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Davis O'Connell

Date: October 28, 1999

To: Andy Rotheman
White House Office of Domestic Policy 456-5581

From: Lynda Davis for Joe Cipfl
Illinois Community College Board

Re: News from the Illinois Community Colleges

ILLINOIS
COMMUNITY
COLLEGE
BOARD



P r e s s R e l e a s e

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**NOT FOR RELEASE UNTIL OCTOBER 29, 1999 10:00 a.m.
October 29, 1999**

Survey: developing student ethics a community college job

Springfield, Illinois— Do ethics and values matter to quality leadership? The people of Illinois say "yes." In that, they are in agreement with the students, faculty and staff of the Illinois Community College System. In a survey conducted for the Illinois Community College System Leadership and Core Values Steering Committee, the Gallup Organization and The Institute for Global Ethics found that Illinoisans share two significant ideas:

- 72 percent "disagree" or "strongly disagree" that "you can be an effective leader without being ethical;" and
- 77 percent "agree" or "strongly agree" that "people today are not learning the values they should."

Illinois citizens also agree on a solution: 70% think community colleges should help students develop ethics and values. Illinoisans indicate that the values of responsibility, truth, fairness, compassion and self-respect are most important to them in their daily lives.

Illinois community colleges are addressing these opinions of citizens with the Leadership and Core Values Initiative. The initiative, first approved by the Illinois Community College Board in 1997, has three main objectives:

- define and describe core values and find consensus on common values held in high esteem among Illinois' populations
- explore and implement strategies that enable Illinois community colleges to create a culture and climate characterized by agreed-upon values

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- develop strategies for infusing these values into the curriculum and operations, into the teaching, and into the leadership at Illinois community colleges.

"This survey confirms that the leadership role Illinois community colleges are willing to take have been validated by the state's citizens," says Joseph Cipfl, president and chief executive officer of the Illinois Community College Board. "Never before has an entire public educational system been willing to step up and tackle this kind of bold initiative."

"The results of this survey are unambiguous," said Charles Novak, president of Richland Community College in Decatur and chair of the Leadership and Core Values Steering Committee. "People agree that ethics can and should be taught, and that our community colleges ought to do it."

Conducted simultaneously with the public at large, and randomly selected students, faculty, and staff at all Illinois community colleges, the findings of this survey represent the first comprehensive study of the values, ethical priorities, moral reasoning patterns, and possibilities for teaching ethical leadership in any statewide community college system.

According to Cipfl, the results of the survey will provide the basis for the application of the ICCB's Leadership and Core Values Initiative on community college campuses through the newly formed Illinois Community College System Center for Applied Ethics.

The Center for Applied Ethics will develop and promote "a heightened awareness of values based educational opportunities within community college curriculum and organizational structures," according to Bruce Conner, department chair of business technology at Kaskaskia College in Centralia. "The Center will be available to all community colleges to enhance their efforts on each individual campus," said Conner, who was recently appointed director of the Center.

Other key findings of the survey are:

- Respondents don't think ethics is always simple. 52 percent reject the idea that "ethical decisions are usually pretty easy."
- Respondents also think there is cause for concern about the future. 52 percent don't believe that "young people are on the right track in developing the values they'll need to be ethical adults."

"The implications of this research go beyond the state's borders," said Rushworth Kidder, founder and president of the Institute for Global Ethics. The IGE is a nonprofit organization based in

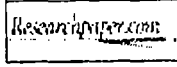
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Camden, Maine, promoting ethics through public discourse and practical action.

"We in the Illinois Community College System welcome the opportunity to open a path that many have been reluctant to follow," said Cipfl. "We cannot shy away from the discussion of leadership and core values or fear where that discussion will lead us. Too much is at stake in our state and in our country to ignore this issue."

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To announce the results of the Leadership and Core Values survey and answer questions about its implications for the Illinois Community College System, Joseph Cipfl, Charles Novak and members of the Leadership and Core Values Steering Committee will hold a press conference at 10:00 a.m. on Friday, October 29, 1999 in the Freeport Room of the Renaissance Hotel in Springfield. Members of the media are cordially invited to attend.



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Changing technology transforms Iowa State U. education

(University Wire) *Arlene Birt*; 11-19-1998

(Iowa State Daily) (U-WIRE) AMES, Iowa -- As technology is used more in classroom instruction, some professors see teaching heading toward a more individualized, Internet-supplemented education.

"[Teaching in the past] was predominantly large group presentations; now we are seeing a very significant transition towards more individual-based activities," said Mike Albright, instructional development specialist. "I think that the transition is going to continue. We've seen this turn before -- the transition to student-centered learning as opposed to teacher-centered learning."

Albright said the increasing use of the World Wide Web in the classroom helps get students more involved in their educations.

"[This kind of] technology creates a more flexible institution," said Scott Chadwick, assistant professor of organizational communication.

Chadwick said the World Wide Web provides teaching tools, such as WebCT and Classnet, that are not available through face-to-face teaching.

"[Programs like] these enable communication that just isn't possible in a regular classroom," Albright said.

Albright said a computerized teaching program called WebCT, which allows teachers to supplement and deliver their curriculum with information from the Web, was licensed to the university last April.

Chadwick said this technology also gives teachers "multiple channels" from which to deliver information to their students. Chadwick said he sees a trend toward more "distance education," which is learning via television or cable.

"I think we have to look at the roles of technology. What does technology allow us to do that is more informational than face to face interaction?" Albright said.

Albright said this technology offers opportunities for simulations and communication.

"I'd say it's more accessible. We have much greater capabilities in terms of graphics and communication; more people have access to it," said Pete Boysen, senior systems analyst for the Durham Center. "I see more accessible, faster capabilities; we will probably be doing more 3-D kinds of activities [in the future]."

Boysen said in the next 10 years, he expects to see computers doing more of teachers' work.

"Some of the instructional management will be taken over by computers to ease the load off faculty so they can spend more time working with students rather than grading things," Boysen said.

However, some experts said more advanced technology will gradually lead teachers to expect more from students.

"Students information access has gotten much easier, the speed with which students can generate documents," Chadwick said. "But as a result, I think teachers' expectations have risen."

Boysen said students' expectations also will rise.

Some students said personal interaction may eventually become obsolete.

"People depend more on technology than relating to other people," said Brianne Brooks, freshman in architecture.

Kelly Meierkord, freshman in landscape architecture, agrees society is headed toward more computer interaction.

"I think we'll see more logging on to the computer as a way of going to class," she said.

But Boysen said some computer uses, such as e-mail and chat programs, help personal interaction.

"In some cases, it's actually encouraging it," Boysen said.

However, some professors said personal interaction has not changed.

"Research shows that if you have people interacting [digitally], they can have the same interaction as when they see each other face to face," Chadwick said.

Albright said it is unlikely that the concept of a university will disappear.

"I don't realistically see that happening till we are all dead and gone. It's not likely that the majority of teaching will take place on the Web until the mid-21st century," Albright said.

Boysen said technology will likely change more in the next decade -- "more than it has in the past 10" -- and ISU needs to keep up with the changes.

"We have to stay up to date with the software and hardware changes and be willing to look at different ways of doing things than we have been in the past," Boysen said. "I think [ISU has] done a fair job, but we could do better and invest more resources in software for use by students."

Albright expects this trend to continue to change.

"Obviously, the World Wide Web didn't exist 10 years ago, so this whole transition towards Web-based teaching has occurred recently," Albright said. "I think when you compare the kinds of learning opportunities that are available now that weren't available then, it's just mind boggling."

(c) Iowa State Daily via U-Wire

Arlene Birt, *Changing technology transforms Iowa State U. education.*, University Wire, 11-19-1998.

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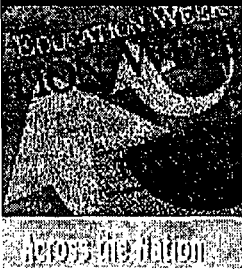
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Study Links High School Courses With College Success

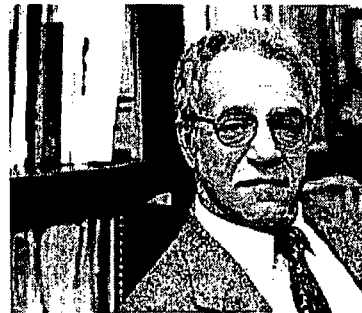
By Lynn Olson

The biggest factor in determining whether young people earn a bachelor's degree is their participation in a strong academic curriculum in high school, according to a federal study scheduled to be released this week.

The completion of a solid academic core was more strongly correlated with a bachelor's degree than high school test scores, grade point averages, or class rank, the study found.

Moreover, an intensive academic curriculum in high school had the strongest positive effect for African-American and Latino students.

The report, "Answers in the Tool Box," by Clifford Adelman, a senior research analyst with the U.S. Department of Education's office of educational research and improvement, is based on data from a national cohort of students who were followed from the time they entered 10th grade in 1980 until roughly age 30 in 1993.



Clifford Adelman studied the importance of an intensive high school curriculum.
--Benjamin Tice Smith

It strongly bolsters what many school reform advocates have been saying for years: One of the best ways to close the attainment gap between minority and nonminority students is to ensure that all young people complete a solid academic curriculum in high school.

For More Information

The full text of "Answers in the Tool Box" is scheduled to be available online later this month at www.ed.gov/pubs.

"It's no longer sufficient just to talk about poverty and about race," said Kati Haycock, the director of the Washington-based Education Trust, a nonprofit group that promotes higher academic achievement for all students.

"There's an achievement gap because poor and minority kids have not been placed in the kinds of rigorous courses in high school that build the skills they need for college and for work."

The study found that by age 30, some 65 percent of high school graduates had attended some form of postsecondary education, and 40 percent had attended a four-year college. Of those, 63 percent had earned a bachelor's degree.

Mathematics Is Key

Our Special Report, *Lessons of a Century*, looks at "The State of Curriculum," May 19, 1999, over the past 100 years.

A student's race was not a significant predictor of whether a young person graduated from a four-year college, once other factors were taken into account, the study found. A student's family income also had little effect after the first year of college.

In contrast, the level of mathematics that students studied in high school appeared to have the strongest continuing influence on whether they earned a bachelor's degree.

"Finishing a mathematics course beyond the level of Algebra 2 more than doubles the odds that a kid will get a bachelor's degree, and that's controlling for everything else," Mr. Adelman said last week.

Based on his findings, he suggested that college-admissions formulas place less emphasis on test scores, GPAs, and class rank, and more stress on the courses students take while in high school.

The study used complex statistical analyses to determine which of 24 variables had the strongest influence on whether young people earned a bachelor's degree.

The academic quality and intensity of the high school curriculum were measured on a graded scale. At the top of the scale were high school students who took: more than one Advanced Placement course; more than three years each of English and mathematics (including math beyond Algebra 2); a minimum of two years each of laboratory sciences, foreign languages, and history; and no remedial math or English courses.

Near the bottom of the scale were students who took only two years of math (including a remedial math course) and only one year of science.

Students from the lowest income groups who had high test scores, grade point averages, and a strong academic core were more likely to earn a degree than the majority of students from the top income groups, Mr. Adelman found.

Mobile Students

Another significant finding was a sharp jump in the proportion of undergraduates who attend more than one institution.

That figure swelled from 40 percent during the 1970s to 54 percent during the 1980s. Based on the most recent data, Mr. Adelman suggests, it will easily surpass 60 percent by next year.

The number of postsecondary institutions students attended had no negative effect on whether they eventually earned a bachelor's degree, he found.

For example, students who attended a community college for at least one semester and then transferred to a four-year institution had a graduation rate of 71 percent, which is higher than the average for those who started in four-year colleges.

In contrast, students' continuous enrollment in higher education after they started had a very strong effect, surpassed only by the combination

of their academic preparation and performance while in high school. Keeping students enrolled, even for one course a term, was critical in their eventually earning a degree, Mr. Adelman said.

Based on the data, he suggests that it no longer makes sense to judge colleges by their graduation rates.

"It's nonsense," he argued. "Given the multi-institutional attendance patterns that have grown up over the past 20 years--students attending two or three schools, 40 percent of them crossing state lines in the process--institutional graduation rates don't mean much anymore."

The study also found that students who took remedial reading classes in college were far less likely to earn a bachelor's degree than students who took other types of remedial coursework, such as math.

Though many states are trying to reduce or eliminate the number of remedial courses students take in college, Mr. Adelman suggests that some deficiencies can be easily remedied without damaging a student's chances of graduating.

Mr. Adelman now hopes to follow the college careers of a new group of students to see whether his findings hold up. "We have a new cohort that graduated from high school in 1992. We're interviewing them in the year 2000, and we hope to get their college transcripts in the year 2001," he said, "and then we'll see whether this story has changed."

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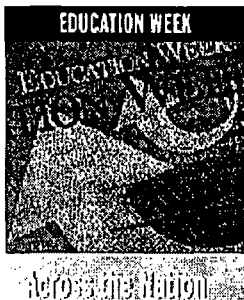
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More Teens Blending High School, College

By Julie Blair

Jodi Smith will celebrate two academic milestones this June, collecting her high school diploma first, then picking up her associate's degree from college a few weeks later.

The 18-year-old opted out of her 52-student high school in Sprague, Wash., last year and enrolled full time at Spokane Falls Community College through a state program called Running Start. Created in 1990, the program pays for qualified juniors and seniors to take classes at public community colleges and earn both high school and college credit.

"I have an older sister, and my family doesn't have the money to pay for us both to go to [college]," Ms. Smith said. "This is two free years of tuition."

Ms. Smith is one of a growing number of teenagers who are straddling the worlds of high school and college through dual-enrollment programs.

The idea behind such programs is to provide a challenging environment for academically gifted students or underachievers who feel constrained by high school's often-rigid structure. In many cases, dual-enrollment plans can also reduce students' higher education costs, boost college enrollments, cut overall state spending on education, and ease overcrowding in high schools and colleges.

But the list of gripes about these plans runs as long as the list of benefits.

Many high school administrators complain that such programs pull away their best and brightest students, divert needed dollars from local districts, and encourage young people to miss out on the full high school experience--pep rallies, football games, and other teenage traditions. At the very worst, critics say, some high school students find they are ill-prepared for college-level work, perform poorly, and realize too late that their college transcripts are permanently marred.

"There's the good and the bad in the way of partnerships" between high schools and colleges, said Frank Wilbur, the associate vice president for undergraduate studies at Syracuse University in New York and an expert on so-called K-16 partnerships. "There's no doubt some are ill-conceived and ill-managed. But once you get teachers and professors working together in a discipline, it's almost like a marriage made in heaven."

'Ready To Perform'

Fourteen years after Minnesota launched the nation's first statewide dual-enrollment program, more than 20 other states now run similar arrangements.

The specifics vary from state to state. In most, state funding for each participating student is shifted from the local district to the college or university; students themselves don't have to pay any tuition. In other states, students have to pick up the tab.

Student eligibility also varies. In some states, students apply directly to the college; in others, students must earn a specified grade point average, take a standardized college-entrance exam, or be recommended by guidance counselors.

And, depending on the state, high school students can participate either by going to a college campus, taking college-run courses at their high schools, or, in an increasingly popular trend, using distance education, particularly over the Internet.

In general, two types of students take advantage of dual-enrollment programs--those who are star students and those who are falling through the cracks, said Darryl Sedio, the coordinator of Minnesota's Postsecondary Options program. This year, 8,000 high school juniors and seniors in the state, about 7 percent of the eligible population, are attending state colleges either full or part time.

"We have really sharp kids out there who are stagnating," Mr. Sedio said. "There is an awful lot of data that shows that even average kids are ready to perform at a college level."

Ms. Smith of Washington is one such student.

By her sophomore year, the aspiring physical therapist had completed the entire upper-level mathematics and science curriculum at Sprague High School.

"Had I stayed, I'd have been taking shop classes for two years," she said.

Ms. Smith is now a full-time college student with a 4.0 grade point average who lives at home and commutes to school. She's taking 15 credits this quarter, including courses in physics, American history, and English composition. Next year, she plans to transfer to Eastern Washington University, a four-year institution.

"People get all stressed out when they go to college, but for me it's just another day at school," Ms. Smith said. "Now I know I can do it."

Good Grades

Students who participate in dual-enrollment programs usually perform well, Mr. Sedio said.

"I had kids that failed every class in high school and had A's and B's every quarter in college," he said. "Many of these students are just plain feisty ... and hard to get along with. They need a more independent environment."

A study completed five years ago at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities found that dual-enrollment students earned an average GPA of 3.1, trouncing the college average of 2.7, Mr. Sedio said. High school students who took upper-level college courses performed even better, earning an average GPA of 3.5.

A study conducted last year by the University of Washington found that dual-enrollment students there had an average GPA of 3.67; for other UW students, it was 3.65.

While some professors note that their 16-year-old students generally have had fewer life experiences than their other freshmen, they see little difference in the quality of work.

"In my experience, they're better prepared academically than the typical freshman," said Donald R. Wagner, a professor of political science at the State University of West Georgia, which participates in Georgia's dual-enrollment program. "Unless the student tells you [he or she is in high school], you don't know."

For the most part, high school students also succeed socially.

"I never felt like I belonged in high school," said Sarah Ann Vogt, a 17-year-old student enrolled at both the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities and the 1,700-student Park Senior High School in Cottage Grove, south of St. Paul. "I had different ideas about how my time should be spent and decided to do something about it."

Ms. Vogt is now carrying an 18-credit-hour courseload that includes classes in geochemistry, cultural studies, and American Indian studies. She met a new boyfriend last year--he's a college junior and a computer science major--and she plans to stay at the university to finish a bachelor's degree. Ms. Vogt aspires to earn her Ph.D. in geochemistry, then work for the federal government or the United Nations.

"In the time that I've spent here [in the dual-enrollment program], I've made far too many good friends in the geology department to want to go anywhere else," Ms. Vogt said.

Ms. Vogt is also the president of the campus Postsecondary Student Association, an 800-member organization that provides events for dual-enrollment students to help them become acclimated to the 33,000-student school.

"At the university, anyone can feel at home--the culture is so diverse and accepting," Ms. Vogt said.

Money Matters

Many state policymakers and administrators argue that dual-enrollment programs also make financial sense, for taxpayers as well as for families who might otherwise have trouble affording higher education.

While most states don't measure and analyze the fiscal impact of dual-enrollment programs, Washington and Minnesota report significant savings.

Washington families saved an estimated total of \$10.8 million on tuition last year, said Ron J. Crossland, the associate state director of the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, which oversees the Running Start Program. The state saved \$21 million in aid to high schools and colleges, because participating students spend less time

in publicly funded education.

In Minnesota, the state saved between \$5 million and \$10 million during the 1993-94 school year in state aid to high schools and colleges, the last time period analyzed, Mr. Sedio said.

Dual-enrollment plans also benefit colleges and universities that need to fill classroom seats or want to expand.

The influx of Running Start students has allowed administrators at Clark College, an 11,300-student community college in southern Washington, to hire additional professors and add class sections, said Tana Hasart, the college president.

The program has also fostered collaboration between Clark and area high schools.

"Our math faculty have found a couple of areas where students who transfer [from high school to college] are hurting," Ms. Hasart said. "We've been able to go back [to the high schools] and have good conversations about how math is being taught."

Moreover, such programs will help ease the expected burden on higher education institutions caused by the "baby boom echo," the large population of baby-boomer offspring that is now entering college.

"The country as a whole is not in the position of building new campuses like they did for the baby boom," said Joanie E. Finney, the vice president of the National Center for Public Policy in Higher Education, based in San Jose, Calif. Participation in dual-enrollment programs, she said, "will free up some space and create more capacity so we can provide more educational opportunities for a population that is growing."

Too Young?

But not all educators believe starting college early is wise.

Some say students shouldn't sacrifice the relatively free and easy years of high school. They warn that teenagers could miss out on relationships with peers, and that some students need closer supervision than they will get in college.

"These kids really get disenfranchised from high school," said Larry Parsons, the northeast-area director of the 32,000-student Spokane school district. "The average age of a community college kid is 29, and we have kids who are 16 sitting next to them. For some kids, that's a real problem."

High school students would do just as well or better by taking Advanced Placement classes, which translate into college credit at most institutions, many administrators advise.

The experience was too much for Kari Allen, 16, who quit Washington's dual-enrollment program and Skagit Valley Community College after only one semester for fear she'd fail one of her three college courses.

Ms. Allen said she had applied to Running Start to get "two free years" of college but was soon frustrated by the crushing workload.

"I wasn't ready for the whole college experience," said Ms. Allen, a junior at the 1,000-student Burlington-Edison High School in Burlington. "There wasn't a whole lot of structure, and no one cared if you were there--no one even knew if you weren't [in class]."

Though Ms. Allen avoided ruining her college transcript by pulling out of classes during the first few weeks of school, she was denied a slot on her high school's varsity tennis team because she was not enrolled full time.

Some principals also complain that dual-enrollment programs deplete their supply of school leaders.

"You're taking the cream of the crop," said Beth VanderVeen, the principal of Burlington-Edison High. "We're left with those who don't have the C average [required to participate]."

Moreover, Running Start depletes the high school's staffing, Ms. VanderVeen said. Each year, 30 to 50 students from Burlington-Edison go to college part time or full time, shrinking the number of sections of high-level classes, she said. Since the start of Washington's dual-enrollment program, the school has been forced to reduce the number of senior English classes from six or seven sections to two or three. German sections dropped from four to two; pre-calculus and physics sections fell from three to two.

"Some kids are getting left out of the opportunity to take upper-level sections," Ms. VanderVeen said.

More To Come

Still, evidence suggests that interest in dual-enrollment programs is continuing to grow.

Participation in Utah's dual-enrollment program, for example, has doubled in the past five years, to about 17,000 students, said Michael A. Petersen, the assistant commissioner for academic affairs for the state board of regents.

Mr. Petersen attributes the program's popularity in part to a recent state law that enables students to attend participating colleges tuition-free. Furthermore, unlike many other states, Utah allows students to attend college classes not only on campus but also in their own high schools, where high school teachers act as adjunct faculty members. Students can also take college courses online.

And in Missouri, the number of college-credit hours earned by high school students in dual-enrollment programs has increased by 50 percent over the past two years, said Stephen Lehmkuhle, the vice president for academic affairs for the University of Missouri system and a co-chairman of a state task force that is setting standards for dual-enrollment programs.

"In the state of Missouri, [dual enrollment] is starting to become overly popular," Mr. Lehmkuhle said. "Kids are earning 30, 40, 50 credit hours by the time they graduate from high school. They've finished their freshman and sophomore year [of college]."

While Mr. Lehmkuhle supports the idea of challenging gifted students and making higher education more affordable, he admits feeling some ambivalence about the overall value of dual-enrollment programs.

"Is this in the best interest of students?" Mr. Lehmkuhle said. "We're wrestling with that."

On the Web

"The Dilemmas of Dual Credit," by Scott A. Nelson, Kingwood College, from the Texas Community College Teachers Association.

The history of the Virginia Plan for Dual Enrollment, tracing various rationales and identifies successes of and concerns with the current dual credit program in "The Virginia Plan for Dual Enrollment: A Historical Perspective," by Rhonda K. Catron. From *Inquiry*, published twice a year by the Virginia Community Colleges Association and the Virginia Community College System.

PHOTOS: Jodi Smith is wrapping up high school and two years of college at the same time.

Jodi Smith, 18, opted out of her tiny high school in Sprague, Wash., last year to enroll full time at Spokane Falls Community College.

--Jeff T. Green

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Prospective Teachers in Rural Areas Tune In to Satellite Classes

By Joetta L. Sack

Melfa, Va.

The rural, slow-paced lifestyle of the Eastern Shore of Virginia--a jagged peninsula set off by the Chesapeake Bay--helps distinguish the region from the more populous parts of the state.

HELP WANTED:
2 Million Teachers

Return to the main story, "All Classes of Spec. Ed. Teachers in Demand Throughout Nation," in This Week's News.

But like other areas of Virginia, the two school districts that occupy this impoverished stretch of shoreland also need special education teachers.

State officials believe they have found a high-tech remedy to ease the problem for the Eastern Shore's isolated communities, where fishing and farming are the main industries.

The state education department last spring sought to remedy theirs and other districts' shortages by awarding a two-year, \$1.2 million grant to Old Dominion University. In turn, the public university provides distance-learning classes for teachers and other professionals to earn their certification in special education.

Distance learning overcomes a large hurdle for ambitious residents of the state's many rural areas--finding accessible classes. The Eastern Shore, for instance, has only one higher education institution, a two-year community college here in Melfa. From this tiny community, at the midway point of the peninsula's only thoroughfare, teachers would have to drive more than three hours, and pay \$20 in tolls, to cross the bay to the Old Dominion campus, located in Norfolk.

For the past several years, Old Dominion has been promoting distance learning through its so-called Teletechnet program, which transmits classes by satellite to other sites. The university worked with school districts to devise a series of nine special education courses required for state certification that could be broadcast by satellite television to the state's 31 community colleges.

On-Site Assistance

Most of the classes broadcast to the outlying community colleges allow students to interact with their on-screen professors by radio, although a few have received two-way video systems. Each classroom also has a site director, employed by Old Dominion, to oversee coursework and exams. And districts must provide a more experienced teacher to mentor each student and oversee evaluations.

"We wanted something that was a proven program," said Sandra Aldrich,

an education specialist with the state department. Old Dominion was chosen to receive the grant partly because "it does not differentiate from its on-campus program."

Virginia in recent years has seen an oversupply of elementary teachers but a shortage in nearly all special education specialties, according to Ms. Aldrich.

The availability of the distance-learning classes at Eastern Shore Community College, along with the financial assistance, has enabled some aspiring teachers to achieve what otherwise would have been unlikely. They pay \$100 of the \$550 tuition for each class, with the grant picking up the remaining amount.

S. Dawn Goldstine, the superintendent of the 2,400-student Northampton County district on the Eastern Shore, said the program has greatly helped the district recruit and train much-needed special education teachers already living in the communities.

"It's difficult for us, at best, to attract quality teachers to an isolated location like this," she said. In addition to the region's lifestyle and lack of amenities, district salaries fall below the state average, making it harder to compete for new graduates, she added.

'Exact Same Courses'

Elaine M. Johnson, a 28-year-old native of the Eastern Shore, started as a substitute teacher, but she was later hired as an aide to special education students in Northampton County. She and her mother, Bonnie M. Trower, 53, a former real estate agent and also a longtime resident, began taking Teletechnet classes to earn their teaching certificates. Now, the pair are enrolled in the special education grant program to earn their master's degrees.

"Our students are taking the exact same courses, same exams, all the same requirements, but are simply using technology to allow them to do so," said Old Dominion President James Koch.

Although having television cameras and computer monitors in their classrooms took some getting used to, several Old Dominion's special education professors said they now have a different view of teaching and learning. "The technology has helped us step out of the box," said Jane Hager, an associate dean for special education.

On the Web

Read an [overview](#) of the special education endorsement program, from Old Dominion University.

For additional information and resources related to special education, read this list of [organizations](#), from Hood College.

PHOTO: "The technology has helped us step out of the box," says Jane Hager, an associate dean for special education at Old Dominion.

--Chuck Thomas

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States Try New Leadership Strategies; N.C. Governor Chairs Special Cabinet

By Robert C. Johnston

When Gov. James B. Hunt Jr. declared earlier this year that the schools in North Carolina would be the best in the country by 2010, he asked his four-member Education Cabinet to map out a plan to get there.

And who better for the task? The cabinet is composed of the state superintendent of schools as well as leaders of the community college and university systems. A representative of the state's private, independent colleges is an ex officio member.

Read a related story, "Governors Vie With Chiefs on Policy, Politics," in This Week's News.

"There is this whole notion of collaboration, but we are making it real," said Cecil E. Banks, the governor's associate education adviser. "The sectors of public education will not operate independent of each other."

North Carolina is one of several states embracing new education governance structures. In North Carolina's case, the Education Cabinet allows the governor to augment his say on policymaking while bringing leaders of different sectors together.

Read our story, "States Increasingly Flexing Their Policy Muscle," April 14, 1999.

Since its inception in 1993, the cabinet has met about twice a year, with Gov. Hunt serving as the chairman. The group's work became more serious this winter, after the Democratic governor laid down his challenge for the Tar Heel State. The cabinet has since met monthly, with members convening more frequently in smaller work groups.

"The meetings had been periodic, even ceremonial," said Molly Corbett Broad, the president of the University of North Carolina System. "That accelerated when the governor declared this year's 1st graders would graduate from the best schools in America."

The cabinet--which does not set binding policy--hopes that by September, if not sooner, it will unveil its plan for making its state's schools the nation's best.

"Despite Takeover Laws, States Moving Cautiously on Interventions," April 14, 1999.

Policy Forum

In general, the cabinet has served as a regular forum for state education leaders to share ideas on how to bridge gaps between the schoolhouse and the ivory tower on such matters as teacher development and student reading skills.

"We just don't think about reaching those decisions these days without going through a collaborative effort," said Michael Ward, the state superintendent of K-12 schools. For example, he said, Education Cabinet

"ECS Convenes
Group To Explore
School
Governance,"
March 3, 1999.

discussions were instrumental in uniting once-disparate resources to help low-performing schools improve.

"The idea that we would have a whole state working around an agreed-upon goal is just unheard of," said Sam Houston, the executive director of the University of North Carolina Center for School Development.

Elsewhere, other state school leaders are also stepping out of their daily roles to help shape education policy, from prekindergarten through college.

"Other states have committees of one kind or another, but it varies to the extent their work is seriously implemented," said Kay McClenney, the vice president of the Education Commission of the States in Denver.

For instance, Georgia state schools Superintendent Linda C. Schrenko co-chairs the state's P-16 Council, a 39-member panel formed in 1995 and named by the governor to study problems common to K-12 and higher education.

And, Maryland has a Pre-K-16 Partnership for Teaching and Learning, which is a voluntary effort led by top state education officials to create seamless public education through graduate school. The 26-member group is forming regional chapters to broaden its scope.

"If we are going to resolve and improve the product we all put out, we can't just slough it off and say it's somebody else's responsibility," said Bob Rice, the Maryland Department of Education's liaison to the panel.

On the Web

Resources for state education policymakers are available in the [K-12 education section](#) of the National Conference of State Legislatures.

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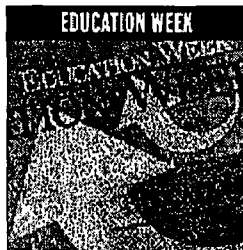
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Going the Distance

The highway heading east from Sioux City is ruler-straight, with little on either side but miles and miles of barren Iowa cornfields covered in snow. Only the 18-wheelers bowling down the four-lane road, which soon narrows to two lanes, interrupt the monotony.

It's not the kind of landscape that brings in many visitors. Or, for that matter, teachers.

Though Iowa schools are the pride of their communities and compare well nationally in achievement, "math and science teachers are hard to come by" in the more rural areas, says Kenneth J. McKenna, the principal of Battle Creek/Ida Grove Senior High School, located about a half-hour's drive off the main drag.

Specialty courses such as Advanced Placement classes or foreign languages are even more of a problem. Even when teachers are available to teach such subjects, there aren't always enough interested students to justify paying their salaries, says McKenna, whose school enrolls about 300 students in grades 9-12.

That's one reason he's thankful for the Iowa Communications Network, the only completely state-owned and -operated telecommunications network in the nation. The fiber-optic network allows schools to communicate not only over the Internet, but also by television-quality video and audio.

This year, Battle Creek/Ida Grove and three other nearby high schools are using the ICN to share about 10 televised courses--including psychology, AP U.S. history, advanced speech, calculus, languages, and a college-credit medical-professions course--that would be impossible for each school to offer separately. In cases where a televised course duplicates one that another school offers, it helps students accommodate jam-packed schedules.

"It makes so much sense to be sharing. All of a sudden, I can offer one course and get seven back," McKenna says.

While schools in many states receive televised courses, mostly via satellite broadcast, no other state has promoted interactive televised instruction, and underwritten it, like Iowa has.

"It's a demonstration to the country of what can happen in a fairly small, rural state to provide equitable opportunities," says Pamela A.

Two-way, interactive videoconferences are the next-best thing to being there for Iowa students who are benefiting from a pioneering state telecommunications network.

Read an accompanying story, "Public or Private?," in This Week's News.

Read our feature story, "Program Puts Teachers On-Line," Nov. 4, 1998, about a distance education program in Alaska.

Pfitzenmaier, who, as the director of educational telecommunications at Iowa Public Television, coordinates the educational activities of the ICN.

Since 1989, when construction of the ICN began, 340 schools have installed interactive classrooms that allow them to carry live, two-way video teleconferences for a bargain-basement line charge of \$5.25 an hour, a cost that is heavily subsidized by the state. And schools can often arrange to use more than 200 interactive sites at area education agencies, libraries, colleges and universities, and National Guard armories.

As a result, Iowa is uniquely positioned to take advantage of what some educators predict will be the next big instructional trend in K-12 schools: distance learning.

For years, rural schools have received television-based classes broadcast by satellite or cable TV. Now the Internet, via World Wide Web sites and e-mail, and interactive television are allowing new forms of distance learning.

Internet-based courses tend to be "asynchronous," meaning they don't involve simultaneous interaction between teachers and students. Many experts believe this approach is more appropriate for adult learners than teenagers. The Internet can transmit real-time "compressed" video, but it is usually of poor quality.

Interactive television, meanwhile, offers an immediate means of communication that allows teachers and students to respond to each other almost as if they were in the same classroom.

Experts disagree over whether interactive television or the Internet will prove more successful in the long run. Fortunately for Iowa schools, the ICN gives them both options.

Iowa schools have taken to the icn with greater enthusiasm every year. Last fall semester, K-12 schools in the state used their interactive classrooms for a total of 30,907 classroom hours--up from 22,821 classroom hours in the fall of 1997. (A one-hour class transmitted to five schools is counted as five classroom hours.)

At the same time, most observers agree that the network's potential has barely begun to be tapped, and many schools' interactive rooms are only occasionally used.

The course-sharing arrangement in western Iowa is one of the ICN's success stories. Four years ago, after Battle Creek/Ida Grove installed one of the first school ICN labs in the state, McKenna and Superintendent Joe Graves noticed the equipment was collecting dust.

"It was sitting there idle most of the time," McKenna recalls. "It seemed like a \$50,000 white elephant."

The district had no budget for purchasing video courses from out-of-state colleges or commercial distance-learning providers. So in 1996, McKenna wrote letters to other high schools in northwest Iowa, inviting them to start a course-sharing league over the ICN.

The deal was simple: Any school that provided a course, free, to the others would be entitled to any and all other courses at no expense. Their only cost would be the ICN's hourly line charge.

Since 1996, the league has been as large as five schools. Currently, it's four.

"The more the merrier," McKenna says. More schools means more options, and more ways to get a good match between school calendars, class schedules, and subject-area needs.

The shared courses take place in each school's interactive classroom. In each room, three large-screen television sets are mounted high on the walls. There are also three video cameras, one at the back of the room trained on the teacher, one at the front aimed at the students' rows of tables, and one mounted on the ceiling above the teacher's table to take images of documents.

A computer on the desk allows the teacher in charge to choose camera shots that all the classrooms will receive. Students share desktop microphones; the teacher usually uses a clip-on mike. A telephone and a fax machine complete the setup.

On a recent Tuesday morning, Battle Creek/Ida Grove is the sending school for AP U.S. History. Nine 11th and 12th graders share the same room with Kate Kramer, the teacher, while the class's nine other students--visible on 32-inch television screens--report from Woodbury Central, Maple Valley, and Rockwell City high schools, up to 65 miles away.

Today's lesson is a classic--the causes of the Civil War--and the method is fairly traditional. Students in small groups mull over questions on a worksheet, writing down their answers before discussing them as a class.

To students at the receiving schools, Kramer is more than a remote video presence. She calls on them by name, and on this day tosses them questions at about the same rate as to those in the room with her. Just to be sure not to miss someone, she occasionally draws a tongue depressor bearing a student's name from a well-riffled stack of them in her hand. To that student she directs her next question.

"Can anybody help them out?" she asks into a video camera, when the Maple Valley High School students falter at defining the "gag laws" passed by Southern states. The answer comes from the trio at Woodbury Central.

"I had some anxiety about teaching on television at first," Kramer says later. "But I love it now."

During second period, Nate Werneburg, a senior, is the only student using the ICN room at Battle Creek/Ida Grove. He is taking Speech II from Maple Valley. An adult's presence is required by the league's informal rules, so an uncertified aide takes a seat at the front of the room; she will help if needed.

It's perhaps not the most efficient use of the aide's time, but the course credit will allow Werneburg, 18, to graduate a semester early, a week before he reports to the U.S. Navy.

Werneburg says the class--the first he has taken online--has been a good experience, with a fine teacher that he otherwise never would have known. "This is one of my funner classes," he says. "I learned to give an after-dinner speech."

Later that day, and 45 miles away in the town of Merville, Woodbury Central High is getting its turn to send a course out to the other schools in the league--in this case a medical-professions course taught by Tom Chartier.

Chartier, a 50-year-old with a wry smile, leads 17 students--all girls--in a review before the semester final, in Woodbury's sleek interactive-video classroom.

Ten of those students appear on 50-inch screens on the wall, from Ida Grove. They discuss the rules of medical documentation and the medical definitions of "abandonment" and "cryonics" and traits of a health-care provider.

The yearlong class is especially valuable to the students because it will earn them college credit. Chartier, who is college-certified, teaches the combined class only two days a week over the ICN. Then a teacher in Ida Grove leads the students at that school the rest of the week. But all the students are eligible for college credit from Western Iowa Tech Community College.

Chartier, who has taught for 28 years, says the video classes took some getting used to, starting with figuring out how to control the cameras so students in the remote classrooms saw what he wanted them to see on their screens. He has learned through experience, with the help of a training session at Western Iowa Tech two years ago.

Teachers need two things to make the arrangement work, Chartier says. First, the equipment has to function reliably, which requires solid technical support. Second, the teacher needs to release his grip on the airwaves.

Chartier says that when he first started using video, he felt as though he had to be presenting information all the time. But now he permits silences so students can make notes or think, and he leaves five minutes at the end of class for students to chat with one another.

Perhaps because of such efforts, Chartier says the remote students perform equally with those in his actual classroom. But he does say the students who aren't in the room need special qualities. "People who succeed have to be strong in comprehension, reading, and have good listening skills," he says. "Without that, there could be a little bit of trouble. They have to be able to focus on a screen."

One complaint some observers have about Iowa's distance education classes is that they don't take advantage of the technology to teach in innovative ways. Teachers often provide information in standard lecture style, with the usual questions and discussions one would find in any traditional classroom.

Pfitzenmaier of Iowa Public Television says that's partly a limitation of the network's current architecture.

She says technical changes being planned will eventually--pending state funding--allow compressed video to go to individual desktop computers throughout a school, which should support a whole range of educational software and alternative approaches.

One complaint some observers have about Iowa's distance education classes is that they don't take advantage of the technology to teach in innovative ways.

Yet ICN administrators say that lecture and discussion are still efficient and effective ways to present material, and that the schools also have computer labs that permit a range of other learning methods.

In the meantime, McKenna tries to place above-average or better-motivated students into the classes at Ida Grove.

Superintendent Graves, who has taught a graduate class over the ICN, says, "Even with graduate students it's much easier to lose the student, much easier [for him or her] to escape mentally."

Distance learning also requires a special type of teacher, McKenna says. It's challenging to keep track of papers and grades for students at all the sites as well as to orchestrate everyone's active participation in class, so flexibility and organizational skills are crucial, he says.

The biggest hassles of course sharing, in practical terms, are the schedule and calendar conflicts, Iowa educators say.

"This is a kind of a pain to set up and do," Graves admits.

"A lot of people are letting pretty small things keep [them] from sharing, like their schedule's three minutes apart," says Jim Christensen, the distance-learning coordinator for the Western Hills Area Education Agency, which serves the state school system's Area 12 in western Iowa.

The key to success, school officials agree, is flexibility. To accommodate schedule differences between schools, Battle Creek/Ida Grove students who are taking ICN classes are often allowed to leave their previous classes five minutes early or arrive late.

Early periods of the school day are easier to schedule with other schools. By lunch, often the trickiest time of day to schedule, "you can just about forget it," Principal McKenna says.

Schools that haven't been able to work things out as flexibly as Battle Creek/Ida Grove can use the ICN for limited projects and for special

events.

For example, Christensen arranged a series of live question-and-answer sessions last fall between students in Iowa classrooms and astronauts at NASA's Johnston Space Center near Houston. For each hour-long session, he says, participating classes spent about 10 hours of preparation and study.

And a 5th grade class at Lincoln Elementary School in Sioux City has used the ICN to visit with pen pals in an elementary school in Wales. Once a month, Lisa Frink's students go to a nearby National Guard Armory building that has an interactive-video room and talk with the Welsh students. They have written a story together and shared cultural lore. Before the December holidays, the students did a statistical study of the most desired Christmas gifts; they found that electronic toys and Barbies topped the wish lists at both schools.

Yet Frink is the only teacher at Lincoln using the ICN. This is the first year the school has had access to the network.

The Iowa Department of Education, the ICN schedulers in the state's 12 area education agencies, and the community colleges are trying to increase use of the network by helping schools match up with one another. Iowa Public Television maintains the Iowa Database, a Web site that posts the ICN's master schedule as well as educational "want ads" from schools looking for offerings, say, of Russian language, or scores of online field trips and joint class activities, some of them sponsored by state or federal grants.

"Short of developing a common schedule, that's about the best you can do," Rich Gross, a technology consultant for the state education department, says.

McKenna notes that standardization and cooperation do not come easily to Iowa, which is so committed to local school autonomy that it has defied the nationwide trend toward state curriculum standards.

"The only way to make it really work is for everyone to have the same calendar and the same schedule--and that will never happen in Iowa--or at least that's the only way to make it work better," McKenna says.

Battle Creek/Ida Grove Senior High has been successful, he says, because "we work hard trying to find people that are compatible."

On the Web

Read more about the [Iowa Communications Network](#), including a [clickable map](#) of ICN video sites. Read how ["Students Learn 'Real World' Chemistry Through Supplemental Curriculum."](#)

"Iowa: Students and the Caucuses," from "The Citizens Election Project," a Pew Center for Civic Journalism Project, looks at how the ICN linked prospective first-time voters with presidential candidates.

To learn more about distance education, browse through the ["Distance Education Clearinghouse,"](#) from the University of Wisconsin-Extension. Includes a list of [online journals](#).

PHOTO: Scott Black, a senior at Woodbury Central High School in Merville, Iowa, listens during an AP U.S. History class taught by Kate Kramer, 45 miles away at Battle Creek/Ida Grove Senior High.

Jim Christensen, the distance-learning coordinator for several districts in western Iowa, says schools that use televised courses have to be flexible.

Battle Creek/Ida Grove Superintendent Joe Graves (foreground) and Principal Kenneth J. McKenna say the state network is a big help to isolated schools.

--Jim Lee

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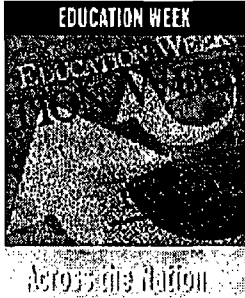
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Reformers Seek End To Complete High Schools

By Millicent Lawton

A pair of education reformers argues in a new book that American public education should do away with a central, yet outdated institution: the comprehensive high school.

That is just one of several radical changes the two say are needed to save public schools. Classes in grades K-2, they maintain, should be no larger than 12 students, and educators should be subject to rewards and sanctions, including loss of their jobs, based on student performance.



**Marc S.
Tucker**

The prescription for an education system rooted in high standards for all students appears in *Standards for Our Schools: How to Set Them, Measure Them, and Reach Them*, written by Marc S. Tucker and Judy B. Coddling of the Washington-based National Center on Education and the Economy and released last week by Jossey-Bass Publishers.

The treatise represents an extension of many of the school reform ideas that Mr. Tucker, his center, and other advocates have been espousing for years. But it represents the first time that Mr. Tucker's group has made such an explicit call for the end to high schools as they now exist.



**Judy B.
Coddling**

The changes, the authors acknowledge, would be profound. "They involve a fundamental reorientation of the system," Mr. Tucker and Ms. Coddling write in a "white paper" that distills the book's ideas. Such a shift, they say, is "nothing short of a revolution in the way that schools are financed, organized, led, and managed."

Failing at Standards

The white paper, which was to be presented late last week in Washington at a symposium on standards convened by the center, also assigns collective grades to the states for their progress on creating a standards-based education system. The authors find that virtually every state has set or is producing standards for what students should know--and for that they earn an A.

But the authors write that the states have made little or no progress in such areas as setting rigorous, internationally benchmarked standards with assessments and curriculum materials to match. Of the 11 letter

grades the authors give to the states overall, eight are D's or F's.

Mr. Tucker, the president of the National Center on Education and the Economy, and Ms. Coddling, its vice president and a former high school principal, say in their book that the high school has to get away from the comprehensive or "shopping mall" approach that came into vogue in the 1920s and '30s.

"The institution hasn't changed a bit since then," Mr. Tucker said in an interview last week, "but the world we're sending these kids out to has changed enormously."

"High school," they write in the book, "should be about academics and applied academics. It should not be about pop culture, driver education, how to use a checkbook, or general shop."

Instead, the authors recommend, students should begin by attending K-8 schools. Students moving from the 8th grade to high school would have to pass a statewide assessment in core academic subjects.

High schools would have two roles. One would be to educate students so that after two years, at age 16, most would qualify for a "certificate of initial mastery"--a concept that the center backed in a 1990 report, "America's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages!" Oregon has also implemented the certificate idea as part of a broader reform effort, and state officials have successfully defended it in the face of considerable opposition.

The certificate, Mr. Tucker and Ms. Coddling write, would go to those students who have met an internationally benchmarked standard of accomplishment in core academic subjects. The standards would reflect the kind of preparation needed for entry-level jobs and for doing college-level work without needing remediation.

State higher education systems would deny admission to those who didn't have the certificate, and state leaders would prod employers to express a preference for hiring job applicants who had the certificate. Both conditions would serve as powerful incentives for students, the authors argue.

High schools would also provide recipients of the initial certificate with additional preparation so that they could prepare for college-entrance exams and application to selective colleges.

Students wanting vocational programs or other professional and technical preparation would go to community colleges, technical colleges, regional vocational-technical schools, or other postsecondary institutions.

Right now, Ms. Coddling said last week, "we're asking high schools to do way too much." When she was the principal several years ago at Pasadena High School in California, she said, the school was trying to do so many things for its needy students that "we had no idea what our purpose was."

But high school principals can't make these changes on their own, Mr. Tucker said. "The state is going to have to bring the parties together,

probably first on a pilot basis and then statewide."

Reading and Results

Schools need to make other institutional changes, the authors argue, including employing "class teachers," a concept from northern European and Asian schools. Teachers would follow cohorts of students and stay with that same group for two or three years, when another group of teachers would take over. That would continue every two years or so through middle school or into high school. Some U.S. schools have adopted a concept, called looping, with similar practices. ("Looping' Catches On as a Way To Build Strong Ties," Oct. 15, 1997.)

The teachers would be better able to know students and their families and "take a kind of responsibility for the growth and development of the child that one cannot take in a system such as ours," the authors say in the white paper.

States should also limit the teacher-pupil ratio to no more than 1-to-12--an essential element to ensure students learn to read by the end of the 2nd grade--Mr. Tucker and Ms. Coddling say.

To focus educators on results--on how students perform--the authors also envision that states would create comprehensive accountability systems.

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