in their education and human services systems.
- **Background Readings:** The readings are designed for the facilitator rather than team members. However, there may be cases when the readings would be appropriate for the team.
- **Transparencies:** The transparencies are for use by the facilitator during the session. The facilitator may wish to copy them as handouts for the team members.
- **Handouts:** These materials are designed for distribution to the team members. Some are an abbreviated version of a background reading while others are materials to be used as part of an activity.

E

OVERVIEW

The seminar is divided into nine segments.

- I. Opening Events
- II. Introduction to System Change
- III. Underlying Principles of System Change in Education and Human Services
- IV. Identifying Desired System and Results
- V. A Continuum of System Change—An Overview
- VI. Examples of System Change
- VII. Building Your Own Continuum of System Change
- VIII. Connecting Today's Work with Future Sessions
- IX. Wrap-Up

The seminar is intended to help people first understand what system change is and why it is important. Secondly, participants analyze their current education and human services systems to understand existing, and often invisible, characteristics that affect how one proceeds to change the social systems.

Once this basic understanding is achieved, participants engage in activities to develop a picture of what their desired system would accomplish and how it would function.

With this end in mind, participants then investigate how to move from the current situation to the desired situation. They look at the stages of system change and the nature of change for various types of people involved in the process. They use a "Continuum of System Change" to guide this process. Then they modify the general continuum presented here to fit their situation. This information is used as the team moves to planning specific actions to bring about desired change.

The expectation is that the seminar will help participants develop a shared understanding of their current education and human services systems and options for moving to systems that better meet their needs.

Below is a map of the materials (background readings, transparencies, and handouts), and how they tie to the segments of the seminar. The three columns on the right contain materials' page numbers within this volume.

	Background Readings	Transparencies	Handouts
	Page	Page	Page
I. Opening Events			
A. Introduction			
B. Purposes for the Day			
C. Processes for the Day			
II. Introduction to System Change			
A. Why Change Systems?			
B. Definitions of System Change	E-17	E-34 (#1)	
III. Principles of System Change in Education and Human Services			
IV. Identifying Desired System and Results			
A. Introduction		E-34 (#2-5)	E-38
B. Group Task			
V. A Continuum of System Change—An Overview			
A. Introduction	E-21		E-39
B. Stages of System Change	E-24	E-35 (#6)	
C. Participants in System Change	E-27	E-36 (#7)	
VI. Examples of System Change			
A. Partial Continuum – Standards			E-42
B. Full System			E-44
VII. Building your Own Continuum of System Change			
A. Introduction			E-46
B. Group Task			
VIII. Connecting Today's Work with Future Sessions			
IX. Wrap-Up			
A. Evaluation			E-48
B. Other			

FIGURE 1 – SEMINAR MATERIALS MAP

SEMINAR ACTIVITIES

This seminar is used to broaden the team's thinking about the strategies for facilitating system change. Such information can then be used as the team develops a specific action plan for change.

This format is offered simply as a suggestion to the facilitator. Each facilitator can develop a seminar design drawing from these materials and ideas. The Seminar Materials Map (Figure 1) links background readings, transparencies, and handouts to each segment of the seminar. The background readings are organized for each seminar segment and provide the content for the facilitator to use.

Following training in the use of these materials, it is essential that the facilitator review the background readings, transparencies, and handouts for each segment of the session to determine how the segment would best be designed for the particular situation.

Logistics

Materials

The following materials are needed for the seminar:

- Blank transparencies
- Flip chart paper for groups
- Flip chart with stand
- Masking tape
- Colored pens (1 per table and several for facilitators)
- Overhead projector

Room Arrangement

Have people seated around one large table, the outside of a u-table configuration, or around several round or rectangular tables. (The choice depends upon the number of people, work within the groups, and interaction between groups.)

I. Opening Events (15-60 minutes)

Introductions — Ensure that everyone knows each other. Introductions may be used to become familiar with others' perspectives and/or backgrounds. There are many ways of doing such introductions. Review books on group process skills if you want examples.

Purposes — Explain that the purpose is to develop strong team functioning and a shared understanding of system change, and to set the stage for developing an action plan for system change.

Processes — Explain the processes and agenda for the day. Handle any general ground rules and expectations for how the group will work together. Again, review books on group process for effective ways to establish ground rules and group expectations.

II. Introduction to System Change (30-90 minutes)

Why Change Systems? — Engage the group in a brainstorming session to identify why they think changes are necessary in their education and human services systems. This is a vital piece. If they aren't convinced change is necessary in their situation, the rest is of little meaning.

Definitions of System Change — This segment helps build an understanding of what system change is. (See background reading for definitions.) You may wish to start with general brainstorming to see what definitions people currently have.

III. Principles of System Change in Education and Human Services (60 minutes)

The transparency (#1) for this segment can be used to illustrate how certain principles or assumptions (often unspoken/unrecognized), underlie system functions. It is essential to recognize the fundamental principles that currently exist and those that need to change to undertake system change. The background readings include principles that various groups have suggested be changed. See Definition 3 in background reading entitled "Definitions of System Change." Have the group develop its own list and examples.

IV. Identifying Desired System and Results (30-90 minutes)

Introduction — Use four transparencies (#2-5) to show likely changes in system structures as well as changes in the desired results to be accomplished by the education and human services systems. The handout has information on this.

Group Task: Discuss the desired type of system and the desired results. Indicate that the ideas discussed will be used at the end of the day to build a continuum of system change.

V. Continuum of System Change—An Overview (30-60 minutes)

This section begins with a mini-lecture; detail depends on the group. The suggested approach is a 15 to 20 minute background of the concept of a continuum of system change showing the stages of change and the roles of various groups in the change process. Then allow for questions and discussion.

Introduction — See the background reading for introductory ideas.

Stages of System Change — See the transparency (#6) and background reading for resources.

Participants in System Change — A transparency (#7) and background reading are provided. A summary handout is provided that covers both the Stages and Participants of System Change.

VI. Examples of System Change (1-3 hours)

An example of a continuum of system change is provided which uses one system change lever—Standards. This example illustrates the stages of change for the various participants in order to fundamentally change the system related to how standards are used.

The second example is of full system change with the particular end results described in the final column of the continuum. This example incorporates current thinking among reformers about the desired features of systems that bring together education and human services in the best interests of children, youth, and families. Since a consensus has not been reached on the desired system, this continuum is provided as an example; it is expected that teams will build their own continuum, drawing on the day's discussions.

Standards

The handout is an example of the continuum using only standards of what students should know and be able to do. This does not constitute full system change. Rather, its purpose is to show that any one change has implications for all parts of the system.

Group Task: Have participants review the continuum example and place their state on each row. Discuss the implications of this configuration.

There are many ways to do this task. Here is one way.

Create mixed-role groups of approximately six people. (Another option is to have same-role groups, who then compare perspectives in the system.)

Reproduce the continuum on a very large wall chart (4' x 6') with only rows and columns of the matrix indicated. Have groups put sticky notes on each cell indicating the position of their state in terms of the stages of system change. (Perhaps use different colors for different groups, especially if groups represent single-role groups.) Discuss the patterns. The background reading provides major points for discussion.

The marks should be placed where most of the same type people are (the rows in the continuum); another option is to draw a line across several stages to show the spread, darkening the line where most people are.

Full System

This example incorporates many features of the education and human services systems that may need to change.

Group Task: There are many possible ways to use the full system continuum. For example:

Discuss the right-hand column explaining that it describes the type of system that is this continuum's goal. Have groups discuss similarities/differences with their goal. Draw from the discussion in Section III of the seminar.

In small groups have participants place their state within this continuum (as they did for the standards example), modifying the right-hand column as well as any preceding cells in the rows to fit their revised goal.

Discuss the patterns of this more complex situation. (See background reading on “Patterns within the Continuum.”) Emphasize that these results are preliminary, not intended as definitive state patterns. They are to be used to stimulate thinking and probably raise as many questions as they answer.

VII. Building Your Own Continuum of System Change (15 minutes)

A blank continuum is provided for teams to use, although it is likely that people will prefer to take the full example and modify it.

Introduction — The idea is to have a continuum that roughly depicts the team’s current vision of the desired system, to be used in future team meetings as they develop an action plan for change.

Group Task: It is unlikely that the full group will engage in building their own continuum. Rather, have the group identify a task force of three to five people to work on a draft, drawing upon all of the team’s work for the day.

VIII. Connecting Today’s Work with Future Sessions (30 minutes)

Conduct a group discussion about the implications of their work for use in future meetings or at other events, particularly the development of specific action plans for desired change. Where they placed their state on the continuum will help determine what next steps to take to move toward their desired system.

IX. Wrap-Up (15 minutes)

Evaluation — Ask participants to complete the evaluation form.

Other — Other wrap-up activities as appropriate.

BACKGROUND READINGS

This section contains readings for facilitators. It is expected that facilitators will draw from these materials as well as from their own experience and research to present comments on each topic appropriate for the particular group.

Please refer to *Figure 1 — Seminar Materials Map*, to determine the relationship between these materials and each segment of the seminar.

DEFINITIONS OF SYSTEM CHANGE

Different definitions exist for the term “system” or “systemic change;” shown below are five to consider. Groups working on system change are encouraged to develop their own definition, which would likely include portions of the following.

Definition 1 — Changing Multiple Parts of the System

One of the earliest notions of system change was that changing only one part of the system was inadequate; many system aspects need to change. However up until the 80s when such interventions were being attempted, specialists in each part of the system worked in their corner of the world with little concern or attention to what others were doing. Consequently, one change could easily cancel the positive effects of another.

Definition 2 — Recognizing Interconnections among Parts of the System

Soon people realized that attention needed to be given to the interconnections among the parts of the system, and the interactions among changes within those parts. In the late 80s when the term “system change” began to gain considerable popularity, the term was typically used to draw attention to the connections among the parts of the system.

Definition 3 — Changing the Fundamental Design Features of the System

Once the interconnections within the system were recognized, people moved to an even more significant meaning of system change. They realized that deep and often unrecognized principles, values, and beliefs define the system. If we are to have significant change, these features must change.

Examples:

What Students Should Know and Be Able to Do. When the current education system was established back in the early 1900s, people primarily focused on students gaining basic reading, writing, and arithmetic skills as well as knowledge in other areas. Although those things are still desirable, we have added a whole new level of learning that schools are expected to help provide. Given the increasing complexity of society, people also want students to be able to apply basic knowledge and

skills to complex situations, to be decision makers, problem solvers, and able to access information.

Designing the System around Learning Instead of Teaching. Another example of the shift from the old system to the new is in how we view teaching and learning. When the education system was established, the main mode of teaching was delivery of information. It was expected that if the teacher stood up in front of the class and delivered information to the students, they would learn. Over the years much research has been done about how people learn. Recent research shows that if we want students to acquire the higher-level skills of application, integration of information, decision making, and solving complex problems, a different type of learning situation is needed. Students need to be interacting with other people as well as with information. They need projects where they are pulling information together from many different sources and looking at how to apply it in meaningful and practical situations. Such an approach to learning means that the teacher plays a very different role—no longer lecturing the class, but rather serving as a facilitator, coach, and guide as students work on projects and tasks, both collectively and individually.

This shift is illustrated by the story of the man who got a new dog. One day he was walking his dog down the street and he ran into his neighbor, Bill. He said, “Guess what! I taught my dog how to talk!” “Well, that is incredible,” Bill said. “Have him say a few words.” Response: “Oh, I just taught him. He didn’t learn.”

Similarly our education system has focused on teaching rather than learning. Therefore, another approach is to design features of the system (e.g., accountability), based on what students are to learn rather than certain actions of the teachers.

Crisis Orientation vs. Prevention. Much of human services’ current focus is on crisis intervention, whereas in the future it will be developing prevention of crises. Such an orientation implies different services from the system.

Multidirectional Rather than Unidirectional Information Flow. Many of today’s organizations are built on the factory model of organization, in which people at the top do most of the thinking and pass down orders to others in the system. Today we realize that such a system does not work for many of the things we need to accomplish. More often now, organizing is horizontal with people at all levels expected to think, integrate information, and accomplish tasks. Information does not flow only top to bottom, but in many different directions due to technological change and our general information society.

When considering changes in underlying principles of a system, frequently we are not totally eliminating one principle and replacing it with another. Rather the balance and emphases are shifting. For example, when teachers become coaches and facilitators of student learning rather than deliverers of information, it does not mean that teachers never lecture under the new sys-

tem, but rather that lecture is no longer the primary mode of teaching. Likewise, when the human services system emphasizes prevention, it does not mean that it no longer deals with crises intervention.

Here are other examples of shifts in the fundamental design of the system. You are encouraged to review the list for examples that seem appropriate for your situation.

Attributes of Current Prevailing System

individual-centered
input-driven
remediation-emphasis
centralized
categorical services and funding
institutionally-based
credentialed professionals providing services
culturally and linguistically neutral
unchanging over time
input-regulated accountability

Desired Attributes

family-centered
outcome-driven
prevention-emphasis
decentralized
integrated blended services and funding
community-based
teams of professionals and non-professionals providing services
culturally and linguistically responsive
evolving, flexible
outcome-oriented accountability

Definition 4 — Recognizing the Process of Change

In the early 90s the definition of system change developed further. As we realized how long it takes to fundamentally change a system, we began to look at the stages within the change process, leading to yet another dimension of system change. As a system moves from one method to another, people tend to go through somewhat definable stages until the new system becomes dominant.

Early on the focus is on maintaining the old system. People assume that if they improve what they have always done, all will be well. Gradually they become aware that different things are needed, but they are not sure what. Next people tend to move into an exploration stage where they try out new ways of doing things and look for the fundamental differences, patterns, actions, and ways of operating. As these fundamentals become clear, and examples of different methods lead to desired results, people move into the transition stage—they are ready to commit to a new way of doing business. This requires that they let go of old ways of doing things. Up to now, they have been able to add the new. Now they cannot proceed without relinquishing the old, counterproductive ways. Unless they do so they won't have the resources and energy to engage in the new over the long term.

Once these deep transitions take place, people move into a period where the new emerging infrastructure is evident. Others who may have been unwilling until this time, become convinced of a better way, or at least that a new way will be rewarded and expected. Finally, people enter the period where there is a predominance of the new system. The new system is never fully locked in place, because as people approach the desired system, it is obvious that even more change is desirable.

This definition of system change is discussed in greater detail later.

Definition 5 — Moving All Categories of Adopters of the New System

Another definition of system change focuses on the well-researched phenomenon of distinct categories of people based on how they respond to innovations. This definition derives largely from the research of Everett Rogers (1983) and has been accumulating for approximately 30 years. Rogers identifies five types of responses. (The percentage in parentheses indicates the typical percentage of people that fall into each category.):

Innovators: Innovators tend to be venturesome, eager to try new ideas. They are not troubled by setbacks and incomplete ideas or methods. They tend to network quickly outside their local circles. (About 3%)

Early Adopters: Early adopters are more a part of the local social system and contain local opinion leaders. They are not as far ahead of the average individual as innovators and are more trusted locally. (About 13%)

Early Majority: This type adopts new ideas just before the average person. They seldom hold leadership positions. They tend to deliberate for quite some time before adopting an innovation. The time it takes them to decide to adopt an innovation is longer than that of early adopters and innovators. (About 34%)

Late Majority: This type adopts a new idea just after the average person. They often don't adopt until it is an economic necessity and until there is growing peer pressure to do so. They tend to have scarce resources and want to be sure a new idea is well developed before they risk change. (About 34%)

Laggards: Laggards are the last to adopt innovation. They are not opinion leaders and tend to be isolated. Their point of reference is the past. (About 16%)

If a system is to be significantly changed on a large scale, nearly all of these categories of people need to be functioning under the mode of the new system.

INTRODUCTION TO CONTINUUM OF SYSTEM CHANGE

In 1987, staff at the Education Commission of the States¹ began to look seriously at the notion of system change. They realized that the U.S. was running into a serious problem as pressure built to change the education system. State education and political leaders focused on increasing mandates and control, while school reformers built on a different set of research and knowledge regarding needed changes in schools—one of greater flexibility and involvement at the classroom level. Therefore they decided to find a way to bring together both lines of thinking, to better understand how to change the whole system, based upon the best support for student learning.

ECS established a partnership with the Coalition of Essential Schools (CES) based at Brown University and headed by TheodoreSizer, one of today's leading high school reformers. He had conducted extensive research during the early 80s which led to what the Coalition calls the "Nine Common Principles" about teaching and learning. These principles include:

- Students should be the workers, and the teacher the coach
- The school should have an intellectual focus
- There should be simple and universal goals for all students

The partnership initiated by ECS and CES initially included five states—it has now expanded to more than a dozen. The states agreed to each have at least 10 schools participate, along with district and state leaders who would work together in making changes from school house to state house. People involved in the partnership learned a tremendous amount about the stages people go through as they make change, and some of the most effective strategies.

With this starting point, the staff at ECS and InSites continued to learn about the stages of change that systems undergo. By 1992, they had evolved a continuum of change from maintaining the old education system to creating a system that had the characteristics (discussed earlier), for improved teaching and learning. The continuum also partitioned the system into six categories for understanding the dynamics of system change. (See Figure 2.)

In 1993, InSites began to develop a continuum of system change that included both the education and human services systems. For the Danforth Foundation-sponsored Policymakers' Institute that summer we used the education continuum plus some human services features. For the 1994 institute, we significantly revised the continuum for a better balance between education and human services. It was difficult to construct a continuum that adequately depicts the system-change process and components when looking at the two systems jointly.

¹ ECS is an interstate compact. All the states except Montana belong to it. Its purpose is to work primarily with state leaders, governors, legislators, state department people, and leaders in higher education on state education policy and leadership. The author of this guide worked at ECS from 1982-1991 before joining InSites.

Stages of Change

ELEMENTS OF CHANGE	MAINTENANCE OF OLD SYSTEM →	AWARENESS →	EXPLORING →
VISION	<p>Vision reflects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning based on seat time • Teaching as lecture • Mandates and inputs • Education system separate from other systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple stakeholders realize need to change from old system, but unclear on what to change to • Strategic plans, study group reports from influential groups call for fundamental changes getting some attention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternatives to old system begin to emerge in piecemeal fashion • Stakeholder groups promote new ideas about parts of the system • New examples visited/debated • Growing numbers and types of stakeholders being drawn together around change
PUBLIC AND POLITICAL SUPPORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support generally taken for granted • Only becomes of concern when finances are needed • Public informed, not engaged, by educators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports on need for changes in education discussed among policymakers, in news media • Public forums on need for change with input from public encouraged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task forces formed to recommend changes for district, school • Political/public opinion leaders speaking out on selected issues • Minor resource allocations to explore possibilities • Public involvement in redefining desired student learning outcomes
NETWORKS, NETWORKING, AND PARTNERSHIPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking among peers often seen as subversive or insignificant • A few teachers within schools begin to network • Partnerships are one-shot, supplemental 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition of value of networking as a way of learning new operations of education system • A critical mass of teachers in a school explore joining restructuring networks • Realization that partnerships need to be longer term and more integral to school mission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networks (including electronic) used as a way to speed up sharing of information and new ideas • Networks joined across schools, districts, states • Whole schools join networks • School leaders begin conversations with potential partners on core educational issues
TEACHING AND LEARNING CHANGES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasis placed on using standard curriculum, instruction, assessment methods more rigorously • High attention to standardized test results and ways to raise scores 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition that traditional teaching and learning methods are not based on current research about learning • Recognition by administrators, public, teachers that education problems are due to social, economic, technological changes that are broader than education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual schools, teachers, districts debating and committing resources to learning and using new ways of teaching • Multi-person and multiyear commitments to try new teaching and learning approaches • New modes of assessing learning explored, developed • Learning outcomes being defined
ADMINISTRATIVE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	<p>Role/responsibility seen as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diminish conflict • Emphasize standardization of approaches, following rules, regulations • Serve as major channel, source of information • Top-down decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrators (at all levels) recognize need to change roles to better support change and learning by teachers • New roles, responsibilities for administration discussed • Media attention on innovative leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site-based decision making (SBDM) approaches piloted • Professional development for administrators focuses on new roles/responsibilities • Bureaucratic layers questions, vacant positions not filled • Administration learning to allocate resources to support learning outcomes
POLICY ALIGNMENT	<p>State, district policy emphasizes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textbook selection • Standardization of instruction methods • Standardized test, comparisons among schools on student achievement • Hierarchical organizational structure • Program evaluation results used as bias for blaming and fault finding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition that standardized tests not measuring all desired learning outcomes • Attention directed to performance assessment to support desired • Recognition that low achievement may be due to broader conditions rather than poor teaching • Debates on how to use policy to help lead reform rather than force change • Waivers to regulations made available to promote experimentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools, districts, states explore new modes of student assessment • Policies debated, enacted, piloted to define graduation based on demonstrated learning rather than courses taken • New policies piloted on curriculum frameworks with higher learning for all

FIGURE 2 — CONTINUUM OF SYSTEM CHANGE IN EDUCATION

Stages of Change

→ TRANSITIONING	→ EMERGING NEW INFRASTRUCTURE	→ PREDOMINANCE OF NEW SYSTEM	ELEMENTS OF CHANGE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emerging consensus on new system components Old components disparaged/shed Need for linkages of new components within system is understood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continual vision development seen as major force for change Vision includes student outcomes, system structure, underlying beliefs Recognition of need for continual refinement, development of vision with expanded stakeholder involvement 	<p>Broad agreement that in the desired system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All students can learn at higher levels Learning means achieving and applying skills, knowledge Teacher as coach, critic, facilitator Distributed decision making Vision-setting leadership Connections to other social systems 	VISION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public debate on specific changes with mixed support Opinion leaders campaign for change Resistant groups vocal More resources allocated for innovation Diversity of population recognized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing commissions, task forces established to maintain momentum for change as political leaders come and go Resources for innovation are ongoing with emphasis on meeting diverse student needs Public engaged in change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public, political, business involvement and connection seen as essential feature of system Allocation of resources based on new vision supported 	PUBLIC AND POLITICAL SUPPORT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognition that networks are a long-term feature of a less hierarchical system Debates on how the district can support ongoing networks Disenfranchised groups (e.g., teachers, ethnic groups) use networks for long-term empowerment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Networks seen as accepted practice Networks act as major source of new knowledge Empowerment issues debated Multiple partners support vision and student learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources allocated for networks Effective network operations developed Networks serve as communication and information channels Empowerment issues being resolved 	NETWORKS, NETWORKING AND PARTNERSHIPS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant numbers of teachers, schools, districts intensely trying new approaches Teachers given time for planning Recognition of depth of change needed and difficulty, time and resources required Teachers convinced it's not a fad Changes being assessed 	<p>For significant numbers of schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> State, district teaching/learning assessments encourage continual improvement, recognize uneven progress Graduation based on demonstrations of established learning outcomes Teaching methods actively engage students Heavy and ongoing involvement in teacher development 	<p>For most schools in district it's the norm:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To have students actively engaged in learning Student assessments how continual improvement on skills, knowledge established in vision as desired outcomes Outcome focus used in teacher and administrator preparation programs 	TEACHING AND LEARNING CHANGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Methods of distributing decision making to lower organizational levels developed Emphasis on outcomes to be achieved with flexibility in how they are achieved Allocates resources to support continual learning by teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrators hired using new criteria for leadership/management Policy supports SBDM Required school-community councils Teachers responsible for instructional decisions Infrastructure supports school change to match vision 	<p>Administrators expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage rethinking, improvement Encourage flexibility in approaches to meet needs of all students Allocate resources to support student learning rather than rigid categories Determine SBDM for learning, equity 	ADMINISTRATIVE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task forces define student learning outcomes, frequently based on national standards Policies enacted that give schools latitude to redesign their teaching and learning approaches Recognition that all policy needs review to determine what system it supports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exit learning outcomes developed by broad-based stakeholder groups at state, district, school levels; outcomes emphasize problem solving, more complex learning for all Multiple means of measuring student learning used; inclusion of demonstrated skills, knowledge Major review of policy for realignment to support new system Policies across education, health, social services, etc. interconnected 	<p>Policy at school, district, state supports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing rethinking, continual improvement Allocating resources to support student learning Curriculum frameworks with high student standards Learning outcomes guide decisions at all levels of system including classroom Flexible instructional materials/methods to meet diverse student needs Alternative modes of assessment 	POLICY ALIGNMENT

FIGURE 2 — CONTINUUM OF SYSTEM CHANGE IN EDUCATION

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However, as the consensus about needed changes has continued to shift and develop within and between the education and human services systems, and as more and more research and theory about system change has been published, we have further synthesized the ideas to create a current depiction of the process. (See “Full Continuum of System Change in Education and Human Services” in the Handouts section.)

The next section of the background readings describes the two dimensions of the continuum—stages of system change and categories of participants in system change. These sections are designed to explain the two handouts: “Partial Continuum of System Change in Education and Human Services: An Example – Standards” and “Full Continuum of System Change in Education and Human Services.” The Partial Continuum uses one feature for system change—standards for student learning. This continuum is designed to help teams understand the basic ideas of the continuum. The Full Continuum provides a fuller picture of system change. This continuum is designed as a starting point for state teams. It is expected that each team will modify it to depict their new desired system.

STAGES OF SYSTEM CHANGE

As an organization/system attempts to change from one state of being to another, we find six roughly definable stages during the progression to the new system’s dominance.

Stage 1 — Maintenance of the Old System

In this stage, people try to improve what they were already doing. They tend to say, “Well, we know that we could do this a little bit better. If we just try harder, I’m sure it will work.” Soon they realize there is something to the adage: “If you always do what you’ve always done, you always get what you always got.” Gradually they begin to say, “Maybe there is something that we need to do differently. Maybe this just doesn’t work.” At this point they begin to enter the Awareness stage.

Stage 2 — Awareness

In this stage, people are aware that what they have been doing is inadequate and that there must be something better. This can be frightening because they recognize the need to give up the familiar, and yet don’t know what to do instead. The awareness can also create a sense of guilt and unhappiness with past performance. Guilt and blaming one another often characterize this stage. For example, as teachers learn about other teaching strategies they may feel that they have failed or have damaged children in the past by teaching in less effective learning methods. Other people may start blaming one another. Teachers and service providers blame the administration, administration blames front line workers, and the front line workers blame students and parents.

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Eventually people realize that blaming and guilt do not help. They begin to look at the alternative practices and become more open to the possibility of their own change. This leads into the Exploration stage.

Stage 3 — Exploration

During Exploration, people begin to pick up on new ideas from many sources; this can take different forms. One method to move into this stage is to visit other schools and communities to observe new practices. Simply talking about the new ideas can be insufficient; people need to observe the practices in operation or, at the very least, by watching videotapes of new practices. Visits are most helpful because of dialogue with their counterparts which gives a more in-depth view of how practices have changed.

Another way to move people into Stage 3 is to set up study groups within the school or agency. These groups identify and read articles on new practices and then discuss what they have read and how to apply it to their situation.

These conversations are extremely important both at the Awareness and the Exploration stages. They show how we learn through interaction (whether adults or children), and that adults' discussion time leads to changes in the mental image and modelling of good teaching, service, administration, or other practice. The ground rules of effective dialogue become particularly important here (see Senge, 1990).

Another useful activity is to encourage people in all parts of the system to actually try out some new approaches. The idea is for different approaches to spring up among those who are interested in trying new things. Some teachers may be exploring cooperative learning; others may be involved in site-based management approaches; others may look at different ways to engage students in conducting projects; and still others may try performance assessment with projects and portfolios instead of multiple choice tests. Service providers may try shifting toward an emphasis on prevention or work out ways that teams could provide better beneficiary service. The focus of this stage is for people to understand at a deeper level, and experience how it works for their situation.

A couple of precautions during this stage: a common problem has been that people adopt one technique on the basis that it will solve the problems of the system; then they often advocate this approach and criticize others for not using it. This undermines the environment of trust and encouragement for learning that is essential to progress. Another problem that can occur is when people try too many things. This results in practices that are tested at only a superficial level instead of at the depth required to judge the usefulness of the approach in their situation.

During the Exploration stage, people often reach a point where so many things are happening that they can't put it all together. They try to choose one technique over another and don't recognize fundamental themes running through many of these approaches.

People need to identify themes and common assumptions that provide the basis for designing their new system. For example, teachers who use cooperative learning may realize that students arrive at jointly shared solutions which are better than individually developed ones. Similarly, a principal who uses site-based management may find that better decisions are made by teachers whose perspective is deeper because of being in the classroom. Teachers are more committed to solutions they understand because they have helped to work them out.

As the Exploration stage progresses, people look more deeply at the commonalities of effective practices and fundamentals that are the characteristics of the new system.

Stage 4 — Transition

People now move into the Transition stage. At this point people begin to make a commitment to some new practices. Until now they have been able to try new things and keep the old. If critics become concerned about new practices, the reformers can lean back on the old approaches. However, in the Transition stage they begin to realize they can't do both. They are faced with the adage "The politics of subtraction are much more difficult than the politics of addition."

Until now it has been relatively easy to keep adding new practices. Perhaps they have been able to find teachers or others in the system willing to contribute extra time (probably with little pay) to try something new. However, now they realize this cannot continue as the main operational mode. Some practices must be eliminated because of cost and because of the confusion they create. Therefore, this stage is characterized by hard decisions of what to keep and discard, personnel requirements, and budget allocations.

Stage 5 — Emerging New Fundamentals

As people move into this stage, they begin to make real commitments to new practices. One indication of commitment is when new teachers or administrators are hired based on criteria reflecting new operating methods. Another indication is when resources are allocated to support new practices, rather than to maintain the old.

A key example is when resources are allocated based on student results rather than on traditional budget categories. At this stage we tend to see 20-30% of schools or communities committed to using new practices and policies.

Stage 6 — Predominance of the New System

This stage is called "Predominance of the New System" rather than "New System," because as people move closer to their vision of a new system they begin to see beyond to even better possibilities.

Consider the story of a city fellow who went to the country looking for Joe Jones' house. He stopped at a farmhouse and asked the woman who answered the door if she knew where Joe Jones lived. "Oh yes," she said, "just go three Cs down this road and turn left." "Three Cs?" he asked. "What do you mean

by that?” “Well,” she said, “you go once as far as you can see, and then you do it again, and then again, and then you turn left.” So too with the shaping of our vision of education and human services. We get a vision as far as we can see based on what our current knowledge is. As we get closer, we see something over the horizon that is even more intriguing and seems more appropriate.

At this point it is unrealistic to expect that everyone will have adopted the “new system” as defined. A state could be considered to be at this stage when about 65-85% of communities are operating according to the definition of the new system.

A continually evolving picture of our direction seems to be a characteristic that will be with us for a long time. Our period of history has so many changes, that we need to become accustomed to change.

PARTICIPANTS IN SYSTEM CHANGE

People within certain roles and functions define which units of the system are involved in the stages of change. There are a number of ways to group the participants; here are two collective units and five roles played by individuals. The units and roles remain despite the design and desired results of the system.

The two collective units of the system are:

- System leadership
- School/community

The roles of individuals within the system are:

- System beneficiaries (children, youth, and families, or students within the context of their families)
- Front line workers (teachers and service providers)
- Administrators
- Policymakers
- Public

Below is a brief description of individual and collective system participants and how they tend to move through the stages of system change. The descriptions draw on an extensive body of research (see Readings on System Change). The descriptions assume that people are moving toward a system defined by characteristics most commonly promoted by reformers.

Collective Units of the System

The nature of the leadership of the system and the norms of the school and community are key elements to track in the process of system change.

System Leadership

A key to system change is leadership evolution as the system changes. Evolution in the leadership from the typical old education and human services systems to the new one(s) is characterized by a shift from:

- heavy hierarchy and bureaucracy to shared and distributed leadership throughout the systems
- one-way communication to multi-directional communication with extensive use of networks and partnerships
- large top-down organizations to smaller partnered and networked organizations
- decision making detached from the beneficiary to decision making open to and connected with the beneficiary
- focus on inputs and activities to focus on results

School/Community Units

Extensive research shows that although individuals must change, there is a shared set of implicit or explicit norms that shape individual change. These norms tend to be particularly defined within a school or community. Thus, one needs to look at the progression of change. As schools and communities shift from the old systems to new ones, they tend to be characterized by a shift from:

- repeating patterns of the past to consciously looking at past patterns and making judgments as to whether these are patterns they want to continue
- a focus on the past to a focus on the future
- a focus on problems and weaknesses to a focus on strengths, assets, and possibilities
- little attention to results for the beneficiaries to major attention on how the system impacts the results for beneficiaries

Individual Participants in the System

Individuals within the system can be grouped by the predominant role they play in relation to the education and human services system.

System Beneficiaries

Beneficiaries' perception of their relationship to the system is a key aspect of system change—and one that is often overlooked. Beneficiaries are often seen as passive recipients rather than active participants in the shape and function of the system. In fact, this is the dominant change that occurs in the shift from the old system to the new—the beneficiaries shift from passive, powerless consumers with little responsibility to actively involved participants with power to influence the system and the commensurate responsibility to achieve desirable results.

Frontline Workers

Teachers, social workers, and other human service providers have the most direct contact with the system's beneficiaries. The way they function and view their roles and responsibilities has a major impact on whether and how the systems change. The front line workers undergo a shift from:

- delivering information or services to a role as coach, mentor, and supporter of the beneficiaries' learning and growth
- assuming responsibility for following rules and regulations to assuming responsibility for supporting the accomplishment of the desired results of the system
- viewing themselves as authorities to viewing themselves as partners with beneficiaries and communities in the accomplishment of results
- viewing their responsibilities as within a narrow specialty to seeing themselves as partners with other service providers in helping the beneficiary view the situation holistically (recognize the interconnections between multiple needs)
- having limited access to information to having broad access to information

Administrators

New systems tend to be characterized by a different type of administration. We look both at how the administrative functions change and who the administrators are.

- **Functions:** Administration moves from a fairly passive role of ensuring that rules and regulations made by policymakers are followed to ensuring that desired results are being achieved by system beneficiaries. This may mean that resource allocation decisions are made by front-line workers and at the community or school level rather than higher up in the system. Those decisions are made to achieve desired results, while leaving considerable flexibility for frontline workers, beneficiaries, communities, and schools to decide the best ways to achieve results.

Accountability under the new system focuses on results, leaving considerable flexibility for local people to determine the methods used to achieve those results. Administrators shift from protecting turf and resources to working in partnership with others to use their collective resources and power bases to serve the beneficiary. Administrators must also think systemically while acting locally. They must look at both short-term and long-term impacts, and examine how actions taken for one purpose impact other parts of the system.

- **Administrative Tasks:** Responsibility for administrative functions is also likely to change. Rather than certain people having a strictly administrative position, administrative tasks are likely to be distributed among a broader group of people. For example, those with a predominately frontline role may have a certain amount of their time desig-

nated to administrative functions, thus reducing the distance between service and administration.

Policymakers

Policies establish the broad framework and parameters of how a system functions and what it is intended to accomplish. The process of policymaking shifts from the old system to the new system in several ways. For example, policy shifts from:

- being driven by bureaucratic convenience and maintenance to achieving desired results
- being segmented and uncoordinated across systems to coordinated and systemic
- having a heavy emphasis on mandates to strategic use of incentives and waivers as well as mandates
- being highly directive at the state and federal levels to state and federal policy setting broader parameters within which effective local policy can be made
- having a focus on compliance with rules and regulations to a focus on results

Public

The role of the public also changes from the old system to the new. The old systems tended to be quite closed to public influence; the major mode of public influence was through the election of people to various policy positions. The new systems are more open, allowing significant public involvement to shape desired results and operation modes to fit the community's needs and values. The new systems are more accountable to the public regarding operation and achievement.

PATTERNS WITHIN THE CONTINUUM

Once the group has identified where their state is on each row of the continuum, reflect on the patterns that appear. Some pioneers are needed within and across groups who help propel the whole system forward; this creates an ongoing dynamic through the system. There is no right way to move the system toward the new configuration. Policymakers may lead in some cases, schools in others, and communities in yet others. The trick is to keep deepening the dialogue within and among groups to improve the quality of changes implemented and to clarify the basic principles upon which the new system rests.

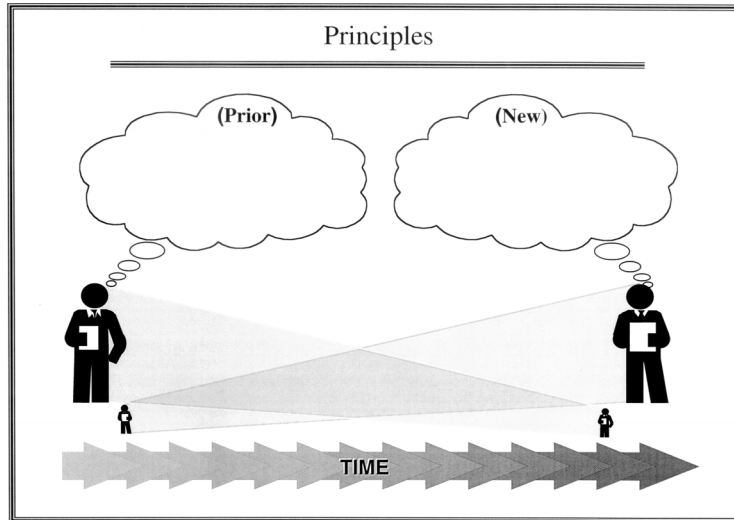
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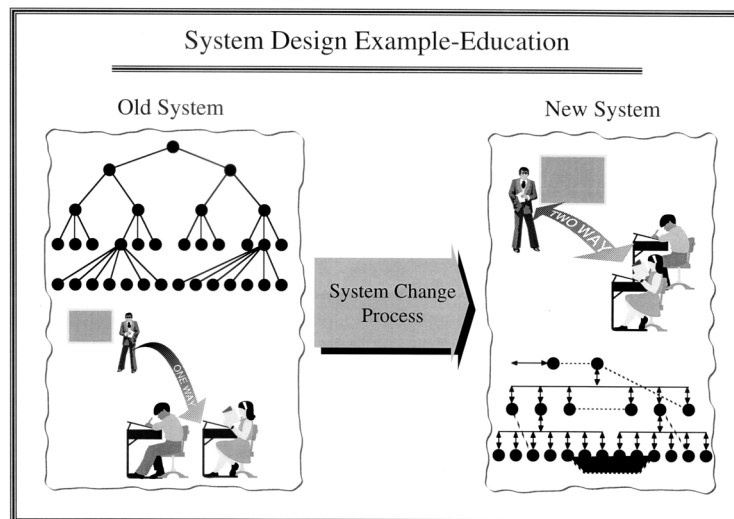
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TRANSPARENCIES

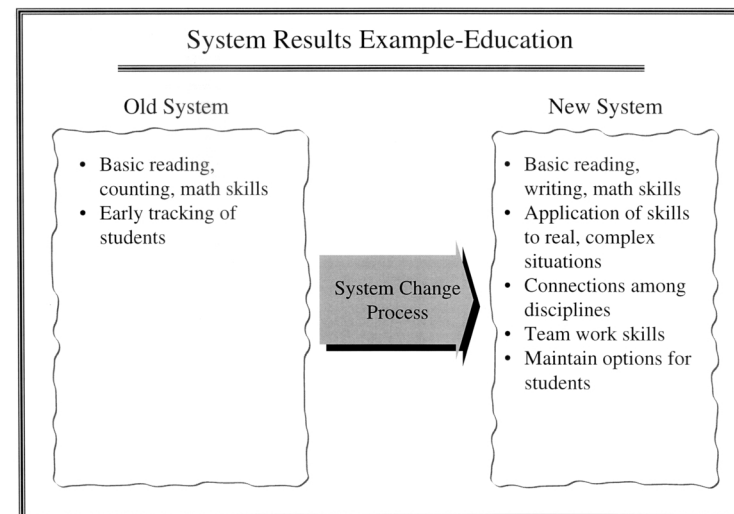
This section contains transparencies for facilitators to use during the session. The facilitator should feel free to modify them as appropriate for the particular group. All transparencies relate to a segment of the seminar as indicated on the Seminar Materials Map (Figure 1).



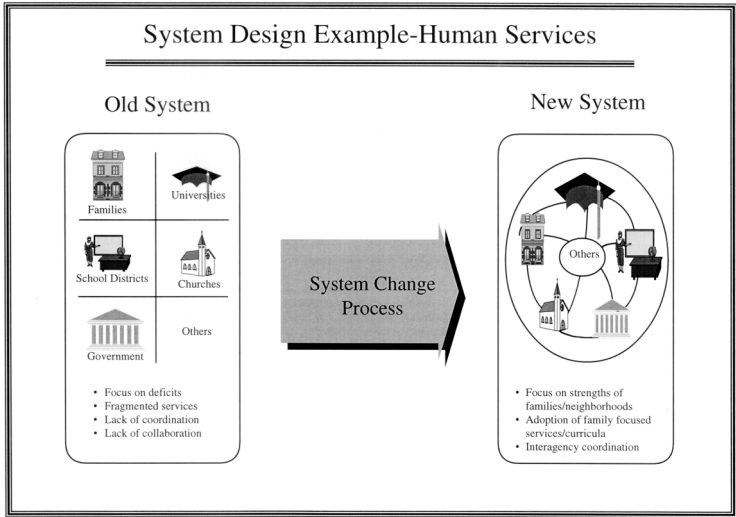
(1) Principles



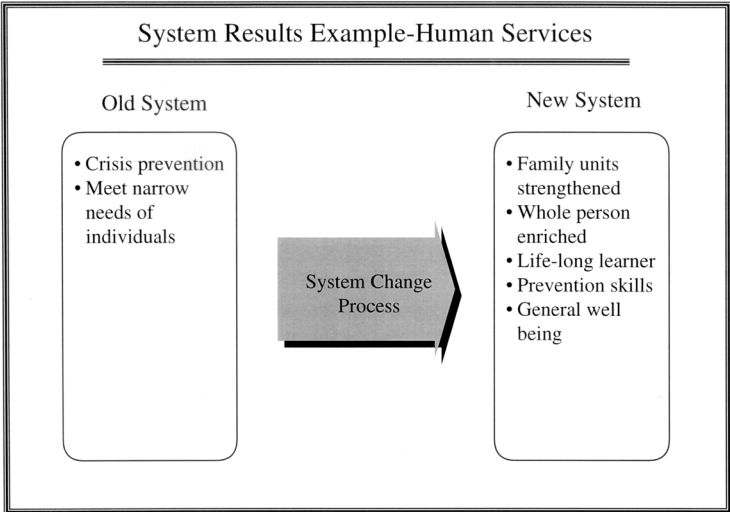
(2) System Design Example—Education



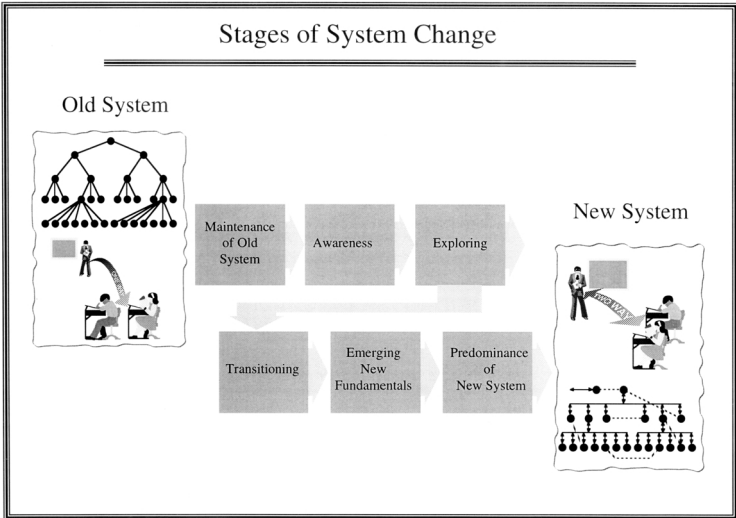
(3) System Results Example—Education



(4) System Design Example—Human Services



(5) System Results Example—Human Services



(6) Stages of System Change

HANDOUTS

This section contains handouts for facilitators to use during the session. The facilitator should feel free to modify the handouts as needed to be appropriate for the particular group. All handouts relate to seminar segments as indicated in the Seminar Materials Map (Figure 1).

DESIRED NEW SYSTEM RESULTS AND DESIGNS

When considering system changes, keep in mind that either the desired results the system is to produce and/or the structure of the system that produces the results may be in need of change.

Desired Results

In education, the major impetus to change is to obtain different results in terms of what students should know and be able to do. For example the existing system was designed to provide basic skills in reading, writing, and math. Now, in addition, students must learn to apply their skills in complex situations and learn to work cooperatively.

The human services system was largely designed to handle crises. Reformers are arguing for a system that has the goal (desired result) of prevention of crises.

Desired System Design Features

To achieve the above results, the education and human services systems need certain characteristics, many of which are not a feature of the current systems. For example, if the education system is to help students apply knowledge to complex situations, teachers need to use different teaching methods. Most students do not learn to apply knowledge unless they actually undertake a project where they practice using the knowledge in a complex situation. A student learns to use new science knowledge by conducting an experiment or designing (for example) an electric motor.

Undertaking this means that class periods may need to be longer. Students need to work together, spend time doing research in the library, or talk to experts. Consequently, the system needs to accommodate longer class periods, team learning, new connections to outsiders, different resource materials in the library. The design of the system needs to be different to accomplish new results.

Likewise if human services systems are to help children and families prevent problems of abuse and neglect, the system needs to focus on creative parental education, or caseworkers with various areas of expertise working as a team.

Once the core purposes of the system and the essential ways of accomplishing the purpose change, the impact ripples through the whole system. The parts and functions are closely connected. Thinking through these interconnections and ways to stage the change process is the essence of system change.

OVERVIEW OF THE CONTINUUM OF SYSTEM CHANGE

System change designed to concurrently transform education and human services is in its infancy. This continuum is a preliminary effort to organize one's thinking about system change. We expect important modifications to this continuum as knowledge and experience expands through state and local action. In many cases, the stages and elements of change are projections based on research and experience in other system change efforts—especially in education and business.

This tool is intended to help a state assess where it is in the process of change. It provides a road map based on explicit characteristics of change and goals for the future. It is intended as a basis for discussion of what constitutes system change in a state as well as where a state is in the change process. Feel free to modify it for your situation.

Stages of System Change

The stages of system change used in the continuum are defined as follows:

- **Maintenance of Old System** — Focuses on maintaining the system as originally designed. Participants do not recognize that the system is fundamentally out of sync with the conditions of today's world. New knowledge about learning, service, and organizational structures has not been incorporated into the structure.
- **Awareness** — Multiple stakeholders become aware that the current system is not working as well as it should but they are unclear about what is needed.
- **Exploration** — Frontline workers, administrators, and policy makers study and visit places that are trying new approaches. They try new ways, generally in low-risk situations.
- **Transition** — The scales tip toward the new system; a critical number of opinion leaders and groups commit themselves to the new system and take more risks to make changes in crucial places. They selectively shed old ways of operating.
- **Emergence of New Infrastructure** — Some elements of the system are operating in keeping with the desired new system on a fairly widespread basis. These new ways are generally accepted.
- **Predominance of New System** — All elements of the system generally operate as defined by the new system. Key leaders begin to envision even better systems.

Participants in System Change

The system has been segmented into the major participants involved in the change process. That involvement includes: individual change in people's mastery of new knowledge and skills, ways of operating and viewing the sys-

tem, collective changes in norms and behaviors, and structural changes in characteristics of the system.

People within certain roles and functions define the units of the system that move through the stages of change. Although there are a number of ways one could group the participants of the system, we have chosen to look at two collective units and five roles played by individuals. The units and roles are ones that remain, despite the design and desired results of the system.

The two collective units of the system are:

- System leadership
- School/community

The roles of individuals within the system are:

- System beneficiaries (children, youth, and families, or students within the context of their families)
- Frontline workers (teachers and service providers)
- Administrators
- Policymakers
- Public

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PARTIAL CONTINUUM OF SYSTEM CHANGE IN EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES: AN EXAMPLE—STANDARDS

PARTICIPANTS IN SYSTEM CHANGE	MAINTENANCE OF OLD SYSTEM	AWARENESS	EXPLORATION
SYSTEM LEADERSHIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hierarchical, bureaucratic structure reinforces coverage of content with emphasis on teaching rather than learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognition that leadership for determining student standards needs to include teachers, parents, community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Innovative schools, teachers pilot standards, get involved in shaping standards
SCHOOL/ COMMUNITY UNITS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasis on courses, credits, grades 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scattered attention to standards among individuals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teams, individuals pilot use of standards, advocate use, see benefits
SYSTEM BENEFICIARIES (CHILDREN, YOUTH, FAMILIES)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focused on what the teacher thinks is the right answer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Question why change is needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate learning through projects, writing, non-standardized tests in pilot efforts
FRONTLINE WORKERS (TEACHERS/ SERVICE PROVIDERS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers ensure coverage of required materials Service providers pay little attention to what students are to learn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers recognize value of student standards; are concerned about being held solely responsible for student learning Service providers concerned that their students are being left out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers explore implications of standards for curriculum, instruction, assessment, accountability Service providers determine their responsibilities for achieving standards
ADMINISTRATORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitors number of credits and courses to be taken and taught in each subject area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognizes that coverage of subject matter does not ensure acquisition of knowledge and skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explores implications of various approaches for resource allocation, responsibilities, accountability
POLICYMAKERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State, local policy identifies general subject areas to be taught; little or no specification of what students are to learn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dialogues about difference between specifying what is taught and what is learned 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waivers and incentives offered to encourage piloting of standards schoolwide or district wide
PUBLIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Little or no involvement in determining what students should learn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Become concerned about quality of education and efficiency of agency services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community forums, surveys to consider what students should learn and be able to do

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PARTIAL CONTINUUM OF SYSTEM CHANGE IN EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES: AN EXAMPLE—STANDARDS

TRANSITION	EMERGING NEW FUNDAMENTALS	PREDOMINANCE OF NEW SYSTEMS	PARTICIPANTS IN SYSTEM CHANGE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared leadership across roles, professional organizations emerge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasis on standards as guiding vision for system redesign 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership functions as a network to achieve standards with flexibility and coherence 	SYSTEM LEADERSHIP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School-wide development of vision with standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public reporting based on standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards guide schoolwide decision making 	SCHOOL/ COMMUNITY UNITS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See standards as important to students' future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take responsibility for learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focused on learning valued skills and knowledge as given in standards 	SYSTEM BENEFICIARIES (CHILDREN, YOUTH, FAMILIES)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers actively involved in revamping curriculum framework to match standards Service providers recognize that student learning standards can be leveraged to help meet student needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers adopt textbooks, develop curricular materials and instructional methods that match standards Service providers link student standards to meeting students' non-educational needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers focus on creating a different environment that helps students achieve standards Service providers link standards with meeting non-educational needs 	FRONTLINE WORKERS (TEACHERS/ SERVICE PROVIDERS)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State, local administrators develop accountability, hiring, and resource allocation procedures to use standards to improve learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluations of professional staff and schools include responsibility for student learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use standards to shape resource allocations, responsibilities, accountability of all parties involved 	ADMINISTRATORS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Common ground found among diverse views on content, who is involved, and how used. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies encourage local establishment of standards and using collaborative methods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State policy provides guidelines for local development of standards that ensure equity, excellence, efficiency 	POLICYMAKERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Different views among community segments used to enrich standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Results of student learning are reported to community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community actively involved in determining standards and monitoring process 	PUBLIC

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FULL CONTINUUM OF SYSTEM CHANGE IN EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES

PARTICIPANTS IN SYSTEM CHANGE	MAINTENANCE OF OLD SYSTEM	AWARENESS	EXPLORATION
SYSTEM LEADERSHIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repetition of what worked in the past • Hierarchical, bureaucratic, large structures • Focus on inputs (amount of activity) rather than results • Focus on management rather than leadership • Top-down communication 	<p>Leaders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hear about alternatives • Dialogue about how to work together for change within and across systems • Criticized by media and community for current system problems • Realize beneficiaries can be better served 	<p>Leaders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stimulate pockets of interest in new approaches, bring together disconnected views • Support pilots using a system approach • Engage segments of all stakeholder groups in decision making
SCHOOL/ COMMUNITY UNITS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on following regulations rather than achieving results • Little interest in innovation • Repetition of what worked in the past • Focus on problems, weaknesses • Focus on the past 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovators recognize problems created by existing assumptions, traditions • New views being brought in by individuals, groups throughout system • Individual, disconnected visions • Increasing dialogue about change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members agree to have some people try new approaches without sabotage from others • Exploration done on a volunteer basis • Incentives to explore • Feedback from explorers to whole school/community
SYSTEM BENEFICIARIES (CHILDREN, YOUTH, FAMILIES)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners passively acquire knowledge • Beneficiaries not actively involved in determining own needs • Beneficiaries work around conflicting eligibility requirements • Disempowered by system, little sense of responsibility for achieving success • Focused on deficits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize boredom and frustration due to inappropriate system structures • Recognize different ways of operating will be more work, but rewarding 	<p>Pilot groups of students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on projects, portfolios in a few classes • Begin to experience shifts in their roles, responsibilities • Link learning and getting needs met • Take initiative for solving own problems • Participate with adults in determining new structures, goals
FRONTLINE WORKERS (TEACHERS/ SERVICE PROVIDERS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers focused on coverage of assigned content • Teachers/service providers have little contact • Teachers/service providers seen as primary authority • Family not viewed as partner • Standardized services • Fragmented services focused on crisis/deficiencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dialogue about problems created by fragmented services and current emphasis on teaching instead of learning • Fear of change • Blaming, guilt feelings about past practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot new service delivery and education methods • Share new ideas via networks, visits • Participate in setting learning outcomes • Recognize structural, belief barriers • Emphasize meeting needs of all students
ADMINISTRATORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource allocation and service decisions made far from beneficiary • Education and services to beneficiaries not coordinated across agencies • Accountability based on inputs and activities, not results • Administrators see role as: diminishing conflict; following rules, regulations; protecting turf and resources • Bureaucratic climate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize current administrative approaches are inhibiting collaboration • Dialogue about reactions to public criticism of systems • Recognize limits of current ways of operating • Hear about alternative administrative approaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage teachers, service providers to pilot new methods • Support waivers of regulations that limit new methods • Engage teachers, service providers in dialogue about new methods • Document impact of new methods • Encourage teacher-developed new curriculum • Encourage sharing of new human services strategies
POLICYMAKERS	<p>Policy emphasizes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provider-determined needs and services • Segmented, uncoordinated, categorical services • Bureaucratic convenience • Hierarchical decision making • Separate education and human service systems • Evaluation used for blaming and fault finding • Accountability for activities, not results • Mandates, compliance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policymakers hear of options for changing systems to better meet needs of beneficiaries • Policymakers debate options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waivers offered to reduce barriers to change • Financial incentives and recognition for collaboration, piloting of new approaches
COMMUNITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systems detached from community input and accountability • Community support taken for granted • Competition among special interest groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicity through news media making community aware of problems in system • Alternative system designs being communicated to the public • Encouragement to get involved in dialogues/forums for change put forth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple community groups trying to influence system structure • Community groups becoming partners with those inside the systems • Dialogue sessions for broader community groups promoted by system leaders • Community surveys • Draft versions of plans, goals developed with small numbers of community groups, seeking broader participation

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FULL CONTINUUM OF SYSTEM CHANGE IN EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES

TRANSITION	EMERGING NEW FUNDAMENTALS	PREDOMINANCE OF NEW SYSTEMS	PARTICIPANTS IN SYSTEM CHANGE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More decisions moved to frontline workers to increase flexibility and coherence for beneficiaries • Professional development for all parties emphasized • Focus on developing a shared philosophy and vision • Reflection on new practices strongly promoted 	<p>In at least 1/3 of situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team approach to professional development largely designed by participants • Pattern of collaborative vision, action, reflection getting established • Leadership teams used • Continual development of shared vision and philosophy • Emphasis on quality and ongoing improvement 	<p>For at least 60% of leaders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision of desired systems, philosophy, and results guides actions • Collaborative and shared leadership within and among systems • Networks, partnerships common • Multiple communication patterns present 	SYSTEM LEADERSHIP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement negotiated with whole unit to adopt certain philosophy, practices • Develop shared vision with serious debate, agreed-on wording acceptable to all, recognition of implications for one's own work 	<p>In at least 1/3 of situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networks exist for sharing among units • New instructional materials with new content and methods • Flexible school curriculum linked to students' real life situations and interests • Teaming of service providers, teachers, parents to support student learning • Untracking of students 	<p>For at least 60% of schools/ communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on strengths, assets, possibilities • Focus on results • Continual improvement of practices and adoption to own situation • Thoughtful critique of new trends • Focus on future • All students actively engaged 	SCHOOL/ COMMUNITY UNITS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasis on students learning new roles, responsibilities in learning and interactions with service providers • Well-articulated descriptions of changed student roles, responsibilities 	<p>At least 1/3 of students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in teams to accomplish projects with student leadership • Are part of leadership teams • Take greater responsibility for own learning • Help build coherence among multiple student needs 	<p>At least 60% of students and families:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn actively (not passively) • Learn to apply skills and knowledge to meaningful situations • Are partners in determining needs to be addressed by system • Focus on own strengths, assets • Feel empowered by system and responsible for achieving success with support from system 	SYSTEM BENEFICIARIES (CHILDREN, YOUTH, FAMILIES)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New curricular, instructional methods developed • Service providers, teachers, parents work as team around whole child needs in a few schools; approaches shared with other schools • Broad-based professional development around new strategies 	<p>At least 1/3 of frontline workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve as coaches, mentors, supporters of beneficiaries' learning and growth • Respectful of different adoption patterns among colleagues • Focus on increasing quality of new approaches 	<p>At least 60% of frontline workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on ensuring all students achieve high standards • Coordinate around needs of beneficiaries • Serve as coach, mentor, supporter of beneficiaries' learning and growth • Support achievement of results • Involve families as partners in meeting student needs • Collaborate in groups to develop improved ways of meeting student needs 	FRONTLINE WORKERS (TEACHERS/ SERVICE PROVIDERS)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linkages made across innovations for greater coherence, meaning, system impact • Eliminate/reduce conflicting approaches • Alignment of multiple innovations to support underlying values of new systems • Encourage development of textbooks around new standards • Encourage professional development around new strategies 	<p>In at least 1/3 of situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation and recertification procedures for teachers and service providers embed new philosophy, practices • Resource allocation consistent with new philosophy and desired results • Professional development for administrators required, practices tailored to specific situations 	<p>In at least 60% of situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource allocation decisions made at the community agency and school level • Services to beneficiaries coordinated across agencies • Results-driven accountability • System procedures leverage student learning to also meet beneficiaries' needs and well being • Administrators build coherence among systems; keep system flexible; encourage results orientation, and systems thinking • Service-oriented climate 	ADMINISTRATORS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies that discourage family and student-centered, results-oriented, collaborative approaches are removed • Incentives established to encourage local innovation and sharing of ideas • Professional development around new approaches supported 	<p>In at least 1/3 of situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies enacted that encourage (not just allow) family- and student-centered results-oriented collaborative approaches to education and human services • Professional development around new approaches required for recertification 	<p>In at least 60% of situations policies require or encourage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family, student-centered decisions • Beneficiaries involved in determining desired results • Results orientation • Outcomes-driven and equitable funding and accountability • Continual improvement • High standards for all beneficiaries • Local flexibility to meet needs and standards 	POLICYMAKERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflicting positions highlighted • Seeking common ground among opposing views • Beliefs, values well-articulated and formulated to reach consensus 	<p>In at least 1/3 of situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locally agreed on beliefs and values serve as basis for redesign of systems • Community seen as ongoing partner in system redesign • Regular reporting to community by systems of their goals, accomplishments, next steps 	<p>In at least 60% of situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible, ongoing, broad-based community involvement in shaping social systems • Community-shaped system goals, purposes, processes • Systems report to community on their achievements 	COMMUNITY

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BLANK CONTINUUM OF SYSTEM CHANGE IN EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES

PARTICIPANTS IN SYSTEM CHANGE	MAINTENANCE OF OLD SYSTEM	AWARENESS	EXPLORATION
SYSTEM LEADERSHIP			
SCHOOL/ COMMUNITY UNITS			
SYSTEM BENEFICIARIES (CHILDREN, YOUTH, FAMILIES)			
FRONTLINE WORKERS (TEACHERS/ SERVICE PROVIDERS)			
ADMINISTRATORS			
POLICYMAKERS			
PUBLIC			

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BLANK CONTINUUM OF SYSTEM CHANGE IN EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES

TRANSITION	EMERGING NEW FUNDAMENTALS	PREDOMINANCE OF NEW SYSTEMS	PARTICIPANTS IN SYSTEM CHANGE
			SYSTEM LEADERSHIP
			SCHOOL/ COMMUNITY UNITS
			SYSTEM BENEFICIARIES (CHILDREN, YOUTH, FAMILIES)
			FRONTLINE WORKERS (TEACHERS/ SERVICE PROVIDERS)
			ADMINISTRATORS
			POLICYMAKERS
			PUBLIC

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PARTICIPANT EVALUATION FORM

Your responses to the questions below will help the sponsors of this session and developers of the materials improve their work with groups such as yours. Thanks for your thoughtful comments and responses. Use the back of the page if you need more space.

1. **Issues.** To what extent were the issues addressed in the meeting timely and important?

2. **Issues.** What aspects of the topic did we miss that were equally or more important than those addressed?

3. **Utility.** What are you leaving the forum with in terms of new ideas, connections, motivations, plans, etc.? What do you expect to do back home as a result of this experience?

4. **Materials.** What changes, if any, would you recommend be made in the materials?

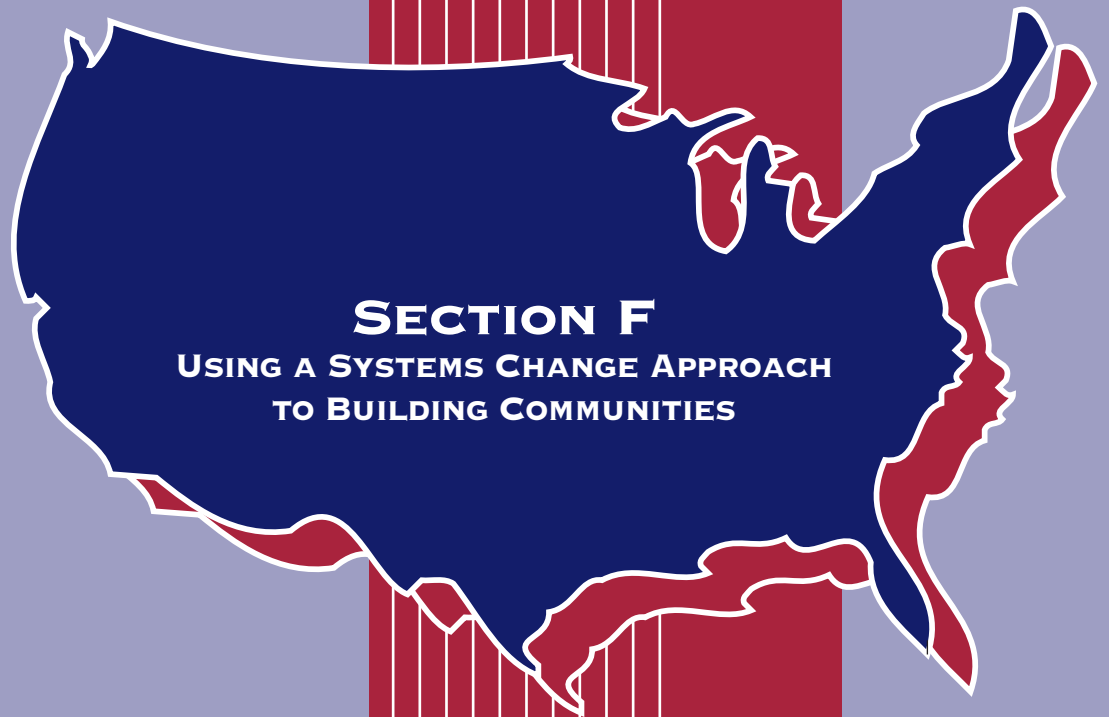
5. **Presentation Approach.** What changes, if any, would you recommend be made in the way the session was designed?

6. **Overall Evaluation of the Forum.** Please circle the number which best expresses your opinion. (1 = Excellent, 2 = Good, 3 = Average, 4 = Only Fair, 5 = Very Poor)

Session Elements	Rating				
	Excellent		Average		Very Poor
a. Planning of the session	1	2	3	4	5
b. Objectives met	1	2	3	4	5
c. Value of information presented/discussed	1	2	3	4	5
d. Overall meeting logistics	1	2	3	4	5
e. Balance of meeting process (discussions, presentations, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
f. Opportunity to participate in discussion	1	2	3	4	5
g. Overall session rating	1	2	3	4	5

7. **Other Comments.**

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SECTION F
USING A SYSTEMS CHANGE APPROACH
TO BUILDING COMMUNITIES

F

F-2

Using a Systems Change Approach to Building Communities

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The way of conceptualizing the approach taken here has been shaped mainly through our work with the Danforth Foundation's Policymakers' Program, the Education Commission of the States, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation's Families and Neighborhoods Initiative, and work with state, urban, and rural systemic initiatives funded by the National Science Foundation. This work builds on the thinking of many other people, most of whose work is referenced in the document. Various Healthier Communities efforts across the country have also influenced our thinking considerably.

This paper has been enriched by the comments of the following reviewers: Lloyd Frandsen, Sid Gardner, Jane Gerberding, Holly Halverson, Cornelius Hogan, Sharon Johnson, Ann Kubisch, Steven Kukic, Peter R. Lee, Ted Marble, and Linda Swenson.

Amy Anderson (research associate), Andra Nicoli, (research associate), Keith Bromley (editor), and Carol Bosserman (evaluation/administrative assistant) assisted in the preparation of this document.

This document was prepared under a grant from The Danforth Foundation. The information and opinions provided herein are the sole responsibility of the author and do not represent agreement or positions of the Danforth Foundation, reviewers, or funding agents. Not for attribution or citation without permission from the Danforth Foundation or InSites.

InSites is a Colorado-based non-profit 501(c)3 organization that conducts research and evaluation and provides technical assistance to educational and social institutions/agencies and policymakers engaged in major change within their social systems.

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This paper was designed to help people who have become discouraged on their journeys toward changing social systems within communities. This paper provides leaders and facilitators of community-change efforts with both a model for change in social systems and a tool to work with others to analyze the status of their change efforts. The redesign of social systems is an essential part of building/rebuilding our communities to better support the well-being of children and families. Deep, and often invisible, fundamental principles support these systems, carrying assumptions so ingrained in us, we scarcely recognize their existence.

Three types of systems—bureaucratic, professional, and community—are intertwined in the social systems of a community. Currently, the balance tilts toward a combination of the bureaucratic and professional, creating an institutional focus. Given today's social conditions, this paper argues that the balance needs to shift toward a community-professional combination, grounded in the assets and desires of the community.

Three fundamental principles appear important in rebuilding communities. The first concerns systems thinking and learning, including looking at systems holistically, with changing, fluid relationships rather than unchanging entities. The second principle emphasizes attention to the purposes of our systems and the results they achieved. The third principle focuses on the rebuilding of community, grounded in the strengths, needs, hopes, and dreams of its residents.

This paper considers which community members should be involved in assessing the community's status and orientation toward systems change. Four groups of people are highlighted: community residents, nonresidents with special knowledge of the community, members of informal multipurpose social units (such as family units or organized city blocks), and representatives of systems established for a specific purpose such as education or health. This paper examines: (a) the stages of change that individuals and groups go through as they move from an institutionally centered system to a more community-based system and (b) the "levers" for systems change—the mechanisms by which people recreate systems.

The stages and levers of change serve as the bases for designing a *Continuum of Community-Building Systems Change*. The continuum is the tool a cross-role group uses to analyze the current status of systems change and to generate ideas about next steps.

Finally, this paper discusses how the continuum of change can be tailored to specific situations.

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CHAPTER I — USING SYSTEMS CHANGE IN REDESIGNING COMMUNITIES IN RESPONSE TO SOCIAL CHANGE

INTRODUCTION

Have you become discouraged on your journey toward changing social systems within communities to better meet the needs of today's society? This paper provides leaders and facilitators of community-change efforts with a way of thinking about the process of changing a social system. It also contains a tool to help them work with others to assess both the status of their change efforts and the next steps. It addresses the formal and informal systems affecting children and families within communities.

The primary purpose of designing or redesigning social systems in today's society is to help build communities that promote the well-being of children and families. These are the core elements of our society. Community building means strengthening the capacity of local residents, associations, and organizations to work individually and collectively toward sustained community improvement. Community building involves developing the capacity of neighborhood residents to identify and gain access to opportunities and effect change as well as developing leaders within the community.

Community building also focuses on the nature, strength, and scope of relationships between individuals in the community and in organizations, government entities, foundations, and other groups inside and outside the community. Through this kinship, community builders can exchange and use information, resources, and assistance. Organizationally, community-building initiatives can develop the capacity of formal and informal institutions within the community to provide goods and services effectively and can develop relationships between organizations within and beyond the community to maximize resources and coordinate strategies.¹

Each level of community building—from individuals to organizations—requires capacity building and the acceptance of the role of ongoing learner. Building stakeholder capacities (both organizational and individual) and connecting these components is what community building is all about. Community building is as much about how transformations occur as creating product-oriented results. It is about increasing the capacities of individuals as well as neighborhoods to create systems which work with them, not at them or for them.

Considering Three Social Systems

Three competing types of social systems are evident—the bureaucratic, professional, and community models. Currently, our community systems are heavily based on bureaucratic and professional models. As a result, systems are growing more distant from the realities, assets, and hopes of a community's residents.

¹ For further information on comprehensive community initiatives, see the work of the Aspen Institute's Roundtable on Comprehensive Community Initiatives for Children and Families.

It is important to encourage greater consideration of the community model in combination with the professional model. This new balance would emphasize the assets of a community's residents and shift the role of professionals such as educators and human-service and medical professionals to one of building on the assets of the community rather than emphasizing needs.

Three Essential Principles

Basic principles or beliefs can reshape social systems within communities to better support children and families. Deep and often invisible fundamental principles support these systems—the interlocking and interdependent parts—of our society. Certain assumptions are typically so ingrained in us that we scarcely recognize their existence. If we want our systems to change in fundamental ways, it is necessary that these principles change.

Three fundamental principles are important in rebuilding communities. The first concerns systems thinking and learning. This includes looking at systems holistically—not only at the parts but also at the relationships between the parts—as well as seeing that systems are ever changing. This requires that we see ourselves as ongoing learners and adjusters of systems. The second principle concerns the purposes of our systems (and the results expected from them). This purpose must be emphasized and, in many cases, redefined. The third principle concerns reshaping community, grounded in the strengths, needs, hopes, and dreams of its residents.

Defining the Community

In the change process, one must determine what constitutes a community and who needs to be involved in assessing the community's status and orientation toward systems change. We begin with an explanation of how to define the community and then identify four groups to consider when determining who will be involved in the analysis: community residents, nonresidents with special knowledge of the community, informal multipurpose social units such as neighborhood associations, and representatives of purpose-based systems that have a distinctive purpose such as education, social services, health, economic development, physical and environmental arenas, and social justice.²

The focal point of the paper is a continuum of community-based systems change. This continuum is a tool and a way of looking at (a) the stages of change that individuals and groups go through as they move from the current configuration of formal and informal systems to the desired systems configurations, and (b) the “levers” for systems change. By this we mean the mechanisms by which people can recreate systems (for example, changing the methods of governance, reallocating financial resources, investing in the training and development of people, and communications strategies).

This continuum of systems change helps people move forward to undertake the next phase of their community systems change initiative.

² Hereafter, these systems will be referred to as “purpose-based systems.”

RESOURCES

Throughout the paper, references to complementary materials are provided. These references represent only a few of the many fine materials available. The ones referenced tend to be key documents we used in developing this paper or short, easy-to-read articles that might be given to community members.

In addition to the specific materials referenced, you are encouraged to contact the following organizations to obtain their publication lists and talk with key staff. Materials from these groups are seldom listed in the “Further Readings” sections of the paper because the numbers of relevant materials are very extensive. Resources from these organizations and/or references they can provide to other groups will connect you to a full array of ideas for how to proceed with community-based systems change efforts.

Bush Center for Child Development and Social Policy
310 Prospect Street
New Haven, CN 06510
203 432-9944 • FAX: 203 432-9949

Finance Project
1341 G Street, NW, Suite 820
Washington, DC 20005
202 628-4200 • FAX: 202 628-4205

Center for Collaboration for Children
California State University at Fullerton
Fullerton, CA 92834-6868
714 773-2166 • FAX: 714 449-5235

Healthcare Forum
425 Market Street
San Francisco, CA 94105
415 356-4300 • FAX: 415 356-9300

Center for the Study of Social Policy
1250 Eye Street, NW, Suite 503
Washington, DC 20005
202 371-1565 • FAX: 202 371-1472

Institute for Educational Leadership
1001 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 310
Washington, DC 20036
202 822-8405 • FAX 202-872-4050

Education Commission of the States
707 17th Street, Suite 2700
Denver, CO 80202-3427
303 299-3600 • FAX: 303 296-8332

National Civic League
1445 Market Street
Denver, CO 80202
303 571-4343 • FAX: 303 571-4404

Family Impact Seminar
1100 Seventeenth Street, NW, Suite 901
Washington, DC 20036
202 467-5114 • FAX: 202 223-2329

National Governors' Association
444 N. Capitol Street
Washington, DC 20001-1512
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CHAPTER II — COMPETING TYPES OF SOCIAL SYSTEMS

When our efforts to create significant change in how people work and interact within a community lag, it is often because the changes have been focused on symptoms and superficial issues rather than fundamental characteristics that shape community life. For the growing number of community-based initiatives springing up around the country, we are learning that the needed changes lie much deeper and are more interconnected than many initially assumed.

As we peel back the layers of our social systems, we see that many of the systems we have were designed for a different set of conditions and circumstances than we find ourselves in today. The systems that worked in low-tech times with smaller populations are not able to handle the increasing complexities resulting from new technologies and a larger and more diverse population. Our ways of designing systems are closely tied to our history.

In a broad sense, three different systems (discussed below) are competing: the bureaucratic, professional, and community models. The challenge we face is understanding what these three system types are and determining when each is most useful. There is no perfect system. We need to keep adjusting our systems to fit our purposes. Much of the community-building struggle centers on the lack of clarity about these basic systems and how they can be integrated to support a strong, vibrant environment for children and families.

COMMUNITY-BUILDING SYSTEM CHOICES

Consider these three system models:

- The **hierarchical, bureaucratic model** uses top-down decision making and has fixed rules and regulations. For many years, this model has been the predominant approach for most organizations in this country. While it is the appropriate approach in the case of policies that need to be consistent—hiring practices and payroll management, for example—it traditionally has covered a wide range of functions within a given system. When workers feel like “numbers,” it is often because they are being treated from a bureaucratic model perspective.³
- The **professional model** evolved as a byproduct of the development of the service industry. The professional model relies on people with specialized knowledge and skills. It defines “clients” as those in need of a particular service or product and “professionals” as the experts who can provide what the clients need.

For example, if the professional model is used in a school setting, educators are the professionals responsible for defining what students should learn and for providing the evidence that teaching and learning

³The term “bureaucracy” was originally used to neutrally describe a certain type of organizational structure. However, over time, it has taken on a negative connotation because of frequent misapplication. For further information on this model as well as other variations of the professional model, see Mintzberg, H. (1979). *The Structuring of Organizations*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc.

have been successful. In human services, social workers, psychologists, therapists, and others are those responsible for “treating” a person with a “need.”

At the core of both the bureaucratic and professional models is a strong element of control outside the person served.

- The **community model**, by contrast, emphasizes consent. The clients/beneficiaries in the professional model become active participants in decision making.

Applying this model to education, parents and students may take the lead in identifying needs, working through choices, coming up with solutions, and creating the conditions and environments they believe will work best in meeting the needs of all those involved. The professionals would support their direction. In the case of social services, families and communities define their needs, and professionals work in supportive roles to help them accomplish their goals and use their assets. This model emphasizes interconnectedness as well as meaningful and productive work for community residents.

As our society has moved away from bureaucratic organizations over the last few decades, we have been moving toward professional organizations and services. There is growing recognition that professionalism has its shortcomings and can actually undermine community building.

Each of these three models can operate simultaneously in a community, separately in some areas and overlapping in others. In the best-case scenario, each model would be used when appropriate, with effective communication providing the necessary connections among all three within and among systems. A major community-building issue is finding the appropriate balance between professional services and community-based caring and action.

The professional and community models warrant further consideration, since the distinction between the two is crucial as groups develop their goals and strategies for systems change.

The Professional Model

The premise of this model is that well-trained professionals can help society ameliorate problems and challenges. Professionals become experts in certain disciplines or fields of study and, in medicine, human services, education, and other fields, provide services to clients or beneficiaries. Special training is a key definer of professional work. Professionals are typically also socialized into the norms of their formal organizations/institutions and professional societies in ways that benefit the profession and the organization. Professional institutions surrender considerable control over their choices of workers and ways of performing work to outside institutions (e.g., universities) that train and certify the professionals. Professional practices increase the quality of the services provided.

Society is moving toward “professionalization” of services because of efficiency and expected increase in quality. According to national statistics, in 1900, approximately 10 percent of the workforce produced services while the remaining 90 percent produced goods. Current projections suggest that by the year 2000, the service workforce will represent 90 percent of the employed workforce.⁴ In some ways, this indicates that society is facing previously unsatisfied need; in other ways, this indicates that professionals are assuming functions that previously were personal and community functions.

In his book, *The Careless Society*, author John McKnight expresses concern that caring within communities has been transformed into a technical process—a service—that professionals are trained to perform on clients.⁵ He believes the evolution of bereavement counseling illustrates this point.

Before the advent of bereavement counseling, when a townspeople died, friends and relatives came together to mourn. They met grief together as a community, offering physical and emotional support to the bereaved family.

Then came bereavement counseling. The counselor offered a method for “processing” grief. A college diploma and professional license made the counselor “credible.” Many—trained in the use of innovative tools and certified by universities and medical centers—seek this professional service out of habit.

Now, when a townspeople dies, family and friends hesitate to go to the bereaved family because these people believe that the bereavement counselor knows best how to process grief. Local clergy even seek technical assistance from the bereavement counselor to learn the correct form for dealing with grief. But as an unintended consequence, the grieving family misinterprets the absence of family and friends as signs of their lack of caring.

With this story, McKnight illustrates that new professional expertise or tools have frayed the social fabric of community and undermined neighborly obligations and community ways of coming together. As citizens see professionalized services assume more community functions, citizens are beginning to doubt their common capacity to care. As a result, citizens and communities have become partially dependent on “counterfeit caring”—human services—as a substitute for their own knowledge, wisdom, and humanity in solving problems within their communities.

According to McKnight, society in general has grown frustrated with the minor impact increasing numbers of professionals have on escalating social problems and rapidly deteriorating families and communities. Society criticizes the professional approach as inefficient, but the move toward professionalism was originally conceived as a more efficient way of dealing with social problems. Professionals are currently criticized for costing more money but producing inadequate results. Professionals also are criticized as elitist, arrogant, and dominant. Professionals may have the power to identify problems, create solutions, implement them, and evaluate the efficacy of the treat-

⁴ See McKnight, John. (1995). *The Careless Society: Community and Its Counterparts*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

⁵ Many of the ideas in this chapter are based on the insights McKnight shared in *The Careless Society: Community and Its Counterparts*.

ment. But clients have been stripped of personal opportunities to participate in this process because of assumed lack of expertise.

A further criticism is that professionalism works to the detriment of society. Professional dominance exerts negative effects upon the problem-solving capacities of the primary social structures of society: families, neighborhoods, churches/synagogues, and ethnic groups. The ultimate tragedy is that professionals can create a cycle of dependence and impotence which may affect other social and economic problems for which further professional treatment only creates deeper dependence. To justify the continuation of professional services, professionals may define “need” as a deficiency within individuals and communities. In this case, human-service tools can place people at risk for low self-esteem and low self-worth, poverty, and disempowerment.

The Community Model

Unlike the professional model that focuses on eradicating the “need” in families and communities, the community model focuses on maximizing each person’s existing capabilities. Individuals initiate capacity building and the pooling of resources and power among members, rather than relying on outside people or institutions.

In this model informal community associations and structures are powerful vehicles for community decision making, critical dialogue, and opinion formation that influences the problem-solving capacities of community members. “Community guides” act as counterpoints to credentialed, licensed professional service workers in communities. These guides are themselves members of a community and help other members navigate and make connections within the community.

Instead of the professionals, community members are seen as problem definers and problem solvers. The raw material of community is capacity, because community interactions are built on the importance of each person. It is the sum of community members’ capacities that represents the power of the group, not deficiencies or needs.

The Professional and Community Collaboration Model

Currently, the most promising model for a community’s social system is likely one that brings together professionals and community to rebuild communities and strengthen families, weaving in threads of bureaucracy or hierarchy to provide a dependable, but flexible structure. Central to this model is overcoming the inherent tension between communities and institutions. The associations of the community represent social tools that are unlike those of managed institutions.

For example, the structure of institutions is designed to control people. On the other hand, the less formal structure of associations is the result of people acting through consent. It is critical that people distinguish between these two motivating forces, because there are many goals that can be fulfilled

only through consent, while in other cases controls preserve justice and fairness.

In working out a combined bureaucratic, professional, and community model, it's important to recognize the differences between community associations and professional or other institutions.⁶

- Interdependence defines associations in communities. To weaken one association weakens them all. For example, if the local church closes, several self-help groups that meet in the church basement will lose their home. If the American Legion disbands, several community fund-raising events and the maintenance of the local ballpark will stop. Contrast these events with the individualistic perception of service delivery in human services, education, and medicine where institutions have separate facilities and operate independently of one another.
- In community environments, people acknowledge their tendencies to make mistakes. But most institutions are designed to adhere to a vision in which things can be done right and an orderly perfection can be achieved. Clients, too, must meet this standard.
- In community associations, there is room for many leaders and room for leadership capacity to develop. This democratic structure assumes that the best ideas come from the knowledge of the collected members of the community. Effective life in community associations incorporates all of those weaknesses and reveals a unique community intelligence. Contrast this with the hierarchical structure of institutions that reserves leadership roles for a few.
- Associations can respond more quickly. They are not constrained by institutional layers like planning committees, budget offices, administration, and so forth.
- Because they are so interconnected, associations within communities can often respond quickly and specifically to the needs of people who come to them for help. In institutions, people often inherit labels, while in associations, people are not defined by labels. Instead, their “shortcomings” are accepted and dealt with.
- The informality of community associations allows for spontaneous, creative solutions. Institutions often require those with creative ideas to follow channels and adhere to policy.
- Relationships in a community are individual and conducted face-to-face. Institutions, on the other hand, have great difficulty developing programs or activities that recognize the unique characteristics of each individual involved. An institution's high-level focus is not on building relationships, but on remaining detached.
- Associations (and the community they create) are forums that encourage citizenship. Institutions, by virtue of their managed structures, typically find it more difficult to act as forums for citizenship.

⁶ For more information on this, see McKnight (1995).

- If it is care that families or individuals need rather than service, institutions seldom satisfy that need. When care is needed, communities are much more likely to produce and deliver it.

Professional organizations and institutions might take several actions to build a relationship with the community to potentially enhance community capacity. These actions include:

- reinvesting resources to strengthen the local community economy and income of individuals
- working with the community to create “community friendly” maps of capacities and assets within the community—drawing on the institution's analytic capacities and information sources
- educating community residents in the skills of their profession to allow residents to be more self-sufficient and less dependent on professional services

FURTHER READINGS ON COMMUNITY BUILDING

Herzog, Mary Jean Ronan and Robert Pittman. (1995). "Home, Family, and Community: Ingredients in the Rural Education Equation." *Phi Delta KAPPAN*, November.

This article discusses a need to leverage the existing strengths of rural communities to create high-quality educational opportunities for all students. Sections of the article include: problems in rural education; trends affecting rural schools; selected demographic, economic, and educational factors—1960-1990; and the strengths of rural communities.

National Civic League. (1993). *The Civic Index*. New York, NY: National Civic League, Inc.

The Civic Index is a guide which provides useful information on engaging the public to improve the quality of life for the community as a whole. It discusses the changing roles of stakeholders, including a need for more volunteerism; how to build a respect for civic involvement into our school and community life; and how to work collaboratively toward common goals. The emphasis is on building the civic infrastructure of the community.

McKnight, John. (1995). *The Careless Society: Community and Its Counterparts*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

McKnight builds a case for focusing on the competence of communities and warns of the dangers of over "professionalization" of social services. Three chapters discuss community building in depth. *Community Organizing in the Eighties: Toward a Post-Alinsky Agenda*, (with John Kretzmann) discusses how the structure of neighborhoods has changed considerably since the 1940s when Saul Alinsky was organizing communities, yet the strategies for organizing communities have remained relatively constant. McKnight presents new approaches to building the capacity of individuals and organizations from within the community to develop the ability to meet their own needs.

Redefining Community defines communities as collective associations—formal and informal—and how to build community by developing relationships across community life. *Regenerating Community* discusses the evolving roles and characteristics of individual and institutional stakeholders within a community and the potential struggles these groups will encounter.

McKnight, John L. and John P. Kretzmann. (1993). *Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets*. Evanston, IL: Center for Urban Affairs and Policy Research, Neighborhood Innovations Network, Northwestern University.

This workbook is intended to help communities engage in the community building process. The workbook offers useful techniques for building capacity, mobilizing resources, developing supportive policies, and making connections/building relationships among stakeholders.

Sergiovanni, Thomas J. (1996). "Building Community in Schools." *Community Education Journal*, Vol. XXII, Nos. 1 & 2.

This article describes the collapse of community that has occurred in our society and offers suggestions for rebuilding productive communities.

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CHAPTER III — PRINCIPLES FOR DESIGNING TODAY'S SOCIAL SYSTEMS

As discussed in the previous chapter, no one system is good or bad in and of itself. The issue is how to design and combine systems to foster health at the level of community. In doing so, it is important to consider the operational principles or values embedded within and across systems. Three guiding principles appear especially important to consider in today's social environment:

- 1) **Taking a “systems thinking” perspective.** This means looking at the relationships and connections among parts of systems and across systems. The current and past tendencies have been to focus on isolated systems and components of systems.
- 2) **Determining if systems are achieving results congruent with their intended purpose.** Many systems currently engage in activities that follow the rules based on what worked in the past, whether or not the systems produce desired results today or foster healthy relationships with the other systems that have grown up around them.
- 3) **Emphasizing system changes that are driven by the perspectives of community residents.** Currently, professional service providers usually determine changes based on what they determine is best for clients or for themselves.

In the remainder of this chapter we describe each of these principles in greater detail.

SYSTEMIC APPROACHES

A design that considers the whole picture rather than just parts of it is a desirable system characteristic that communities seek today. That is, the approach is systemic. This approach involves considering the interrelatedness of parts within a system. This approach also recognizes the structure within the structure and acknowledges that the parts must interconnect. In fact, the definition of a system is in the relationship of its parts.

While it may begin as a superficial assessment of parts interconnecting, comprehensive systems thinking goes well beyond this point and analyzes patterns of interrelationships and their dynamic movements — often “two steps forward and one step back” as decisions and changes are being made.⁷

Systemic thinking and action seek an holistic and sustainable improvement in the pattern of interrelationships between parts of a process or system—for instance, the neighborhood. Each part of a neighborhood is influenced by the actions and reactions of systems beyond it. Analyzing the patterns and building linkages among systems and within components of systems

⁷ This approach is different from some comprehensive community initiatives that look broadly at all the components or separate systems of a community, but fail to focus on their interconnections and interactions.

requires facilitation skills, flexibility, and an ability to move between all levels, instead of focusing on one. Analyzing and focusing also require an openness to change at all levels.

This is a dynamic, fluid, and ongoing process. This type of orientation is often antithetical to the fundamental characteristics of many of the existing social systems which are rigid and formally separated into isolated and disconnected components with an orientation toward addressing individual needs.

Systems thinking eventually leads to comprehensive change, but comprehensiveness is not the initial focus. Rather, the focus is on understanding the interconnections, dynamics, and fundamental principles of the system, and how to use these characteristics to lead to change across all community systems. One looks for patterns and natural dynamics to move desired changes from one system to another. There is an opportunistic quality to the process, instead of an emphasis on “forcing” change.

Systemic thinking begins with strategic consideration involving the nature of an undertaking and the central challenges or assumptions the undertaking poses. System thinking focuses on the patterns and cycles of interrelationships among the key components of a system. Just as cycles dominate nature, so too they dominate relationships among people and organizations.

People go through stages of change as systems are changing. To isolate one from another is unnatural. People create systems; systems are a reflection of people. Systems thinking accepts that, but because of the number of interactions and levels addressed, individuals, communities, and systems need considerable time to act, react, and interact through the change process.

Time alone, however, is not the only consideration. Systems thinking, planning, and action require ways of looking at the underlying structures that create the cycles within relationships.⁸ Systems thinking, planning, and action also imply being in a mode of continual learning. Systems are dynamic. What used to work may no longer today. As a result, we need ongoing ways to analyze systems.

RESULTS-ORIENTED APPROACHES

As we consider many of today’s social systems, we find that they often focus on carrying out activities and delivering sets of services with the assumption that certain results will be achieved, but with little attention to whether the results actually are produced. Two patterns account for much of this behavior.

First, when systems were originally established, they were well-connected to results. However, over time conditions have changed, but the systems have continued on without adequate adjustments to those changing conditions.

⁸ For a detailed discussion of this, see Chapter 13 in Sense, P. M., et. al. (1994). *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook*. New York, NY: Doubleday.

Second, people have assumed that if they took certain actions, results would automatically follow. The story of a man who got a new dog illustrates this.

One day, while walking his new dog, Jim ran into his neighbor, Bill. Jim said, “Guess what? I taught my dog how to talk!” “Well, that is incredible,” Bill said. “Have him say a few words.” “Oh,” replied Jim, “I just taught him. He didn’t learn.”

Similarly, many of our systems perpetuate activities with the hope, but not necessarily the evidence, that they are accomplishing desired results.

Given the marked changes in today’s communities, it is essential to focus explicitly on what a system will accomplish. In doing so, it is important to get down to authentic purposes and call into question actions that have become habitual but are superficial. A purposeful, results-oriented system defines the outcomes or results expected, then works backwards to design actions that display these results. The actions may need to be different for different people and conditions. The commonality is around results, not the means of achieving those results.

As community systems move toward a results orientation, these systems often experience a tension regarding “processes” and “products.” For some people, results are defined in terms of a “product” such as building a recreation center, providing housing for someone in need, reducing the amount of litter on the streets, or cleaning up a vacant lot. For others, the results they seek are defined in terms of “processes” such as building and strengthening relationships that serve as the basis for identifying and effectively carrying out tasks.

Within community initiatives, there are often strong advocates of a process orientation and strong advocates of a product orientation. One group sees the process of community building as the most significant aspect. The other group sees the product as the most valuable. There is typically an ongoing tug of war between the two.

Effective results-oriented systems focus on both processes and products. Products of a community project—a new park, a gym, a housing development—are important in creating a sense of achievement and legitimacy among participants, outsiders, and the community as a whole. These visible achievements can be key to future funding for other projects and building pride and inspiration based on achievement and ability. Products often are the measurable successes desired by residents as well as funders. Yet all too often, these products are of short-term value, because community members do not have a sense of ownership of them. It is crucial that these products grow out of relationships that have the potential to produce further products.

Such relationship-building processes are essential components of creating sustainable change. Process is essential to facilitating social networks and building capacity. Processes create the framework of regular interaction which helps develop and strengthen relationships. Neighbors working toward positive change in their communities build a learning process and an awareness of

who lives and works within the streets they occupy. This knowledge can be critical to diagnosing and solving problems such as poverty, homelessness, crime, and gang issues, and establishing the links that operate among them.

This is like making a cake. One needs all the ingredients (the products), but one is not going to make a cake without certain processes—beating the sugar and butter together, folding in the flour, and baking the cake in the oven. Both products and processes are essential.

Perspectives on the importance of process or product often change within an initiative. Perspectives may shift because of feedback regarding implementation efforts, whether the initiative responds to critical community needs, which social assets and funding are available, or the value other community members place on the efforts of their neighbors. As a result, when building a purposeful, results-oriented approach, participants must carefully discuss the balance between processes and products.

This balance is closely tied to the dynamic of short-term vs. long-term results. Results-oriented initiatives that also incorporate systemic thinking strive to achieve short-term results that inspire long-term change. Long-term change, in turn, ultimately deals with basic problems and issues rather than symptoms. Without systemic thinking, short-term results often are directed toward symptoms. It can be very valuable to address symptoms as long as that is not the end of the work. Too often, however, once the symptoms are gone, people lose interest in addressing the more fundamental problems.

RESIDENT-BASED APPROACHES

The third fundamental assumption concerning the redesign of formal and informal community systems is that the perspectives of residents shape the changes made. Too often, service providers drive system changes, and community residents are viewed as beneficiaries of services or as clients rather than the ones who are key to improving the quality of life in the community. A community-building orientation is about increasing the capacities of individuals as well as neighborhoods to create systems which work with them, not at them or for them. Eventually, through these individuals in a group or groups, accountability develops, as does a method for the community to work to regenerate itself.

Currently, most communities' formal systems are built around hierarchical, top-down structures. These systems are often crisis- and problem-oriented. They focus on deficits, create dependent relationships, and are characterized by competition. A community-building orientation promotes a sense of equal partnership between professionals and residents. This orientation focuses on the assets of all members of the community and on prevention of problems. It builds interdependent, responsible, accountable relationships.

On the whole, institutions typically don't look to the community until they need to gain support for their strategies. To achieve community-based systems change, fundamental changes must happen and be driven at the com-

community level (e.g., neighborhood schools). To keep the focus at the community level, the broader levels of the system (e.g., state departments of education) need to support changes (desired by the community), lending expertise and perspective in the process, rather than determining what they think is best for the community.

The notion of resident-initiated capacity building is illustrated in the story⁹ of a community on Chicago's west side:

A community of 60,000 people was largely poor and African American—the majority dependent on welfare payments. Residents had formed a voluntary community organization that encompassed an area where there were two hospitals. These hospitals had not been accessible to the black residents in this neighborhood.

The community organization began a political struggle to “capture” the two hospitals. They were successful in convincing the board of directors of the hospitals to accept more neighborhood people as patients and employ more community residents on their staffs. After several years, the community organization assessed the health status of the community. They found that although they had “captured” the hospitals, there was no significant evidence that residents' health had changed since the community had greater access to the medical facilities in their neighborhood.

To determine the residents' most common ailments, the community organization examined the hospital's medical records. Examiners were surprised to learn that the top reasons for seeking medical treatment had little to do with disease. Ailments included car accidents, interpersonal attacks, bronchial infections, dog bites, and drug/alcohol-related problems. “Disease” was not the main problem the hospitals addressed. Instead, the hospitals dealt with maladies related to social problems. The residents in the community organization recognized that there were social problems in their communities, and the hospitals were only treating the symptoms.

A group of concerned citizens from the community organization analyzed this information and used it to get to the root causes of these social problems. Then, they developed a strategy for addressing these problems in their communities. To reduce the number of car accidents, residents investigated their neighborhood to learn where these accidents were happening and why. With help from an outside city-planning group that provided detailed data on neighborhood traffic patterns, residents learned that most accidents occurred at the entrance to a department store parking lot. The group then petitioned the store owner to make changes. This greatly reduced the number of accidents, and the number of peo-

⁹ This story is from McKnight, J. (1995).

ple in the neighborhood seeking medical treatment for related injuries.

To reduce the number of bronchial problems, residents learned that good nutrition was a factor. Adequate fresh fruits and vegetables, especially in winter, were too expensive for many residents. So they sought solutions: growing their own fruits and vegetables. Since gardening space is limited in the city, residents built an experimental greenhouse on the flat roof of an apartment house. Citizens viewed the greenhouse as a tool to gain control of their own health, but quickly citizens also discovered that it was an economic-development tool. The greenhouse increased their income, because they now produced a commodity to use and sell. There was another use for the greenhouse, one that maximized the capacities of the community. The greenhouse trapped lost heat and turned it into an asset, becoming an energy-conservation tool.

The community organization that spearheaded the greenhouse project also owned a retirement home for elderly members of the community. The retirement home residents became regular plant caretakers. They became excited and rejuvenated. They were able to use some of the knowledge they had learned as children and young adults in rural areas, and the greenhouse became a tool to empower older people in the community.

This story illustrates the hidden capacities within communities to define and solve community-specific problems and maximize their skills and talents through a collective effort. It also illustrates how the community had a results-oriented approach—investigating whether the health of the people in the community improved. And finally, the expanded use of the greenhouse illustrates the systemic nature of the change process.

COMPOSITE PICTURE OF CHANGE

The previous perspectives present an overall picture of systems transitioning from primarily bureaucratic and professional (with a touch of the community model) to ones that are grounded in the community. These systems blend the professional and community models previously discussed with appropriate threads of the bureaucratic model. This shift involves moving from one set of underlying principles to another, as depicted in Figure 1, *The Foundation of Changing from Institutional to Community-Based Systems*, below.

The arrow between the two types of systems represent the strategies and initiatives that a community develops to move from one type of system to another. The strategies and initiatives are multiple, and the progress from one system type to another is in interconnected and overlapping stages.

Strategies/Initiatives for Change

Bureaucratic/Professional Systems



Community/Professional Systems

Rules-Oriented

- Focused on short-term activities
- Focused on following rules
- Conflicting, disjointed rules

Piecemeal/Parts-Oriented

- Isolated, disjointed systems
- Separate parts
- Rigid
- Static
- Task-oriented projects

Service Delivery-Oriented

- Deficit focused
- Hierarchical
- Crisis- and problem-oriented
- Monocultural
- Competitive

Purpose/Results-Oriented

- Purpose/mission drive choices
- Process/product results are valued
- Long-term sustainable results are sought

Systemically-Oriented

- Interconnected systems
- Holistic orientation
- Flexible
- Dynamic
- Evolving, comprehensive initiatives

Community Building-Oriented

- Asset-focused
- Community/Professionals as equal partners
- Prevention-oriented
- Interdependent
- Accountable

FIGURE 1 — THE FOUNDATION OF CHANGING FROM INSTITUTIONAL TO COMMUNITY-BASED SYSTEMS

FURTHER READINGS ON SYSTEMS THINKING AND LEARNING

Gates, Christopher T. (1995/1996). "Making a Case for Collaborative Problem Solving." *Community Education Journal*, Vol. XXII, Nos. 1 & 2, Fall/Winter.

Discusses how all over America, dedicated community problem solvers are finding new ways of bringing together the public, private, and nonprofit sectors in collaborative problem-solving efforts.

Sense, P.M. (1990). *The Fifth Discipline*. New York, NY: Doubleday/Currency.

This book has become a classic. It describes and encourages systems thinking. The author considers systems thinking as the "fifth discipline" that organizations need to cultivate to become learning organizations. The other disciplines are personal mastery, shared vision, mental models, and team learning.

Sommerfeld, Meg. (1995). "A Community of Learners." *Education Week*, 14, 25.

This article discusses the Community Learning Centers (CLC) project, a systemic school-change design in Minnesota. Examples from actual CLC schools will be helpful for communities that are interested in innovative ways to create a local hub of learning that engages multiple and diverse stakeholders.

Wheatley, M.J. (1992). *Leadership and the New Science*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Hoehler Publishers.

Wheatley looks at organizations through the eyes of new science. This includes discussing relationships and nonlinear connections as the sources of new knowledge. In this framework, roles and structures are created from need and interest which nurture individual and team creativity, the basis of learning organizations. An inventive and compelling book that looks at natural processes (such as "relational holism" in quantum physics) that maintain integrity and then asks central questions concerning organizational structure and processes in the same light.

FURTHER READINGS ON PURPOSE AND RESULTS-ORIENTED CHANGE

Dryfoos, Joy G. (1994). *Full-Service Schools*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

This book provides examples of how communities are redefining the purposes for their schools and creating new types of social centers that fit the conditions of the community. Integrated support services in schools which include health, mental health, and social service agencies are discussed as the “wave of the future,” particularly in improving the social environment of disadvantaged communities. Projects/initiatives are included.

The Family Criteria Task Force. (1988). “A Strategy for Strengthening Families: Using Family Criteria in Policymaking and Program Evaluation.” Washington, DC: AAMFT Research and Education Foundation.

This paper analyzes what can be done to ensure that policies are supportive of family life. The paper underscores that the family is regularly affected by government programs and policies whether at the federal, state, or local levels. However, the family is seldom formally referred to beyond rhetoric in policymaking and analysis. Program evaluation and policy analysis regarding family programs are discussed by acknowledging the need for formal measurements of program outcomes and discussion of how these measurements can be created.

Raack, Lenaya. (1995). “An Effective School Model.” *City Schools: A Research Magazine About Urban Schools and Communities*, Volume 1, Number 3.

If schools are to affect students positively, schools must believe in students and that all children can learn and flourish. There must be an unwavering commitment to the potential of students and to their academic needs and concerns. This article shows how communities have rethought the purposes of their schools.

Schaeffer, R.H. (1988). *The Breakthrough Strategy*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.

This book provides an approach to defining small units of change to achieve early results and build momentum for long-term change.

Theobald, Paul and Paul Nachtigal. (1995). “Culture, Community, and the Promise of Rural Education.” *Phi Delta KAPPAN*, November.

This article focuses on the need for the rural school to stop emulating the urban or suburban school, and attend to its own place. Article sections include: industrialization: the name of the old game; ecology: the name of the new game; the promise of rural education; and the task before rural educators. This article shows how the rural context is key to shaping the purpose and consequently the nature of the education system.

United Way of America. (1996). *Measuring Program Outcomes: A Practical Approach*. Alexandria, VA: United Way.

This guide explains how to measure outcomes of United Way programs.

Work Group on Health Promotion and Community Development. (1995). *Work Group Evaluation Handbook: Evaluating and Supporting Community Initiatives for Health and Development*. Lawrence, Kansas: The Schiefelbusch Institute for Life Span Studies.

This handbook outlines a system to support and evaluate nearly 20 different community initiatives.

FURTHER READINGS ON RESIDENT-BASED CHANGE

Chrislip, David, Carl Larsen. (1995/1996). "Collaborative Leadership: How Citizens and Civic Leaders Can Make a Difference." *Community Education Journal*, Vol. XXII, Nos. 1 & 2, Fall /Winter.

This book discusses and demonstrates how citizens and civic leaders can make a difference by serving as catalysts for collaboration.

Cortes, Ernesto, Jr. (1995/1996). "Engaging the Community in Education Reform." *Community Education Journal*, Vol. XXII, Nos. 1 & 2, Fall/Winter.

The author argues that the community needs to be included at the core of every effort to improve public education.

Heckman, Paul E. and Jean M. Peacock. (1995). "Joining Schools and Families in Community Change: A Context for Student Learning and Development." *New Schools, New Communities*, Vol. 12, No 1, Fall.

As an overview of the Educational and Community Change (ECC) Project in Tucson, AZ, the authors describe several ideas and concepts that merge school and community; give examples of activities that teachers, parents, and project staff have created and implemented; and identify challenges and lessons learned.

Mathews, David. (1995/1996). "Why We Need to Change Our Concept of Community Leadership." *Community Education Journal*, Vol. XXII, Nos. 1 & 2, Fall/Winter.

For fundamental change to occur, community citizens have to act, says the author. Large groups of people need to be engaged fully in the process. Ultimately, when citizens talk about leadership within their communities, these citizens are talking about themselves.

Thompson, Scott. (1995). "Creating Community Alliances: A Guide to Improving Project Advocacy and Dissemination." *New Schools, New Communities*, Vol. 12 No. 1, Fall.

The author provides practical guidance for community initiatives interested in establishing local advocacy groups to support the progress and visibility of their efforts.

Weiss, Abby R. (1995). "The School-Community Connection." *New Schools, New Communities*, Vol. 12, No. 1, Fall.

Weirs shares the history of the School-Community Connection project, an effort designed to make real differences in the lives of children and families by strengthening relationships with their communities. The author also provides descriptions of the six schools that participated in the project and shares lessons learned in the implementation of these designs.

CHAPTER IV — SELECTING STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS TO ANALYZE THE STATUS OF COMMUNITY SYSTEMS

Who should analyze a community's social systems to determine the next steps in moving the whole set of community systems—formal and informal? How can the principles discussed in the previous chapter become the normal modes of operation in the community? The choices seem endless.

In this chapter, we first define “community” for purposes of this analysis. Next, we focus on identifying people to analyze the status of system change in the community.

WHAT IS THE “COMMUNITY”?

Communities are often considered collections of friendships related to each other by proximity. In actuality, a community is more than a place and more than a series of friendships. Instead, it comprises various groups of people who work together, face-to-face, in public and private life. The key feature of community is its tendency toward associations. The driving force behind the formation and maintenance of community is not just the continuation and expansion of familial ties, but the coming together of common citizens to form both formal and informal associations that solve problems.

Communities are comprised of individuals, associations, and institutions—all of which have assets for community building.

The associations that express and create “community” take several forms. These associations can be relatively formal, with official names and officers elected by the members—like the American Legion, the local church bowling league, or the local peace fellowship.

A second type is not so formal. It usually has no officers or official name. Nonetheless, it represents a gathering of citizens who solve problems, celebrate together, and enjoy a social compact. These associations include poker clubs, coffee klatches, or neighborhood gatherings. Though they may not have a formal name and structure, they are often sites of critical dialogue, opinion formation, information sharing, and decision making. These interactions influence the values and problem-solving capacities of citizens.

A third form of association is less obvious, because it typically occurs as an enterprise or business. However, much of this kind of association activity also takes place in local restaurants, beauty parlors, barbershops, bars, hardware stores, and other places of business. People gather in these places for interaction as well as transaction.

Often, institutions have viewed communities and these three types of associations as a collection of parochial, inexperienced, unschooled, uniformed people. Those accustomed to managed experiences and relationships can see

communities as disordered and inefficient. Yet, there is often a hidden order to communities and their associations created along six dimensions:¹⁰

- **Capacity** — We build community associations on the strengths of each community member. The sum of each person's capacities represents the power of the group. This contrasts with the dominant professional model, focusing on the deficits or needs of communities and their members.
- **Collective Effort** — The essence of community is people working together. One of the characteristics of community work is shared responsibility requiring many talents. Thus, a person labeled deficient by institutions can often find support in the collective capacities of a community that can shape itself to the unique character of each person.
- **Informality** — Community associations are critical elements of the informal economy that keeps communities going. These associations also are key to authentic relationships. When authentic relationships develop, a strong sense of caring also develops in communities. This informality allows for more flexibility in the community's ability to incorporate both the capacities and weaknesses of members.
- **Stories** — In universities, people gather knowledge through studies. In institutions, people gather knowledge through reports. In communities, people gather knowledge through stories. These community stories allow people to reach back into their common histories and their individual experiences for knowledge about defining problems and solving them. Successful community associations resist efforts to impose the foreign language of studies and reports, because that language ignores their own capacities and insights.
- **Celebration** — Community groups constantly incorporate celebration, parties, and social events into their activities. The line between work and play is blurred, and the human nature of everyday life becomes part of the way of work.
- **Tragedy** — One of the surest, most consistent strands of community life is the explicit common knowledge of tragedy, death, and suffering. Professionals and institutions have traditionally left little space for these and have ignored them in their understanding of individual capacities and deficiencies. Tragedy helps humans acknowledge their mortality, but also helps them recognize their capacities to survive and thrive.

The institutions within a community range from private businesses to public institutions such as schools, libraries, hospitals, social service agencies, police and fire stations, and recreational facilities. Such institutions are often the most visible and formal aspect of a community's structure.

To analyze the status of a community's systems, we have used the term "community" to refer to a group of people who are geographically located

¹⁰ These dimensions are drawn from McKnight (1995).

close to each other and bound together in ways described above. This group is also bound together by other types of public governmental systems, transportation systems, and economic conditions.

A community constitutes a collection of people who are in the process of creating a collective value—improving their well-being. For purposes of both analysis and change, the most useful unit, that is a “community,” is a subset of a city or, in a rural area, a geographical area that encompasses several small towns, for example, a county. A unit of 10,000 people seems to be a reasonable size.¹¹

WHO SHOULD DO THE ANALYSIS?

Once you have identified your “community,” generate a list of the people potentially involved in the analysis. In our experience, the group size can vary considerably—from 12 to 15 people to 100 people. If a large group is involved, small groups would handle portions of the analysis.

When selecting people for the analysis, consider two purposes for the analysis: product and process. The **product purpose** is to obtain the information that comes from the analysis. The **process purpose** is to create a dialogue and shared understanding of change within a key group of people whose commitment to change undertaken in the community is necessary.

By having this key group involved in the analysis, the facilitator can become acquainted with key people and gain insights into the identification of the people who may be important to involve in future phases of community change. The facilitator can bring together people for this analysis without making a long-term or specific commitment to their future involvement.

We will consider people with several different connections with the community: community residents, nonresidents with special knowledge, representatives of social units within the community, and representatives of purpose-based public systems. Although it is difficult to determine all the types of people and interactions of importance in the community, having a full range of stakeholders and partners involved in the analysis is important for generating meaningful information and developing the broad base of knowledge and understanding needed for fundamental systems change. Collectively, the group will see how one sector affects another in terms of underlying system structures in the community.

Community Residents

At the core of the analysis and subsequent action are the residents of the community or neighborhood to be analyzed. You need a broad range of residents—representatives of the full age range, from youth to senior citizens, as well as residents involved with the full range of social systems that operate within the community. When selecting residents to be involved in the analysis, look for people who are informal opinion leaders within the community. For this

¹¹ We hope to learn more about the appropriate size unit of analysis from your experiences. Using the catchment area of the high schools appears to be a useful way to subdivide larger cities.

task, it may be valuable to select people who have some familiarity with the language of systems. The other option is to spend time with the residents, familiarizing them with the concepts to help them deflect intimidation from professionals in the group.

Nonresidents with Special Knowledge

The community may have been the focus of community-change efforts in the past or have been involved in studies. A researcher or facilitator involved in such an effort may have gained a special familiarity with the community that would be valuable in the analysis.

Informal Multipurpose Social Units

“Informal multipurpose social units” are groups of individuals, such as family members, neighbors who have organized themselves, or informal groups of volunteers who have banded together. Each of these “units” can be a key focus for building strength and social capital.¹²

Representatives of Purpose-Based Systems

Another way to view the community is to divide it into the purposes (e.g., education, governance, and health) that often serve as the basis for defining systems—linking to ways of solving problems and realizing hopes and dreams. Each purpose-based unit tends to have different (possibly overlapping) special-interest groups involved, and also different priorities and different professionals.

When considering these groups, distinguish between organizations that have originated in the community and those that are an extension of a system external to the community. For example, a social service agency that is an extension of state government operates and is viewed very differently from a local nonprofit service agency affiliated with a local church, yet both may be focused on the same purpose, e.g., mental health.

Many purpose-based systems are formal bodies such as county, district, state, and federal agencies that work within a structured public sector system such as health, education, or human services. These systems are often highly specialized, with professionals and some nonprofessionals working within the constraints of the system and offering services to the community, although the service providers may frequently live outside the neighborhood. Others are local associations, religious institutions, cultural organizations, and libraries that may have many more volunteers and nonprofessionals.¹³

¹² For more information on building social capital, see the National Civic League (1993). *The Civic Index*. New York, NY: National Civic League, Inc.

¹³ For excellent information on identifying the variety of associations, organizations, and institutions within a community, see Kretzmann, J. P. and McKnight, J. L. (1993). *Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University.

Tasks and product outcomes are typically defined around these units. And within each unit, several different formal and informal systems may be operating. For our purposes, we have categorized the purpose-based systems into seven categories, recognizing that some of these categories overlap:

- **Social services and personal well-being** — The systems in this category may be governmental human services agencies as well as churches and community-based organizations. The types of services provided encompass spiritual well-being as well as social and emotional conditions.
- **Education** — Communities may have a wide range of educational institutions, but, minimally, each one has connections to the public school system for K-12 education. Nearly all communities also encompass or have links to community colleges, technical colleges, and/or universities.
- **Health** — The public health systems, hospitals, medical doctors, clinics, complementary health practitioners (e.g., chiropractors, acupuncturists, massage therapists, psychologists), and other private health-care providers may be relevant groups to include.
- **Economic development** — A wide variety of groups involved in economic development may be considered: community development corporations, chambers of commerce, large and small businesses and their associations, banks, venture capitalists, and others.
- **Physical and environmental maintenance/revitalization** — Some communities may have groups that emphasize maintaining or revitalizing the visible assets of the community by building gyms, parks, and housing; cleaning up vacant lots; or addressing air pollution and other aspects of the environment. A local Community Development Corporation, a public housing agency, or private sector investors may be functioning within the community.
- **Social justice** — Police departments and the court systems may be key players in the community.
- **Governance** — Although all of the above categories encompass governmental agencies, it is important to consider the overall governance structure, particularly emphasizing elected officials (the mayor, city council members, county commissioners, and the town clerk).

READINESS FOR CHANGE

When selecting people within and across these and other categories, consider that there may be distinct categories of people in terms of how they respond to innovations and new ideas.¹⁴ (The following numbers in parentheses indicate the typical percentage of people who fall in each category relative to an innovation.):

¹⁴ Everett Rogers has been accumulating this information for the last 30 years. For more information, see Rogers, E. M. (1983). *Diffusion of Innovations*. New York, NY: Macmillan Publishing Co.

Innovators — Innovators tend to be adventurous, eager to try new ideas, and untroubled by setbacks and incompleteness of ideas or methods. They network quickly outside their local circles. (About 3 percent)

Early Adopters — Early adopters are a part of the local social system and include local opinion leaders. Early adopters are not as far ahead of the average individual as innovators and are more trusted locally. (About 13 percent)

Early Majority — Members of the early majority adopt new ideas just before the average person and seldom hold leadership positions. They tend to deliberate at length before adopting an innovation and decide to adopt an innovation later than innovators and early adopters. (About 34 percent)

Late Majority — Members of the late majority adopt new ideas just after the average person. They often don't adopt until it is an economic necessity and/or there is growing peer pressure. They tend to have few resources and are therefore more reluctant to take risks. (About 34 percent)

Late Minority — Members of the late minority are the last to adopt an innovation or may never adopt it. They are not opinion leaders. They tend to be isolated and their points of reference are in the past. (About 16 percent)

When it comes to any given community, the proportion of people in the various categories may be different than the figures given above. This is especially true in poor communities when change involves some type of economic risk. More people are unable to take such risks and are more likely to be in the late majority category. If a system is going to change on a large scale, large proportions of nearly all of these categories of people must be functioning under the mode of the new system.

When selecting people to be part of the analysis team, many will come from the early adopter category. However, it may be useful to consider people from the other categories to be sure that knowledge of the full spectrum of the community is present among the group.

Using the ideas above, we suggest that the facilitator work with key groups and individuals to generate a list of possible people to involve. It may be useful to establish an informal advisory committee that chooses the selection criteria and helps make the choices among possible participants.

FURTHER READINGS ON ANALYZING COMMUNITY SYSTEMS

Education Commission of the States. (1991). *Restructuring the Education System: Communication*. Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States.

This was written specifically to help schools develop communication plans, however, the information provided will be helpful for any community and/or institution interested in learning how to effectively communicate with the public.

Mathews, Forrest David. (1994). *Politics for People: Finding a Responsible Public Voice*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.

This book discusses why communication, inclusiveness, and listening are critical to building effective democracies.

Moore, G.A. (1991). *Crossing the Chasm*. New York, NY: Harper Business.

Moore develops a continuum entitled the “Technology Adoption Life Cycle” which contends that technology is absorbed into any given community in stages corresponding to the psychological and social profiles of various segments within the community. The thinking is similar to that of Rogers. This psychographic profile—combining psychology and demographics—is used to market high-tech products by following the users and/or nonusers identified as: innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards. The patterns provide ideas of what one might expect in other fields such as community work.

Rogers, E.M. (1983). *Diffusion of Innovations*. New York, NY: Macmillan Publishing Co.

Diffusion is the process of disseminating new ideas through channels (formal and informal) in society. Diffusion can be seen as an act of social change. When new ideas are diffused and are adopted or rejected, the process creates a change in the social environment. New ideas can be spread in a planned or spontaneous way. In this book, Rogers synthesizes important findings from past research, criticizes the work (which includes his own), and charts new directions in diffusion research and analysis.

Weisbord, Marvin R. (1995). *Future Search: An Action Program Guide to Finding Common Ground in Organizations and Communities*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler.

This book encourages the use of a technique called “Future Search Conferences” for bringing people together to achieve shared vision, breakthrough innovation, empowerment, and collaborative action.

F

CHAPTER V — MAPPING THE STATUS OF COMMUNITY-BASED SYSTEMS CHANGE

This chapter lays the groundwork for use of a tool that determines the extent and progress of systemic change within a community. This kind of information can be used to structure a new initiative or the next phase of an initiative for continual progress toward the new types of systems desired for the community. A matrix relates the stages of the change process to various “levers” for change that appear to be particularly important in keeping the change process moving.

This matrix or “Continuum of Community-Based Systems Change” presented in Figure 2 (p. F-62) is designed as a tool for a community-change facilitator to use with a cross-role group of people to assess the status of the community’s change initiatives to date. Chapter VI explains how to modify the continuum for your situation.

Change is an ever-evolving process whose stages often have ambiguous edges. There is no one correct place to begin. Choices depend on the personalities of those interacting, the conditions people seek to change or create, and, of course, the context. The starting point for structuring an initiative may be focused on individuals (e.g., leadership development), neighborhoods (e.g., developing trust among residents), or within a formal system (e.g., reducing duplication and making human service agencies more accessible). Participants may be building upon existing assets, responding to community needs, mobilizing residents or professionals, targeting selected social systems, or leveraging other types of change.

Regardless of the starting point, these pockets of change must be gradually intertwined if long-term and comprehensive change is ultimately to result. The stages and levers of change presented in this chapter help groups find ways to weave together actions that lead to long-term comprehensive change.

To simplify use, the continuum is presented in rows and columns. In reality, the stages and levers of change are much more cyclical and intertwined. First, we describe the stages of change in the continuum, then the levers of change. Each stage or lever includes an example.

STAGES OF CHANGE

It takes considerable time to fundamentally change a system. Many people must think and act differently. People and systems cannot be separated. As systems go through changes, so do the people involved in making the systems work. Although the process is complex and varies from community to com-

munity, there are six recognizable stages of the change process that communities and individuals go through as they recreate their social systems:¹⁵

- Maintenance of Institution-Oriented Systems
- Awareness (of the need for change)
- Exploration (of new outcomes and ways of operating)
- Transitioning (from the old to the new system)
- Emerging New Fundamentals (of the new system)
- Predominance of Community-Based Systems

Within the description of each stage of change is a community example (in italics) that illustrates what might be happening at this stage. The examples are drawn from actual situations (or a composite of more than one situation).

Maintenance of Institution-Oriented Systems

In this stage, people expect to overcome problems and challenges by improving the approaches already in use rather than trying a new approach. The power dynamics of dominant cultures and organizations are firmly held in place. Eventually a few key people realize that if they continue to do what they have always done, they will continue to get the same (unsatisfactory) results, no matter how hard they try.

Example: The local paper is criticizing the county social service agency for being inefficient and not addressing the needs of clients. The agency head decides that all staff members should have time-management and stress-management training. How staff members work with other agencies remains the same.

There may be a few small projects or efforts (probably led by people with little power) that are attempting to change the systems. However, it is likely that there are no initiatives in the community to address the interconnections among systems (e.g., education, health, and human services).

Awareness

Key people in the community become increasingly aware that the efforts made to improve services and their ideas about what works have made little or no difference in the life of the community. They begin to wonder whether there might be some better approach, but they don't know what to do next. There is fear of letting go of the familiar even though key players may recognize it as essential.

¹⁵ The stages presented here are congruent with other models of the stages of change, e.g., see Bridges, W. (1991). *Managing Transitions: Making the Most of Change*. New York, NY: Addison-Wesley; and Land, G. and Jarman, B. (1992). *Breakpoint and Beyond*. New York, NY: Harper Business. However, the stages presented here are divided into more parts and have an emphasis on groups of people changing the systems that shape their lives. These characteristics are based on our experiences and study of the stages related to changing systems.

Often in this stage, people feel guilty or unhappy about their performances and begin to blame others. The emphasis is on what has gone wrong or is being done poorly rather than on new possibilities. Getting past this blaming period is critical to the development of new initiatives and alternative practices. However, it is not until the Transitioning stage that people begin to band together and let go of the blame and anger.

During the Awareness stage, people in power often exhibit tokenism. They make efforts to include those they realize have been excluded, but their efforts (conscious or unconscious) still ensure that the locus of power remains the same. During this stage, people discuss small projects and begin to talk about collaboration, but there is still great distrust and lack of commitment to new ways. People are just beginning to break free from their old paradigms of how the systems should work. They are only beginning to see other possibilities.

Example: The chamber of commerce has just published a report that criticizes the administration of the schools and local social service agencies. According to the report, too much money is going into administration and not enough is reaching clients and students. The report identifies five other cities that are decentralizing their bureaucracies. The chamber of commerce challenges the local schools and agencies to follow example of these five cities. Key people begin to take notice of the ineffectiveness.

As people move through the Awareness stage and hear of new ways of doing things and as tensions increase, people open to the possibility that change is needed. This leads to the Exploration stage.

Exploration

During Exploration, communities pick up new ideas from many sources. It is critical for people to see the change in action and hear about it from their peers. For example, they visit communities experiencing success in their areas of interest, have one-on-one conversations with various stakeholders, participate in Internet discussion groups, attend conferences, establish study groups, watch video tapes, etc. Community groups and organizations begin to talk about banding together as they explore, but there are lots of turf issues and power struggles that occur as people begin to try these new roles and responsibilities and to change their mental images of how they should be operating. For example, a manager may feel useless and inferior as she realizes she needs to be a supporter rather than a director of people.

At the Awareness and the Exploration stages, conversations are extremely important. It is through these interactions that people learn and begin to change their mental images of what is the “right” way to do things. The ground rules of effective dialogue become particularly important to make these conversations productive.¹⁶

¹⁶ For more information on effective dialogue, see Senge, P. M. (1990). *The Fifth Discipline*. New York, NY: Doubleday/Currency.

Another key activity at the Exploration stage is for people at all parts of the system to actually try out new approaches in as many arenas of the community as possible based on personal interests and commitments which are key to motivating change. It is also essential that all parts of the formal and informal systems of the community start to shake loose from their habitual and often unconscious ways of operating. Unless change starts to happen at all levels of a system (e.g., governance, leadership, management, workers), it is unlikely that the work will lead to fundamental change in how any given system operates. Instead, the foundations of the old systems will remain, and only a few interesting projects will model the new assumptions without significantly challenging the dominant community systems.

Example: Nonprofit and governmental social service agencies and schools wrote a proposal and were awarded funding from a national foundation to develop a single-entry intake form for clients in the county. These agencies and schools established a restructuring committee with representation from each agency that would work together to develop the form and process. Once this effort was underway, the agencies and schools moved on to a literature review of case-management models and concepts focusing on community and client assets rather than deficits.

Other initiatives focused on assets began to network with the agencies and schools, and they identified others who shared a common vision and philosophy. They are now ready to talk with county commissioners about needed policy changes. Unfortunately, their external funding is about to expire, and the members of the group are very concerned that the top administrators of some key agencies got involved just to get the external money without a commitment to continue the support.

At the Exploration stage, people begin to understand new practices and philosophies at a deeper more personal level. They recognize the connection between assumptions, beliefs, and daily practice. They recognize incongruities between current practice and the new beliefs and assumptions that they want to drive their operations.

A couple of precautions during this stage: Often, certain stakeholders will latch onto one technique, thinking it is going to solve all of the problems of the system. They may become strong advocates for the chosen approach and criticize others for not using it. This undermines the environment of trust and encouragement essential to move forward. Also, people may try too many new approaches at a very superficial level.

For example, a school may try to institute cooperative learning, but teachers do not have time to train students in how to do it well. They make feeble attempts and then declare it an ineffective approach, rather than realizing that they have taken just one of many steps needed to use this method as it is intended.

This phenomenon links closely to the problem of people trying to use new practices without challenging their fundamental beliefs about how systems need to operate or how they view other people. For example, people in power attempt to reach out to community members but still maintain their position of superiority. Community members view these attempts as tokenism and can become hostile.

As people leave the Exploration stage and move toward Transition, they are often overwhelmed with all the choices and issues, yet they begin to see themes, patterns, and connections among parts of the system. They are able to look more deeply at the commonalities among promising practices and recognize their potential to make some of these practices a reality. They also come face-to-face with issues of power, equity, trust, and respect.

The move from the Exploration stage to the Transition stage is typically the biggest leap from one stage to another. One writer refers to this type of move as “crossing the chasm.”¹⁷ This is where deep commitment to a new set of underlying principles is required. Without this commitment, people will either get caught in an endless loop of explorations or will revert back to the old ways of doing business.

Transition

It is in the Transition stage that initiatives coalesce and new structures are put in place that could begin to define the new connections. For example, existing associations and organizations might agree jointly to fund a coordinator who works across associations/organizations to accomplish a particular purpose such as coordinated services for children’s health and social needs. Such a position may have been funded during the Exploration stage, but in the Exploration stage, special funding—from a foundation—was used. In the Transitioning stage people are, at least in part, using their own funds.

Problems inevitably occur when people make the switch to the new system. Typically, they will hang on to some aspects of the old system until they are comfortable with the new ways of doing things. Those who succeed realize they don’t have the resources to do both and they need to make a choice between the old and the new.

Recognizing when one has to give up the old way and cling to the new is tricky. It involves balancing what worked in the old way (rather than throwing everything out from the past or trying to keep all of both old and new) with what is needed in the new context and deciding how to allocate resources to support the change. Those tough decisions must be based on a deliberate commitment to the new underlying assumptions that will anchor their systems—for example, a commitment to shared and community-driven decision making around the priorities of a system rather than hierarchically based decisions.

¹⁷ For more information, see Moore, G.A. (1991). *Crossing the Chasm*. New York, NY: Harper Business.

Example: *The school superintendent and the director of the county social service agency have known each other awhile, but have not talked about the changes that each was making to decentralize decision making to teachers and social workers respectively. The superintendent and director discovered the commonalties in their approaches during a conversation at a chamber of commerce panel with business leaders. The superintendent will soon be taking a job with a larger district and has asked for the support of business leaders and the social services director when she goes to the school board to make some policy changes that will establish the new approaches for the long term. The business leaders also talked about how the chamber and other influential people in the community might work with the school board to help ensure that the hiring process for the new superintendent includes criteria that results in the hiring of someone who supports this same philosophy.*

During this stage, outside sources typically supply some funding, however, increasingly large amounts will be reallocated from within the existing formal and informal systems. For example, a community decides that sports uniforms will no longer be paid for out of the school budget, instead those dollars will be used for professional development and training for teachers and community volunteers engaged in school activities.

The Transition stage is fragile. Often external funders pull out at the Exploration stage, leaving people too vulnerable to weather the assaults of those still holding on to their old power positions and perspectives. The Transitioning stage represents the dying of the old—letting go of past priorities and frameworks.

Emerging New Fundamentals

During this stage, players begin building the new in a consistent and committed fashion. It is like going beyond the periodic diet to a long-term new set of eating habits and patterns. It is the time when those who may not have been willing to commit up until now are convinced that this is the better way of doing things or at least it is the one that will be rewarded and expected.

About one-fourth or one-third of the people in any stakeholder group will be quite comfortable with the new way of doing things and regularly use new language and practices (e.g., shared decision making) at this stage. There will be pockets where efforts remain piecemeal. For example, in neighborhoods there are likely to be stakeholders whose assets have not been tapped (e.g., families with multiple needs). This is the stage, however, where leaders within nearly all stakeholder groups are confident in their abilities to build their communities from within and to leverage outside resources to further their goals.

For example, in a school, funding to support community-based change comes from its regular budget, showing it is committed and able to sustain this effort.

Example: Six community agencies and organizations have been working as a collaborative for five years. Funding for a single-entry intake process and for a liaison within each organization (a person who as part of his/her regular job description works collaboratively with the community and other agencies) is a regular part of the budgeting process of each agency. Recently, the steering committee—comprised of primarily agency representative—was changed. It is now comprised of 60 percent community residents served or affected by the agencies and 40 percent agency staff. The steering committee is now considering how agency and organization services can better build the assets of the community. Last year, two agency leaders were new. Both support the collaborative work and have continued funding even though they had some budgetary cutbacks. Hospital liaisons are now talking to the collaborative about how they might work together. People throughout the state (and even beyond state lines) who want to learn more about the collaborative's processes are now visiting the collaborative.

Predominance of Community-Based Systems

At this stage, key systems that shape the character of the community are generally operating according to the fundamental assumptions (results-oriented, resident-based, systemic) that were sought as the basis for the community's systems. This stage is called "Predominance of Community-Based Systems," because communities seldom, if ever, have the new systems fully in place.

As communities approach their desired systems, they typically see something beyond that is even more desirable.

It is like the story of the city man who went to the country looking for Joe Jones' house. He stopped at a farmhouse and asked the woman who answered the door if she knew where Joe Jones lived. "Oh yes," she said. "Just go three C's down the road and turn left." "Three C's?" the city man asked. "What do you mean?" "Well," she said, "go as far as you can see, then do it again, then again, and then you turn left." Frequently, we get a vision as far as we can see based on what our current knowledge is. Then, as we get closer and closer, we see something over the horizon that is even more intriguing and seems more appropriate. As the systems of a community reach this stage, the systems are most likely ready to recycle through the whole continuum again, having learned a considerable amount about the process of change.

At this point, systems are also more flexible and better able to incorporate small changes with less dramatic shifts in thinking and action than the first time designers worked through the process of fundamental redesign. At this point, key people have shifted to a learning mode and have created what some refer to as a "learning organization" or "learning community."

Because system change is a dynamic process, movement is constant—forward and backward—along the continuum. People gradually develop a different perspective of the world they work in or the community they are trying to build. They recognize the patterns of change and gain confidence that once

they have worked through one set of issues or problems, they will be better prepared to face the inevitable next set. They don't expect things to ever be perfect but are increasingly prepared to deal with the cycles of life.

Example: Most agencies and community organizations view collaborative working relationships as essential, and community residents are regularly involved on the boards of many of the agencies. Major issues are now surfacing about how to rebuild businesses within low-income neighborhoods and what approaches to use for improving housing conditions. Community leaders are realizing that long-standing racial and economic issues are still not adequately resolved, and new approaches are needed. However, these leaders feel that they have a strong cadre of citizens connected with key organizations that have worked through changes before and are positioned to address these tough issues.

LEVERS OF CHANGE

The process of changing multiple systems and the fundamental norms and principles of a community is a daunting and often overwhelming task. How can a community approach the task in a manageable way?

There are certain “levers” for change that seem to be present in nearly all system-change efforts. One dictionary defines a “lever” as “a bar used to pry something loose.” These levers for changing systems are entry points into systems that help to dislodge the systems from the principles and practices that may have worked well in the past but no longer are adequate or appropriate for new community conditions. Once systems are pried loose—“unfrozen,” as some might say—they are pliable and easily reshaped.

These levers, however, are integral parts of systems themselves. Thus, the metamorphosis of these levers creates the new systems. The levers of change look different and are used differently at each of the stages of change discussed previously. The eight levers addressed here are:

- Shared Principles and Norms
- Vision and Goals
- Stakeholder Roles
- Projects, Programs, and Initiatives
- Human Capacity Building
- Governance/Leadership
- Communications/Networking
- Financial Resources

The levers are not mutually exclusive; they overlap, but each provides a different way of looking at the system. It is analogous to a kaleidoscope where each turn gives a different view, and yet each is recognizable as a different view of a common collection.

The transformation of each of these features of the community's systems results in systems that have the desired new characteristics. Review the following descriptions of these levers, contrasting how they look within the old systems versus the new systems.

When considering these levers, one can apply them to individual systems within a community or to a collection of systems. Typically people need to be going back and forth, from thinking and working on particular systems (e.g., the dynamics among families in a neighborhood or a church, the human services department, the public health department, or the education system) to thinking and working on the interconnections and interfaces among formal and informal systems.

Shared Principles and Norms

In institution-oriented systems, common community norms may be those of confrontational style, short-term results, single-issue focus, top-down social/organizational hierarchy, one-way communication, dependency, and competition for scarce resources. The basic principle is that systems are organized around activities, isolated from one another and hierarchically structured, and focused on problems, needs, and deficits to work in an orderly and efficient fashion to improve the community. (These characteristics may have been appropriate for the industrial age, for which they were designed, but no longer are.)

The new community-based systems create common norms that are respectful of other ideas rather than confrontational. And these norms display shared leadership, a focus on long-term capacity building rather than short-term crisis interventions, and an expanded view of stakeholders.

These norms grow out of a new set of principles that serve as the foundation for social systems: (a) a purpose and results-orientation both in terms of products and processes that contribute to the well-being of children and families as well as the community at large (b) a focus on interconnectedness and dynamic relationships (a systemic approach) and (c) an orientation to community building, recognizing assets of all citizens and the importance of developing shared responsibility and leadership with a sense of equality among all parties.

Example: *The director of the Community Development Corporation and the chair of the Interfaith Council in Summitville met during a conference on substance abuse prevention sponsored by the governor. They had not recognized how focused they were on deficits of the community and its residents. The concept of focusing on assets was revolutionary for them. They agreed to start talking with a few key people about this change in perspective and what it might mean for their work. Soon the conversation expanded to many others. They began observing interactions among their staffs and others, and began taking note of the subtle ways in which deficit thinking tended to shape behavior. They noted examples of behaviors that were based on a focus on assets. These served as the basis for educational ses-*

sions held within the community. Over the course of three years, even outsiders began to notice something different about interactions in the community and the amount of ownership building around the new housing project on the west side of town.

Vision & Goals

Typical community systems, formal or informal, focus on and perpetuate activities that have proven to work in the past. Key people pay little attention to changing conditions and contexts. Short-term strategies and successes are rewarded, without consideration of their long-term impact. Thinking is inward rather than outward, with priority given to benefiting the organization or group itself rather than those it is intended to serve. In many cases this is done almost unconsciously, since people in the system have little or no discussion of their visions, purposes, and goals.

As systems move into new modes of operating, these systems focus on creating or recreating a vision of their roles and purposes in the community, on who should be involved in determining this, and how to connect their daily activities to this vision. System leaders focus on moving people toward critical analysis of problems and issues to understanding and addressing root causes. They work toward challenging the root causes head-on.

As a result, the goals that derive from the vision involve flexibility, analysis of prevailing conditions/contexts, and relevant interventions based upon controllable factors. Since these conditions/contexts affect many services and people, the move is toward a cross-sector approach that is both client- and community-focused. As people work through the stages of change, clients and other stakeholders become increasingly involved in the creation of the vision and all other levers as they are the keys to real change. Personal commitment is high because of involvement and respect for ideas of all groups and because the focus is on the assets of clients and the community.

Example: *An agency partnership began among a group of health, education, and social services agencies serving 12 rural counties. A couple of the agency heads wrote a grant that was funded to support the effort. When the funds actually arrived, the newly hired director of the partnership wanted to have all of the agency heads get together for a one-day visioning session to be sure everyone shared the goals in the proposal. Most of the agency heads were not interested in such a gathering. Finally the partnership director began surveying the community on her own, with minimal interest from the partners, to determine what seemed to be the major issues the partnership should address.*

After a year of meetings of the partnership, usually with poor attendance and low interest, the partnership members began talking about mission and vision statements. Several worked with people in their own agencies to create an agency-level mission and vision statement. Two years later, the partnership members agreed to a retreat to rethink their direction and create a vision statement and goals for the

next phase of the partnership. After three years, they realized that citizens had to be involved in the yearly retreats they were now having. The agencies were also gradually involving clients in the development of their vision statements, and a new level of energy and commitment was emerging within and across agencies as well as among those receiving assistance from the agencies.

Stakeholder Roles

In institutional systems (both formal and informal), people with power—professional staff (instead of beneficiaries), administrators (instead of front-line workers), parents (instead of children)—are traditionally viewed as the key stakeholders and the ones primarily involved in decision making. Citizens, clients, and workers who are at lower levels of the system hierarchies have little or no involvement in the decision-making process. Decisions are “delivered” to the community and others, and support for the decision is taken for granted.

When community systems arise and reach the Predominance of Community-Based Systems stage, citizens, beneficiaries, and other stakeholders become equal partners in decision making. They are empowered through involvement. Authority within systems is more distributed, and systems are more interconnected through the overlap of stakeholder involvement across systems. A mutual respect evolves, with each seeing the other as making a valuable contribution.

Example: *Ansbury is an urban neighborhood that has experienced continual deterioration since the steel industry economy collapsed more than 20 years ago. More and more people have become dependent on welfare, housing has deteriorated, and illegal dumping has filled vacant lots with garbage. Ten years ago, a group of concerned citizens began to mobilize citizens to take action. They formed a neighborhood association that obtained help from the city to take over vacant lots and remove the garbage. It has been a painstakingly long process, but now agencies whose boards had been largely comprised of people from outside the neighborhood have begun to bring residents on as board members. The agencies are forming a collaborative to develop communication, conflict resolution, community organization, and other skills among resident board members to give them greater control over their community. Residents, outsiders, and agency personnel are developing mutual trust and respect and are seeing that each has an important perspective.*

Projects, Programs, and Initiatives

Within institutional systems, projects and programs typically have a narrow focus. They build upon old norms and assumptions and are isolated from other programs despite similar goals or other related features.

Within community-based systems, projects, programs, and initiatives are key levers during the change process. They keep the focus on desired results.

They look for linkages—cross-agency and/or cross-community—and are likely to have multiple purposes. They are designed for both short- and long-term results and emphasize building human assets at the same time they are accomplishing visible community improvements (i.e., processes and products). They use the assets of persons within the community as well as those outside. Evaluations look at a full range of results (in terms of process and product) and help evolve the theory of change guiding the initiative.

Projects are likely to be embedded within broader initiatives that are defined primarily by community-building assumptions—purpose and results-oriented, systemic, and resident-based. Smaller units within the community create specific projects that put these principles into practice.

Example: Many of the Ansbury agencies were started as specially funded projects. Some were related to housing, some to youth development, some to substance abuse, etc. Each was focused on a segment of the community: youth, senior citizens, people with substance-abuse problems. Often these agencies competed with one another for foundation funding. Turf protecting was the norm. A special funding opportunity arose that required that organizations form collaboratives to apply. The agencies began to look at how they could address bigger challenges by working together. These agencies also began to look at longer-term goals and ways to be flexible in their approaches both in making immediate changes in their neighborhoods and also in positioning themselves for other challenges.

As a result, they have mobilized residents to reclaim two parks from drug dealers, and now agencies are working on building economic opportunities for neighborhood youth. These agencies refer to their collective work as the Ansbury Neighborhood Initiative, with smaller projects coming and going as needed.

Human Capacity Building

In predominantly institutional systems, there is a narrow view of resources within the community. People look outside for community support and invest primarily in programs and facilities rather than training and development of people. Volunteerism is limited and unfocused. Job training programs are narrowly focused or outdated, and there is little encouragement toward lifelong learning.

In the new systems, building social capital is stressed.¹⁸ Leadership is developed through training and support. Volunteerism is used as a way to incorporate stakeholders and keep systems flexible and dynamic. Technical skills used in community building are taught and practiced in the community-development process. Communities organize their own community-building activities. This strengthens the capacity of local people individually and collectively to nurture and sustain positive community change.

¹⁸ For more information on building social capital, see the National Civic League (1993). *The Civic Index*. New York, NY: National Civic League, Inc.

Example: *The university's school of social work has been providing in-service training for community agency personnel for many years. However, the movement was toward professionals with increasing specializations and service categories. Churches and nonprofit organizations were having more and more difficulty recruiting volunteers. Job training programs were preparing people for nonexistent jobs.*

Spurred by external funding that required a university-community-agency partnership, a collaborative was formed to revamp social work preparation programs within the university, in-service for agency personnel, and new training programs for community residents. The university faculty involved in developing the proposal were heavily focused on a community-driven approach and worked out a balanced distribution of the funds among the partners.

The partnership began its plan for developing human capacity building in the neighborhoods. They developed small collectives of agency, university, and resident members who did surveys of their particular areas to find out what kinds of training and technical support the residents wanted. Working back from these areas, they developed a plan that reshaped the role of the agency personnel in the community and the type of education offered through the university. Agency personnel are learning how to work in support of building on resident assets to meet resident-determined needs. University students now spend time in the community learning to build relationships, rather than delivering "services" to clients.

Governance/Leadership

In the institutional approach, systems are defined hierarchically, with those at the top of the hierarchy defining boundaries and making key policy decisions. Individual community members are expected to implement but not be involved in making policy decisions. There is little or no cross-sector involvement. Governance is defined separately for each formal system, and informal systems go either unrecognized or undervalued. The purpose or mission of one system shows little connection to other systems in the community. Efficiency is valued far more than participation. The focus is largely on the internal management of each system. Learning is defined as something you did in school. Personal commitment is low. Governance is defined within formal systems with few, if any, governance structures that cross systems. Little evaluation of the work of the system is done, or it is done in a judgmental way that does little to promote new thinking. Rather, evaluation is oriented toward ensuring that people are "following the rules" and/or it is focused on individual projects.

In community-based systems, distributed/shared decision making is valued both within systems and across systems. Community residents and clients participate in the decision-making process. Cross-sector involvement is advocated. A redistribution of power, authority, and accountability occurs with governing groups established with representation across formal

and informal systems. These governing groups create a web of connections that results in all community stakeholders being involved in significant decision making and policy making.

Governance and leadership are viewed as keeping the system responsive to, and in tune with, the needs and vision of the community, rather than micromanagement of the system. Evaluation is done with an emphasis on learning and improvement and using data to make decisions. Evaluations are also focused on looking at benchmarks of progress toward long-term goals and providing information that helps governing bodies recognize adjustments they need to make within and across systems to achieve their ultimate goals. Rewards flow from community strength and creativity.

***Example:** Nine agencies that serve a rural 15-county area decided to work together to support a training center for child care workers, because providing quality child care is crucial to the economic development of the region. The heads of the agencies started out as the governing body for the center. Over the first two years, the director of the center became involved in a leadership program sponsored by the local chamber of commerce. She is now getting small family child-care providers involved in the leadership program and in the governance of the center. Training programs also are being developed to help people be more effective board members. Community forums are being held to generate more involvement of the residents in the operation of the training center as well as in the agencies in the collaborative. The leadership program, initially focused on business leaders, is now expanded to include nonprofits, public agencies, and individuals who are seen as having leadership potential within the community, although they are not affiliated with a particular organization.*

Communications/Networking

In an institution-oriented system, the public is informed after decisions have been made or a project has begun. One-way communication through press releases and speeches is the main method of communication. Dissemination of information has little or no focus on how it benefits individuals or organizations, and is seen as a way of directing acceptance of policies rather than encouraging dialogue and coming to general agreement.

In a community-based approach, communication is seen as a two-way street involving listening and understanding. There is an immediate or direct information flow. The public is a part of the decision-making process as well as the dissemination effort. The public is clear on opportunities for participation in decision making. Written materials are tailored to the audience. Two-way interactions are preferred. Formal and informal networking is a key part of the new infrastructure. Regular community forums are offered where people can express points of view and brainstorm ideas, where professionals can offer appropriate expertise—that is, where they can act as resources rather than superintendents of resources.

Example: *Until about five years ago, the local schools provided little student performance information to the community. Because of a state mandate, the schools began providing a report on student performance, but the report contained the minimum information required by the state. Press releases tended to focus mainly on the few positive areas of performance and ignored the less-than-satisfactory situations. Soon, the newspaper encouraged by a group of unhappy parents began to push for more information. Tensions mounted. Finally, an outside facilitator was brought in.*

Guided by outside facilitators, a series of community forums was convened. Residents were asked to define the skills and knowledge they wanted their students to have by the time they left high school. Gradually, the emphasis shifted from what was wrong to what was desired. A committee that included community members, teachers, parents, administrators, and business people began developing a communication plan for the schools. This plan facilitates ongoing dialogue and exchange of views. Networks among the neighborhoods served by each of the four elementary schools are beginning to form.

Financial Resources

In an institution-oriented system, categorical funding is typical, and the categories are defined at locations outside the community. There is emphasis on bringing in outside resources and maintaining past resource-allocation categories and patterns. In a community-based system, budgeting and funding is driven by the results sought. “Budgeting for results” becomes the watchphrase. Desired results are defined, and then budgets are designated to achieve each of the results. Some funds may be allocated specifically in ways that help to build linkages across systems, providing better support to communities.

Example: *A Midwestern state legislature passed a bill that allowed pooling of funds for child welfare. This action was driven by a 40 percent increase in children requiring foster care in the previous five years. “Decategorizing” funds was seen as the best method to serve families and children. Counties go through a process to be designated as a “decat” county. A key feature of decategorization is that counties can carry money over from year to year, making decat a major incentive for counties. This approach moves money into long-term planning and helps to move to early intervention and investment in the future. Within decat counties, results-oriented performance measures are being established within programs followed by budgeting based on these desired results. The state is also working on a way to calculate a Return On Investment (ROI) for publicly funded programs. The benchmarks and results-oriented program performance measures are being implemented in selected agencies this year.*

Each of these levers for change becomes a means by which an initiative or project can help to move systems forward from one stage of change to another.

FURTHER READINGS ON STAGES AND STRATEGIES OF CHANGE

Anderson (Parsons), B.L. (1993). "The Stages of Systemic Change." *Educational Leadership*, 51, 1.

This article presents an easy-to-read discussion of the stages and levers of change in the education field. It presents a continuum of change similar to that presented in this paper, but focused only on education. A fuller discussion of the topic is presented in Anderson (Parsons) B.L. (1993). *A Framework for Understanding and Assessing Systemic Change*. Fort Collins, CO: InSites.

Anderson (Parsons), B.L. and Cox, P.L. (1988). *Configuring the Education System for a Shared Future: Collaborative Vision, Action, Reflection*. Andover, MA: Regional Laboratory for the Northeast and the Islands.

This paper describes the importance of collaborative groups developing vision and action plans followed by time to reflect on the consequences of their actions.

Bridges, W. (1991). *Managing Transitions: Making the Most of Change*. New York, NY: Addison-Wesley.

Bridges describes what change does to employees and what employees in transition do to an organization. He describes how to minimize the distress and disruptions that occur during times of change.

Flower, Joe and Norris, Tyler. (1994). "Sustaining the Effort: Building a Learning Community." *The Healthcare Forum's Healthy Communities Action Kits*, Module 4.

This article touches on many aspects of the continuum for community-based systems change presented in this paper and provides helpful examples and advice for communities engaged in a change process. This article discusses: governance, structure, and leadership; process; maintaining participation; resources; transferring knowledge and capacity; measurement; and celebration.

Fullan, Michael. (1993). *Change Forces: Probing the Depths of Educational Reform*. Bristol, PA: Falmer Press.

Change Forces focuses on educational reform and tackles the nonlinear and chaotic nature of the forces of change at all levels of society. It shows why we need a new mindset for contending with the real complexity of dynamic and continuous change. *Change Forces* debunks many of the current myths about roles of vision and strategic planning, site-based management, strong leadership, consensus, and accountability.

Fullan, M. and Steigelbauer, S. (1991). *The New Meaning of Educational Change*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press: Columbia University.

Building on the previous work, *The Meaning of Educational Change*, this book analyzes the problem of finding meaning in change. It stipulates that if reforms are to be successful, both individuals and groups must find meaning concerning what should change as well as how to go about change. This book distills, from 30 years of planned educational change, those experiences which provide lessons on how to cope with and influence the change process.

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Gardner, John W. (1996). "School and Community." *Community Education Journal*, Vol. XXII, Nos. 1 & 2.

The article discusses the four main resources necessary for creating a sense of community: city government, the media, the schools, and the civic infrastructure.

InSites. (1995). *Analysis of System Change in Education and Human Services: A Facilitator's Guide*. Ft. Collins, CO: InSites.

This is a team guide providing background readings, a detailed continuum, transparencies, and handouts for use in explaining system change in state-level activities.

Katzenbach, J.R., Smith, D.K. (1993). *The Wisdom of Teams*. New York, NY: Harper Business.

The authors believe that teams and performance are inextricably linked. Teams can have many purposes and forms. Characteristics of a "committed team" are identified as a common purpose, a set of related performance goals, and an approach for which they are mutually accountable. The focal point of the book is the section on team stories. These can be a stimulus for managers to use teams to their most fruitful advantage.

Land, G. and Jarman, B. (1992). *Breakpoint and Beyond*. New York, NY: Harper Business.

Change itself has changed. Old rules mandated change of degree. Today we see changes of kind. At breakpoint, the old rules no longer apply and can even create barriers to success. *Breakpoint and Beyond* discusses how understanding the change process in nature and applying it to our lives and organizations can help us unravel many seemingly irreconcilable problems.

Lipnack, Jessica and Jeffrey Stamps. (1993). *The TeamNet Factor*. Essex Junction, VT: Oliver Wight Publications.

A TeamNet involves people working in small groups across boundaries that separate functional expertise and command chains. *The TeamNet Factor* presents five principles in achieving a TeamNet: unifying purpose, independent members, voluntary links, multiple leaders, and interactive levels.

Moore, Linda R. (1995). "A Lesson from the Field: Leadership Matters." *New Schools, New Communities*, Vol. 12, No. 1.

The author shares her insights on why projects that connect schools and communities require skills in collaborative leadership.

Price Waterhouse Change Integration Team. (1995). *Better Change*. New York, NY: Irwin Professional Publishing.

A practical "tool kit" for managers working from the first stage of envisioning change to implementing inclusive change efforts. This guide provides case studies as well as checklists to give support and encouragement to those entering the change process.

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Rees, Fran. (1991). *How To Lead Work Teams*. San Diego, CA: Pfeiffer.

Rees discusses power and the changing role of the manager (from over-responsibility to shared responsibility, and from controlling to facilitating), myths about facilitation, what is a leader-facilitator, and balancing managing with facilitating.

Richards, Ronald W. (1996). *Building Partnerships*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

As a report on developments in the Community Partnerships with Health Professions Education initiative, this book illuminates new approaches to educating primary care practitioners by linking universities and communities. Illustrations of various approaches to this partnership are identified in Hawaii, Massachusetts, Michigan, and Georgia, among others. The premise of this initiative is that, if given appropriate tools, individuals, institutions, and communities can work together to make changes in bridging the gap between the culture of communities and the academic culture of health education to create better multidisciplinary education in primary care.

CHAPTER VI — ASSESSING COMMUNITY-BASED SYSTEMS CHANGE

CUSTOMIZING THE ANALYSIS

Once the appropriate parties have been identified for the analysis, the next step is to determine the method for actually conducting the analysis. It's often effective to convene the group for a one-day work session. The session typically begins with the group discussing the concept of systems change and the principles that they believe should guide the changes they make (as discussed in Chapters II and III).

Next they discuss the types of systems and results that they believe are desirable. In education, for example, the results for the beneficiary (student) could be defined in terms of what students should learn and which skills they should be able to use. In human services, customer results may be defined in terms of changed conditions and skills for children, youth, individuals, and families. These definitions are likely to be similar to the column of the continuum labeled "Predominance of Community-Based Systems."

Next, participants use the continuum in small mixed-role groups. Each group is given an enlarged version of Figure 2. Each group determines at what stage(s) of change they think their systems are in regard to the element being analyzed. There are many ways to do this. It may be useful to have small groups analyze each of the purpose-based systems (as defined in Chapter IV) within the community. In other cases, the groups may attempt to look more holistically at the community's systems. Another approach is to have different small groups work on each row of the continuum. The group may use sticky notes or simply write on the continuum to indicate its assessment of the community's status.

Once the groups have completed their analyses, the group members use sticky notes to indicate their analyses on a very large (e.g., 4' x 6') version of the continuum—a continuum outline—that is posted on the wall in the front of the room. The analyses give a visual picture of the full situation. This is, of course, a very rough approximation since the continuum may not fully fit the group members' situations. We have found, however, that it is usually close enough, or people can make impromptu changes to make the analyses more meaningful and provide many ideas about likely next steps in their community-change efforts.

A separate document, *Analysis of State-Level System Change in Education and Human Services*, which InSites prepared in 1995 for the Danforth Foundation Policymakers' Program, gives a detailed example of a one-day seminar that uses a state-level continuum of change in education and human services. The guide includes sample handouts and transparencies that can be modified to fit this new community-based continuum.

The basic idea is for the group to discuss each row of the continuum and identify at which stage(s) of change they think their community as a whole or particular systems within the community are. Once the group members have

completed each row, they can see a pattern across the matrix. This pattern will show which leverage points within the systems have been most transformed and which are lagging behind. This information is intended to generate creative ideas about how to redesign current initiatives to better take advantage of the full range of levers.

The general principle in analyzing the community using the continuum is that, within and across the rows of the continuum, the groups cannot get too spread out, otherwise, things start to disintegrate. Imagine that rubber bands connect the various locations which the group members marked on the continuum. If the rubber bands are stretched too far, they can break.

On the other hand, there must be pioneers within and across groups to help propel the whole system forward (e.g., Innovators) in an ongoing dynamic through the system. However, there is no one right way to move institution-oriented systems toward new community-based configurations. In some cases, policies may lead. In other cases, schools and human service administrators may lead, and in yet others, churches or individual community residents may lead. The key lies in deepening the dialogue and building relationships within and among groups to improve the quality of implementation of desired changes and to clarify the basic principles upon which the new systems rest.

Once a group members have worked through the continuum described in Chapter V, it is likely that they will find that their situations are not quite reflected in the stages and/or the defined goal of their change processes as presented in the final column of the continuum. If the group expects to use the continuum for regular monitoring of their progress, they may wish to develop their own continuum that more accurately reflects their situations.

One process for modifying the continuum is to convene a mixed stakeholder-and-partner group to define what the community systems would be like when functioning as desired in a certain number of years. The group will need to achieve a reasonable balance of idealism and realism in defining the desired system, aware that this is an evolutionary process. They can define the best version of the system to date. After a few years, as they understand more of the dynamics of change in context, they can redo the continuum or develop another one as the sequel to the one they are working on.

For more information on tailoring a continuum to fit your specific needs, contact InSites, 1460 Quince Avenue, S101, Boulder, CO, 80304.

FURTHER READINGS ON ASSESSING SYSTEMS CHANGE

Senge, P.M., et. al. (1994). *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook*. New York, NY: Doubleday.

This nearly 600-page pragmatic guide shows how people are developing learning organizations based on the concepts in *The Fifth Discipline*. This guide is filled with practical suggestions and stories of how formal and informal organizations are recreating themselves. In developing the strategies to use as discussed above, teams are encouraged to refer to Chapter 13 of *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook* for a deeper understanding of patterns of behavior that are common within and across systems, and how best to adjust these patterns to keep moving the process forward.

Stages of Change

LEVERS OF CHANGE	MAINTENANCE OF INSTITUTION-ORIENTED SYSTEMS →	AWARENESS →	EXPLORATION →
SHARED PRINCIPLES/ NORMS	<p>Assumptions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity-oriented • Isolated, rigid systems • Service delivery-oriented • Hierarchical <p>Norms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confrontational, judgmental • Competition • Top-down style • Problem/crisis-oriented • Separation of systems/services 	<p>Pockets of stakeholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize broader social / economic issues impacting community • Recognize need for cooperation • See new connections among people, ideas, issues, problems • Become conscious of dysfunctional norms • Token steps toward new norms/assumptions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New norms consciously used in designing and reviewing projects or programs • Extensive dialogue about norms and underlying assumptions among people developing action plans
VISION & GOALS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little attention to local, state, or national context of problem • Focus on short-term successes and strategies • Vision, goals more focused on benefiting organizations than citizens • Limited personal commitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition of need for a vision and goals within organizations • Strategic planning discussed • Notion of shared vision and goals across entities discussed • Attention to development of mission statements with citizen focus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Separate entities establish vision and goals with limited stakeholder involvement • Short-term/immediate results used to keep interest and motivation toward vision • Initial efforts to build shared vision among compatible groups • Vision/goals becoming citizen-focused
STAKEHOLDER ROLES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders, professional staff primarily involved in decision making • Decisions “delivered” to community rather than community engaged in decision making • Public support taken for granted by associations and organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National or state reports on need for broader stakeholder involvement discussed by leaders • Controlled citizen input discussed • Beginning recognition of the diversity of stakeholder involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured efforts (e.g., surveys) to gather citizen and other stakeholder input • Dominant stakeholders begin involving previously neglected stakeholders • Stakeholder groups become more vocal
PROJECTS, PROGRAMS, INITIATIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built on narrowly focused organizational norms • Isolated within separate associations/ organizations • Projects seen as ends in themselves and focus on short-term result 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of cross-agency projects with similar visions • Beginning discussions of how to design projects to reflect new assumptions or norms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects begin connecting short-term results with long-term visions • Developing human capacity becomes focus of many projects • Collaborative projects and initiatives emerge
HUMAN CAPACITY BUILDING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in the development of facilities/ programs rather than people • Limited or unfocused volunteerism/philanthropy • Job training programs narrowly focused and/or outdated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realize that relying on external resources is not building community or internal capacity but instead dependency on others • Realize importance of developing human resources and capacity and evaluating what assets already exist within community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and pilot methods for assessing the interests, skills, and capacity of individuals and organizations within the community (e.g., community resources audit) • Networking within/across current systems and groups encouraged as a way to build capacity
GOVERNANCE/ LEADERSHIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders and managers define boundaries and make key policy decisions (top-down) • Individual community members expected to implement but not make key policy decisions • No cross-group or system governance • Predominant orientation is to systems efficiency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders recognize a need to involve more stakeholders in decision-making • Informal community leadership recognized • Collaborative initiatives discussed, issues of their governance explored • Collaborative initiatives designed with little shift in power 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More people from community invited to participate in key policy meetings and give input • Growing attention to policymaking process, not just final policy • Importance of systemic thinking recognized • New reform initiatives require greater community governance • Initiatives struggle with power issues
COMMUNICATIONS/ NETWORKING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform public after decisions are made and/or effort is moving forward • One-way communication (e.g., press releases, speeches) • Information disseminated with little regard for recipients’ interests or applicability of topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize that early communication with stakeholders is critical • See need for targeted material 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot new ways of soliciting information and feedback from community (e.g., community forums) • Monitor successes and problems in new communications, networking methods • Networks of peers emerging
FINANCIAL RESOURCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasis on bringing in outside resources (dependent) • Resources used to support what has been done in past • Allocation categories determined external to the community, activity—rather than outcome-focused 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize that dependency cycle exists • Need seen for new (internal) methods for generating funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looking at social assets of community for resources (traditional/non-traditional assets and funding groups) • Special funds support new ways of operating

FIGURE 2—CONTINUUM OF COMMUNITY-BUILDING SYSTEM CHANGE

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Stages of Change

→ TRANSITION	→ EMERGING NEW FUNDAMENTALS	→ PREDOMINANCE OF NEW COMMUNITY-BASED SYSTEMS	LEVERS OF CHANGE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders make explicit existing norms and their contrasts with desired norms • Explicit, hard choices are made for community-based norms/assumptions rather than institutionally-oriented ones • Spotty application of new norms within entities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key associations and organizations consciously operate on some of the new norms/assumptions • Leaders attend to congruence of actions with new norms/assumptions 	<p>Predominant assumptions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results (process and product) oriented • Systemic thinking, action • Resident-based, community-building, assets <p>Predominant norms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared leadership & responsibility • Coordinated service/support • Flexible • Multicultural • Long-term capacity building • Collaboration/equality 	SHARED PRINCIPLES/ NORMS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad-based stakeholder involvement in vision and goal-setting initiates • Continuing focus on citizen input in stating vision, goals • Vision links activities of associations and organizations more closely to desired results for citizens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continual shared vision development seen as a major force for change • Vision and goals include attention to full range of community conditions and formal and informal systems • Movement beyond initial issues to encompass more community needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive personal commitment • Established process for developing and refining shared community vision that includes all stakeholders • Vision/goals of separate entities complement one another and support a shared vision • Vision/goals more focused on well-being of children and families than that of organization 	VISION & GOALS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community residents becoming very vocal and involved in shaping vision, making decisions • Increasing number of opportunities for citizen involvement across associations/organizations • Organizational structures changing to regularly incorporate broad range of stakeholders in decision making and action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emerging comfort with each other as equal partners • Rewards and incentives for participation in collaboratives are infused into formal and informal systems • Key associations and organizations have new policies about who their stakeholders are and how they are to be involved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All stakeholders (not just professionals) are actively involved in critical decision making and action roles • Continual attention to public involvement in dynamic systems • Formal and informal systems networked together through diverse stakeholders 	STAKEHOLDER ROLES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects seen as vehicles for developing new norms, human capacity • Projects comfortably link short- and long-term results • Assumption-based initiatives develop from projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanding pattern of cross-agency initiatives • Mechanisms to develop human capacity are basic to projects and initiatives • Projects become a way to change standard operating mode of agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects seen as vehicles for developing new norms, human capacity • Projects comfortably link short- and long-term results • Assumption-based initiatives develop from projects 	PROJECTS, PROGRAMS, INITIATIVES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A resource map used to identify and connect human and organizational capacities and interests with potential community issues and/or projects • More community-based ways of learning and doing becoming evident • Emphasis on reflection, improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committed corps of volunteers emerges • Human resources increasingly utilized on a regular basis • Individual and group learning seen as an ongoing and essential process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of resources of community are broadly evident • Investment in the development of people as important as facilities and programs • Volunteerism and philanthropy are leveraged to keep formal and informal systems flexible, dynamic 	HUMAN CAPACITY BUILDING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New stakeholders invited to give input and make decisions • Group recognizes a need for a facilitator/coordinator to encourage open dialogue prior to decision making • Shared responsibility and accountability discussed • Decisions made about new roles and responsibilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emerging comfort with new roles and responsibilities • All stakeholders represented in making important policy decisions • Decisions made about how to hold each other accountable • Governance of collaborative initiatives operating more smoothly; grounded in community-based norms and assumptions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collective decision making about key policy issues (e.g., personnel, budget, curriculum, service delivery, etc.) • Residents in leadership and governing positions • Redistribution of power and accountability across and within formal and informal systems • Participation, efficiency, and production are balanced concerns for the systems 	GOVERNANCE/ LEADERSHIP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication patterns begin to develop that broaden dialogue and support community-based ideas • On-going refinement of methods • Public debate on specific changes earn mixed support • Greater recognition of community diversity and need for different involvement strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information regularly reviewed for quality and applicability before dissemination • Two-way communication strategy is in place with active participation from diverse stakeholders • Networks recognized as valuable communication vehicles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public aware of the wide range of options for community participation • Communication begins well before decisions are made and continues through implementation and review • Written materials tailored to audience • Two-way communication is the norm • Formal and informal networking is key part of infrastructure 	COMMUNICATIONS/ NETWORKING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative decisions about resource allocations across formal and informal systems • Basic resources beginning to be allocated to new ways of operating • Special funds strategically used to solidify new ways of operating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing internal capacity for generating assets and external supporting collaborations • Resources increasingly allocated based on results, systems thinking, and community building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative funding mechanisms in place so systems jointly support shared vision and goals • Resources regularly being allocated based on results, systems thinking, and community building 	FINANCIAL RESOURCES

FIGURE 2—CONTINUUM OF COMMUNITY-BUILDING SYSTEM CHANGE

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