

TRENDS IMPACTING PUBLIC EDUCATION:

***Getting Ready for
The 21st Century Agenda for Education***

**Glenn Koocher
Massachusetts Association of School Committees**

Some Perspective

- ❑ EDUCATION AS A SOFTER SCIENCE
 - Harder to assess
 - Fewer scientific principles
 - More vulnerable to political rhetoric over reality.
 - ❑ EVERYONE THINKS THEY'RE AN EXPERT
 - Many perspectives based on personal, family, or professional experience
 - ❑ FUNDING WILL NEVER BE ADEQUATE IN MINDS OF STAKEHOLDERS
 - ❑ The population of our planet is expected to grow 50% between 2000 and 2050
 - ❑ 51% of all 1st graders in the largest 10 American cities are at-risk minority and low income children.
-

EDUCATION MUST BE VIEWED FROM SEVERAL PERSPECTIVES

□ WHAT WILL WE NEED TO DO ?

□ WHAT MUST WE DO ?

- Urgency

- Competitive Pressure

□ WHAT CAN WE DO ?

- Given economics

- Given societal problems

- Political rhetoric

WE CAN LEARN FROM EACH OTHER

– Health Care

- Health Care: a Great Model for Education
 - Universality of application
 - Diligence in study and performance
 - Cost
 - Assessment and accountability
 - Ethical decision making
-

WE CAN LEARN FROM EACH OTHER

– Environment

- ❑ Unavoidable issues to confront
 - ❑ Difference of perspectives for solutions
 - ❑ Integration of science, individual social responsibilities, economic interests
 - ❑ International implications
 - ❑ Ethical decision making
-

WE CAN LEARN FROM EACH OTHER

– Economics

- ❑ Ask three economics for solutions and get three different responses
 - ❑ As three educators for solutions and get six responses.
 - ❑ Unlimited variables in real world study
-

CONFRONTING CHANGE

“Resistance as a Function of Fear and Pain”

- Culture of the “education community”
 - Timidity
 - Respect for status quo and status erat
 - Resistance to radical change
 - Process obsessive
 - Politically naïve
 - Turf obsession and disconnect at various levels (including higher education and social agencies).
-

THE OTHER FACTOR: Special Interests

- Powerful special interests:
 - Educators
 - Parents
 - Civic Officials
 - Corporate educational services
 - Corporate general special interests
-

LEGACY PROBLEM

- Post WWII culture:
 - Complex societal issues
 - Economic disparity
 - Numerous diversions from diligence
 - Role of politics/regulation
 - The “Blob” factor
 - Politically polarized environment
-

IMPLICATIONS OF THE LEGACY

- Inconsistent instruction in schools in:
 - Science
 - Mathematics
 - Foreign Languages
 - Achievement Gap
-

TRENDS WE MUST DEAL WITH

- Old will outnumber the young
 - Intergenerational warfare in many disciplines (jobs, economics, health care)
 - Changing racial demographics
 - An emerging nation of minorities by 2060
 - Demographics of school faculty changes 30 years later than community.
 - Student Information Acquisition changes
-

TRENDS

- ❑ Expanding world economics
 - ❑ Expanding global communications
 - ❑ Unprecedented and growing pace of change
 - ❑ We must prepare for jobs that do not exist!
 - Some of the new occupations include Cybrarians, Web Gardners, Robotic Engineers, Automotive Fuel Cell Battery Technician and Hybrid Technicians, and Programming Artists
-

TRENDS: Students in 2020 (Gen X; Millennials; and beyond)

- ❑ Students embrace collaboration
 - ❑ Students live in broad community and want role in their future.
 - ❑ World developments and risks call for a role for education
-

ACTIONS REQUIRED (Consensus?)

- ❑ Strengthen foreign language instruction
 - ❑ Strengthen science, math, technology, and engineering studies
 - ❑ Integrate innovative, creative, and other elements to curricula
 - ❑ Expedite acquisition of “wisdom” skills that we accumulate as we age.
-

ACTIONS REQUIRED

- Provide incentives for best minds to commit to education
 - Tuition relief
 - Loan forgiveness
 - Value-Based Wages (Merit Pay?)
 - Encourage acceptance of change, innovation, and evolution of skills
 - Foster creativity and invention
 - Promote lifelong learning
 - Value educational and intellectual leadership
-

ACTIONS REQUIRED

- Thinking globally and integrating global studies and world issues into the curricula at strategic points.
 - Force colleges and universities to be part of the continuum in:
 - Training generations of teachers
 - Aligning strategies and curriculum
-

THE FUTURE OF "SCHOOL"

- What should "school" look like; Must it be the same for everyone
 - SCHOOL WITHOUT BOOKS
 - Longer Day and Year
 - Heavy focus on STEM subjects
 - Competence in foreign language
 - Options for Distance Education
 - Virtual high schools
 - Virtual specialized classes
 - VIRTUAL SCHOOLING
 - Family involved to greater degree
 - Open to all ages, all the time.
 - Arts as vehicles for encouraging creativity and innovation
 - Ethics and Service Learning
 - Pedagogical shift to the new learning styles of emerging generations
 - Encouraging continuous improvement
-

FUTURE OF SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

- A. Is “local control” a dinosaur?
- B. Can the state oversee education?
- C. Could we create cyber-districts?
- D. Must we cater to parents?
- E. All of the above in some combination

“How do we teach civic engagement and responsibility in a cyber world?”

QUESTION FOR GOVERNANCE

- Must the governance and regulatory system be punitive in order to succeed?
-

MEASURING SUCCESS

- Accountability debate is overwhelmed by special interests.
 - Multiple assessments vs. tests
 - Can and should we be measuring a creative index?
 - How can we measure innovation in the making?
-

Implications

- ❑ Understand divergent views
 - ❑ Make change peacefully and democratically
 - ❑ Developing student teamwork and management skills
 - ❑ Build media and literacy skills
-

Implications for Education

- Helping students learn across disciplines
 - Emphasizing the arts as a way to create, express, and think across disciplines
-

HAUNTING QUESTION

- How will we deal with emerging a) ethical issues and b) security:
 - Teaching students to think ethically in order to survive in an ethical society.
 - Deal with technological advances
 - Education
 - Health Care
 - Workforce
 - Deal with Safety
-

Implications for Education

- ❑ Balancing economic development and environmental sustainability
 - ❑ Considering the impact of globalization
 - ❑ Stimulating creativity
-

THE QUESTION OF ETHICS AND VALUES

- Do we have the moral compass to guide us in:
 - Confronting international poverty
 - Unite the generations at home
 - Share our success locally and globally
-

A Matter of Values

If we do not take deliberate steps to write our values into law and to act on them, at some point in the not too distant future the invisible hand of time, events, and economics will write its own values for us.

And when it does, we may be powerless to change them.

Thomas H.D. Mahoney
Professor of Humanities, MIT
1946-1984
