

**EDUCATION AND TRAINING STUDY REPORT FROM THE
"REWARD FOR PERFORMANCE" SUB-COMMITTEE
December, 1990**

The Vermont Business Roundtable's education report, Vermont's Unspoken Danger, makes three policy recommendations for K-12 education: identify learning outcomes, hold educators accountable for performance, and assess the educational system. The recommendation on learning outcomes has been well received, and the Roundtable has endorsed the Vermont Department of Education's assessment plan using portfolios and testing.

The recommendation that may be the most difficult to implement is accountability. Many educators and interested stakeholders are in general agreement that educators should be accountable for student performance, but the questions that have arisen repeatedly are: What does accountability mean? How does an educational system implement accountability measures? What specific changes can be made to insure accountability? What programmatic strategies can be employed to dramatically improve performance?

Most educators and stakeholders agree that restructuring is necessary to assure accountability and increase student performance. Many restructuring efforts are underway at this moment throughout the United States.

The Roundtable believes that the responsibility for implementation of reform is the responsibility of the professional educator. From a policy perspective, however, the debate about educational restructuring and reform may be aided by the development of a framework outlining a specific restructuring proposal. The purpose of this report is to suggest such a model.

The Framework: Restructuring Criteria

Any programmatic evaluation should be based on criteria that will ensure the highest probability of outstanding student achievement. The following four measures attempt to develop these restructuring criteria:

* **Emphasis on Outcomes.** The fundamental mission of school reform must focus on attaining the highest possible student achievement. Any program change must articulate exactly how the new proposal will achieve the outcomes that previous programs were unable to attain. Examples of learning outcomes vital to competing in the economic arena of the 21st century are superior written and oral communication skills, tangible mastery of mathematics and science skills, technological literacy, team work, and learning how to learn.

* **Accountability.** Effective accountability has at least two dimensions. First, an appropriate measure of student performance must be built into the program by developing local assessment measures and/or by commitment to statewide assessment programs. Second, staff evaluations must be conducted to identify and remedy poor performance among school staff and reward superior performance.

* **Local Control.** Every attempt must be made to push decision making down to the lowest level possible in the system (school-based management). The overriding commitment must be to develop solutions that will work at the local level. Teachers must be in control of the daily operating decisions that affect the student.

* **Effective Leadership.** The goal in a school is the best possible use of human and material resources to achieve the desired educational outcomes. Emphasis must be on the spending of resources on direct services and not overhead. Another important element is the degree to which the program encourages autonomy and innovation among teachers, parents, and others.

The current leadership climate of confusion and crisis in Vermont must end. No system can hope to be effective when the turnover in its top leadership positions (i.e., superintendents and principals) exceeds 25% a year.

The local community including parents, teachers, elected officials, and business professionals must also support school reform. In order to implement change, the process of achieving and developing consensus is a key ingredient. Some process issues are: community support of educational change, the mechanisms available to develop consensus, and the community's commitment to long-term change. The increasingly high failure of school budgets indicates the public's discontent and frustration with public education.

In addition, local schools must have the support of State and Federal education professionals and elected officials. Their cooperation is essential to reduce and eliminate bureaucratic and legislative barriers to local control so that innovative programs can take place at the local level.

TWO RESTRUCTURING COMPONENTS

The Roundtable sub-committee has explored restructuring options. The committee, composed of business leaders, professional educators, and school board members is proposing an approach to school restructuring that holds promise for improving the academic performance of Vermont children. This approach includes Team Teaching and Career Options for Teachers.

Time-Tested Strategy: Team Teaching

Team teaching has been utilized in public school education since the 1950s and many schools in Vermont use team teaching now. Team Teaching is a practice where a group of teachers (as well

as aides, professional specialists, and other educators as needed) plan, instruct, and evaluate the children for whom they are responsible. The team coordinates activities and makes team assignments that maximize the resources available to the team assuring that each child achieves to his or her best ability.

Advantages of team teaching are better staff and resource utilization, more flexibility in organizing instruction and curriculum, greater teacher autonomy over budgeting and scheduling, and evidence that students learn more from interdisciplinary teaching. Team Teaching also provides the opportunity to empower individual teachers through an energizing group process.

Team Teaching emphasizes goal-setting and planning for both students and teachers. Obtaining maximum performance from each child, while realizing that each child is unique and therefore has unique performance goals, is a high priority.

The Team Teaching model can effectively use assessment instruments to evaluate student performance. In Vermont, the student portfolios would be an important assessment tool. Evaluations comparing the goals established for each student with the outcomes attained could also be used. In a similar fashion, staff evaluations can be made based on the goals the team establishes for the school year.

Team Teaching is a school-based model in which the teachers make the daily operating decisions that affect the student's academic performance. The principal and superintendent exercise their leadership by coaching, coordinating, and supporting teacher decisions when necessary.

New Reform: Career Options for Teachers

One obstacle teachers face is that their upward professional mobility is hindered under the current one-dimensional career role. Generally the only upward path for teachers is to move into administrative jobs. Many excellent present and future teachers are lost because they want more challenging work assignments or better pay. The Career Option proposal for teachers is intended to change this.

The Career Option concept emphasizes teaching excellence and is outcome oriented. If teachers want to progress through the different steps, a consistent pattern of outstanding performance would be expected in order to progress from one level to the next. At level one and two (teacher intern and teacher resident), for example, people who are clearly unsuited for teaching could be separated from the teaching profession as soon as reasonable so that high standards are maintained.

In a school-based management system, teachers and administrators have control of the Career Option concept. They know the performance of individual teachers and can best make decisions about promotion and separation. Administrators would be responsible for coordinating evaluations, assuring fairness and consistency, and would themselves answer to the local school board for the effectiveness of the evaluation process. The Career Option recognizes and encourages leadership

among teachers so the best qualified who choose to assume more responsibility would be promoted up the steps and would therefore be encouraged to assume leadership roles in the teaching profession.

Restructuring Model

Reward for Performance: The Restructuring Model combines the Team Teaching and Career Option concepts and outlines how the two concepts would be implemented. The Intern and Resident steps in the Model represent a three year program for aspiring teachers to demonstrate their superior abilities. The third step is the Professional level, where the teacher achieves the status of Professional Teacher. Further professional promotions are available through the Career Options Level by taking on special assignments and responsibilities Team Leader, Teacher Researcher/Writer, Teacher Trainer, or Community Liaison.

Restructuring Model

I. General Overview

A. GOALS

1. To enhance student achievement
 - Use assessment instruments including portfolios
2. To attract the best people into the profession
 - Establish career opportunities and motivation
 - Create career path and compensation similar to other professions
 - Attract people committed to a challenging career
3. To keep the best people in the profession
 - Avoid burn-out and leaving the classroom for administrative or private sector jobs
 - Recognize and reward teachers for assuming added responsibilities
 - Provide time for summer work
4. To Improve Public Perception of the Teaching Profession
 - Enable appropriate comparisons to other professionals (i.e., issue of 180 day contracts/3-month vacations)
 - Reconnect the public to their schools so that teachers are seen as:
 - ◆ Committed to professional growth

- ◆ Committed to supporting innovative curriculum

- Show tax payers why education is a good investment

B. REWARD FOR PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE

- Enhance student achievement
- Recognize professional performance through career options
- Identify what good teachers want and what the public can afford

C. ACCOUNTABILITY

- Establish responsibility for outcomes
- Determine accountability for goals
- Allow teacher collaboration to develop plans for student success
- Encourage student, teacher, and parent collaboration

D. TEAMING (Restructuring)

- Team Structure ranging from 2-20 teachers
- Building-based decisions and flexibility
- High School, larger/Freshman and Sophomore teams
core curriculum, all courses, specialists, counselors
- Middle School, smaller teams (5-10)
specialists their own team/cross grade, multi grade
- Elementary School, research supports multi-aged classrooms/combination
grades (K-3), (4-6); Individual teacher with specialist(s)

1. Team Empowerment

- Establishes teachers as salaried professional vs. hourly employee
- Requires more time for tasks, i.e., more days and evenings, summer weeks
- Allows teacher control over budget, supplies, scheduling, personnel, evaluation (peer), goal setting, expectations and standards
- Enables team to set its own master schedule, common planning time, "conditions" and terms for prep time, breaks, conferences with parents
- Allows team decisions on curriculum implementation and interdisciplinary work
- Needs support of administration and school Boards

2. Team Problem Solving

- Eliminates isolation under present structure
- Assists teachers and administrators with challenges brought from society
- Provides support in decision making from colleagues
- Enhances resources for dealing with difficult parents and families
- Matches teaching style with learning styles
- Allows for varying instructional technique with changing student learning patterns
- Creates opportunity for effective discipline

3. Restructured Organization

- Flattens and decentralizes the organization thus gaining support for budgets
- Reduce central office and administration
- Provides savings of tax dollars through a loss of positions
- Eliminates old industrial model and utilizes elements of the new industrial model
- Allows certification waivers within teams
- Responds to Commissioner and State Board goals
- Empowers local Boards to respond to public pressure to restructure

4. Change Riffing System

- Makes staff reductions through performance based system
- Allows reduced number of positions thereby providing resources for career options and stipends

II. Model of Staffing Sequence for Team Organization

A. TEACHER INTERN, ONE YEAR (FIFTH YEAR PROGRAM) SALARY SCALE

- Connected to a university, part of professional training
- Stresses classroom management issues; trial year
- Award probationary education certificate
- Evaluated by the administrator with team input
- Mentored by peer Teacher Trainer

B. TEACHER RESIDENT TWO YEARS SALARY SCALE B/C

- Stresses curricular issues
- Emphasizes teaching methodology
- Award probationary educational certificate
- Evaluated by administrator and team leader
- Provide evidence/documentation of standards achieved (or not achieved) for renewal or possible non-renewal (end of year #1)
- Recommended by administrator to Board for professional contract if candidate qualifies; if candidate does not qualify, candidate may appeal to Superintendent and then to Board (end of year #2)

C. TEACHER PROFESSIONAL (10-MONTH CONTRACT) SALARY SCALE D

- Maintains certification, state standards
- Given yearly administrative and peer evaluation
- Dismissed with just cause
- Allows binding arbitration
- Provides rifting based on evaluation, not seniority (for all professionals)
- Works under basic teaching contract

D. CAREER OPTIONS/TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES

These options are open to application by all teachers at the professional level on each team)

1. Teacher Researcher/Writer, Salary Scale E

- coordinates curriculum articulation between grades, schools and subjects
- communicates with Central Office, sending and receiving schools
- updates team members with current research and professional development workshops
- organizes all new programs, professional days, and conferences
- supervises the curriculum scope and sequence on the team

2. Teacher Trainer, Salary Scale E

- Supervises interns and residents
- Serves as master teacher (articulates the craft of teaching)
- Organizes peer mentoring program with team members
- Encourages the principles and standards of effective teaching
- Reports to team leader

3. Teacher Communicator, Salary Scale E

- Writes parent newsletters, serves as community liaison
- Schedules parent conferences, home visits
- Coordinates open houses, parent events
- Organizes class meetings
- Coordinates possible job placements with the business community
- Coordinates employer/school hiring process with transcripts interviews; provides basic guidance/counseling to students

4. Teacher Administrator (minimum 2-year commitment) Salary Scale E or F

- Requires five years of experience and Masters degree or equivalent; administrative appointment
- Takes responsibly for: budget, supplies, hiring, scheduling,
- Participates in personnel decisions including evaluation of team members
- Serves on administrative council
- Manage the team, leadership responsibilities
- Initiates professional in-service activities
- Reports to building administrator

Reward for Performance Sub-Committee Members:

Chair: Peter Kreisel, Peter Kreisel & Co.; **Roundtable Members: Mike Flynn**, Gallagher, Flynn & Company; **R. Allan Paul**, Paul, Frank & Collins, Inc.; **Ross Anderson**, Anco Inc.; **Dick Chapman**, **Drew Rockwell**, New England Telephone Company; **Educators: Emily Gennari**, Teacher, Colchester; **John Bossange**, Principal, Essex Junction; **Roger Bourassa**, Superintendent, Colchester