

**NEW AMERICAN
HIGH SCHOOLS
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

HIGH SCHOOLS AT THE LEADING EDGE OF REFORM

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

How Can Your School or a School in Your Community Become a New American High School?

Schools compete to become New American High Schools. Schools must supply compelling evidence indicating that they have undertaken standards-based, locally driven reform efforts that positively affect key indicators of school improvement and student success. Documentation must include:

- ✦ Increases in student achievement
- ✦ Increases in student enrollment at postsecondary institutions
- ✦ Increases in student attendance
- ✦ Reductions in student dropout rates

If you are interested in learning more, you can get the dates of competitions, a copy of the application, case studies of successful schools, research findings on high school reform, or even take a virtual tour through a New American High School. Visit our web site at www.ed.gov/offices/OVAE/nahs or call 1-800-USA-LEARN.

What are the Benefits of Becoming A New American High School?

Schools that become New American High Schools receive immediate benefits. Schools, their districts, and communities gain public recognition of their success. Each school receives a small stipend to cover the cost of outreach and information sharing activities, including participating in a network with other New American High Schools. Schools have access to a wide variety of technical assistance, including ways to improve their accountability systems and use data for continuously improving school performance. New American High Schools also inform policy and practice at the federal and state level.

Access Our Resources and Products:

Call 1-800-USA-LEARN to receive:

- ✦ Applications (package also available on our web site)
- ✦ New American High Schools: Schools at the Leading Edge of Reform
- ✦ Aiming High: Strategies to Promote High Standards
- ✦ In Their Own Words: Students and Educators Talk about What Matters
- ✦ Key High School Reform Strategies: An Overview of Research Findings
- ✦ New American High Schools Video
- ✦ A list of New American High Schools that you can contact directly to discuss strategies that work.

Visit Our Website

- ✦ Web Site: www.ed.gov/offices/OVAE/nahs
- ✦ Virtual Tours: New American High Schools Up Close - CD-ROM video on the Department of Education's home page at www.ed.gov.



1-800-USA-LEARN



Schools at the Leading Edge of Reform

What Are New American High Schools?

New American High Schools are preparing all students to meet the challenges of the 21st century. They are committed to achieving high academic standards for all students, preparing all students for postsecondary education, and providing students opportunities to learn about and explore careers. They have high rates of attendance and high school completion, increased college enrollment and student achievement. They differ from traditional high schools in many ways:

- ★ **High Standards.** They have clear standards and high expectations for all students.
- ★ **Small and Safe Environments.** They create small, safe learning environments where students feel connected to the school and are known well and supported by caring adults.
- ★ **Teachers Working Together.** They have well prepared teachers and provide time for teachers to plan and work together.
- ★ **Strong Principal Leadership.** They have principals who provide strong, effective leadership, and who work collaboratively with teachers on school improvement.
- ★ **A Focus on Student Learning.** They focus on learning, not just on earning credits. They make learning relevant. They help students understand how their classroom learning can be used outside the school. They offer internships and community service learning. They provide extra help to students after school, in the summer and on weekends so they can meet higher standards. They have fewer class periods so that students can focus on subjects in depth and have time for projects and experiments.



- ★ **Technology to Enhance Achievement.** They use technology to expand access to information, enhance instruction, manage schedules and analyze student progress.
- ★ **Results Oriented.** They use a wide variety of student assessments to ensure that students have mastered their subjects. They use student assessment and evaluation data to continually improve instruction, staff development, management, and organization with the central goal of increasing student achievement.
- ★ **Strong Partnerships.** They cultivate strong partnerships with parents, middle schools, postsecondary institutions, community leaders, and employers.

Why Do We Need New American High Schools?

Reports from the National Center for Education Statistics show that many students are not receiving the academic preparation needed to succeed in college and the knowledge-based economy of the 21st Century.



- ★ More than 20% of young Americans between the ages of 18-25 do not graduate from high school.
- ★ Of the high school graduates who go on to college, half drop out by the end of their sophomore year.

To succeed in the Information Age, students need to be:

- ★ Knowledgeable, with a high level of academic skills
- ★ Effective communicators, thinkers and problem-solvers

- ★ Able to apply knowledge and skills effectively in work, family and community
- ★ Able to reason, understand and analyze information
- ★ Technologically competent
- ★ Continuous learners



What Is the New American High School Initiative?

The Department of Education launched the New American High School Initiative in 1996. In coordination with Blue Ribbon Schools, the department recognizes outstanding high schools that are committed to high standards for all students and have achieved excellent results. The initiative showcases schools that represent the broad range of high schools in the country: comprehensive high schools, magnet schools, redesigned vocational-technical schools, charter schools, theme schools, pilot schools and alternative schools serving the needs of at-risk youth.

As part of the initiative, the department provides information and technical assistance, conducts research and evaluations, and promotes standards-based reform efforts.



Brooklyn Technical High School
29 Ft. Greene Place
Brooklyn, New York 11217-1299
Principal: Dr. Lee D. McCaskill
(718) 858-5150

Type of School: Magnet

Type of Location: Urban

Students Served: 4,187 (27.6% African American; 18.3% Caucasian; 14.3% Hispanic; 39.8% Asian and Others; 23.8% students qualify for free/reduced-price lunch)

Compelling Outcomes: Compares favorably with state and district standards on NY State Regents Exams; 98.4% of all 1998 graduates went on to four year colleges, .8% to two year schools and .6% entered the military. Data not available for .2% of the graduating seniors. Named one of Redbook's America's Best Schools and a U.S. News and World Report outstanding high school.

*One of 15 finalists in the U.S. Department of Education's 1999 NAHS Competition



NEW AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOLS . . . in brief

SAUNDERS TRADES AND TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL
YONKERS, NEW YORK

"We are training our young people for a viable occupation, and/or an opportunity to attend post-secondary institutions. Unless you graduate with a skill or go to college, where are you going?"

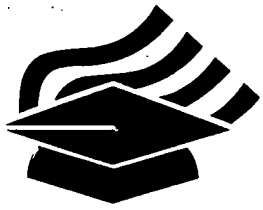
— BERNARD P. PIERORAZIO, PRINCIPAL,
SAUNDERS TRADES AND TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

Type of School:	Comprehensive High School/Tech Prep Magnet
Type of Location:	Urban
Students Served:	1,222 (40% Hispanic; 38% Caucasian; 17% African-American; 5% Asian; 57% of students qualify for free/reduced-price lunch)
Compelling Outcomes:	Nearly 100-point increase in SAT verbal and 70-point increase in SAT math scores, with average annual participation of 50%; increases in numbers of students taking and passing most rigorous state assessment (Regents) in the nation; average daily attendance 94.5% in 1998; decrease to near 0 dropout rate since 1993; 89% of 1996 graduates enrolled in postsecondary education or vocational training; Middle States Association of Secondary Schools Exemplary Rating, 1994-95; New York State School of Excellence, 1995 and 1997. (School Year 97-98)

LEARNING IN ACTION

A dedicated magnet school with a diverse student population, Saunders Trades and Technical High School is as proud of its recent history as it is of its 80-year-old past as the first public trades and technical high school in Yonkers, on the outskirts of New York City. Prior to 1990, Saunders was lacking the perception of academic challenge and direction needed for students to attain postsecondary admission. The school did not offer high-level academic courses; the SAT scores were low; and there were a limited number of students graduating with the distinction of a New York State Regents diploma. The drop-out and attrition rates were unacceptable and the attendance rate was below 90%. The school realized it needed to change the community's understanding of Saunders to a school which not only offered high-level vocational and technical programs of study, but also a comprehensive and challenging academic core that would meet the expectations of parents as well as college admissions officers.

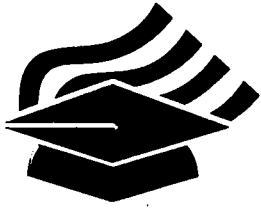
Today, Saunders is providing a uniquely dynamic environment that encourages learning and anticipates success. Students at Saunders have the opportunity to explore their career interests through a ninth-grade



exploratory program. Students then select a three-year trades or technical major from a choice of food service/restaurant management, design and production (including cosmetology, fashion design, and graphics/printing/visual communications), or a rigorous pre-engineering technical program with options in architectural design, industrial design, electronic/computer circuitry, environmental technology, and chemical technology. Through the granting of a tech prep award, articulation agreements were brought about for students in all majors with a wide variety of renowned colleges and universities, including the State University of New York, the University of Connecticut, St. John's University, Manhattan College School of Engineering, New York Institute of Technology, Westchester Community College, and Johnson and Wales. Saunders students can earn college credit or be granted advanced status in various programs including engineering by taking an articulated course of study at Saunders. These students are also provided with college tutoring and media services.

No matter what students major in, course requirements, particularly in math and science, have been reviewed, reorganized and made more rigorous. For example, all students must now take a minimum of three years of Regents-level mathematics (which exceeds the state minimum) as the school makes the transition to becoming an "all Regents" school. Whenever possible, content is related to the majors students are studying. For example, sine and cosine waves are applied to electrical circuits or surveying problems for architectural design students, and imaginary numbers to electrical theory. For other majors, there is emphasis on business applications such as profit and cost equations. In science, all students must complete at last Regents earth science and biology. In addition, Advanced Placement courses now offered include calculus, English, chemistry, American history, physics and environmental science. The English department has also made a shift to give more students the option of college by incorporating SAT preparation. Reading and writing are a school-wide priority spearheaded by the English department, in which students regularly engage in "writing workshop" and write reports using rigorous Modern Language Association procedures which are graded jointly by English and content teachers. All subjects require students to read extensively in authentic sources, including scientific and social science literature.

To ensure student success the school changed its daily schedule to incorporate an extended day and additional periods per week in the math and science areas. Through a tech prep grant, tutorials were also established, including after-school and Saturday sessions. For more support, the school has found great success with its grade level team concept, including an assistant principal, dean, teacher advisors, and guidance counselor, who monitor the same group of students from freshman year to graduation. To address the large multicultural population, there are bilingual personnel, including two bilingual counselors as well as ESOL teachers. In response to parental concerns, the ESOL teacher now presents an "English for Specific Purposes" program, incorporating English assistance within the vocational curriculum.



Staff development and teacher leadership are a priority at Saunders. Well in advance of implementation, the staff is participating in "all-Regents" workshops. Department chairpersons are scheduled to share the same prep time as most vocational instructors, which facilitates curriculum integration. Teachers have also collaborated to create uniform homework policies. It was classroom teachers/chairpersons who designed the new environmental technology magnet, and wrote the numerous accompanying curriculum guides. Another staff emphasis is authentic assessment, including student portfolios of achievement to be presented at employment and/or college interviews. Rooted in tradition, responding to the challenges of excellence, and anticipating change, Saunders Trades and Technical High School is dedicated to excellence in vocational and academic instruction.

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NEW AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOLS ... in brief

HIGH SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND FINANCE
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

"You don't get to work on Wall Street anymore without a college diploma. So all the youngsters in this school take a full Regents program, which in New York state is the highest level of courses. Simultaneous with that is the vision of a school [that is] just small and humane and caring."

— SUSAN EWEN, PRINCIPAL

Type of School:	Magnet Academy
Type of Location:	Urban
Students Served:	Enrollment 576 (39 % Hispanic, 32 % African American, 16 % Asian, 12 % Caucasian)
Compelling Outcomes:	The 1996 attendance rate was 93.3%; In 1995-96, 99 companies and nonprofit organizations sponsored community service and unpaid internships; In 1995-96, 55 companies conducted 108 student seminars. (School Year 95-96)

LEARNING IN ACTION

Where can a student take rigorous academic courses and learn the intricacies of high finance at the same time? With its focus on high-level study and its network of business support, the High School of Economics and Finance is just such a place. The school weaves weekly business seminars, community service, internships, and individualized tutoring into broad but personalized in-depth mentoring experiences that augment students' academic achievement and career goals.

Founded in 1993, the school uses the theme of economics and finance to focus its 4-year curriculum. That curriculum is based upon Regents classes, the highest level of coursework that New York offers. There is no tracking. Every student takes Regents courses in every core academic discipline to prepare for the Regents exams and competency tests—12 in all. They must pass them to earn the Regents diploma that is necessary to enter the State University of New York college system.

But it is the economics/finance theme that makes the school unique. All students must take coursework from the Academy of Finance, a program of finance-related study. In addition, they must complete three phases of work-based learning, progressing from 120 hours of community service to 120 hours of unpaid internships to 240 hours in paid internships. Throughout each phase, the student prepares a resume, passes job interviews, completes daily work assignments, and submits a final report. When the students complete 11 Academy courses and the paid internship, they receive a certificate that verifies their expertise for financial sector jobs.



The school's location in the heart of Wall Street's financial district provides students a distinct advantage to pursue their aims. That location offers them the unique opportunity to connect with partners that continually reinforce the economics/finance theme. The most important of these is the Sanford I. Weill Institute for Lifelong Learning, a small-business school that offers short courses by almost 180 business professionals throughout the year. Every Wednesday, students don their business clothes and trek to the Institute for their 8-week, 2-hour seminars, workshops, or similar finance-related activities. Through the Institute, students may request individualized tutoring, work at internships after school, develop personal relationships with industry representatives, and participate in job shadowing opportunities. The Institute program manager works with the student to ease the connection between classes and work experiences.

Another key partner is Baruch College, the City of New York's business school, which operates a satellite campus at the school. Students may take up to four undergraduate courses at Baruch College free, which count toward high school and college credit.

Support for teachers at the school also reflects its special purpose. Teachers take a 2-week summer institute where they participate in workshops facilitated by the Council on Economic Education. These workshops focus on how the economic concepts of the marketplace can be infused in the regular curriculum. In addition, teachers enjoy regular common planning periods in which they learn from one another. Many also attend centers through the Weill Institute, and they all regularly tour corporate sites, where they learn from the experts in the industry. They have an opportunity to take continuing education or graduate courses at Baruch College.

School evaluation is done through a team composed of teachers, parents, students, and the principal. The team prepares an annual needs assessment and evaluation plan and sets annual improvement goals. The team also gauges the number of students participating in work-based learning and in the NASDAQ Incentive Plan, which rewards students with cashable shares for academic achievement. These measures allow the school to track student progress in the unique areas that underlie its mission.

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Creating Small, Safe, Supportive Schools

The Size of Today's High Schools

- 40 percent of high schools have student populations of 1000 or more.
- 71 percent of students attend schools enrolling at least 1000 students.
- Between the 1990 and 1997 school years, the percentage of high schools enrolling less than 1000 students decreased from 66 percent to 60 percent. The percentage of students attending high schools with enrollment under 1000 dropped from 36 percent to 29 percent.
- In the same period, the number of schools enrolling more than 1500 students increased 45 percent. The number of students attending schools with more than 1500 students increased 49 percent.

Enrollment	% Of High Schools	% Of Students
Under 500	33.6	9.0
500-999	26.0	19.9
1,000-1,499	19.1	24.5
1,500-1,999	12.0	21.6
2,000-2,999	7.9	19.5
Over 3,000	1.5	5.5

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 1997-98 School Year

Note: Includes regular high schools with 3- and 4-year programs

The Benefits of Small Schools

- Better school climate
- Less drinking
- More college credits earned
- Less class cutting
- More individual attention
- Greater feeling of belonging
- Increases opportunities for student to be known well by at least one caring adult

The Research Findings

- Size of learning environment has an indirect affect on student learning; creates the conditions for success, especially when there are high expectations and standards.
- When size of learning environment is reduced, benefits often become apparent very quickly, even within a year or two.
- Benefits of creating smaller learning environments arrive in stages: **first**, morale of students & teachers improves, students become more engaged in school; **second**, school climate and discipline improve, with corresponding improvements in attendance and graduation rates; **third**, students take on and succeed in new challenges, such as AP or college prep courses, and scores on achievement tests & other assessments begin to rise.
- Some evidence exists that after enrollments exceed 400 students in a high school, the benefits of comprehensiveness diminish, i.e. very few students actually enroll in the additional courses offered. (Monk, 1987)
- There is evidence that large school size tends to have a negative affect on attendance, student attitudes toward school, and a sense of belonging.
- Adolescents stand a better chance of avoiding risky behavior when they experience & express strong connections to their school. (AddHealth Study, NIH 1997)
- Students' positive feelings of being connected to school are moderately associated with lower levels of violent behavior. (AddHealth Study, 1997)

- What seems to matter most for adolescent health is that schools foster an atmosphere in which students feel fairly treated, close to others, and a part of the school. (AddHealth Study, 1997)
- Success of small schools-within-schools dependent on their level of autonomy from the 'parent' school. (Raywid, 1995; Crain, 1997)

Practices that Help Create Safe, Supportive Learning Environments

- **Schools-within-schools**, e.g. career academies, houses
 - Multi-age
 - May be organized around a theme
 - Team of teachers with degree of autonomy
 - Students take most of classes together
- **Small schools** (less than 500)
- **Magnet Schools**
 - Usually have core focus, e.g. math & science; arts; career
 - Usually draw from entire district
 - May have admissions requirements
- **Keep cohorts of students together** as much and as long as possible
 - e.g., 9th grade students stay together to ease transition from middle school
 - Team of teachers
 - Smaller classes, better counseling, extra help
- **Teacher-advisory systems**
 - Administrators & teachers are assigned small number of students for whom they remain responsible over 3 or 4 years of high school
 - Homeroom is changed to teacher-advisory period
- **Block scheduling**
 - Extend class time from 45-50 minute periods to blocks of 80-90 minutes
 - Provides more time for individual attention, interdisciplinary lessons, greater variety of learning activities, e.g. project learning
 - Less disruption from changing classes
 - More preparation time for teachers
- **Mentoring**
 - Extra attention from a caring adult, e.g. teacher, employer, community leader
- **Reducing the number of students teacher teach each day**
 - Average teacher sees 120 to 150 students each day; experts recommend reducing number to 80.
- **Extra support and help for students**
 - Provide a structured system of extra help to enable students who may lack adequate preparation to complete an accelerated program of study that includes high-level academic and technical content.



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American
High Schools](#)

Speeches and Testimony

Contact: Melinda Malico (202) 401-3026

**Remarks as prepared for delivery by
U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley**

**Annual Back-to-School Address
Changing the American High School to
Fit Modern Times**

**The National Press Club
Washington, D.C.
September 15, 1999**

Good afternoon. Over the last five years, I have had the opportunity to come to the National Press Club to make my annual back to school speech on a variety of topics. Last year, I used the occasion to make a set of policy recommendations about improving teacher quality. I am pleased to report back to you that we are seeing some progress on this central issue when it comes to improving American education.

Last year, Congress passed our \$75 million teacher quality legislation and put down a first installment to meet the president's challenge to reduce class size by supporting 100,000 new teachers in the early grades -- teachers who have a special skill in teaching reading.

I also challenged America's higher education community to give the education of America's future teachers a much higher priority. I am pleased that over 100 college and university presidents are gathering in Washington today and tomorrow to join me at a "University Presidents' Summit on Teacher Quality." Some of these leaders are in our audience today.

Why Have This National Conversation?

Today, I want to start a national dialogue on the American high school and make a set of recommendations to get that conversation going. There are several reasons why we need to put the spotlight on these high school years of learning.

The first is simply demographics. The Baby Boom Echo generation -- 53 million strong in 1999 -- is getting older and the

pressure point is going to be more and more the American high school. In the next ten years, we will educate an additional 1.3 million high schools students.

Let us also recognize that how we learn and work has changed dramatically. We are in a new era, driven by science and technology, and our schools need to give young people both the capacity to do college-level work and the essential skills to prosper in our new economy.

A second reason is what young people are telling us themselves. Several weeks ago, I released a poll of over 1,000 high school students -- the Shell Poll. This poll told us that the great majority of America's high school students are optimistic, ambitious and have very good values. They want to go to college. They are thinking seriously about the future. But teenagers will tell you that growing up isn't easy. They told us in the poll that it is "tough" being a teenager and that they are looking for help. They feel increased pressure to go to college and get good grades. While the majority of students gave their high schools good marks, they also told us that they were bored and that many of them were willing just to get by.

Many of our young people have strong ambitions but no sense of direction about how to start achieving those ambitions. The poll also told us that about 20 percent of our nation's high school students -- that's about 2.7 million teenagers -- are being challenged by a host of problems such as drugs and alcohol, staying in school, or a troubled family life.

We need to listen hard to what our young people are telling us. Teenagers by their nature are passionate, creative, open to new ideas, and full of energy to discover the world around them. We need to find new ways to capture all of this positive energy, and we need to make sure that teenagers are part of the solution.

Finally, tragedies like Columbine have made all of us take a second look at the American teenage experience. Why are we losing some of our young people? What can we do in our high schools to make sure that every young person feels connected? For all these reasons and others, I believe that now is the right time to challenge ourselves to do some creative thinking about the future of the American high school.

Stuck in a Time Warp

Many experts have noted that the American high school is one of the most enduring and unchanging institutions in our society. Even as the world is changed all around them, the majority of our

nation's high schools seem to be caught in a time warp from long ago. In his well-known book *Horace's Compromise*, published in 1984, Ted Sizer took a searching look at the American high school. He wrote,

as one visits communities one is gradually struck by how similar the structure and articulated purpose of the American high school are.... the framework of grades, schedules, calendar, courses of study, even rituals, is astonishingly uniform and has been so for at least 40 years.

Little has happened in the last 15 years to make Ted Sizer change his observation. Now, I am not somebody who believes in change simply for change's sake. Yet, there is something out of sync here in 1999, if we continue to accept the unspoken assumption that too often defined the American high school of 50 years ago.

Fifty years ago, one-third of the students were being prepared for college, one-third drifted through high school but eventually got decent jobs, and one-third were tagged as low achievers and expected to drop out.

Years ago this assumption could prevail because we lived in an industrial era. Muscle power mattered as much as brain power when it came to making a living. In the South, where I come from, you could leave high school as early as tenth grade and make a decent living in a cotton mill. But those times are over and the old factory model of thinking needs to be left behind as well. Yet today, we still seem to be using America's high schools as "sorting machines," tagging and labeling young people as successful, run of the mill, or low achievers.

We need all of our young people learning to high standards in what Alan Greenspan has called the new "economy of ideas." This is why I continue to challenge the unspoken assumption in American education that we expect some young people to drop out, fail out or lose out and that there is nothing we can do about it. One fact I find especially troubling is the high Hispanic drop-out rate. Reforming our high schools must engage these Hispanic young people to stay in school.

So what are we to do about the American high school?

Leon Botstein, the president of Bard College, and a passionate champion of America's young people, has suggested in his book *Jefferson's Children* that the American high school is "obsolete." He goes on to argue that at the very least young

people need to be finishing high school by age 16 and assuming a new set of responsibilities to increase their sense of adulthood.

While I disagree with Leon Botstein's premise that high schools are obsolete, there is merit in his assertion that the "weakest part of America's educational system is located at the juncture of adolescence and schooling." Leon Botstein goes on to make the salient point that our high schools, with their rigid structures, can deaden the curiosity of our young people precisely when they are most curious.

It seems to me that we need to go in a new direction. The American high school needs a purpose that is more than just helping students get through it. Yes, many of our high schools do a very fine job of preparing young people for college. At the other extreme, some high schools are little more than a way station for young people who already know that life is very unfair.

Some of you may have read the article a few days ago in the paper about a Jesse Jackson-led tour of two high schools in Chicago that exemplified these extremes.

One school -- Neuqua High School in Naperville -- is a \$62 million suburban high school on a 50- acre campus. The other -- Harper High School -- in center city Chicago has a science lab with no running water and a dropout rate of about 33 percent. This gives me the opportunity to express some frustration.

All of our efforts to improve American education not only require new thinking but also new investments. For three years now, President Clinton has been asking the Congress to help this nation modernize and build more schools. We need to build 6,000 new schools to keep up with rising enrollment in the next ten years. Yet, the Republican-dominated Congress has done nothing to address this pressing issue. I remain perplexed by this partisan brick wall.

Congress needs to pass school modernization legislation, fulfill its promise to reduce class size, and provide the American people with a budget that makes education a high priority. We are not even near that now, and I remain disappointed by the current Congressional inaction.

There are other reasons why we need to go in a new direction to improve the American high school. While record numbers of high school seniors are going on to college, we still are not doing a very good job of preparing them to stay in college. Almost half of entering college freshmen drop out by the end of their second year.

And close to 30 percent of all students entering a four-year college have to take remedial courses. That's not good enough in my book. I think colleges and universities should be putting school districts on notice when they continually send them students who have to take remedial classes. So where can we improve?

Improving Academic Rigor

First, we need to accelerate learning. For six years now, I have been talking continuously about ending the tyranny of low expectations. This can only happen if our nation's high schools end the practice of putting some students into low-achieving or dead-end courses that tell these young people that we have just about given up on them.

High schools justly take great pride when their graduates go on to the best colleges and universities. But we can't place all of our focus only on the gains at the top. We need to have an unwavering focus on academic achievement, combined with a "no excuses" attitude for those at the bottom.

If a student is struggling, the answer has to be an intense intervention effort -- some combination of tutoring, after-school, Saturday schooling and summer school -- to help that student meet high standards.

I encourage local school districts to make the extra effort to test all of their eighth graders prior to entering high school to make sure that their reading and math skills are up to date.

If a child needs to improve his or her skills, do it during the summer before the student starts taking geometry and biology.

This leads me to, once again, urge high schools to encourage their students to take the tough core academic courses. Research tells us that the single most important factor in making sure a student gets admitted to college and completes the college degree is the academic intensity of the student's high school curriculum. Taking the tough courses counts much more than test scores or class rank. This is especially true for minority students. Right now just over half of all high school students are taking the core academic courses. Let's set a goal of 75 percent by 2005.

I believe that every high school in America should be offering advanced placement (AP) or other advanced courses in the core subjects within the next two years, and a fuller range of AP courses within the next three to five years. Today, only 49 percent of our high schools offer AP courses and only 10 percent of our

students take these demanding courses.

I remain deeply concerned that we continue to shortchange many of our young people, particularly our minority youth, by not even giving them the opportunity to stretch their minds.

This year, we have asked the Congress for \$20 million to expand AP opportunities. Distance learning and the Internet are surely two ways to get more AP courses to our nation's rural schools.

I encourage many more states to create high school exit exams where students demonstrate what they know and are able to do. About half of the states in the country have exit exams in place or in development. Years ago, I opposed high-stakes exit exams because minority students really had less chance to succeed in the days immediately following integration.

Today, I believe high school exit exams can help stimulate new efforts to raise up minority achievement, if we give every student the individual support needed to pass the exam.

Like other lawyers, I went to law school and then got ready to take the bar exam. Like most graduates of a law school, I discovered that the bar review helped me in many ways to integrate what I had learned in law school.

I believe that similar types of review courses could be established to help high school seniors achieve two goals: to help students prepare for high school exit exams; and to help them integrate what they have learned for a senior year portfolio.

Let me suggest one other way to raise standards. I believe that in this new economy every high school student should be close to fluent in a foreign language when he or she graduates. We should begin teaching foreign languages in our elementary schools, and then in middle schools and high schools. English is a beautiful language and every American student must be a master of it. English is surely a world language. But learning a foreign language exposes young people to new cultures and new horizons and helps them understand English better.

Now, all this push to get young people to learn more is going to provoke the question: When are they going to have time to do it? Between sports, the band, or other extra-curricular activities, between work, going to school and just hanging out, something has to give. Let me suggest the answer. We need to stop letting teenagers work more than 20 hours a week during the school year.

Helping young people develop a work ethic is an important part of growing up. The research, however, is quite clear. Students who work too much put earnings over learning and are too tired to study. Parents need to set limits on how much time young people spend working.

Building a Foundation for Change

Now, an important point. The effort to raise standards can't be done overnight, and we shouldn't assume that the current structure of the school day is the best and only way to get the job done.

You need to build a foundation and give teachers and principals the resources, the time and the flexibility to find the right way to help all of the young people. If we just add another layer of requirements on to a rigid school structure that already gives teachers little time to plan or interact with their students, then we will have missed the boat entirely.

Teachers are the heart and soul of our schools, and we have to do a better job of listening to them. And principals have to be close to magicians to balance day-to-day demands while redesigning their schools for the future.

So we need to support creative principals and teachers who see themselves as architects for a new type of high school that is more flexible, open, demanding and challenging.

This is why this Administration is asking the Congress for new support to reform America's high schools. We are seeking in our proposed Elementary and Secondary Education Act reauthorization substantial new budget authority to help 5,000 high schools improve or redesign themselves. And we have created a network of high schools on the cutting edge of reform. These New American High Schools are setting a new standard of excellence for all students.

Start with Good Teaching

Building a new foundation for America's high schools has to begin and end with good teaching. This is why 100 college presidents have graciously come to Washington for this important summit on improving teacher education. We simply have to elevate the task of preparing the next generation of teachers to the highest level of university leadership.

High school teachers, and for that matter all teachers, have to be

given the opportunity to raise their professional standards. They have to be masters of their field whether it is history, physics, technology or music.

This intense effort to give future teachers the tools they need is only the beginning. As one principal wrote me, 98 percent of her students are "digital children." New teachers simply have to be masters in knowing how to teach using technology and, frankly, we're not there yet.

Another high school principal made this important point which I support. She said that her dream would be to have her students in class nine months of the year, but have her teachers working an extra month to six weeks to plan the curriculum, to understand how to teach to new high standards and to learn new teaching skills. It seems to me that the high school of the future is simply going to have to go in this direction.

This requires teachers to have a central role in redefining how they teach. If we ask teachers to do the extra work to raise achievement levels, I believe we should pay them for the effort. You can't get good teachers on the cheap.

Helping Young People Build Connections

I also believe that we need to find ways to create small, supportive learning environments that give students a sense of connection. That's hard to do when we are building high schools the size of shopping malls. Size matters.

The National Association of Secondary School Principals in their important study, *Breaking Ranks*, makes the key point that students learn best in schools with about 600 students. While we may not be able to change the size of every high school building, there are many ways that we can make young people feel more connected.

We can create schools-within-schools, academic houses, and make sure that every high school student has an advisor for all four years that the student can count on all the time. At Central Park East High School in New York City, the morning home room has been turned into a student advisory period. The students get focused about what they are doing and relate it to their lives.

Certainly we need many more counselors and mentors in our high schools and not just to help young people get ready for college. Growing up is "tough," teenagers tell us, and they are looking for guidance and support. Given the recent violent tragedies, I support the new efforts in the Congress to increase funding both

for counselors and mental health counselors.

Two Key Transitions: Ninth and Twelfth Grades

Two very important transitions points take place in the American adolescent experience: when young people first enter high school; and when they graduate. These transitions really amount to rites of passage, as they come at key moments in adolescent development. We need to see them in a new light.

The typical eighth grader, for example, leaves a much smaller elementary or middle school and suddenly find himself in a very big and, at times, impersonal high school. The transition can, at times, be overwhelming. The result is that some students become low achievers, some drop out and some decide that they are not college material.

And suicide prevention experts tell us that ninth grade is the most troubling year. So this first transition deserves our attention. Several recommendations come to mind.

Schools can create a smoother transition in a number of ways, such as freshmen academies, regular contact with the same group of teachers and advisors, and transition courses that address new challenges from study skills to understanding other cultures. The key is to create smaller and more personalized learning environments for these young people.

Parents need to stay very involved with their children when they enter high school. This is so important and goes against the common assumption that parents should give their teenagers more independence. The truth of the matter is that teenagers want to grow and have new experiences; at the same time, they want to know that their parents are there for them. Parents need to realize that they are still the most important source of support and guidance for teenagers. Sometimes it is hard to break through.

My message to parents is to stay involved. Slow down your lives. I hear a real concern from parents about their children being bombarded by a multitude of messages -- some of them harmful -- from television, movies, the Internet and even from their children's best friends.

Young people can be very tough on each other at a time when relationships are so important to them. They create cliques, groups, and select out those they do not want. Our high schools have to push back against this tendency, and students are telling us that this is where they need the most support. Community

groups and faith communities can also play a positive role in helping schools meet this challenge. The message should be very clear -- every teenager matters.

This is why I believe that schools should set a real goal that every student has some adult to turn to for advice and support. It may be a counselor, a mentor, a coach or a teacher. But the key is to make sure that every teenager has that sense of security about knowing whom to turn to when he or she is struggling.

The freshman year is also a crucial year for getting young people on the right track in terms of taking the right courses and getting them thinking about going on to college. This is why I want to recommend highly something that Gene Bottoms is doing as part of his "High School That Works" initiative that is supported by the Southern Regional Education Board.

Freshmen who participate in this program, which is now in more than 500 high schools across the South, sit down with their parents and a high school advisor and sketch out a six-year plan. The young people get the message that they have new and higher horizons and that going to high school has a larger purpose.

Creating New Pathways to Learning and Adulthood

We can also do more to create new pathways to learning and to adulthood. In a world exploding with knowledge, with teenagers hooked on the Internet as never before, the traditional seven-periods-a-day way of learning may not be the best or the only way to educate our young people.

New pathways to learning and adulthood mean new connections to colleges and universities, new connections with other institutions in the community whether it is a hospital, a bank, a zoo, or a museum. Close to 230,000 high school students, for example, are now taking college-level courses across the country. Tech Prep courses and School-to-Work programs, for example, are great ways to link high school students to community colleges.

High schools of the future need to see themselves as the starting place where young people launch themselves into other learning experiences, and then come back to their high school to integrate what they have learned.

I also encourage schools to do some creative thinking about the senior year experience. Some high school seniors start "checking out" once they have filled out their last college application or received an early acceptance notice from college. The young

people tell us in a very direct way that they want to move on.

Senior year should be a well-thought-out transition into adulthood with students being given increasing responsibility. They should be given many more opportunities to be out in the community in structured internships, apprenticeships or service-learning opportunities. By treating these young men and women as adults, we send a powerful message that we expect adult behavior from them as well.

Conclusion

I end now with this thought. Believe in our young people. I say that again -- believe in our young people. Please help me give them a message of hope, promise and possibilities. I am tired and weary of the worn-out nostalgia and pessimism that seems to haunt American thinking when it comes to our young people.

Let us reject the twin belief that once there was a time in American education when all things were better; and the negative assumption that this generation of young people can't quite cut it. Our young people don't buy that and neither do I.

Surely, in this time of peace and prosperity, in this great nation -- the world's best democracy and hope -- we can send a more positive message than that to our nation's young people.

I believe in America's young people. They are optimistic and ambitious and they are looking for direction. If you don't know a high school student, go out and meet one.

The high school student you meet will be full of possibilities and bored at the same time; extraordinarily creative and, at times, absolutely clueless. High school students will be full of themselves, and scared to death about what people are thinking about them. They are our children and grandchildren. And in a few years, when all of us are in our rocking chairs, they will be our leaders.

Let's give them hope and promise for the coming times, and let's create high schools that are exciting, exploring, creative and challenging, high schools that spark all of our young people to see the full value of their God-given potential.

Thank you.

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Ideas for Secretary's Press Club Speech on High Schools
Trish McNeil

The headline: Secretary Riley calls for higher standards, tougher courses, smaller schools, and more relevancy in American high schools. He also says students need more help in making transitions from middle school to high school and from high school to college and careers. He calls on colleges and universities to roll-up their sleeves and get involved in high school reform.

1. The world is changing
 - Globalization of the economy
 - Information explosion
 - Technological revolution
 - Need for more education for good jobs and good citizenship
 - Need for education beyond high school
 - More Students in High School than ever before
2. Basic structure of the American High School largely unchanged for last 50 years.
 - The first public high school opened in Boston in 1821, by 1860s tax-supported high schools had displaced private academies as the source of most secondary education. Latin and algebra dominated the high school curricula of the 1900s. In 1900 only about 6% of young Americans graduated from high school.
 - By the late 19th century, the decline of the apprenticeship system, the end of child labor, the influx of new immigrant children and the rise of the manufacturing economy, caused business and labor leaders and educators, like John Dewey to call for more practical schooling.
 - High schools began to organize on the factory model – driven by the clock, bells, and periods to work at different subjects. In 1918 and 1920 respectively, the curriculum was expanded to include vocational education and the general track. In the early 1920s, the Carnegie unit system was introduced for college preparatory course work as a way of identifying courses that would prepare students for college admission. It wasn't until the Great Depression in the 1930s that a majority of young people was enrolled in high school.
 - The comprehensive high school model was developed in 1950s. It maintained basic factory model organization, but started trend toward larger schools, offering more subjects. This structure characterizes most of today's high schools. They are:
 - Divided into college prep, general track, vocational education
 - Divided into 7 period days of about 50 minutes each; "the clock is king"—Sizer
 - There is a sequence within subjects (i.e. algebra before trigonometry), but rarely a coherent relationship or sequence across subjects. Sizer
 - Most classes in lecture mode
 - Curriculum for the most part "a mile wide and an inch deep"
 - Student grouped by ages and grades

- Subjects come at students in random order
- Students see 5-6 teachers a day; teachers see 120-150 students each day
- The goal is to get grades, accumulate credits in order to graduate; the focus is not so much on learning the material and being able to use what you learn

“This big country contains numerous educational jurisdictions, with authority decentralized. Nonetheless, as one visits communities one is gradually struck by how similar the structure and articulated purpose of American high schools are. Rural schools, city schools, rich schools, poor schools; public schools, private schools; big schools, little schools: the framework of grades, schedules, calendar, courses of study, even rituals, is astonishingly uniform and has been so for at least 40 years...” Ted Sizer, *Horace's Compromise*, 1984

3. Parents, business leaders, colleges are concerned that students aren't being well prepared for the future.
 - 64% employers say most high school graduates do not have the skills necessary to succeed in the workplace.
 - 55% of college professors say that the high school graduates they see do not have what it takes to succeed in college.
 - Teachers and parents believe that students aren't working hard enough
4. Young people are optimistic about their future, but they do tell pollsters that their high schools could serve them better.
 - They are bored; much of high school seems irrelevant
 - Young people have learned how to play the game all too well
 - They don't feel challenged in high school
 - They want smaller, more personal learning environments
 - They feel that respect for one another is not valued at their school.
 - They also say that at work they are treated more like adults, trusted more, given more responsibility, and given more respect than they are at school
5. At the Department of Education, we've been studying high schools that are making the kinds of changes necessary to prepare all students for the 21st century by ensuring that they meet rigorous academic standards, are prepared for college, and have opportunities to learn about careers.
 - We began our New American High School project in 1996. We have recognized 17 high schools to date. In November, I will announce the winners of this year's competition. {16 finalists announced – will provide names as requested}
 - The work of these New American High Schools has taught us a great deal about ways in which high schools can change to respond to the needs of students, parents, and employers in the future.
6. High schools need to change if we are going to prepare our young people to live, work and be responsible citizens in the 21st century.
 - The purpose of just getting through high school is not good enough

- The factory model is outdated
- High schools should not be places where we sort students by preconceived notions
- Too many students aren't graduating from high school. Only 78% of students have a high school diploma by age 25; another 11% get a GED
- More students are going to college and that's good news, but almost half of entering freshmen dropout by the end of their second year
- Too many students have to take remedial courses when they get to college. 41% of students entering a two-year college and 29% of students entering a four year college have to take remedial coursework
- Young people who don't go on to college often face a lifetime of depressed wages and often have trouble finding a secure spot in the workforce until they reach their 30's.

SEVEN ACTION STEPS

1. A new rigor in academics for all students
 - The Information Age demands that all students have strong academic skills, computer and other technical skills, and problem solving, information analysis, communication, and teamwork skills, and that they are prepared for postsecondary education and careers.
 - Academic achievement is directly related to the investment students make in challenging coursework...The relationship between course-taking and achievement holds after controlling for socioeconomic status, aptitude, and/or prior achievement. (Source: Coursetaking in American High Schools, *ETS Policy Notes*, Spring 1999, Jeremy D. Finn.)
 - Only 42% of high schools require 3 years or more of math; only 27% require 3 years of science (Source: Finn)
 - In 1994, only 13% of American students completed 4 years of English, 3 years of math, science and social studies, 2 years of foreign language, and ½ year of computer science as recommended by the National Commission on Excellence in Education in 1983 (Source: Finn), and only a little over half (52%) completed 4 years of English, 3 years each of math, science and social studies. (Source: Finn)
 - Both the breadth and depth of course offerings were consistently lacking in small and rural communities; and poor schools offered fewer and less advanced math and science courses and often only one foreign language. (Source: Finn)
 - African American and Hispanic students took fewer math, science and foreign language courses than white students. This pattern was not affected by the availability of advanced courses or by the schools graduation requirements. (Source: Finn)
 - Tracking has a negative impact on coursetaking. "In most cases assigning students to non-academic tracks curtails their access to advanced courses," although increasing graduation requirements appears to have a positive impact on coursetaking by non-academic students. (Source: Finn)

- Only 49% of schools offer AP courses; only 10% take AP
- More states are developing exit exams; appears to have a positive impact on staying in school; taking more rigorous courses; and on how serious students take their schoolwork.
- Example of high school practice that causes students to take more rigorous courses:
 - i. Increasing graduation requirements
 - ii. Eliminating low-level courses and offering college prep content to all students
 - iii. Providing students with extra help after school, on weekends and in the summer
 - iv. Offering AP and International Baccalaureate programs and other advanced coursework
- ◆ Several of the Department's New American High Schools have held students to high expectations and have seen outstanding results. The curriculum at Adlai Stevenson High School in Lincolnshire, Illinois, is a model of challenge and relevance for the 3,300 + students enrolled. Newsweek magazine (1998) rated Stevenson number one in Illinois and among the top 20 high schools in the United States on efforts to give as many students as possible the opportunity to do the most advanced work. The payoff at Stevenson is remarkable: more than 90% of 1997 graduates exceed Illinois State math and science course requirements; the College Board (1997) ranked Stevenson first in the Midwest and among the top 10 schools in the world in the Advanced Placement (AP) program – *for producing more AP scholars than any school in the world*; and more than 95% of 1996 graduates enrolled in postsecondary education.

2. Smooth the transition from middle school to high school

- Ninth graders must cope with social, emotional, physical and intellectual challenges while undergoing the difficult transition from middle school to high school (CRESPAR)
- It is easy for students at this stage to feel alone, confused and overwhelmed (CRESPAR)
- Many young people perform poorly in high school or drop out – there is a pressing need for school reforms that prevent students' low achievement and failure in high school (MDRC)
- For many students, the traditional structure and practices of large, comprehensive high schools appear to be major sources of low achievement and dropping out (MDRC)
- Research strongly suggests that the first year of high school (typically 9th grade) is a year in which many students, particularly students in large urban areas, start on the path toward low achievement and dropping out (MDRC)
- The transition from middle school to high school can be a stressful time for all groups of students, but students with fewer resources due to family and community circumstances have less to rely on during times of stress

and become more vulnerable to negative educational outcomes than students with access to greater resources (MDRC)

- Roderick (1990) documented troubling outcomes for first-year high school students. Her research concluded that dropping out is not based on some individualized phenomenon but on something within the environment that causes youth to become disengaged from school after experiencing a transition to a new school
- High school is typically a far more impersonal place than middle school or elementary school, one in which students are much less likely to experience a sense of community (MDRC)
- Examples of high school practice that ease the middle to high school transition

- i. **Each entering high school student has a plan worked out with parents to cover the 4 years of high school and at least the first two years following high school.** The plan should reflect the student's goals and the courses the student needs to take to achieve those goals. All kids should know they are preparing for something and that high school is preparing them for their next steps. The Career Advisory Program at Newman Smith High School in Carrollton, Texas (1998 NAHS designee) provides each student with the tools and guidance to formulate a four-year academic plan. Teacher work with 12-15 students on the development of a portfolio-style individualized educational plan and provide students with a differentiated counseling program at each grade level. Freshman are required to enroll in a transition course titled SUCCESS (Students Understanding Cultural Diversity, Career Planning, Empowerment, Social and Academic Skills, and School and Community Spirit). Implemented in 1995-96, SUCCESS addresses study skills, understanding of the cultures of this diverse school, meditation skills, career possibilities and academic requirements.
- ii. **Every student has an advisor or mentor that meets with him/her regularly for the duration of high school.** At David Douglas High School in Portland, OR (1996 NAHS designee) every faculty member is assigned about 5-10 students each year, who remains that student's advisor for the four years of high school. Students meet every week with their faculty advisor. Students, parents and faculty advisors meet twice a year. The end of the year conference is led by the student who explains to the parent the standards each student is expected to meet, gives the parent a progress report and explains a piece of work undertaken by the student during the school year. At Central Park East High School, homeroom has been turned into a student advisory period. Students spend 45 minutes each day with their advisor.
- iii. **Set up special schools or schools-within-schools for 9th graders.**

The academic program at Minnie Howard School in Alexandria, Virginia provides Alexandria's ninth grade students with the appropriate transition from middle school to T.C Williams High School. Students are assigned to an academic team and share four or five of the same teachers for their core courses and their Teacher Advisory period. At Encina High School in Sacramento, California (1996 NAHS designee), all 9th grade students are enrolled in Encina's Freshman Academy. This transitional academy focuses on study skills, career exploration, data processing and computer applications along with academic requirements. Ninth grade teachers meet weekly to discuss classroom activities and students.

3. Changing the role of teachers and principals

Coronado High School in Coronado, California (1998 NAHS designee) is an example of the accomplishments that can be achieved when school leadership joins in partnership with its teachers and community. A new school vision, the addition of over 50 new courses, a shift to a more student-centered and active instructional strategies, a change in the class schedule, and a collaborative and inclusive decision-making process have resulted in a strong trend of improving test scores and attitudes.

4. Creating smaller, safer schools

- The Benefits of Small Schools
 - i. Better school climate
 - ii. Less drinking
 - iii. More college credits earned
 - iv. Less class cutting
 - v. More individual attention
 - vi. Greater feeling of belonging
 - vii. Increases opportunities for student to be known well by at least one caring adult
- The Research Findings
 - i. Size of learning environment has an indirect affect on student learning; creates the conditions for success, especially when there are high expectations and standards.
 - ii. When size of learning environment is reduced, benefits often become apparent very quickly, even within a year or two.
 - iii. Benefits of creating smaller learning environments arrive in stages: **first**, morale of students & teachers improves, students become more engaged in school; **second**, school climate and discipline improve, with corresponding improvements in attendance and graduation rates; **third**, students take on and succeed in new challenges, such as AP or college prep courses, and scores on achievement tests & other assessments begin to rise.
 - iv. Some evidence exists that after enrollments exceed 400 students in a high school, the benefits of comprehensiveness diminish, i.e.

very few students actually enroll in the additional courses offered. (Monk, 1987)

- v. There is evidence that large school size tends to have a negative affect on attendance, student attitudes toward school, and a sense of belonging.
- vi. Adolescents stand a better chance of avoiding risky behavior when they experience & express strong connections to their school. (AddHealth Study, NIH 1997)
- vii. Students' positive feelings of being connected to school are moderately associated with lower levels of violent behavior. (AddHealth Study, 1997)
- viii. What seems to matter most for adolescent health is that schools foster an atmosphere in which students feel fairly treated, close to others, and a part of the school. (AddHealth Study, 1997)
- ix. Success of small schools-within-schools dependent on their level of autonomy from the 'parent' school. (Raywid, 1995; Crain, 1997)
- **Practices that Help Create Safe, Supportive Learning Environments**
 - i. **Schools-within-schools**, e.g. career academies, houses
 - Multi-age, May be organized around a theme, Team of teachers with degree of autonomy, Students take most of classes together.
 - ◆ At Fenway High School in Boston, Massachusetts (1996 NAHS designee) all students belong to one of three houses: Children's Hospital; CVS Pharmacy, or Cross Roads (partnered with Boston's Museum of Science. Each house has approximately 80 students and 4-6 teachers. Teachers and students are paired together for the entire four years. Student grading is performance-based and graduation is earned through portfolios and exhibitions that demonstrate mastery of knowledge rather than an accumulation of course credits.
 - ii. **Build smaller schools** (less than 500)
 - iii. **Magnet Schools**
 - Usually have core focus, e.g. math & science; arts; career; Usually draw from entire district; May have admissions requirements
 - iv. **Keep cohorts of students together** as much and as long as possible, e.g., 9th grade students stay together to ease transition from middle school
 - v. **Use student organizations to support student goals, create structure, helps students learn good study habits, engage them in learning, learn how to become leaders and responsible citizens**

- Organizations like JROTC, Vocational Student Organizations, etc. provide students with more contact with caring adults, close relationships with a group of students
- vi. **Teacher-advisory systems**
 - Administrators & teachers are assigned small number of students for whom they remain responsible over 3 or 4 years of high school
 - Homeroom is changed to teacher-advisory period
- vii. **Block scheduling**
 - Extend class time from 45-50 minute periods to blocks of 80-90 minutes
 - Provides more time for individual attention, interdisciplinary lessons, greater variety of learning activities, e.g. project learning
 - Less disruption from changing classes
- viii. **Mentoring**
 - Extra attention from a caring adult, e.g. teacher, employer, community leader
- ix. **Reducing the number of students teacher teach each day**
 - Average teacher sees 120 to 150 students each day; experts recommend reducing number to 80. Extend class time from 45-50 minute periods to blocks of 80-90 minutes
 - Provides more time for individual attention, interdisciplinary lessons, greater variety of learning activities, e.g. project learning
 - Less disruption from changing classes
- x. **Extra support and help for students**
 - Provide a structured system of extra help to enable students who may lack adequate preparation to complete an accelerated program of study that includes high-level academic and technical content.

“Any school of integrity...should try to help its students become decent people...Decency in the American tradition comprises fairness, generosity and tolerance. Everyone should get a fair shake. People who are in trouble or who for whatever reason are weak deserve a special hand; the big guy should not force their way on the little guy.”Sizer, *Horace’s Compromise*.

5. Offer students more interesting and relevant learning opportunities
 - Students learn in a variety of ways
 - Students have access to a wide variety of information and experiences outside of school
 - Students need to understand the relevance and application of what they are learning in school

- Need more options and choices for student learning if all students are to attain high standards
- Examples of ways to better engage students in learning
 - i. Connect what students are learning in the classroom to experiences outside the classroom through job shadows, internships, community service learning
 - ii. Have fewer class periods so students can focus on subjects in depth, have time for projects and experiments and understand how subjects relate to each other, e.g. math, physics, and electronics.
 - Lengthen class time through block scheduling, extend class time from 45-50 minute periods to blocks of 80-90 minutes
 - Provides more time for individual attention, interdisciplinary lessons, greater variety of learning activities, e.g. project learning
 - iii. Use technology to enhance learning
 - Use distance learning to enhance instruction, do original research
- ♦ At David Douglas High School in Portland, Oregon, 11th and 12th grade students participate in one of seven broad career areas called constellations. Each year, academic classes provide a foundation of necessary skills, while constellation courses offer a range of ways to learn and practice various career-related skills, from hands-on projects to student-run businesses or enterprises. For example, in the Business and Management constellation, students run a school store and the Bank of David Douglas, which is a satellite branch of a commercial bank open to the entire community.

6. Senior year transition to college and life

- Many more students taking early acceptance; once accepted many college-bound seniors see no reason to continue to study
- Many students get enough credits to graduate and take few courses in senior year.
- Examples of how some schools engage students throughout senior year:
 - i. Offer students a chance to take college courses for credit
 - ii. Engage students in challenging senior projects which must be completed to meet graduation requirements
 - iii. Engage students in development of portfolios of their work, which are judged by outside experts, teachers, and peers at the end of the year as a condition for graduation.
 - iv. Engage students in internships and independent research projects that are linked to academic and career objectives.
- ♦ Students at the Marine Academy of Science and Technology (1998 NAHS designee), located in Sandy Hook, New Jersey, are provided numerous opportunities to expand and explore their options throughout their senior year. All students are required to participate in some type of onsite work experience. Internships with NOAA, the National Park

Service, the U.S. Coast Guard and the New Jersey Fisheries Department provide students an opportunity to conduct research with scientists and apply academic concepts. A senior thesis project requires 12th grade-students to design, conduct, analyze and present research on a selected topic with a mentor of their choice, related to their studies in the marine sciences and technology. College credit for oceanography and internships are offered through articulation agreements with Rider University and Stockton College of New Jersey.

7. The role of colleges and universities

- Can't stay on the sidelines in the effort to raise standards
- 1.1 million additional high school seniors in the coming decade; increasing number want to go to college
- Examples of how colleges can be involved in high school reform
 - i. Gear-Up
 - ii. Offer courses to students for credit while in high school
 - iii. Set up high schools on college campuses
 - iv. Offer distance learning in advanced coursework to high school students
 - v. Work with teachers to ensure students have the right skills to do college level work.
 - vi. Examine admission requirements so that they reflect what students know and are able to do, not just grades and Carnegie units
- ◆ Gateway Institute of Technology, a Science and Technology Magnet High School located in St Louis, Missouri (1996 NAHS designee), provides students ample opportunities to receive college credit and exposure as an enrolled high school student. In partnership with several two-year institutions, students can receive dual credit for classes taken either at Gateway or at the community college. For example, Applied Physical Sciences students who complete Gateway's course in chemical technology can earn credit in that same class at Florissant Valley Community College. Partnerships with four-year institutions also exist. Students who graduate from Gateway with a specialty major in Aviation/AirFrame/Power Plant are able to receive 56 hours of credit acceptable at several institutions: Parks College, Purdue University, Embry Riddle and Phoenix Aviation.



How Does My School Become a New American High School...

Why is this important to my school...

The nation is working to reform K-12 education and build School-to-Work Opportunities systems in order to prepare all students with the high level academic and technical skills necessary to succeed in the 21st century. The New American High Schools initiative is focused on high schools that are committed to ensuring that all students meet challenging academic standards and are prepared for colleges and careers.

At the national, state and local levels much attention is being paid to the lack of academic preparation being exhibited by high school students. Data from the National Center for Education Progress clearly show that students are not receiving the academic preparation needed to succeed or compete in the knowledge-based economy of the 21st century. Further, almost half of the students graduating from the nation's high schools today do not possess even the basic skills needed to successfully complete a college education or to move up a career ladder in an entry level job. While the research seems to indicate a compelling need for whole school reform, a nationwide search by the National Center for Research in Vocational Education (NCRVE) in 1996 uncovered only 31 high schools that had undertaken comprehensive whole school reform efforts. The Consortia for Policy Research in Education has estimated that at the current rate of reform only 20 percent of high schools will have incorporated reforms by the year 2000.

The Department of Education has embarked on an aggressive strategy to address these challenges and those further highlighted by the recently released results of the Third International Math and Science Study through the New American High Schools initiative. Nationally, this initiative aspires to transform high schools into institutions, which fully prepare students to meet the challenges of a changing technological and increasingly competitive global economy. New American High Schools are places where innovative instructional techniques, leading edge technology, enhanced and targeted professional development, community service and integrated work based experiences and community based partnerships are utilized to transform the high school experience, resulting in increases in student achievement and performance. Towards the promotion of such whole school reform efforts, the Department feels it is critically important to recognize and applaud schools striving to prepare students to meet high academic standards and realizes the potential these and future New American High Schools have to offer communities across the nation.

Where we have been and where we are going...

In 1996, the Department chose Ten New American High Schools with assistance from the National Center for Research in Vocational Education for their innovation and commitment to academic excellence. These schools were also awarded the Seventh Annual *Business Week* Awards for Instructional Innovation at a national conference sponsored by the Department of Education and co-sponsored by more than 60 education, business and community partners. Throughout 1998, 1999 and into 2000, the Department intends to expand the New American High Schools initiative through a three pronged solicitation-based approach:

1. **Collaboration with the Blue Ribbon Schools Program.** Schools identified as 1998 Blue Ribbon Secondary Schools had the sole opportunity to apply for New American High School recognition during the summer of 1998. Thirty-five of the one hundred twenty 1998 Blue Ribbon Secondary School award winners applied for this recognition and seven schools were competitively selected as the 1998 New American High Schools showcase sites. The seven showcase sites received formal acknowledgement at the Blue Ribbon Schools recognition ceremony held on November 12, 1998. The 1999-2000 Blue Ribbon Secondary Schools competition will fully integrate the New American High Schools initiative through its inclusion as a permanent special emphasis area category. The 1999-2000 Blue Ribbon application requirements were published in October 1998.
2. **Open solicitation for "at-large" schools.** The Department intends to solicit nomination packages for 1999 New American High School recognition. The 1999 recognition process will be co-sponsored by a national school reform organization and expects to identify as many as 80 new national showcase sites. The application requirements will likely be published by the Spring of 1999. Formal school selections will be announced during the Fall of 1999. This solicitation will be open to any high school engaged in comprehensive school reform efforts and committed to implementing strategies reflected by the New American High School initiative.
3. **Schools nominated by partner high school reform networks.** In September 1998, the Department awarded contracts to Jobs for the Future, the Southern Regional Education Board, and Sonoma State University with the intention of linking the New American High School initiative to activities and reform strategies supported by these education reform networks. The discrete purpose of the project is to infuse New American High Schools strategies into network philosophies, technical assistance themes and products, and support and establish a nomination pool of schools for future New American High School recognition. Partner networks will nominate network schools for recognition throughout late 1999 and 2000.

What are the expectations and the benefits...

A core philosophy of the New American High Schools initiative is that the responsibility of public service accompanies the reward of public recognition. This initiative spotlights educational successes and offers meritorious schools the opportunity for public praise and validation for their accomplishments. As models of excellence and equity, New American High

Schools have much to share among themselves and with other schools that aspire to similar success. To facilitate outreach and information sharing activities, scaled to the level expected under a nationally recognized program, the Department intends to provide each recognized New American High School with a small stipend to offset the financial burden of such activities on the schools.

Beyond public recognition, designation as a New American High School will provide several key benefits for a school community. Schools will have access to technical assistance and support through network partners and apprised of cutting edge research findings and grant opportunities throughout the Department. Future activities include initiatives designed to develop a learning community of existing sites and further technical assistance and information sharing ventures.

Your questions or comments are always welcome. Feel free to direct them to the Department of Education via 1-800-USA-LEARN or contact the Office of Vocational and Adult Education at (202) 205-5451 or via email at ovae@inet.ed.gov.

The New American High Schools Initiative:
Supporting High School Improvement Through Reform Networks

The U.S. Department of Education is spending \$ 4.6 million to assist high schools with their school reform efforts. By collaborating with existing national and regional reform networks, the Department gains access to hundreds of schools already in the process of change. To support its New American High School (NAHS) initiative, the Department is contracting with three networks:

- Southern Regional Education Board, (SREB), Atlanta, Georgia
- Jobs for the Future (JFF), Boston, Massachusetts
- California Institute on Human Services/Sonoma State University in collaboration with the California Department of Education

These networks have strong working relationships with their member high schools. The network have the ability to assist high schools to implement whole-school reform strategies resulting in all students meeting both challenging academic standards and acquiring the communication, problem solving, computer, and technical skills necessary to pursue college and careers.

By funding SREB we will be able to reach their 800 plus schools in 22 states. The *High Schools That Work* initiative is a whole-school, assessment-based school improvement effort that ensures a rigorous academic curriculum for all students. Through our contact, SREB will work intensively with 25 schools relative new to their network to assist them to become NAHS. In addition, SREB staff will share the elements of the NAHS with the rest of their schools and school districts.

The Jobs for the Future (JFF) *Benchmark Communities Network* activities will serve to strengthen each participating school and district's capacity to create and sustain a district-wide reform network. Forty lead schools and up to 30 participating school districts will implement whole school reform principles that mirror the NAHS elements. By assisting fellow districts, the Department will add numerous schools to the list of practicing NAHS.

The collaboration of the California State Department of Education and Sonoma State University provides a unique opportunity for reform in California on a large scale. The focus of the New California High Schools Network will be to address technical assistance needs and increase the capacity of all 193 Network schools to institute whole school reform reflecting the NAHS strategies. The *California High School Network* was founded to follow the principles of *Second to None: A Vision of the New California High School*. With the support and funding from the State Department and expert technical assistance from Sonoma State University, this effort should result in many schools becoming New American High Schools.

ABSTRACT: NEW AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL NETWORKS AWARD
One of Three

Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), Atlanta, GA
Subcontractor: MPR Associates, Berkeley, CA

<u>Total Award</u>	: \$1,537,000
<u>Award Dates</u>	: October 1, 1998 to March 31, 2000
<u>Network</u>	: High Schools That Work (HSTW) includes over 800 schools
<u>No. of Schools</u>	: 25 HSTW schools with at least 15 urban areas
<u>School Grants</u>	: \$10,000 for additional specialized assistance
<u>Evaluation</u>	: Baseline and follow-up data will help guide schools in their reform efforts. Data to be collected even after federal funding ends.
<u>Goal</u>	: To provide targeted technical assistance to these schools at an accelerated rate to move them toward the "ideal vision of a New American High School"
<u>Conference</u>	: The New American High Schools That Work will be featured at SREB's yearly summer conference
<u>Products</u>	: Mentor and Facilitator Guides, Final and Evaluation Reports
<u>Strategies</u>	: SREB and MPR will enlist mentors from the top HSTH to help these sites with school-wide improvements. In addition, each school will be provided their own School Improvement Facilitator to work with staff so all students can meet challenging academic standards, master technical knowledge and skills, and expand their understanding of career and post-secondary options.

Contact: Ione Phillips
Southern Regional Education Board
592 10th Street NW
Atlanta, Georgia 30318

Phone: (404) 875-9211 ext. 248

ABSTRACT: NEW AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL NETWORKS AWARD
One of Three

Jobs for the Future (JFF), Boston, MA

<u>Total Award</u>	: \$1,534,000
<u>Award Dates</u>	: October 1, 1998 to March 31, 2000
<u>Network</u>	: JFF's Benchmark Communities Initiative
<u>No. of Schools</u>	: 40 "lead" schools in year one; 30 in year two
<u>School Districts</u>	: Seattle, Philadelphia, Rhode Island Cluster, North Clackamas, Oregon, and Boston are Phase I Districts. Phase II will add New York, Minneapolis, Kansas City, Oakland, and Fresno.
<u>School Grants</u>	: 5,000 for targeted professional development
<u>Evaluation</u>	: Benchmark Communities evaluation and assessment
<u>Goal</u>	: To accelerate whole school reform in high schools with the close cooperation and guidance of their school district, and to create and sustain a district-wide reform network
<u>Conference</u>	: High Schools in Transition Conference co-sponsored by JFF and the Coalition of Essential Schools in 1999
<u>Products</u>	: Whole School Change Toolkits; High Schools in Transition: Six Case Studies; Design Studios; Partners in Change: Districts, Schools, Communities
<u>Strategies</u>	: Several schools will serve as "Whole-School Change Design Studios." These Studios along with a Peer Learning Network will accelerate Transfer of skills and experience among participating schools. In addition, National Professional Development Institutes will be designed for Educational leaders and Coaching Institutes for teachers.

Contacts: Lili Allen
Jobs for the Future
88 Broad Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02110

Phone: (617) 728-4446

ABSTRACT: NEW AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL NETWORKS AWARD
One of Three

California Institute on Human Services
Sonoma State University, CA
In Collaboration with
California Department of Education

<u>Total Award</u>	: \$1,519,000
<u>Award Dates</u>	: October 1, 1998 to March 31, 2000
<u>Network</u>	: California High School Network—over 193 schools
<u>No. of Schools</u>	: 20 schools will receive intensive assistance, 173 schools will also Benefit directly
<u>School Grants</u>	: \$27,000 each for 20 schools
<u>Evaluation</u>	: Third party evaluation will include assessment of progress toward toward reaching NAHS goals
<u>Goal</u>	: To use the 20 model schools as learning centers for the remaining 193 schools in this California Network and finally as models for the remaining 1,000 plus high schools in California.
<u>Strategies</u>	: The augmented network services include a series of targeted Workshops; on-site, on-line, and on-phone technical assistance by learning coaches; web-site support providing promising practice descriptions; and school to school site visits.

Contact: Dr. Eileen Warren
California Institute on Human Services
Sonoma State University
P.O. Box 51724
Riverside, California 92517

Phone: (909) 686-4296

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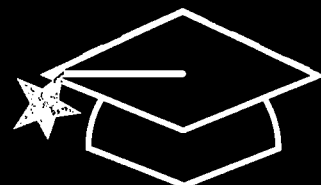
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In Their Own Words

STUDENTS AND
EDUCATORS
TALK ABOUT
WHAT MATTERS



**NEW AMERICAN
HIGH SCHOOLS**
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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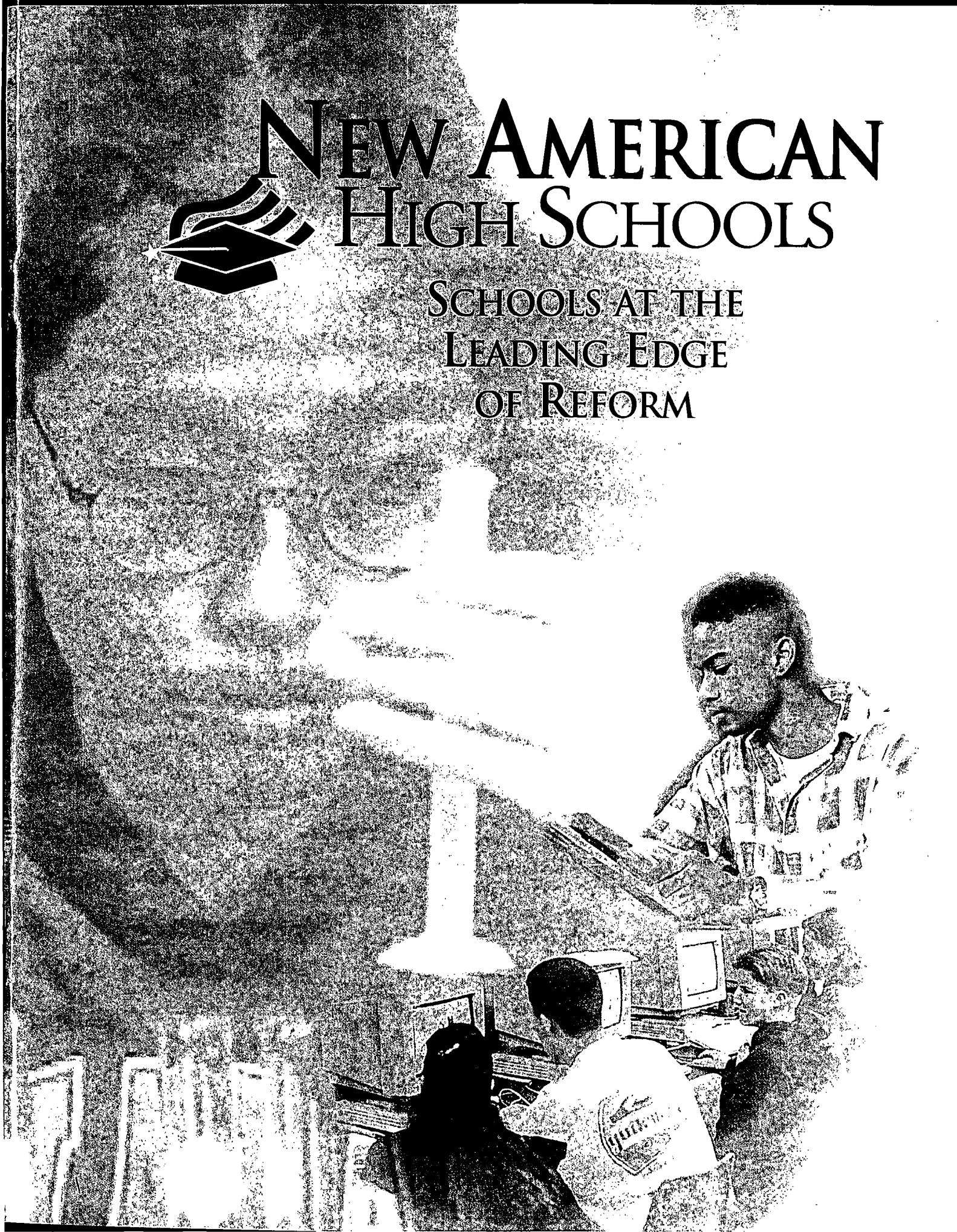
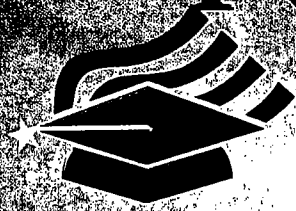
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NEW AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOLS

SCHOOLS AT THE
LEADING EDGE
OF REFORM



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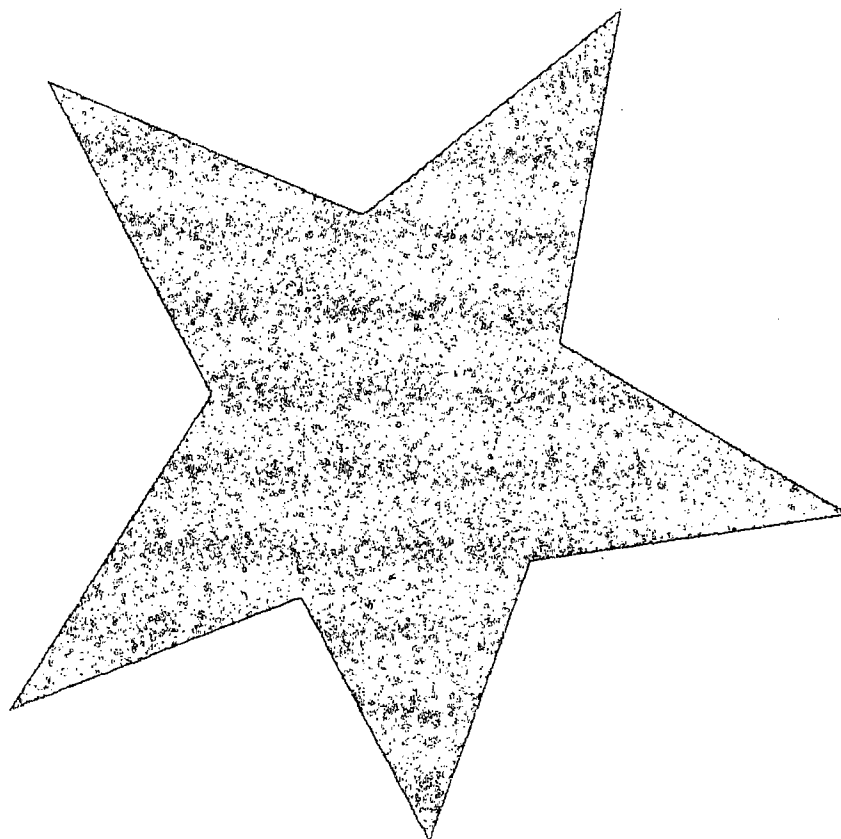
KEY HIGH SCHOOL REFORM STRATEGIES:

An Overview of Research Findings



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