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ABSTRACT

The four parts of this memorandum are not intended to be definitive or complete; rather, their object is to present a range of alternative strategies for federal elementary and secondary education policy and to provide an initial basis for discussion. The first problem addressed is that of meeting the serious and multiple needs of children living in areas of concentrated poverty and of the schools serving such children. The second problem is the fragmentation of services and resulting educational, physical, and social isolation of special needs children. The third problem is the difficult transition that many youths, and particularly minorities and women, often make from secondary schools into the workplace. The last problem discussed is inefficiency in the provision of elementary and secondary education. Collectively, the analyses in this memorandum identify several broad features of potential solutions that would: (1) make connections and increase coordination among elements in the educational system, such as students, families, and schools, and among federal education programs, as well as certain noneducation services; (2) raise standards for students and schools; and (3) do more with current levels of support. (MLF)

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MEMORANDUM October 26, 1992

SUBJECT : **Selected Reform Options for Federal Education Policies and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act**

FROM : Education Section
Education and Public Welfare Division

In this memorandum, Congressional Research Service (CRS) analysts examine some of the fundamental problems confronting elementary and secondary education, and analyze selected reform proposals intended to address these problems. Each of these problems, along with others not discussed here, might be an aspect of the 103d Congress' work on education in general, and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in particular.

The four parts of this memorandum are not intended to be definitive or complete analyses. Rather, their objective is to present a range of alternative strategies for Federal elementary and secondary education policy, and to provide an initial basis for discussion. If requested, more substantive background information on, and analysis of, these issues and proposals can be provided. It should be emphasized that these are not the only major problems affecting American elementary and secondary education; and the strategies considered in this memorandum are not the only ones that might be effective in addressing these problems. Further, the CRS neither endorses nor opposes these or any other particular reform strategy.

Below is a brief summary and analysis of the alternative strategies as a group. After this, the memorandum presents the four analyses in parts one through four. Each part begins with a summary of the specific strategy and the problems it is intended to address.

This memorandum was prepared by the Education and Public Welfare Division to enable distribution to more than one congressional client.

SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

The problems addressed in the four analyses are as follows:

- The issue of meeting the serious and multiple needs of children living in areas of concentrated poverty and of the schools serving such children. The potential solution analyzed in this part involves (1) intensive support for schools with high poverty student populations, (2) comprehensive services to these students and their families, and (3) accountability for achieving improved student outcomes. (Part 1)

- The fragmentation of services and resulting educational, physical, and social isolation of special needs children in schools. A proposal is analyzed that includes (1) consolidation of certain Federal programs, (2) concentration of Federal services on a broad group of special needs students, (3) substantial reform of instructional policies and practices, including the institution of cooperative learning and content mastery centers, (4) school-based decisionmaking, and (5) performance standards to ensure that improvement in achievement is accomplished by all groups of students, including the lowest performing. (Part 2)

- The difficult transition that many of our youth, and particularly minorities and women, often make from secondary schools into the workplace. A more effective transition may bolster productivity in the workplace. This part analyzes possible modifications to current Federal programs that might strengthen the ties between schools and work. Particular attention is directed to youth apprenticeships that would formally focus students' high school years on (1) exploring different occupations, (2) identifying career goals, and (3) integrating academic instruction with job-based experiences and learning. (Part 3)

- Inefficiency in the provision of elementary and secondary education. Reduction of this inefficiency may be a means of achieving educational improvement. Several possible ways of reducing inefficiency are analyzed, including (1) reducing the number of years of schooling that individuals complete, (2) decentralizing the control of schools, and (3) expanding responsibility for education to other institutions and groups. (Part 4)

Analysis of the potential solutions reviewed in each part suggests that they would pose substantial challenges to traditional Federal education policies and

programs. These policies and programs, including those in the ESEA, have generally been oriented toward enhancing the **inputs** into the educational system, concentrating on targeting Federal assistance on specific, discrete groups of students, particularly in an effort to address equity concerns. These policies have not traditionally attended to the needs of educational system, schools, or children **as a whole**. In particular, they may not have coherently addressed students' multiple educational and related needs.

Collectively, the analyses in this memorandum identify several broad features of potential solutions to diverse educational problems that may point in new directions for Federal policymaking. These proposals would:

- make **connections and increase coordination** among elements in the educational system, such as students, families, and schools, and among Federal education programs, as well as certain noneducation services;

- **raise standards** for students and schools; and

- **do more with current levels of support.**

Connections and Increasing Coordination

Implicit or explicit in each strategy analyzed in this memorandum is concern about the consequences of a lack of connection and coordination in elementary and secondary education. Work is unconnected to schooling (part 3). The diverse, multiple needs of poor children are not connected to necessary academic and social services, nor are compensatory education services well coordinated with most regular education services for disadvantaged pupils (part 1). Students with special needs are unconnected with the mainstream of academic instruction (part 2). Different connections among educational programs and policies would help make schools and their education processes more efficient (part 4).

Connections and coordination are also aspects of the potential solutions explored in each part below. Coordination of services for disadvantaged students is proposed (parts 1 and 2). Linking special needs students to mainstream instruction, services, and other students may be pursued (part 2). Connecting the ties between secondary schools and the workplace may help ease the school-to-work transition for many students (part 3). For Federal policymakers, perhaps the most important aspect of the options considered in this memorandum is that connections among Federal programs (parts 2 and 3), and between Federal programs and schools' overall educational activities (parts 1 and 2) may be critical to addressing fundamental educational problems, including those covered in this memorandum.

Raise Standards

Without exception, the alternative strategies include raising standards as an element in the reform options they explore. Raising standards could give

more meaning to the high school diploma, potentially reducing the inefficient prolonging of schooling for many students (part 4), or facilitating the transition from school to work (part 3). Student performance standards should be applied so as to ensure that all students, particularly those in the lowest performing groups, benefit from educational interventions (part 2). Heightened standards for student outcomes become integral to efforts to support site-based decisionmaking and to increase accountability in schools (parts 1 and 2).

Do More With Current Support

In general, these alternative strategies presume that solutions to the problems each addresses do not require large aggregate increases in resources, rather they explicitly or implicitly suggest that making better use of current resources will be necessary. The attention to efficiency in part 4--maximizing outcomes for a given level of investment--is only the most explicit manifestation of this premise. Indeed, none of these strategies calls for a major investment of new Federal funding. Alternatives explored include consolidation of current funding to permit more efficient use of funds (part 2); more narrow targeting of funds on a particularly needy population (part 1); reconsideration of the extent to which education is to be provided through schools (part 4); and reduction in the time it takes individuals to complete their schools (part 4).

PART 1: CONCENTRATED POVERTY--ITS EDUCATIONAL EFFECTS AND A POSSIBLE STRATEGY TO ADDRESS THEM

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SUMMARY

Schools serving populations with high poverty rates face a wide range of especially serious problems, and often have inadequate resources to meet these challenges. While several current Federal education programs, especially chapter 1, title I, ESEA, are intended to address these concerns, they: (1) are likely to be insufficiently targeted on high poverty areas to provide adequate assistance; (2) often have relatively marginal effects on the total educational experience of participating children; (3) may only partially compensate for the low level of State and local resources available, relative to needs of children attending such schools; and (4) base accountability largely on inputs and procedures, rather than outcomes for pupils. A strategy of targeting assistance on high poverty schools, providing intensive assistance to improve the entire program of these schools, including comprehensive services to pupils and their families, and basing accountability on pupil outcomes, might be more effective. A major weakness of such an approach is that many areas of the Nation might have no schools qualifying for aid, potentially narrowing the constituency for the program; further, the program might have no effect on systemwide policies or practices, and the assistance would be costly, at least on a per pupil basis.

DISCUSSION

What Are the Educational Effects of Concentrated Poverty, and Why Should Federal Policy Address This Problem?

The educational effects of concentrations of poor people--primarily in central cities but also in some rural areas--are among the most serious problems facing the American educational system. Research has indicated that in schools serving areas with high poverty rates, the achievement of **all** pupils, not just that of the individuals from poor families, is negatively affected. For example, the average achievement levels of nonpoor children in high poverty schools has been found to be lower than those of poor children in schools with low poverty rates. Further, for all children, the educational effects of poverty are much more severe, the greater the concentration and duration of poverty.[1]

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[1]See, for example, U.S. Library of Congress. *Chapter 1 Concentration Grants: An Analysis of the Concept, and Its Embodiment in Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Legislation*. CRS Report for Congress No. 88-670 EPW, by Wayne Riddle. Washington, 1988. 28 p. Also see U.S. Department

Schools serving high poverty areas not only have low aggregate pupil achievement levels in general, but also tend to have disproportionate shares of pupils with specific educational difficulties--such as limited English language proficiency, given the high rates of immigration into many high poverty areas in recent years, and a variety of learning disabilities. Poor parents may less frequently get involved with school functions or learning activities at home than other parents, frequently because of language barriers, low educational attainment, reflecting the parents' own lack of success in school and a lack of the knowledge to help their children with schoolwork, or--especially in single-parent families--lack of available time and energy. High rates of pupil mobility in high poverty areas also tend to reduce educational attainment.

High poverty neighborhoods and schools are often disrupted by violent crime and drug distribution. Children are frequently distracted from educational goals by unmet health and nutritional needs, or lack of secure arrangements for their care before and after school. As a result of these wide-ranging, unmet needs and conditions, and a lack of role models of mainstream "success" in the community as middle class families flee areas of concentrated poverty, pupils are poorly motivated to achieve in schools.

Schools in high poverty areas not only face greater educational problems, but also frequently have fewer resources with which to deal with them. Teacher attrition rates reportedly are higher in poor districts. Teacher mobility rates also appear to be higher in such districts, as more experienced and qualified teachers leave for more congenial and supportive--and often better paying--teaching environments elsewhere. Educational facilities that are often old and/or poorly maintained can reduce educational motivation and productivity. In spite of supplemental Federal funds, through chapter 1[2] and other programs--the total level of Federal, State, and local funds available per pupil is often relatively low in comparison with the variety and level of special pupil needs and high operating costs (including costs for maintenance, repair, security, etc.) in high poverty central city areas.

While model programs for the education of disadvantaged children in high poverty areas are conducted in some localities, educational policies and practices in these areas often exacerbate educational and environmental deficiencies. Institutional rigidities in the policies and practices of LEA and school administrators are often barriers to improvement, especially a lack of knowledge about, or incentives to use, innovative educational techniques, or an unwillingness to recognize and act to resolve deficiencies in current instructional programs. In particular, an over-emphasis on remedial "basic skills" instruction, rather than a focus on "higher order thinking skills" (e.g., problem-solving, interpretation, etc.), may inadvertently cause disadvantaged youth to fall further

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of Education. Office of Policy and Planning. *The Chapter 1 Implementation Study, Interim Report*. Washington, 1992. p. 156-162.

[2]Chapter 1 of title I, Elementary and Secondary Education Act--education for the disadvantaged.

behind others in their educational achievement. Further, a reluctance to seriously involve parents, especially the low-income parents, in educational activities, policy development, and services is frequently a major problem.

Current Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and Other Federal Programs and Policies That at Least Partially Address This Problem

The primary ESEA program that addresses educational problems of pupils in high poverty areas is the program for education of disadvantaged children--chapter 1, title I of the ESEA. Funds are allocated to local educational agencies (LEAs) primarily on the basis of their number of poor children, and distributed to schools in the **relatively** low income areas of each participating LEA. Chapter 1 funds are intended to serve the educational and related needs of low achieving children attending that school. For nearly all of the chapter 1 funding, an LEA need have only 10 children from poor families in order to participate, and approximately 90 percent of all LEAs do so. A small portion of chapter 1 funds is allocated to districts with "concentrations" of poor children, that is districts with a school-age child poverty rate of 15 percent or more, or at least 6,500 such children; however, since a large majority of children reside in such districts, these grants are not really concentrated or targeted on high need areas.

In the great majority of cases, chapter 1 funds may be used only to serve individual children who are the lowest achievers in schools with chapter 1 programs. However, in schools with very high poverty rates--75 percent or more--chapter 1 aid may be used on a "schoolwide" basis, not limited to the specific children eligible for chapter 1 services. This is currently done in approximately 1,400 schools in about 4 percent of participating LEAs,[3] most of them in urban areas of concentrated poverty.

Federal programs outside of the ESEA address some of the other needs of children living in high poverty areas. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act supports services to disabled pupils, including those with learning disabilities, who are disproportionately found in high poverty schools. The Head Start program provides educational, health, nutritional, and social services to poor children aged 3-5 years. Even Start is a relatively new, small, but fast growing program providing services jointly to preschool children and their parents who lack a high school diploma. The Bilingual Education Act supports programs for the growing number of limited English proficient (LEP) pupils. Other Federal programs at least partially address nutritional, health, housing, and social service needs of children living in high poverty areas.

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[3]Department of Education, *The Chapter 1 Implementation Study*, p. 3-4.

There are several deficiencies in the current Federal education programs for areas of poverty concentration, as outlined below.

- Not all of the eligible children are served, especially in high poverty areas.
- There is some evidence that programs such as chapter 1 are least effective in the highest poverty schools.[4]
- The aid is spread thinly--for example, about three-quarters of all public elementary schools have chapter 1 programs.
- The level of funding per child served is frequently insufficient to meet all of the additional costs of serving the child's educational and related needs.
- Even in the case of chapter 1 "concentration grants," aid is not efficiently targeted on areas of poverty concentration.
- The range of programs, services, and agencies that may be available to meet the multiple needs of children in high poverty areas is usually incomplete and almost always insufficiently uncoordinated.
- With the possible exceptions of some schoolwide plan sites, Federal programs such as chapter 1 are generally poorly integrated with, and have little effect on, the overall school program.

One **possible, future** exception to this pattern is the "Weed and Seed" program initiated by the Administration in 1991, and included, in modified form, in recent legislation to aid urban and rural areas.[5] Under this concept, aid would be given to a limited number of areas of concentrated poverty, to address jointly a wide range of needs for crime control, job training, education, health care and housing. At this juncture, this effort focuses more on crime control

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[4]For example, a recent Department of Education (ED) report found that on a standardized reading test for third grade pupils, 30 percent of the chapter 1 participants in high poverty schools (75-100 percent of pupils receiving free/reduced price school lunches) scored below the 10th percentile, whereas only 10 percent of chapter 1 participants in low poverty schools (0-19 percent of pupils receiving free/reduced price school lunches) had such low scores. Of course, this partially reflects the effects of high poverty rates on the entry achievement level of chapter 1 participants, as well as the effects of chapter 1 services. Department of Education, *The Chapter 1 Implementation Study*, p. 160.

[5]The conference version of H.R. 11, the Revenue Act of 1992 (title XI, subtitle B).

than on education. More importantly, while this approach appears to be promising, it has begun to be implemented in few places, and its effects are unknown.

Elements of a Possible Strategy to More Effectively Address Educational Problems Associated With Concentrated Poverty

A strategy to address the educational and related needs resulting from concentrated poverty is outlined below. It is described here for discussion purposes only and is one of a series of possible alternative strategies for Federal aid to elementary and secondary education that are considered in this memorandum.

This strategy has several elements, each of which is integral to achieving its objectives, which are essentially to provide effective, substantial, and comprehensive services to schools in greatest need, in a manner that provides both flexibility and accountability. It would target assistance on elementary and secondary schools serving high poverty areas, as one of the highest priority needs in American education. Within those schools, the focus would be on **improving the entire school's operations**, not just services provided to individual children who are most in need. The assumptions are that services would be most effectively provided in this manner, and that in high poverty schools most pupils will have substantial educational needs anyway. Services would be comprehensive--addressing health, social service, and other "non-academic" needs as well. The program would incorporate and involve as partners each pupil's parents and other family members to the extent possible. Finally, school staff would be given not only additional resources but also a great deal of flexibility--with school-based management, and accountability requirements based on outcomes, not inputs or processes--in determining how best to improve the performance of the pupils in their school. Key elements of the strategy are described below.

- Provide aid to **high poverty schools** only.

Aid would be awarded only to schools serving high poverty areas. LEAs or States without such schools would receive no funds. It might be appropriate to have different poverty rate or number thresholds for secondary versus elementary schools. Approaches might include eligibility for schools conducting chapter 1 schoolwide plans, schools located in federally supported enterprise zones, or schools serving concentrations of pupils living in publicly subsidized housing.

- Provide **comprehensive, intensive, schoolwide**, and--to the extent needed and possible--**whole-family services**.

Services would be sufficiently intensive, in terms of resources, expenditures, and time, to provide truly substantial promise of meeting a child's unmet educational and related needs, as determined by the schools. Services would also be comprehensive, incorporating school-based or school-coordinated health

(including mental health), social, child care, and perhaps other services. Participating schools could be required to provide certain services, such as extended day care and mental health services, unless they demonstrate that these services are being adequately and conveniently provided to students and their families by other local institutions or agencies. Where possible, services would also be extended to parents and other family members, including children under the age of 5 years. In particular, English language, other academic and parenting skills instruction would be provided to parents. The chapter 1 schoolwide plans, as conducted in some LEAs, as well as several[6] model programs share several aspects of this approach.

In line with this requirement, and in view of past occasions when Federal educational service goals were not matched with necessary amounts of Federal aid, it should be provided that Federal funds equal a substantial amount per pupil in participating schools before the program takes effect in those schools. Further consideration of the appropriate "trigger" level of funding is necessary, but one possible benchmark is at least 50 percent of the national average expenditure per pupil for public elementary and secondary education for each child enrolled in participating schools.

- Give grantees a high degree of **regulatory flexibility**, including authority to commingle funds from different Federal, State, and local programs and agencies, through "performance agreements" negotiated with all relevant agencies.

The regulatory waiver provisions of the conference version of S. 2, 102d Congress, provide an example of this approach. Some States--such as North and South Carolina, Washington, and Minnesota through its charter schools--are also experimenting with wide-ranging regulatory waivers. Schools that failed to meet the terms of their performance agreements would be dropped from the program.

- Use the **school-based management** approach to maximize the ability of school level staff to respond creatively and effectively to pupil needs.

In order to efficiently use the additional Federal resources as well as meet outcome goals, the principal, teachers, and other staff of participating schools, as well as parents and other representatives of pupils served by the schools would have maximum flexibility to decide how funds from this program, **as well as other resources**, would be used. Within the limits of only the essential

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[6]These include the model school programs developed by James Comer of Yale University (School Development Program), Henry Levin of Stanford University (Accelerated Schools), and the Center for Effective Schooling of Disadvantaged Students at Johns Hopkins University (Success for All).

State and LEA policies and requirements,[7] as well as the requirement that comprehensive services be provided as needed, school staff and other immediately interested parties should have maximum flexibility to both plan for use of the additional Federal funds and to implement that plan.

- Establish accountability on the basis of **"high" outcome goals**, that are linked to demanding State and/or national curriculum standards, and appropriate assessments.

The regulatory flexibility noted above would be complemented by an emphasis on outcome measures. While outcome goals would be negotiated with participating States and LEAs, not specifically mandated in the Federal statute or regulations,[8] efforts would be directed toward making the goals as strict and challenging as possible. A focus on instructing disadvantaged children in higher order skills (e.g., interpretation, analysis, synthesis, problem-solving, etc.), in addition to remedial basic skills, would be part of this emphasis. The Accelerated Schools concept exemplifies this approach. There would be an emphasis on improving the quality and variety of instructional materials available to the pupils in participating schools. Schools would be encouraged, but not required, to lengthen the total amount of instructional time to which pupils in participating schools are exposed, by such steps as increasing the school day and year, or offering expanded summer programs.

- Include also **incentive/merit grants** for successful programs, and **"tough" program improvement requirements** for unsuccessful ones supported under this proposal.

Another aspect to the accountability approach of this proposal would be provision of financial rewards to especially successful programs, as are provided in several States and authorized under chapter 1 to a limited extent. Similarly, sanctions--including significant technical assistance and program improvement efforts--would be applied to unsuccessful programs. Initial experience with the chapter 1 program improvement provisions enacted in 1988 might provide guidance in this area, particularly drawing attention to a propensity of many States and LEAs to set minimal outcome standards for schools serving the disadvantaged if not required to set more challenging goals.

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[7]Examples might include State curriculum frameworks or assessment requirements, or State and Federal civil rights protections for disabled children.

[8]The Federal statute and/or regulations could list a variety of possible outcome measures from which participating States and LEAs could choose.

- Allow no "**categorization**" of children within these schools, other than that necessary for diagnostic purposes. Similarly, discourage schools from pulling pupils out of their regular classrooms for "special" instruction--have services provided in a "mainstream" environment whenever possible.[9]

It is widely believed that educational programs are most effective overall when pupils work primarily within mixed ability groups, rather than being tracked or categorized into separate treatment or pullout settings. At the same time, the basic civil rights requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) would continue to apply to disabled children. Under this strategy, any such separate treatment of pupils would be for **very** limited periods of time, and would provide **net** increases in instructional time, not just a substitution of one form of instruction for another. While these requirements may be seen as contradicting the general theme of regulatory flexibility, this is an area in which States and LEAs have historically proven to be in need of guidance. Among existing programs, the "Success for All" model emphasizes limiting pull out services to brief, intensive periods.

- Require States to provide greater **equalization** of State and local funds among LEAs and schools, so that the Federal aid does not supplant State and local resources. In particular, require that expenditures and resources per pupil in participating schools be comparable to at least the average levels in schools statewide, LEA-wide, or metropolitan area-wide (whichever standard is higher).

This would represent an expansion of the comparability concept now included in chapter 1, to apply outside, as well as within, the LEA. This would help avoid situations where Federal aid is largely offset by low State and local revenues in participating schools, relative to schools statewide or area-wide. For example, the latest New Jersey school finance court ruling and subsequent legislation emphasized the provision of extra funds to high poverty urban schools so that they might be able to offer services and resources comparable to those in affluent suburbs.[10] States might be allowed to use alternative means to demonstrate that equal educational opportunities are provided to pupils in high poverty versus other schools, although it is not clear what those alternatives might be.

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[9]Part 2 of this memorandum addresses this issue more thoroughly.

[10]More recent State budget legislation may substantially limit New Jersey's ability to meet this requirement.

- Provide substantial **inservice training and access to information** on exemplary programs and practices to **all** teachers in participating schools.

Teachers are often unaware of the model approaches and practices that they might utilize in teaching disadvantaged children. More extensive efforts could be made to increase their knowledge of promising approaches. Technical assistance centers, such as those established under chapter 1, and on-line computer services readily available to teachers might be effective means for providing this information. The model programs mentioned above place great emphasis on extensive and continuing teacher training and involvement.

- In participating **secondary** schools, focus on improving the **transition from school to work.**[11]

A key problem with most current elementary and secondary schools is that they fail to adequately prepare disadvantaged students, especially those who do not intend to enter a traditional, 4-year college program, for the transition from school to work. This might be accomplished through apprenticeships or other training programs that develop specific job skills as well as broader, positive work habits and attitudes.

- All students should have school **staff members who know them personally** and who show evidence of concern about their individual progress, especially at the secondary level.

The anonymity that often characterizes student life at large secondary schools could be counteracted by decreasing the size of classes and/or schools. This need not require the construction of additional facilities; alternatives include the "school within a school" approach, or certain forms of "team teaching" under which the same group of teachers is responsible for instructing a limited number of pupils over several school years.

- Encourage innovative efforts to **increase** the academic **motivation** of pupils in high poverty areas.

Finally, this strategy should encourage participating schools to develop and test innovative ways to increase the motivation of their pupils to succeed academically. While it is essential to raise the quality of educational resources and instructional techniques as described above, and such improvements by themselves would likely help increase pupil motivation, more direct efforts to increase motivation should be attempted and their effects systematically evaluated. These activities might include practices intended to raise pupils' self-esteem--without engendering unrealistic notions regarding their current academic achievement level or the effort required to learn--as well as a variety of both short term rewards and an emphasis on the long term benefits of educational progress. While some such techniques are used in many schools

[11]Part 3 of this memorandum focuses specifically on this issue.

serving disadvantaged pupils, there is rarely an attempt to use them systematically or to evaluate their effects.

Possible Strengths and Weaknesses of This Strategy, Compared to Current Policies

Compared to current programs and approaches, the strategy outlined above could have several advantages. This alternative strategy would presumably result in services that are less fragmented, more supplementary, more comprehensive, more precisely targeted, more flexible, and more adequate in comparison with pupil needs.

However, there would be several difficulties, if not disadvantages, to the approach described in this part. It would be very limited in terms of the proportion of all schools that might participate. If aid is precisely targeted on schools with the greatest enrollment of poor pupils, most LEAs, and perhaps even some entire States, would have no schools qualifying for aid. Further, given the lack of objective information on the populations served by individual schools, it would be hard to assure that the neediest schools were targeted, and that the cutoff between eligible and noneligible schools did not appear to be arbitrary. In addition, it would be expensive on a per-pupil or per-school basis, although not necessarily in the aggregate.

The strategy would also be limited in the sense of having little or no effect on systemwide policies or practices. The strategy's impact might be expanded somewhat by requiring that successful curricula and instructional techniques be disseminated to other schools in the LEA or State.

There would be no obvious role for private schools and pupils, although the concept might be expanded to include some services for them.

It would be hard to force different Federal, State, and local agencies to effectively cooperate with one another, especially in tight fiscal periods when each agency has competing demands to meet; and schools may end up paying--through this program--for services that "should" be paid for by other agencies.

While it emphasizes the provision of comprehensive services to pupils, the proposal does not deal directly with many nonschool aspects of the distress of high poverty areas, especially crime, drug abuse, racism, and joblessness. It is possible that no strategy will significantly improve the educational achievement of the targeted pupils if it does not also effectively address these environmental barriers to improvement.

Finally, it would be very difficult to assure that outcome-based accountability measures are sufficiently strict yet flexible, as called for under the proposal. Provisions should be flexible, in view of the broad range of needs to be addressed, the primacy of States and LEAs in setting educational goals, and the current wide-ranging national debate over pupil assessment methods and policies. Nevertheless, provision of complete State and local discretion to select

the outcome measures could make the "outcome accountability" concept largely meaningless. This aspect of all "regulatory flexibility" proposals needs further consideration. Possible resolutions might be based on the national, or State, education goals, and State assessments.

PART 2: FRAGMENTATION OF SERVICES--THE EDUCATIONAL EFFECTS AND A POSSIBLE STRATEGY TO ADDRESS THEM

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SUMMARY

Fragmentation of Federal education programs and services may result in educational, physical, and social isolation of children in schools. A possible strategy to address the educational problems associated with fragmented services focuses on consolidating major Federal elementary and secondary education programs. We call this strategy the unified system initiative (USI). It proposes one major Federal program for **all children with special needs** that serves and supports them in regular classrooms. Accountability standards are included to ensure that program resources are concentrated on children with special needs. USI requires the adoption of a new learning structure in schools to improve the delivery of educational services to children with special needs.

DISCUSSION

What is Fragmentation of Services, and Why Should Federal Policy Address It?

The proposition of this part is that the categorical nature of Federal education programs results in the delivery of fragmented services to children. Although there are merits to the categorical approach of Federal programs, often there are also unintended consequences that dilute the effectiveness of Federal aid to elementary and secondary education.

The major elementary and secondary education programs of the Federal Government are categorical in that they are each intended to aid a "category" of children in need, such as educationally disadvantaged children, disabled children, or limited English proficient (LEP) children.[12] Their categorical design is intended to ensure that limited Federal resources go to those most in need (i.e., those children within those categories). These programs supplement a local school district's resources in order to remedy shortcomings in the district's ability or willingness to serve these children. The goals and requirements of these programs, however, result in the creation and delivery of services that are often uncoordinated with one another or with "regular" education, often segregate the child from the mainstream physically and socially, and are often too limited to meet the entire needs of the child. There are, however, some unintended consequences of categorical programs, as outlined below.

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[12]There are other elementary and secondary education programs of the Federal Government that are not categorical. For example, chapter 2 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) provides block grants to States and local school districts to improve the quality of, and promote innovations in, elementary and secondary education.

- **Targeted students are frequently disconnected from the mainstream socially.** Federal education programs often require the labeling of students for eligibility. These students are often isolated from the mainstream socially through the stigma of being labeled "disadvantaged" or "disabled." Targeted students are known by their label--"at risk," chapter 1, etc.

- **These students are frequently disconnected from the mainstream physically.** The instructional assistance provided by Federal programs is often conducted in separate classes or through "pull out" programs (i.e., where students leave their regular class for a portion of the day and go to a different classroom for instructional assistance). Requirements that Federal funds benefit only targeted children are often cited as the reason that separate classes or pull out programs are conducted. Targeted students are isolated from the mainstream physically through these separate classes or pull out programs.

- **These students are frequently disconnected from the mainstream educationally.** There is often little or no coordination of the content of instruction between pull out programs and the regular classroom. Targeted students are thus often isolated from the mainstream educationally through instructional services that do not correspond with the regular classroom's lesson plan. In addition, special instruction is often conducted during the school day, forcing students to miss some mainstream instruction. The consequence is no real increase in total instructional time for the students, and no true supplemental benefit.

- **No holistic approach to needs.** Federal programs focus on one particular problem or type of child through distinct categories that do not fully acknowledge that pupils may have multiple needs. For instance, a child with a disability may have need for chapter 1 services, but cannot receive them unless the need stems from being disadvantaged not disabled. Thus, the multiple needs of children may not be met because of this focus on only one particular problem; no individual or program takes responsibility for the "whole child." There may also be the problem of duplicative services being provided by different programs because of a lack of communication and coordination among programs.

Why should Federal policy address the problems resulting from fragmented services? There are several reasons. First, much of the fragmentation is a direct result of Federal policy. Although the Federal contribution to elementary and secondary education spending is small, Federal education programs have

been very influential in establishing a structure of rules, procedures, and methods for providing services to children with special needs. During the reauthorization of ESEA, Congress will be considering amendments to programs that could reduce fragmentation. Second, given the current budget climate, it is very difficult for Congress to significantly expand programs for children. Attention is shifting to ways to improve the current programs to make them more efficient and effective.[13] Reducing fragmentation may be one answer. Third, school officials and researchers have identified fragmented or uncoordinated services as one area that is becoming more important to address as schools are serving more and more children with multiple needs.

Current Federal Programs, Policies, and Proposals That at Least Partially Address Fragmentation of Services

Current U.S. Department of Education (ED) programs that address the problems resulting from fragmentation include the ESEA chapter 1 schoolwide projects, promotion of chapter 1 regulatory flexibility, the Integrated Services Project, and systems change research projects. Chapter 1 schoolwide projects (title I, section 1015, ESEA) conduct chapter 1 programs without limiting services to educationally disadvantaged children in schools where 75 percent or more of the pupils are from low-income families. This program comes closer than any other Federal education program in attempting at least partially to address the limits of the categorical approach to children in need, most notably problems of labeling and separate classes. Evaluation results for schoolwide projects are limited but thus far are generally positive.[14]

New regulations promoting the flexibility of chapter 1 have been issued by ED (see the *Federal Register* of August 27, 1992) in response to criticisms that chapter 1 regulations inhibit the coordination and effective delivery of services to educationally disadvantaged children. The new regulations clarify that schools may serve both chapter 1 and regular students in the same classroom with the same teachers, provided that the regular students do not decrease the quality, increase the cost, or limit access to services for chapter 1 students.

The Integrated Services Project is a new effort initiated by ED's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education. The project has recruited 12 States to find schools that are interested in putting into practice an integrated services model. The project plans to provide identified schools with technical assistance on how Federal resources can be coordinated to meet the multiple needs of children within the limits of current statutory provisions.

Systems change research projects are supported by ED's Office of Special Education Programs through the program for children with severe disabilities authorized in part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

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[13]See, for instance, part 4 of this memorandum.

[14]U.S. Department of Education. *National Assessment of the Chapter 1 Program: The Interim Report*. Washington, 1992. p. 112-113.

Systems change research examines methods of integrating children with disabilities into regular education classrooms.

Legislation considered in the 102d Congress also addressed these problems. The conference version of the Neighborhood Schools Improvement Act (S. 2) included regulatory flexibility provisions intended to overcome many of the problems of Federal categorical programs in approximately 200 local educational agencies (LEAs) and 750 schools nationwide. The bill would have allowed schools to consolidate Federal funds and serve children with special needs in regular classrooms, thus avoiding problems of isolation. As part of AMERICA 2000, the Bush Administration has proposed a conditional deregulation plan giving the Secretary of ED authority to waive a wide range of regulations in any LEA.[15] Supporters claim, among other things, that the plan would allow for the more efficient use of Federal resources in serving children with special needs.

Elements of a Possible Strategy to More Effectively Address Educational Problems Associated With Fragmentation of Services

An approach in addressing the educational problems associated with fragmented services is outlined below. It is described in general terms only, and is intended to prompt discussion of possible alternative strategies for Federal aid to elementary and secondary education as Congress enters the reauthorization of the ESEA.

This strategy focuses on consolidating major Federal elementary and secondary education programs. We call this strategy the unified system initiative (USI). It proposes one major Federal program for **all children with special needs** that serves and supports them in regular classrooms. Accountability standards are included to ensure that program resources are concentrated on children with special needs. USI requires the adoption of a new learning structure in schools to improve the delivery of educational services to children with special needs. USI can be implemented either as a demonstration program or as a complete and direct redesign of the major Federal education programs; a national demonstration and dissemination program at the elementary level could be a first step. These and other key elements of USI are described below.

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[15]For more information on the complaints against Federal categorical programs by regulatory waiver proponents, see: U.S. Library of Congress. Congressional Research Service. *Conditional Deregulation of Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Programs: The America 2000 Proposal.* CRS Report for Congress No. 91-531 EPW, by Wayne Clifton Riddle. Washington, 1991.

- **Schools would receive a unified system (US) grant for all of their children with special needs.**

The US grant funding would come from a consolidation of ESEA title I, chapter 1, chapter 2; title II; and IDEA part B, section 611.[16] US grants could be distributed by formula with weighted factors related to poverty, average per pupil expenditure, and enrollment. US grants would finance personnel (teachers, aides, related services staff) and education and related services in support of children with special needs. US grants would be contingent on adoption and implementation of a new learning structure outlined below. Other Federal education programs would be modified to ensure coordination of services and activities. (For instance, Bilingual Education Act funds would still be awarded on a competitive basis.[17] Once a LEA received an award, however, it would have to coordinate and integrate its bilingual instruction services with the mainstream curriculum to the maximum extent possible.) US grant funds would supplement local and State support for education. The Congress could include other fiscal accountability measures.

- **The consolidated approach of USI recognizes that often children with special needs have complex problems that do not fit simply and solely into one particular Federal category of need.**

This focus directly addresses one of the fundamental drawbacks of current categorical programs: a narrow conception of children as having one particular type of problem or need. Federal categorical programs tend to address only one particular type of problem that a child has without addressing other problems and needs. USI acknowledges that often children with special needs do not come to school fitting neatly into one specific Federal category of aid. The increasing numbers of school children from diverse backgrounds (e.g., immigrants, single parent families) frequently have a multitude of problems resulting from such conditions as poor health and nutrition, low socioeconomic status, and poverty.[18]

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[16]The USI would only consolidate the major Federal formula grant programs for elementary and secondary education: compensatory education, ESEA title I, chapter 1; education block grants, ESEA title I, chapter 2; Eisenhower math and science, ESEA title II; and the State grant program for the education of the disabled, IDEA part B, section 611. Historically, there has been reluctance to amend the IDEA State grant program. The USI incorporates the State grant program in order to build off the strengths of the IDEA model and apply these strengths to all children with special needs.

[17]Since the Bilingual Education Act is not a formula grant program, it would not be included in the program consolidation.

[18]See, for instance, part 1 of this memorandum for a discussion of the multiple problems of students in poor areas.

- **A new learning structure in schools that includes all children is an essential component of USI.**

The USI requires the adoption of a new learning structure in schools to improve the delivery of educational services to children with special needs. USI is predicated on the concept that all children should and can learn together, and that all children learning together will benefit academically and socially from the experience. Under USI, children with special needs are educated in regular classrooms with support. There are several examples of schools that have adopted this philosophy.[19] The elements that are important for the success of this approach are detailed below. These elements are intended to reduce the educational, social, and physical isolation of children with special needs.

There are five elements that together provide a new learning structure envisioned under USI. They are: cooperative learning; content mastery centers; interdisciplinary curriculum; team teaching; and school-based decisionmaking. The most important of these elements are the first two dealing with the way children are taught. The supported integration of children with special needs envisioned under USI would occur through the use of cooperative learning. Content mastery centers would be used for children who occasionally need additional assistance that cannot be provided in the regular classroom. All of these elements are briefly described below.

Cooperative learning. Under cooperative learning, children of mixed ability are grouped together with the goal of integrating children with special needs with their peers in a supportive learning situation. These groups engage in instructional activities, as well as informal peer tutoring. As groups work on a variety of projects, the higher achievers assist the lower achievers. Cooperative learning has a strong research base that shows that under this model low achievers do better without detriment to the high achievers.[20] The proper implementation of this model requires teachers trained in the cooperative learning method.

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[19]For instance, several LEAs and SEAs have promoted and adopted the integration of children with disabilities. Among LEAs, are Boston; Syracuse, New York; Saline, Michigan; and West Cook/East DuPage Counties, Illinois. Among SEAs are Massachusetts, Michigan, Colorado, and California. Local schools that have adopted programs to integrate all children with special needs include Lynnwood, Washington, and Philadelphia. Finally, one project of the privately funded New American Schools Development Corporation, Roots and Wings: Universal Excellence in Elementary Education, under the direction of Robert Slavin of Johns Hopkins University, also adopts the philosophy of integrating all children with special needs.

[20]For a fuller discussion of cooperative learning, see: Slavin, Robert E. Research on Cooperative Learning: Consensus and Controversy. *Educational Leadership*, v. 47, Dec. 1989. p. 52.

Content mastery centers. Children who need assistance beyond that provided in the classroom would attend a content mastery center in the school.[21] Children would attend content mastery centers either before or after school so that they would not miss class during the day.[22] The assistance provided would be intense and focused on the lessons the child had difficultly with in the regular classroom. The use of instructional technology would be important in these centers. Computers and interactive technologies could serve many purposes: they could raise a child's self-esteem as someone special who is allowed to use high tech equipment; they could record academic data on the student for evaluation and planning purposes; and they could provide a child with an engaging method of learning. Teachers would need training to take full advantage of the instructional technology.

Interdisciplinary curriculum. The curriculum would integrate the teaching of subjects around different themes or topics. For instance, math, science, and writing might be taught together through a project on ecology. In other words, students would experience how their various academic skills come together in a particular context. Teachers would employ a wide range of teaching techniques and tasks to involve students in the learning process.

Team teaching. Underpinning all of these elements is all teachers and staff working together. Team teaching would be vital for cooperative learning and content mastery centers to work.[23] It would build upon staff strengths, supporting peer coaching, and providing flexibility across grade levels, curriculum, and program boundaries. It would allow staff to draw upon a collective expertise, strengthening the academic experience. It would allow regular and special education teachers to build trust and understanding in order to engage in team planning. It could increase the percentage of time teachers devote to teaching, and lead to a more efficient allocation of resources. Staff development is essential if team teaching is going to be successful.[24]

School-based decisionmaking. School staff's (principal, teachers, support personnel) and parents' "ownership" of the process would be important

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[21]One example of the use of content mastery centers is the Austin, Texas public schools.

[22]Content mastery centers could also operate during the summer recess to maintain academic skills.

[23]One school where team teaching is employed is Central Park East Secondary School in New York.

[24]Some examples of how school districts have provided staff development for comprehensive service initiatives are highlighted in *Joining Forces: A Report from the First Year*, by the National Association of State Boards of Education. Staff development options for "at risk" prevention programs are outlined in the working paper *Every Student Succeeds: A California Initiative to Ensure Success for Students at Risk*, by the California SEA.

for USI to succeed.[25] They would have discretion on how to implement the new learning structure of USI. Local school boards and the school superintendent would have an important role in USI for accountability purposes.

- **Schools would have an obligation to locate, identify, evaluate, and serve all children with special needs under USI.**

The USI would maintain all of the existing civil rights for children with special needs, including children with disabilities.

- **Accountability under USI is based on outcomes.**

Accountability standards ensure that program resources are concentrated on children with special needs. Outcome goals would be established for each school, determining the progress of all students from initial achievement levels (broadly measured). In other words, schools would be judged, and funding would be contingent, on the progress made by students, especially those with severe achievement deficiencies.[26] The amount of progress expected, and in what areas, would be negotiated between States and LEAs, with guidance from ED. The Congress may wish to consider whether to establish an independent panel of nonpartisan experts, teachers, and parents to advise ED on whether the standards are too low or high.

Possible Strengths and Weaknesses of this Strategy, Compared to Current Policies

There are several possible advantages to the USI.

Holistic approach to needs of the child. The inclusion of children with special needs in the regular classroom not only meets multiple educational needs, but social needs as well. The children, through peer support, then may have more of a chance for success. USI acknowledges that often children with special needs do not come to school belonging neatly to one particular Federal category. More and more school children come from a minority, immigrant, or otherwise disadvantaged background, and are thus more likely to have a wide range of needs. USI provides more of an opportunity than current categorical programs to have those educational needs met.

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[25]One example of site-based decisionmaking that could serve as a model in USI is James Comer's school governance teams. For a description of the Comer model, see: Comer, James P. Educating Poor Minority Children. *Scientific American*, v. 259, Nov. 1988. p. 42.

[26]By placing an emphasis on outcome goals for those with severe achievement deficiencies, schools will have an incentive to concentrate resources on these children with special needs in order to meet the goals.

Flexibility to meet constantly changing needs of students. USI allows for the flexible deployment of personnel and equipment through school-based decisionmaking. Flexibility is important not only in accommodating sudden needs, but also in implementing a long range plan for the school. As a school establishes its strengths over time, it will need to have the ability to devote resources to those areas as it cultivates them.

Instructional fragmentation minimized. Perhaps the greatest possible advantage to USI is the elimination of pull out programs as the primary means to deliver extra services to children with special needs.. Since students will remain primarily in the regular classroom, they will not miss mainstream instruction. Since time in a content mastery center will be minimal, it will be easier to link the instruction provided in content mastery centers to the regular curriculum. The assistance in content mastery centers truly supplements, rather than replaces, mainstream instruction.

There are also several possible drawbacks to USI.

Difficulty in determining appropriate outcomes to assure accountability and developing mechanisms to provide information about identified outcomes. The greatest challenge of USI is ensuring that the accountability provisions serve their purpose. The elimination of targeting assurances from the consolidated programs is risky. Among the challenges are finding appropriate means of measuring initial achievement levels, setting outcome goals that are adequate for each school participating in USI, and providing the incentives to schools to concentrate resources on children with special needs. There is also the issue of possible debate on whether the standards are too high or low.

Difficulty in generating political and appropriation support. Another possible drawback to USI is that it may be more difficult to generate congressional support for one broad Federal program than for programs with specific constituencies. The USI, while attempting to make the Federal effort to aid children with special needs more efficient, may not necessarily cost less than the individual programs that are candidates for consolidation.

Conflict with parent preferences. Parents of children with disabilities in particular may not want children integrated into mainstream classes, especially if they perceive that a USI approach may diminish the protections of the IDEA and affect the quality of services already available to them.

PART 3: IMPROVING SCHOOL-TO-WORK TRANSITION FOR DISADVANTAGED GROUPS

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INTRODUCTION

This part discusses possible strategies for improving the transition from school to work, particularly for women, minorities, and other groups that have not always been well-served by current education and training programs. It discusses possible changes in tech-prep and the chapter 1 program aimed at improving school-to-work transition and examines a promising proposal: youth apprenticeships. The part concludes with a discussion of policy issues that likely will arise in a national debate on school-to-work transition.

PROBLEM DISCUSSED, AND WHY FEDERAL POLICY SHOULD ADDRESS IT

New workers entering the workforce will increasingly be women and minorities. Population projections indicate that women could account for three of every five "net additions" to the workforce between 1988 and 2000. (Net additions take into account workers entering **and** leaving the workforce.) Blacks could account for nearly 17 percent of net additions, and Hispanics could account for more than 27 percent. In addition, because of declining numbers of young workers, employers might need to hire many who, in the past, they ignored or avoided, such as the economically and educationally disadvantaged.[27]

Unfortunately, education and training systems have not served these groups well. Evidence indicates that U.S. education and training programs (which have had mixed results overall[28]) have been least effective in preparing the disadvantaged, women, and minorities for work. Recent studies of vocational education, apprenticeships, and the Job Training Partnership Act

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[27]"Moderate-growth" projections indicate that the percentage of the workforce ages 16 to 24 will drop from 19 percent to 16 percent by the year 2000. For further discussion of these trends, see U.S. Congress. Joint Economic Committee. Subcommittee on Technology and National Security. *Demographic Change and the Economy of the Nineties*. Chapter III. *Demography and the Labor Force in the 1990s*. Committee Print No. 102-55, 102d Cong., 1st Sess. Washington, GPO, 1991.

[28]See, for example, Grubb, Norton W. *Preparing Youth for Work: The Dilemmas of Education and Training Programs*. In Stern, David, and Dorothy Einhorn, eds. *Adolescence and Work: Influences of Social Structure, Labor Markets, and Culture*. Hillsdale, New Jersey, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1989. (Hereafter cited as Grubb, *Preparing Youth for Work*)

(JTPA) suggest that members of these groups do not always have access to the same programs and services that white males do.[29]

- **Vocational Education.** The National Assessment of Vocational Education (NAVE) found that the disadvantaged, minorities, and especially disadvantaged women do not have equal access to "quality" vocational education (including specific labor market courses and paid, supervised work experience).[30]

- **Apprenticeships.** Historically minorities and women have not had equal access to apprenticeship programs. While their participation rates in civilian apprenticeships have grown, problems of access still exist. For example the General Accounting Office (GAO) found that, although minorities hold a proportion of apprenticeships roughly equal to their participation rate in the workforce, minority apprentices tend to cluster in programs for lower paying occupations and are underrepresented in those for higher paying occupations. Women's participation in apprenticeships does not approximate their rate of labor market participation; and like minorities they have less access to apprenticeships in higher paying occupations.[31]

- **JTPA.** The GAO has found that minorities and women are more likely to be trained for lower paying occupations. The GAO also reports some indication that minorities (especially blacks) in JTPA programs are more likely than whites to

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[29]There is also evidence that once in the workplace, women and minorities have less access to employer-sponsored training. See Lynch, Lisa. Private-Sector Training and the Earnings of Young Workers. *American Economic Review*, v. 82, Mar. 1992. p. 299-312.

[30]Hayward, Becky Jon, and John G. Wirt. *Handicapped and Disadvantaged Students: Access to Quality Vocational Education*. Final Report, v. 5. In U.S. Department of Education. National Assessment of Vocational Education. Washington, Aug. 1989. p. 80.

[31]Minorities hold approximately 22 percent of all civilian apprentices; women hold about 7 percent. U.S. General Accounting Office. *Apprenticeship Training: Administration, Use, and Equal Opportunity*. Report to Congressional Requesters. Appendix I. GAO/HRD-92-43, Mar. 4, 1992. Washington, 1992. p. 30-31.

receive only job search assistance, which apparently is less effective than either classroom or on-the-job training.[32]

Possible Strategies

Experience over the last several decades with successes and failures in youth training programs suggests some hopeful lessons. Norton Grubb, for example, argues that schooling and work experience need to be complementary and integrated.[33] Training by itself can lead to frustration and cynicism about work because of mismatches between students' acquired skills and low skill demands of most jobs available to young workers. On the other hand, work experience programs, without training, often prove ineffective. In addition to linking school and work, the quality of high school students' jobs seems to substantially influence later labor market success. Stern and Nakata have found that students with high school jobs that, among other things, provide opportunities to work with adults and to develop and use skills in the workplace, experience greater success in the labor market after high school.[34]

Congress, in reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), may wish to modify current programs (such as tech-prep and chapter 1) and authorize new programs (such as youth apprenticeships) to incorporate lessons for improving education and training for new workers, especially for the disadvantaged, women, and minorities.

Modifying Current Programs

Tech-Prep. The Tech-Prep program under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act aims to improve high school technical instruction and link high school and postsecondary learning. Since Congress authorized the tech-prep program only 2 years ago (although some States have been operating programs for several years), some may argue that it is too soon to make major revisions to the program.[35] Others might contend that, since

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[32]U.S. General Accounting Office. *Job Training Partnership Act Racial and Gender Disparities in Services*; Report to the Chairman, Legislation and National Security Subcommittee. House Committee on Government Operations. GAO/HRD-91-148, Sept. 1991. Washington, 1991.

[33]Grubb, *Preparing Youth for Work*, p. 30-31.

[34]Stern, David and Yoshi-Fumi Nakata. *Characteristics of High School Students' Paid Jobs, and Employment Experience After Graduation*. In Stern, David and Dorothy Einhorn, eds. *Adolescence and Work: Influences of Social Structure, Labor Markets, and Culture*. New Jersey, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1989. p. 30-31.

[35]The National Assessment of Vocational Education authorized by the 1990 Perkins Act Amendments apparently will have extensive data on the tech-prep program. Preliminary data from the NAVE should be available by January

the Federal Government is investing more than $100 million in tech-prep, and all States are beginning or expanding such programs, it is important that these programs operate as well as possible.

Current law encourages some links between education and work. Tech-prep could be modified to strengthen links to employers and the workplace. For example, tech-prep consortia may combine high schools with adult apprenticeship programs as well as high schools with postsecondary institutions, such as community colleges. (The latter is the more likely program configuration.) In addition, "special consideration" is to be given to tech-prep programs that are developed in consultation with business and labor and provide "effective employment placement activities" after graduation. Changes to the legislation could strengthen these links by requiring program planning to be done in conjunction with local business and union leaders and mandate that tech-prep programs incorporate work experiences such as cooperative education or apprenticeships.[36]

Chapter 1. Another program that could be modified is chapter 1.[37] An expanded chapter 1 program in senior high schools could connect basic and more advanced academic instruction with students' work experiences. Throughout the history of the program, most chapter 1 funds have been concentrated in elementary grades; relatively few resources have gone to high schools.[38] One

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1994, which could inform ESEA reauthorization as well as consideration of the reauthorization of the Perkins Act during the 104th Congress.

[36]The State of Arkansas recognizes the possibility of combining tech-prep programs with its youth apprenticeship demonstration. "The Tech-Prep curriculum is an especially promising building block for youth apprenticeship/work-based learning programs. . . . The principal differences between youth apprenticeship and Tech-Prep are: (1) the carefully structured and monitored work experience at the core of youth apprenticeship; and (2) the continuous linking of work-based learning with class-based learning and structured reflection." Arkansas Department of Education. Vocational and Technical Education Division. Youth Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning. Request for Proposal. Little Rock, May 10, 1991, p. 6.

[37]Chapter 1 programs aim to improve both "basic and more advanced skills" of "educationally deprived" children (chapter 1, title I of ESEA). For additional discussion of possible amendments to the chapter 1 program, see the essay in this series by Wayne Riddle and James Stedman.

[38]Evidence from national studies of chapter 1 shows that this pattern has persisted over many years. In 1980, only 6 percent of the 4.3 million students in chapter 1 programs were in grades 10-12. (Advance Technology, Inc. *Local Operation of Title I, ESEA 1976-1982: A Resource Book*. McLean, Virginia, June 1983. p. 2-22.) Findings were remarkably consistent by the mid-1980s: The 1987 National Assessment of Chapter 1 found that again 6 percent of chapter 1 students were in grades 10-12. (Birman, Beatrice F., et al. *The*

reason for this is the assumption that earlier intervention is more effective. Another reason is that chapter 1 programs in high schools are often more difficult to organize.[39] In addition, a common practice for determining which schools have relatively large concentrations of poor children--and therefore are eligible for chapter 1--uses counts of students in the free lunch program. High school students are less likely than elementary school students to participate in free lunch programs (in part, because of the stigma of admitting poverty). As a result, even high schools with large concentrations of poor students may not provide chapter 1 services.[40]

Various changes in chapter 1 could ensure increased participation by high school students and tie chapter 1 services to occupational education and student work experience, as outlined below.

- **Chapter 1 could be modified to make serving high school students easier.** For example, a high school could be designated a chapter 1 school if a majority of the elementary schools feeding students into it are chapter 1 schools. Similar logic could be used to qualify high schools

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Current Operation of the Chapter 1 Program. Final Report from the National Assessment of Chapter 1. U.S. Department of Education. Office of Educational Research and Improvement. Office of Research. Washington, 1987. p. 110.) These findings persist in the most recent chapter 1 national assessment:

> Districts provide chapter 1 services in most of their elementary schools and considerably fewer secondary schools. Seventy-one percent of all public elementary schools are chapter 1 schools, in contrast to 39 percent of secondary schools. Overall, 15 percent of all elementary school students and 6 percent of secondary students receive chapter 1 services. (Department of Education, *National Assessment of the Chapter 1 Program*, p. 157.)

Even in schools with high concentrations of poverty, elementary school students are more likely to be served:

> In the poorest schools, more than one in four elementary school students is served. . . . Only about one in five secondary students in high-poverty schools receives chapter 1 services (p. 157).

[39]One difficulty is that there are relatively few remedial materials for high school students. In addition, States may not permit academic credit for remedial courses. This in turn can impede students progress through high school.

[40]Of course, if LEAs want to include high schools in the chapter 1 program, they could use alternative selection options.

as schoolwide projects:[41] a high school could be designated a schoolwide project if most of its "feeder" schools are schoolwide projects.

- **Chapter 1 programs could be required to serve more high school students.**[42] The law could be modified, for example, to earmark a portion of a district's allocation for high poverty high schools.

- **High school chapter 1 programs could integrate academic remediation and advanced academic skills with occupational courses and work experience.** For example, instead of a pullout or in-class chapter 1 project connected with a "basic" English class, Chapter 1 could provide academic instruction keyed to occupational training for students.

- **Chapter 1 high schools could also be coordinated with tech-prep programs.** For example, projects could provide the academic instruction for chapter 1 students enrolled in tech-prep at the high school level.[43]

- **Chapter 1 programs in high schools could be coordinated with work experiences.**[44] Legislation could require chapter 1 teachers to consult with students' employers to determine what skills need improvement and

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[41]Chapter 1 schoolwide projects, which are allowed to serve all students in qualified school, are permitted in schools with particularly high concentrations of poor children.

[42]Chapter 1, part C authorizes a separate program for high schools, which permits use of funds for "innovative" programs for a variety of activities including pre-employment and school-to-work transition, but has never been funded.

[43]Texas is already coordinating the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) with tech-prep programs. "JTPA can complement tech-prep programs by providing remediation to interested applicants and support services to those in training and by placing graduates into jobs." *Employment and Training Reporter*, July 29, 1992. p. 893. High school level chapter 1 could play a similar role, especially regarding remedial education for those interested in tech-prep programs.

[44]Most high school students work for pay in some capacity. See, for example, Hamilton, Stephen F., and Jane Levine Powers. Failed Expectations: Working-Class Girls' Transition from School to Work. *Youth and Society*, v. 22, Dec. 1990. p. 245.

obtain examples from jobs to incorporate into classroom.[45] Teachers' use of real problems and situations that students encounter on the job could improve their views of the relevance of what they learn, which could spur them to work harder in school and better prepare them for the workplace.

Creating New Programs

In addition to modifying current programs, Congress might consider authorizing new programs to improve the preparation of youth entering the workforce. Perhaps the most widely discussed proposal in this arena is the youth apprenticeship.

Youth apprenticeships link learning in school with work experience. These programs can originate in 10th grade or earlier with career exploration to investigate occupations and clarify students' career goals. The actual apprenticeships often start during the last 2 years of high school and integrate high school academic instruction with work-based learning and work experience taking place on the job. Adult mentors guide students' experiences on the job. Program completers might proceed directly into the workforce, to postsecondary education, or even to "adult" apprenticeship programs.

A major question is whether we know enough about implementing youth apprenticeships to mount a nationwide Federal program. If, as some argue, we do not, then Congress might consider an incremental approach that could include some or all of the following components:

- A national study of existing American youth apprenticeship programs[46] to identify components of success, problems to avoid, and how/whether to mount larger-scale efforts;

- Identification of successful models of youth apprenticeships (perhaps building on a national study) by the U.S. Department of Labor, the U.S. Department of Education, or some other Federal agency, dissemination of these models to States and school districts, and provision of technical

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[45]Title V of the Higher Education Amendments of 1992 contains related proposals. For example, part A of title V authorizes internships for teachers to work in business or industry to develop new skills and gain workplace experience.

[46]Several States and local partnerships have begun embryonic youth apprenticeship programs. Most appear to be new and/or very small. See, for example, State of Arkansas Request for Proposal; and Hamilton, Stephen F., Mary Agnes Hamilton, and Benjamin J. Wood. *Creating Apprenticeship Opportunities for Youth*. A Progress Report from the Youth Apprenticeship Demonstration Project in Broome County, New York, Sept. 1991.

assistance to those interested in starting apprenticeship programs;

- A national demonstration, which would fund applicants to implement, modify, and evaluate models identified by a national study;

- Planning or start-up grants and technical assistance to State and local governments to encourage youth apprenticeships based on the demonstration models.

If, as others argue, studies and demonstration programs rarely lead to substantial and permanent changes, Congress could authorize a national competitive grant or formula grant program for youth apprenticeships.[47]

- This could be done immediately or after a national study identified lessons that could inform the Federal initiation and oversight of such grants.

- A variation on a national grant program would be to link apprenticeships to other social investments, such as infrastructure restoration. For example, contractors receiving funds for Federal highway construction could be required to participate in local youth apprenticeship programs and employ youth apprentices as some percentage of their workforce.

Policy Issues

In attempting to develop better school-work integration and school-to-work transition programs, policy makers might consider some of the following issues:

- **Targeting**: Concern that the disadvantaged, women, and minorities have been poorly served by our training systems raises questions of whether and how occupational education and training should be targeted on these groups. Should youth apprenticeships, for example, be required to recruit women and minorities? Can the Federal Government ensure that women and minorities have equal access to apprenticeships for higher paying jobs? How would

[47]One approach is to tie the decision of whether to initiate a demonstration, a competitive grants competition, or a national formula grant to the amount the Appropriations Committees allocate for the program once it is authorized. The Tech-Prep programs under the Perkins Act has a "trigger" of $50 million. At or below that level of appropriations, the program is a competitive grants program run by the Secretary of Education; above that amount the Act stipulates a formula grant program for tech-prep.

targeting requirements affect the recruitment and participation of employers?

- **Coordination and Integration:** A variety of programs throughout the country provide workforce education and training. Some receive Federal support through the JTPA, but others are run with State, local, or private funds. Past efforts to coordinate programs (for example, requirements that JTPA and the Perkins Act programs jointly plan services) have not been totally successful. How can Federal, State, and other programs be better coordinated to provide integrated services to youth?

- **Employers' role:** Employers must play an active role in programs that provide work experience. To what extent should their specific needs influence program design and implementation? To what extent should employers help pay for the programs?

- **Influencing labor markets:** Ironically, reforming occupational education and training may have little influence on the kinds of jobs young workers obtain. The jobs young workers secure may be less influence by their preparation for work than by employers' attitudes toward young workers (for example, whether they are seen as reliable and mature), and by business decisions on how work will be accomplished (for example, by high-skill or low-skill workers). Should educational and training reforms incorporate efforts to influence employers' attitudes and business decisions? If so, how should this be done?

PART 4: EFFICIENCY IN EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

This part discusses how American education might be made more efficient. It considers three strategies for increasing efficiency:

- reducing the number of years of schooling
- decentralizing school control
- developing alternative learning opportunities

and identifies steps that might be taken to encourage such changes. The part begins with a brief discussion of the concept of efficiency and why it is important to apply it to education. It emphasizes the need for changes if additional funding for schools is not forthcoming.

DISCUSSION

Efficiency in education occurs when desired learning outcomes are maximized for available inputs. The concept can also be stated the other way around: the condition when inputs are minimized for desired learning outcomes.[48]

Efficiency can be a useful concept for education policy-makers. Interpreted broadly, it reflects the common sense view that money for schools should be spent carefully and effectively. Allegations of waste undermine legitimacy and impede efforts to obtain resources. More important, the concept of efficiency directs attention away from **spending** as a measure of educational quality; it suggests that equal consideration must be given to measurable outcomes. What schools achieve should be emphasized as much as their cost.

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[48]Adapted with modifications from Windham, Douglas M., and David Chapman. *The Evaluation of Educational Efficiency: Constraints, Issues, and Policies.* Greenwich, Connecticut, JAI Press, 1990. p. 60. Desired learning outcomes are the results used to measure effectiveness of activities; inputs are costs. The concept of efficiency developed in engineering and production contexts, and some people question whether it can be applied to education. Schools have multiple inputs (teachers, students, textbooks, facilities, equipment, etc.) that vary in quality; moreover, they are expected to produce numerous outcomes, personal and social as well as academic. Objective information about their cost and productivity is difficult to obtain. These problems indicate that measuring efficiency in education rigorously will always be difficult and that what are viewed as improvements from one perspective might be criticized from another.

The concept of efficiency may be most important when resources for education cease growing or decline. Although today there are many calls for more spending on education, total expenditures by schools and colleges actually rose steadily across the 1980s (they were 6.5 percent of gross national product in 1981 and 7.2 percent in 1990) and now may be approaching the all-time high of 7.5 percent recorded in 1970.[49] Whether future spending will match or exceed that figure remains to be seen; it was reached near the end of a period of sustained economic growth when there may have been more optimism about the availability of resources. There may also have been more interest in spending on education at that time since a larger proportion of the population was of school age.[50]

- If spending on education does not increase beyond today's levels, the **only** way there can be improvements in education for the country as a whole is through greater efficiency.

- Improvements could occur for some groups without changes in efficiency or total funding, but only at the expense of other groups.

To some people, efficiency implies that schools should be economical and get by with modest funds, perhaps less than they now have. But the concept itself is not synonymous with lower costs; rather, it provides that whatever the cost, outcomes should be maximized. Under some conditions, efficiency might be used to justify higher expenditures for education. For example, if well-managed schools cannot achieve minimum educational goals with existing resources, additional spending would appear to be needed. But efficiency would not support additional spending on poorly managed schools: whatever marginal gains might occur, over time such spending may perpetuate shortcomings. For example, additional funds for remedial instruction in high school may help more students graduate, but they might also reduce the incentive to improve

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[49]U.S. Department of Education. National Center for Education Statistics. *Digest of Education Statistics 1991*. Table 29. Between 1970 and 1990 the proportion of expenditures by elementary and secondary schools went down from 4.7 to 4.3 percent of gross national product, though it was only 3.9 percent in 1981; while the proportion of expenditures by colleges went from 2.7 to 2.8 percent, though it was 2.5 percent in 1981. (Percentages may not sum to totals due to rounding.)

[50]U.S. Department of Commerce. Bureau of the Census. *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1991*. 111th edition. Table 13. Washington, 1991. In 1970, persons ages 5 through 19 years represented 29.3 percent of the population; in 1989, they represented 21.3 percent. The proportions for those 20 through 24 years were 8.4 and 7.6 percent, respectively.

elementary schools. By intervening after problems develop, not enough attention may be given to prevention.[51]

The Changing Federal Role

Efficiency has never been an explicit Federal education policy goal.[52] One reason for this is that Federal education programs generally are supplementary; they provide additional resources that are added to the periphery rather than the center of school programs.[53] As "extra" programs, often serving specialized needs and interests, Federal education efforts may contribute to the fragmentation of educational institutions; they do not focus attention on how well schools function as a whole. Second, while school districts that receive Federal aid must comply with fiscal requirements, these primarily ensure that nonfederal funding is maintained (so total resources are increased) and expenditures are authorized (used only for certain things within a certain time period). Concerns about effectiveness and frugality, if raised at all, are addressed only through loose requirements for planning and evaluation.

Federal education policy has not emphasized efficiency for several reasons. Until now, the dominant policy goal has been expansion of educational opportunity, particularly for disadvantaged groups; the dominant policy restriction has been preserving State and local authority (or institutional autonomy, in the case of colleges and universities). Consensus on the policy goal was reached near the end of a period of strong economic growth; whether resources were available to expand opportunities did not appear to be an issue. Consensus on the policy restriction reflected traditional preoccupations with States' rights (particularly with respect to racial integration) and academic freedom; questions about legal authority were predominant.

But the context for Federal education policy may be changing.

- The Federal Government and many States have budget problems. There is concern that resources will not be sufficient to maintain existing social programs, let alone expand them.

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[51]The dilemma is that some poorly managed schools are not easily changed: barring major reform, the only practical way to obtain improvements may be to spend more.

[52]More attention is paid to efficiency at the local level, where responsibility for balancing goals and resources must be carried out. Even in local school districts, however, efficiency may be less of a goal than a consequence of trimming costs to fit available funding.

[53]Some Federal categorical programs have nonetheless directly affected core school programs: the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act are two examples.

- Legal questions are now overshadowed by economic problems. While not new, concern about workforce skills is now widespread. Today improvements in education often are considered an economic necessity more than a matter of justice or fairness.

The effective use of scarce resources is coming to the foreground of policy debates. Policies that were predicated upon the assumption that resources would be expanding may have to be reconsidered.

Three Approaches to Improving Efficiency in Education

Three different strategies for improving the efficiency of American education are discussed below:

- reducing the number of years of schooling ;
- decentralizing school control; and
- developing alternative learning opportunities.

The three were selected to illustrate contrasting ways of bringing about more efficiency. The first approach considers how long it takes students to move through the education pipeline; the second, what conditions are required for cost-effective organizations; and the third, whether responsibility for some education can be shifted from the schools. While each approach can be considered separately, there are linkages among them. Reducing the length of schooling, for example, might be easier to achieve if schools were not regarded as the only providers of education. Similarly, decentralizing the control of schools might make it easier to develop programs that develop other learning opportunities.

Reducing Years of Schooling

More people graduate from college in the United States than in any other country.[54] Normally this is considered a virtue, but it may also be a sign of inefficiency: it takes longer for Americans to complete their schooling and move into the labor force and other adult roles. Today 60 percent of high school graduates **immediately** go on to college (up from 47 percent in 1973) and more than one-quarter graduate from 4-year schools before turning 30.[55]

College attendance rates show the effectiveness of broad-based student aid programs. They also indicate that high schools no longer provide good certification for much adult employment. There are numerous reasons for this,

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[54]U.S. Department of Education. National Center for Education Statistics. *The Condition of Education 1992*. Indicator 23.

[55]Ibid., tables 7-1 and 22-3.

including higher graduation rates (which weaken the screening role that high schools traditionally have played), changing job requirements (which make employers place higher priority on having educated workers), and the development of postsecondary programs offering vocational training. However, the most important reason may be that high schools generally are undemanding institutions. Throughout the country, standards often are low and student achievement is limited.[56] Individual families are powerless to correct these problems, aside from moving to affluent school districts or paying for private schools; instead, they overcome them by obtaining further education for their children. For many students, attending college provides the certification for quality education that good secondary schools might have given earlier.[57]

Prolonging education carries a high cost. For students and their families, there are tuition charges and other school expenses; even greater losses may occur from foregone earnings and missed opportunities for on-the-job training. Government spending for education is increased, as is student aid for living expenses; in the short run, governments lose tax revenue that earlier employment would generate.

Can the number of years that Americans attend school be reduced? In the short term, opportunities might be expanded for students to begin college work earlier:

- Concurrent enrollment programs allow students to receive both high school and college credit: examples include Advanced Placement courses, now found in one-third of all high schools, and the State-mandated programs in Minnesota and Florida.[58]

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[56]There are many reports and studies that criticize the quality of secondary education in the United States. The following works illustrate several approaches to the subject: National Commission on Excellence in Education. *A Nation at Risk*. Washington, 1983; Powell, Arthur G., et. al. *The Shopping Mall High School*. Boston; 1985; Bishop, John. *Incentives for Learning: Why American High School Students Compare So Poorly to Their Counterparts Overseas*. In Commission on Workforce Quality and Labor Market Efficiency. *Investing in People*. Background Papers, v. 1. Washington, 1989.

[57]College attendance may also be important for maintaining or improving students' social class, which can affect prospects for marriage as well as employment.

[58]Greenberg, Arthur. *High School-College Partnerships: Conceptual Models, Programs, and Issues*. Washington, George Washington University, Clearinghouse on Higher Education, 1991. p. 31-32, 39-43.

- Early enrollment allows students simply to skip their senior year of high school altogether; once in college, more might similarly be allowed to start graduate work early.[59]

While it is not clear how quickly these options can be expanded (among other things, junior high school curricula might have to be revised), the goal might be set that most students who go on to college should complete their secondary and collegiate work in seven rather than eight years. Conceivably student aid programs could be modified to encourage this.

For high schools to provide good certification for adult employment, their standards must be raised. How this can best be done is now being widely debated and a number of strategies have been suggested:

- creating youth apprenticeship programs that provide training in high-skilled workplaces[60]
- establishing nationally recognized academic and vocational skill standards[61]
- developing curricula that reflect high national skill standards
- developing standardized course grade and skill level reporting systems.

Consideration might also be given to proposals for reforming secondary education more generally, including establishing national assessments of student performance, raising professional standards for teachers, and encouraging schools to define their educational objectives more purposefully and shape their curricula accordingly.[62]

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[59]Some universities offer 6-year programs in which students receive both bachelor and medical degrees. For a proposal to generally reduce the length of college from 4 to 3 years, see Starr, S. Frederick. Tuition Relief for the Middle Class. *New York Times*, Oct. 6, 1991. p. E17.

[60]See part 3 of this memorandum.

[61]Perhaps as described in part in U.S. Department of Labor. Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS). *Learning a Living: A Blueprint for High Performance*. Washington, 1992.

[62]Perhaps as recommended by Theodore Sizer in *Horace's Compromise: The Dilemma of the American High School*. Boston, 1984; and the National Coalition of Essential Schools.

Decentralizing School Control

Lack of competition among schools frequently is cited by economists as a cause of inefficiency in elementary and secondary education in the United States. While some propose school choice as a remedy, it is debatable how much competition it would actually create. Among other things, questions have been raised about whether parents have the ability to make informed decisions and whether market segmentation would limit the number of real alternatives available. Even with competition, schools might not be efficient if parents had no direct, immediate incentive to lower costs (or if some even thought that high cost is a measure of quality).[63] Nonetheless, choice plans are spreading and their effect on efficiency should be studied.[64]

Rather than relying on competition to improve efficiency, similar results might be obtained by decentralizing the control of schools. The theory behind site-based management points the way: by giving individual schools more flexibility, it is hoped that principals and teachers will take more initiative to identify and solve problems. However, schools with site-based management have discretion only about administrative matters; they still must implement policies that others determine. The scope of their innovations will always be limited by general policies for all schools in their State or district, whether they are similar or not.[65]

Independent nonprofit private schools may provide a better model of the decentralization needed in public education.[66] While limited in varying degrees by State law, these schools essentially can chart their own course. They set

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[63]In education, as in health care, consumers might have an incentive to reduce costs if they had to make partial payments (copayments) for services. For analysis of the effects of cost-sharing plans in health care see: U.S. Library of Congress. Congressional Research Service. *Controlling Health Care Costs.* CRS Report for Congress No. 90-64 EPW, by Mark Merlis. Washington, 1990. p. 3-5.

[64]For a discussion of programs to promote choice, see: U.S. Library of Congress. Congressional Research Service. *School Choice: Status and Issues.* CRS Report for Congress No. 92-55 EPW, by James B. Stedman. Washington, 1992; and *Public School Choice: Recent Developments and Analysis of Issues.* CRS Report for Congress No. 89-219 EPW, by Wayne Riddle and James B. Stedman. Washington, 1989.

[65]Whether it is appropriate to apply State or district (or for that matter Federal) policies to all schools is an issue about which there is likely to be disagreement, especially for policies of any consequence. Even where there is consensus about policy goals, the way general policies are administered and enforced is likely to limit discretion at local schools.

[66]Not all private schools are independent (that is, have separate boards of trustees): for example, some Catholic schools are part of diocesan systems.

their own goals, hire their own instructors, and teach what and how they want. Their efficiency comes less from competition, which market segmentation may minimize,[67] than from the ability to match educational programs with institutional strengths and student needs. In technical terms (see the definition of efficiency on page one), they can modify the desired learning outcomes as well as determine the use of inputs. Where there is inefficiency, the independence of each school helps clarify where responsibility rests. There is no system toward which blame can be deflected.[68]

It would be foolhardy to consider decentralizing control of public education to each of the Nation's 80,000 elementary and secondary schools. But such decentralization might be appropriate where existing school systems often are unable to deliver quality education in a cost-effective manner:

- urban schools serving poverty neighborhoods;
- specialized schools offering advanced instruction;
- vocational schools offering employment-based instruction; and
- residential schools.

How decentralized public schools might be governed is a key issue. One model might be the charter schools recently established in Minnesota. There, licensed teachers are authorized to organize their own schools under contracts or "charters" with local boards of education; while the schools are not part of local school systems, ultimate authority remains with the local boards. If the independent private school model were followed, authority could be placed in a board of trustees, perhaps appointed by the governor (though many variations come to mind, including arrangements in which some trustees were named by parents, local boards of education, mayors, or even the Federal Government). Under either model, it would have to be determined how much additional public regulation there should be: arguably it might be limited to what States require of their private schools, though further requirements might be appropriate with respect to such matters as enrollment, student assessment, financial accountability, etc.[69]

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[67]Among the ways that market segmentation limits competition among private schools are differences in religious instruction (the characteristic that distinguishes most private schools), tuition charges, and location.

[68]This does not mean that independent schools cannot cooperate with one another.

[69]As is currently the case, private schools would be subject to Federal civil rights laws if they receive Federal financial assistance.

Developing Alternative Learning Opportunities

American elementary and secondary schools are responsible for more than education: they provide meals, day-care, recreation, and sometimes health care and other social services. It is commonly argued that these functions absorb scarce resources and divert schools from their principal mission.

What is not as widely recognized is that American schools may also be responsible for too much of education. Many people think that schooling and education are synonymous, whereas schools are only one of a number of social institutions that can nurture learning. This analogy is strained, but it illustrates the point: no one would think that people can become healthy only in hospitals, so one should not think children can learn only in schools. Just as providing additional funds to hospitals is not always the most efficient way to improve public health, so giving schools more money may not be the most efficient way to further learning.

Some public institutions other than schools already serve an explicit educational purpose. Museums and libraries foster learning by giving the public access to their collections; many also offer lectures and other programs with an explicit educational goal. Consideration might be given to expanding public funding (including tax expenditures) for these activities to the extent they appear more cost effective than school programs.[70] Attention might also be given to coordinating their activities with school programs.

More significant gains in efficiency, however, may come from expanding educational activities that today are considered **private** rather than public. According to the historian Bernard Bailyn, the development of formal schooling in America coincided with the reduction in educational roles previously played by families, churches, and communities.[71] As European social institutions were transformed during the colonial era, new structures arose to carry on needed services. The fundamental changes that Bailyn described cannot be reversed, and it would be fruitless to assume that families, let alone churches and communities, could once again assume the principal responsibility for educating children. But the potential contribution of private social institutions for learning should not be ignored.

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[70]For recommendations on expanding library educational programs, see The White House Conference on Library and Information Sciences, 1991. *Information 2000: Library and Information Services for the 21st Century.* Washington, 1991. For museum programs, see Commission on Museums for a New Century. *Museums for a New Century.* American Association of Museums, Washington, 1984.

[71]*Education in the Forming of American Society.* Chapel Hill, 1960.

For families, consideration initially might be given to policies that encourage parents to help their children succeed in school:

- expansion of Even Start and parenting skill programs;
- "contracts" between parents and schools; and
- additional homework.[72]

For employers, consideration might be given to policies that increase work-based opportunities for learning:

- tax incentives for training;
- training consortia for small employers; and
- youth apprenticeship programs.

Expanding private learning opportunities instead of public schooling may increase social and economic disparities in American society. Differences in the capacity of families and employers to provide quality education probably are much greater than differences among schools. Nonetheless, if additional resources for schools are not available, alternative learning opportunities that are targeted for special populations may be one way that they can obtain better education.

[72]American schoolchildren generally do little homework. For 17-year olds enrolled in school during 1987-88, more than 60 percent spent less than an average of 1 hour a day doing homework. Only 12 percent spent more than 2 hours. *Digest of Education Statistics 1991*. Table 104.