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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

WORKFORCE POTENTIAL OF AMERICAN PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS:

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
IN THE CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND POLICY STUDIES

BY
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PREFACE

Two enduring legacies of the common-school reform movement are the American faith in education and the cosmopolitan ideal of inclusive public schools. School reformers believed that common schools could solve the problems of diversity, instability, and equal opportunity. . . . Despite the periodic rediscovery that schools have not in fact solved our problems. . . Americans widely share a belief in fairness and cohesion through (common) schools, a belief that is the core of the cosmopolitan solution.

Carl F. Kaestle, Pillars of the Republic, 221-222.

On the eve of the American 1992 presidential election, citizens anxiously awaited solutions to pressing national concerns. Education was a priority issue. George Bush, Bill Clinton, and Ross Perot, the three contenders for America's highest-ranking office, highlighted their plans for educational reform. The three candidates believed in the development of quality public schools in which youth may have the chance of becoming productive citizens and, in turn, assure America's economic security. Yet, consensus did not exist, and each nominee offered his own blueprint as solution.

Education has been recognized as an important component to American economic productivity. The question is how to develop the necessary skills and competencies required for successful workforce entry and longevity. Since the inception of A Nation At Risk in 1983, numerous reports and studies by prominent individuals, blue-ribbon commissions, and philanthropic foundations among others have pressed upon American citizens the need for educational reform. A wide
variety of educational reform issues have been discussed over the past quarter-century. A recurrent theme is the development of skilled workers in order to sustain economic productivity.

American public schools have always been used as vehicles for social, economic, and political reform agendas. During the 1950s, the Sputnik scare motivated Americans to call for educational reform. The Soviet accomplishment prompted the nation's schools to focus student learning on technological areas such as science and mathematics. During the 1960s and 1970s, the social and economic concerns of the nation dominated education. The reverberation of domestic unrest was felt in the schools.

During the 1980s, educational reformers were influenced by economic issues. The "back to basics" movement spurred a plethora of concerns regarding the seemingly inadequate academic preparation of youth by the schools. Public lack of confidence in the educational community's ability to provide leadership further diminished the credibility of the schools. Business executives and government officials have increased direct involvement in educational matters.

The comprehensive high school remains the standard model for American secondary education. An important function is the preparation of youth for work. Reformers have been critical of American educators' ability to produce skilled workers.
In this study, I hope to provide an historical framework in which business, government, and educational perspectives are analyzed. The blended experiential histories of business, government, and educational communities shape attitudes toward American education. Differing expectations of schools exist. This divergence of opinion results in the formulation of unclear, fragmented, and disjointed goals for the education of American youth. Quality education will only be achieved through the concerted efforts of business, government, and educational partnerships. In this manner, youngsters can aspire to their fullest capabilities as productive American citizens.
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CHAPTER I

THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT OF EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE POTENTIAL

Domestic Agenda

The current American domestic scene can be best characterized as precarious. Many of our nation's viable institutions are facing imperative crisis. The outcry of the American people for improved living conditions, which has far-reaching consequences, reverberates throughout every sector of our society. Public educational organizations, in particular, have increasingly come under attack for perceived poor performance in imparting the appropriate skills and competencies required of future citizens and workers. Thus, the public schools have again become an easy target for the focus of a frustrated nation.

The casual observer can easily be swayed by media coverage, political rhetoric, or commission reports condemning the public secondary-level institutions for inadequate performance. These formidable critics postulate their possibly well-intended but often biased remedies for schools to implement. Unfortunately, public opinion becomes negative and educational organizations lose credibility.
The average American citizen lacks the initiative, the time, or the ability to explore the important variables involved in the exploration of inadequate preparation of our youth for life endeavors.

The intention of this study is to focus upon vital parameters critical to the examination of public high school preparation necessary for successful future workforce participation. Pertinent demographic, economic, and political factors are necessary components in the equation. It is essential for the relevant facts surrounding this most inclusive domestic issue to be explored in the proper context. Only then can a well-developed image of what is reasonably true evolve.

**Demographic Change**

America has a long-standing tradition as a world economic leader. In spite of this reputation, the domestic agenda of the United States is not faring well. Economic, political, and social factors are responsible for sluggish standard-of-living patterns. Vastly changing demographic patterns are important indicators crucial to the understanding of critical American concerns. As the United States struggles to maintain a prominent world position, key economic sectors of the American society show signs of trouble. Our nation's problems have been consolidated under the theme of "inadequate preparation of American workers."

This theme of inadequate worker preparation has woven
itself into the national cry for help regarding America's well-being. Educational institutions are targets of this concern. In the most recent decade, various blue-ribbon commissions and task forces have examined our nation's domestic woes in relation to education since the inception of *A Nation at Risk* in 1983. These reports have justified the perceptions of many Americans that poor public educational instruction has been the culprit in the continual production of an inadequate workforce over the last quarter-century.

American public schools have received an undue amount of criticism concerning our nation's domestic prosperity. It would be naive to solely put the blame of America's domestic situation upon one segment of society. A thoughtful examination of complex economic, social, and political elements are critical to the realistic understanding of the American domestic agenda.

American families have been characterized as the backbone of our nation. They are responsible for the economic health of America. It is the nuclear family unit which sets the tone for nurturing and educating children. Without the traditional family structure, our nation's domestic security is threatened. The erosion of the nuclear family unit has had enormous implications for American life. The rise of single-parent families represents a major reorganizational structure in American
society. Marital discord has increased the number of single-family dwellings. While more and more working mothers are taking their rightful places along their male counterparts, the children are likely to receive less nurturing.\textsuperscript{2}

The \textit{Workforce 2000} report stated that the American population will reach an estimated 275 million people by the year 2000. Our nation's population appraisal amounted to 240 million residents in 1985. The rate of gain, amounting to 1\% per year during the 1980s and 3/4 of 1\% during the 1990s, suggests a decrease in people.\textsuperscript{3}

The slowing of the American population is reflected in the decrease in labor force growth.\textsuperscript{4} Even so, increasing numbers of diverse racial and ethnic minorities have shown greater work participation. These groups have changed the size, shape, and preparation of our nation's workforce. The proportion of black youth in the total youth population is projected to increase from 13.7\% in 1980 to 15.2\% in 1996. Black youth have made remarkable strides in educational gains since World War II. While the academic achievements of black students have been more substantial than those of whites, the black cohort group has lagged behind the general population. In 1984, 78.8\% of black youth between the ages of 25-29 received high school diplomas in relation to only 11.6\% of their cohort group graduating in 1940. While these statistics are encouraging, serious problems face this
population. In 1985, 43% of all black children 18 years of age and under lived in poverty.\(^5\)

The Hispanic labor force is projected to become one of the largest growing minority groups by the year 2000. Participation rates are expected to increase by 74%.\(^6\) Educational attainment for this population group is not encouraging. As of March 1987, 50.9% of all Hispanics over 25 years of age were high school graduates as opposed to 75.6% of the general population. Among the 18-24 year-olds, 70% of Hispanics completed high school in relation to 86% of all youth.\(^7\)

While black and Hispanic groups tend to have a multitude of social and economic problems related to poverty status, it is usually overlooked that non-Hispanic whites do not fare well either. In 1985, 68.6% of all 15-24 year-old white youth were living in poverty. In addition, 41% of poor white 18-21 year-old youth did not have high school diplomas.\(^8\)

To a smaller but significant extent, Asian-Americans will round out the expanding American profile. This population symbolizes tremendous growth potential by the year 2000. These recent immigrants have steadily increased in numbers through relocation to America. In 1980, Asian-Americans accounted for 44% of all immigration into the United States. The Asian-Americans represent a diverse group. While the average Japanese-American speaks English
as a primary language, the typical Indochinese does not.

Educationally, Asian-American youth tend to be successful.9

Demographic indicators signal one important message to
the American public school system. By the year 2000, our
nation will have to shoulder more poor ethnically and
linguistically diverse children. One in three people will
be non-white and encompass a broader socio-economic base.10

The changing composition of our student clientele which
comprises America's public school system is an alarmingly
pressing issue. While government statistics reinforce
public perception of an increasing number of poor, minority
youth in our schools, this knowledge appears to go unheeded.
Data obtained from the 1983 and 1991 editions of The
Condition of Education offer valuable insights into the
explosive demographic shifts occurring within the American
public schools.

Public school enrollment statistics in 1983 provide
evidence supporting a continuing profile of educationally
disadvantaged students. Racial/ethnic minorities
represented 27% of the total public elementary and secondary
school participation in the fall of 1983. While black youth
national inclusion was 16%, heavy concentration of these
youngsters was notable in certain southern states. Hispanic
groups added 8% to the national norms. Asians or Pacific
Islanders accounted for less than 2% of the national total.
American Indians/Alaskan natives presented less than 1%
The 1991 edition of *The Condition of Education* indicated an enormous increase in minority school enrollment status. In 1986, black, Hispanic, Asians, and others represented almost 30% of national public school statistics. While the growth patterns of high schools decreased by 14% during the 1970s and 1980s, a projected increase of 20% is estimated for the 1990s.

**Educationally Disadvantaged Students**

The educationally disadvantaged student population presents a major crisis for America's economic future. Many educational reform reports either ignore or offer a superficial treatment of this problem. Henry Levin of Stanford University offered this commentary:

> The vanishing of the disadvantaged from policy reports and the media is a reflection of political expediency or wishful thinking rather than an educational triumph. The battle to overcome educational disadvantage did not end in victory, but in neglect and disarray.

The rapid expansion of educationally at-risk students and the increased degree of disadvantage commands the undivided attention of the American people. Higher birth rates and immigration status, both legal and illegal, account for increased minority enrollments. The excessive impoverishment of recent immigrants into the United States has been responsible for the rising degree of disadvantagedness among our student population. Recent newcomers to America are strongly representative of the
poorest countries in Asia and Latin America. The profile of a typical new settler to the American shores is a person from a rural region equipped with a poor-quality, primary-level education.\textsuperscript{15}

Henry Levin strongly acknowledged the importance of socio-economic factors which are crucial to the understanding of appropriate schooling for disadvantaged students. Socioeconomic variables such as parental education, income, and race are important indicators of a student's educational progress. Students who tend to complete fewer years of schooling and are more likely to drop out are from homes where parents have low income and minimal levels of education. Conversely, students, inclined toward successful school progress, are those individuals coming from homes in which the parents have achieved high school diplomas in addition to some college-level preparation and provide adequate income for basic comforts. Successful parents are able to furnish the values, skills, and language required of our present educational system. These parents can provide appropriate models which teach students the connection between education and future work endeavors.\textsuperscript{16}

Numerous definitions have been coined regarding the term "educationally disadvantaged." According to Russell Rumberger and Henry Levin, educationally disadvantaged students are defined as "students who by virtue of a lack of
resources in their home or community are unlikely to succeed in schools as schools are presently constituted."\textsuperscript{17}

Aaron Pallas, et al., view the educationally disadvantaged as "students who have been exposed to inappropriate educational experiences in school, in the community, or at home." This group of educational commentators offered five key indicators connected with the at-risk group: single family dwelling, poverty-level income, minority ethnic/racial identity, linguistically-different background, and poorly educated maternal model. Several implications of this definition are noteworthy. First, the term "educationally deficient does not necessarily mean socially deficient." Second, the educational deficiency or deficiencies may follow the student through his or her entire school career. Third, this definition of educationally disadvantaged students allows for variation within the group.\textsuperscript{18}

\textbf{Economic Change}

America's domestic well-being is indicative of our nation's economic health. Workers and jobs are significant variables which contribute to a thriving economy. Educational requirements for jobs represent one major concern. Demographic and social indicators present alarming information regarding workforce capabilities.

According to economist Howard Fullerton, population and participation rates are the two major factors which
contribute to labor force growth. By the year 2000, the labor force is projected to be 139 million people. The Workforce 2000 report suggested that the labor force growth will be from 115 million to 141 million people between the years 1985 to 2000.

Trends in labor force participation rates affect the size of the group by age, race/ethnicity, and gender. The baby boom generation has been having families. The offspring or the "echo" are contributing to school enrollments. High school attendance is expected to peak by the year 2000 resulting in the need for greater educational services.

Race/ethnicity variables are important factors in the discussion of labor force participation. Traditionally, whites have represented the largest share of the labor force. White participation is dropping and will continue to do so until the year 2000. In 1972, 89% of white employees comprised the workforce and in 2000, this figure is projected to drop to 84%.

Minority groups will reflect an increasingly significant proportion of the workforce. Non-whites will represent more than 15% of labor force participation by the year 2000. In the year 2000, immigrants could comprise 20% of the future labor force entrants. Blacks are estimated at 18% participation rate till the end of the century. The addition of Hispanics under white inclusion could increase the figure to 117 million by the year 2000. In summary,
blacks, Hispanics, Asians, and other groups could account for 57% of the workforce by the year 2000.25

Men remain the majority of the labor force. Both younger and older male cohort groups will increase between 1995-2000. Black male rates are expected to grow more rapidly than the overall force despite falling participation due to higher population growth. By the year 2000, Hispanic men will outnumber the percentage of their black counterparts in our nation's workforce. Women have shown greater representation in the ranks of labor force participation with an estimated sixty-six million by the year 2000.26 By the end of the century, female participants could represent more than 47% of the workforce.27

Economic growth is expected to improve by 40% or 2.4% per year between 1986-2000 according to the moderate projections issued by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Since the estimate relies upon an increase of productivity growth, the economic growth projections are only tenuous.28

George N. Hatsopoulos, a business executive, and two academic colleagues, provide insights into the issue of American productivity. The unusual rise of our nation's trade deficit from 1981 to 1987 has positioned the United States in a challenging economic position. This is compounded by America's newly developed reputation as the world's leading debtor. The United States still maintains an exceedingly high standard of living as compared to other
major industrialized nations. Yet, during the last fifteen years, we have not been very successful in raising our standard of living to high levels of attainment.\textsuperscript{29}

The economic situation in the United States has not fared well since the early 1970s. Hatsopoulos, et al., state:

It is no exaggeration to speak of the United States in the past 15 years as passing through a 'quiet depression' in which the income of families has stagnated or declined, forming a sharp contrast with the rapid growth in income that characterized the postwar years up to the early 1970s.\textsuperscript{30}

The authors believe that this stagnation of American income is the result of the continual downturn of our lead in income wages as compared to other major nations.

The primary source of real income stagnation has been due to declining growth in production: 2.2% annually from 1973 to 1985 as compared with 3.8% growth rate from 1960 to 1973. Moreover, the growth of the labor force has not resulted in the increased output per worker. The annual rate of 1.9% per year was achieved from 1960 to 1973 while only 0.3% per year resulted during 1973 to 1985.\textsuperscript{31}

Productivity concerns in the United States focus around the following issues. First, our nation's workers have been forced to accept lower wages than those offered by foreign competition in order to compete in the global economy. Second, the United States has lost its competitive edge in our once honored lead in technological advancements. Third, the perception of decreased American quality has hindered
Employment shifts are notable. While twenty-one million new job offerings are estimated for 1986-2000, 133 million jobs are projected in service industries by the year 2000. Manufacturing industry employment has dropped since 1979. While a partial comeback of manufacturing has emerged since 1982, new economic conditions have suppressed a complete recovery. First, the higher value of the dollar has resulted in increased levels of imports into the United States. Second, restructure and cost-cutting technological advancements have pushed corporate productivity down. Yet, factory output is estimated to be very strong between 1986-2000. The demand for American manufactured goods is projected high. Manufacturing employment is expected to shift away from assembly-line production jobs to technical, managerial, and professional positions.

Strong employment growth in the service and retail trade industries characterized the 1980s. The expanding service division which accounts for business, health, and other general services provided for half of all job growth during the previous decade. The business services industry was considered both the biggest employer and the most rapidly growing of all groups. In addition, the retail trade industry fared well during the 1980s. Strong employment growth figures were representative of changing American life-styles. The increased number of working women
plus a larger percentage of two-job holders contributed to the expansion of retail trade.\textsuperscript{34}

Changing demographic and economic variables are crucial factors to consider in planning for appropriate curricular organization for twenty-first century work. Russell Rumberger and Henry Levin are highly respected academics knowledgeable in the area of workplace competencies and educationally at-risk school populations. These authors have concluded that poor, minority workers tend to achieve lower levels of academic attainment than whites. An increase in disadvantaged students entering the workforce could reduce the educational proficiency levels of the labor force in lieu of significant changes in schooling practices.\textsuperscript{35}

While the educational establishment has been accustomed to accepting blame for the lackluster performance of our nation's workforce, the review of economic indicators reveals an encompassing global influence. According to Dr. Sue Berryman of the National Center on Education and Employment, at least three major forces affect the American economy. International competition, computerization, and domestic deregulation are major variables that impact heavily upon various industries. Dr. Berryman stated, "These factors play themselves out in different ways for different industries, with different effects on the nature and structure of work across industries."\textsuperscript{36}
Schooling for Workforce Participation

George T. Silvestri and John M. Lukasiewicz, economists at the Bureau of Labor Statistics, report that the employment data for 1986 and projected to 2000 indicate health and technical skill industries requiring post-secondary educational competencies comprise the fastest growing number of jobs in our nation's economy. Rumberger and Levin furnish a labor perspective approach to the crucial issue of appropriate schooling for future workers. These researchers suggest that the use of occupational projections to examine educational requirements of future workers should be approached with caution.

Rumberger and Levin state that jobs in service and technological areas are representative of new fields which employ relatively few people. In addition, traditional American occupations which require lower educational attainments employ larger numbers of people, but are growing at a more modest rate over this same time period.

Another source of contention exists in regard to the use of occupational projections. The practice of focusing on new job growth as an indication of inclusive educational requirements should be handled prudently. The examination of educational skills and competencies for both existing jobs and new jobs needs to be explored. Existing jobs hold the key to more employment openings which use new technologies and participative work arrangements than new
job opportunities.\textsuperscript{40} The need for educated workers is increasing and is expected to continue into the twenty-first century. The changing economic shift from a manufacturing to service-oriented base has prompted an increased reliance upon new technologies.\textsuperscript{41}

Rumberger and Levin further discuss important reasons for the production of skilled workforce participants. First of all, the trend toward increased numbers of future jobs in the service-producing industries will require higher educational attainment levels of workers. Second, employers have instituted cost-cutting measures in lieu of other productive inputs. Third, technology and workplace organization contribute to productivity which affect the demand for an educated workforce. Technological advances can both increase and decrease the need for educated workers. On the one hand, greater technological advances require advanced skills and competencies of workers. Yet, technology could be utilized as a substitute for human resources.\textsuperscript{42}

The organization of work is changing. Traditional work patterns are in the process of restructure. Strict hierarchial boundaries are beginning to fade. Workers are becoming an integral part of the decision-making procedure. Changing organizational arrangements call for increased numbers of educated workers. American firms are beginning to focus their energies toward customized production.
Educated workers need to provide the basis for adaptability and flexibility in order to handle customers' needs for customized goods and services. International competition affects the need for educated workers. The level and composition of demand for imported and exported goods is a crucial variable under consideration concerning educational levels of workers.\(^{43}\)

Robert Reich, Secretary of Labor in the Clinton administration, provides thoughtful insights into the provocative circumstances of the American economy and educational needs of our future workers. The United States enjoyed considerable spending and lavish self-indulgence during the 1980s. American prosperity would be sacrificed by the next decade. The United States faced two choices according to Reich. Our nation could continue to live beyond its means or it could become more productive. The second alternative has been elected to a lesser degree.\(^{44}\)

The United States must become more productive in order to survive in the world economy. Mr. Reich stated:

Productivity is no longer simply a matter of making more of what we already make at less cost per unit. To add greater value to the world economy, we have to provide higher quality goods, and tailor our products and services to the particular needs of consumers. This is a new challenge, entailing a very different organization of work.\(^{45}\)

During the early postwar years, productivity was measured by high volume and low costs. The American economy was dictated by economies of scale. Workers were expected
to learn relatively simple, routinized tasks which produced "high-volume, standardized production." Under this organizational umbrella, a few powerful people were responsible for all of the major decisions. The employees had to follow rules and regulations regarding work sent down from the top executive level. In order for this type of top-down, hierarchical structure to operate smoothly, workers had to possess certain kinds of skills and traits. Rigid work rules and job categories were strictly enforced. Public school education stressed the proper training for these "cog" jobs, named to refer to the rigidity of specific tasks. 46

Future workers were taught to take direction without question and implement the tasks religiously. Discipline and reliability remained key values required of the American workforce. A well-educated group of man-power was selected for decision-making duties at the pinnacle. This privileged sub-set of people was trained to think creatively. Abstract logic, clarity, and firmness would become important values. Hence, the tracking system provided a successful vehicle which prepared workers for two types of jobs. 47

The high-volume, standardized production ideal of yesterday can no longer reap continued productivity gains. Contending with international trade competition has increasingly become a thorn in our nation's side. Robert Reich stated:
In a world where routine production is footloose and billions of potential workers are ready to underbid American labor, we can no longer expect to be competitive by simply producing more of the same thing we produced before at lower cost. As the production of commodities shifts to other nations, America's competitive advantage correspondingly must shift toward work whose value is based more on quality, flexibility, precision, and specialization than on its low cost. 48

The birth of a global economy requires restructure. The future of the United States depends on its people. We must band together to improve our standard of living. Our nation can either pay comparable wages to workers offered by international competition or compete by employing manpower knowledgeable in the achievement of successful goods and services. The second alternative is the only solution to the ultimate, long-range prosperity of American life. The first solution requires certain sacrifices to be made by both the managerial and general workforce levels. Managers and the general workforce would be obligated to employ various cost-reduction measures harmful to our future standard of living. The second answer to strengthening America's economy is by improving labor's value. This path would allow managers and workers to increase and enhance job creativity, flexibility, and security in order to improve our nation's productive edge. 49

The second solution to the improvement of the American economy requires a different organization of work and hence, a different workforce equipped with the necessary skills and competencies. The traditional work organizational pattern
characteristic of American society will not serve our nation well in the future. In addition, a different type of education will be a necessary requirement of all workers. Education will play a crucial role in the creation of the new world economy in two ways. Future workforce participants must become both minimally literate and numerate in addition to processing job skills rich in responsibility and collaboration aptitudes.  

The Composition of Secondary-Level Education  
The American people are painfully aware of the perceived increasingly low educational achievements of its youth. The publication of A Nation At Risk in 1983 earmarked an era of concern over the nation's public educational system. Public elementary and secondary schools were scrutinized by blue ribbon commissions and task forces sponsored by various governmental, educational, and private agencies. The results were mixed although some commonalities were found. Students were not learning the basics. The curriculum was too "soft" and future workers were not equipped for jobs. The states have reacted to the plethora of criticisms concerning a general lack of educational success by American youngsters. More stringent requirements were enacted for both students and teachers to reach.

The American public high school was particularly blamed for the underdevelopment of skills and competencies required
for workforce responsibility. Philip Cusick presented a paper at a meeting of the National Commission on Excellence in Education on May 25, 1982. Valuable insights were offered regarding the underpinnings of the secondary school structure. Certain elements are critical components of the school structure. In turn, the high school curriculum is dependent on the school structure. One important consequence of the comprehensive high school model is the tremendous diversity among these large secondary-level institutions. Secondly, public high schools derive their financial assistance from local and state sources which, in turn, bring the accountability issue to the foreground.  

These consequences of the comprehensive high school model set the tone for other unique characteristics to occur. Because the comprehensive high schools are tax-supported and accountable to the public, these institutions are required to educate all students regardless of abilities and aspirations. In addition, the "paying public" has the inherent privilege to influence the curriculum. High schools become particularly vulnerable to the specialized interests and whims of select groups of people within our larger societal structure.  

The curriculum of large, diverse comprehensive high schools is affected by external and internal forces. These forces tend to diversify and fragment the school course offerings. Specific advocacy groups become external
pressures to school people. Special interest groups convey their narrow concerns to high schools, which spur the continuation of diverse curricular offerings within secondary-level institutions.53

Also, federally-mandated monies are channeled through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to state departments of education. Educators become distant from the local school level due to legislative initiatives. These educators want to keep the curriculum diverse in order to maintain a powerhold in the high schools.54

Internal forces also help to shape the curriculum of public high schools. The schools are dependent upon regular attendance from large groups of students. Since the primary mission of the comprehensive high school is to serve vast numbers of students concerned with varying academic programs, this premise is never seriously questioned. Due to this fact, the expansion of the school curriculum is an easy objective to fulfill. Also, since the definition of "student needs" is elusive, it leaves the door wide open for the addition of limitless course offerings. Since school administrators are busy dealing with attendance, discipline, and public relations, curricular matters fall on the shoulders of the classroom teacher. As Philip Cusick stated:

the teachers left alone in the classes and charged with maintaining order, instructing and getting along with the students are themselves the creators of the vast number of electives offered. It is the teachers who
create the diverse courses to fulfill what they perceive to be the demands of the students, and in order to fulfill themselves as teachers and individuals.\textsuperscript{55}

The American comprehensive public high school model had been set down in the \textit{Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education} released in 1918 by the Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education. This significant document clearly advocated the necessity for change within the high schools due to societal, demographic, and educational theory alterations. An emphasis on the academics and job training earmarked two important objectives of education stressed by the committee.

Differential curricula at the senior high school level were regarded as necessary aspects of successful participation for life. The term "curriculum" was defined by this commission as:

\begin{quote}
\begin{small}
a systemic arrangement of subjects and courses in those subjects both required and elective, extending through two or more years and designed for a group of pupils whose common aims and probable careers may properly differentiate a considerable part of their work from that of other groups in the school.\textsuperscript{56}
\end{small}
\end{quote}

This philosophy of secondary-level education provided the foundation for birth of the comprehensive high school. The idea of an unified organization for all curricula under one roof remains the standard secondary-level structure to the present day.\textsuperscript{57}

James B. Conant, a noted scientist, administrator, and writer, became an enthusiastic champion of American
secondary-level education during the 1950s. Motivated by Francis Keppel, dean of Harvard School of Education, and John W. Gardner, president of the Carnegie Corporation, Dr. Conant submitted a proposal of an education project to the Carnegie Corporation in December 1956.58

Dr. Conant and his staff began their monumental task of reporting on the nature of the "comprehensive" American high school during the 1957-58 academic year. The publication date was early 1959. Conant and his fellow colleagues could not have imagined what an auspicious target date they had selected. The launch by the Soviet Union of Sputnik I, in 1957, heightened public criticism of American education.59

By October 1957, America faced an educational dilemma. The dramatization of America's technological and military deficiencies intensified the argument that the solution to the present ills was through immediate attention to the schools. Criticism of our educational institutions centered around the "lack of academic rigor" which was evident in the following ways: in courses required, homework expectations, student evaluations, and overemphasis with non-academic concerns of schools.60

By 1958, Congress enacted the National Defense Education Act which pumped over one billion federal dollars into the educational arena for loans and fellowships to university students. Financial assistance was provided for all levels of education to promote science, mathematics, and
foreign languages. Funds were available for the identification and encouragement of academically bright students. Utilization of electronic media for instruction was to be provided. Finally, vocational education in science and technology was to be imparted.\textsuperscript{61}

The tremendous involvement of various societal sectors, including the federal government, signaled mounting anticipation of great rewards. The National Science Foundation (NSF), established in 1950, concentrated its efforts toward research and education in the sciences. Initially, unconcerned about precollege curricula, the fervor of Sputnik increased NSF's involvement in such high school curricular areas as mathematics, biology, chemistry, and social studies.\textsuperscript{62} Due to this participation, such programs as "the new math," "the new social studies," and revisions in natural sciences occurred.\textsuperscript{63} Between 1956-1975, NSF funded 53 projects of which 43 were in math/natural sciences and 10 in the social studies.\textsuperscript{64} The NSF's efforts at revising precollege curricula were successful, in part, especially in the area of the physical sciences. The curriculum reform movement of the 1950s, as in other eras throughout America's educational history, was at best "incremental and piecemeal."\textsuperscript{65}

Yet, propelled by the "space race," school board members in America anxiously desired answers to questions such as: How should we organize the schools? What should
the high schools teach? Parents and public school educators greeted the publication of Conant's study with enthusiasm. Professors of Education reacted coolly to the report. The recommendations were felt to be very conservative, if not reactionary. The university educators were appalled that a "layman" would make suggestions concerning school curricula.

Whatever criticism came his way following the release of *The American High School Today*, Dr. Conant became highly visible through the use of media attention and his personal use of the spoken and written word. Shortly after the release of the highly publicized study in February 1959, Arthur Morse produced, directed, and wrote a National Education Association film report entitled "How Good Are Our Schools? Dr. Conant Reports" which was released to TV stations throughout America. High-profile media coverage spear-headed Dr. Conant's publication into the public arena.

The completion of *The American High School Today* evoked much response from the professional and lay public concerning Conant's crusade for the "comprehensive" high school model. Whatever criticism was laid at his feet, no one could take issue with Dr. Conant's impeccable professional reputation. William Alexander and Kenneth Erickson, who were two educational commentators of this era, attested to the fact that this investigator had provided valuable insights into the world of public secondary-level
educational institutions. Most significantly, Dr. Conant had drawn attention away from unrealistic attacks on our high schools and directed the deserved focus on pressing financial and personnel concerns underlying the educational organization. According to this model, Conant defined this American phenomenon as:

comprehensive because it offers, under one administration and under one roof (or series of roofs), secondary education for almost all the high school age children of one town or neighborhood.

The study was intended as a personal report. Yet, Conant wanted to speak to important policy-makers such as educational and political leaders in order to create a congenial atmosphere favorable to his vision of successful American secondary-level education.

In The American High School Today, Dr. Conant discussed his vision of the "comprehensive" high school model which was based on the fulfillment of three functions: Can a school at one and the same time provide a good general education for all the pupils as future citizens of a democracy, provide elective programs for the majority to develop useful skills, and educate adequately those with a talent for handling advanced academic subjects—particularly foreign languages and advanced mathematics.

The comprehensive high school model was indispensable in Conant's view, for it provided general education for all citizens on the basis of a common democratic understanding. The equality of opportunity doctrine was paramount to Dr.
Conant's vision of this unique high school model. The belief in equal opportunity for all citizens, regardless of economic status of family and the striving for fulfillment of varied educational needs and goals, was inherent in this American secondary-level model. Dr. Conant was a believer in the vision of the comprehensive high school serving as a vehicle for the improvement of economic and social positions in society.

More than a quarter-century marks James Conant's investigation of the American high schools. The scrutiny of the high schools, since the 1950s, continues to this day. During the late 1950s, educational institutions were blamed for major societal inadequacies. Reacting to the progressive education movement of the 1930s-1940s and America's lag in the space race, education became a scapegoat for complex issues during the 1950s. What happened during this period of intense reform should allow Americans to be cautious of "flamboyant rhetoric and easy panaceas."

Despite the pendulum of school reform the characteristic nature of secondary education has remained constant since Dr. Conant's classic study more than twenty-five years ago. Public opinion has shifted since the Conant era regarding education. By the late 1960s, public confidence in schooling had deteriorated. In 1970, Charles Silberman discussed the "mindlessness" of schools
mirroring the decline in the American spirit in his landmark Crisis in the Classroom.\textsuperscript{77}

Today's highly technological and complex society cannot compare to the Conant era in terms of societal problems. Yet, the ideals are the same. Various educational reform recommendations have evolved from the vast array of societal sectors. Whether Dr. Conant would agree with today's new suggestions is unclear. His most significant contribution, the advocacy of the comprehensive high school model, continues to be assessed and improved in order to meet the needs of all American youth; thus indicating his tacit agreement.\textsuperscript{78}

Zealous reformers of secondary-level educational institutions have rallied around various ideological themes throughout American history. Well-intentioned activists dictated their visions of the appropriate goals necessary for the future of our youth. The transmission of suitable skills critical to effective workforce participation has been an integral curricular high school issue.

The Excellence Movement, which catapulted during the 1980s, was motivated by economic and political forces unlike those of earlier reform periods. According to William Wayson, et al.:

Previous reform efforts had been founded on moral and professional imperatives and were supported by minorities who traditionally had been neglected by the schools. Because of the political climate behind the movements of the late Fifties, the Sixties, and the early Seventies, school personnel tended to drag their
feet or to settle for cosmetic changes. . . The economic system could support, and indeed seemed most satisfied with, education programs that could turn out a few well-educated leaders and many partially educated, obedient, and dependent workers. 

Clearly, this most recent educational reform initiative has taken on its own unique characteristics. Past precedents of earlier movements may not help shape the destiny of our most recent educational cycle.
CHAPTER I NOTES

4. Ibid., 104.
8. Ibid., 11.
10. Ibid., 7.
13. Ibid., 7.
16. Ibid., 7.


20. Johnston and others, 104.


23. Fullerton, 23.


27. Kutscher, 4.

28. Ibid., 7. Kutscher states that the projected productivity growth rate is more variable than the projected labor force growth. Labor force growth is expected to slow.


30. Ibid.

31. Ibid., 300.

32. Ibid., 301.

33. Valerie A. Personick, "Industry Output and Employment Through the End of the Century," *Monthly Labor Review* 110 (September 1987): 30-31; 33. According to Lois Plunkert, manufacturing's all-time employment peak was in June, 1979. Only 40% of these jobs were recovered by 1982. In the mid-80s, factories experienced another slowdown. The overall economy continued to expand. Consumers enjoyed strong spending patterns during this time but focused on foreign goods.


35. Rumberger and Levin, 23.

and the Institute for Educational Leadership, 1987), 4-5, ERIC, ED 292 950.


39. Ibid., 20.
40. Ibid., 20.
41. Ibid., 5.
42. Ibid., 5-7.
43. Ibid., 8-10.
45. Ibid., 11.
46. Ibid., 11.
47. Ibid., 11-12. Every job was rigid (like cogs in a wheel). Most young people graduated high school or vocational institutions for employment in cog jobs. The privileged few advanced to the college-level for futures in law, banking, engineering, consulting, etc.
48. Ibid., 13.
49. Ibid., 14-15. Reich explains that the first solution requires the top-level layer of companies to initiate cost-reduction measures such as massive lay-offs, sending out work to lower-cost suppliers, automation, diversification to different goods/services, and a move to lower-wage areas. Workers find themselves having to defend their jobs/earnings and taking lower wages/benefits. The second solution would demand the retraining of workers for more complex tasks. Automation would provide a help to increase worker flexibility and creativity. Under this organizational pattern, workers could experience ownership of companies. Flexible job categories, work rules, and wage rates are necessary components.
50. Ibid., 18.
52. Ibid., 4-5.
53. Ibid., 17-18.
54. Ibid., 17-19.
55. Ibid., 17-19.
57. Ibid., 24.


61. Ibid., 427.


63. Ibid., 232.

64. Ibid., 261.

65. Ibid., 265.


67. Ibid., 622.


71. Hampel, 71.


74. Hampel, 58.

75. Podeschi and Hack Barth, 430.


CHAPTER II

SELECTED CORPORATE COMMENTATORS ON EDUCATION FOR THE WORKFORCE

History of Corporate Involvement in Education

Corporate organizations have long been benefactors of philanthropic causes. After the release of *A Nation At Risk* in 1983, corporate participation in public school educational endeavors was revitalized and the formation of new public school-business connections steadily increased since the early 1980s. Organizations such as the Committee for Economic Development, the Carnegie Foundation, and the Conference Board have been instrumental in catapulting the business community into the highly visible educational arena. While this union is still developing in uncharted waters, the direction appears certain.

The American economy experienced two major changes during the nineteenth century which impacted on the educational preparation of youth for the workplace. The first change took hold in the northeastern region during the 1820s and 1830s. The textile mills and shoe factories became predecessors of the future American factory system of industrial production. The factory system expanded to the
creation of other goods by the end of the century. A few large corporations had formed by this time. Monopoly corporations were responsible for the organization of the workplace which, in turn, influenced school practices.¹

America was an agrarian society where manufactured goods were produced by artisan masters and journeymen during the early nineteenth century. The development of the factory system changed this arrangement. Large corporations became very influential by the end of the century. The need to increase productivity led to the adoption of scientific management. According to Martin Carnoy:

Scientific management attempted to break down work into a series of distinct tasks which could then be speeded up or, in the case of highly skilled workers, assigned to a less-skilled (lower paid) worker who would do only the single component of the work rather than the whole job.²

The organization of work in corporations was reflected in school institutions. The second major change occurred after the turn of the century. School authorities introduced testing, tracking, counseling, and school management techniques. Schools were required to appropriately place students for the production process. Formal assessment procedures became necessary in order to ensure the "proper" place and curriculum for students.³

Educational reformers in Massachusetts laid the imposing foundation needed for workforce participation in industrial America during the 1820s and continuing into the 1880s and 1890s. The public high school became the forum
whereby reformers could convey their visions of industrialism.\textsuperscript{4}

The creation of workers for industry was one of the most important missions of centralized state school systems. Schools needed to instill behavior patterns appropriate to the work setting. A sense of time and authority are important to the factory setting. Business people understood the importance of schools in the preparation of future workers.\textsuperscript{5}

Business involvement in education existed before the 1980s. Distinguished school boards were comprised of business and professional men. Business management concepts provided the underpinnings for public school management programs. Educators and business leaders formed a consensus concerning the educational preparation of students for the world of work.\textsuperscript{6}

The changing social context of the 1960s and 1970s brought the issues of equity, due process, and political power pertaining to previously neglected groups of students to the foreground. The educational policy-making arena became infused with a new set of players. Organized parent, teacher, and community groups developed with advocates, lawyers, judges, and state/federal personnel rounding out the equation. Corporate representatives either withdrew their participation or were pushed aside.\textsuperscript{7}

Business participation cooled during the middle 1960s
to the latter 1970s. Instead, interest was redirected toward higher education. Business executives were unfamiliar with most public schools. Their children attended the finest suburban public or private institutions. Business leaders tended to accept the negative stereotypes of public schooling popular at the time. Some of the unflattering perceptions included criticism of ineffective teachers, administrators, and schools at the expense of student learning. Corporations became passive critics of public education since a qualified supply of people was available for workforce participation.8

During the 1960s and 1970s, antibusiness and antiestablishment sentiment abounded. The social climate of the times echoed the massive unrest in America. Such concerns as the Vietnam War, Watergate, and protests against gender/racial discrimination reverberated throughout the nation. Educational institutions were not immune from repercussions. Educators and students became antagonistic toward the business orientation and conservative political outlook. This action precipitated the withdrawal of business involvement with the schools.9 Simultaneously, public confidence in the schools began to erode. Depressed test scores, disruptive students, militant teachers, and poor pedagogical innovations provided data which were perceived by the general public as indicators that our schools were failing, especially in the cities. The
business community joined in this negative characterization of our nation's schools. The release of *A Nation At Risk* in 1983 heightened a renewal of interest by the business community in schools. The changing workforce supply became the major reason for action. Business leaders became acutely aware of pressing realities concerning future labor force recruits. First of all, successful global economy participation would require increased worker productivity. Also, changing skill qualifications of the workforce would necessitate educational restructure.

The First Wave of educational reform unfolded with the publication of *A Nation At Risk*. This report triggered swift response from the business community. Thousands of companies headed into interactions with public schools. The Second Wave of reform, which focused on the empowerment of teachers as an avenue to improve school quality, presented highly visible, superficial collaborations such as adopt-a-school programs. The current Third Wave reflects substantial, direct endeavors on the part of business to really make a difference in educational policies at the local, state, and national levels.

The late 1970s and 1980s set the stage for the reinvolvement of business interest in public education. Employers witnessed disturbing circumstances in the workplace. Increasing numbers of new employees were
entering the labor force with deficient basic skill competencies which required expensive corporate retraining programs. Alarming rates of youth unemployment signaled poor school to work transition. School leaders began to look to business as front line advocates of political support for education in lieu of decreasing resources and citizen support. The social climate of America during the second half of the 1970s allowed for the easing of antibusiness sentiment.\textsuperscript{13}

Michael Timpane's study of the corporate sector's interest in precollegiate education in American cities provided interesting insights into this newly formed connection between business and the public schools. The objectives of Timpane's study were twofold:

first to help develop a greater understanding of the nature of the corporate interest in education in the great cities, which might explain the emerging patterns of activity and second to suggest steps that the public and private agencies could take to encourage and improve future corporate activities that would strengthen and support the cities' schools.\textsuperscript{14}

Timpane's study concentrated on both corporate and educational perspectives. In addition to searching the available literature, 150 interviews with representatives of the business and the educational communities were conducted via phone or on-site/personal visitations. This researcher was pleasantly surprised as to the candidness of the interviewees. Timpane stated:

The literature, selected to reflect both corporate and educational perspectives, was unexpectedly lacking in
direct commentary on the issue of corporate interest in education. On the other hand, the interviews were rich with the insight of experience.  

Educational concerns were not high priority items on business agendas during the early 1980s. In fact, precollegiate educational matters impacted minimally in corporate planning. Money, interest, and initiative were sadly lacking. Corporations seemed more concerned in the public relations aspects of educational endeavors than long-term goals.  

The Timpane study revealed lack of ownership related to educational endeavors by most CEOs. Top executive leaders concentrated their efforts toward the improvement of short-term objectives and goals. CEOs paid minimal attention to human resource development inside and outside of the corporations. Corporate interest in education was usually designated to the mid-level managerial levels. High-ranking business leaders were rarely directly involved in the undertakings.  

In the early 1980s, senior-level business executives believed that educational affairs should be handled by school people. Articulation between the educational and corporate worlds was at best minimal. Timpane advocated the need for leading corporate figures to provide guidance and direction for their colleagues to follow.  

Negative perceptions of our nation's public schools have greatly contributed to the alienation of corporate
support. According to Michael Timpane, urban precollegiate education was often unfavorably compared to two pet educational projects. Corporate educational programs and higher education connections were highly regarded within the business community. These comparisons were often unfair. This view emphasized the lack of knowledge about urban school settings by corporations.\textsuperscript{19}

Dale Mann's 1984 exploration of public education and business initiatives in twenty-three American cities complemented Timpane's 1982 study. Both studies emphasized the negative perceptions of the business community toward urban educational systems. According to Mann, important school concerns such as training students for work and the quality of academic pursuits mattered little to corporate leaders.\textsuperscript{20}

This pessimistic attitude on the part of the business world needed to be redirected. Although school-business relationships were fragmented and transitory, the idea of a stronger, more mature collaboration resulting in direct business participation in the political arena for educational matters, especially in the area of finance, was a worthy long-range goal.\textsuperscript{21}

In the early 1980s, budding school-corporate interactions developed. Mann maintained that educators were responsible for much of corporate participation in urban education. He felt it was imperative that the increased
efforts of higher levels of business activism in education be encouraged by school people.\textsuperscript{22}

The renewed relationship between education and the private sector evolved slowly. Business and educational leaders were required to let go of negative stereotypes of each other in order to move the interactions along. Business people approached the formation of reestablished connections with educational institutions slowly and cautiously. School leaders proceeded forward with suspicion. Educators remembered the harsh criticisms hurled against them. In addition, it took some time for school people to internalize those skills and competencies advocated by business for future workers.\textsuperscript{23}

Business people developed positive attitudes toward the schools, by way of direct contact with professional educators and their institutions. The private sector workers learned three important things concerning the educational world. First of all, educating our youth was hard work. Second, educational staff and students took their work seriously. Third, corporate people could never put up with the daily setbacks and frustrations which were common to everyday educational sites.\textsuperscript{24}

The early to mid-1980s highlighted an increasingly important turning point for business-school ventures. Individuals, task forces, and commissions composed of politicians, educators, and business representatives were
visible at local, state, and federal levels. Business and education were forming meaningful interactions.

The business community's interest in education has developed into a top priority item. The Conference Board has highlighted business leadership in precollege education as a vital issue. The number of school and business ventures has increased from 42,000 to over 140,000 since 1983.25

Distinguished business leaders have become advocates for education and have openly addressed this concern in the public forum. J. Richard Munro, chairman of the board and CEO of Time Inc. said the following:

In the last decade of the twentieth century, corporate America faces a simple choice: either help improve the quality of our schools or accept the fact that we will no longer be a global competitor. Those who decide to help must be willing to be advocates for the reform and rebuilding of our schools. They must also be willing to act, to invest their resources in the struggle for change. If that seems daunting, consider the alternative.26

Lee Iacocca, former chairman of the board of Chrysler corporation, remarked:

We as manufacturers have a huge stake in education. Would you believe maybe survival? I know what factory workers in Japan and Korea can do. I've seen them. I also see what we're getting from our schools, and I'm scared. Everybody can get the same technology today, but if you don't have people who are smarter than the robots they work with, the game is over. You are simply not going to compete.27

Characteristics of Excellent Companies

Well-managed corporations provide some valuable lessons which could be utilized in educational institutions. The
most important point is the ability to empower people within enterprises. Organizational structure, leadership, values, and goals are valuable tools in this process.  

The key to successful companies appears to be found in the establishment of conditions within organizations which will promote the effectiveness of its workers. This is contrary to the notion of creating systems which compensate for worker weakness or limitation.

Schools have been guilty of teacher-proofing curricula and instruction. Authority and decision-making processes are not at the classroom level. Educational policies relating to school environments should complement the empowerment of teachers.

Successful companies are primarily concerned with increasing productivity through people. Employees are afforded high degrees of autonomy within work organizations. This is accomplished through extensive use of motivation and evaluation measures.

Motivation and evaluation measures are achieved through the basic characteristics of individual companies. First of all, excellent companies allow groups of employees to set their own goals. While important values are channeled by a strong centralized level of executives, a simple, decentralized structure allows for autonomy and entrepreneurship. Strong shared values such as quality, service, innovation, and respect for individuals predominate
in these enterprises. The use of myths, stories, legends, and traditions are utilized to promote a strong organizational culture. Finally, a powerful leader understands how people make changes within organizations.  

The "effective schools" literature offers similar characteristics which set excellent schools apart from the rest. According to Marsha Levine of the American Enterprise Institute, effective schools share the following criteria:

a. clearly defined missions
b. strong leadership
c. consistency among goals, instructional programs, and performance measures
d. a shared culture or set of values
e. continuous feedback
f. communication among faculty and between faculty and administration
g. frequent measures of student performance

Thomas Peters and Robert Waterman wanted to know how excellent companies actually functioned internally. In their outstanding 1982 book entitled In Search of Excellence: Lessons From America's Best Run Companies, the authors identified forty-three best run companies over a two year period. The companies were arranged into various representative industry groupings. These clusters included but were not limited to the following:

a. high-technology companies
b. consumer goods companies
c. general industrial goods companies
d. service companies
e. project management companies
f. resource-based companies

Peters and Waterson described eight attributes which accounted for the high performance levels of their best run
company sample. First, excellent companies project a bias for action. Teams of employees are involved in decision-making processes while tackling individual problems. These organizations pay close attention to the customers that they serve. Autonomy and the entrepreneurship spirit are highly valued within these enterprises. Worker productivity is known to be highly valued throughout the fabric of excellent companies. A hands-on approach to running these organizations is important as well as familiarity with the business. The organizational structure is simple and top-level staff positions are few. Finally, excellent companies are both centralized and decentralized.35

David Kearns, a businessman, and Denis Doyle, an academic, provided a thoughtful account of how successful reform of American schools could occur. Kearns and Doyle published Winning the Brain Race: A Bold Plan to Make Our Schools Competitive in 1988. In this book, Kearns stated that as chairman and chief executive officer of Xerox corporation, his company did not fare well in the world economy during the 1970s. Restructuring of the organization helped Xerox to regain its competitive edge. The schools can benefit from lessons learned by corporate America.36

The suggested reform plan for American education outlined by Kearns and Doyle consisted of the following six ideas. The concept of choice was tantamount to the authors' reform agenda for schools. Educational facilities should
compete for customers in an open market. All school
districts would restructure their organizational patterns.
Educational sites would become year-round magnet schools
with principals and staff members in complete control of all
educational decision-making. The teaching staff must be
allowed to function as professionals. The idea of
professionalism in education would require changes in how
teachers are trained, recruited, rewarded for their
services, and in how services are delivered to students.
Higher academic standards should be expected of all
students; they consist of four years of English, three years
of mathematics and history, two years of a natural or
physical science and a foreign language, and one year of
computer science. Students require training in values,
which would instill a sense of democracy in all citizens.
The federal government should continue its limited but
important role in educational matters. A national
involvement would focus in the areas of building incentives
for outstanding local school initiatives and funds for
future educational research.37

The name of W. Edwards Deming was not of consequence to
the educational community a dozen years ago. The
distinguished Dr. Deming had enjoyed a brilliant career as a
statistician involved in management control. During World
War II, Deming taught personnel of American industry methods
for increasing productivity known as statistical quality
control (SQC) or statistical process control (SPC). In 1950, Deming was invited by General Douglas MacArthur, the military governor of Japan, to aid in the rebuilding of Japan's industries. This knowledge was thus passed on to Japanese corporations and continued to be refined over the next two decades. The Japanese used SPC in unique ways in order to develop quality at all levels of operation. The Japanese focused on participatory forms of management through the use of team efforts and always geared toward customer satisfaction. Unfortunately, American companies paid little attention to the Deming Method until the 1970s.  

Deming's Total Quality Management (TQM) consists of fourteen points, which are necessary for successful implementation in industry:

Companies should redefine their roles; the reason for existence is to stay in business and provide jobs. Americans need not accept poor quality products and service. Quality should come from improvement within the process and requires the participation of all workers. Develop long-lasting relationships with suppliers. Improvement is a continual process in companies. Training programs should exist within companies. Managerial staff are required to provide leadership to the general workers. Employees need to feel secure, so that they may provide quality service to the organizations. Participatory work in teams is important within companies. Allow the employees to formulate their own slogans and exhortations for the workplace. Numerical quota systems do not enhance productivity and quality within companies. Provide work environments in which the employees are able to perform quality tasks. An aggressive inservice retraining program is necessary, in order to educate all employees in the new behaviors. All workers in the organizations must be committed to the new plan of action to improve quality within companies.
American educators embraced Deming's Total Quality Management principles during the 1990s. Deming's quality tenets are consistent with the hopes and desires of educators concerning the future direction of schooling. TQM should not be considered a panacea for American educational ills. Yet, positive results of TQM may be possible if the ideas are consistently put into practice over a period of time.\(^4\)

**Literacy in the Workplace**

Literacy is an important component of workplace competency skills. Investigations of economic productivity and educational attainment focus on literacy. A common definition of the term "literacy" varies. Literacy referred to the ownership of basic reading, writing, and mathematical skills during the 1970s. During the 1980s, requirements for literacy increased. Literacy skills were regarded as the necessary abilities in reading, writing, mathematics, communication, computer, and other work-related skills for workplace performance.

*Literacy: Profiles of America's Young Adults* was a 1986 report which discussed the results of a 1985 investigation of literacy in young people assessed by the National Assessment of Educational Progress. The NAEP proposed the following definition of literacy: "using printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential."\(^4\)
The Young Adult Literacy Assessment sampled reading and mathematical literacy skills of some 3,600 Americans, age 21 through 25, in occupational categories through the use of interviews. The majority of the respondents possessed basic lower-level literacy skills, but lacked higher-order critical thinking competencies.42

Paul Barton and Irwin Kirsch authored *Workplace Competencies: The Need to Improve Literacy and Employment Readiness* in 1990. The researchers believed that the development of increased literacy skills among at-risk populations presents a current requirement of successful workforce participation. Literacy requirements for specific occupations remain untapped research areas. Further research in workplace literacy could provide important insights concerning skills and jobs.43

Leonard Lund and Patrick McGuire published *Literacy in the Work Force* in 1990. In this study, surveys were sent to 1,600 manufacturing and service firms. The researchers received 163 responses from major employers. Results of this survey provided interesting observations of employers in relation to literacy skills of entry-level workers. More than 70% of both manufacturing and service industry firms did not generally screen prospective employees for reading and writing skills. Companies tended to assume that one is literate if a high school diploma was attained or by virtue of having filled in a job application. Yet, four out of
five firms described the reading requirements for their entry-level positions as "moderate." Lund and McGuire remarked that moderate-level literacy difficulty should be reason enough for the implementation of screening procedures.44

Literacy skills represent one key component of work competencies necessary for business enterprises to thrive. The Lund and McGuire survey indicated that 55% of the firms estimated that 5% or less of their employees were illiterate. Manufacturing companies indicated 10% or less illiteracy compared to less than 5% for service-oriented companies.45

Surveyed employers expressed dissatisfaction with the current pool of employees. Participants reported that between 15% to 35% of their current staff could not handle higher-order work tasks. Six deficient literacy skill areas were reported by the Lund and McGuire study. They were: "reading and interpretation, basic mathematics, written communication, oral communication, computer capability and work readiness." Meaningful differences were noted between the manufacturing and service industries. For instance, oral communication skills were deemed to be more significant for service industry employees to possess than for their counterparts in the manufacturing sector.46

**Reports/Studies and Workplace Competencies**

Educational studies and reports commissioned since the
1980s have expressed divergent sentiment regarding appropriate skills of future workers. During the early 1980s, scant attention was drawn to the fate of non-college bound high school students. Yet, this population represents a major segment of the American labor force. Throughout the 1980s and into the current decade, national-level reports and studies increased our nation's data-base concerning educational preparation of high school graduates for work. In addition, the business community has become directly involved in the support of educational endeavors, which will aid in improved workers for the private sector.

The Center for Public Resources (CPR) is an organization committed to the purpose of building public-private partnerships with the direct input of the business community. In January 1982, members of a Task Force of the CPR Corporate Roles in Public Education Project met and discussed what pertinent information would be useful for business and school people to share for the purpose of closer collaborative relationships. According to CPR: "The overall goal of the Project is to highlight, develop, and communicate effective methods for improving basic skills education in the public secondary school system via local partnerships of business and education leaders."

Survey results based on data from 184 businesses and 123 school systems were reported in CPR's Basic Skills in the U.S. Work Force published in 1982. Interesting data
resulted from this investigation. Business people and educators both regarded reading, writing, and reasoning abilities as important skills for the workplace. Speaking and listening skills were considered necessary for successful workforce participation by both groups. Corporate executives ranked mathematical skills as more important for job entry than educators did. Corporate leaders felt that good science backgrounds were necessary for entry-level workers while educators did not agree.48

The survey results indicated differences in perceptions of business executives and educators concerning the nature and degree of worker deficiencies. Three-quarters of the respondent school systems reported that their graduates were generally adequately prepared for work. The majority of the responding businesses felt that major skill deficiencies existed in their prospective job applicants. Business executives reported serious concern over low worker levels of proficiency in science, mathematics, speaking and listening skills.49

Action for Excellence: A Comprehensive Plan to Improve Our Nation's Schools was prepared by the National Task Force on Education for Economic Growth in 1983. This early work emphasized the importance of business participation in improving precollegiate education for economic competitiveness. According to this report, "If the business community gets more involved in both the design and the
delivery of education, we are going to become more competitive as an economy. It is imperative that corporate America defines what workplace skills are required for students to acquire in our schools.

The report of the Panel on Secondary School Education entitled High Schools and the Changing Workplace: The Employers' View in 1984 provided a significant breakthrough concerning work skills of secondary-level graduates from a business perspective. The study's primary purpose was:

to define the educational competencies that will be needed by the high school graduate for success in the workplace, both at entry level and throughout a 45-to 50-year career in a constantly changing economic environment.

In High Schools and the Changing Workplace, the panel members, who represented the Committee on Science, Engineering, and Public Policy, strongly advocated the need for a mastery of core competencies during the high school years. Education for non-college and college-bound students should not differ represented the underlying premise of this report. Students who enter the labor market directly after high school could add to their employability by engaging in specific vocational skills. The imperative recommendation for all secondary-level students was:

the ability to read, write, reason, and compute; an understanding of American social and economic life; a knowledge of the basic principles of the physical and biological sciences; experience with cooperation and conflict resolution in groups; and possession of attitudes and personal habits that make for a dependable, responsible, adaptable, and informed worker and citizen.
The core competencies supported in High Schools and the Changing Workplace were not new concepts in the educational world. Core skills are represented in American high school curricula. Yet, many students have been slipping through the cracks. This panel did not find blame with our nation's educators. The responsibility and solution to the ever-growing problem lies with a shared consensus of input from all societal groups. The community, government, educators, parents, students, and business must collaborate for the best interest of our nation's economy.54

Investing in our Children: Business and the Public Schools was a 1985 study sponsored by the Committee for Economic Development. Employability traits comprised one key element of this report. The researchers spoke of the "invisible curriculum" in public schools. This "invisible curriculum" was composed of "the signals a school transmit to students about what is and what is not acceptable behavior." The business sector wanted the schools to instill positive work traits such as self-discipline, reliability, and perseverance into students.55

Redesigning America's Schools: The Public Speaks was a report of a survey by Louis Harris and Associates for the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy in 1986. Part of this survey was directed toward the business community. Telephone interviews concerning educational perceptions were conducted with 202 top corporate executives.56
Business perceptions regarding American public education were largely negative. The quality of educational institutions must improve before our work force can excel. In fact, 90% of the business participants felt that a well-skilled labor force would determine our competitive livelihood. A majority of the business people endorsed the following competencies for workforce success:

- to write and reason well;
- to understand math, science, and technology;
- to be able to use what you know;
- to learn how to figure out what you know and how to find it out;
- to educate people who can think their way creatively through tough problems. 57

*Children in Need: Investment Strategies for the Educationally Disadvantaged* was compiled by the Committee for Economic Development in 1987. This investigation proposed a much needed policy statement directed toward at-risk student populations. Business executives were urged to guide coalitions of societal sectors in the political arena for educational excellence. The importance of the "invisible curriculum" and its relevance to the successful employability of future workers was targeted in this report. 58

Anthony Carnevale, et al., conducted a two-year joint venture for the American Society for Training and Development and the United States Department of Labor in 1988. This investigation determined what skills employers require of entry-level workers. Employers want their employees to come to the workplace equipped with additional
skills besides reading, writing, and arithmetic abilities. Business executives want workers who are knowledgeable in other related areas. Workers must be able to "learn how to learn." Employers consider speaking and listening skills important commodities in the workplace. Employees should possess problem-solving abilities to allow for innovation and creativity. Workers require personal and career development skills, such as good self-esteem and motivation. Employers want people who can work in teams and show leadership, interpersonal and negotiation skills.59

Training in America published in 1990 by Anthony Carnevale, et al., provided further refinements. To meet the current competitive economic challenge, educators must impart certain skills to future workers. Schools must prepare students to solve problems in team situations. In addition, academic subjects should hold application to life experiences. The link between secondary education to work requires improved business and school communication.60

America's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages!: The Report of The Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce was published by the National Center on Education and the Economy in 1990. The commission was chaired by Ira C. Magaziner, who is currently a special assistant to President Clinton and recently co-authored the Clinton administration's health care proposal. The co-chairs, William E. Brock and Ray Marshall, in addition to the other
panel members, represented the viewpoints of business, industry, private organizations, education, and government. The National Center on Education and the Economy is a not-for-profit organization committed to the purpose of improving American education for building a world class economy.  

The commission conducted a study to investigate how American business people viewed the skill qualifications of their workers. Interviews of at least 2,000 people at more than 550 firms were conducted. The researchers did not anticipate the outcome. Eighty percent or more of the respondents voiced concern about poor skills of workers. Yet, the consensus focused on good work habits, such as positive work ethics and pleasant personalities, and not on the academics. Only a few employers were concerned about literacy and mathematical skills. Only 5% of the respondents viewed education and skill requirements as rising significantly in the future. Fifteen percent of the employers interviewed felt that good work candidates were difficult to find. These shortages were noted in underpaid, female-dominated occupations, such as nursing, and craft apprentice trades, such as manufacturing.  

A 1990 study was conducted by the National Alliance of Business (NAB) to determine satisfaction levels of employers regarding their workforce. Two-hundred executives were selected and interviewed from a sample of "Fortune 1000"
companies. Thirty-six percent of the respondents regarded their workers as satisfactory, 50% of the executives were neutral, and 13% of the business people were dissatisfied with their entry-level employees. Twenty-five percent of the respondents reported dissatisfaction with America's workers, 57% of the executives were neutral, and 14% of those surveyed expressed satisfaction with entry-level workers.\textsuperscript{64}

In 1991, a Louis Harris study sponsored by the Committee for Economic Development conducted a national study to tap the business community's responses regarding its impressions of American elementary and secondary school quality. The researchers surveyed 402 executives of small, medium-sized, and large companies from the private and governmental sectors.\textsuperscript{64}

The Louis Harris group results indicated that the business community holds our nation's public schools in low esteem. The survey asked executives to critique students on the basis of fifteen key attributes. They were:

ability to read and understand written and verbal instructions; the capacity to do arithmetic and higher mathematics, to write and read well, and to solve complex problems; having disciplined work habits; and having the capacity to concentrate on the work done over an extended period of time.\textsuperscript{65}

The conclusions of the Louis Harris survey suggested that employers are certain that new entry-level workers possess border-line literacy abilities in addition to the lack of higher-order/problem-solving skills. In general,
the business sector believed that new employees are, at best, marginally prepared for the work force.66

Major School-Business Partnership Models

School-business partnerships have received public attention since the early 1980s. While these initiatives have increased in size and types, these activities have remained unconnected, episodic, and undefined. Yet, these ventures can be found throughout our nation and are especially popular in urban centers.

The importance of business and school partnerships was emphasized in Reconnecting Youth: The Next Stage of Reform in 1985. This report was a product of the Business Advisory Commission, an arm of the Education Commission of the States (ECS), which included representatives from government, business, and education. The commission's purpose is to advance relationships between business and education to improve education for economic development. James B. Campbell, a businessman and chairman of the Subcommittee on Youth Policy of the Business Advisory Commission stated that: "Our aim is to offer recommendations, stimulate discussion and reaffirm the roles that business can play, in collaboration with educators and policy makers, in improving opportunities for all youth."67

A vast majority of America's adolescents and young adults, between the ages of 14 through 24, are not able to make successful transitions into adulthood. The
Reconnecting Youth report offered several suggestions for the creation of collaborative efforts between business and the schools. Business leaders could become allies of public education as participants in such endeavors as state business roundtables and private industry councils. The direct involvement of business with the schools would be worthwhile. School and business partnerships that promote direct contact with the public schools are beneficial.68

Shakeshaft and Trachtman conducted a 1986 school-business collaboration mailed survey from the corporate viewpoint. Chief executive officers of 809 major corporations on the Forbes 500 list were selected as participants. The 69% return rate totaled 345 responses.69

The Shakeshaft and Trachtman survey offered some valuable insights. First of all, 62% of the reporting corporations were involved with comprehensive high school partnerships. Adopt-A-School projects were tallied at 45% of given joint ventures.70 It was found that types of partnerships have not changed since the early 1980s.71

The authors felt that these partnerships were worthwhile and useful in some ways. For instance, 75% of the business community has developed a more positive impression toward public schools.72 Also, 87% of the participants felt that educational excellence should be the responsibility of all citizens.73 Yet, these researchers
felt that corporate influence cannot be implemented through school-business partnerships. The business community can offer the public schools the most constructive support through policy-level initiatives.  

**The Fourth R: Workforce Readiness** was a publication developed by the National Alliance of Business in 1987 that dealt with the theme of worker preparation. This report was written for business leaders and emphasized the importance of corporate involvement in education at the federal, state, and local levels. Business and school collaborations provide effective vehicles to resolving workforce quality. This report stated: "The focus of this unique project is to promote business-education partnerships emphasizing school improvement, institutional change and policy reform, and to view such partnerships from a business perspective."  

**The Fourth R: Workforce Readiness** report indicated that employers require problem-solving skills in addition to competency in the three R's from their workers. A skills gap between competencies and jobs is increasingly observed by employers. To intervene in this dilemma, the NAB urged the business community to become actively involved in education. Business and school partnerships were regarded as effective solutions to the problem of workforce readiness. Corporate commitments to education included various types of service delivery, such as the provision of management assistance, as a support service and the
formulation of collaborative partnerships with federal, state, and local governments.\(^7\)\(^6\)

Corporate involvement has reached the highest level of direct intervention for educational reform during the 1990s. The business community has entered the political arena on behalf of American public education. It is in this public domain that the corporate sector will impact most significantly for improved secondary-level curricular matters related to successful workforce participation.

The presence of well-known corporate executives before various Congressional subcommittees interested in education and productive workers signals a growing national concern. To emphasize the importance of educating competent people for work, the business sector has developed The Business Coalition for Education Reform which includes the following organizations: American Business Conference, Black Business Council, The Business Roundtable, Business Higher Education Forum, Chamber of Commerce of the United States, Committee for Economic Development, The Conference Board, National Alliance of Business, National Association of Manufacturers, and the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.\(^7\)\(^7\)

William Kolberg, president of the National Alliance of Business, stated that his organization was instrumental in the creation of this national effort. As Kolberg said:

The work we do, as national business organizations, is designed to provide help to State and local organizations, particularly business organizations. We will continue to research, write, and work together to
provide information that can be used locally. Through continued demonstration projects in business-education partnerships, we gain additional experience and can provide information and analysis to State and local leaders so that the lessons learned by each community are available to others. We see ourselves as a resource and a catalyst for change.78

The business community's interest in education is fueled by economics. Various types of business-education partnerships have been experimented with in order to improve skills of future workers. It is not the intention of this dissertation to examine partnership efforts. Yet, the exploration of important prototypes should be mentioned in order to fully understand the underlying processes behind the concept of corporate-education collaborations.

The Boston Compact is a collaborative school-business partnership which originated during the early to middle 1970s. The Boston business community experienced a reduced pool of qualified entry-level workers. This impetus spurred the alliance between the Boston Public Schools and the Boston business sector. The Compact was:

a formal agreement between the Superintendent of the Boston Public Schools and the Boston business community that the schools will work to achieve annual percentage increases in student retention and curriculum improvement and testing in exchange for preferential hiring commitments for full-time positions by Boston businesses.79

The inception of school-business partnerships began as a by-product of court-ordered desegregation in Boston during the early 1970s. At that time, the Tri-Lateral Council for Quality Education which voluntarily paired employers and the
eighteen city high schools, attempted to provide support for urban youth. While eighteen different partnership models developed, the adopt-a-school construct was genuinely found to be ineffective.\textsuperscript{80}

During the late 1970s, a group of about a dozen notable executives, of whom many had been involved in the Tri-Lateral Council for Quality Education, formed a collaboration to provide improved employment and training for the city's at-risk population. The creation of the Boston Private Industry Council (BPIC) emerged. This organization was composed of business, government, and community leaders who searched for meaningful training programs for the city's disadvantaged people.\textsuperscript{81}

Boston's business community recognized the importance of reciprocity between the schools and themselves. The schools were responsible for the transmission of skills and competencies required in the workplace. The business sector realized that their bargaining tool was in its hiring capacity and used this device to strongly persuade the schools to produce capable workers. The Boston Compact was created.\textsuperscript{82}

The California Roundtable is an organization composed of leading executive officers of major state companies. As early as 1980, this enterprise identified education as a priority issue. Local companies in California were experiencing difficulty in finding qualified entry-level
workers who possessed the appropriate basic skills necessary for the workplace. By 1983, eighty-eight prominent companies banded together in order to solve this serious problem. The Roundtable's interest in the educational preparation of students for the workplace led to the development of a research study which highlighted important recommendations. They were: "to raise educational standards, to upgrade technical education, to increase community involvement and support, and to encourage legislative reform." 

The Industry Education Council of California (IECC) was organized as a device to facilitate the expansion of business-education partnerships throughout the state. The state-level IECC served as an umbrella arrangement with county affiliates. The collaboration of schools and industries serve to produce various types of education-business enterprises. The partnership process is the most valuable component in this construct. The ultimate success of school-business partnerships depends on the mutual, cooperative dialogue between the two sectors.

School-business collaborations can provide important and viable pathways to the success of future entrants into the American workplace. As our nation heads into the twenty-first century, the development of necessary skills and competencies at the high school level will be imperative. The school to work transition is crucial for
effective employment prospects. The business sector has experienced the declining competency levels of beginning workers over the last decade. Alarm has swept over business communities nation-wide. Many types of school-business partnerships have been tried. The most successful and meaningful supports stem from coalitions of members across societal sectors who are politically active. It is in the political arena that business representatives can be of most service to the schools and, most importantly, to those whom educational institutions serve.
CHAPTER II NOTES

2. Ibid., 116-118.
3. Ibid., 118.
4. Ibid., 125.
5. Ibid., 126.
7. Ibid., 389.
8. Ibid., 389-90.
13. Useem, 104.
15. Ibid., 3.
17. Ibid., 14-15.
18. Ibid., 16.
19. Ibid., 16-18.
21. Ibid., 1.
22. Ibid., 5-6.
24. Ibid.
27. Ibid., 10.
29. Ibid., 58.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid., 58-59.
32. Ibid., 59-60.
33. Ibid., 64.
35. Ibid., 13-16.
37. Ibid., 140-143.
39. Ibid., 17-19.
42. Ibid., 1.
45. Ibid., 14.
46. Ibid., 15-16.
48. Ibid., 6 & 13-14.
49. Ibid., 16 & 24.
51. Ibid., 35.
53. Ibid., 19.
54. Ibid., 29.
57. Ibid.
62. Ibid., 24-25 & 96.
65. Ibid., 6.
66. Ibid., 7.
68. Ibid., 25-26.
70. Ibid., 5.
71. Ibid., 6-7.
72. Ibid., 9.
73. Ibid., 10.
74. Ibid., 13.
76. Ibid., 11 & 19-21.
77. U.S. House of Representatives, Subcommittee on

78. Ibid., 20.
80. Ibid., 4.
81. Ibid.
82. Ibid., 5.
84. Ibid., 9.
CHAPTER III

SELECTED GOVERNMENT COMMENTATORS

The political arena provides Americans opportunities to express their fondest wishes and desires in a democratic society. It is fundamental that a majority of the people believe in the same morals and values. Hopefully, these tenets of life can be discussed in Washington, D.C. Our nation's public school system is one important institution which receives a major contribution of governmental input.

Federal Agenda

Educational issues have dominated state and local agendas throughout our nation's history. Federal participation has been limited to a lesser degree. Discussion of concern at the national level regarding educational quality remained limited during the past quarter-century. It would take the publication of a short thirty-six page pamphlet to redirect the federal government's involvement in educational matters as never before.

The National Commission on Excellence in Education was created on August 26, 1981 by Secretary of Education T.H. Bell. This task force was directed to examine the general
health of American public education and provide a report to the nation by April 1983. The result of this effort culminated in the landmark endeavor, *A Nation At Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform*.

The concept of federal involvement in educational matters is not new. Historically, federal aid to education has been brought to the Congress since the 1870s, consistently with little success. Failure to win support for aid to education in Congress was due to three reasons: race, religion, and fear of federal control.¹

The question of federal aid to education, which has appeared in the face of national crises focuses attention on the schools. Since World War II, major educational matters have become the province of national concern. The issue of federal aid to education permeates the court system, political parties, congressional committees, and national commissions, all of which have become critics actively involved in public education. American education has become the vehicle for addressing social and economic concerns. As Diane Ravitch stated:

As the tendency grew to think about educational issues as social problems, the issues themselves became national in scope, and educational institutions were often thrust into the center of major social conflicts, serving as a hostage or a prize for partisans in ideological and political disputes.²

Chester E. Finn Jr. wrote an insightful article for *Change Magazine* in 1980 entitled "The Future of Education's Liberal Consensus." This author focused attention on an
operational definition of "liberal consensus" and considered implications of this movement on society, especially in educational policy-making circles. The "liberal consensus" is composed of not-for-profit organizations, university educators, major national teacher and educational institutional groups such as the National Education Association, the American Association of School Administrators, the National School Boards Association, and the American Council on Education, civil rights representatives, the major labor unions, federal politicians and political appointees, notable think tanks, education writers for major metropolitan newspapers, and remarkable public individuals.³

The liberal consensus has been instrumental in shaping national educational policy since the early 1960s. Finn cautioned against the replacement of this position by a willing conservative consensus "full of mischief and waiting to take over." A central tenet of the liberal consensus stood "for a complete end to involuntary educational segregation of every kind." This belief included segregation by ethnicity, in addition to, economic and physical conditions, cultural diversity, gender, and age. The forceful use of federal intervention by way of legislative and judicial mandates has been used. Complete confidence in the ability of the national government to extend educational access to those Americans who, otherwise,
would not be able to attain it was voiced. The issue of how the national government ought to be organized presented differences of opinion.⁴

The controversy surrounding a Cabinet-level Department of Education split supporters of the liberal consensus. The National Education Association and other educational groups were in favor. The A.F.L.-C.I.O. and the American Federation of Teachers were against this proposition. The civil rights and higher education organizations were divided in their votes. After the enactment of the Department, all factions came together in cooperation with the new agency.⁵

In his follow-up article "Toward a New Consensus" in the September 1981 issue of Change Magazine, Finn commented on the pattern of "education's liberal consensus" adopted by all five presidents between 1960 and 1981. In particular, these men generally believed in allowing an activist federal government, equipped with financial resources, to lead our nation in educational affairs. The appropriate buzz word of the times was "equity". Every policy and program was evaluated on this basis. This viewpoint predominated for nearly two decades.⁶

Finn explained that all of the presidents from 1960 to 1980 were not supporters of the liberal agenda. Kennedy made little progress with Congress in passing generous educational packages. Johnson, a member of the liberal consensus, was an outstanding "education president" in his
pursuit of legislative efforts. Nixon and Ford were removed and aloof to this philosophy. Carter's achievements amounted to the passage of the Middle Income Student Assistance Act and the implementation of the first Cabinet-level Department of Education. 7

In the arena of federal educational policy-making, presidents could avoid direct involvement. As long as key executive-level appointees would comply, the liberal agenda could be carried out by bureaucratic forces. Before 1980, conservative voices were not taken seriously. Most of society felt connected to this liberal philosophy. According to Finn: "more people got more schooling, important research breakthroughs were made, poverty was less a barrier to education, one's color (or sex, religion, handicap, etc.) had less bearing on admissions and personnel decisions." Yet, this liberal agenda lost momentum as evidenced by the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980. 8

On the eve of the presidential election in 1976, the liberal educational agenda was still alive in Washington, D.C. Since 1963, significant federal involvement in educational matters had occurred. Federal participation was welcomed by the educational systems and the policy-makers. General consensus seemed to dictate the continuation of active involvement for American public education. 9

Heated discussion concerning a separate U.S. Department of Education before and during the Carter administration
represented the very core of the federal involvement question. Much debate had been directed toward this concern on a national level. Pros and cons were presented in political and academic circles throughout our nation. Concern was voiced as to the ramifications and degree of federal control that should exist in relation to state and local jurisdictions. The preponderance of illustrious opinions reverberated by way of the printed word and conferences.

The Institute for Educational Leadership conducted a five-person bipartisan informal colloquium to discuss the federal role in the formulation and shaping of educational policy during the 1976 election year. The purpose of these discussions was to focus upon the scope and ramifications of the federal role in education.

The five-person panel consisted of the following prominent players: Robert Andringa, Minority Staff Director for the House Committee on Education and Labor; Chester Finn, associated with The Brookings Institution; Michael Timpane, member of the Rand Corporation; Thomas Wolanin, Staff Director of the Subcommittee on Labor-Management Relations of the House Committee on Education and Labor; and Samuel Halperin, Director of the Institute for Educational Leadership. Paramount to their dialogues concerning federal involvement in education, each member of the panel expressed concern "that the federal role in education was somewhere
between poorly conceived and disastrously implemented."\textsuperscript{10}

In \textit{Federalism At The Crossroad: Improving Educational Policymaking}, an anthology of articles, edited speeches, and other readings in 1976, various politicians and educators aired their philosophies regarding federal involvement in education. In particular, Joseph M. Cronin, Superintendent of Education in Illinois, Warren G. Hill, Executive Director of the Education Commission of the States, and Samuel Halperin, Director of the Institute for Educational Leadership, cautioned against the federal intrusion into state and local educational responsibility. The federal government has a significant but minor role to play in public school policy-making. Major federal effort should concentrate in the development of greater intergovernmental support. According to Samuel Halperin: "The cumulative impact of over-regulation, underfunding and sluggish federal implementation is a "junior partner" impinging upon educational autonomy as never before, while bearing relatively less of the educational burden with each passing year."\textsuperscript{11}

Wilbur J. Cohen, Dean of the College of Education at the University of Michigan, delivered a speech at the Center for Vocational Education, Ohio State University, in January 1977. His message emphasized the need for welfare and health care reform as paramount to federal aid to education. In addition, Dr. Cohen was cool to the idea of a new
department of education. He predicted considerable problems resulting from the separate creation of an educational department.\textsuperscript{12}

**State Agenda**

State legislatures experienced increased interest in educational policy-making during the mid-to-late 1970s. A decade prior, a typical state representative would have explained that education was a local concern. State legislators found themselves inundated in school matters. Negative public opinion regarding educational systems began to be heard. Attention focused on inadequate preparation of basic skills in American youth. A doubting public seemed unwilling to provide funding for education. The time was right for the intensification of state political involvement.\textsuperscript{13}

Changes in state legislatures allowed for greater educational intervention. Flexibility in the legislature's capacity, the internal distribution of power, habits of work and the group composition allowed for significant changes.\textsuperscript{14}

Legislative capacity provides legislators with increased numbers of professional aides. These staffers provide state representatives with valuable research concerning educational matters by which constructive and informed policy-making decisions can be made.

The internal power hierarchy of legislatures had shifted. No longer would a centralized leadership exist in
both chambers. Instead, standing committees rose in establishing themselves as powerful groups. Legislative leaders began to seriously depend on the education committees for policies and programs.¹⁶

The work habits of legislators had changed. The members started to work longer hours. In general, state legislatures began to meet annually instead of biennially. Also, sessions became longer in addition to making better use of time. Consequently, members could use the extra allotted time for participation on standing committees. This provision allowed for the implementation and passage of an increased number, in addition to, improved scrutiny of educational bills.¹⁷

The composition of membership within state legislatures has changed. The men and women who comprise the recent generations of state chambers were "more independent, moralistic, aggressive and issue-oriented." This profile of a state legislator would become aligned with contemporary issues, including education.¹⁸

Formerly, the "education community," which included state departments of education, educational administrators and teacher associations, was the sole contributor to school policy-making. At that time, this group found itself having to share in the decision-making process, which proved to be uncomfortable. The state role in education would forge ahead and not turn back.¹⁹
As America entered into the 1980s, state legislators continued their furor concerning education. Even before the publication of *A Nation At Risk* in 1983, politicians began to address academic concerns of American youth. State governors were becoming involved as well. The National Governors' Association proved to be a valuable vehicle for state participation in education. This organization was founded in 1908 as the National Governors Conference and is an instrument through which governors are able "to influence the development and implementation of national policy and to apply creative leadership to state problems." It became increasingly clear to major state politicians that socio-economic problems were becoming unmanageable. In addition, human resource development remained unacceptable. Public schools were not delivering the necessary products capable of productive work. The time had come for serious state-level initiatives, in addition to collaborative national efforts. It was time for the states to take the leadership role for educational excellence.

The National Governors' Association published a report entitled *The Five-Year Dilemma* in 1985, which examined school to work transition and offered state-initiatives for solutions. The successful change from school to work is a component of necessary preparation for American youth.

A state reply to the problem of improving successful transition of our youngsters, particularly at-risk young
people, to the workplace should address certain components. First, make sure that creative and flexible second chance programs are available to the 15 to 20% of non-achieving high school students. Second, expand job-information seeking services to both in-school and out-of-school youngsters. Next, broaden the scope of employment opportunities to those who are the neediest. Finally, a collaborative group of appropriate employment and related social service agencies must work together for the good of youth initiatives.²¹

According to The Five-Year Dilemma, as many as twenty-one governors had implemented major educational reforms in their respective states. The improvement of mathematics, science, and computer programs seemed appropriate in order for students to succeed in a changing labor market. Yet, educationally at-risk students could find the pressure of increased academic requirements intolerable. These conditions could increase the number of marginal students who drop out. State initiatives must direct efforts toward this problem. The report offered an array of possible solutions to this ever-increasing problem. Characteristics and needs of individuals as well as diverse populations should be kept in mind when planning alternative educational strategies.²²

The Five-Year Dilemma report praised The Job Training Partnership Act, enacted in 1982, as a federal initiative
instrumental in developing competency-based programs geared to give disadvantaged youth a second chance. The act placed states in the position to use this federal mandate to stimulate maximum student performance. Basic academic and occupational skill development could be monitored through the use of prescribed performance standards systems.²³ (A more detailed discussion appears in Chapter IV.)

Programs which involve participant accountability and applied learning situations may prove productive for adolescent learners. Some students may respond favorably to school programs which have built into them incentive and sanction systems. In addition, the combination of a school-work high school program has been known to offer young people the opportunity of hands-on experiences in the real world.²⁴

The apprenticeship model, which has been tested successfully in European countries, especially in Germany, deserves mention. This prototype allows a person to combine on-the-job occupational training in conjunction with the learning of skills in a competency-based program, while earning respectable wages. The unique combination of factors makes this option attractive to target populations.²⁵

In The Five-Year Dilemma, attention was devoted to the issue of high school credentials. Many state-level educational reform movements have concentrated on improving
students' academic performance and developing strategies to provide smooth transitions of these learning performances throughout one's educational lifetime. The effort to improve credentialing contributed to the mandating of more stringent graduation requirements in many states during the 1980s. The goal was to add greater credibility to the high school diploma in the labor market. The General Equivalency Diploma (GED) has become an accepted alternative to the traditional diploma in business circles.\(^\text{26}\)

Large numbers of educationally at-risk adolescent populations lack both traditional high school diplomas or the GED equivalent. Disadvantaged students, who are without acceptable credentials, find themselves hard-pressed to acquire jobs. Most employment and training programs do not pay attention to documentation of competencies, which could provide necessary profiles of future workers. States might want to develop assessment procedures which would address this issue.\(^\text{27}\)

Ultimately, it is the responsibility of state and local municipalities to earmark the needed resources for development of appropriate job skills and competencies, necessary for entry-level employability. Governors need to understand that a coalition of societal actors is required to provide successful educational and work opportunities for high school youth.\(^\text{28}\)

Marc Tucker and David Mandel, two academics, prepared
the report *Competitiveness and the Quality of the American Workforce* in 1987 for the Center for Policy Research and Analysis, National Governors' Association. This publication addressed the concern for educational quality. High school graduates have not obtained the necessary competencies required of work. According to the authors, the states must exhibit strong leadership roles in educational reform. The investigators stated:

We believe that state policy for a high quality workforce should be designed with a performance orientation, providing rewards to service providers on the basis not of enrollments or time in the seat, but rather on the performance of students against stated performance standards, wherever possible. These rewards should be designed so that the greatest resources are directed to those students who need them most. Such systems, if properly designed, should produce accountability with teeth in it.  

John Chubb and Terry Moe, of the Brookings Institution, published their book *Politics, Markets, and America's Schools* in 1990. The authors presented their interpretations of an analysis regarding two data sets, the High School and Beyond 1980 Sophomore Cohort First Followup and the 1984 High School and Beyond Administrator and Teacher Survey.  

Chubb and Moe contend that effective educational reform is unlikely because of strong governmental influence. Their reform agenda centers on the idea of choice in education. State intervention in education would be drastically changed. Since school-site control is crucial to this framework, states would allow schools complete authority in
charting their destinies.\textsuperscript{31}

The authors of \textit{Politics, Markets, and America's Schools} remained pessimistic concerning successful consequences of current educational reforms. Chubb and Moe said:

\begin{quote}
In the meantime, we can only believe that the current "revolution" in America public education will prove a disappointment. It might have succeeded had it actually been a revolution, but it was not and was never intended to be, despite the lofty rhetoric. Revolutions dismember old institutions and replace them with new ones. The 1980s reform movement never seriously thought about the old institutions, and certainty never considered them part of the problem. They were, as they had always been, part of the solution-and, for that matter, part of the definition of what democracy and public education are all about.\textsuperscript{32}
\end{quote}

The National Governors' Association sponsored the creation of seven gubernatorial task forces for utilization in the National Governors' Association Action Plan for Attaining Educational Excellence in 1985. This action plan was organized and implemented in a methodical manner resulting in the culmination of an end product entitled \textit{Time for Results: The Governors' 1991 Report on Education} released in 1991. Seven pertinent educational questions concerning the improvement of American public schools were formulated. The betterment of educational institutions is necessary in order to compete successfully in the global economy. In August of 1985, each governor selected one of seven task forces, in which each state leader would actively participate. The next twelve months were spent on the road for the leaders of each state, meeting with a cross-section of America. Written as well as oral testimony was accepted.
This precedent-making collaborative effort by the nation's governors in addressing the issue of educational excellence presented an unique challenge.\textsuperscript{33}

The report \textit{Time for Results: The Governors' 1991 Report on Education} was chaired by Secretary of Education Lamar Alexander, and co-chaired by Governor Bill Clinton of Arkansas, and Governor Thomas Kean of New Jersey. The seven task forces dealt with the following contemporary public school issues: teaching, leadership, parental choice, readiness, technology, school facilities, and college quality. Each topic was selected because of its unique impact upon the ability to prepare future workers. According to Lamar Alexander, this report was different in the respect that: "...the governors themselves are doing it, we're tackling seven tough issues that professional educators usually skirt, and we're setting up a way to keep up with results for five years." In this statement, Alexander emphasized the need for a strong alliance with educators and the public in obtaining results. Also, states would be willing to relax educational rules and regulations in exchange for high student performance.\textsuperscript{34}

\textbf{President Carter and Federal Educational Policy}

Jimmy Carter prepared to enter the White House in early 1977, as president of the United States. This president-elect addressed the issue of school-to-work preparation. As state legislatures became more directly involved in
education, Carter cautioned against piecemeal remedies. He stated: "As President, I will initiate a comprehensive program as one of my early major priorities. This program will include specific and substantive proposals for implementation by the President, the Congress, and the states." Two components of his proposed plan dealt with educating adolescents for workforce participation. Carter was a strong advocate of creating a separate Department of Education, which could provide greater influence over education at the federal level. In addition, the broadening of vocational and career educational opportunities were advocated. 35

President Carter had the monumental task of dealing with major domestic concerns from the beginning of his administration. Trying to achieve a balanced budget and tackling the unemployment problem remained top priorities. Yet, education issues were important to this president, in particular, the need for job skills and training. 36

The Carter administration has been sharply criticized for its ineffective leadership in most domestic and foreign avenues. Education is such an issue. In 1978, the Institute for Educational Leadership sponsored a colloquium addressing educational policy during President Carter's second year in office. Key people of Washington's educational policy-making establishment met to examine the issue. 37
It was pointed out that President Carter demonstrated a strong interest in education which did not exist during the Nixon-Ford era. Action in three critical areas demonstrated Carter's concern. First, a 14% increase in educational appropriations resulted. Second, the president requested the creation of a Cabinet-level Department of Education. Third, the executive branch proposed legislation to aid all levels of education.\(^{38}\)

President Carter received high marks during the analysis of his educational policy at the colloquium for his positive federal-state educational relationships. Aims C. McGuinness Jr., who was Coordinator of Federal Relations of the Education Commission of the States, remarked, "More has been done since mid-1977 than in the previous ten years to give reality to the rhetoric of a federal-state partnership and to build a process in which points of view of the states will be reflected in federal policy."\(^{39}\)

The formulation of a Cabinet-level Department of Education proved to be controversial, at best. Regarded as one of Carter's greatest contributions to education, the creation of the newest federal department was criticized by some people as motivated by political pressure. Members of Congress debated the appropriateness of establishing this department. It was not a high-priority item.\(^{40}\) Republicans generally opposed the action. In 1979, by a narrow vote, Congress enacted legislation to create a Department of
President Carter had made good on a major campaign promise.

Eileen Gardner presented a negative commentary of the Department of Education in Mandate for Leadership II: Continuing the Conservative Revolution. The newly created Cabinet-level Department of Education had previously been included in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW). Supporters of a separate department believed that it would achieve greater accountability and efficiency. The new department would be responsible for civil rights, research, and education programs. Gardner related that "the establishment of a Cabinet-level Department of Education was an historic blunder," caving into the demands of special-interest groups. 

The Office of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Office of Vocational and Adult Education were two agencies placed under the auspices of the new Department of Education that impacted on academic excellence and job preparation. The Office of Elementary and Secondary Education sought the assistance of state and local education agencies in order to promote educational excellence for public secondary-level institutions, as part of their designated duties. The Office for Vocational and Adult Education provided states and local districts with technical assistance concerning the training of youth for work force participation.
Carter felt that the Department of Education would provide the required federal leadership. Concern over the lackluster academic performance of public school students was highly visible at the state and local levels during the mid-to-late 1970s. The development of a semi-independent Federal Advisory Commission on Education was recommended as a device in aiding the nation's number one educator in dealing with educational issues. This commission would:

monitor the condition of American education and advise the executive and legislative branches of federal and state governments and the general public as to the health, vigor, and effectiveness of the nation's educational systems in providing for the educational needs of all groups. 44

Judge Shirley Hufstedler and the Department of Education

Shirley Mount Hufstedler was born August 24, 1925 in Denver, Colorado, the daughter of a teacher and an engineer. Her parents moved the family many times during Shirley's formative years. The parents did not provide a strong support system for the young girl. Yet, despite a strong family unit, Shirley became her own ally and promoted herself. As a graduate of the Stanford Law School, Hufstedler enjoyed a long career as a jurist. She was appointed to the Superior Court of Los Angeles in 1961 and was promoted to the California State Supreme Court in 1966. In 1968, Lyndon Johnson appointed Judge Hufstedler to the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. 45

Judge Shirley Mount Hufstedler had the distinct opportunity of becoming the first secretary of the newly
created Cabinet-level Department of Education in 1979. Judge Hufstedler spoke candidly about her position as secretary of education from 1979 to 1981 during a revealing dialogue, which was part of a series of lectures and forums devoted to the theme of education and American presidents hosted by the Council of the Miller Center at the University of Virginia.

Shirley Hufstedler's recollections of President Carter's interest in education were positive. According to the judge:

Jimmy Carter told me what education meant to him, what it meant to him to serve on the school board, what it meant to him to see the turnaround in the education of blacks and whites, what it meant to him to see people left out of the educational structure. He spoke of how intensely he wanted the department to work, and what he hoped that I could do.46

Judge Hufstedler spoke warmly of President Carter and his leadership style toward Cabinet members. The Carter presidency was marked by accessibility and informality. President Carter wanted to possess a thorough knowledge of each department's agenda. He and Vice-President Mondale were always available to the Cabinet heads. Informal gatherings were frequently held at the White House concerning government affairs. The newly-appointed secretary of education felt comfortable with the president's promise of support, regarding professional decisions.47

The creation of the Department of Education was beset with a multitude of problems from its onset. The consensus
of well wishes from Washington, D.C. circles was minimal. Judge Hufstedler found herself in uncharted waters, in charge of organizing the first Cabinet-level Department of Education. The controversy surrounding this newest of Cabinet positions provoked adversarial stances by government people. Accordingly, "nobody wanted to give up one square foot of space, not physically, not turf, not anything."  

A leader's vision or mission of an organization is crucial to success or failure. Judge Hufstedler gave much thought to the direction of the future role for the Department of Education. Secretary of Education Hufstedler believed that policy drives the budget. One decides which policies will be emphasized by highlighting key elements of the budget.  

The origination of the Department of Education brought the issue of education into national prominence. Yet, many critics of the Cabinet-level post emerged. Judge Hufstedler, the first secretary of education, was a strong advocate for high-profile attention. Education, as a political issue, demands a place at the Cabinet table. Since Washington, D.C. operates on the premise of power or perceived power, it is imperative that education be given the highest status, in order for important educational policies to happen. Unfortunately, the Reagan administration would attempt to dismantle education from its rightful place among the presidential Cabinet.
Ronald Reagan's First Term and Federal Educational Policy

The end of the liberal consensus movement ended with the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980. What conditions preempted this seemingly swift movement to the right? Chester Finn believed that this phenomenon occurred due to "a broader-based discontent with excessive federal activism combined with shoddy performance by the institutions that had been acted upon." Reagan's presidential victory and the conservative mood of Congress had enormous consequences for education.51

President Reagan's first term was devoted to the restructuring of the federal role in educational matters, a time of procedural concerns. Washington politicos referred to this as the five 'Ds':

disestablishment (elimination of the Department of Education), deregulation, decentralization, deemphasis (reduction of the position of education as a priority on the federal agenda), and most important, diminution (reduction of the federal budget in education).52

According to Chester Finn Jr., the decreases in monies and services were representative of four types. First, deep reductions in federal aid to education budgets resulted. Also, major educational decisionmaking processes would occur at the state and local sites. In addition, many rules and regulations mandated by the old liberal consensus were seriously lightened. Finally, a new educational agenda was established, offering a strikingly different order of priorities.53
Eileen M. Gardner, a policy analyst at The Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank, presented a glowing characterization of Ronald Reagan's impact on educational affairs. During his first term, Reagan was successful in Congress with his major educational initiatives. This president's main philosophical tenet centered on the idea of returning power to the states and localities for education. Federal intrusion should be limited, at best.  

The concept of decentralization was paramount to President Reagan's conservative world view. He felt that centralization had failed American education. In the past, the federal government had promulgated false tenets about education to the American public. This process distorted education's true mission, "the search for truth, the acquisition of academic skills, the development of a responsible citizenry." This matter of centralization vs. decentralization of education should be brought before the public. A national commission of public sector representatives might be appointed to conduct hearings, to critically examine documented evidence, and report the conclusions to the American people. The implementation of appropriate initiatives would correct the decreased educational quality caused by centralization.  

In accordance with this viewpoint, various strategies were adopted to enhance decentralization. First of all, President Reagan wanted to disband the newly created
Department of Education. This structure only enhanced the dominance of a strong, centralized federal involvement in education. Also, block grants, instead of categorical grants, were felt to be desirous. This initiative would free the states and localities from burdensome regulations, high costs, and federal interference. In fact, the Chapter 2 Block Grant of the 1981 Omnibus Reconciliation Act was legislated to provide most of the elementary and secondary educational programs. This act encompassed forty-two limited, categorical programs. This allowed state and local intergovernmental educational agencies the flexibility to govern programs, in addition to holding down administrative costs. Tuition tax credits and vouchers represented additional decentralizing proposals. These initiatives would provide credible options to education's present situation, according to Gardner. The Secretary of Education should be a spokesperson for the advancement of credits and vouchers to make education competitive on the open markets.\footnote{56}

In a way never experienced before, the Reagan administration redefined federal involvement while using the presidential platform to convey the message. According to Eileen Gardner, Reagan was able to "define and encourage excellence, making available the most up-to-date and well-proven methods of its attainment, and recognizing people and programs that exemplify excellence in education with
Critics of Ronald Reagan's presidency and in particular, his educational policies, have questioned the wisdom of his proposed educational policy-making changes. Marilyn Gittell, an academic, comments on possible serious repercussions of the initiatives, especially to urban school districts. Many categorical grants direct federal funds to local regions. Block grants would go directly to state capitals. The shift to block grants could very well undermine the authority of localities. In addition, the locus of control would be at state-levels, where urban school districts, traditionally, do not fare well. Also, block grants may be used in discretionary ways by states. This ability would allow states to employ these funds to supplant their budgets in many ways. Federal funding would not necessarily be earmarked for education.

T.H. Bell, Secretary of Education and A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform

Secretary Bell commissioned the National Commission on Excellence in Education on August 26, 1981. This commission was instructed to produce a report on the quality of public education and submit it to the secretary of education and the American public by April 1983. This bipartisan eighteen-member committee included David P. Gardner and other distinguished individuals. Bell felt that an examination of schooling was necessary in response to
negative public perception of the academic achievement of graduates. In particular, the focus of this report would be on the public secondary schools.\textsuperscript{59}

The unveiling of \textit{A Nation At Risk} occurred in the State Dining Room at the White House on April 26, 1983. A distinguished audience attended, composed of ranking officers of all the major education organizations and an array of news media people. The members of the National Commission on Excellence in Education were seated in a special section in front. Secretary of Education Bell introduced all members of the commission to the audience. Chairman David Gardner, speaking for the commission, described the group's work on this special project.\textsuperscript{60}

During the introductions, President Reagan's absence was conspicuously apparent. Dr. Bell had been informed that the president was detained at a previous engagement, but would be arriving shortly. The Secretary of Education provided fillers until the president's arrival, which seemed like an eternity. Eventually, President Reagan entered the room and leaped onto the platform to address the audience. While the nation's leader did direct some of his remarks to the commission's report, much of his discourse focused on the reaffirmation of conservative ideological philosophy. In spite of this minor setback, the report was well received by those in attendance, in addition to the public at large.\textsuperscript{61}
With the release of *A Nation At Risk* in 1983, Americans were presented a dismal picture of public education. The very fabric of our nation's stability was being threatened, according to this report. Our educational system was at the crux of this concern. The well-known line of *A Nation At Risk* succinctly stated the premise: "The educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a Nation and a people."^62

The emphasis on educational quality was highlighted. The high school curriculum should be composed of the five New Basics: "4 years of English; 3 years of mathematics; 3 years of science; 3 years of social studies; and 1/2 year of computer science." All sectors of society were urged to participate in activities to improve education at the state and local levels. As President Reagan stated at the Commission's first meeting: "Certainly there are few areas of American life as important to our society, to our people, and to our families as our schools and colleges. . . . We are confident that the American people, properly informed, will do what is right for their children and for the generations to come."^63

Following the release of *A Nation At Risk*, President Reagan used this publication as a sounding board for the continuation of his conservative philosophy. Everything fell into place nicely for this president. The report
reconfirmed Reagan's ideological viewpoints. First, the account focused the educational community's attention on the issue of excellence rather than equity. Second, educators did not appear to be actively involved in the reform process since the leaders of school reform were concentrated in state and national political circles. Third, deregulation strategies were suggested for school-improvement models. Finally, the mandate of decentralization was emphasized by establishing educational reform at the state and local levels.64

The release of *A Nation At Risk* was followed by a series of twelve regional forums. More than ten thousand Americans convened to debate the Commission's discoveries and solutions. The National Forum on Excellence in Education was held in Indianapolis, Indiana on December 6-8, 1983. This gathering, the last and most important, enlisted the participation of an estimated 2,300 educators. In addition, the attendance of educationally-minded governors, lawmakers, business executives, and leaders of national organizations/governing boards rounded out this prestigious group of participants.65

Panel discussions centered on the use of successful innovative state and local models and programs currently in practice across the nation. In general, this symposium reinforced the ideological stance advocated by the Reagan administration under the guise of educational excellence.66
At the National Forum on Excellence in Education, Secretary Bell spoke of three priority and four performance goals which schools must meet to improve educational quality. The first priority was a commitment to literacy. Every student should graduate from high school with the ability to read, write, and think in a manner consistent with a profile of well-educated people. The second priority was a good working knowledge of mathematics. The third priority was a foundation in citizenship consistent with principles of our nation. The offering of such classes as: the arts; vocational/occupational skills; physical education/athletic endeavors cannot be ignored. Education has the responsibility of preparing youth for life and work.  

Secretary Bell explained that the implementation of educational goals nationwide was a necessary component of reform. Over a five-year period, Bell urged state adoption of the following school goals. First, all high school students in the nation should be required to study and pass examinations in the New Basics. Second, every state high school graduating class of 1989 should exceed SAT/ACT scores attained by the generic class of 1965. Third, the dropout rate of American high schools should not exceed 10% by 1989. Fourth, all states will employ strategies to attract and keep excellent teachers.  

The National Forum on Excellence in Education proved to
be a highly rewarding experience for President Reagan. The program confirmed the success of the commission's *A Nation At Risk* report and encouraged the states and localities to take the lead in educational reform. The presidential campaign of 1984 followed the culmination of these highly successful conferences. Of course, education was a high-ranking national issue, due to the publication of *A Nation At Risk*. President Reagan realized that the approving public would not allow national prominence of educational matters to dwindle into the background. He pondered the idea that the time would be ripe for the dismantle of the entire department of education and all federal involvement in educational concerns following re-election. This course of action did not materialize. The Department of Education retained Cabinet status.

Ronald Reagan's Second Term and Federal Educational Policy

After a stunning re-election victory in 1984, President Reagan began his second-term educational agenda. The scenario did not include Secretary of Education Bell. Dr. Bell, a moderate Republican, did not always agree with the president's ideological stance concerning education. Since the total elimination of federal involvement in education did not appear likely, President Reagan wanted a person in charge of the Department of Education who would be a spokesperson for conservatism. That person was William J.
Bennett.

Ronald Reagan persisted in his attempt to reduce all federal involvement in education. He continually recommended the elimination of the Cabinet-level status, in addition to persistent budget cuts. The president constantly spoke of state and local responsibilities for education while praising governors for their remarkable leadership abilities.\textsuperscript{72}

**William J. Bennett and the Department of Education**

William Bennett is a person of intellect and excellent professional credentials. He holds a B.A. from Williams College, a Ph.D. from the University of Texas, and a law degree from Harvard. In addition, Bennett served as chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities.\textsuperscript{73}

William Bennett replaced T.H. Bell as Secretary of Education in 1985. Secretary Bennett proved to be an excellent choice by President Reagan. The new secretary had no reservations in spreading conservatism. The president and his newest appointee were in perfect agreement concerning the national agenda.\textsuperscript{74}

Secretary Bennett became an ardent spokesperson for the Reagan administration. He used every opportunity to advocate principles embraced by the president. The substantive direction of Reagan's second term centered around the issues of content, choice, and character.\textsuperscript{75}

The expanded emphasis on content continued, elaborating
upon the basics in addition to what should be taught. Choice represented a controversial topic on the national agenda. Paramount to the conservative Reagan administration, the president was particularly interested in allowing parents to choose schools of their choice. Secretary of Education Bennett explained that all children would be afforded the same educational access regardless of ethnicity or socio-economic status. Educational vouchers or tuition tax credits could provide that access for interested families. Character development was sadly lacking in many young people. Secretary Bennett spoke to this issue, explaining that the schools had an obligation to instill old-fashioned values into American children.76

Up to the 1988 presidential campaign, Secretary of Education Bennett was a highly visible commodity, always the outspoken advocate for Reagan's conservative agenda. President Reagan's policy preferences and viewpoints never wavered throughout his two terms in the White House. Secretary Bennett was relentless in his defense of the president's position concerning education. Many might disagree with the right-winged policies advocated during this president's eight years on Pennsylvania Avenue. Yet, one thing is very certain. Ronald Reagan had a profound effect on federal involvement in education, which would reverberate for many years to come.77
George Bush and Federal Educational Policy

As Vice President, George Bush languished during the Reagan years and virtually, little was heard from him. However, as the forty-first president of the United States, George Bush set out to show America his leadership capabilities, including those in the educational arena.

During the 1988 presidential race, education remained an important national topic, not to be ignored by the hopeful candidates. As the 1988 Republican candidate for President, George Bush promised to become an "Education President." As candidate Bush explained:

Education is critical to our future, both as individuals and as a nation. Better schools will mean better jobs for our young people, and that will mean a more competitive America. There is an old saying that I often use: To plan for a decade, plant a tree; but to plan for a century, teach the children. Our program for the future must be built around a strategy of investing in our children.  

As President Reagan before him, Presidential-hopeful George Bush declared that education was primarily a state and local affair. The federal government had a limited, yet important, role to play in the process. The federal government should "act as a catalyst for excellence in education." A Bush administration would concentrate its efforts on the provision of incentives for local creativity in schools.

Candidate Bush presented educational strategies which could make a significant difference in American schools. First of all, it is imperative that academic performance of
students improve. To accomplish this, successful students, teachers, and administrators should be rewarded. Cash awards would go to outstanding schools throughout the nation. In addition, accountability measures need to be increased at the state and local levels. Teacher performance is in need of improvement. George Bush recommended the use of public or private funding for the construction of teacher evaluation models. Local school boards could utilize these models for rewarding the superior performances of teachers. States should impose minimum competency testing for all students. Increased funding for the National Assessment of Educational Progress was recommended to follow school progress at the national and state levels.\textsuperscript{80}

George Bush's second educational strategy dealt with the choice issue. In order to fulfill America's diverse educational needs, choice in education should be expanded. To accomplish this, the development and use of magnet schools should be encouraged, while inspiring experimentation at other educational sites. Third, federal intervention is necessary for at-risk students. Federal government financial assistance would be provided to those most in need. Fourth, character development and parental participation should be integral parts of the educational process. Fifth, students should be prepared for the world of work. Schools have to improve curricula, in addition, to
forming meaningful partnerships with the private sector. Sixth, the importance of scientific research and access, pertaining to higher education, remain crucial issues to address.

George Bush became the forty-first president of the United States in 1988. With the anticipation of a new administration on the horizon, many were hopeful concerning federal involvement in education. The oppressive ultraconservative Reagan government had played havoc with educational matters. With anticipation, critics looked to President Bush for effective leadership concerning education, while work preparation remained a pertinent area.

The trustees and staff of the National Center on Education and the Economy prepared a report entitled To Secure Our Future: The Federal Role in Education in 1989. This report was adapted from a letter addressed to President-elect George Bush in early January 1989. This statement was intended to stimulate a discussion debating the federal government's part in the development of America's most important asset, the skills of our workers.

The report, To Secure Our Future: The Federal Role in Education, provided a clear and concise vision of what federal involvement in the promotion of a highly skilled American workforce should be. The composers of this account did not believe that large increases of federal monies provided the solution. The National Center on Education and
the Economy's position centered on the belief that education should model itself after business enterprises. Schools should restructure themselves along certain principles which have proven to be successful in the private sector. First, quality is important to the school enterprise. Second, the rewarding of success for established quality is important. Third, accountability measures should be developed. Implementation of school tasks should be handled by people close to the students. Burdensome rules and regulations that prevent or hamper success need to be streamlined.\textsuperscript{83}

These principles would only succeed with the strong leadership from the executive branch. The President of the United States is in the position to set the tone for a national response to the establishment of a first rate workforce. The imperative for swift and constructive action was demonstrated in this written account to President Bush.\textsuperscript{84}

President Bush articulated a well-constructed educational vision during the 1988 presidential campaign. Like so many politicians delirious with the thought of winning on their minds, campaign promises fail to materialize soon after success. Yet, this president did carry through on some educational issues.

*The Chronicle of Higher Education* highlighted excerpts from President Bush's budget documents on February 15, 1989. The president planned to follow through on some of his recommendations regarding federal educational initiatives as
promised during the election year 1988. First, the Bush administration planned to reward excellence in school achievement through recognition and grant endeavors. Second, federal financial assistance was targeted toward at-risk populations. Third, the Bush White House promoted choice and flexibility for families, students, teachers, and principals, to encourage competition and excellence. Fourth, the advancement of increased accountability was required in order to assure quality education.85

The "Education Summit" and the subsequent strategies which followed were significant accomplishments of the Bush administration. President Bush and the nation's governors participated in a two-day meeting at the University of Virginia in September 1989 to discuss pertinent national educational goals. This bipartisan effort produced six American education goals, hopefully attainable by the end of the century, known as America 2000.86

These important goals are as follow:

All children in America will start school ready to learn; The high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90%; American students will leave grades four, eight, and twelve having demonstrated competency in challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, history, and geography; and every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our modern economy; U.S. students will be first in the world in science and mathematics achievement; Every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship; Every school in America will be free of drugs and violence
and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning.87

The adoption of these lofty national education goals occurred in 1990 by President Bush and America's governors. All six goals have some bearing on the production of our future skilled work-force. By April 1991, educational strategies were devised to complement the national goals. This report was entitled The America 2000 Education Strategy, a plan to enable our nation's communities to carry out the intended goals.88

While the adoption of national education goals and strategies were enormous endeavors, the popular acceptance of these plans was questionable. The successful promotion of this notable undertaking would require the Secretary of Education's expertise at public relations.

Lauro F. Cavazos and the Department of Education

Lauro Cavazos grew up as a poor, Hispanic boy in Texas. His father held a high school diploma and was employed as a ranch foreman. His mother obtained a third-grade education. Yet, both parents were strong supporters of educational attainment for their children. Cavazos' early education began in a segregated, two-room schoolhouse located on the ranch where his father worked. Later, the family moved into town. In this environment, the children could attend an Anglo school which provided greater educational opportunities. Eventually, all five siblings graduated from college. One of the brothers served as the first Hispanic
general in the United States Army. Lauro Cavazos became president of Texas Tech, in addition, to being the first Hispanic Cabinet member, as Secretary of Education in the Reagan administration.\textsuperscript{89}

Ronald Reagan nominated Lauro Cavazos for the post on August 9, 1988. Cavazos was unanimously confirmed by the Senate on September 20, 1988. President-elect Bush asked Secretary of Education Cavazos to continue his duties during the new administration.\textsuperscript{90}

On January 18, 1989, in remarks presented before the U.S. Department of Education Forum and directed toward the education establishment, Dr. Cavazos provided the audience with an outline of Bush's educational vision. The secretary reiterated the concepts of expectations, access, and accountability, which hallmarked Bush's presidential campaign rhetoric concerning education.\textsuperscript{91}

Obediently, Secretary Cavazos made several more attempts to publicly address the tenets of President Bush's educational agenda. Unfortunately, Dr. Cavazos' professional performance was mediocre at best. Criticism of this education secretary created an unflattering image for Mr. Bush, the education president. Written reviews of Secretary of Education Cavazos' achievements indicated poor leadership skills. This secretary of education could not successfully convey the Bush administration's educational message to the nation.\textsuperscript{92}
Secretary Cavazos addressed the educational agenda advocated by the White House, but the effects of his attempts were disheartening. Media reports of poor leadership skills were common, such as a critique cited in the August 6, 1990 issue of U.S. News & World Report. Yet, Secretary Cavazos performed his duties, but represented only a weak spokesperson for Bush's agenda. Cavazos' performance in delivering Bush's American educational vision, including job skills for youth, proved unimpressive.

The issue of youth workforce preparation was addressed by this secretary of education. While remaining a staunch supporter of minimal federal aid and interference in education, Cavazos favored integrated vocational programs, consisting of academic skills taught in the context of relevant, occupational coursework.

Secretary of Education Cavazos' poor performance damaged Bush's reputation as the "education president." Cavazos was replaced by a flamboyant politician who was known for his ability to accomplish major economic and educational victories in political circles. That person was to be Lamar Alexander.

**Lamar Alexander and the Department of Education**

Lamar Alexander has had a long career as a politician at the state and federal levels. As a staunch Republican, Alexander was an aide to Senator Howard Baker and served in the White House during the Nixon administration. As a two-
term Governor of Tennessee during the 1980s, Alexander improved his state's economic competitiveness. Governor Alexander felt that educational quality was important to increasing Tennessee's competitive edge. He actively pursued the implementation of educational reforms, such as the 1984 enactment of a state-mandated career-ladder system for teachers.  

Lamar Alexander left his post as chancellor of the University of Tennessee system to become the fifth United States secretary of education in 1991, following a collapse of confidence in the administrative abilities of Lauro Cavazos. Reviews pertaining to his performance as an educational leader while Governor of Tennessee were mixed. Yet, media reports, such as a commentary in the March 1991 issue of Phi Delta Kappan, presented encouraging words regarding Alexander's skill as both a political and educational leader.  

Secretary Alexander shared a close relationship with President Bush. Alexander always had a direct and accessible line of communication to the White House. Although Bush's track record for the first two years of his presidency produced little results concerning education, Lamar Alexander meant to change that perception.  

Secretary Alexander proved to be an aggressive and vocal advocate for the Bush administration. He appeared to be a good Bush choice, as a Cabinet member. The inception
of America 2000 occurred during Lamar Alexander's tenure as secretary of education. Although the report was not well received by the public, Secretary Alexander used any opportunity to promote the acceptance of this initiative. Yet, sectors of society were not convinced of its merits; the media, many U.S. Congress members, educators, and some business people remained skeptical. 97

There continues to be little unanimity of opinion on how to encourage articulation of national goals for education or for cooperation among local, state, and federal programs and spending. Nothing better summarizes the inconsistent policies and lack of goal-setting strategies during the 1980s than the recent release of the Sandia National Laboratories report Perspectives on Education in America in 1992 and heated discussion of it. 98

In 1990, the United States Department of Energy commissioned a comprehensive study of education in America over a period of eighteen months. Beginning in February 1990, researchers at an important government science contractor, Sandia National Laboratories, studied the American secondary education system. The report was divided into two sectors: historical performance and future requirements. Sandia's dispassionate and presumably objective, research team noted in their report, entitled Perspectives on Education in America: An Annotated Briefing, that while there continues to be a consensus that the United
States system of education must change, there is little agreement on just what alterations are necessary. In fact, the Sandia report listed at least twenty proposed reforms, such as "back to basics for all students," in opposition to "increased flexibility in schoolwork," which at times so conflicted with each other, progress was immobilized.99

Perhaps one of the most articulate discussions of the "Sandia" controversy yet written is Daniel Tanner's "A Nation Truly At Risk" in the December 1993 issue of Phi Delta Kappan. Tanner commented on the embarrassment to the Bush administration of having, on the one hand, the U.S. Department of Education's America 2000 goals to be met in the twenty-first century and on the other, the U.S. Department of Energy's Sandia report, critical of the total lack of logical, patterned goals. As Tanner stated:

Needless to say, the Sandia Report was withheld from publication, the researchers were reassigned, and the Sandia Labs promptly dropped the proposed research and development program for public education. Obviously, nuclear weapons research is far safer than the maelstrom of politics that swirls around our public schools.100

President Bush's continuation of his lofty educational endeavor was cut short, due to the Presidential campaign of 1992. George Bush's defeat marked the end of American educational reform, as he envisioned it. Sadly, Bush's view of educational excellence, without any commitment to legislate additional federal expenditures, has been interpreted as mere lip service by many knowledgeable
observers.

Federal educational initiatives have become by-products of wavering philosophies, resultant of presidential administrations. The composition of intricate political variables provides a backdrop for the enactment of interesting scenarios to occur. Work force preparation of American youth has received the close attention of Washington, D.C. politicos for decades. The development of well-trained workers for the twenty-first century demands even closer scrutiny.
CHAPTER III NOTES

2. Ibid., 42.
5. Ibid., 26.
7. Ibid., 18.
8. Ibid., 18.
10. Ibid., 29.
14. Ibid., 2.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid., 2-3.
17. Ibid., 3.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid., 3-4.
22. Ibid., 14.
23. Ibid., 15.
24. Ibid., 16.
25. Ibid.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid., 28.
31. Ibid., 223-225.
32. Ibid., 228-229.
34. Ibid., 4 & 7.
38. Ibid., 8.
39. Ibid., 9.
40. Olson, 42.
43. Ibid., 50-51.
47. Ibid., 70-72.
48. Ibid., 65.
49. Ibid., 73.
50. Ibid., 77-78.
51. Finn, 20.
53. Ibid., 20.
54. Gardner, 51.
55. Ibid., 56-57.
56. Ibid., 51, 53, 57.
57. Ibid., 52.
61. Ibid., 130-131.
62. Ibid., 5.
63. Ibid., 6 & 24.
64. Clark and Astuto, 35.
69. Ibid., 31-32.
70. Clark and Astuto, 35.
72. Clark and Astuto, 36.
74. Ibid., 36.
75. Ibid.
76. Ibid., 36-37.
77. Ibid., 39.
79. Ibid., 114.
80. Ibid., 114-116.
81. Ibid., 116 & 118. A total monetary figure of 500 million dollars yearly could provide awards to 1/5 of all schools serving a significant proportion of at-risk students.
83. Ibid., 7.
84. Ibid., 8-9.
86. Thomas DeLoughry, "Many Political Leaders Use Education Summit to Maneuver on Issues," The Chronicle of


88. Ibid., 3.


The United States and its major institutions benefited from sustained economic prosperity following World War II. During the 1970s, renewed concern surfaced regarding America's public institutions, including the educational system. The public schools were perceived as unsuccessful in developing skills and competencies necessary for successful work force participation. The anxiety over the critical shortage of competent entry-level workers has increased dramatically throughout the past three decades. Federal initiatives which spoke to the important issue of competent workforce participation have emerged since the 1970s.

During the 1970s, President Carter addressed the issue of schooling, youth, and work concerns. In 1983, the landmark publication, *A Nation At Risk*, boldly warned Americans against mediocre schools. Since the 1980s, the federal government began to assume a leadership position in raising public consciousness for improved schools. This leadership effort took many forms. The formation of task forces, special commissions, and conferences dominated the
federal agenda, regarding American public education. Every level of the federal government became concerned with educational matters. A popular topic of concern focused on the successful preparation of entry-level workers. Concern grew, regarding the development of job competencies and skills. Schools were not perceived as successful in providing the necessary tools to potential workers. At present, the federal government is firmly committed to leading America forward in this most challenging area, necessary for competitive advancement.

**Manpower Training Legislation and the 1960s**

The federal government has participated in national efforts to improve worker productivity since the early 1960s. Early federal initiatives focused on national program regulation and participation to the exclusion of state and local input. In 1962, the Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA) was passed. This bipartisan legislation signaled the beginning of a long tradition of federal involvement in work training proposals, focusing on program development and implementation for targeted populations at state and local levels.¹

High unemployment rates produced great concern about the American economy during the early 1960s. To deal with this problem, MDTA was developed to provide retraining to skilled male workers, whose job competencies were thought to be technologically obsolete. Surprisingly, the initial
training program disclosed the existence of poorly skilled and uneducated workers. This discovery provided the impetus necessary for future federal manpower programs to target hard-to-employ populations, including at-risk youth.²

**Manpower Training Legislation and the 1970s**

During the 1970s, manpower programs served hard-to-employ youth and adults. Several key legislative mandates were introduced, in order to bridge the gap between school and work for at-risk youth. In 1973, the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) was formulated, which replaced the Manpower Development and Training Act. This statute provided employment training and skill development for those economically-depressed adults and youth, who were most at-risk.³

The Comprehensive Employment and Training Act did not adequately address the needs of at-risk youth. Yet, one component of this legislative effort did fare well. The Job Corps program, authorized under Title IV of CETA, produced some success with clients. Participants were usually required to cooperate in a residential setting, where a broad spectrum of services could be utilized. This intensive, comprehensive approach provided assistance better suited to the realistic needs of the targeted population.⁴

The Youth Employment and Demonstration Projects Act of 1977 (YEDPA) characterized the largest federal effort to serve targeted at-risk youth. This venture was mandated on
August 5, 1977 by President Carter. The project began with an approximate enrollment of 30,000 economically-depressed young people between the ages of 16 to 19 years of age. Eligibility requirements included the participation in an educational facility, in addition to the adherence to specified school and job performance standards. In return, each participant would be provided a part-time job during the school year, in addition to summer employment. ⁵

A summary report, which covered the start-up period from January through June 1978, was not promising. Job sites were heavily concentrated in the public sector, particularly in schools. Private sector contributions were poor. The thrust of activities was work-related and minimal attention was paid to skills training. ⁶

Toward the end of the 1970s, the meager results of manpower programs for America's at-risk youth population spurred federal additional efforts. In order to provide constructive national leadership regarding school to work transition, President Carter appointed a special Task Force on Youth Employment in 1978. Vice President Walter Mondale presided over this undertaking, which would scrutinize the delicate issue of youth employment and recommend possible solutions necessary for the coming decade. ⁷

Nine months of intensive study, which involved interviews and conferences, culminated in the formulation of policies regarding youth employment. The task force stated
that many adolescents and young adults may not possess adequate reading, writing, and arithmetic skills required for entry-level work success. Mandates, regulating federal programs, must become flexible in order to allow for realistic governance by state and local levels. Partnerships, which involve business, schools, community groups, labor, and government, were identified as necessary components to achieve results. 8

The Vice President's Task Force on Youth Employment recommendations became the foundation of Jimmy Carter's key youth legislative package in 1980. On January 10, 1980, President Carter held a reception in the White House where a cross-section of American society was present to hear the results of this youth employment study. Most importantly, the President used the occasion to announce his proposal of The Youth Act of 1980, based on committee findings. 9

The Carter administration was hopeful that the Youth Act of 1980 would provide American young people the opportunities to develop necessary job skills and competencies. Two basic programs were outlined in this new youth legislation. The Youth Employment and Training Program, administered by the Department of Labor, would serve 14 to 21 year old, out-of-school adolescents and young adults. The emphasis would concentrate on the addition of jobs and training for the targeted population. Of particular interest, stringent performance standards were
mandated and administrative paperwork was simplified. The Youth Education and Training Program became the second arm of the legislation, which was directed toward at-risk youth. This agenda would be under the auspices of the Department of Education. The provision of academic and job skills comprised basic components of services directed toward low-achieving, economically-depressed, in-school American youth.  

The Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) was enacted into law on October 13, 1982. This federally mandated initiative has been applauded as the most realistic piece of legislation, which addresses the actual employment needs of targeted at-risk populations. The purpose of this act is as follows: "To establish programs to prepare youth and unskilled adults for entry into the labor force and to afford job training to those economically disadvantaged individuals and other individuals facing serious barriers to employment, who are in special need of such training to obtain productive employment."  

The Job Training and Partnership Act replaced the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, which had received negative reviews. Significant restructuring was required in major portions of the CETA law. JTPA provided the necessary revisions, designed to better serve its clients. This new law allowed for decentralization of program implementation, greater flexibility, accountability
measures, and performance standards to be administered by state and local agencies.\textsuperscript{12}

The Job Training and Partnership Act is reflective of contemporary societal issues. This federal initiative has been praised in its efforts to provide work skills for at-risk youth. At the Sixth Annual Conference of the Partnership for Training and Employment Careers in 1989, a presentation entitled "Improving Workplace Skills: Lessons From JTPA" praised the use of this legislation to implement realistic work-based programs for the nation's young people.\textsuperscript{13} A 1983 policy statement, prepared by the National Council on Employment Policy, advocated the intensive use of remediation for JTPA clients. The council's position was as follows: "remedial education is the key factor in yielding post-program gains and that the more disadvantaged the participant, the greater the net gains."\textsuperscript{14}

As the 1980s came to a close, the tone of federal education legislation began to change. Increased emphasis was placed on deregulation, decentralization, competency, performance, and accountability measures. Legislative mandates such as A National Demonstration Program for Educational Performance Agreements for School Restructuring, the Educational Excellence Act of 1989, and the Regulatory Impact on Student Excellence Act are examples of recent national initiatives, which reflect the mood created by Reagan's conservative domestic agenda for America.
Longitudinal Studies

In 1963, Commissioner of Education Frank Keppel chose to gather educational data, which would act as a barometer in monitoring the health of our nation's schools. The outcome of his idea developed into the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).\(^{15}\)

The National Assessment of Educational Progress is a federally mandated initiative and is administered by the Department of Education's National Center for Educational Statistics. Throughout NAEP's twenty year history, this national-level educational indicator remains America's "only on-going, comparable, and representative assessment of what U.S. students know and can do."\(^{16}\)

Generally known as the nation's report card, the National Assessment of Progress developed as a result of this effort. The purpose of NAEP can be defined as follows: "improve the effectiveness of our Nation's schools by making objective information about student performance in selected learning areas available to policymakers at the national, regional, state, and local levels."\(^{17}\)

The National Assessment of Educational Progress presents normative and descriptive data about American students biennially. Students in grades 4, 8, and 12 are asked to demonstrate competencies in core subject areas and higher-order thinking skills. National sampling of students explored race/ethnicity, gender, community, and regional
The National Assessment of Educational Progress is not a perfect measurement instrument, but it affords the nation acceptable educational reports within the confines of its purported purpose. Strengths and weaknesses exist within every measurement tool. The National Assessment of Educational Progress is no exception. The NAEP does serve as an index of student performance throughout America. States could utilize the information as "benchmarks" to gauge the progress of their student populations. Also, the NAEP offers local administrators impartial national-level educational data for use in policy-making decisions. On the other hand, the NAEP does not promote a national curriculum and should not be used by local school districts for prescriptive purposes. In addition, the analysis of individual student profiles is unattainable with the use of this instrument. The NAEP only provides data for groups of students for a particular point in time and across periods of time.

The perception of declining American student performance focuses attention on the NAEP, as the national instrument designated to inform citizens of American educational attainment. The 1990 report, *Accelerating Academic Achievement: A Summary of Findings From 20 Years of NAEP*, compiled educational data, in order to draw relevant national-level conclusions about the current condition of
American students.

In *Accelerating Academic Achievement*, data interpretation was closely tied to outcome student performance goals, as stated in the national education goals. As students enter the job market or post-secondary educational institutions, certain skills and competencies should be mastered. The results of this study are not promising.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress examines student expertise in the core areas: reading, writing, English, mathematics, science, U.S. history, civics, and geography. In addition, higher-order thinking skills are tested. In general minimal progress can be reported. Minimal student achievement gains exist for the past two decades. While improvement has been cited in the improvement of basic skills, students remain deficient in the application of higher-order skills. Although progress continues to narrow achievement gaps between white and minority students, performance differences are great. Stereotypical gender performance differences stay the same, with males outperforming females in science and mathematics. Large numbers of secondary-level students are not enrolled in challenging science and mathematics courses.²⁰

The National Longitudinal Study of the High School Class of 1972 (NLS) is a nationally-designed, continuing study, designed to assist policy-makers and researchers in
guiding educational and occupational decisions. The U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare initiated this project in the late 1960s. During the spring of 1972, the life experiences of approximately 23,000 seniors in 1,200 public and private high schools were examined as these young people pursued post-secondary work and educational opportunities.21

Measurement of vital goals occurred at various intervals. Initially, data samples were collected from high school seniors in 1972. Information was gathered through the use of various techniques. Student surveys and standardized test results were collected. School records and counselor questionnaires were utilized.22

The first follow-up survey began in the fall of 1973 and ended by April 1974. The active participation of young people during this first piece of supportive data was excellent, with 92.8% completion rate. The respondents were requested to provide information relative to their educational and/or occupational status as of October 1973.23

Six classification variables were used to structure the findings of the first follow-up survey. They were: gender, race/ethnicity, high school program (academic, general, vocational), family socio-economic status (SES), and geographical location. In general, 65% of the participants reported that they were part of the workforce.24

Notable differences existed in relation to the six
classification variables used in the design of the study. Ability level, SES, and high school program of the participants were related to post-secondary work experiences. In general, those students, whose profiles reflected lower ability, lower SES, and enrolled in vocational track high school programs, comprised the majority of workforce entrants.  

The second follow-up survey of NLS began in October 1974 and ended in April 1975. Again, the response rate was excellent, approaching 95% of the surveyed group. The data results of occupational status provide interesting information. Two-thirds of the class of 1972 were employed either part-or full-time. Race/ethnicity information revealed pertinent trends. Blacks and Hispanics tended to be overly represented at the lower rungs of the labor market. In addition, 71% of the former vocational program respondents reported that they felt previous school training was beneficial to current work situations.

The third follow-up survey of the NLS began in October 1976 and ended in May 1977, with 94% participation rate. Seventy-two percent of young people reported workforce entry, in comparison to the 68% rate stated in the second follow-up study. As the preceding NLS surveys indicated, black and Hispanic workers fared unfavorably in the workplace. Feelings about high school curricula were revealing. Over half of the respondents questioned favored
greater emphasis on vocational as well as academic high school preparation. The fourth and final follow-up survey of the NLS was completed between October 1979 and June 1980. The excellent response rate of 89.3% was indicative of previous survey member participation. According to its framers at the Research Triangle Institute, this longitudinal federal initiative had been extremely successful, as to data quality and sample retention. 27

During the 1980s, High School and Beyond (HS&B), a second educational longitudinal study, was sponsored by the National Center for Education Statistics. The HS&B study paralleled the purpose and construction of the National Longitudinal Study of the Class of 1972. Yet, important adaptations were added. HS&B surveyed parent and teacher groups, as to their wishes, desires, and assessments of student life plans. Also, this longitudinal study extended the investigation to sophomore cohorts, in addition to high school seniors. 28

The base year HS&B survey was conducted in the spring of 1980. Ninety-one percent of public as well as private high schools and 84% of their student populations participated. In 1980, 67% of the students surveyed believed that greater emphasis should be placed on the teaching of academics, as compared to 50% of 1972 senior respondents. 29

Results of the follow-up 1982 HS&B data in comparison
to the 1987 high school transcript information yielded interesting observations. The transcripts of 15,000 1982 and 1987 high school graduates were paralleled as to educational excellence. While less than 2% of the 1982 graduates completed the rigorous curriculum suggested in *A Nation At Risk*, 12.7% of the 1987 seniors mastered the core subjects. The data inferred that an increased number of American secondary-level students selected an academic track. The participation rate of students in the general track dropped from 35% in 1982 as opposed to 17% in 1987.  

### Government Reports/Studies and Workplace Competencies in the 1970s

Critical accounts in educational reports and studies began to appear during the 1970s. The focus of these statements concentrated on the themes of citizenship and equity, with some mention of curricula and workplace skills. The comprehensive high school organizational pattern was questioned in terms of its benefits to graduates. A variety of alternative educational structures was recommended. Reports such as *American Youth in the Mid-Seventies* in 1972, *The Reform of Secondary Education: A Report to the Public and the Profession* in 1973, *The Adolescent, Other Citizens, and Their High Schools: A Report to the Public and the Profession* in 1974, *Continuity and Discontinuity* in 1973, *Youth: Transition to Adulthood* in 1974, and *The Education of Adolescents: The Final Report and Recommendations of the*
National Panel on High School and Adolescent Education in 1976 depicted selected, representative statements regarding secondary American education.

*American Youth in the Mid-Seventies* was a report which developed from a conference held in Washington, D.C. on November 30 and December 1, 1972. While sponsored by the National Committee on Secondary Education of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, this endeavor was supported by the Stone Foundation, the U.S. Office of Education, the U.S. Office of Economic Opportunity, the White House, and ACTION. This report addressed the concerns of secondary school educators, in relation to the concept of "action learning." Action learning was defined as "learning from experience and associated study that can be assessed and accredited by an educational institution. It may be in paid jobs, in unpaid volunteer work, or in personal performance, as in publishing, art, drama, or music in which participant learning is an objective."

Sidney P. Marland, Jr., who was Assistant Secretary for Education of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, set the conference tone. The concept of "action learning" was an idea advocated by the federal government as one remedy for youth development and transition into the adult world. Action learning complements the principles of career education. The core of career education rests with the acceptance and respect of all skills, talents, and
training of people in America's ever changing and interconnected society. According to Marland:

If there is a central message in our conception of career education, it is to cry out against this absurd partitioning of the house of education, this separation of subject from subject, of class from class, this false and destructive distinction between the liberal academic tradition on the one hand and the utilitarian-vocational tradition on the other.32

In July 1972, the Charles F. Kettering Foundation established the National Commission on the Reform of Secondary Education. The commission was charged with re-examining secondary educational institutions in relation to students' needs. This diverse twenty-member committee consisted of PTA, school board, higher education, professional associations, teacher, and student representatives. Important input was achieved through a lengthy year-long data gathering process. The commission interviewed panels of concerned educators, parents, students, and administrators, who offered valuable insights into the secondary school experience.33

In 1973, the Charles F. Kettering Foundation's publication entitled The Reform of Secondary Education: A Report to the Public and the Profession examined problems of American high schools. A decade of innovation and experimentation, between 1962 and 1972, did not deliver the expected school quality as so many people anticipated. According to this report, "the decade of change and innovation in the schools had little or no lasting effect on
the content of school programs or the quality of teaching and learning." Public secondary schools were failing to educate their charges successfully. In particular, the schooling process should be participatory. The inclusion of educators, parents, students, and the citizenry is paramount. Traditional as well as alternative high school experiences should be investigated in order to encourage successful learning.\textsuperscript{34}

The Charles F. Kettering Foundation published \textit{The Adolescent, Other Citizens, and Their High Schools: A Report to the Public and the Profession} by the Task Force '74, as a follow-up statement to \textit{The Reform of Secondary Education} in 1974. Task Force '74 examined three pertinent findings of the earlier study in depth: citizen involvement, the education of responsible citizenry, and alternative programs and schools.\textsuperscript{35}

This companion statement to \textit{The Reform of Secondary Education} explored the significant issue of transition to the working world. The broadening of the high school concept beyond the comprehensive model was highlighted. Community, business, and school collaborative ventures were recommended. In particular, the business community was urged to become directly involved in educational matters, such as in the development of curricula and the use of personnel as teachers in alternative community and business sites.\textsuperscript{36}
The report entitled *Continuity and Discontinuity* was published by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education in August 1973. Although this statement focused upon school and college interactions, valuable insights were presented regarding the secondary institutions. The commission favored the comprehensive high school model and thought that American mass education was faring reasonably well. Yet, serious attention was required in the areas of basic skills and vocational education.\(^{37}\)

In 1972, Commissioner Sidney Marland of the U.S. Office of Education created a national committee to investigate the education of America's adolescent population between the ages of 12-18. Panel members included educators and students, in addition to scholars in economics, psychology, sociology, and political science. The outcome of this project was released in 1976 as a formal statement entitled *The Education of Adolescents: The Final Report and Recommendations of the National Panel on High School and Adolescent Education*.\(^{38}\)

Similar to the other major educational reports of the 1970s, The National Panel on High School and Adolescent Education recommended reform of American secondary-level educational institutions. The drafters of *The Education of Adolescents* believed in:

- comprehensive education through complementary arrangements and linkages among many organizations including schools. The Panel would shift the emphasis away from the comprehensive school toward comprehensive
education, arguing that the confines of one building are no longer enough to contain all the valuable and necessary experiences for today's young person. What is needed is greater diversity in formal education which reflects the actual diversity of the learning situations and the variety of experience that living in today's world demands.  

**Government Reports/Studies and Workplace**

**Competencies in the 1980s**

The 1980s represented a turning point in America concerning the nation's schooling issues. The federal endeavor of *A Nation At Risk* in 1983 provided a benchmark for discussing education in contemporary society. Public attention focused on Washington, D.C. for guidance in school affairs. A precedent had been put into place by the Reagan administration; a multitude of national reports dealing with the current state of education in America would follow.

On November 15, 1983, a follow-up statement by the National Commission on Excellence in Education was issued. The statement entitled, *Meeting the Challenge: Recent Efforts to Improve Education Across the Nation* provided an update on educational practices and policies implemented nation-wide since the release of *A Nation At Risk*. This report explained that "throughout the nation, public and private actions by individuals and groups at local, state, and national levels are meeting the challenge to improve education."  

In November 1983, the Education Commission reported that 165 state-level task forces were established, in order
to focus on educational issues. These diverse groups consisted of educators, parents, business people, politicians, and other concerned citizens.  

The National Conference of State Legislatures' Survey polled state legislative initiatives in 1983. By November 1983, thirty-six states had responded to the survey. Interesting data trends were revealed in the areas of curriculum and teacher preparation. State legislative efforts to improve school curriculum criteria centered on the adoption of student competency tests prior to 1983. In 1983, the most popular state legislative measure to improve curricular standards was to increase basic core requirements. In the area of teacher preparation, teacher competency tests were commonly required by state legislatures prior to 1983. In 1983, the most widely state legislative initiatives required additional education or training for teachers of math or science courses. 

The report *The Nation Responds: Recent Efforts to Improve Education*, in 1984, represented Secretary of Education T.H. Bell's continued attempt to keep the educational issues outlined in *A Nation At Risk* alive in the political arena. This statement was a companion piece to *Meeting the Challenge: Recent Efforts to Improve Education Across the Nation* of 1983. In *The Nation Responds*, the focus was three-fold: an update on national educational developments at state and local levels; individual state
initiative profiles; local effort profiles, including school, district, higher-educational institutions, associations, and the business sector. 43

The Twentieth Century Fund represents an independent research organization which conducts policy undertakings of economic, political, and social institutions. Members of the Trustees for the Twentieth Century Fund expressed the need to examine the state of public education in relation to America's economic and social concerns during the early 1980s. Although education had not previously been an area of interest for the Twentieth Century Fund, a subgroup of members within the foundation became convinced that school concerns were paramount to America's competitive future. 44

The trustees knew that other organizations were providing funding to commissions and panels for examination of public education. Yet, the members of the Twentieth Century Fund felt that their organization could furnish an unique investigation of school issues from a federal perspective. A task force was formed and consisted of a diverse group of members, which included two trustees from the Twentieth Century Fund, representatives from academia in the fields of economics, policy studies, political science, and education as well as practitioners. Robert Wood, the chairperson, was a former secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. 45

The Task Force of the Twentieth Century Fund put forth
a clearly articulated statement concerning the state of education in May 1983 entitled *Making the Grade*. This group focused upon the premise that the federal government's commitment to the goals of equality and excellence need not be mutually exclusive. All public schools must provide students with the same core components, which include skills in reading, writing, calculating, computer, science, foreign languages, and civics. The panel stated:

We think that both objectives should be vigorously pursued through a fresh approach, one that reflects the national concern for a better-educated America and that strikes a reasonable and effective balance between quality and equality. Federal education policy must function, moreover, in ways that complement rather than weaken local control. This calls for a change in direction, replacing the current emphasis on regulations and mandates with a new emphasis on incentives.  

During the inception of the report sponsored by the Twentieth Century Fund, Paul E. Peterson, a professor of political science and education at the University of Chicago was asked to provide a background paper on the federal role in education to the panel. The emergence of the Department of Education as a separate Cabinet-level position in 1980 elevated school issues to national prominence. Yet, according to Peterson, the new department had not focused upon a clearly defined federal education policy.

During the early 1980s, federal debate over two equally important and not unrelated concerns arose. The first issue focused on how to raise educational standards. The second issue dealt with educational funding procedures.
Professor Peterson discussed two different strategies to aid in the improvement of educational standards in his background paper. The first type was competency-based education (CBE), which states that standards can only be improved through the use of bureaucratic control. The second model was the use of parental choice, which accounts for increased standards through school competition in the open marketplace. According to Peterson, "Neither of these strategies is entirely satisfactory. There is considerable merit, however, in a tuition voucher or tax credit plan that would allow students greater choice among high schools." 69

Funding procedures are closely tied to educational policy-making. During the early 1980s, the idea of categorical versus block grant scheduling became a heated topic of debate. The task force supported the continued use of federal categorical aid. As stated, "the Task Force supports continuing federal efforts to provide special educational programs for the poor and for the handicapped." On the other hand, the Reagan administration supported the idea of block grants, which allowed states and local levels of government the required flexibility in apportioning educational funding. 50

The National Task Force on Education for Economic Growth was formulated by the Education Commission of the States in order to develop an action plan which addressed the issue of student preparation for the world of work.
This diverse panel consisted of governors, legislators, business people, educators, representatives from the labor and scientific communities, etc. The end product resulted in the June, 1983 publication entitled *Action for Excellence: A Comprehensive Plan to Improve Our Nation's Schools.*

The focus of *Action for Excellence* was as follows, "It is the thesis of this report that our future success as a nation—our national defense, our social stability and well-being and our national prosperity—will depend on our ability to improve education and training for millions of individual citizens." The combined efforts of government officials, business people, educators, parents, and other concerned citizens are required for a collaborative approach in educational endeavors. In *Action for Excellence*, the underlying premise addressed the need for constant re-evaluation of what core competencies and skills are required of our young people as they proceed into the future. These skills should be reading, writing, speaking and listening, mathematical, and scientific competencies, which would give graduating seniors the knowledge-base and problem-solving skills mandatory to accomplishment in America's everchanging workplace.

The evercharged issue of education remained on the political agenda during the 1980s. Following the release of *A Nation At Risk*, the continued efforts of the Reagan
administration were relentless in raising public awareness of school concerns. Educational policy publications were prepared by Secretary of Education William Bennett, who conveyed the conservative Reagan ideological philosophy.

As secretary of education, William Bennett continued to emphasize the importance of the federal government's responsibility of transmitting "reliable and accurate information about education to the American people." The Department of Education published a series of "what works" statements directed to the general public. The first report was entitled What Works: Research About Teaching and Learning by the United States Department of Education in 1986. As stated in the foreword:

It is intended to provide accurate and reliable information about what works in the education of our children, and it is meant to be useful to all of us—parents and taxpayers, teachers and legislators, newspaper reporters and newspaper readers, principals and school board members. But, first and foremost, this book is intended to be useful to the adult with a child. 53

In What Works: Research About Teaching and Learning, the importance of collaboration among the home, the classroom, and the school was emphasized. The home is instrumental in providing an environment conducive to learning. The classroom and the school must hold high academic expectations for all students, which were outlined in A Nation At Risk. Students, who have attained a solid knowledge-base in a core curriculum program, are likely to become successful in the world of work. 54
Another report in the "what works" series was entitled *Schools That Work: Educating Disadvantaged Children*. This statement addressed the issue of excellence in education for all American children. The premise included the idea that effective schools can make the difference in the preparation of productive citizens in life and work endeavors. This book presented parents, teachers, principals, community representatives, federal, state and local leaders information on how to replicate effective school practices for disadvantaged students in a practical format.\(^5\)

The United States Department of Education recognized 571 selected American secondary schools, which was a federal plan commensurate with the Reagan political agenda. The report entitled *The Search for Successful Secondary Schools: The First Three Years of the Secondary School Recognition Program* was released in October 1986. The purpose of this account was to enlighten the general public as to the many successes in American education nationwide, as well as providing exemplary models for public schools.\(^6\)

Secretary Bennett presented his personal vision of an ideal high school curriculum in the document *James Madison High School: A Curriculum for American Students* in 1987. The secretary of education fully endorsed the stringent core academic requirements at the secondary level recommended in *A Nation At Risk*. As William Bennett stated, "schooling in the full set of core academic disciplines should be central
to the true purpose of American secondary education."^57

National involvement in educational matters continued during the Bush administration. President Bush's belief in minimal federal interference in education was apparent. The use of the presidency as a bully pulpit persisted. Public attention remained focused upon the issue of education and training. Government officials were outspoken critics of public schooling practices concerning preparation of America's future workers.

The United States Department of Education and the United States Department of Labor both addressed important issues outlined in *A Nation At Risk* during the Bush administration. The successful foundation, in the provision of work competencies and skills required during the high school years, continued to receive attention.

The United States Department of Labor issued a report entitled *What Work Requires of Schools* by the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) in 1991. Under the direction of Secretary of Labor Lynn Martin, this panel was to examine what competencies were necessary at work and to determine if young Americans possessed these skills. The investigation led to a list of five competencies and a three-part foundation, which the committee felt were prerequisites to gainful work experiences. The five competencies were identified as: "resources: identifies, organizes, plans, and allocates resources; interpersonal:
works with others; information: acquires and uses information; systems; understands complex interrelationships; technology: works with a variety of technologies." The three-part foundation was composed of basic skills, thinking skills, and personal qualities, which were considered necessary in productive work situations.58

President Bush used the United States Department of Education and the United States Department of Labor as bully pulpits to relate his vision of school to work preparation to the American people. National conferences were convened by these two important cabinet-level agencies, which drew together the important players in this significant enterprise.

The School to Work Connection reported proceedings of "The Quality Connection: Linking Education and Work" during May 1990. The sponsors, the Department of Education and the Department of Labor, solicited the participation of government officials, business people, and educators. This diverse group of people met in order to focus on the problem of poorly educated youngsters, who will become America's future workers and how business and schools could collaboratively improve the educational product.59

The publication, In Making the Connection: Coordinating Education and Training for a Skilled Workforce, was a report of the proceedings of a national conference for state leaders during July 1991 and sponsored by the United States
Department of Education in conjunction with the United States Department of Health and Human Services and the United States Department of Labor. Federal representatives were present and spoke to the importance of state and local responsibility in addressing successful school to work transition.  

Federal involvement in American education has been uneven but significant during the last quarter-century. The national focus has steadily involved a collaboration of business people, state and local governmental leaders, educators, parents, and other concerned citizens, with federal officials playing a minor but important role as Americans proceed into the twenty-first century. This recent philosophy permeates all federal initiatives in education.
CHAPTER IV NOTES


6. Ibid., 57.


8. Ibid., 13.

9. Ibid., 51.

10. Ibid., 52.


16. Ibid., 5 & 8.

17. Ibid., 5.

18. Ibid., 7.


20. Ina Mullis and Others, Accelerating Academic


22. Ibid., 7.


24. Ibid., 11.

25. Ibid., 12 & 35.


27. Bruce K. Eckland and Joseph M. Wisenbaker, National Longitudinal Study: A Capsule Description of Young Adults Four and One-Half Years After High School, Washington, D.C., February 1979, 12-14, ERIC, ED 178 561.


32. Ibid., 2-3.


34. Ibid., 7-8 & 11.


36. Ibid., 30-31.

37. The Carnegie Commission on Higher Education,


39. Ibid., 8.


41. Ibid., 5.

42. Ibid., 5-6.


45. Ibid., v-vi.

46. Ibid., 3 & 6-7.

47. Ibid., 135.

48. Ibid., 135-36.

49. Ibid., 136.

50. Ibid., 15 & 143.


52. Ibid., 14 & 48-49.


54. Ibid., 7 & 59 & 62.


59. United States Department of Education and United States Department of Labor, The School-to-Work Connection, A report of the proceedings of a National Conference of

CHAPTER V

EDUCATIONAL COMMENTATORS

Traditionally, public education has been the business of all Americans. For this reason, educational philosophies and ideological stances have become confused and blurred during our nation's public school history. The completion of high school is marked by the presentation of a diploma. Hopefully, the diploma is representative of successful completion of a core of basic required coursework, which is thought to prepare students for post-secondary experiences such as further schooling or immediate work. Professional educators have ended a long history of compromise with the rest of society concerning school matters. This chapter explores the perspective of preparation for work from professional educators' viewpoints.

Public Confidence and Education

Citizen opinion has always been a major consideration crucial in the area of public policy-making. Educational issues have always dominated the public's attention. Beginning in 1969, the Gallup/Phi Delta Kappa Polls of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools have provided a national barometer on the public sentiment toward
In The Gallup/Phi Delta Kappa Polls of Attitudes Toward the Public Schools, 1969-1988, the public was asked certain key benchmark questions. One such question inquired how the people rated their schools. Forty-two percent of the respondents in 1969 said that they had little knowledge about their local schools; the response was almost the same in 1987. Questions, concerning the curriculum, provided insights into public attitudes toward education. For instance, the results of the 1973, the 1980, and the 1982 surveys indicated that the public felt that schooling was extremely important to a person's future. Also, people felt it was important that America's future prosperity relate to the development of a superior educational system. For example, 84% of the public responded yes in 1982 and 88% voted yes in 1988, in relating economic prosperity to education. While in many instances professionals hold far differing views than the public concerning education, this compilation of past public surveys showed agreement in certain areas. Seventy-eight percent of the educators and 76% of the public felt that increased academic standards would help raise the quality of schools. In addition, 65% of the educators and 75% of the public felt that more required basic courses such as science and mathematics would improve the quality of the schools.

Carl Kaestle presented an historical perspective on the
issue of public perception and education in his 1990 article in *American Heritage* entitled "The Public Schools and the Public Mood." Kaestle stated that, "critics aroused an anxious public about the quality and content of public schooling." Educational reform occurs only when the public lacks confidence in the schools.¹

**Scholastic Aptitude Test Score Decline**

During the 1970s, the decline of Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores of secondary education students caused an outcry of concern by the American public. This interest created an atmosphere in which many sectors of society, including educators, examined the academic achievement of American students. The examination of test score decline was a popular subject during the 1970s. Educational organizations commissioned studies and reports to investigate the issue of falling test scores in relation to academic achievement.

According to Gilbert Austin and Herbert Garber, two academics who edited *The Rise and Fall of National Test Scores* in 1982, "Test scores are used to measure the health of an educational process. When declining test scores in the nation's schools are reported, public concern is understandably aroused."⁵

The trustees and the officers of the College Board decided to investigate the issue of SAT score decline and American secondary education. In October 1975, Sidney
Marland, Jr., the president of the College Board, and with the full cooperation of William Turnbull, the president of Educational Testing Service, declared that the twenty-one members of the newly formed Advisory Panel on the Scholastic Aptitude Test Score Decline should commence their work. The commission was to act in an advisory capacity to the presidents of the College Board and Educational Testing Service. This committee's objective centered on grappling with the SAT score decline dilemma and in providing an analysis of the problem to the public. In 1977, On Further Examination: Report of the Advisory Panel on the Scholastic Aptitude Test Score Decline was released.6

The SAT examination has been utilized since the 1920s to provide information about a student's readiness for higher education. The test is composed of a Verbal and a Mathematics portion, in which each part is scored separately on a scale of 200 to 800. In addition, a Test of Standard Written English was included in 1973. According to On Further Examination:

The Mathematical portion of the SAT, which requires as background mathematics typically taught in grades one through nine, depends less on formal knowledge than on reasoning; it measures students' problem-solving ability in three areas—arithmetic reasoning, elementary algebra, and geometry. The Verbal portion, designed to assess reading skills and understanding of word relationships, covers four areas—antonyms, analogies, sentence completion, and reading comprehension.7

The commission analyzed scoring patterns of students taking the SAT between the years 1963 to 1977. A noticeable
decline in scores was observed during this period. According to the report *On Further Examination*, a 49 point reduction in the average score on the Verbal section occurred, with a drop of 478 in 1963 to 429 in 1977. A decrease of 32 points on average took place on the Mathematics section during this time, falling from 502 to 470. The panel considered this decline in SAT scores to be a serious situation which required immediate attention.⁸

The panel identified two major periods of breakdown, in relation to the fourteen year SAT score decline. The time from 1963 to 1970 marked the first significant decline. Two-thirds to three-fourths of SAT score decline, during this time, was thought to be related to "compositional" changes in groups of participating students. A significantly increased pool of students emerged, due to America's efforts to increase educational opportunity to all, regardless of race, ethnicity, sex, economic, and social status.⁹

The second significant decline took place between 1970 to 1975. Although the panel suggested that a quarter of the depressed scores could be attributed to the shifting targeted population, a combination of other factors appeared to distinguish this period of test decline. First, high schools had added more electives, while demanding fewer requirements for all students. Second, less emphasis was placed on the mastery of skills and information, evidenced
in such issues as automatic promotion, grade inflation, relaxed homework policies, and lowered higher education standards. Third, a preoccupation with television caused a harmful distraction from the learning process. Fourth, the increased percentage of students in precarious familial situations was seen as contributory to lowered test scores. Fifth, the chaotic state of America from 1972 to 1975 could account for another variable which played havoc with SAT scores. It was during this time period that the SAT decline was the greatest. America experienced great social and political turmoil, such as war and burning of urban centers. Sixth, student motivation seemed to wane. The panel pointed out that lack of student motivation paralleled the general national mood.¹⁰

While the release of On Further Examination brought an outpour of criticism by people toward the American public school system, one fact was not widely acknowledged; the SAT scores of students in some secondary-level institutions did not decline. The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) identified thirty-four high schools as institutions with stable or rising SAT scores. Principals of the selected sites were asked to comment as to their opinions concerning the performance of students on SAT instruments since 1973. The results of that inquiry developed into the monograph entitled Guidelines for Improving SAT Scores, published in 1978.¹¹
The reporting principals emphasized the fact that their high schools focused on academic course work for college-bound students, supported by parents and extended communities. Academic courses included such instruction in English, mathematics, foreign languages, and physical science. Students, who showed stable or rising SAT scores, took more academic classes during the 1973-1976 time period than their counterparts in the 1960s. Rigorous English and mathematics curricula were considered necessary components for success on SAT examinations. In addition, educational counseling services were thought to provide students with constructive awareness and preparedness for test-taking. Schools, whose students received stable or rising test scores, preferred the use of ability grouping. Teachers, students, parents, and communities should hold high expectations of secondary educational institutions.12

In 1983, Devaluation, Diffusion and the College Connection: A Study of High School Transcripts, 1964-1981, by Clifford Adelman of the National Institute of Education, was released. This report focused on the issue of high school curriculum and its relationship to college course requirements. The central tenet of this study was that "college graduation requirements, influence both the course offerings of high schools and the course-taking behavior and levels of achievement of secondary school students." Adelman's findings suggested that students spent less time
studying academic subjects and more on electives.\textsuperscript{13}

The College Board's publication entitled \textit{Academic Preparation for College} in 1983 emphasized the study of the basic academic subjects, which included "English, the arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and foreign language." In addition, basic competencies in such skill areas as writing, reading, and reasoning were considered necessary. This document stressed that this knowledge was imperative and recommended same curricular offerings for all high school students.\textsuperscript{14}

\textbf{Educational Surveys During the 1970s}

By the 1970s, educators became increasingly alarmed by negative confidence levels concerning secondary education throughout America. Educational organizations polled their own membership in order to determine the current status of high school education.

The National Committee on Secondary Education of the National Association of Secondary School Principals was requested to present a report of a study of the high schools in America's largest cities. The summary, entitled \textit{A Profile of the Large-City High School}, was presented to NASSP in 1970. This 1968 descriptive study surveyed 700 high schools in forty-five of the nation's cities with populations over 300,000.\textsuperscript{15} High school principals were requested to complete questionnaires pertaining to the health of secondary educational sites. The response rate
was excellent; 670 principals completed and returned the instruments.¹⁶

Four groups of educational goals were ranked according to level of importance. The highest ranked group pertained to cognitive-academic competencies and consisted of "basic skills, basic knowledge, critical inquiry." The second highest scoring group represented the affective-particularistic skills, composed of such attributes as "self-concept, adaptability, physical fitness." The third ranked group of skills was referred to as socio-civic, which encompassed the parameters of "inherent values, cultural appreciation, moral and spiritual values." The fourth ranked group consisted of socio-economic purposes, focusing on "training and talents."¹⁷

The National Association of Secondary School Principals conducted a national survey of high school principals in 1977 to determine the characteristics of effective leaders and educational institutions. This particular study provided additional information to an increasing, but still limited body of research data, relative to secondary education. In 1978, this account was published and entitled The Senior High School Principalship - Volume I: The National Survey. This report sampled a randomly selected group of 1,600 principals nationwide, through the use of questionnaires. A 70.6% response rate was obtained.¹⁸

The participating principals were asked to comment on
variables relative to secondary education, such as school characteristics, status of personnel and programs, and job tasks. Of particular interest was the information on educational purposes and practices of high schools. According to this 1977 survey, principals rated the acquisition of basic skills, denoted as reading, writing, and mathematics, as the most important task of secondary education. In addition, 59% of the respondents favored measures of accountability, such as competency testing to ensure mastery of basic skills. Eight percent of the reporting principals indicated that they had a monitoring system in place at the time of this survey. Finally, principals were asked their opinions about the use of alternative diplomas and certificate options for students unable to achieve minimum basic skill levels. Sixty percent of the educators favored such an approach, while 7% of those polled favored using optional exit certifications.19

In 1977, the National Association of Secondary School Principals collaborated with the National Institute of Education in formulating a study whose mission was to supply a realistic picture of American secondary education. The report High School '77: A Survey of Public Secondary School Principals was published in December 1978.20

The authors of High School '77 intended that the survey conclusions would describe the current condition of American secondary education in a fair, unbiased format for public
consumption. Their presentation hoped "to assess how well high schools meet student needs for basic and individualized instruction and personal and flexible management of their lives."21

The High School '77 survey included the participation of 2,000 randomly selected public comprehensive high schools, representative of regional, social, economic, ethnic, and racial diversity. Survey questionnaires were provided to the selected respondents from June to September 1977, with a 72.4% reply rate.22

Curricular offerings were discussed in High School '77, which related to student learning. At the time of this data gathering process, American secondary education provided its clientele with a comprehensive curriculum, with a vast array of course offerings. Two-thirds of the reporting schools witnessed a growth in the number of electives offered during the five years from 1972 to 1977. The results of this survey indicated that almost all of the schools sampled reported the presence of "a standard academic curriculum, with courses in biology, chemistry, physics, and a mathematics sequence through grade 12; they also required all students to take English through 11th grade. Almost every high school also offered the usual courses for non-college-bound students: business education, homemaking, wood or machine shop, and art." In addition to the traditional curricular comprehensiveness, responding four out of five
principals commented on the trend toward teaching basic skills such as reading and mathematics. Work preparation for students in community settings was provided in two-thirds of the sampled high schools.  

High School Unrest

A complex web of social and political concerns plagued the United States during the 1960s. Social upheaval dominated the American domestic agenda. Civil rights issues, assassination of a president, poverty in urban areas, and involvement in Vietnam were topics that held the interest of Americans. Young people committed themselves to these national concerns.

During the late 1960s, American public high schools experienced great confusion. Formerly, the traditional secondary-level curriculum remained intact with only minor additions. After years of high school unrest, these institutions again became safe havens for students. This task proved to be difficult due to the presence of such problems as budget cuts, teacher strikes, and public negativism. Yet, most schools resumed educational activities in a pleasant and calm environment.

Social unrest in the American public high schools exploded in 1968. In January 1969, the National Association of Secondary School Principals polled secondary-level administrators regarding student activism in the schools. Fifty-nine percent of the institutions reported adolescent
conflict within the sites. Ten percent of the principals polled stated that the protests were race-related. Dress and grooming regulations composed another major source of student dissatisfaction. One-third to one-fourth of all schools polled indicated student unrest regarding dress and hair policies. In general, various school regulations, in relation to such issues as school smoking, and censorship of school papers or underground literature were deemed as the basis of harsh criticism by 82% of the students. Forty-five percent of the responding principals indicated that students protested concerning curriculum matters, such as content and grades.26

Since its origination in 1958, Education U.S.A., a weekly newsletter, has discussed topics from preschool through graduate education. In a special report of an April 1969 Education U.S.A. survey, high school administrators were asked questions pertaining to conflict within the buildings. The major source of protest resulted from racial issues, which concerned civil rights of blacks. Twenty percent of school administrators surveyed cited racial connotations as a major source of confrontations among students.27

The Education U.S.A. Special Report stated that the student unrest on high school campuses appeared to be caused by internal problems. At the beginning of the 1969-70 school year, educational administrators held four different
viewpoints regarding student activism:

a small percentage have anticipated possible outbreaks and are in the process of working toward giving students greater participation in school management; a sizable percentage are reflecting heightened sensitivity to student concerns and are searching for, or considering, approaches that might work in their own school situations; a substantial percentage are watching and waiting; and a small minority regard any concessions to student protest as "over my dead body."  

Educators reacted to the student unrest in public high schools throughout America. School people began to readdress the concept of "humaneness in education." "Humaneness" was not new to secondary education. This issue of relevant schooling for adolescents existed from the 1930s to the 1950s, from the time of the Great Depression. The reintroduction of "humaneness" into secondary education provided a way to restore calm within educational institutions.  

Educational Reports/Studies and the Status of Secondary Education in the 1970s

The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) created the Secondary Education Council in October 1963 for the purpose of exploring the prevailing status of American secondary education. After much discussion, the members decided to focus on the topic of "humaneness" as the underlying foundation of successful high schools nationwide.

The council arranged conferences on the theme of humanization in the secondary school. Two conferences were
scheduled during 1967, which occurred in Portland, Oregon in January and in St. Louis, Missouri in November. Significant contributions were included in ASCD's booklet, Humanizing the Secondary School. Yet, the council believed that additional work was required in promoting the concept of "humaneness" in the high schools. Twenty-four knowledgeable educators in the area of secondary education were invited to attend a special seminar. Professor James Macdonald, an expert in curriculum and instructional theory, was invited to deliver a position paper dealing with humanization within secondary education. Finally, a fourth meeting occurred in Minneapolis, Minnesota in April 1970. This gathering was convened to allow the participants to evaluate the merits of Macdonald's premise regarding the humane high school.31

The publication, Humanizing the Secondary School, by the Secondary Education Council of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development in 1969, reflected the mood of high school administrators during this period of student activism. The booklet contained a collection of important papers which were presented during two conferences sponsored by the Secondary Education Council; the highlighted topic of discussion was humaneness in high school education.32

The members of the Secondary Education Council became acutely aware of massive student unrest throughout the nation. American students became more and more dissatisfied
with societal institutions, including high schools. Students were particularly hostile about their instructional programs. To examine this issue, the ASCD Council coordinated two regional conferences, which focused on program needs of adolescents. The first conference, held in Atlanta, Georgia in April 1969, focused on "Student Unrest: Threat or Promise?" The second conference in New Orleans, Louisiana in November 1969 pursued the theme "Student Unrest: Implications for Secondary Schools." Documents from the proceedings of these significant meetings were published as a booklet entitled, Student Unrest: Threat or Promise? in 1970.\(^33\)

In 1969, the authors of *Humanizing the Secondary School*, defined "humane high school" as follows:

A humane secondary school is one whose total efforts are devoted to the optimum development, in socially approved directions, of the potentialities and capabilities of all adolescents. . . .; A humane secondary school is one in which all organizational, managerial, regulatory, and policy matters are designed solely to achieve, to the optimum degree possible, the goals of a humane program of education; A humane secondary school is one that provides a broad and comprehensive curriculum in which ample opportunities exist for the optimum exploration and development at the adolescent level of talents and capabilities of all youth. . . .; A humane secondary school is one in which each adolescent in the community served by the school is treated by staff, peers, and citizens alike with dignity and respect as a person.\(^34\)

The two 1969 ASCD regional conferences, dealing specifically with the reform of the high school curriculum, considered the protests of students as valid and to be taken seriously. Reasons for student unrest, in addition to
constructive ways of channeling the anger, were identified in the document.

In *Student Unrest: Threat or Promise?*, Scott Thomson, the superintendent of Evanston Township High School in Evanston, Illinois, presented "A Perspective on Activism." According to Thomson, the heart of the difficulties regarding student unrest in the school environment stemmed from the close relationship between educational sites and the social and political forces. He called on his fellow educators to act in the following manner: communication must occur with the community, concerning student activism; the provision of viable, constructive contacts with outside organizations must occur for those students, who wish an active role in political and social causes.  

Mario Fantini, the program officer for the Ford Foundation, contributed "The Student Movement and School Reform" for the *Student Unrest* booklet. Fantini stressed the importance of student activism as a motivating force in reforming secondary education. According to this author, "the student movement offers a tremendous impetus and infinite resource for educational reform in the United States."  

Carroll Johnson, a professor of education at Teachers College, Columbia University, in "What the Schools Can Do About Student Unrest," addressed the issue of high school initiatives in easing student aggression. The involvement
of faculty members was considered imperative. This author suggested the use of councils, composed of faculty and student representatives. In addition, an active student government should exist in high schools. This organization could mitigate strife between faculty and students in addition to resolving conflicts between students.\(^{37}\)

ASCD's account, *Removing Barriers to Humaneness in the High School*, was published in 1971. In his position paper on humaneness, Professor James Macdonald presented his definition of a humane school:

> is freedom—freedom as an end for man himself, and freedom as a process by which one can only himself be free. If the school exists and if its program is so shaped as to make the individual subservient to the collective group and to carry out the roles it assigns, schooling becomes a sham, an empty, inhumane enterprise; but if the school enables the individual to exercise his own free choice, to develop his own potentialities for their own sake alone, to serve the social group collectively because he has freedom to do so rather than because of pressure to conform, or to achieve for the group's sake, then humaneness pervades the school.\(^{38}\)

Macdonald addressed the issue of high school curriculum within the concept of humaneness. He stressed that the idea of "freedom" must be the underlying force which guides the instructional programs of secondary education. Macdonald questioned the emphasis on achievement in curricular matters, such as proficiency in reading, mathematics, and science, which were perceived as necessary for the collective group as considered. While more technological capabilities are important for use in an increasingly
mechanized society, the addition of humanities to the high school curricula is necessary for each person to pursue his or her true potentialility. The study of the arts, literature, philosophy, and social studies should be included in the humanities program.\textsuperscript{39}

**Alternative High School Education**

Americans were disenchanted with their institutions, including the public schools, during the 1960s and 1970s. Student unrest in the high schools was a signal to professional educators; alternative educational options were required to satisfy the dissatisfied clientele of the schools.

Unrest on college campuses was common during the late 1960s. Growing agitation over the mounting social and political issues, such as the Vietnam War and civil rights, was paramount. It was not unusual to discover ever-increasing numbers of American college students committed to social activism. This behavior pattern of college students was soon imitated in high schools.\textsuperscript{40}

Professional educators were alarmed at this sudden outbreak of aggressive student behavior in many high schools. The exploration of alternative educational choices was considered imperative for the nation's adolescent population. American high school educators convened and discussed other secondary-level approaches for students.

One such conference occurred on April 11, 1972 in the
Washington, D.C. area. A cross-section of professional educators gathered to debate alternative high school options for students. The conference was co-sponsored by Educational Facilities Laboratories and the Institute for Development of Educational Activities (/I/D/E/A/), an affiliate of the Charles F. Kettering Foundation. The symposium which ensued was entitled, "The Greening of the High School."41

The purpose of "The Greening of the High School" was "not to dwell on the moribund state of America's secondary schools. Rather, it was how to make them healthy, how to infuse them with elements that would turn them green and growing." The participating educators' testimonies provided constructive insights into ways to improve secondary education. For three days, group members presented examples of positive high school programs nationwide, which focused on humaneness.42

The participants at the "Greening of the High School" conference reached a consensus concerning the future of American secondary education. The members felt that "the principal point of agreement on adjusting high school to the client was the urgency of dejuvenilizing." This included wide agreement on the related need to honor each student's individuality.43

Harold Howe II, Vice President of the Division of Education and Research of the Ford Foundation, delivered the
keynote address. Howe had served in various professional capacities, including United States Commissioner of Education, during his career.\textsuperscript{44}

Howe suggested ten principles for educators to keep in mind when contemplating high school reform. Several selected ideas have bearing on this study. Education does not only take place inside of the traditional high school walls. Learning occurs in the community environment and educators should honor this option for acquiring knowledge, skills, and competencies. High schools must accept increased responsibilities for career education and job preparation. The acquisition of subject matter in courses such as science, mathematics, history, and foreign languages necessitates a connection with the larger world.\textsuperscript{45} This symposium focused on humanization, which reflected educational thinking during the late 1960s and the 1970s.

Although traditional high school patterns remained stable during the late 1960s and 1970s, the implementation of alternative secondary education options occurred as a way to channel student activism in high schools. Educators felt that the active participation of students in the educational process would quell adolescent hostility. Larry Cuban, an educational historian, defined the concept of alternative high school in his monograph \textit{How Teachers Taught: Constancy and Change in American Classrooms, 1890-1980} in the following way, "schools without walls where the city is the
classroom, store-front schools, mini-schools within larger conventional high schools, theme or magnet schools (e.g. arts, science, etc.).

Cuban claimed that the alternative high school movement of the late 1960s and 1970s changed relatively little in the way of secondary education. While teachers may have made concerted efforts to link content to life experiences of students and lead classroom discussions in informal ways, the basic high school organization patterns remained. In alternative high schools, the predominant pattern of instructional presentation to students appeared to remain teacher-centered. In general, secondary education classrooms were dominated by teacher-controlled uninteresting lessons, presented to a large group of passive students during the 1970s.

The move toward a permissive high school environment, with its informality and relaxed curricular requirements, came to an end during the late 1970s. Carl Kaestle remarked that the publicity concerning the SAT decline provoked a backlash against this "liberal" movement. According to Kaestle, a liberal reform movement meant "equal access to education and recognition of student diversity." Americans felt that rigorous academic subjects were ignored by high school students as a consequence. American secondary education would experience a back to basics movement.
The Back to Basics Movement of the 1980s
and Workplace Competencies

During the 1980s, many sectors of society recommended a return to a rigorous academic curriculum for all high school students, including professional educators. Many alarming indicators of failing performance were witnessed in the schools and in the workforce. What appeared especially inexcusable was the inattention paid to mathematics and science coursework in secondary schools.

The 1977 National Survey of Science, Mathematics, and Social Studies Education was prepared for the National Science Foundation. Survey questionnaires were sent to a national sample of teachers, principals, superintendents, local and state supervisors of mathematics, science, and social studies. The response rate was excellent, ranging from 72% to 90%.49

The 1977 National Survey of Science, Mathematics, and Social Studies Education indicated that state requirements in science and mathematics were lower than in mandated social studies. Inadequate funding and facilities were considered serious threats to science, mathematics, and social studies teaching. Poor reading ability and indifference to the subject matter by students were cited as additional problems to instruction in science, mathematics, and social studies.50

Coursework in High School Science and Mathematics, was an analysis of the 1980 base year data from the High School and Beyond study. This statement pointed to the fact that most entering freshmen, who were equipped with good basic skills in reading and mathematics, participated in the college preparatory track. These would be the students who, probably, would select advanced science and mathematics courses. Few other students, even those with strong cognitive abilities, would enroll in intermediate and advanced level mathematics and science classes.¹⁵¹

**Educational Reports/Studies During the 1980s**

A number of prominent professional educators examined the status of secondary education during the 1980s. These lengthy investigations explored many facets of secondary education, including curriculum and work preparation.

The Paideia Proposal: An Educational Manifesto was released in 1982. Chaired by Mortimer J. Adler, the panel consisted of representatives from public school systems, academe, and various think tanks. Adler's message was written in a simple and direct format. Appropriately titled, the theme focused on the extension of general learning for all people.⁵²

Members of the Paideia group advocated the use of a one-track system throughout the twelve years of public schooling for all students, to achieve three main educational objectives. First, every student should acquire
a solid academic foundation, which would allow for a lifetime of personal mental, moral, and spiritual growth. Second, children need preparation in developing competencies required for roles as informed citizens. Third, future generations of workers must be prepared for the everchanging workplace.53

To accomplish the three important objectives of basic education recommended in The Paideia Proposal, the committee stated that "to give the same quality of schooling to all requires a program of study that is both liberal and general, and that is, in several, crucial, overarching respects, one and the same for every child. All sidetracks, specialized courses, or elective choices must be eliminated." One exception to this rule was made. The choice of a foreign language was left to the discretion of individual students.54

The model, outlined in The Paideia Proposal, provided a well-thought out framework of student and teacher formats required during a student's twelve-year learning process. Three different modes of student learning were matched to three different modes of teacher presentation, which corresponded to three different mind improvement strategies.

The Paideia program consisted of a flexible plan which could be adapted to the individual needs of America's school systems. First, the subject areas of language, literature, fine arts, mathematics, natural sciences, history,
geography, and social studies were considered crucial to a fine basic education. Didactic or teaching by telling provided the primary mode of presentation. Second, basic skill areas were to be developed. The use of skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening, observing, measuring, estimating, and calculating were thought to be paramount to successful life experiences. This mode of learning dictates the use of coaching to ensure skill in performance. Third, an understanding of values and ideas should be developed. The use of the Socratic method of teaching is required, which involves the teacher as the leader in a discussion format and whose function is to direct questions to the students. This process, hopefully, will guide students to deeper mind-provoking experiences. Of course, integration of the three teaching and learning modes exist in this idealized framework. In addition, room for flexibility was accounted for in The Paideia Proposal. The auxiliary studies, such as physical education, health, manual activities (typing, cooking, automobile repair, etc.), and job preparation were considered appropriate schooling concerns to be given attention during the educational process.55

A sequel entitled Paideia Problems and Possibilities was produced in 1983 after considerable public interest emerged following the release of The Paideia Proposal in 1982. This companion piece addressed questions, relating to
the implementation of the Paideia format. The message in the continuation of the Paideia philosophy, concerning workforce effectiveness, was well-articulated in the following remarks:

What basic schooling can contribute to the solution is to give the young the most general, the least particularized, preparation for performing productive work. This means learning early the art of adapting to changing forms and conditions of work. Schooling can do this only by developing those basic skills that everyone needs to do almost any kind of work. 56

The Board of Trustees of The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching commissioned a study of American public high schools during the spring of 1980. The trustees felt that adolescent students were confronted with the significant job of determining their life-long paths during the crucial high school years. In addition, a general weakening of public support and confused educational goals added credence to the need for a national study of secondary-level education. The scope of the study was confined to American public high schools. Also, high schools were to be examined as educational institutions, where academic quality was judged. In 1983, High School: A Report on Secondary Education in America, headed by Ernest L. Boyer, President of The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, was released. 57

An ethnographic study of fifteen public high schools was developed, based on a national, heterogenous cross-section of secondary education institutions. The chosen
sites were geographically, racially, socially, and culturally diverse. A group of twenty-five educators visited the pre-determined schools. Members of the team spent twenty school days at each building. The outcomes of the Boyer study merit discussion. According to the investigators:

quality education in the 1980s and beyond means preparing all students for the transformed world the coming generation will inherit. To achieve this goal, a comprehensive school-improvement program must be pursued urgently. Without excellence in education, the promise of America cannot be fulfilled.

Boyer and his staff presented their readers with priority recommendations relating to high school education. Suggestions regarding curriculum received critical attention. The panel believed that a common core of knowledge was necessary for all students. This curriculum must comprise "a study of those consequential ideas, experiences, and traditions common to all of us by virtue of our membership in the human family at a particular moment in history." All high school students should be required to take courses in literature, history, mathematics, science, foreign language, health, fine arts, civics, non-Western studies, technology, and work (a study of the attitudes concerning work).

The Boyer group examined the concept of preparation for work during the secondary years. The high school has a responsibility to its clients, concerning successful transition into the workplace. A single-track curriculum
should be required of all high school students. While the first two years would be geared to core studies, the last two years were to be a "transition" time for students. At this point in the educational process, time would be devoted to "elective clusters." Young people could select advanced studies in career options, or a combination of the two avenues. In order to accommodate the individualized needs of all students during the "transitional" time, high schools should consider alternative, community-based learning environments. 61

The Good High School: Portraits of Character and Culture was published in 1983. This account of American secondary education was crafted by Sara Lawrence Lightfoot. The author employed the use of portraiture in the exploration of secondary education. Portraiture is a powerful device which allows an amount of visual imagery to capture the essence of each individual school in relation to its people and extended environments. The three-year endeavor, which took place during the years of 1979 through 1982, was described by the author in the following way: "In these six portraits, I seek to capture the culture of these schools, their essential features, their generic character, the values that define their curricular goals and institutional structures, and their individual styles and rituals." 62

This experience in portraiture for Lightfoot centered
on the collection of data from a small pool of diverse high schools nationally, representing urban, suburban, and private sectors. These sites were chosen because of their quality of "goodness." According to the author, "the high schools portrayed in this book had an unusual degree of self-confidence, saw themselves as healthy and resilient institutions, and were relatively unthreatened by public scrutiny." 63

Sara Lightfoot purposely chose to study good schools. Good schools were educational sites deemed as such by staff, students, parents, and the community; these schools enjoyed fine reputations as well-regarded institutions with clear visions. The quality of goodness was defined by the author as "...the school's 'ethos'..." The concept of goodness is holistic in nature and must be viewed in context. 64

Lightfoot addressed the issues of equity and quality in education for adolescents. The researcher discussed the inadequacies of tracking used in most American high schools. Programming of high school students aligned itself along racial and class distinctions. The use of track programs were securely in place in the two urban high schools. 65

John I. Goodlad's record of schools was reported in A Place Called School: Prospects for the Future in 1984. This account of public education examined life in schools across a diverse cultural, racial, social, and geographical cross-
section of America, encompassing a sample of thirty-eight elementary and secondary-level sites in thirteen communities. The researchers found these schools to be representative of educational institutions nationally.66

Goodlad's study focused upon the examination of ten themes which described schools. The first theme was school functions. Preparation for life experiences was considered necessary. The second theme was the school's relevance in the lives of its clients. The third and fourth themes encompassed the issue of teaching and the conditions under which this vital service is provided. The fifth theme dealt with curricular matters. The sixth theme concentrated on the distribution of resources for learning purposes, especially the variable of time. The seventh theme was equity issues, which included but was not exclusive to differences in content and teaching practices for students in low, middle, and high-track programs. The eighth theme was depicted by the hidden or implicit curriculum of a school. The term "hidden or implicit curriculum" referred to the ways that the subject matter was presented to students, perhaps through the presentation of rote learning or problem-solving techniques. The ninth theme was considered to be satisfaction of people in the school community, which included principals, teachers, students, and parents. The tenth theme was a need for data, common to individual school sites. According to Goodlad, these ten
Themes provide the foundation which depict a thorough examination of descriptors, shaping the schooling process. Themes relating to issues of curricula at the secondary-level were considered to be of paramount importance in *A Place Called School*. According to Goodlad:

> the central problem for today and tomorrow is no longer access to school. It is access to knowledge for all. The dual challenge is that of assuring both equity and quality in school programs. . . . Two sets of conditions require attention. The first is an apparent division of secondary schools, particularly senior high schools, into essentially academic or vocational specialization. The second is a further division of the curriculum and accompanying pedagogy into courses presumed to be devoted to general education but in no way constituting a common core for all.

Goodlad recognized the importance of studying the following knowledge areas, "mathematics and science, literature and language, society and social studies, the arts, and the vocations." Horace's Compromise: The Dilemma of the American High School by Theodore R. Sizer in 1984 was a first report of a three-part trilogy, which was formulated from a five-year exploration of secondary American education. Chaired by Sizer, this endeavor was sponsored by the National Association of Secondary School Principals and the Commission on Educational Issues of the National Association of Independent Schools and resulted in *A Study of High Schools*. The project was undertaken in 1979 in order to focus the attention on public high schools, especially in the area of teaching and learning. According to Sizer:
Learning is a humane process, and young humans look to those human elders with whom they are in daily contact for standards, for help, and as models. That is what teachers are for. This book, inevitably, is a celebration of their work. Equally inevitably, its primary recommendation is that Americans restore to teachers and to their particular students the largest share of responsibility for the latter's education.70

During the 1981-82 academic year, Theodore Sizer and his staff visited dozens of public and private high schools nationally. The fictitious characters, Horace Smith and Mark, represented the prototype teacher and student in a typical American public high school.71 Dr. Sizer provided a portrayal of a representative teacher and student to illustrate to the general public the nature of an "average" high school. According to this researcher, "taking subjects in a systemized, conveyer-belt way is what one does in high school." This mindless process of activity is endured by students and their parents.72

Sizer addressed the subject of curricular offerings at the high school level. While this researcher does not subscribe to the theory of the "one best curriculum" for all educational institutions, a proposed model was presented, which could be tailored to the individual needs of schools. This arrangement focused on the organization of high schools into the following departments: inquiry and expression, mathematics and science, literature and the arts, and philosophy and history. Students could select electives which connected within these few areas of study. Preparation for successful workforce participation would be
developed through the acquisition of a good general education.73

Portraits of High Schools-A Supplement to High School: A Report on Secondary Education in America was authored by Vito Perrone and his associates in 1985. This ethnographic account, depicting thirteen of the fifteen high schools used in Ernest Boyer's study, provided an in-depth look into the selected diverse group of schools nationally. The descriptions of high schools furnished in this supplemental work formed the foundation on which Boyer's High School was based. Twenty-one prominent educators participated in the school observations, which took place in the broad national array of urban, suburban, and rural sites across diverse geographical, economic, social, ethnic, and racial lines.74

Perrone provided the staff of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching with valuable observations concerning the descriptive data of the selected high schools. While he admitted that secondary educational reform was necessary, the general climate of many high schools was positive. According to Perrone, "Overall, the schools we observed were congenial places, generally displaying evidence that teachers and administrators cared about the students."75

Perrone and his team found that the major areas of interest in high schools centered around social, intellectual, academic, citizenship, and pre-vocational
issues. Clearly defined educational missions for individual schools are required in order to develop constructive paths for adolescent youth. This team of investigators recommended the implementation of an untracked core curriculum for all students in grades nine and ten, focused on skills in reading, writing, listening, speaking, and problem-solving. During the transitional eleventh and twelfth years, learning opportunities should become more specialized, as in the exploration of work or advanced academic coursework in community settings.  

The Shopping Mall High School: Winners and Losers in the Educational Marketplace by Arthur Powell, et al., in 1985, represented a second report from A Study of High Schools. This three-year investigation of fifteen American high schools focused on the analogy between schools and shopping malls. According to the authors:

If Americans want to understand their high schools at work, they should imagine them as shopping malls. Secondary education is another consumption experience in an abundant society. Shopping malls attract a broad range of customers with different tastes and purposes. . . . In high schools a broad range of students also shop. They too can select from an astonishing variety of products and services conveniently assembled in one place with ample parking. Furthermore, in malls and schools many different kinds of transactions are possible . . . . Shoppers have wide discretion not only about what to buy but also about whether to buy.  

The accommodating feature of American public high schools was reflected in the curricular offerings. Powell, et al., discussed the four elements of secondary-level course work. First, the horizontal curriculum consisted of
all subjects taken for credit. Second, the vertical curriculum provided a multitude of variety within subject areas. Third, the extracurriculum, which included activities, clubs, and sports, was considered an integral part of high school life. Fourth, the services curriculum provided social and psychological services to students, addressing such issues as grief and abuse.79

Powell, et al., recommended the need for a drastic change in the way American public high schools served their clientele. The standard academic disciplines could be used to enhance intellectual capacities, such as reading, writing, and reasoning skills. The issue of curriculum, in addition to pedagogical concerns, must be addressed, to serve the educational needs of high school students.80

In 1986, Robert Hampel's The Last Little Citadel: American High Schools Since 1940 was released. This account marked the third report from A Study of High Schools. This report focused on the historical developments in secondary education from 1940 through 1984.81

An Imperiled Generation: Saving Urban Schools was published in 1988. This report of American secondary education was sponsored by The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The focus of this investigation centered on the education of urban adolescents, that involved the visitation of city high schools throughout the nation.82
The Carnegie Foundation stressed the need for a quality education for all students. According to the members of this report, "an urban school will be successful only as teachers, administrators, and community leaders have confidence that all students can succeed. Different approaches to learning are required, but all students, regardless of background, should be given the tools and encouragement they need to be socially and economically empowered." Students should not be labeled by tracks, which are the preferred way of programming students during the high school years. All students, regardless of race or social status, must receive both equitable and quality educations.

The members of this examination for The Carnegie Foundation recommended the study of a core curriculum for all secondary-level youngsters. This proposed group of academic areas would include knowledge in English, history, mathematics, science, and the arts. All students, irrespective of post-secondary plans, are entitled to core curriculum classes. The non-college bound youth are no exception. While tracking arrangements in the high schools should be eliminated, career-related courses were encouraged for work-bound students as long as vocational and academic classes provided meaningful life experiences for future work force participants. Committee members recommended the use of alternative school arrangements, such as the magnet
school or the "transition school." While the focus of the magnet school is related to a central vision for its clientele, the transition school allows for flexibility during the last two years of high school. In the transition school, students would be allowed to pursue various types of learning experiences outside of the traditional high school building, such as work or college study. 85

**Recognition of Successful Secondary Schools**

The recognition of successful American public high schools became common during the 1980s. Various sectors of society, such as the government, business, and education began to honor effective schools, which were making a difference in the education of its clients. Public attention should become focused on the positive gains made in many schools across the nation.

In 1982, the Ford Foundation decided to honor large urban high schools nationally, that had shown considerable improvement in student learning. This project was called the City High School Recognition Program. The selected schools were awarded monetary as well as public recognition, of the superior educational job done. 86

During 1984, John Roueche and George Baker, of The University of Texas at Austin, decided to investigate schools given honor by the 1983 United States Department of Education's Secondary School Recognition Program. The result of their effort culminated in the printing of
Profiling Excellence in America's Schools, which was published by the American Association of School Administrators (AASA).  

This examination of excellence in high schools was modeled after the eight basic attributes of effective organizations, which were provided in the Peters and Waterman book entitled In Search of Excellence. Questionnaires were used to gather information from school people. Of the 154 schools included in this sample, these researchers found 39 superior school climates, 34 exceptional principals, and 89 outstanding teachers. In 1985, the Final Report for the Council of Great City Schools Secondary Improvement Study reported encouraging descriptions concerning the effectiveness of American high schools. Principals and superintendents of thirty-five urban districts were surveyed. The results were promising; 80% or more of the districts reported some success, as a result of school improvement measures. The three most often cited consequences of implemented reforms were improved scores in basic skills (81%), increased collaboration between business and educational sites (73%), and improved student attendance (54%).  

Educational institutions have been victims of a backlash by the American public during the last quarter-century. Average citizens possess perceptions of what education should be, which is formulated from their own days
spent in school. These personalized images form walls which are difficult to break through. It is the responsibility of professional educators to lay the groundwork for realistic pictures of schools.
CHAPTER V: NOTES

2. Ibid., 10 & 14.
3. Ibid., 233.
7. Ibid., 3.
8. Ibid., 5.
9. Ibid., 45.
10. Ibid., 46-48.
14. College Board, Academic Preparation For College: What Students Need to Know and Be Able to Do (New York, N.Y.: College Entrance Examination Board 1983), 13; 31; 34.
19. Ibid., 57-58 & 60-61.
21. Ibid., 8.
22. Ibid., 13. The average responding school has 956 students, while 7% of the schools reported populations of
2,000 or more youngsters.

23. Ibid., 19-20 & 22.


28. Ibid., 3 & 7.


30. Ibid., viii.

31. Ibid., viii-ix.


39. Ibid., 8-9.


42. Ibid., 8-9.

43. Ibid., 21.

44. Ibid., 11.

45. Ibid., 21-22.
46. Cuban, 171.
47. Ibid., 199-201.
50. Ibid., 25-27.
53. Ibid., 16-17.
54. Ibid., 21.
55. Ibid., 22-34.
58. Ibid., xiii.
59. Ibid., 30.
60. Ibid., 302-305.
61. Ibid., 305-306.
63. Ibid., 19-22.
64. Ibid., 23-24.
65. Ibid., 357-360.
67. Ibid., 28-31.
68. Ibid., 140.
69. Ibid., 286.
71. Ibid., 7-8.
72. Ibid., 83.
73. Ibid., 132-135.
75. Ibid., 645.
76. Ibid., 652-654.
78. Ibid., 8.
79. Ibid., 12-13.
80. Ibid., 306-308.
81. Hampel, ix.
83. Ibid., 1.
84. Ibid., 3-4.
85. Ibid., 26-27 & 30.
88. Ibid., 156-158.
CHAPTER VI

THE SUGGESTED SOLUTION

Divergence in Business, Government, and Educational Perspectives

The United States has witnessed tremendous social and economic changes during the last quarter-century. The nation's major institutions have been forced to react during turbulent times. The public school system is no exception. The production of ill-prepared young adults for future life endeavors has focused misplaced blame on the schools.

The business, government, and educational communities have recognized the significance of complex social and economic factors in American society. The decline of the traditional family unit has produced major repercussions for American children. The socio-economic variables of parent education, income, and race/ethnicity provide important indicators for student success in school. Increasing numbers of poor students from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds have altered the composition of public high schools. Business, government, and education circles are aware of demographic changes regarding the size and shape of the workforce. Successful participation in "global
interactions" presents a key indicator of the nation's economic health. To achieve the best competitive edge possible, citizens must be equipped with the skills and competencies required of workers, who will be able to handle twenty-first century challenges. Business, government, and education critics understand that transitional social and economic variables exist in America. The rather simplistic blaming of one institution, such as schools, for preparing inadequately skilled workforce recruits is perplexing in modern America's highly complex society.

Business, government, and education commentators disagree as to which institution is primarily responsible for the education of American youth. Each sector has its own unique history, which shapes its worldview. Business, government, and education perspectives have been molded by historical developments, which influence policies toward public schools. If the nation's children do not acquire adequate knowledge and skills in school, social critics focus attention on the performance of professional educators. The nation's politicians pay considerable attention to public perceptions. If negative public perception exists, then the public school system becomes a scapegoat for frustration felt by many in the American public. For this reason, the public school system represents one prime example of how political power can be used to direct the education of a nation's most precious
commodity, its children.

The financial responsibility of public schooling falls squarely on the shoulders of American taxpayers. The financial support entitles the average citizen the privilege of being privy to educational decision-making. Often ill-conceived and politically motivated ideological perceptions have abused the reputations of professional educators. School people find themselves at the mercy of public opinion. The taxpaying public holds certain expectations concerning the performance of the nation's schools. Opinions of citizens are reflected in political circles at the local, state, and federal levels. These views are translated into financial packages, which are arranged in priority for educational funding purposes. Educational plans often reflect the general mood of constituents. For this reason, an intricate web of political variables interact to create educational policy-making for American schools and children.

Motivation of Business, Government, and Educational Sectors

The motivational factors that shape particular interests are important to consider in the discussion of business, government, and educational attitudes toward the schools. Historical trends have shaped opinions of special interest groups concerning American education. Business, government, and education groups have had different experiences with the educational establishment. Because of
this experiential variance, perspectives and expectations of what public educational systems should accomplish differ. One function of American public education has been the preparation of workers. In particular, high schools have provided the majority of training for immediate entry into the workforce.

The business community has a long but disjointed history of involvement in educational matters. In a capitalistic economy businesses seek to maximize profits. As long as well-qualified workers were available, business people generally were satisfied with the schools. During the mid-1960s to the late 1970s, the business sector was disinterested in pre-collegiate education. Businesses enjoyed a pool of competent workers. By the 1980s, the business community had redeveloped an interest in education due to decreasing numbers of recent high school graduates prepared to enter high-tech workplaces. This renewed concern proved to be beneficial for both business and education groups.

Business people expect the schools to accomplish certain goals. High school students should learn the necessary skills and competencies which enable them to compete successfully in future work situations. If qualified workforce candidates are not produced, then the business community blames educational institutions. Due to insufficient numbers of good workers, business groups
developed negative perceptions of the schools. During the early 1980s, the rekindling of interaction between business and schools helped to reduce these negative perceptions.

The question of federal aid to education has always been a controversial issue in the American political arena. Each American president has contributed his unique ideological twist to this longstanding debate. Of particular interest to this study, the Reagan years in Washington, D.C. illustrated the use of an educational platform as a sounding board for ideological rhetoric. President Reagan presented a dismal picture of poorly run schools where little learning ensued. For eight years, President Reagan successfully promoted his own personal world view under the guise of educational excellence. The American public responded positively to Reagan's sentiments regarding the deplorable state of education. Americans looked to the nation's capital for guidance in the area of educational reform. Schools were held responsible for the production of poor work candidates. This cry for academic excellence in American schools, especially in secondary education, reverberated at the federal, state, and local political levels.

The continuation of the "excellence in education" theme was promoted by the Bush administration. President George Bush used his position to reinforce and expand a governmental perspective concerning school and work.
Federal recognition of excellent secondary schools, in the form of award and grant incentives, and accountability measures at the state and local levels, represented a few of the measures Bush advocated.

Educational documentation abounds at the national level of government. Numerous reports, studies, and longitudinal surveys represent some types of documents produced in Washington, D.C. The National Assessment of Educational Progress, the National Longitudinal Surveys, and High School and Beyond represent ongoing instruments, which provide indicators of the nation's educational health. Other types of governmental publications try to assess the contemporary view of education. In general, federal documents reflect the current administration's ideological stance; and educational announcements are no exception.

Throughout American history, educators have often delegated their professional standing to the whims of the society-at-large. This action has not always delivered positive results in educational matters. The many social, economic, and political forces in society can act upon schools in negative ways. Only through an intelligent examination can an appropriate assessment of educational inadequacies be revealed.

Educators have always been influenced by the social, economic, and political mood of American society concerning schooling. The Sputnik scare prompted citizens to focus on
the quality of American high school education. The spectra of Soviet dominance in space exploration caused the United States to better understand the linkage of technological advances and world leadership. This realization held direct bearing for American education. The National Defense Education Act (NDEA) was quickly passed by Congress in 1958. This act provided monies, which were targeted for equipment and the study of mathematics, science, and foreign languages. Sputnik symbolized the impact that politicians, the media, and the public could exert on the schools.¹

The National Science Foundation (NSF) began to direct its efforts in addressing secondary-level education science and mathematics curricular concerns. Founded by Congress in 1950, the NSF was conceived of as a research and educational institution paying minimal attention to pre-collegiate issues. After the Sputnik crisis, the NSF became involved in secondary education. The culmination of these concerted activities resulted in the development of such curricula as "the new math" and "the new social studies." These piecemeal curricular innovations of the 1950s and 1960s were initiated in hope of improving high school education. It was projected that the combination of talent, additional funding, and innovative programs would improve American education.²

Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty and related social initiatives dominated educational reforms of the 1960s.
During the late 1960s and 1970s, high schools experienced student unrest, due to social and political pressures. The social and political issues of Vietnam, emerging racial and ethnic self-assertion, and increased access for minorities permeated the fabric of American society. According to Diane Ravitch, an educational historian:

> During the decade after 1965, political pressures converged on schools and universities in ways that undermined the authority to direct their own affairs. New responsibilities were assigned to educational institutions, even as effective authority was dispersed widely among students, faculty, unions, courts, state and federal regulatory agencies, state legislatures, Congress, the judiciary, and special interest groups. Educational administrators found themselves in the midst of unfamiliar power struggles.³

The issues which surfaced during the 1960s bore heavily on secondary education. Professional educators realized that high school reform was necessary. School people became interested in the concept of "humaneness" as a device to actively and constructively integrate adolescent students into high school life.

During the mid-1970s, social and economic issues such as Vietnam, energy shortages, increased global competition, crime, and drug addiction plagued America's domestic scene. On the education front, reports of declining SAT scores were publicized in the media. The public again responded to the challenge. By the late 1970s, the beginning of a renewed school reform movement was evident, which focused on improving student academic learning and achievement. This reform movement became known as the "excellence movement"
after the publication of *A Nation At Risk*.  

The educational reform movement of the 1980s was fueled by economic reasons. Americans began to question the supremacy of the United States in the global economy. A link between economic prosperity and schooling became common knowledge through educational publications by prominent scholars, blue-ribbon commissions, and task forces.  

The excellence movement of the 1980s addressed quality issues and low educational standards and expectations. Chester Finn, Jr. identified and discussed ten kinds of school reform used during the 1980s in *We Must Take Charge: Our Schools and Our Future*. Policy-makers rushed to legislate standards for students and teachers. Changes were initiated in the area of teacher recruitment, education, and licensure. Reformers stressed the need for a common group of core subjects and the development of higher-order critical thinking skills. Attention was also given to the area of testing and assessment with augmented measurement of learning outcomes. Incentives and rewards were used to motivate efforts to increase the pool of successful American school programs. Business and university partnerships were developed to provide technical support, offer assistance, and other incentives to public schools. The research on the "effective schools" movement offered insights into how successful schools functioned. Parental choice in the selection of schools for students was recommended. Finally,
the concept of school restructuring permeated the school reform literature of the 1990s. This elusive term can be defined as "reallocating roles and responsibilities, power relationships, and decision-making arrangements within individual schools and systems."^7

A flood of investigations by eminent scholars, task forces, and commissions were supported by private and public organizations during the 1970s and 1980s. Business, government, and education critics held opinions as to what ailed America's schools. The focus centered on economic productivity and the schools. High school graduates were not performing well in the American workplace.

Educational scholars were well-known for their examinations of high school institutions during the 1980s. Their professional insights were perceptive but not considered as serious solutions to the educational problems at hand. Researchers such as Mortimer J. Adler, Ernest L. Boyer, John I. Goodlad, and Theodore R. Sizer represent distinguished commentators. Yet, the opinions of professional educators were not superior in American school policy-making.

Theodore R. Sizer wrote an insightful article entitled "High School Reform: The Need for Engineering" for Phi Delta Kappan over a decade ago. The fundamental message stated that a complete reorganization of high school structures must be accomplished before serious reform measures can be
attained. Dr. Sizer said, "the hard fact remains that there is no serious way to improve high schools without revamping their structure. Politically painful though such a renovation may be, it is inescapable."  

Theodore Sizer's 1983 article discussed at least fourteen changes necessary in the organizational structure of American high schools. Secondary-level institutions should define a short clearly-articulated list of goals. Those students, who begin high school with poor academic skills, must spend the necessary time in the improvement of these deficiencies. Higher-order thinking skills, such as reasoning, analyzing, and synthesizing present the core of intelligent high school work. Learning should be based on mastery demonstrated, as in a culminating exit examination, and not on mere student attendance. Students must develop responsibility for and enjoyment for life-long learning. The existing curricular structure remains fractionalized and is inappropriate for the teaching of such important competencies as higher-order thinking skills. The hurried pace of most high schools is not conducive to the kind of dialectical instructional methods required to transmit critical thinking skills. A core group of high school work should be demanded of all students. The extended community resources should be utilized as legitimate learning opportunities for students. Teachers require autonomy and incentives to deliver excellence in classrooms. The
recruitment of well-qualified teaching candidates and the concept of "professionalism" in education will never be attained without attention to the closest link to students, which are the teachers. 9

When Dr. Sizer outlined this intelligent and knowledgeable plan of attack for American secondary education in 1983, many of his professional colleagues agreed with him. Yet, these recommendations were largely ignored in powerful political agendas. Sizer wisely prophesied:

It is our duty to join with colleagues to persuade the American political system-its public authorities and its great private philanthropies—that investment in imaginative educational engineering is absolutely essential if we are to have a secondary school system worthy of the talent and promise of American adolescents. 10

Future Directions

The 1990s offer hope for American secondary education. Business, government, and education communities are at the point of engaging in collaboration regarding school issues. Government and business participation are important to the future planning of educational policy-making decisions. The building of a competitive workforce is a vital concern affecting all Americans. This common interest provides a framework for a mutual working relationship to develop among the business, government, and education communities.

Paul Hill, a senior social scientist with The Rand Corporation in Washington, D.C., prepared a 1989 publication
entitled The Federal Role in Education: A Strategy for the 1990s. This report specifically addressed the issue of urban education and federal involvement. The main thrust should come from local initiatives and not by the federal government. According to Hill, "the purpose of federal participation must be to facilitate the emergence of local consensus and coalitions. Such coalitions need to be built by local leadership, in styles and sequences appropriate to local communities."  

Paul Hill was directly involved in a 1987-88 study of large-urban school districts. The report focused on six troubled metropolitan districts which have shown considerable improvement. This Rand Corporation project was possible due to funding provided by the James S. McDonnell Foundation of St. Louis, Missouri. Published in 1989 and entitled Educational Progress: Cities Mobilize to Improve Their Schools, the significant finding of this investigation was that the combined efforts of whole communities were paramount to improvement of public school systems. The full participation of civic, political, and business leaders, in addition to representatives from education and foundations, is required. State and federal leadership should function as facilitators to local projects.  

The National Alliance of Business (NAB) endorsed the concept of local initiatives concerning workforce quality in the 1992 report entitled Building a Workforce Investment
System for America. This paper focused on the development of skills required for twenty-first century workers. According to the NAB, the most crucial obstacle to the formation of a competitive American workforce is the lack of coordination between the private and the public sector. The NAB stated:

Business and government in each state and local community develop a workforce investment system that links existing training and education institutions in the effective partnership needed to build a highly skilled, high performance workforce.13

The NAB recommended the concept of workforce investment councils as viable models for use by local communities. The business-directed councils would be instrumental in providing the necessary leadership in shaping policy concerning workforce issues. The councils could serve as important liaisons between high schools and the workplace.14

The implementation of collaborative community projects, to improve workforce quality, is encouraging. The inclusion of professional educators in these ventures is promising. Yet, the educational community must not stand back in these current reform efforts. Educators need to take their rightful places at the forefront of reform and present their leadership capabilities.

American public education has provided its clientele with faithful service throughout the years. Thousands of citizens have passed through the doors of the nation's schools to acquire good, solid educations, which have served
them well in life endeavors. The public schools have been open to all people from a diverse mix of social, economic, racial, and ethnic backgrounds. Schools have provided common experiences for all youth.

Schooling for a wide array of youngsters is a monumental task. Schools do not operate in a vacuum. Educational institutions are dependent on the prevailing social, economic, and political climates of the country. The pressures of the contemporary mood weigh heavily on the schools. To this end, the American public school system becomes caught in a web of unfortunate circumstance.

Secondary education is a relatively stable phenomenon in American society. Yet, the availability of high school educations for all youth is a notion taken for granted by citizens. The preparation of youth for future life experiences is a major expectation of the high school experience. A solid foundation in academics and critical thinking skills is necessary for students bound for either post-secondary schooling or work situations. Curricular offerings in secondary-level institutions are geared toward these activities.

The training of young people has remained a legitimate goal of secondary education. Traditionally, vocational educational programs have been highly visible components of secondary education. Yet, students in high school vocational tracks have not uniformly proven to be successful
as entry-level workers. Future employees have not been equipped with the necessary skills for job application.

America has experienced a shortage of qualified workers for the nation's changing workplace during the last quarter-century. High schools are expected to furnish the competencies required for work. The old practices and organizational patterns of secondary education will not operate effectively for twenty-first century requirements.

Educational reform measures of the 1980s have enjoyed mixed reviews, at best. Schooling has remained relatively unchanged. High schools operate similarly to their predecessors of the early twentieth century. Social, economic, and political factors are drastically different during modern times. Educational needs differ also.

The high school educational agenda for the 1990s should consist of restructuring efforts by school districts. Secondary-level institutions need to focus on ways to challenge their students academically as well as training them for competitive employment opportunities. A close look at vocational education programs deserves scrutiny in order to meet the needs of future employers. Non-college-bound youth require the same broad-based grounding in the academics and thinking skills as their college-bound counterparts.

Professional educators should be regarded as leaders in schooling in American society. School people must take
proactive postures regarding educational reform. The business and government communities should desist from pursuing educational agendas, which are self-serving. The educational community has to assume the responsibility for and the leadership necessary for agenda-setting. In addition, the development of professionalism within its ranks is essential in attracting and keeping capable people who will feel pride and excitement that goes with helping America's youth unfold and mature into productive citizens.
CHAPTER VI NOTES

2. Ibid., 231-232.
3. Ibid., 267.
6. Ibid., 42-51.
7. Ibid., 48.
9. Ibid., 682-683.
10. Ibid., 683.
12. Paul T. Hill et al., Educational Progress: Cities Mobilize to Improve Their Schools (Santa Monica, Ca.: The Rand Corporation, 1989), iii & 1.

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VITA

The author, Linda Barbara Kukler, is a lifelong resident of Chicago, Illinois. Ms. Kukler entered the teaching profession in 1971 after earning her Bachelor of Arts Degree, With Honors, at Northeastern Illinois University, majoring in Linguistics and Education. In 1979, following a two year sabbatical, her Master's Degree, in Speech Pathology and Audiology, was conferred by Southern Illinois University.

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During her career in the Chicago Public Schools, Ms. Kukler has initiated speech and language programs for students of diverse abilities from preschool through adulthood. At present, she supervises speech and language services at Chicago's Northside Learning Center, a regional school, serving developmentally-delayed young people, ages 15-21. Northside's innovative, community-based programs have become models for other facilities nationwide.

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