

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Dave Kerr at 1:15 p.m. on January 17, 1995 in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

All members were present.

Committee staff present: Ben Barrett, Legislative Research Department
Carolyn Rampy, Legislative Research Department
Avis Swartzman, Revisor of Statutes
Brenda Dunlap, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Randy Hall, Math Teacher, Sabetha, Kansas
Leslie Scoby, Social Studies Teacher, Sabetha, Kansas
Terry L. Rush, Ph.D., Liberal, Kansas
Dan Hardin, Ph.D., Washburn University, Topeka, Kansas

Others attending: See attached list

Randy Hall, a math teacher from Sabetha, Kansas, presented his own and some of his colleagues views of QPA. They perceive three major problems with QPA, which are as follows: 1.) Morale. Sabetha previously had great team of teachers that worked well together, and had very high morale. After the advent of QPA, the high morale plunged rapidly and dissention among teachers began. Teachers felt great pressure to complete all of the new paperwork, a great frustration that the rules and guidelines of QPA were constantly changing, that their opinions did and do not matter, and that too much time is being spent on paperwork and training that should be devoted to lesson preparation and teaching students. 2.) System Not Manageable. The program is not cost effective in dollars or time spent. The excessive time involved for meetings, training and paperwork is continuous and has little direct impact on students. 3.) Loss of Local Control. Although promised local control, control at a local level has actually been lost. Local school buildings are being pressured to respond in a pre-determined fashion. For example, the curriculum changes and teaching methods are being determined at the state not the local level. Teachers feel they must teach towards the students being able to pass the state assessment tests, not what they feel is personally important.

Leslie Scoby, a social studies teacher from Sabetha, Kansas presented a more positive view of QPA. She is the QPA Chair of her Building, on a site council, and on a steering committee. Further, she has been a cheerleader for QPA because she feels it is necessary and important for the schools and teachers to be accountable. She has worked very hard to promote QPA in her community, especially among the parents.

Her major concern is the seeming lack of local control that was promised. And, she would like to know why all schools are mandated to work on the same areas, in the same ways, especially because some schools may be scoring very high in some of the state mandated areas, and low on some areas they would like to work on which are not even addressed by state mandate. She is frustrated that the teachers seem to have no voice. In summary, she felt more local control is needed, the constant change and lack of direction which are a big problem, need to be addressed, and paperwork needs to be cut drastically. When asked about lack of control over areas to be emphasized, she responded that they wanted to emphasize math computation and were encouraged to emphasize problem solving.

Terry L. Rush, Ph.D., Liberal, Kansas, feels "QPA is an attempt to institutionalize many of the educational reforms of the last sixty years. These are reforms that have undermined and will continue to undermine the development of fundamental academic competence as well as student responsibility. QPA simply allows educational reformers with an effective marketing strategy to put a new spin on education reforms that have been around for a long time." (See Attachment 1)

Dan Hardin, Ph.D., Washburn University, Topeka, Kansas, stated he is not opposed to QPA, but to the process being used as the single criteria to accredit schools. It should be used as a method to improve education. He feels QPA is a "one size fits all" framework that works for some schools, but does not work for others. Thus, accreditation should not be threatened by a "content free" curriculum, and schools should not lose their accreditation just because they do not meet all of the QPA guidelines.

Senator Oleen made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 12, 1995 meeting. Senator Walker seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 18, 1995.

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE COMMITTEE GUEST LIST

DATE: 1-17-95

NAME	REPRESENTING
HAROLD PITT	Citizen
Ken Bentley	Kansas State Board of Education
Randy Hall	Teacher/Parent
Leslie Sody	Teacher-Parent
Josie Torrez	Families Together, Inc.
Phyllis Osgood	parent
TC Mosier	Teacher / Parent
KEVIN T. STAMPER	INTERN - SEN. J. MORAN
Anne Thornton	Citizen
Jason Neal	Intern - Sen Bogina
GREG HANSEN	SEN HARRINGTON - INTERN
Aurshel Rose	Cit
Robert Schultz	Citizen - Retired Supt.
Kathy Hollingsworth	Citizen - Parent
Debbie Tuelers	citizen / parent
Amyal Woodhead	citizen / parent
Carolee K Braksick	citizen / parent / business owner
Steve E ABERNETHY	citizen
Stan Bartel	Teacher of the Year Program

(over)

Sherry Bukovatz
Don Fuller
Merle Hiee
WCApt

Kansas State Board of Education
USD # 441
KACC
USA

Londrone Corder
Ann Harrison
Barbara White

Lerman, Brandberry & Assoc.
KSBU

Becky Goodwin
Marsha Shreves

KS School for the Deaf
Cust of Ks.

Jacque Dales
Mark Tallman

SQE
KASB

Trish Hannenschel
Gerald Henderson
Babs Irwin

LPA
USA of KS
USD # 250

Kay Bauer

USD 512

Diane Ypistad

USD 259

Colleen Scroggin

Manhattan (USD 383)

Rim Smith

Manhattan USD 383

Diana Nibel

Manhattan USD # 383
(Where's Lana Olsen?)

M. Slivick

Haris News

Karla Taylor

BB 428

Rogic Gooper

Keys For Networking, Topeka

Lia Wood

KS

Testimony .before the
Kansas Senate Committee on Education
January 17, 1995
Terry L. Rush, Ph.D.
Liberal, Kansas

If QPA is to become the permanent standard for educational policy in Kansas, then its attendant philosophies and theories should be understood by more than just the educators in charge of its development and implementation. Although philosophies and theories sometimes seem difficult and uninteresting, the truth is that they are important because they generate consequences - consequences that cannot be understood or addressed without some historical and theoretical knowledge. Therefore, the following discussion will outline as briefly as possible a few of the many problematic themes that occur in the restructuring literature and provide the historical, philosophical and theoretical foundations for QPA.

Regardless of assertions to the contrary, except perhaps in the most trivial ways, QPA is neither unique nor is it new. In the spring of 1993, as many as forty two states had restructuring initiatives and/or legislation in progress. In all these states implementation has followed a common pattern and the restructuring models are surprisingly similar. It is accurate to say of Kansas what the candid State Superintendent of Public Instruction in Oklahoma said of their restructuring effort. We have joined a national movement. However, more important is the fact that the reforms promoted in QPA are not historically new.

Senate Education
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Attachment 1

They may seem new because it is unfortunately true that when we know no history, everything seems new. If this committee has the inclination, the time and the staff to investigate the education literature supporting QPA, beginning with its own bibliography and proceeding from there, you will find that QPA is an attempt to institutionalize past education reforms by using exit and curricular outcomes, and to enforce them through the accreditation power of the state.

Traditionally education emphasized the intellectual development of the student and his socialization by communicating and fostering the nation's existing history, language, traditions, and institutions. However all reform efforts since the early 1900s have generally de-emphasized rigorous academics while emphasizing considerations like the student's orientations, attitudes, behaviors and emotions. Slowly but steadily reformers have succeeded in moving away from the idea of educating the intellect toward the "new" education. Terminology arose like teaching the whole child, facilitation, active learning, process, interpersonal skills, and affective education to name a few. Of course, the terminology is not so important, but the implications are. Affective education replaced self-esteem derived from actual accomplishment with self-esteem derived from unconditional self-acceptance. Non-directive teaching replaced directive teaching to encourage active or experiential learning. Experiential learning was considered the only true learning because students can only learn when integrating and applying

information in situations relevant to themselves. (The sixties you may recall saw the blossoming of the age of relevancy.) Learning facts was treated contemptuously since the world was changing so rapidly that facts became obsolete before they could be used. Only discovered knowledge not knowledge revealed by the teacher was considered significant. Process became more important than content. Learning how to apply knowledge became more important than developing a knowledge base. Lower order skills like memorization and computation were considered nearly useless and increasingly de-emphasized. Higher order skills like problem solving, decision making, creating new knowledge, teamwork, etc. were increasingly emphasized. Affective education even invaded the academic curriculum as self-acceptance became more important than accurate knowledge. Some reformers became convinced that there is no such thing as right answers.

There were several different reform groups pursuing these kinds of changes. Progressive reformers of the early and middle 1900s did not believe in challenging and channeling the intellect of the child. They believed in releasing his creativity by freeing him from adult prejudices and constraints. Reformers known as social reconstructionists were greatly disturbed by the depression and believed that through the schools society had to be reconstructed free of the values upon which capitalism depended. In the 1960s Rogerian reformers believed that children needed the "freedom to learn" and that psychotherapy had come upon the attitudinal qualities needed for significant learning.

They adapted their psychological techniques to the classroom, and affective education was born. At about the same time, behavioral psychologist applied the principles of behavior modification to the classroom. Neoprogressive reformers adopted the social reconstructionist themes that the school has a social mission that did not stop at the nation's borders. Convinced that civilization has never been in greater jeopardy they consistently urged school officials to reconstruct the social, cultural and economic system both nationally and globally. Sometimes these groups were in conflict, sometimes they were coordinated, but they each doggedly pursued their agenda. Slowly, surely and mostly without notice outside the educational establishment reformers transformed education. In many ways current education more nearly reflects the reforms of the last sixty years than it does traditional education. For example, in 1905 the curriculum in almost all high schools was academic. Indeed little if any time was devoted even to the arts and music. Now, academic time on task estimates in American schools cluster around forty percent or lower - the lowest in the industrialized world. Perhaps one should not be too surprised about continual drops in academic achievement. One reaps what one sows. But the question is: how does Kansas plan to deal with this problem.

According to the KSBE, restructuring in Kansas begins with anticipating and envisioning a changed world, the future world.

(1) This process is described by Kansas reformers as the anticipatory socialization or the social change function of

schools. We have to anticipate what the future is and then move back and figure out what needs to be done today. In order to engage in anticipatory socialization, educational planners use futurist predictions both as a philosophy and guide to education. As the restructuring literature recommended by KSBE's Outcomes Education Team states, "Educational futurists offer a wealth of ideas for those who are searching for a substantive philosophy to guide education in the coming years." (2) Their recommendations are a springboard for the outcomes that drive instruction, curriculum and assessment in QPA. There are obvious problems created by basing education on predictions about the future. For one, it is intrinsically unknowable. But aside from that, the futurist recommendations for education are little more than revised versions of the old reforms that have diluted academic curriculum and diminished academic achievement for many years. To call this restructuring is a mistake. The question for Kansans is whether or not we want to continue down the same old path and institutionalize those reforms, or scrap QPA and truly restructure.

Let me explain how QPA institutionalizes these reforms. Affective education, or emotional education, is one of the most controversial aspects of modern schooling. Addressing student behavior in this manner is obviously different from the traditional use of school rules and behavioral codes that reflect socially acceptable conduct and through which social "values" were once transmitted. It should not be surprising that the

introduction of psychological techniques into the classroom has disturbed a growing number of people and led to heightened tensions between the public and their schools. Not only are many parents opposed to the psychological manipulation of their children, many professionals see it as dangerous and in conflict with the self-discipline needed for academic learning. Nonetheless, QPA effectively institutionalizes affective education in the classroom by making the demonstration of physical and emotional well-being an exit requirement satisfied by mastering an integrated affective curriculum. Kansas Outcome V concerning physical and emotional well being along with local required Indicator 2 is representative of similar outcomes nationwide. It illustrates both the institutionalization of affective education through exit outcomes and its integration throughout the curriculum.

Student Outcome IV is an interesting example of the subtle way in which individual accomplishment and autonomy is being subordinated to further group dynamics as a goal of education. It calls for students to demonstrate the necessary characteristics to work effectively both independently and in groups. However, the Standards only address students work collaboratively in teams. The indicators only call for the individual to exhibit skills necessary for teamwork. There are no indicators or standards that address working independently. This outcome reflects the theme in reform literature that although individual learning styles are important, when it comes to the goals of

education the group takes precedent over the individual. Toward this end, reformers recommend that the curriculum be structured around collaborative roles, peer tutoring and cooperative learning (often in a "projects" format) "to help youth gain a service ethic that will check tendencies toward unbridled self-interest." (3)

Another example of the nonacademic nature of some QPA outcomes and standards is the anti-intellectualism of Outcome IV in the Curriculum Standards for Communication. Here one sees how the theories of affective education have been inserted into the academic curriculum. Self-acceptance rather than accurate knowledge sets the agenda. Within the context of the first sentence, recognizing diversity is transformed into according equal status. In the second paragraph, the pursuit of accurate knowledge is abandoned in the assertion of linguistic and cultural equivalency.

COMMUNICATIONS OUTCOME IV.

Learners will recognize that in a multicultural society there will be numerous languages and dialects, and they will accord each language and dialect equal status as a social expression of human experience.

No language or dialect is linguistically superior to another, just as no culture is inherently superior to another culture. Unfortunately, many people are restricted from favored social status or improved economic advantages because their language or dialect is considered inferior.

Two of the benchmarks for meeting this outcome are:

C. demonstrate an understanding that no language or dialect is superior to another.

D. demonstrate an understanding of why some languages and dialects are misjudged as superior to others.

Linguistically, this outcome is inaccurate. Some languages are superior to others just as some cultures are superior to others.

It is not difficult to identify as intolerable practices like slavery, infanticide, child prostitution, and cannibalism that are common in some cultures. Are students who acquiesce to demonstrate their mastery of this standard demonstrating accurate knowledge? No, but they will have passed one diversity training outcome. This outcome embraces a cultural definition of knowledge in which the idea of objective, accurate knowledge is rejected.

Judging by the literature reference in the QPA bibliography on implementing global education, this might also be the standard for knowledge in social studies. It calls for the production of an individual who has the "capacity to transcend his own ethnocentric skin; that is sees equivalents in values" and urges that schools provide both cognitive and affective experiences such as: "A study of various social, political, and economic systems from a nonethnocentric point of view." (4) Do we want students in Kansas to come away from the study of fascism, socialism and Marxism thinking that they are equivalent to capitalism? Do we want them to come away thinking that totalitarianism or for that matter anarchy is equivalent to democracy? How far does the abandonment of seeking accurate knowledge go? In some reform literature it goes pretty far. Some educators even maintain that this idea should be extended to the sciences. As one educator has written, perhaps four minus one need not always equal three.

One quick comment on Student Outcome III which reflects the

Kansas commitment to stress higher order thinking skills. Higher order, problem solving skills are an important part of the education process and always have been. However, they can be overemphasized and oversold. Some educational theorists claim that concentrating on higher order thinking skills will lead to comprehending the lower order skills. One example often cited is that the multiplication tables need not be mastered because they can be learned by studying higher level math skills. Such arguments as these are as fraudulent as they are popular. They ignore the fact that the development of higher order skills requires a graduated, systematic increase in skills and knowledge. They are analogous to maintaining that if you build a roof, the foundation will just appear. Young students developing their lower order skills are doing precisely what they should be doing. Testimony before the KSBE in October 1992 revealed that the physiological development of the brain does not allow higher level skills to begin developing until approximately eleven years of age. Consequently, time spent on higher order skills before that age is wasted.

Finally let me address the Kansas restructuring goal of ensuring both excellence and equality. Toward this end, QPA is supposed to be a timeless education model. As KSBE literature explains "Instruction ... assumes that all students can learn and that learning is the constant and time the variable..." (5) Ordinarily a given lesson is taught using a relatively fixed amount of time determined by the average speed of the class. The

result of this process is that achievement, as demonstrated by traditional grades, is distributed normally, a distribution commonly referred to as the bell curve. However if achievement is held constant, say at 80%, and time is allowed to vary until that grade is achieved by all students then, proponents argue, both equality and excellence are accomplished. There are many difficulties associated with this approach, but I want to make only two brief observations. First, equality achieved in such a manner is an illusion. Although meritorious achievement based upon aptitude will be eliminated when all students achieve the same grade, equality will not be achieved. Rather than a normal distribution of proficiency, there will be a normal distribution of time required to achieve proficiency. Forced equality is a delusion. However, education reformers seem to share a deep ideological commitment to a particular kind of egalitarianism: equality not of opportunity but of outcome. This is another reason for minimizing the study of hard factual content. It tends to be acquired in a way that inevitably reflects the differences in ability that students bring to the classroom. Consequently, curriculum used by egalitarian reformers progressively emphasizes "soft," attitudinal learning while de-emphasizing hard factual learning. This is sometimes reflected in assessment tests where students are given partial credit for incorrect answers if some aspect of their reasoning is correct - even on math tests - or on math tests that emphasize estimating the approximate answer not getting the right answer, on reading

comprehension tests in which there is more than one right answer, in the acceptance of imaginative spelling and grammar, or in students' developing their own standards as in Communication Outcome V. You may recall that in June after a fifth straight year of declining math achievement scores for eighth-grade students on the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills, Wichita school district officials defended their approach to teaching math. They were using higher order skills to teach math. It seems that the students could listen to math, and they could read, write and speak about math. They just couldn't do any. A final observation on making time a variable is this: one need not reflect long to see that real life is time-based. A system that wants to model the real world cannot free itself from the constraints of time. However inconvenient for those who might prefer it otherwise, the real world is based on clocks, calendars, and deadlines. Any educational system that fails to prepare students for this aspect of life has failed them miserably.

It is time to see QPA for what it is - an attempt to institutionalize many of the educational reforms of the last sixty years. Reforms that have undermined and will continue to undermine the development of fundamental academic competence as well as student responsibility. QPA simply allows educational reformers with an effective marketing strategy to put a new spin on education reforms that have been around for a long time. We need less not more of what ails us.

Endnotes

1. Kansas State Board of Education, Planning Resources for Strategic Directions of Education in Kansas, draft, July 1994, p. ii.
2. Steve Benjamin, "An Ideascapade for Education: What Futurists Recommend," Educational Leadership, December 1992/January 1993, p. 68,69.
3. Steve Benjamin, "An Ideascapade for Education: What Futurists Recommend," p. 9.
4. See H. Thomas Collins and Sally Banks Zakariya, eds., Getting Started in Global Education: A Primer for Principals and Teachers, national Association of Elementary School Principals, 1982, p. 4.
5. Kansas State Board of Education, A Design for Building Outcomes-Focused Curricula, p.9.

STUDENT OUTCOME IV

STANDARDS

INDICATORS

All students will demonstrate the necessary characteristics to work effectively both independently and in groups as evidenced by the following standards:

A. Work collaboratively in teams.

State Indicator:

Achievement will increase or high performance levels will be maintained across all student groups on the interpersonal communications skills portion of the State communications assessment.

Local Required Indicators:

- 1. Student self-concept, adaptability/flexibility, interpersonal, and negotiation skills necessary for teamwork will improve or high performance levels will be maintained across all student groups.**
- 2. Students' understanding and respect for their own culture as well as for the cultural diversity of this country will improve or high performance levels will be maintained across all student groups.**
- 3. Achievement will increase or high performance levels will be maintained across all student groups as demonstrated through the use of multiple assessment techniques aligned with the local integrated curriculum.**

STUDENT OUTCOME IV

STANDARDS

INDICATORS

B. Work together without prejudice, bias, or discrimination, using techniques to separate people from problems, focusing on interests not positions, inventing options for mutual gain, and using objective criteria.

State Indicator:

Achievement will increase or high performance levels will be maintained across all student groups on the interpersonal communications skills portion of the State communications assessment.

Local Required Indicators:

- 1. Student self-concept, adaptability/flexibility, interpersonal, and negotiation skills necessary for teamwork will improve or high performance levels will be maintained across all student groups.**
- 2. Students' understanding and respect for their own culture as well as for the cultural diversity of this country will improve or high performance levels will be maintained across all student groups.**
- 3. Achievement will increase or high performance levels will be maintained across all student groups as demonstrated through the use of multiple assessment techniques aligned with the local integrated curriculum.**

Local Optional Indicator:

Schools and districts may establish local indicators for either of the standards.

STUDENT OUTCOME V

STANDARD

INDICATORS

All students will demonstrate physical and emotional well-being as evidenced by the following standard:

A. Have the knowledge, skills, and behaviors essential to live a healthy and productive life.

Local Required Indicators:

- 1. The number of students demonstrating mastery of a locally-developed, comprehensive human sexuality and AIDS curriculum (as referenced in State Board Regulation 91-31-3g) will increase or be maintained at high levels across all student groups.**
- 2. The number of students successfully demonstrating mastery of the local integrated curriculum which prepares them for healthy living will increase or be maintained at high levels across all student groups.**
- 3. Schools and districts will establish local indicators.**

4. Learners will recognize that in a multicultural society there will be numerous languages and dialects, and they will accord each language and dialect equal status as a social expression of human experience.

No language or dialect is linguistically superior to another, just as no culture is inherently superior to another culture. Unfortunately, many people are restricted from favored social status or improved economic advantages because their language or dialect is considered inferior.

American students need to honor diversity in language as a part of honoring diverse cultures; especially compelling is the need to honor the dialects and cultures that are within our own borders. At the same time, students must recognize the importance of appropriate levels of usage. In practice, such recognition involves the selection of the speaker's or writer's social dialect most appropriate to audience and purpose. In this sense, "standard" English represents a dialect that should be common to all, rather than a label of favored social status. Nonstandard dialects, including attempts by foreigners to speak English, are not corruptions of standard English but rather communication which uses rule systems not shared by standard English.

ESSENTIAL COMMUNICATION BENCHMARKS: SECONDARY, MIDDLE AND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

- A. demonstrate control of standard American English.
 - B. demonstrate in their speaking and writing that they value their own language and dialect.
 - C. demonstrate an understanding that no language or dialect is superior to another.
 - D. demonstrate an understanding of why some languages and dialects are misjudged as superior to others.
 - E. demonstrate an understanding that to meet their purpose, writers and speakers will choose from among the dialects they speak, and they will choose a degree of formality or informality.
 - F. demonstrate a familiarity with the literature of diverse cultures and with the work of both men and women speakers and writers.
5. Learners will enhance their creative and critical thinking by developing and describing their own standards for aesthetic and critical evaluation.

In addition to developing technical proficiency in the receptive and productive aspects of oral and written language, students need to develop their own unique standards for appreciating and critiquing human expression. The development of personal standards extends the resources of the entire language community.

ESSENTIAL COMMUNICATION BENCHMARKS: SECONDARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL

The learners will:

- A. create and critique their own criteria for assessing written and oral expression responsive to author purpose and audience need.
- B. demonstrate an understanding that personal and varied interpretation is part of the richness of any art.
- C. interpret and evaluate literary and dramatic activities and works with openmindedness, curiosity, and a willingness to ask questions.