

FIFTY YEARS OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING: WHAT DO WE HAVE TO SHOW FOR IT? WHAT MIGHT WE DO NEXT?

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ABSTRACT

The hard work and the money spent by and for education in the last 50 years does not, it seems, to allow us to deliver required and ethical value for the money. We are charged with assisting all learners to be productive citizens of tomorrow, but, loaded down with non-core curriculum and social requirements, the educational ship is creaking and falling short. This article reviews how we are doing in delivering value and suggests two types of leadership and planning for us to transform ourselves: Outside-in and Inside-out leadership in planning. Both are useful and combined they can be a powerful force in delivering true value.

INTRODUCTION

Education either adds measurable value to our shared society or it subtracts it. If it adds value, our world gets continually better. If it doesn't, it subtracts value on many dimensions. Education and educators agree that we want to add value. We have burdened it with many non-core things that exhaust us and divert us from our core mission of adding value to our society, and doing it safely. Do we now add responsive measurable value? If not, what might we do and accomplish?

It is possible to make education so it will add value to all stakeholders. Let's go from what is overloading education today and how another perspective on planning could reform education and really help learners be successful in school, successful in life and help develop our world to be a really safe and add value to all.

GOOD INTENTIONS

Here is a partial list of likely well-intentioned changes in the last 50 years, either mandated or enlisted. Have they been effective, just putting more demands on education with little, no or negative return on investment?

- Desegregation
- Mainstreaming
- Affirmative action
- Busing
- Block scheduling
- Ban of prayer
- Accountability
- Tenure
- Teacher testing
- High stakes testing
- High standards
- Cultural literacy
- Bilingual-Bi-Cultural
- Charter Schools

- School choice
- Class size limitations
- Merit-based compensation
- Outcome based education
- No Child Left Behind
- Initial mastery
- Computers/CIA/CMI
- School-to-work
- Common core
- Distance learning
- Political correctness
- Women’s studies
- Black Studies
- Latino/LatinX Studies
- Gender neutral bathrooms
- Race to the Top
- ESSA
- STEM
- STEMA
- Social Justice
- Safe spaces
- Project-based learning
- Flipped classrooms

We have caused fatigue by all the things we load up on education to do and deliver. All, somewhere and somehow, included in educational planning and then delivery. Each intended to improve learner and social performance. Perhaps as did your mother, mine repeatedly told me, “The road to hell is paved with good intentions.” Did they? When change initiatives fall short, there is a tendency to fix the blame and not fix the problem.

OUR RETURN ON INVESTMENT FROM PLANNED INTENTIONS

How did each and all do? Although US education includes possibly the widest diversity in its learner population (and no declines in performance should be appreciated and dropouts seem to be decreasing), the results and return on investment is, putting it gently, disappointing. Here are some data indicating that we spend abundantly per learner (2nd in the world) and get a poor return (See Figure 1).

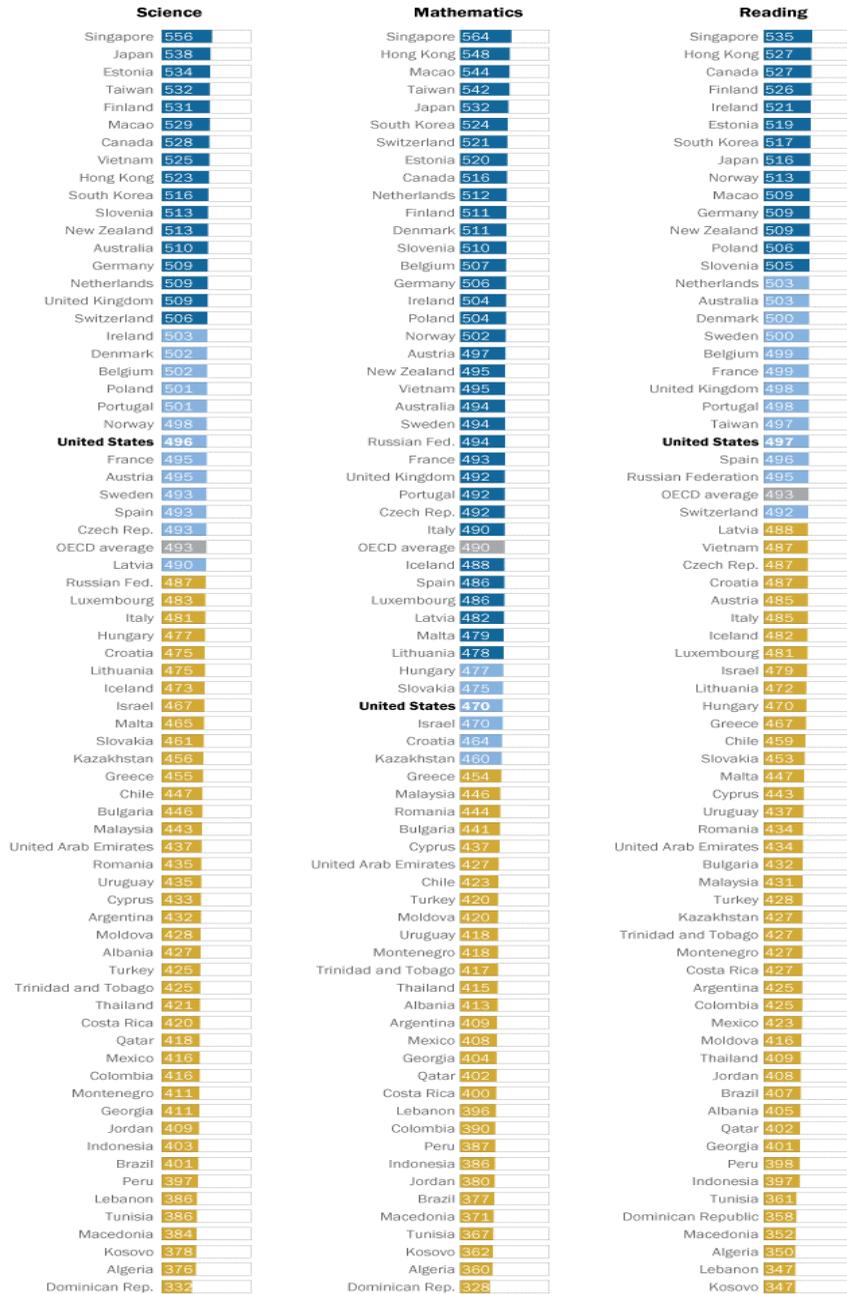
Despite our high spending on education, current PISA data (<https://data.oecd.org/pisa/reading-performance-pisa.htm#indicator-chart>) show that the US is doing a bit better at reading, worse in math, and better in science. We have made limited progress, if one can call it that, over the years for the sizeable investments made. We are still not, it is suggested, getting appropriate return on our substantial investment. We can do better.

According to the annual Phi Delta Kappa Gallup polls on education, people are happy with “their” system but question all others; Interesting but seems to deny actual reality. This emphasizes the reality that all educational partners must be involved in planning. Doing so delivers what Peter Drucker called “transfer of ownership.” Not to involve all partners will weaken planning and its effectiveness.

How the U.S. compares on science, math and reading scores

Average scores of 15-year-olds taking the 2015 Program for International Student Assessment

● Score is significantly higher than U.S. ● Score is not significantly different from U.S. ● Score is significantly lower than U.S.

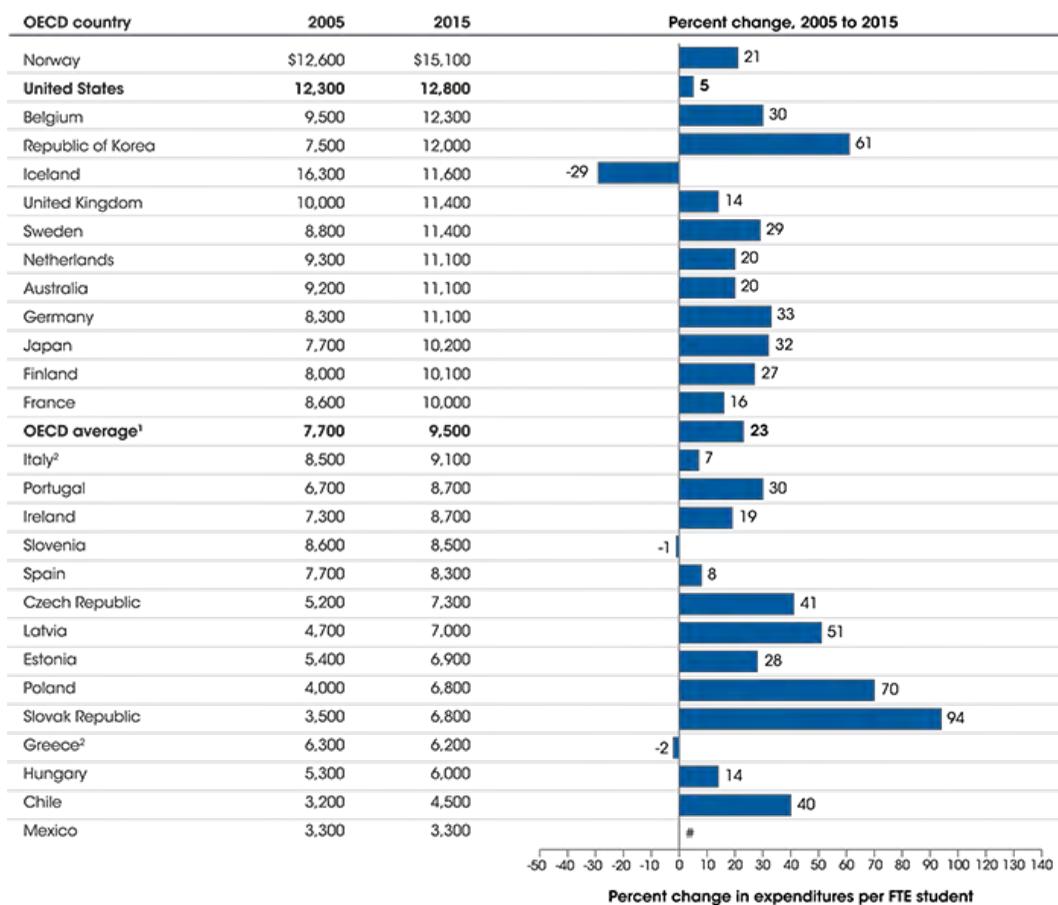


Note: Scale ranges from 0-1,000. Results from China not included because only four provinces participated in PISA 2015.
Source: OECD, PISA 2015

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Information available at <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/02/15/u-s-students-internationally-math-science/>

[In constant 2017 U.S. dollars]



Information available at https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_cmd.asp

Figure 1. Examples of US education performance and investments

HOW DOES THIS CURRENT EDUCATIONAL REALITY HAPPEN?

I suggest that we have hit our limits of what can be done to improve the current educational system. It is old, creaky, and not in any condition to improve if we simply want to enhance what now exists. Adding more and more well-meaning approaches and study topic would be suspect.

It is as if we had a wonderfully functional educational wooden sailing ship and we keep trying to improve it by retrofitting it. We put braces on the timbers, made the sails stronger and more durable, changed the crew to multi-lingual, assigned them to different posts, trained them more, increased supervision, added GPS.... And, still, the old wooden hull did not meet the requirements of today's seafaring realities. We kept adding, changing.... And like education, here we are with a vessel that once was good enough, but not now robust enough to serve us well.

Our approach to planning and delivering education has hit its limit, as suggested by Branson (1988). We know many validated things that do not often get applied in human learning

and delivery, and we also know a lot about motivation. Do we apply evidence-based concepts and tools? Do we change how we deliver education, and is it uniformly effective to our diverse learner population? Are relevant competencies provided by colleges of teacher education? These, and many other questions about the status quo exist.

VITALLY, DO WE KNOW WHY WE TEACH WHAT WE TEACH?

We keep trying to do the same things, only cheaper, faster, better. But our old ship of education is creaking, and we, at the same time, are not sure of to where we are sailing and why. Do we stay with the original ship, or do we change the platform to serve new realities? Do we define where the ship should head and know how to track its progress and arrival?

Schumpeter (1937) suggests the concept of “creative destruction,” where, in order to move ahead, things of the past must be demolished; get out of the way to be replaced or stopped. Perhaps this notion must be applied to transform--not just improve or change--all or part of our current educational enterprise (c.f. Bernardez (2009). In addition, Kuhn (1970) informs us that simply peer acceptance of concepts or ideas may lead to inhibiting useful change. Popular is not always the same as useful. If we want to transform, as well as improve the measurable value added of education, the implications of two approaches and their viability are worth considering (Kaufman, 2020).

TWO APPROACHES TO EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND PLANNING

There are at least two types of leaders and related planners (labels I will now use interchangeably). The traditional leaders and planners (and there are several variations of them), that get others to do things with the same purposes cheaper fast, and better. They build on the here-and-now and work diligently to bring it to new heights of success. They view education and educating from within their organizations and then extend out, hopefully, to shareholders—citizens, communities, and our shared societies—to attempt to deliver value. They are *Inside-out* leaders and planners.

Then, there are the *Outside-in* (or inversion) *planners* –who stand things on their heads, who create something new and labor to bring it to the point conventional leaders can take the new orientation onto the next steps by using Inside-out planning. Outside-in leaders ask questions such as: “If my organization is the solution, what’s the problem?” and “If this organization didn’t exist, would you re-create it? Just the way it is now.” Outside-in planners look at things from outside an organization—with societal good as the primary focus—and then move inside. The two approaches to educational planning and thinking, Inside-out versus Outside-in thinking, leadership and planning are shown in Figure 2.

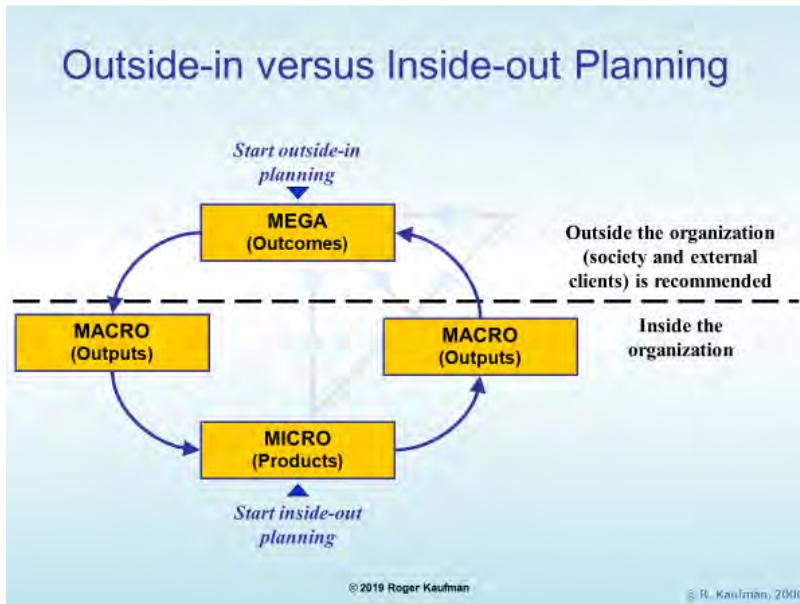


Figure 2. Outside-in and Inside-out planning and leadership (Kaufman, 2006, 2011, 2020)

Both the Outside-in and Inside-out planner best uses the three levels of results (Kaufman, 2000, 2006, 2011) of:

- MEGA – Primary client and beneficiary is society and the world we choose to create for tomorrow’s child
- MACRO – Primary client and beneficiary is the organization itself
- MICRO – Primary client and beneficiary are individuals and small groups.

There are, in addition to these three, two more *Organizational Elements* (Kaufman, 2006, 2011), that include Mega, Macro, and Micro, that are not results but essential enablers of results, which together form everything and organization, uses, does, produces, delivers and its external value added:

- PROCESS – programs, projects, activities, methods, and procedures intended to deliver results.
- INPUTS – the ingredients that may be used, including human, physical, and capital resources.

These five levels – the Organizational Elements – for best practice, should be linked and aligned. They also form a hierarchy of planning (Kaufman, 2018).

The Inside-out planner attempts to get from internal practices and results to measurable Mega/Societal contributions. The Outside-in planner starts with Mega/Societal value added and builds the educational enterprise from there...sometimes using current practices while replacing and creating others.

Figure 3 shows Outside-in and Inside-out orientations. It includes the entire Organizational Elements Model (Kaufman, 2000, 2006, 2011), Figure 4 also describes a planning hierarchy (Kaufman, 2018).

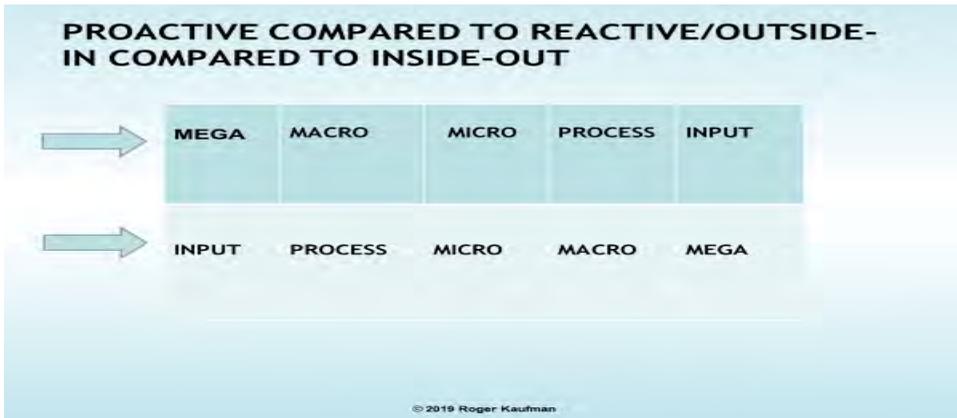


Figure 3. Outside-in and Inside-out approaches.

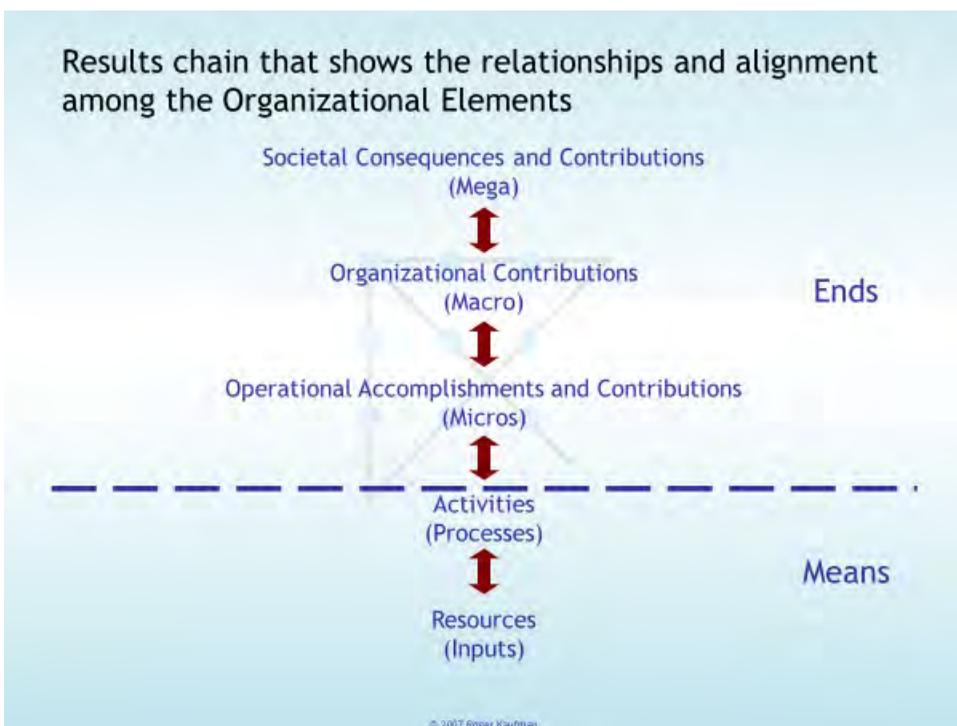


Figure 4. A results chain and hierarchy of planning including the Organization Elements of Mega (Societal Contributions) | Macro (Organizational Contributions) | Micro (Individual Contributions) | Processes methods, programs, activities) | Inputs (physical, human, and financial resources. (Kaufman, 2018; Kaufman, 2019 May).

A complete definition, including contributing variables, is in Kaufman (2011) as an Ideal Vision. It defines the kind of world we want to create for tomorrow's child. Moore (2010) suggests

doing so is an ethical responsibility. If you are not adding measurable value to our shared society, what else are you doing and delivering?

WE MUST HAVE BOTH TYPES OF LEADERS AND PLANNERS

Our world is rich with people who decided not to keep doing what everyone else is doing, instead moving to a perspective outside of the conventional reality. They realized the once wonderful wooden educational sailing ship was not performing in the current realities.

Our society is abundant with examples of people who realized the current modes of operation were failing. Women, facing a world where men were physically stronger, shifted not to weightlifting but to developing intellectual strength. Medical science is developing increasingly better ways to treat dread diseases such as cancer, pandemics, and Alzheimer's, while others are finding ways to eliminate them in the first place. We must have both competent women and men as we still must have planners who treat disease and those who eliminate it: Outside-in and Inside-out. So, it is for poverty. There are leaders who help the poor and unlucky to cope, and those that show ways out of hopelessness. Conventional leaders and Outside-in leaders.

WHAT MIGHT WE DO TO OPTIMIZE BOTH KINDS OF LEADERS AND PLANNING?

We could get education to transition back from teaching people what to think to teaching people how to think. We can reward leaders who leave our shared world a better place intellectually and socially. We can identify community vital signs (Kaufman, 2019, Aug.) to determine the skills, knowledges and attitudes learners must have in today's and tomorrow's world and use that to design curriculum, learning aids, and define teacher competencies.

With an Outside-in approach, organizational structure, staffing, curriculum and curriculum design, delivery, and evaluation (c.f. Bernardez, M., & Kaufman, R. (May-June 2013; Bernardez, M., R., Krivatsy, A., Arias, C. & Kaufman. (2012), would likely transform an organization. Examples exist, such as its application at the Sonora Institute of Technology (Guerra & Rodriguez, 2005). There are many other instances of organizations starting with Mega/Outside-in: Bernardez (2009) and his team, charged by the President of Panama and their Minister of Tourism, to transform the very troubled City of Colon. Another community example was to save an Argentina petroleum transmission company, including the community which managed and implemented it and the troubled city in which they lived (Bernardez, 2004). Outside-in planning is being used successfully to transform a slum in Buenos Aires (Bernardez, 2020). Outside-in/ Mega planning was used in the creation of a new Australian University (Watts, 1989).

ONE CAVEAT IN USING OUTSIDE-IN PLANNING

The Inside-out planners often want to take over the operation before the Outside-in planning has been accomplished. Because it is the conventional and accepted approach, Inside-in planners and implementers feel comfortable with it. They have a tendency not to change modes and continue with the institutional wisdom. The pressure "to go back" is often high. Even when that happens, the impact of a Mega focus usually remains. To be sure, Inside-out planning will and should be used once the Outside-in planning is completed.

With Outside-in planning, our delivery model would not be as much patterned after ancient university emphases on subjects alone but would blend them with other knowledge areas so learner can and will think integratively and hopefully creatively.

Research (Hinchliffe, 1995) suggests that working from inside-out might limit our effectiveness. In his work, he found that starting with the more comfortable Inputs, then Processes, and then Products (using the Organizational Elements Model in Figure 3) tended to inhibit planners to go further to the other results (Macro and Mega, Figure 3). However, he found that starting matched people outside-in, they were more comfortable moving from Mega and then inside to all the elements of delivering worthy performance. But that does not mean everything we use now should be discarded.

BUILD ON WHAT IS WORKING

Throw out subject knowledge? No. Build on subjects and integrate them. Replace teachers? No. Re-place teachers as learning managers and mentors. We can use what is in place to create new learning environments based on contemporary validated on how people learn and perform.

We can do Inside-out leadership and planning and change platforms—from wooden ones to metal to...—and develop what currently could contribute to useful measurable results. We keep doing that with seeming diminishing return on investment. Therefore, Inside-out planning is best done after Outside-in has been accomplished in order to assure our educational systems are adding value to our shared society...to Mega.

During the Outside-in planning, creative destruction might be recommended and implemented. We can change our view on what education is and could deliver from a content area focus to an integrating and application focus. We could start viewing education as integrating k-12 and higher education as well as other social agencies, such as housing and urban development, health and human services, law enforcement, labor...all of which realize they are part of serving the same clients. This a holistic view. (c.f. Kaufman, 1992; Kaufman, Corrigan, & Johnson, (1969), Kaufman, Herman, & Watters, (1996). Kaufman. & Herman. (1996), Kaufman, Watkins, & Leigh, (2001), Kaufman, Guerra, & Platt. (2006), Reville, (2020).

While we are managing our educational operations, we can do Outside-in leadership and planning and perhaps discover and develop new missions, structures, platforms, new methods of delivery, new methods of evaluation (c.f., feedback, and reform. We might think of not just change, but transformation (Drucker, 1994), where a new educational reality might emerge.

I am just touching on possible options for educational planning and transformation. Any current approach can be seen as the conventional Inside-out. I would argue that an Outside-in approach—not to be confused with “backwards planning” the starts with clarifying current goals and objectives--be used in education to remove the exhaustion of doing the same thing over and over (with little to dismal result). This approach, with a focus on the societal good, could help design a new educational ship that meets the realities of today and tomorrow.

That leaves one to wonder; will we shift to become both conventional Inside-out planners and Outside-in leaders and planners? Or will we keep getting better at doing that which should not be done at all? Or will we also think outside the box, and add measurable intellectual and social value? Outside-in leaders and planners can help us become the only ones who do what we do. We can create new realities. Will we commit to add measurable value to our communities and society? Our individual and collective futures depend on our choices.

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