

# Chapter 1: Introduction

## A. Background

The topic for the 1998 Onondaga Citizens League study, *Onondaga County School Systems: Challenges, Goals, and Visions for the Future* was originally discussed during the 1997 Minnowbrook Leadership Conference. At that meeting, Bethaida (Bea) Gonzalez, Assistant Dean of Syracuse University Continuing Education / University College, presented the conference with compelling statistics from the Syracuse City Schools. She noted that, “there are really two different school districts: one for kids that succeed, and one for kids that don’t.” These differences, she noted, are often based on *the expectations for success that educators have for students*.

The facts she presented were so compelling that the OCL Board requested that Dean Gonzalez lead the 1998 study. Together with co-chair, Dr. Patricia Schmidt, Assistant Professor of Education at Le Moyne College, they assembled an advisory panel of leadership educators charged with recommending the weekly topics and identifying the outstanding individuals who could serve on the panels.

While the panels met during the winter of 1998, a sub-committee of the OCL Board met for discussions of the future of the organization and the annual study. As part of its work, the committee more clearly defined the function of the study, the roles of the panels and the participants, and the structure of the final report.

They determined that the study, though conducted over many months, functions much like a symposium. It brings together individuals with expertise and experience who can shed light on separate facets of an issue. The unique value of such a study results from the examination of multiple views that combine to create a fuller picture of the issue than could be developed by examining the issue from single—or even opposing—perspectives.

Because the study is about conditions found in Onondaga County, the panels are comprised largely of local experts. The panels are representative of a variety of viewpoints, but not necessarily all viewpoints.

The participants, members of the Citizens League, who attended the weekly meetings, were able to offer insightful questions and probe the panels for deeper understanding of the topics. They were not expected, however, to serve as scientific experts to refute or support the panels’ findings.

The information shared by the panelists forms the substantive content of the report. The report details the facts as presented by the panelists, but does not attempt to critically appraise these facts, or to serve as the last word on the subject. The value of the report lies first in its careful summary of the weekly sessions. Second, it identifies areas where a consensus of opinions from a variety of viewpoints points to a conclusion. And from these areas of consensus, recommendations emerge. The report shares the information and insights offered by the panelists with the wider community to encourage informed dialogue in many quarters about the issues.

## B. Local Conditions

The data Dean Gonzalez presented at the 1997 Minnowbrook Leadership Conference was focused on the Syracuse City School District. The '98 study, like past OCL studies, examined conditions in Onondaga County including the City of Syracuse. The study found that while differences between school districts in the county can be dramatic; differences can also be found at the school level within districts.

School success rates vary based on many factors. Some of these factors arise from the neighborhood community in which the school is located, including average family income, racial and ethnic characteristics, and overall neighborhood safety and health. Success, or the lack of it, can also be attributed to the conditions within a school building—its physical condition, access to technology, library facilities, and the environment for learning that is created by the administration and the teachers. And success is also influenced by the involvement of families, the cultural relevance of the curriculum, and the physical, emotional, and intellectual preparedness of the students themselves.

Onondaga County is measured as part of the Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) that also includes Cayuga, Madison, and Oswego counties. The City of Syracuse is different demographically from Onondaga County, with the city being poorer and more racially and ethnically diverse than the county.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines income categories by percentages of the MSA median income. In 1997, the median income for local MSA was \$43,600, while the City of Syracuse median income was \$29,834 (68 percent of MSA), and classified as “low income” according to HUD.

*(NOTE: The data in this document was originally reported by a variety of sources for different purposes. It does not always provide the preferred level of detail in relation to the discussion contained in this report. Specifically, the demographic category of “other” does not provide a comparison of success rates for individual groups aggregated in the category.)*

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**HUD Defined Income Levels**  
(based on local MSA median income of \$43,600)

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Income Category	Percent of MSA Median Income	Gross Annual Income	Gross Monthly Income
Moderate income	81-95	31,316 - 41,420	2,943 - 3,452
Low income	51-80	22,236 - 34,880	1,853 - 2,907
Very low	31-50	13,516 - 21,800	1,126 - 1,817
Extremely low	0-30	0 - 13,080	0 - 1,090

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Families of four with a gross annual income below \$21,385 are classified as living in poverty. Seventeen percent of families in Syracuse live below the poverty line, compared to 7.2 percent of the families in the MSA.<sup>1</sup>

The Syracuse City Schools have the highest proportion of poor students and children of color of any school district in the county. Countywide, Whites have a 90 percent graduation rate, while fewer than 50 percent of Hispanic students graduate, and Blacks have only a 42 percent success rate. It is not common knowledge that in the Syracuse City School District, students speak 49 different languages and 33 percent have disabilities. Conditions such as these place a significantly unequal burden on the city schools.

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**City / County Student Enrollment Demographics**

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Race / Ethnicity	SCSD Enrollment	County Enrollment	Difference
% White	51.5	82.1	+ 30.6 County
% Black	41.2	13.5	+ 27.7 City
% Hispanic	4.3	1.6	+ 2.7 City
% Other	3.0	2.8	+ .2 City
Total Number	22,790	77,909	+ 55,119 County

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Source: "Statistical Profiles of School Districts" NYS website  
<http://www.nys.gov/chap655/G421800.HTML>, 7/30/98.

The data show that Black, Native American, and Hispanic students are not succeeding at the same rate as White students and that the problem, like the population, is concentrated in the Syracuse City School District.

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<sup>1</sup> Statistic from the United Way of Central New York Community Assessment, 1998 and derived from the 1998-99 City of Syracuse Consolidated Plan.

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 High School Course Comparison, 1996-97
 

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Subject	White		Black		Hispanic		Other	
	Number Enrolled	% Passing	Number Enrolled	% Passing	Number Enrolled	% Passing	Number Enrolled	% Passing
Mathematics	1,843	73.6	1,391	60.3	117	50.4	348	71.0
English	2,421	87.8	1,748	78.9	125	79.2	356	88.5
Science	1,755	83.6	1,246	70.5	99	69.7	307	86.6
Business Education	759	84.3	730	78.4	63	73	145	86.2
Vocational / Technical	189	92.1	235	90.0	14	78.6	48	95.8
All Subjects	16,134	84.9	12,098	74.4	935	69.5	2,768	85.3

Source: Syracuse City School District.

The city shows a higher incidence of risk factors including poverty, lack of English proficiency, and dropout rates than the county.

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 Student Risk Factors and Dropout Rates (Percent)
 

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Student Factor	SCSD	County
Free/reduced lunch	74	37
Limited English	5.5	2.0
Dropout Rate	5.4	2.8
Suspension Rate	12.1	7.1

Source: "Statistical Profiles of School Districts" NYS website  
<http://www.nys.gov/chap655/G421800.HTML>, 7/30/98.

The city has fewer permanently certified teachers and lower teacher salaries than the county, but the city also has a somewhat better pupil: teacher ratio and more minority teachers than the county.

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Classroom Teacher Statistics

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Teacher Statistic	SCSD	County
Pupil : Teacher Ratio	12 :1	14 : 1
% Minority	9	3
% Annual Turnover	10	9
Median Salary	\$36,421	\$41,500
%Permanent Certification	74	81
%Provisional Certification	17	13

Source: "Statistical Profiles of School Districts" NYS website  
<http://www.nys.gov/chap655/G421800.HTML>, 7/30/98.

Performance, as measured by the number of Regents diplomas, improved for both the city and county between 1989 and 1996. But the percentage of graduates with Regents diplomas remains significantly lower in the city than in the county.

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Graduation Rates with Regents Diplomas (Percent)

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Time Period	SCSD	County
1988-89	26.8	45.6
1995-96	31.4	50.9

Source: "Statistical Profiles of School Districts" NYS website  
<http://www.nys.gov/chap655/G421800.HTML>, 7/30/98.

As a measure of school success, the data show that students in the city schools take Regents level courses at a lower rate.

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**Students Taking Regents Examinations**  
(Percent of Average Enrollment)

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Subject	SCSD	County	Percent Difference
Comprehensive English	59	74	15
Global Studies	90	84	-6
U.S. History / Government	63	74	9
Comprehensive French	15	18	3
Comprehensive Spanish	35	37	2
Sequential Math I	84	94	10
Sequential Math II	56	64	8
Sequential Math III	35	48	13
Earth Science	46	44	2
Biology	60	75	15
Chemistry	33	49	16
Physics	16	31	15

\* The county outperforms the city in all subjects but Global Studies.  
Source: "Statistical Profiles of School Districts" NYS website  
<http://www.nys.gov/chap655/G421800.HTML>, 7/30/98.

Student performance, as measured by percent of students passing Regents examinations, shows significant differences between city and county in all subjects.

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**Passing Rates for Regents Examinations (Percent)**

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Subject	SCSD	County	Difference
Comprehensive English	63	85	22
Global Studies	46	76	30
U.S. History / Government	57	84	27
Comprehensive French	75	92	17
Comprehensive Spanish	71	91	20
Sequential Math I	51	79	28
Sequential Math II	55	80	25
Sequential Math III	56	83	27
Earth Science	66	84	18
Biology	60	83	23
Chemistry	59	85	26
Physics	68	90	22

Source: "Statistical Profiles of School Districts" NYS website  
<http://www.nys.gov/chap655/G421800.HTML>, 7/30/98.

When viewing the combined effect of low passing rates with the low enrollment numbers in math and science classes in the city, the results are startling. Only ten percent of city students (compared to almost three times as many county students) pass the Physics Regents.

Variation in performance can be found between school districts across the county.

Table 13 County School District Comparisons

SCHOOL DISTRICT	ATTENDANCE RATE*	FREE LUNCH ELIGIBILITY**	3 GRADE READING At Typical Level	REGENTS DIPLOMAS
(measured in percent by district)				
Baldwinsville Central	95.5	8.4	81.1	65.0
East Syracuse-Minoa	95.1	14.9	71.5	57.0
Fabius-Pompey Central	95.9	16.0	53.6	50.0
Fayetteville-Manlius Central	96.3	3.4	80.7	75.0
Jamesville-Dewitt Central	95.6	6.7	84.1	68.0
Jordan-Elbridge Central	95.1	20.4	69.7	52.0
LaFayette Central (1)	94.3	25.1	63.0	53.0
Liverpool Central	95.4	10.7	72.1	61.0
Lyncourt Union Free (2)	96.4	17.1	79.3	—
Marcellus Central	95.6	5.4	86.0	69.0
North Syracuse Central	94.8	10.8	74.4	46.0
Onondaga Central	95.1	16.5	80.0	40.0
Skaneateles Central	96.1	5.9	82.9	68.0
Solvay Union Free	94.7	15.2	75.3	53.0
Syracuse City	91.3	60.9	43.7	30.0
Tully Central	95.3	8.7	71.6	57.0
West Genesee Central	95.9	6.3	81.4	57.0
Westhill Central	96.6	3.3	77.4	86.0

Source: United Way of Central New York *Community Assessment*, 1998, compiled from data provided by the New York State Education Department.

1 District includes Onondaga Nation

2 District with no high school

Variation in performance can also be found between schools within a district and between male and female students.

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Syracuse City Students Testing above the State Reference Point, 1995-96

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SCHOOL	GRADE 3				GRADE 6			
	Reading		Math		Reading		Math	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Bellevue	83	92	100	100	—	—	—	—
Blodgett	100	100	100	100	—	—	—	—
Danforth	78	74	100	100	79	74	97	91
Delaware	58	70	100	97	42	50	82	76
Elmwood	86	77	95	95	54	73	88	100
Franklin	73	83	96	98	—	—	—	—
Frazer	93	62	100	100	78	79	95	90
Hughes	82	76	89	92	—	—	—	—
Huntington	78	86	97	95	—	—	—	—
Salem Hyde	77	80	100	100	86	94	100	97
Dr. King	86	77	100	100	—	—	—	—
Le Moyne	67	79	91	88	88	83	100	94
McKinley-Brighton	86	69	100	97	46	55	67	85
Meacham	65	81	95	92	91	97	100	98
Porter	80	88	100	100	93	89	100	97
Roberts	81	87	100	93	93	83	96	96
Seymour	74	54	89	100	65	58	96	79
Edward Smith	90	88	98	100	95	83	100	92
H.W. Smith	76	75	98	96	88	91	97	100
Solace	55	50	73	80	—	—	—	—
Van Duyn	65	71	89	97	67	69	96	93
Webster	89	91	100	98	—	—	—	—
Dr. Weeks	78	81	96	94	—	—	—	—
Clary	—	—	—	—	56	75	87	88
Grant	—	—	—	—	65	70	75	82
Hughes	—	—	—	—	64	83	88	80
Lincoln	—	—	—	—	58	66	89	79
Shea	—	—	—	—	77	82	89	79
Average	78	78	96	96	73	77	92	89

Source: Syracuse City School District.

The data present a clear picture of the unequal, and in some cases inadequate, education our young people receive. Not one of the panelists in this study believed that the situation was tolerable. But it was also true that not one believed change was impossible. They offered us ideas, models, and solutions. Change will require a community-wide commitment of resources and energy. The reward will be our future.



## Chapter 2: The Study — An Exploration

The panelists offer us the benefit of their years of experience working with children, parents, school administrators, and legislators. They offer us insights into the complex dynamic of education. This chapter details their presentations.

### A. Politics and Finance: Equity of Resources Among Our Schools

PANELIST: *Carl T. Hayden*, Chancellor of the New York State Board of Regents

- The public debate of equity in education has often been so locally focused that the larger relationships have not been well understood. A broad-scale dynamic created the inequities that disadvantage local taxpayers.

Twenty five years ago, the balance of funding for education was 47 percent local, 47 percent state, and six percent federal. Since then, there has been a systematic withdrawal of resources by the state. The reduction of state funding was concurrent with the erosion of the urban tax base. The shift was gradual and many communities were slow to react. Hayden likened the situation to a frog in hot water, “if you drop him in boiling water he’ll jump out; but heat the water slowly, and he’ll just die.”

The 1998 budget for education in New York was \$27 billion. Of this, \$11 billion came from the state through income taxes, and \$7 billion came from local property taxes. Property taxes, though sometimes criticized as regressive, provide a level of continuity and predictability that income taxes do not. Any new system for funding will need to be based on multiple sources of revenue such as real property taxes, value-added taxes, income taxes, etc., to achieve a balance that shares the financial burden of education fairly and also maintains a level of constancy that allows the schools to plan for future budgets.

The state now pays 40 percent of the cost of education, up from a low of 38 percent in recent years, but significantly less than the nearly 50 percent of the mid-seventies. This means that hundreds of millions of dollars in additional costs must now be borne by localities than would have been true two decades ago.

State funding is determined by a complex formula, theoretically designed to support poorer schools with revenues collected statewide and distributed by need. While the existing formula helps address inequities, it does not solve them. The amount spent on education varies widely. Some districts spend as little as \$7,000

per pupil, while others spend as much as \$26,000, but these numbers do not tell the whole story. In practice, poor schools do get the larger share of state funding. However, the issue remains whether this additional share is enough to close the gap between rich and poor schools. In many places, the answer is no. Defenders of the current system point to the greater contribution made to poorer schools and say the system works. But in making this defense, they often ignore the local capacity to shoulder the remaining cost burden. The tax base in many cities has declined so significantly that property tax revenues are insufficient to make up the difference.

However, it is also important for detractors of the system to note that in places like Westchester, where they pay high levels of both income and property taxes, they receive just \$1,000 per child from the state. Many of these local taxpayers feel that they have already shouldered their fair share of the statewide tax burden. They argue that after making full contributions to statewide education funding, it is their right to determine the needs of the local school district and raise whatever resources are necessary to achieve a quality education for their children.

To understand the system it is necessary to understand three key factors:

- the formula for spending,
- the legislative process that creates the budget, and
- the distribution of funds.

The formula for spending is enormously complex. Hayden joked that “only three people in the state actually know how it works.” The formula does not function based on a set of consistent operating principles. It was built over many years by aggregation—piling one good idea on top of another—so that the formula is filled with narrow regulations that address specific interests.

The formula’s intrinsic obtuseness makes it difficult to amend. There is enormous resistance to tinkering with the formula because each regulation has its “godparents,” whose special interest is served by the regulation. With such complexity there is a great potential for mischief, warned Hayden. He related an incident where a state legislator wanted to increase funding for his Long Island district without “leaving footprints.” He accomplished this by small changes to the complex formula for funding transportation and “brought home the necessary bacon.”

State budgets for education are crafted through a process consisting of two proposal cycles and one disposal cycle. The Board of Regents creates the first draft of the proposed budget then sends it to the governor for review and amendment. The governor makes revisions, then sends it to the legislature for passage into law. Hayden explained that while the Regents are mindful of fiscal and political constraints, they serve as “rational advocates” for change and intentionally set a high goal. The governor on the other hand, must watch for ways to conserve resources, and therefore lowers the goal. The legislature must mediate and make choices between the two. It is important to note that the governor’s final

budget proposal is very detailed. Many items in the budget are never discussed or addressed by the legislature. Any item *not* changed by the legislators becomes law by default.

Once the budget is passed, the money gets distributed according to the formula. More than 40 percent is first sent to New York City where 38 percent of the state's children are educated. Money is then distributed to the "big 5" cities including Syracuse. The remainder goes to upstate, the suburbs, and Long Island.

It is important to recognize the political imperatives that operate in the system. Politicians must continually prove that they have advocated effectively for the home district. Even those who fight to reduce the budget must go home with a "trophy" for their constituents. The system works well enough on the political level that there is no real incentive to change. Therefore, change, if it happens, will probably be imposed judicially and result from litigation like that underway by the Campaign for Fiscal Equity.

Hayden concluded with the observation that while there are problems with the current system that need to be addressed, an alternative to the current system is not yet well formed. To achieve the desired results, the reform effort will continue to require considerable additional study.

## B. Local Equity Issues

PANELISTS: *Barrie Gewanter*, Executive Director, Central New York Civil Liberties Union  
*Ned Deuel*, Vice President, Henneberry Hill Consultants, Inc.  
*Darlene Williams*, Principal Elmwood Elementary  
*Jaime Alicia*, Principal, Fowler High School

- The ideal of equity is only partially guaranteed by law. Both the national and state constitutions bar the government from imposing laws that have disparate impact based on race, income, or home location. The Supreme Court, in the case of *San Antonio vs. Rodriguez*, found that under the federal constitution, the responsibility for education rests with the states. Therefore, the struggle for educational rights must be fought on a state-by-state basis, recognizing that each state constitution has its own language and provisions.

The state has the constitutional responsibility for providing adequate education, but today the state is not even meeting this basic measure consistently—much less the level of success most citizens would want the schools to achieve. The "formula" itself is not the real culprit. Politics undermines the honorable intent of the provisions of the formula. To satisfy constituents, even the most conservative fiscal advocate in the legislature must "bring home a sizable piece of the pie."

Barrie Gewanter proposed that in the absence of political will to change the system and correct for inequities, the courts will be used to bring judicial remedies.

The courts found in the historic Levittown case that *equity* in education was not guaranteed by the New York constitution—though *adequacy* may be.

The legal definition of adequacy is tied to different measures in different places. Each state defines adequacy—the measures of an adequate education—in its own way through its constitution. It is the responsibility of the electorate to determine the test of educational adequacy. In New York State the measure of adequacy is the ability to serve on a jury, including: the ability to read, make independent judgments, determine veracity, apply mathematical skills, analyze evidence, and express opinions.

The Campaign for Fiscal Equity (CFE) is one group working through the courts to change the system. They first succeeded in winning the basic right of citizens to sue the schools. They are currently arguing a case for adequacy against New York City schools. However, even if this case succeeds, the courts could decide to create a remedy that applies only to New York City and not impose a statewide change. Therefore, in districts across the state, other groups are working to develop local cases.

To develop the legal argument for a right to adequate education for all students, these cases must first establish a baseline for “sound basic education” (SBE), and thereby, a measure for basic performance. It is important to note that we already measure educational quality through such gauges as standardized tests, graduation rates, and types of diplomas. The state can, and has, already identified low performance schools—and 12 of the 13 in Onondaga County are located in the City of Syracuse.

Generally, the end result of the current funding mix is that wealthier communities have better quality schools while poorer areas—that most often include higher proportions of minority and special needs students—have lower quality schools. Civil rights law says that government funded programs should not have a disparate impact on minority children. Funding formulas need to take into account the needs of poor children. Therefore, schools are obliged to meet the specific needs of their student population. If, for instance, it is common to find that in poor families parents must work multiple jobs, and as a result there is no one to help children with homework, it may be necessary to offer enriched programming that features homework supports to meet the needs of these children.

As these cases further refine the definition of adequacy, they will look at factors that influence a child’s ability to learn including the availability, condition, and age of textbooks; student–teacher ratios; safety and accessibility of facilities; and the condition of equipment in laboratories, including computers and scientific equipment.

Improvements must be district-specific and address the needs of each school. For schools where there are significant numbers of children in poverty, there may be a need for additional resources such as funding for pre-kindergarten classes; after school and extended day programs; retention initiatives for minority teachers; provision of safe transportation; expanded staff development; social work

resources in the schools; and conflict resolution / violence reduction programs. Barrie Gewanter explained that it is essential to change our thinking from “let’s take of my kids” to “let’s take care of all our kids.”

- Ned Deuel suggested that to address the issue of equity, we must first ask a series of questions, starting with four basic issues:

- First, what definition of equity is in question?
- Second, is funding of schools a political issue?
- Third, does equity go beyond financial considerations?
- And fourth, do people really *want* equity?

Beginning with the issue of what constitutes equity, he queried whether we achieve equity by allocating equal dollars to each student, or whether we have equity through achievement measured by common standards. He questioned whether our current multi-level diplomas were—not by accident—related to resources. He asked if equal access to technology, scientific equipment, and the Internet constitutes equity? And he asked if equity meant that those with special needs should be equally well served?

Addressing the second question, he affirmed that equity issues are unquestionably political issues. Federal, state, and local governments all have a hand in education, but the state has the primary responsibility for education under the law. The state uses a complex formula for determining who gets funding with the intent of distributing money based on need, as well as many other factors. The formula is so complex that even district superintendents and business managers may not know how to fully use the system. The political imperative to bring funding to the home district is often in conflict with the priority of meeting the needs of all students. Though some suggest we shift the burden for education solely to the state, who will tell the local taxpayers that they cannot raise additional funds if they choose?

Deuel asserted that the issue of equity does indeed go beyond the issue of funding. Parents are a child’s primary teachers and success, or lack of it, is linked directly to the home environment. All parents are not equal, and some do not do an adequate job of teaching their children in the critical early years. Learning rates are highest from birth to age seven and every child develops and learns differently. If children enter school without sufficient learning already having taken place, catch-up is often not possible.

Some practices in schools unintentionally foster inequity. Tracking—the practice of identifying and following students throughout their school years based on an early evaluation—was intended to identify and respond to individual needs, but often results in permanent labeling of students. For these students, whether identified as brilliant, average, or slow learners, this designation often becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Deuel asked how we can have equity when this message of in-equality is so pervasive and structural?

It is no secret that better schools often attract better teachers because they offer more competitive salaries, better working conditions and supports, and higher baseline achievement levels for students. It is also generally true that better students are placed in classes with better teachers. We will not have equity as long as we accept these differences as unavoidable.

A less-often asked question is whether we truly *want* equity. Until, and unless, people truly want equity, they will never get it. Racism is pervasive. Our society remains segregated by color and class. Before urban flight began in the 1950's, city schools typically had the highest spending per student, now they almost invariably have the lowest.

The demonstrated correlation between wealth and success clearly applies to schools. In a technology referendum in Liverpool some parents argued that rather than spending public resources to fund technology in the schools (such as computers and internet access), students should “get it at home.” The unspoken message was that those who already had these resources for their own children did not want to guarantee—and pay for—equal access to these resources for all students. As a society we have not been able to sort out competitiveness. But we must acknowledge that if we choose to foster a system where there are winners, there must also be losers. To ensure students an adequate education must first ask, are we willing to provide necessary resources? And second we must ask, are we willing to provide them to all, not just our own?

- Darlene Williams reflected that the issue of equity is on the minds of many people, including most of the parents of children in her school, Elmwood Elementary. She asked, if we believe that children can learn, that they are our future, then do we not have the obligation to create equity for them? As citizens, we have the power to make a difference by speaking up and voicing our concerns. Elmwood, with over 500 students, emphasizes doing one's personal best. Williams explained that students begin school with zeal, they are excited about learning and we must continually foster that enthusiasm. These students trust the schools to teach them and care for them. We must be forceful in pursuit of the needs of children and demand, for instance, safe transportation for all children. How can we justify the fairness of a policy that requires elementary school children to walk a mile and a half through dangerous areas without protection? Isn't this also part of equity?

Poor schools need added resources. The children of the poor are often developmentally delayed. Over half the students at Elmwood come to school at a “C” level or below and are simply not ready to learn. These students need good teachers and additional resources such as speech and language support. Meeting these needs now means success later, and the success of these children means the success of our future.

Testing for success is not enough, we need to understand the reasons for failure and address these issues. Our legislators need to hear what is needed and respond

to these needs with necessary resources, but achieving success will take a mix of “funding, families, and business support.” Williams concluded that if we use all our community’s resources, and not just look to government for help, we could have the success we seek in our lifetime.

- In Jaime Alicia’s experience, when we address the issue of equity, it is not enough to measure the discussion at the district level. We need to recognize the differences in success in zones within the same district, and between individual schools. We need equity across all zones, and we must make change “building by building.”

Alicia’s students come from poor families. Ninety-three percent qualify for free lunch and only two percent pay in full. When Alicia became principal of Seymour Elementary, he had to struggle to get resources. Now, the building has been transformed. He agreed with much of what the previous speakers had to say, but added that it is essential to involve parents—not only in the education of their own children, but also as voters and voices for change. They must inform their elected officials of the specific needs of their local schools. They must question whether resources are allocated to meet the specific needs of the students, or for other reasons. When we allow students to fail we diminish our community’s capacity to meet future challenges. There are no long-term savings to be had by withholding resources and failing to meet the needs of students, of failing to create success. We will pay dearly later, for what we don’t do now.

## C. Funding for Education

PANELISTS: *Bob Sprague*, former Executive Assistant to Assemblyman Zimmer  
*Kate O’Connell*, former Syracuse School Board and Common Council member  
*Dr. Rudolph Rubeis*, Superintendent, West Genesee Schools

- Bob Sprague explained that in previous decades, inflation continually drove school costs upward and budgets had to be adjusted accordingly. During the years of high inflation the city tax rate increased annually and most of that increase went directly to the schools.

While Sprague worked in Albany, he saw a different perspective and understood the state-level pressures on school funding. Many schools had difficulty getting additional state funding during the years of high inflation and the burden was increasingly shifted to local taxpayers. He noted that it is important to understand that legislators at all levels of government need an understanding of what the public wants them to do. Effective communication is critically important, from schools to the community, from the community to elected officials, and from legislators to the schools. Too often legislators only hear from the community at budget time and too often the focus is on the “loudest squeaky wheel.” We need

clear goals — and we need to clearly communicate the vision behind those goals — if we want state and local officials to carry them out.

- Kate O’Connell’s perspective has been shaped by her experience as a parent, professional social worker, former school board member, and former city councilperson. She warned that it is important to understand the amount of reactivity these issues engender. And, it is important to recognize that equity issues are as relevant in rural and suburban schools as they are in urban schools.

Syracuse is one of the “big five” school districts, a category that also includes Albany, Buffalo, Rochester, and Yonkers. These districts are “dependent,” meaning they rely on city governments to apportion funds for the schools. Unlike suburban and rural districts where funding for education goes directly into the school budgets, in dependent districts these dollars go into the general fund where other priorities compete for resources. In suburban districts school budgets are voted on by taxpayers, while in dependent urban districts the voters have no direct means of control over the allocation of resources, and funding for the schools can be appropriated for other purposes. As an example, in 1996, the mayor presented the common council with a budget that proposed to move \$8 million away from the schools to meet other needs of the city.

But if education is not treated as a high priority, and if city schools are allowed to fail, the cities themselves will fail. This will have a profound impact on the quality of life not only in the cities, but in the outlying suburbs, the county, and the region as well. The impact will affect other priorities including job rates, crime, our cultural institutions, and the condition of our neighborhoods.

In Syracuse schools, 25 percent of the funding comes from local taxes. Historically, the late resolution of state budgets meant that funding for schools was not confirmed until August, close to the start of the school year. For many years there was no state budget at the time when local property tax rates had to be determined, meaning there was no reliable information about the level of aid to the schools. Local officials must strike a difficult balance, trying to restrain property tax increases, without firm commitments from the state that necessary funds will be available. Lawmakers must try not to shortchange either the taxpayers or the schools. With downward pressures on local revenues through an eroding tax base and restrictions on property tax increases, we must acknowledge that cities can’t do it all.

O’Connell agreed that the city schools do need to improve. But the challenges to city school districts also need to be recognized. In Syracuse 66 percent of students come from low income families, the number of children with language or special learning needs has grown markedly in the past few years, and significantly higher numbers of non-English speaking Asian and Latin students have all placed demands on the district to provide added resources in a time of shrinking funds.

The STAR program that grants property tax relief to senior citizens and others will bankrupt public education, O’Connell warned. It will hurt big cities and poor



rural districts. In Syracuse, over a third of all residential property owners are senior citizens. How will the loss of tax revenue be compensated for once the program is in place? STAR exacerbates upstate / downstate inequities and will make a bad situation worse. She concluded that, “This is a political gimmick that will devastate public education.”

- Dr. Rubeis has been a school superintendent for 19 years, but credits his experience as a parent as his highest credential when it comes to education. His experience as a parent helped him “understand what it takes to prepare a child to leave home and create a successful life.”

He strongly believes that the most important relationship in education is between a teacher and the child. Children entrust us with preparing them for the future, he cautioned, and it is our responsibility to honor that trust. With the continued loss of manufacturing jobs that pay wages of \$18 and more an hour we must prepare students to find the jobs of the future, jobs that can support a family. We must prepare students to enter the high-tech world. It is unacceptable to have children leave school unable to do more than flip burgers, Rubeis emphasized.

Money is an important issue, but not just how much we spend per pupil. It is essential to prioritize and spend money on that important teacher / student relationship, to support the educational mission. In 1981 the state contributed 68 percent of the cost of schooling, in 1992 they supported only 41 percent. But the formula for education that forces the state to pay to fix buildings and districts forces educators to be aggressive in securing this funding so they can bring buildings up to code, improve them technologically, and lower their operating costs through such things as higher energy efficiency.

Other factors are also important in achieving the desired outcome in education, including “heart,” good parenting, and high expectations for students. Rubeis told parents, “you *are* going to do a better job of parenting,” but to make that a reality takes more than words alone. We must persist in bringing parents into the equation for success. Money and programs won’t buy parental support; we need support from the community and to make it a collaborative responsibility to prepare students for the future. In 1993, only 43 percent of West Genesee students received Regents diplomas. In 1997 that number had increased to 66 percent and the goal is to have 80 percent of students graduate with this distinction.

To make change we must do what it takes—but not through “flavor of the week” reform that makes adequate assessment impossible because, as Rubeis noted, you can’t hit a moving target. We must concentrate our energy and resources on the areas of highest priority: the teacher / child relationship, continuous improvement, and establishing partnerships for success. We need to manage our time more effectively, provide academic support where necessary, refine the academic program and core mission, and include parents as partners. This will require us to assess core courses in language, reading, and mathematics at all levels and publish the results. We must pay for good teachers and the bricks-

and-mortar needs of our schools. We must provide access to technology for all students and we must train and support teachers to be ready for this change. We must invest up front in teaching teachers the new technological skills. Otherwise, even if you buy computers they'll get dumped at the door. Most importantly, we must bring our hearts to this work, to care for and trust our schools, students, and teachers.

## D. The New Standards

PANELISTS: *Dr. Pat Richards*, Assistant Superintendent, OCM BOCES  
*Paula Drake*, Vice President, Syracuse Teachers Association  
*Dr. Mark DeSantis*, Superintendent, Westhill Central School

- The panel was opened by Pat Richards who told of an incident that characterizes the essence of the new BOCES training. Six months earlier, a friend's car was serviced by two BOCES students enrolled in mechanic's training. When the car was ready the friend found a letter on the front seat of the car outlining the work that had been done and also outlining other information about the condition of the car—wear on the tires, etc. The friend was impressed by the level of professionalism and attention to detail these students brought to their work. This level of responsibility and quality needs to be incorporated into all learning. Teaching itself will have to be different to accomplish this change across the board.

Richards asked the group to consider, what *is* a standard? Didn't we always have standards? Some may want to go back to the "good old days" when the focus was on academics and discipline. People fail to remember that this was also a time with high dropout and failure rates. We need to prepare students for the future, not the past. Students with low scores and low skill levels can still find jobs, but most of these jobs pay low wages and offer little opportunity for advancement. In this country, low skill level jobs are being replaced by opportunities requiring high-level skills. We need to train students to be ready for these jobs, if only to protect our own future. She reminded the group that in the 1950's there were 17 workers supporting 1 on Social Security. By the year 2020 the ratio will be 3:1.

Through the new standards, schools seek to accomplish two things, excellence and equity. The goal is high scores for all students. The biggest change is the phase-out of the non-Regents diploma. Schools will need to gear up for this change. It will be, Richards explained, like "changing a tire while the car is rolling."

The new standards will also involve significant changes in the assessments (tests) themselves. Testing will involve reasoning skills that cross the curriculum and will help bring teachers together throughout a child's school years. Teachers will need to work collaboratively with fellow teachers and with students, administrators, and parents, sharing responsibility for success. Overlapping subjects require students to

synthesize general knowledge with specific reasoning skills. The tests will no longer be strictly multiple-choice. Tests in all subjects, including mathematics, will require written answers. Soon students will be required to explain how they arrived at an answer—not just get the numbers right. Students in the U.S. generally score lower in math and science than other countries. New York State leads the way in developing improved standards in math and science.

Recently the state’s report card on the schools was released. It showed the performance of students in schools across the state and created a “huge public accountability.” The report card provides real, tangible measurements of student performance by school.

- Paula Drake agreed that the new standards represent a massive undertaking. The effort will require partners in the equation: government will need to shoulder the burden of creating and communicating the standards; teachers and parents will need training and support. She added to the definition of “standard” that it is “a statement that can be used to judge the quality of the content, teaching, or evaluation of a curriculum. A standard is a statement about what is valued. If we train students so that their only skill is in taking tests, how can we expect them to succeed in a world that needs skills in problem solving? The world expectation is that people be able to work in teams, with an emphasis on reasoning and thinking.”

Drake offered this, from the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics,

“The standards call for a shift in emphasis from a curriculum dominated by an emphasis on memorization of isolated facts and procedures, and proficiency with paper-pencil skills to one which emphasizes conceptual understandings, multiple representations and connections, mathematical modeling and mathematical problem solving.”

Schools today use mathematics to filter out students and emphasize rules, computation, and drills on routine rather than reasoning skills and problem solving. These skills were important in earlier eras when the only tool for completing these tasks was the mind of the individual. That is no longer the case and real-world demands place a priority on other skills.

But before we become too involved with numbers, she suggested we need to consider what is the true measure of quality? Drake showed what a 99.9 percent “success rate” means:

- 16,000 pieces of mail lost every hour by the US Postal Service
- 50 newborn babies dropped at birth by their doctors per day
- 20,000 incorrect drug prescriptions per day
- 6,570 commercial airline crashes per year
- 26,000 botched surgeries annually
- 158,400,000 checks deducted from the wrong accounts each year

We need to use the standards as a tool, but not let them be our sole guide.

As we move to new standards a number of things must change including:

- our expectations regarding what all students must know and be able to do;
- how we measure what all students must know and be able to do;
- how we prepare teachers to teach what all students must know and be able to do; and,
- the tools we use for teaching and learning.

The new standards will feature “new basic skills” such as:

- learning to learn
- competence in reading, writing, and computation
- communication, oral, and listening skills
- problem solving
- creative thinking
- personal management skills
- group effectiveness skills
- and influence skills

We need to recognize the impediments to accomplishing this goal. The teaching envisioned by those who embrace the new standards differs significantly from what many teachers and parents experienced themselves as students. Parents will need to be informed about the changes early in the process and provided with tools to understand the new curriculum.

- Mark DeSantis commented that stories can sometimes be an effective communication tool, and he had several to share:

At one family gathering, his 78 year-old father-in-law quoted a 30-40 line poem from memory, learned in grade school over 60 years earlier. His 19 year-old daughter was impressed—but had never memorized a single line of poetry in all her years in school. We still test for memorization skills, even though these skills do not have much value today.

In the 1960’s DeSantis spent over a hundred dollars on a four-function calculator that could add, subtract, multiply, and divide. Recently he opened a box of breakfast cereal and found a more sophisticated model inside for free—times have changed.

He told of a wrenching meeting at the Westhill School District when teachers wanted to take spelling off the report card. Parents were outraged, in part because this was one area where they could help their children do the homework and they didn’t want to lose this.

A recent survey in his district pointed out that 78 percent of students have computers in the home while only 61 percent of teachers do.

The content of the curriculum has changed and will continue to evolve for the foreseeable future. When DeSantis first started teaching he taught math as formula manipulation, now it requires higher order thinking skills. Next year will be a “time

warp” when 8th graders will be tested on concepts while 9th graders will be tested on memory. By the year 2001 only Regents diplomas will be available to graduates. Currently, some schools don’t even offer a Regents diploma and their students often do very well. While a Regents diploma alone won’t “get you into Harvard,” it is a standard of quality. The new standards are designed to bring us into the globally competitive economy.

Teachers have been “graded” on how well students do on the Regents, and therefore they teach for the test. Teachers are willing, though reluctant, to make the necessary changes to adapt to the new standards. They know that will have to teach more—and teach to more students. The “new satisfaction” for teachers will come from the new and multiple modalities across all realms—teachers, parents, and administrators. We will need to retrain our teachers and offer additional financial incentives. They are being asked to do more with less.

The new standards will require a massive reconstruction of how things are taught. The 5-year high school will become the norm for 20–40 percent of students, DeSantis predicted. In the short term we will see a drop in the number of students who graduate. We will have to reexamine how we operate our schools. By law, schools still function on an agrarian calendar and cannot start the school year earlier. Specifically, schools can open at any time in the summer but cannot transport students until after Labor Day. We may also have to rethink the pace at which we move students through school. We may, for instance, need to move middle-schoolers into high school earlier. And somehow, we will have to find the funds to make the new standards work for all students.

## E. Partnerships with Business and Education

PANELISTS: *Joseph Vargo*, Executive Director, Partners for Education and Business  
*Lyn De Tore-Stone*, Site-coordinator, Syracuse-as-Schools, Nottingham High School  
*Tricia Myers*, Student, Syracuse-as-Schools Program

*This session was the first of two parts dealing with the business / school relationship. This session focused on the outstanding program at Nottingham High School, the Syracuse-as-Schools program.*

- The importance of preparing students for success in a rapidly changing world means that schools need to develop links to the business world. Currently, our region’s market competitiveness is undermined by the lack of desired skills in our workforce. Seventy-five percent of students enter the workforce without a bachelor’s degree or the skills necessary to acquire a well-paying job. Low-skill jobs are disappearing in all but the service industries, where wages are traditionally very low. Communities without a skilled labor force cannot successfully compete

for jobs, and this situation will only intensify, as the economy becomes more global.

Too often the things students learn in school have no relationship to what business needs an employee to know. Vargo explained that the new standards are a perfect example of the classic school / business disconnect. Business “does not care at all” about Regents scores or Regents diplomas. They care about skills and job readiness, and so far this has not been a component of our educational mission.

One way to build business-related skills—and an interest in becoming even more skilled—is by offering applied learning opportunities to students. These programs allow students to experience what they will encounter in the business world, to have a chance to sample different occupations, and to learn the value of good work habits before they leave school.

The idea of applied learning is not new, but is not yet fully integrated into the Central New York schools. Other states have recognized the importance of applied learning and have established business–school partnership programs. Kentucky has a *Learning Equals Earning* program, and Michigan offers *Yes, Schools Count*. In addition, three major national business associations, representing 230,000 employers, have looked seriously at this need and concluded that these programs are very important. Central New York has been described as “admiring this need from afar.”

When Superintendent Williams came to Syracuse, he brought with him the experience of an adopt-a-school program that linked education to business and decided to replicate it here. In an adopt-a-school program, the business provides such things as tutoring, technical assistance, and money to the school. NYNEX, for instance, adopted Edward Smith Elementary School and helped with a reading and mentoring program.

Concurrently, the Metropolitan Development Association (MDA) conducted a study of the local workforce and determined that business needed to work with the schools to “grow” our labor force into one that could serve our future needs. The schools and the MDA collaborated and initiated a program through which several businesses adopted schools. But it was clear that there was more to do than adopt-a-school could accomplish.

What was needed was a real partnership between business and education. This was not an altruistic undertaking. Business saw this as an economic development initiative. By improving the quality of graduates, Syracuse and Onondaga County could attract new business. But the effort to partner could not be solely business led. From the outset it was important for all those involved to demonstrate respect for the different mandates of education and business. It was important for business people recognize they were working with teaching professionals, and for educators to understand that the initiative was not an indication of failure on the part of teachers.

Challenges to this partnership exist for both schools and business. In the short term, the schools will be occupied with the challenge of implementing the new

standards, and it will be difficult for them to fit in even one more new initiative. Transportation and student safety are also issues the schools must deal with. For business, it will be a challenge to change the thinking that “it’s not my job—teachers should do it.” Business is bottom-line driven and it will take effort to convince them of the value of these partnerships.

But these partnerships can be viewed as opportunities for schools, businesses, and students as well. Schools can raise achievement levels through applied learning. They can become better aligned to the total community. For business, this is an opportunity to “think globally and act locally.” There are over 3,700 businesses in the county. Virtually all of them could become involved and help bring learning to life. According to Vargo, this is economic development at its best. And the partnerships can also help students learn the skills, attitudes, and behaviors that are necessary to be successful. The experience of work can instill a sense of urgency for students who have “turned off,” and help students relate the classroom to the real world. For some students, this gives them hope, which in turn gives them a vision of a future that incorporates the educational experience.

To keep the program alive requires ongoing financial support, new partnerships with business, and teaching support for students enrolled in the program. Many of the students who participate in the program need help—and hope for the future. They go through an interview and are accepted for “employment” just like they will when they finish school and begin searching for jobs. In some cases, students have continued to work at the sites after the program ends.

The Central New York program, Partners for Education and Business, is a catalyst and mediator for these interactions. The organization helps establish the partnerships and “translates” between business and education because their respective languages are often very different. Once established, the partnerships generate great enthusiasm, in part because they are something that has succeeded.

- Lyn De Tore-Stone asked the participants to visualize the *Syracuse-as-Schools* program as living thing that has grown over time. At the beginning OnBank, Merchants Bank, and Chappels helped by offering job-shadowing opportunities for students. These experiences created great enthusiasm for students, but lacked follow-up. OnBank helped the program develop further by contributing startup funding to open a program similar to New York City’s “City-as-School” program in our own community. The *Syracuse-as-Schools* program began with just 15 students. It now has over 200 students enrolled in job-shadowing and business-in-the-schools programs.

Students keep up with their studies through a more flexible school week. They have extra reading and writing assignments to make up for lost class time. These opportunities are different from typical part-time jobs because they are more career-oriented and allow students an inside look at multiple facets of the business they work with. Students learn about finances and sometimes attend board meetings to learn how they operate. Students learn success from mentors who

have succeeded. The program teaches accountability and values in an authentic setting. And it offers a way to meaningfully relate academic issues to work.

The program originated to serve “at-risk” youth. But it was soon clear that the definition of “at risk” crossed traditional boundaries. The program is not always a choice of last resort; in fact the program population is split in thirds. The first third are truly at risk of failure and are nearly dropping out. A second third is not doing well with coursework and is at risk of disconnecting with school. And the third group is bored and losing academic ground because of it. Asked how many students should be in the program, it was emphasized that virtually all students could benefit.

- Tricia Myers, a student who participated in the *Syracuse-as-Schools* program, heard about the program in her junior year. She had tired of school and her performance had begun to decline. She was not in danger of failure, but had lost enthusiasm for learning. Through the program she began work at a downtown restaurant, The Brick Alley, as a prep cook intern. Over the course of her internship she worked with the staff of the entire restaurant and learned about many aspects of restaurant work.

She described the experience as “the best decision she ever made.” It gave her renewed interest in school, and she applied to colleges that also offer co-op programs. She explained that the stereotype of youth as disinterested, often masks the truth that they often feel no hope, and that they need motivation. They often want to succeed but have no opportunities to start real work. This program teaches students skills, develops their ability to communicate, and gives them real-world experience that can help them land a first real job.

## F. School-to-Career Training

PANELISTS: *Scott Shablak*, Office of Professional Development, Syracuse University  
*Lena Kochian*, Coordinator, Tech Prep and Health Careers, Henniger  
*Gary McCandless*, Training Coordinator, Crucible Steel  
*Ellie Peavey*, Director, Career Center, Cicero-North Syracuse Schools

- Scott Shablak advised that when looking for solutions to a problem “watch good people and do what they do.” First, start by looking at the obvious top-ten programs. They are tops for a reason, learn from them. Second, go to the past and learn from it. Then look at what was learned since.

In this case, he suggested look, for instance at OCL Report 11. The report said three things we could still agree with today: that economic development will have to be long-term to be sustainable; that business needs to assume a leadership role in education; and that we need to develop outcome-based goals for education. Some of these recommendations have already been adopted. In 1994, the MDA conducted a study and found that the requirements for graduation have little to do



with the needs of business. Business and the schools now agree on the roles they need to play respectively, and also that they are not yet doing a very good job.

Over the last four years several successful, replicable, programs have been initiated in Central New York. At rural Tioga Central, students are bussed to a bank fifty miles away for a business / school partnership program. These students “over achieve” in math, technology, and science. In Morrisville a program places students on the job—literally in the trenches laying pipes. They learn technical skills, as well as social and personal skills, that will make them job-ready when they graduate.

Locally the focus is on developing a workforce skilled to meet the needs of jobs identified by the 2010 plan as being in future demand. We need to mobilize training providers to collaborate on training for the jobs that will exist. Employers will want to see skill data on potential hires. We do not now test for skills, just personality and aptitude, but such a test would be more than a screening tool, it would profile an applicant’s ability to do a specific job. In other areas this idea has been taken one step further so that an evaluation profile is part of the advertising for jobs.

Many new teachers want to incorporate school-to-work in the curriculum but need help. To make these programs work, applied learning needs different teaching approaches. The challenge is not in *finding* what to do, rather to cut beyond the rhetoric and *do* it.

- Lena Kochian has worked on statewide programs with Shablak. She believes that school-to-career programs have global implications and potentially impact everyone. We need to do a better job with the resources we direct towards school-to-work. The *Health Careers Programs* at Henniger and Fowler are pre tech-prep and pre school-to-career. They began in the 1980’s when hospitals had a desperate need for nurses. Two state departments, Health and Education, collaborated to bring money to the “big five” school districts for programs to encourage students to consider health careers. The Syracuse program started at ground zero, while the others retrofitted old programs. Today, only the Syracuse program continues, while the others disappeared once the startup funding was gone. The program motivates through exploration. It now serves 478 students at Henniger and 86 at Fowler. It is a strong academic program requiring 5.5-6.5 additional credits above the standard requirements for graduation. Students in this program are counseled into Regents courses even if they have some basic skills that need work. Kochian noted that reading is only a skill, and the ability to read is not equivalent with the ability to think.

The program begins with courses in the ninth grade, a survey of health professions, and issues of concern to the health industry including the law. Students learn theory through applied learning. At this level there was a need for a professional keyboarding course. St. Joseph’s Hospital helped to develop one. In tenth grade students begin their clinical experience. Each week, a block of time is

set aside for students to go to the hospital and experience a rotation through 8-10 departments. Students witness surgery firsthand and get into full hospital garb to participate. The program also serves a marketing need for SUNY and they use a video of the students as a recruitment tool. After the 10th grade students choose what they want to do. With over 100 agencies participating in the program, students can experience the world of work in fields such as social services and mental health.

Despite the quality of the program, there is still a need for systemic educational reform to support applied learning in the schools. These programs have provided quality internships and upper-level courses so students can learn to apply high-level thinking skills. The program is inclusive and the Advanced Placement (AP) Health course is open to all students—regardless of skill level. It includes a high level of minority participation. The results of the local AP test were two points higher than the national average (in most instances, enrollment in AP courses is restricted to gifted students, making this two point achievement even more significant).

- The Career Center at Cicero-North Syracuse will soon celebrate its tenth anniversary. Business and education come to this from two different perspectives. It is essential to combine school with work through “connecting experiences,” whether students are going to college or directly to work. The programs must take students from wherever they are and help them make their own decisions. The program through the Career Center provides a comfort zone where learning can take place. The objectives are the same in all programs: to apply the subject to the occupation, while satisfying curriculum needs. Students must learn at least one set of job-specific skills as well as job-readiness skills. They need to understand the rules of the workplace: to respect others and the job; to be on time; to be responsible; and to develop critical thinking skills, effective communication skills; and how to transfer knowledge from one situation to another. Students understand that business needs to make money—that they aren’t owed a job—and they quickly learn the value of their own efforts.

Each program begins at a work-site where a parent of one of the students is employed. The development of the program is a collaborative effort involving the parent, teacher, principal, counselor, coordinator, and student. After the parent makes the first contact, the teacher shadows the job. Then the collaborative group meets to frame responsibilities and engages in “free thinking.” The student participates at the site and follows a tailored curriculum. The last step is a celebration of learning where students teach what they have learned to parents and mentors and together they celebrate the accomplishment. The eagerness of students engages the parents and they participate as partners.

- Classroom teachers are under a lot of stress and must justify any time taken away from Regent’s work. The collaboration with Crucible has demonstrated that these programs work, not only because students learn that they can “make money at

this,” but also because it brings the importance of traditional subjects into perspective. The program began with three classes and organizers chose the lowest performers in each class to take part. These students ended up scoring 10 points higher than their peers who did not participate in the program. Students in the program developed a new attitude and had the opportunity to work with sophisticated equipment unlike anything the schools could provide. They became truly excited about the subject of chemistry, and were introduced to higher-level concepts such as alloys and metallurgy.

The people at Crucible *believe* in the program, it has proven its worth over time. The program started with one student who was interested in shadowing in metallurgy. That first experience was very successful and showed that the program could work.

McCandless explains to new students that at Crucible, you can work from the bottom up. The current president of the company started as a laborer. Crucible has a long history of community involvement and this program was a natural extension of this commitment.

In the program students learn about the many different types of steel and how carefully they must be made. They learn about tensile strength and resistance to corrosion. They see the different properties of steels made for rifle barrels, nuclear equipment, aircraft, and boat propellers. Back in school they learn the basics in science class.

When they arrive at Crucible, students are often surprised to start at the beginning, in purchasing, where materials are ordered, then work through the many departments and functions of the company. Finally they see how different types of steel are made and how they look under a microscope. They also get to talk to those in charge, the union president and the company president. They learn the hard rules—that if you goof off you get fired, no excuse from “Mom” will do. At first students are afraid but they learn to respect and appreciate the manufacturing environment—especially when they see how much they can earn and “how nice the cars are in the lot.”

To close the experience a final presentation / celebration brings students together with Crucible employees, the student’s teachers, and family. The students do presentations that show how much they’ve learned. They know there is a future for them if they are willing to work for it.

## G. The Future of Tenure

PANELISTS: *Dr. Terry O'Brien*, President of Board of Education, East Syracuse-Minoa  
*Diane Canino-Rispoli*, Assistant Director of Personnel, Syracuse City Schools  
*Joseph Coleman*, Superintendent, LaFayette Central Schools  
*Sylvia Matousek*, President, North Syracuse Education Association

- Tenure evolved from the early years of the century when it was offered to ensure that politics would not rule the intellectual life of the community. It was first offered in the public schools in the 1970's and was introduced to protect teachers from a lack of due process. Prior to that time teachers could be dismissed for "violations" such as divorce, improper dress, unpopular political views, or making too much money. Teachers today still seek due process, and view tenure as one of the supports to protect these rights.

But the community questions the wisdom of protecting "dead wood"—teachers with tenure who don't continue to grow professionally or who are no longer competent. The problem with determining who will be granted tenure is that you cannot tell whether an eager young teacher will remain so after twenty years. Poor teachers can do what is required, take courses to "look good on paper" for professional development, and still be bad at teaching.

Many agree that what is needed is a system that serves both needs, that respects educators and holds them accountable. Teachers need to work with administrators, to engage in learning throughout their careers, and to motivate and teach students to love learning.

Our institutions of education are under siege from many fronts, Dr. O'Brien warned. He recommended the book *Overcoming Indifference* (O'Donahue) that talks about vision for education and argues that the old salves don't work, people shrink from them. The book explores the dangers of pointing fingers and placing blame, warning, "you may become fixed in the limbo of despair.... Love vision, not the seduction of power, and create a vision that is respectful and just, otherwise kids will suffer from a lack of vision for themselves."

- Diane Rispoli suggested that we are not talking enough in the tenure debate about how tenure impacts students' education. At one time it was thought that a single year spent with a less than competent teacher could be made up for in subsequent years of good teaching. Now we know that even one poor teacher has an influence on a student's capacity over an entire school career. Every year counts, every teacher counts, Rispoli emphasized.

Tenure is only important when there is a problem teacher. The teacher's union wants their members to be teachers who do well, to be teachers who want to teach. The union works with members who have a problem. But the union must also defend teachers in cases where due process is not carried out. No one wants

to protect incompetent teachers, Rispoli explained, and inferior teachers need to be removed.

As an administrator she looks at issues of real concern with tenured teachers on a daily basis. We must deal with this, with energy, and over the long term, she cautioned. There are no quick fixes. Many do not realize that the issue of tenure also applies to administrators. Administrators also need tenure because, like the coach of a football team, they can't always turn problem schools around as fast as some would like.

More thought must be given to who gets tenure in the first place. We now recognize how serious it is to grant tenure. Education has changed dramatically and demands teachers to be life-long learners. Tenure does not grant a right to stop learning. The teacher's union and school administrators are working together to create a system that offers job security and due process while holding people accountable for performance. The debate needs to focus on how to keep the *best* teachers, not lose some because we must deal with seniority issues first.

Administrators also share responsibility when tenure is used as a shield when parents complain. This is wrong, but it is costly to remove a tenured teacher. Teachers must be paid while a case is pending. In 1992, the 200 cases against problem teachers cost the Syracuse School District \$150,000. This took dollars away from direct services to students at a time when tight budgets made those dollars hard to replace.

It is too simple, however, to just throw tenure out. At the state level there are potentially promising discussions of "renewable" tenure. New York is one of only nine states that does not have a requirement for ongoing education for teachers. While no one argues that we should go back to the old days when teachers could be dismissed for wearing the wrong clothes, yet it is tough to support the party line when parents repeatedly complain about an incompetent teacher. People want their tax dollars to go as far as possible, and they want quality teachers in every classroom. There are no simple solutions, no cookie-cutter approach that will solve all the problems. The teacher's union will need to be a partner in finding solutions that work.

- Sylvia Matousek explained that it is important to first define tenure for what it is, "legal protection for teachers who cannot be fined, fired, or suspended without due process." Support for tenure is at an all-time low, but support for due process remains strong.

There are many misconceptions of the issue, but it is important to recognize that support for tenure does *not* mean support for incompetence. Tenure provides protection for competent teachers against groundless termination. Sometimes teachers need support to do the unpopular thing. When issues finally reach the stage of a tenure panel, there has been a system-wide failure on the part of the teacher, the union, and the administration.

The tenure debate has raised awareness of the need for excellence from the beginning of teacher's career. The probationary period is a "trial by fire," and very rigorous. Young teachers often struggle with the challenges of entering a new profession, learning the ropes of teaching, working towards a master's degree, and serving on committees. They need help learning to be teachers. Formal mentoring programs offer financial support to relieve mentors from other responsibilities while they mentor. More often, a "buddy system" is used that relies on teachers to guide younger members above and beyond their regular responsibilities.

Teachers are protected by tenure and by union contracts. If mechanisms were in place to support due process, most teachers would support the end of tenure. Such a support would need to be free of political bias, offer clear expectations, keep dialogue open, be judged on delivery of results, and meet the needs of students first.

## H. Connecting with Home Knowledge

PANELISTS: *Ruth Henry*, Social Worker, Seymour School  
*Michele Abdul Sabur*, Parent Advocate, Syracuse City School District  
*Robert Storrier*, Principal, Enders Road Elementary School  
*Nancy Plaza*, Teacher, Meacham Elementary School

- Too often educators don't look at the whole child when there is problem with learning. Children will respond and act differently based on their sex, age, and economic class. When it's time to find a solution to a problem we need to look at the broader circumstances including a child's background and family relationships.

At Seymour School children come from a variety of cultural backgrounds. Most of the Latino children come from Puerto Rico, some from Cuba. It is important for teachers to recognize the considerable variation within the Latino community and to understand how important strong family ties are in Latino families, how much emphasis the culture places on unity and loyalty. For children from these families, respect is very important and plays a role in all personal relationships.

In Puerto Rico, for instance, respectful children do not challenge those in authority. Teachers sometimes misinterpret when children from this culture lower their heads when they are addressed. They may appear to be ignoring the teacher when in fact they are showing respect. Teachers also need to know that Latino families share common values of love, respect, and nurturance. In a crisis, these families believe they are obligated to care for the children of any family member. It is not uncommon for children to be transferred from the parents to a grandparent, aunt, or uncle for loving care during difficult times. Care giving by the extended family is normal in Latino culture. When teachers understand this, they can work better with the child.

Formal education in itself can cause stress in Latino families, especially for new immigrants. Children learn language and acculturate faster than most adults. This can have a profound effect on families. Parents may feel inferior and children may feel ashamed of their parents. In school, Latino children may have to act as translators for their parents. When professionals from other countries come to the U.S. their credentials don't always transfer. This causes the parent's self esteem further damage. All this can be very hard on the family and can bring the family into crisis.

Even the weather can play a part in creating a sense of hostile environment for immigrant families. Families from warm Caribbean climates experience cold weather as very dangerous. Children are afraid of the cold at first but get over it—parents may not. They sometimes keep children at home on cold days fearing for their safety. All of this can create stress for the child as well. The needs and values of these families must be integrated into the schools, as we work toward common goals.

- Michele Abdul Sabur brings her experience as a parent of five children to her work as parent advocate in the Syracuse schools. She is a strong proponent of role modeling as a teaching method. If we are to have an effect on the education of a child, whether as teacher or parent, we must “work outside our own respective box.” She cautioned that we must remove our own barriers of turf, professionalism, race, and class. Collaboration must happen in an atmosphere of mutual respect. Her mission during her discussion is to help “blur the edges of the box.”

In hierarchical systems like the schools, it is important to recognize the imbalance of power between highly educated teachers and administrators and lesser educated, often lower income, parents. It is essential to empower and support those who may feel left out. In the schools this often means empowering parents by giving them the tools, information, and skills they need to become full, active partners in the education of their children. The schools have a role—a responsibility—to value the cultural and social home base of students. And they need to partner with parents across class boundaries as well. Abdul Sabur noted that many Eastside parents began the relationship with the schools feeling unempowered and intimidated. For many Southside parents this feeling never stops. But once parents have a sense of their own personal empowerment they find a voice and become collaborators in learning.

She has been asked the question, how can schools support parental empowerment? She offered several important suggestions:

1. Develop different strategies for effective communication between home and school.
2. Demonstrate a respect for, and inclusion of, all parents and students regardless of race class and culture.

3. Provide workshops on essential life skills, resume writing, assertiveness training etc.
4. Demystify education jargon.
5. Include parents on decision-making teams.
6. Include parents in staff development
7. Make the school environment welcoming
8. Inform parents of the culture and structure of the district
9. Engage media to promote parent involvement and education.
10. Ask parents what they think is important about their child's education.
11. Develop a school-wide buddy system (parent-to-parent, parent-to-staff).
12. Teach staff the value of parental involvement and the importance of cordiality to everyone.
13. Provide supports for involvement—childcare, transportation, etc.
14. Validate parents
15. Encourage parent / staff dialogue.

Abdul Sabur acknowledged that this represents a lot of work, but explained that when parents know they can make a difference in their child's education, they will more than make up for the effort. She offered ten suggestions of ways to incorporate home knowledge in meaningful learning.

1. Develop a curriculum that incorporates each student's family stories.
2. Invite parents to be mentors and tutors and offer opportunities to participate before, during and after school.
3. Encourage parents to be advocates for their classroom, school, and district.
4. Encourage parents to provide job-shadowing opportunities.
5. Parents who cannot come to the school to volunteer can help in other ways—making costumes, grading papers, making phone calls, etc. Children feel pride knowing their parents are connected to the school.
6. Parents of diverse backgrounds can provide a personal perspective of their culture and offer students a first-hand opportunity to learn about others.
7. Parents can provide teachers with insight about what works best with their own child regarding learning style and discipline.
8. Parents can share their knowledge of the community and access to resources.
9. With support and information, parents can participate in development of home/school reading programs. This demonstrates the importance of reading and literacy to children at home as well as in school.
10. Materials can be shared with parents to help them support the learning process in school.

Parents must act on their knowledge of their own children. When they do so, they will give their children pride and self-esteem, a sense of safety in the world, and ensure them a place of values where their voices can be heard and their choices respected.



- Robert Storrier explained that the schools use two means to connect with the home, written and verbal. This may take the form of a newsletter, phone call, email, flyer, PTA meeting, parent/child activity or school open house. He acknowledged that there are plenty of means, but two issues: how to use what parents already know, and how to educate and inform parents about what they need to know.

Addressing the first issue, Storrier noted that parents know a lot about their own children and are the child's most important teacher. It is essential to take advantage of parent's skills and knowledge. But first, it is important to get parents into the schools. Parents can be valuable extra hands in the schools, a source of social expertise, connected to the schools before- and after-hours, and can help provide opportunities for learning outside the schools. They can be involved at home through programs like the TV turnoff (television-free nights twice a week), a leisure time fair (children learn to do the things parents enjoy) and by involving children in what parents do for a living.

On the second issue, Storrier noted that parents also need to know more, sometimes so they don't undo the work of the schools. Parents can be shown these skills through workshops. They can learn how to teach beginning reading, for instance, or how to discuss homework assignments. Homework is very important and parents must understand their role. Parents can be reading partners for their children and the schools can offer help for parents to learn how to be good partners.

At Enders Road Elementary School parents are invited to "Friday Night Prime Time Live" where they learn how to be a good reading partner. Parents bring three books and sit with their child on mats in the school gymnasium. As soft music plays, parents try out different reading techniques to see what works best for them. There is also a role for home / school character education. If students don't learn these lessons, other efforts are diminished. It is most important to remember that home / school relationships are two-way and require continued communication.

- Nancy Plaza explained that from the teacher's perspective, new classes are welcomed eagerly each year. Activities to include parents are both planned and spontaneous and include such things as plays, parent /teacher conferences and open houses. As a benefit, the teachers get to know the whole child, and students have shared experiences with the class.

But there are negatives too—students bring family problems to school that are often complex and require a good deal of attention. Problems can also arise in the neighborhoods, with other children, or on the playground. Teachers need to be involved in all these aspects, but must also manage time well and concentrate on the educational mission. There is rarely enough time to teach skills like conflict resolution, or to honor the heritage and history of each student.

There are many ways to increase parent involvement—conferences, concerts, parent volunteer programs, homework letters, interim reports and report cards,

phone calls, letters about rewards or suspensions, field trips, and holiday activities. Parents want to know that someone cares for their child when they are at school. Some parents do ask, “is this my job?” They need to see education as a joint venture.

Supports are available, but not everyone can use them, Newsletters work—for English speakers and those who can read. Homework hotlines work—for those who have a phone. Plaza recognized that she needed to do something more.

She started a program to get her first grade parents to engage in a “weekly chat,” phone call to discuss student’s work, to get updates, to ask questions, and review homework. In previous years she made the calls monthly but they weren’t frequent enough and didn’t build the necessary relationship. If the parents did not have a phone in the home they were invited to call any evening at their convenience. At the beginning Plaza made six or seven calls a day that took ten to fifteen minutes each. Parents were suspicious at the beginning, fearing something was wrong. Over time she built trust and a solid partnership with each family. Her students look forward to her calls with pride—they are important in the lives of the adults around them. Parents really know what’s going on and problems can be solved very effectively because everyone is on the same team.

When the parents were unable to attend a conference at the school, Plaza went to them. She encouraged parents to participate as they could, to bring food or recipes, to share cultural traditions. Students keep a journal to record their progress a school, and their lives at home. Parents were advised of upcoming meetings and other important school information. They are actively engaged with the school and trust the teachers—where they trust few other professionals. The teacher gets to know the whole family, the extended family, and has the opportunity to share in lifelong learning skills.

## I. Challenges of Race Relations

PANELISTS: *Patricia Schmidt*, Assistant Professor, Education Department, Le Moyne College  
*Linda Hall*, Human Rights Commission of Syracuse and Onondaga County  
*John Landesman*, Director, Community-Wide Dialogue, CNY Inter-Religious Council  
*Vivian Moore*, Director of Multi-Cultural Affairs, Onondaga Community College

It is important to understand the impact of racism on children—both in and out of the classroom. By age three, children know it’s “better” to be white and most children choose white dolls to play with, regardless of their own skin color. By grade three children begin to segregate themselves by skin color and play only with those like themselves.

In the schools it is still clear that expectations and outcomes are lower for students of color than for white students. It is clear that race plays a role in who succeeds and who fails when all the students in an honors section are white and all

the students in the remedial section are of color. While we claim to want everyone to succeed, some people want inequality, and want a better-than-even playing field for themselves and those they identify as being “their own.” It is also clear when studies prove that African American college students do better at all-black colleges where they are nurtured and where they face no artificial barriers, that our colleges and universities also need to address issues of racism. All our schools need to look for ways to nurture and teach how to self-motivate.

- We need to look at the messages we send with the materials in schools. Patricia Schmidt showed an example of a map using a Mercator projection, the most commonly used map in schools. The map distorts the size of landmasses in the northern hemisphere and presents Europe at the center of the world. The sizes of landmasses are extremely exaggerated close to the poles so that Greenland appears to be larger than the continent of Europe. Conversely, the continents of the southern hemisphere appear extremely small. Schmidt argued that it was no accident that Mercator’s map was created by a European and that the lands of people of color were made to appear less significant. She then showed a map created with a Peter’s projection that preserved the relative sizes of landmasses (though distorted in shape) in both hemispheres. She noted that when she shows this map to students they frequently comment on how big Africa looks and are often surprised to hear that this is because Africa *is* so big.

Schmidt also showed a number of books for young children that featured stories of children from a variety of cultures. The books included the Spanish language version of Doctor *Seuss’s Cat in the Hat*; and *Encounter*, a story of Columbus from the view of a native Taino child. Several of the books featured stories of contemporary African American children and families, stories that created authentic portraits of the African American culture. She noted that these works were only available from bookstores by special order and that children often did not gravitate to them because they were unfamiliar. Teachers need to introduce white children to the worlds of others, and to affirm children of color with the value of their heritage, by including a variety of stories in the curriculum.

- Linda Hall from the Human Rights Commission informed the participants about the number and nature of calls to the Commission last year. Over 2,000 calls were received and of these only three percent had to do with education—approximately 50 complaints. Some were from teachers concerned about promotion issues because of race or gender. Some were from parents of children who had experienced racism in the schools. In many of these cases the child was subjected to verbal abuse, name calling, or racist graffiti. The reaction is often quick, Hall noted, but coping is usually slow. It is easy to punish an offense but far more difficult to create long-term change. Too often promises to “deal with it” are not kept. Her agency sponsors an annual youth award to recognize the actions of youth themselves to make conditions better.

Hall invited John Landesman to join her in engaging participants in an exercise about white privilege. Cards bearing affirmations were distributed around the room. Participants were asked to acknowledge whether the affirmation was true for them or not. The affirmations read:

- When I ask to see the person in charge I expect that person to look like me.
  - I expect that my teacher's children will look like them.
  - I expect that the heritage of my people to be affirmed in school materials.
  - I can find books, magazines, art, cards, etc. that feature people who look like me.
  - On TV or the front page of the paper I can see people like me widely and positively represented.
- Vivian Moore explained that racism could be the result of well-intentioned efforts. A local school has a “wall of fame” flanked by a “wall of shame.” She noted, “I never see people who look like me on the fame side, and lots who do on the shame side. This sends a message.”

Moore commented on two issues important to her and her experience. Racism, she explained, is a serious form of violence, and stopping violence means more than ending lynching. It means accepting our differences and moving closer to the democratic principles in our Constitution. It means getting past our programming that says it's okay that some are valued and some aren't. If we allow ourselves to divide the city schools by race then two-thirds of our students will not be well educated. We need to address this now to ensure democracy's future. Moore recommended that we need to interrupt racism whenever it occurs, and we could use humor more often while we do it. We need to know what we SEE—a Significant Emotional Event—when we see it. We need to interrupt racism and reduce violence on a personal level

In her early years, Moore denied her experience of race. She grew up in a segregated community where her value was recognized and valued and she was praised for her good qualities. While she “followed all the rules,” she was still reminded of race every day. We must educate *ourselves* first she emphasized, and learn to love those like us, then reach out. We need to be clear about who we are as persons. We must not skip the step of loving those like ourselves; we must love the humanness of the self first before we can truly love others. Then we must look at systems and insist that they respond systemically—not through set-aside programs. Teachers must be evaluated, school boards held accountable, and districts measured by outcomes. Racism is both a power and an economic issue. When some have jobs but others don't we need to challenge the assumption that “that's just the way it is.” We need to meet the challenge to be part of the world economy.

- John Landesman presented a video clip of a Race Dialogue session. Comments were made by participants in the Dialogue such as, “people don’t know they are racist when they make racist remarks because it is so much a part of culture and family,” and “even when we see things about racism in movies like ‘Eyes on the Prize,’ it shows racism as a fact of history, not as something going on now.” The young people in the video were concerned about how to explain racism to their younger brothers and sisters, about how they were forced to assume a different identity to get into college (for instance, to use the name Sue rather than Suger), and how it hurt and angered them to be “ID’ed as a drug dealer just for being African American and hanging out.” They felt it was important to bring young people together, to get to know each other better.

City schools have a fairly good track record of promoting women of color and the number of African American administrators is growing, but important systemic changes still have not happened. As curriculums focus on the basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic, how will the “human stuff” get taught? How will students be prepared for a world economy where they will need to interact with people from many different cultures? What is needed is a strategic plan of action that identifies the issues most in need of attention.

## J. Meeting Individual Learning Needs

PANELISTS: *Dr. Thomas Cappa*, Superintendent, City of Syracuse School District  
*John Cataldo*, Superintendent, Liverpool Central Schools  
*Sister Mary Anne Heenan, CSJ*, Superintendent, Catholic Schools  
*Dr. Phillip Martin*, Superintendent, Fayetteville-Manlius School District

The panel presentation began with a video entitled “Common Miracles.” Research for the video had been conducted nationwide and solutions were found for virtually every problem faced by American schools. But, though small pockets of excellence were found in many places, the goal remains finding ways to connect and replicate these innovations and to “make excellence commonplace.”

Research into the mind itself has shown it to be more flexible and capable than we ever knew. As we learn, dendrites, the neural connectors in the brain, grow. This happens whenever we concentrate on something new, whatever our age. There is truth to the saying that imagination can “change your mind.” The old measure of IQ on a continuum from smart to dumb has given way to the understanding that there are many different forms of intelligence. Each person has some level of capacity in each form of intelligence so that in combination, each person is uniquely intelligent. Gardner recognized seven forms of intelligence: interpersonal, introspective, spatial, bodily, musical, verbal, and logical / mathematical. Traditional measures of intelligence only focus on the last two,

verbal and mathematical ability. The new question to ask is not “how smart are you?” but rather, “how are you smart?”

Individuals work and learn best when they operate from their strengths. The important thing is to discover your natural talents and use them. When we begin by recognizing that every child is gifted, then we build confidence and success for each child by respecting their strengths. The old IQ model crippled many people, and many never learned the excitement of learning. One definition of intelligence is the coordination of thoughts with actions. “Meta-cognition” is thinking about thinking. Kids are naturals at meta-cognition, always creating new games and modifying the rules through new ways of thinking about the games. Playing games requires concentration but it is *enjoyable* concentration. Dendrites grow even when we’re having fun. The trick is to apply this to other learning, to make learning fun. When we do, we “go with the flow”—a highly enjoyable mental state where we are challenged but not faced with the impossible. The best teachers can get students into the flow easily.

It is clear that every student can learn, but to maximize each student’s potential we must also have high expectations for every student. Gifted programs have been proven to work for any child and should not be reserved for the special few. Unfortunately, too many schools still practice tracking, segregating students by ability in verbal and mathematical intelligence. Tracking does not help students who are verbally and mathematically gifted to do better, and it invariably dooms the “slow” students to failure. The best schools embrace all students and individualize teaching. If we start with a school that believes every student can learn, they *will* learn.

One way to encourage children to use their natural intelligence is to place them in situations where they must use “HOTS” (Higher Order Thinking Skills) and offer them incomplete teaching. In these situations students are given part, but not all, of the information they need to solve a problem. They are allowed to fail — “controlled floundering” — and then succeed. Teachers guide students by asking them about their choices. Students don’t enter the flow if they are too heavily guided—they will simply give back what is told to them.

Some schools are working with students that have been held back for two years with remarkable success. These students are given a chance to make up the lost time in one year and rejoin their class. They work very hard on a carefully designed curriculum that teaches exactly the skills and knowledge they need to make the grade. Each area is broken down into small recognizable units and these are listed on a display board. Students have the satisfaction of marking off each new accomplishment and can see just how far they have yet to go.

Mathematics has long been considered the purview of the exceptionally gifted. But virtually all kids are good at math. They naturally play games that involve counting and grouping. If given the opportunity, kids learn math easily through methods of their own devising. Asked to solve a complex problem in any way they wish, a group of students will usually come up with a wide variety of techniques to

reach the answer. When students explain their methods to each other they learn new and creative ways to get to the answer, routes that may be useful in a future situation. They learn there is no right way or wrong way to get to the answer.

Modern schools were designed as factories for learning, to create the workforce needed to run a manufacturing economy. It was important that these people were trained to follow orders, to go in the designated direction, and to work efficiently. The jobs of the future will go to people who can think, people who can choose from many different paths, and people who can utilize various resources to get to where they want to go.

- Sister Heenan recounted her own years as a teacher and remembered that students became excited to learn when they were challenged and allowed to do their own work. Students need to feel secure, to be cared about, and this is part of the mission of Catholic schools. Building a Christian community means valuing diversity. We have relied on verbal and math skills alone to demonstrate knowledge but we need to look at other modalities. And, we need to make teachers aware of these modalities.

Heenan noted that life is not broken into “subjects.” To live successfully one must use multiple skills. Students can learn using more than just math and verbal skills, they can act out, draw, and do other things to demonstrate concepts—and have fun doing it. It all comes down to the teacher, to that *person* who creates the learning environment. We want teachers to develop good relationships with students so they can help each student find a place—not just the intermediate/high achievers.

Dollars are important when they translate into smaller classes, teacher training, and support materials. But we still need to make it lead somewhere. Some students may simply require more time in school. There is no magic to the forty-minute class, or the nine-month school year, or the twelve years to graduate. If there is magic, it will be found in the teachers, Heenan asserted. Teachers are the key.

- John Cataldo cautioned participants to be wary when they hear the phrase “and test scores went up.” We need to disconnect from scores and look for more holistic measures of success. In New York State we still don’t have anything like a portfolio system. New York is still test-driven—we are trapped in the “test box.” At Westhill there is no tracking of honors students; in fact, no such designation exists. They operate on extended blocks, with four classes a day instead of seven resulting in less time spent between classes.

Two other things are important to note, Cataldo explained, character education and the relationship of education to life needs. The themes of respect and responsibility cut across all ethnic and class lines and deserve a place in our schools. And we need to make education relevant to life. We need to give students “real” experiences as another way to succeed. We need to provide student’s with

opportunities “outside the pen and pencil,” to create an integrated curriculum where linkages are emphasized over discrete tests and drills.

- Dr. Cappa noted that he had received the video from a parent. In it he saw the things he was trying to do and it hit him. “What will get to this child? How can we recognize who they (students) are?” He began to match instruction to individual students. He needed to know which of the seven intelligences could be used to reach the individual. We need to tap into this with each student creatively—to use music to teach math for instance.

We are still learning how our brains work and there is new research all the time. We need to have high expectations for all students and to find ways to tap into each student’s aptitudes. If we don’t they lose interest.

- Dr. Martin noted that education is a balancing act. He had mixed reaction to the video presentation. He noted that in education we can be our own worst enemies, always “not doing enough.” Some time-tested truths remain. There are true essentials to a good school:

1. Teachers must have a passion for students and learning.
  2. There must be a pervasive belief that every child can learn.
  3. There must be high expectations for every child.
  4. There must be a coordinated, articulated curriculum where no student falls through the cracks.
  5. Each child must have the opportunity to learn in his/her own way.
  6. There must be a responsible school environment.
- When these things are true, students will learn.

## K. Character Education

PANELISTS: *Reverend John Breslin, SJ*, Interim Director of Values Program, Le Moyne College

*Jackie Grace*, Teacher, Tecumseh Elementary School

*Dr. Thomas Lickona*, Director, Center for 4th and 5th Rs, SUNY Cortland

*David Wheeler*, Principal, Wellwood Middle School

- Father Breslin opened the panel explaining that the issue of character education is large and prominent and seen as an essential component of education today. The Jesuit tradition of education is 460 years old. The principals and virtues central to the Jesuit tradition made it possible to reach out and connect to other traditions and cultures from the earliest times. The Jesuits were founded in 1540 as an intellectual—but not school-forming—order, but they were pressed into teaching service by the local duke who wanted his son to be educated. Soon after the order was formed they were overwhelmed by recruits and found that they needed to



teach and prepare these young men for service. They soon found that by teaching lay students along with these recruits it was possible to defray some of the costs. Sixteen years later, teaching had become a primary activity and the Jesuits have been associated with teaching to this day. Their method of teaching was good at pulling things together from many sources and was not ideological. They tried to adapt the Parisian model but didn't want rote piety; rather they encouraged the development of a strong inner core—valuable for both intellectual and moral pursuits.

Out of this mix, a set of three values arose, as did a methodology for teaching them. These three related virtues are found in other cultures, including that of the Onondaga, and form the center of an educational and moral tradition. Reflection, gratitude, and service are inter-related and form “a gracious circle.” Virtue is a habit, Breslin noted, and the Aristotelian model holds that virtue, once perfectly attained, no longer requires struggle. An example is athletics—once you know how to hit the ball you can do it again without thinking. When virtuous habit becomes second nature, virtuous action becomes spontaneous. Breslin explained that based on this same thinking “to become virtuous, hang with virtuous people; to become intellectual, hang with intellectuals.”

Reflection has two parts. Imagination, the first part, is integral to reflection and is the ability to enter into the senses. It does not have the rigor of thought, but can be experienced in music, art, and stories. Imagination is natural in children. The second part of reflection is attention. While not opposed to imagination, it is the ability to concentrate and focus. It is the ability to pay attention and interact, the ability to notice and respond. It is the ability to dismiss distractions and not become focused on immediate payoff rather than the big picture. It is a form of detachment and an ability to pay attention to that which is outside of ourselves rather than self-involvement. When we are able to reflect, ideas become interesting and we can play with ideas. We need to ask ourselves what we are now doing to encourage imagination and attention?

The result of reflection is gratitude, a most naturally religious virtue. Thanksgiving, while secular, is at the heart a “religious” virtue. Thanksgiving is an affirmation of the future, of coming to know and love the world.

Service is a habit of will. When we notice, and we are grateful, how do we show it? By coming to be of service. This is one of the areas strong in both education and culture. When alumnus of the Jesuit tradition gather, they seek to “do more than drink beer.” They look for ways to complete the gracious circle through service.

These virtues transcend any specific religious tradition and feed one another. One may enter the gracious circle from any angle and those who make a habit of these virtues find that they feel they get more out of life than they put in. They experience humility. O'Mallory on Jesuit education speaks of “loving students” and “respectful familiarity.” Today we call this modeling and mentoring and

Breslin called it “a spiral toward the divine.” We ought to be explorers he concluded, for in my end is my beginning.

- David Wheeler started a character education program at F-M eight years ago and worked with Le Moyne to develop the curriculum. The program started at the high school level and now operates in junior high as well. From the outset they made an essential, district-wide commitment. There are several things to look at when attempting to start such a program:

- Find support within the district: not only financial and moral support but also support from the Board, Superintendent, community, and staff. Get training as needed.
- Assess the local school culture—how far can we go? Is this an urban or suburban school? Are the parents themselves well educated? Are there religious factors to consider?
- Should the program “push in, or pull out?” Should the whole school participate in a half-hour lesson—a “virtue of the month”? Or should the program be incorporated into the ongoing curriculum?
- Find the correct terminology and use words that are acceptable to the local constituency. Currently, where “values” is often a loaded and contested word, the word “virtues” has become a more acceptable umbrella for the ideals of honor, honesty, and perseverance. Determine the climate of opinion about these issues.

Begin with a core group, teach them first, then build and expand. Establish a steering committee, including students and parents, and allow the parents to help explain the value of the program to the community. It is important to find a forum relevant to the culture based on respect, responsibility, and rights. Wheeler also warned against “letting the naysayers get a foothold.” Don’t let them discourage the entire group, let them talk in a smaller group. Avoid getting into debates with them—you can never win. Find and use good resources. The F-M program used the “Book of Virtues for Young People” by Bill Bennett as a resource to build the program for two years. Other suggested books include “A Call to Character,” “Educating for Character,” and “The Moral Intelligence of Children.” The latter is a guide to the development of conscience in children and is a useful guide for anyone who deals with children. Wheeler concluded by affirming that as adults we must model moral action—caring, civility, respect, sharing, and responsibility—you have to show what you want to see.

- Jackie Grace explained that she grew up in a small town outside of Montgomery Alabama, “segregated but rich in teachers.” They didn’t know they were poor, she explained. Children grew up in the village where everyone raised the child. When she was able to take her own family there, her children exclaimed, “mom, *this* is the *village!*”

She grew up with both caring and responsibility. She saw cooperation in action; people gave to each other; children showed respect—they said hello to adults and thank you for every kindness. They didn't climb the peach tree because they knew the peaches were needed. They had consistency and stability. Every child was expected to perform, to grow to be what he or she wanted to be. Values were instilled in all children.

Today we talk about the village, but what has changed? When families moved away they lost the sense of community. Schools and teachers can create this village and show respect, caring and cooperation. We still teach values at an early age, but are we instilling the values we want children to have? Teach love to children and adults, the real basics, Grace encouraged. Teachers can take their cue from administrators, but they can do it on their own too. We must *believe* we can do it, she concluded.

- Tom Lickona expanded on Father Breslin's circle and presented another way of looking at these values is the combination of moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. It can be called virtue of the mind, heart, and will. Or it can be understood as knowing the good, feeling the good, and doing the good. Any individual virtue can be divided into these parts. Justice, for instance, begins with knowing what is right from wrong, feeling outrage when faced with injustice, and acting on it when faced with injustice. What effort do we need when faced with this? We need a comprehensive plan as outlined by the diagram.

The notion of "habit" needs rehabilitation, Lickona suggested. Habit requires practice but ultimately we become what our habits make us. Being a parent means being "second" for a quarter of a century. Helping families helps children, and helping families develops the character of a community. Some communities are actively becoming communities of character. To do so we need to make explicit connections to character with everything students do.

Syracuse schools adopted a "no put-downs" program that was not fully successful because it was not consistent and varied building by building. It was easier to implement in elementary schools where students had only one teacher, than it was in the high schools. The current school board does not see this as a key issue and, therefore, has not approached this systemically. We need to create high expectations based on the developmental level of children and look to outcomes for measures of success.

Character education themes are sometimes in direct conflict with the attitudes of athletic coaches. These coaches are often not teachers and, therefore, not part of the culture. Some schools have behavior contracts that operate in all situations—including athletics—and regulate character behavior in and out of the classroom. Some coaches are successful models of moral behavior—Joe Paterno, for example—which proves that athletic success and moral behavior are fundamentally compatible.

Some communities are implementing “courtesy patrols” that distribute cards to note when someone has violated a courtesy code. Yellow, red, and green cards say, “you have violated the courtesy code.”

Storytelling and books can help teach children character. A revised story of the ugly duckling does not have the duckling *change* into the beautiful swan, it has the duck grow up to be *accepted and valued* as different. Children can be taught moral feelings easily because they are so able to experience feeling.

## L. Town Meeting on Education

PRESENTER: *Carl T. Hayden*, Chancellor of the New York State Board of Regents

PANELISTS: *John Bateman-Ferry*, President, Disability Solutions

*John Cataldo*, Superintendent, Liverpool Schools

*Carl T. Hayden*, Chancellor of the New York State Board of Regents

*Sister Mary Anne Heenan, CSJ*, Superintendent, Catholic Schools

*Kate McKenna*, President, Syracuse Teachers Association

*Tom Rogers*, Associate Director, N.Y.S. Council of School Superintendents

*Patricia Schmidt*, Assistant Professor, Education Department, Le Moyne College

*Yvonne Young*, Assistant Superintendent, Syracuse City School District

MODERATOR: *Rob Flower*, Le Moyne Values Program

Carl Hayden “set the table” for the meeting by explaining the direction of the Board of Regents. They are trying to recraft education entirely around higher standards. The percentage of students choosing the low-standard route to graduation has grown over time until today over 60 percent of graduates choose the non-Regents course of study. The lower standards will be abolished in the year 2003, when all students must pass at least 5 Regents examinations to graduate. The change will be phased in gradually, beginning with this year’s eleventh graders, who will have to pass the English Regents exam to graduate. The new standards will result in the most rigorous system of education in the country.

The new standards also measure the performance of schools through the school report card. This measures individual school achievement against achievement at similar schools and against statewide averages. These measures result help parents understand the conditions of the schools and enable them to frame the right questions. It identifies problem schools and gives them a period of time to improve — or close. Communities need to be willing to take necessary actions. As an example, when it was revealed that in the Rosewood School District on Long Island thousands of students were enrolled but only four graduated, they removed the entire school board.

The new standards are for students, schools, and teachers as well. But this will be a difficult passage. There are strong feelings regarding the issues of teachers and teaching, issues of tenure, the role of teaching, and collective bargaining. Many people see the abolition of tenure as a quick fix. What is needed is a system

that honors and upgrades the profession and that incorporates substantive ongoing professional development as the norm. To date the Regents have “walked the middle and satisfied none.” Teachers will be tested in three areas; knowledge about the world; pedagogy, including teaching techniques and child development; and content of specific subjects. Teachers will be required to take 175 hours of professional development over five years, more than most other professions require. We also need to look at the curriculum of schools that teach teachers. They have been asked to measure their own progress, but self-assessment has not been enough.

Two major issues will require further task-force study. First is the issue of leadership in education. People no longer seek out the role of superintendent or principal; it’s a “vanishing breed.” The ranks of those qualified to move into leadership positions are thinning and action needs to be taken quickly. The second issue is that of the role of poverty in education. Some people mistakenly see this as an urban issue, but poverty exists in rural areas and creates the same obstacles to learning. We spend millions to remediate problems in children at risk, but we will need to act differently to get a solution to the problem.

Hayden suggested four things citizens could do to make the higher standards real. First, read to children, all children, because the best indicator of success is literacy by the third grade. When children don’t achieve this early goal, remedial dollars often have little effect. Second, reduce distractions to learning. Seventy percent of students know where Bart Simpson lives but only ten percent know where Lincoln lived—even though the city has the same name. The schools succeed best when they build on a foundation established at home. Third, we must be prepared for the consequences of the new standards and make preparations for these consequences. We have been managing concepts until now, but this is when reality hits and we will see if the community will stick by them. Fourth, citizens must serve on school boards, school to work committees, and support education as a funding priority. Elected officials do want to know what we want, but the goals must be clearly articulated and forcefully supported. It is important to understand that children at risk cost more to educate than the children of families with resources who are supported in learning. Fifth, support public education. Meritocracy in the public schools does work and we must not believe that public schooling is a failed enterprise. It is not necessary to find fault with parochial and private schools to support the public schools as a foundation of democracy.

Equity will prove elusive if it is cast in purely monetary terms. We must look at outcomes and demand equivalent learning opportunities. We need to see our self-interest in helping poor and minority kids achieve success. Either they will contribute to the world and generate revenue, or they will take from the world and consume revenue. We must recognize our stake in their success.

Moderator Rob Flower posed questions for the panelists. Beginning with Yvonne Young, he asked if inequity, so prevalent in society, is unjust? She

responded that she has spent 27 years in education and in the early years saw efforts to close the gap. She is now concerned that many of the issues and beliefs have gone around the wrong corner. She now hears the arguments for reverse discrimination used to refute the need for equity.

Asked if we are capable of taking the concepts like poverty seriously enough, John Bateman-Ferry responded that we are taking these issues less and less seriously. We are in danger of cynicism when we forget that there we are more alike in our aspirations than dissimilar when dealing with those who are disabled or disadvantaged.

John Cataldo cautioned that we will be measured by our actions and must consider who will be the casualties from the new standards. We will be using this year's 11<sup>th</sup> graders as the measure of our new success. But "what about those who don't walk across the stage at the end?" he asked. How is a successful education measured? Is it by 173 to 191 hours in class? By some other measure? Standards must be matched by effective delivery and Cataldo worries about cuts to education. Our actions must match our words.

Tom Rogers described the universal standards as "an upward movement of the base level." But while we need a financial mechanism to support the implementation of the new standards, there is significant political resistance to "level up." He asked how does the state propose to support the higher standards while implementing the STAR program? How does the state propose to make up the loss in revenue? To reach the higher standards will take money, and as citizens we must advocate for these dollars.

If we spend dollars as usual, we will have outcomes as usual, Rogers argued. Whether the necessary resources come from federal, state, or local funding streams, we will pay for it one way or another. One third of New York State revenues go to education. We have mandated new programs at the same time we have cut the tax base through STAR. Little wonder there is such cynicism about the seriousness we bring to the new standards.

The Campaign for Fiscal Equity (CFE) and ACLU suits upstate are bringing pressure on elected officials to address these problems and the systemic inequities in education. Carl Hayden agreed that these suits are not unwelcome to the Board of Regents because they bring much to light. But he worries about what will happen if the plaintiffs win, who will frame the remedy? The same people who created the problem, the legislature? We may be disappointed with the outcome. We need to think now about what an equitable formula might be. For example, the STAR program sought to bring tax relief for seniors by shifting the burden to others and planted the seeds of a financial breakdown of the educational system.

In cities like Syracuse, one of the "big five," we face another dilemma. This year the schools received a generous contribution from the state. But these dollars go to the city, not to the city schools, and the city decides where these dollars will go. When we allow the diversion of resources away from the schools, we will suffer the consequences. The challenge to the big five districts is to place responsibility in

the hands of the school board, not the common council. We are losing kids now, and judicial remedy is slow. We need to act quickly.

Kate McKenna agreed and added that through the maintenance of effort bill cities would not be allowed to drop their share of funding when the state raises their share. STAR results in real winners and losers.

Sister Heenan added that parochial schools are also looking for ways to create a sound education for all future citizens. Far from being enemies of the public schools, private schools represent the same ethical and social values that are being discussed in this forum. They differ only in the mechanics of achieving the desired outcome. There is much debate around the privatization movement, charter schools and vouchers. Many feel we cannot have it both ways. Heenan is a proponent of parental choice but agrees that we can affirm choice while disagreeing about the mechanism. Vouchers and tax incentives even the playing field of choice. But choice without good choices is no choice. As parents are given a voice and a choice, there will be an outcome. People vote with their feet.

McKenna asked where will we put our emphasis? On choice between public and private schools, or within the public school system? Each city school must attract on its own. We need to keep neighborhood schools alive as part of the community. Parochial schools do this well. We need to make our neighborhood schools the best they can be. We need to energize our local residents to participate in the debate about who wins, who loses, who decides, and what form does change take.

Patty Schmidt described the best schools as “places where children explore who they are and learn from their strengths.” We need to recognize that in our school materials some children see images of faces like their own, while others do not. Some schools educate parents to help their children learn, others do not. Too often students of color from poor families are taught by white, middle-class women who were not prepared in their own education to teach in cultures unlike their own. Children in these circumstances do not have equal opportunities to learn. Adequacy is about meeting students needs. Parents need to know what a good education is, what is happening in their own schools, and what actions to take to get the quality education they desire for their children.

There are bound to be problems with fairness when standards are raised in schools that are not now doing an adequate job. What will the Regents do to equalize opportunity while raising standards? Equity has more than one focal point. In truth, we are already too adept at achieving a minimum standard. To face a global economy we need to reach a much higher uniform standard than we are now ready to settle for, and to make the resources available to reach this level. We need equivalent learning opportunities that meet the respective needs of all of our students.





## Chapter 3: Recommendations

Our capacity—as a community, a region, and a nation—to successfully meet the challenges of the future world economy will depend on our ability to develop a highly skilled and adaptable workforce. The capacity of individuals to successfully meet the challenges of the future will require them to develop reasoning, creativity, and the ability to build and manage human relationships with people unlike themselves. To prepare students for the future we must be willing to challenge the assumptions about education we once accepted and embraced.

Throughout this study common themes emerged. The themes assisted in the development of three categories of specific recommendations: for community involvement, for the improvement of teaching, and for the improvement of student learning.

### A. Recommendations for Community Involvement

1. *Educate the public about the inequities that exist among schools in Central New York with a widespread and intensive media campaign.* The community needs to realize that our children are not getting an equal education and, therefore, do not have equal opportunities in their futures. There are significant differences in technology, materials, resources, class sizes, school buildings, and teacher salaries among school districts. Discussions of minimum standards and benchmarks for success should be part of the public debate. The recent NYS-CLU case should be followed closely.
2. *Change community thinking about children from “let’s take care of my children” to “let’s take care of all our children.”* As a society we cannot afford the perpetuation of a system that insufficiently prepares children for success. Our children are arguably our most important national resource. Under the current system we under-utilize and retard the development of this resource. All children must be given an education that meets their needs and empowers them to live productive lives as adults. Without an investment on the “front-end” in education, we will experience the “rear-end” costs in prisons and other non-productive social services.
3. *Recognize the essential importance of funding in providing a quality education and commit to investing in quality education for all students.* While it is frequently said that money alone does not create a quality education, it is nevertheless true that money is an essential component in building a quality

educational environment. Adequate funding is essential to hire good teachers, create and maintain safe and healthful school buildings, provide the tools necessary for special learning, and to keep up with the pace of technological change. Funding needs to be apportioned to meet the needs of students. Relative amounts of state and local funding should be examined to reduce inequities and control for wide disparities among districts.

4. *We need to build the capacity of schools to serve as public resources for children, families, and neighborhoods and to integrate the schools with the community.* The schools are a child's primary experience of the world outside the family. Frequently, the schools are also the center for family involvement with public institutions. It has become commonplace across all socioeconomic levels to find that both parents work outside the home, and the number of single-parent families is increasing. In light of these realities, the African proverb, "it takes a village to raise a child," certainly rings true. We should explore more community programs, after-care programs, conflict resolution, and social and athletic programs to fully utilize community resources.
5. *Families need to be assisted and empowered to become allies in learning for their children.* Families and other community members should be welcomed in schools to share their time and talents in a variety of capacities: reading to and tutoring children, consulting with teachers about curriculum, participating in staff development, planning and sharing in school programs. The unequal power relationships that have traditionally existed between teachers and families need to be reconstructed as partnerships to benefit children. Administrators and public officials can sponsor legislative initiatives and regulations to articulate concrete methods for realizing this recommendation. There are suggestions within this report which can significantly increase family involvement in education.
6. *Develop partnerships with business and education to prepare our children for the world of work.* Students in early elementary grades are not too young to begin learning about the work world. Talking with people in various occupations and visiting local businesses will spark student ideas about the future. As students advance, they can benefit from internships and mentoring opportunities in local businesses. School-to-career applied learning opportunities and high-quality internships give students a clearer vision of the breadth of occupations that can be available to them. Students enrolled in these programs also gain insight into what it means to be job-ready and the rewards of meaningful work. Companies, lobbying groups, and foundations concerned with our community well being can lend their support to this effort by underwriting and sponsoring new initiatives.
7. *Formulate goals that clearly articulate a vision for education and communicate this to those with the power to create change.* Members of the community need to become active in the public debate about education. They need to capture the attention of state and local officials and demand action in

favor of our children's education and to hold them accountable for achieving these goals. Within our community, FOCUS and other groups have contributed greatly to this endeavor. All participants should support and encourage this effort.

## B. Recommendations for the Improvement of Teaching

8. *The ability to meet student needs should be the primary measure of teacher effectiveness.* The student / teacher relationship is essentially important and should be given the highest priority.
9. *Prepare educators with culturally relevant pedagogy.* Teachers need to be trained to prepare children for participation in a global economy where diverse perspectives are essential components in the problem-solving process. Each year, the classrooms in Central New York become more diverse. Through the use of culturally relevant materials and learning activities teachers help students gain understanding and appreciation for cultural differences that will equip them for the workplace of the future.
10. *Prepare educators with the skills to reach out and communicate effectively with families, and to create a welcoming atmosphere in classrooms and schools.* Family members are the child's first teachers, so educators must value each child's background and home knowledge. When teachers connect home and school experience for students they create relevant learning experiences.
11. *Invest in teachers, hold high standards for their performance and recognize excellence.* Administrators need to reinforce teacher improvement, by following teachers who have participated in professional development courses and workshops. They may discuss, observe, record, and praise positive changes in classroom environment, student behaviors and achievements, and teaching strategies.
12. *Improve the tenure system.* The tenure system protects good teachers from possible injustice. However, the tenure system should not only ensure due process, but also hold teachers accountable and help teachers with problems learn to change and grow.

## C. Recommendations for the Improvement of Student Learning

13. *All students need high expectations and everyone involved in education must believe that success for every student is achievable.* The school and community must not only set high standards for children, but also provide the resources necessary to reach those standards. Families, teachers, school board members, administrators, legislators and all other community members bear the responsibility for improving student learning.
14. *All students need to be given opportunities to learn in ways that build on their natural strengths.* The new question to ask is not, “how smart are you?” but “how are you smart?”
15. *All students need a consistent emphasis on the universal values of caring, sharing, respect, hard work, and responsibility.* Schools need to model good character and integrate character education across the curriculum at all grade levels.
16. *Learning activities that incorporate active involvement should be part of every student’s education.* Inquiry learning, reading and reasoning, teamwork, technological proficiency, and creativity should be key components in the teaching / learning process.

# Appendix 1: Further Reading

This list was compiled by Dr. Patricia Schmidt, co-chair of the 1998 study, as a resource for readers who wish to have more information about a specific topic. Entries are arranged by topic.

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## Appendix 2: Previous OCL Studies

- 1979 Equality and Fairness in Property Assessment
- 1980 Young People in Trouble: Can Our Services be Organized and Delivered More Effectively?
- 1981 The County Legislature: Its Function Size and Structure
- 1982 Declining School Enrollments: Opportunities for Cooperative Adaptations
- 1983 Onondaga County Public Works Infrastructure: Status, Funding and Responsibilities
- 1984 Police Services in Onondaga County: A Review and Recommendations
- 1985 The City and County Charters: Time for Revision?
- 1987 Blueprints for the Future: Recommendations for the Year 2000
- 1988 The Role of the Food Industry in the Economy of Onondaga County
- 1989 Poverty and its Social Costs: Are There Long-term Solutions
- 1990 Syracuse Area Workforce of the Future: How Do We Prepare
- 1991 Schools that Work: Models in Education that Can be Used in Onondaga County
- 1992 Town and Village Governments: Opportunities for Cost-effective Changes
- 1993 The Criminal Justice System in Onondaga County: How Well is it Working
- 1994 The Delivery of Human Services: Opportunities for Improvement
- 1995 Reinvesting in the Community: Opportunities for Economic Development
- 1996 Building a Non-Violent Community: Successful Strategies for Youth
- 1997 Security Check: Public Perceptions of Safety and Security