

How to Fix Our Education System

The foundational premise of our schools is to educate our children. A noble goal by all measurements only to be thwarted by those with a socialist agenda. The goal was hijacked and instead we created a secure career path for teachers and funded teacher unions with billions of dollars. Their objective was to stealthily develop social indoctrinators posing as teachers. Over the last four to five decades the abysmal failure of achieving the original educational goal was obvious. Seeing the problem but not accepting the cause of the failure, our country's historical solution was to simply throw money at the problem, at the persuasion of the social indoctrinators. Clearly that solution has not worked.

History

Early education was a hodgepodge of methods: Church-supported schools, tuition schools by traveling schoolmasters, charity schools for the poor, "Dame schools" run by women in their homes, work apprenticeships with rudimentary reading, writing and arithmetic. At the time of the American Revolution there was no formal system for education. Most schools were paid for by parents, charities, property taxes, fuel taxes and in some cases the towns and cities in the Northeast. ¹

Thomas Jefferson submitted a bill in 1817 to establish a system of public education. The Founding fathers thought it was necessary to the country's future to have the citizenry literate and educated. The curriculum was to include reading, writing, numeral arithmetic and the elements of geography. Each school was to expect a Visitor at least once a year to examine the progress of the pupils and evaluate the proceedings and practices of the school. The bill provided funding for both teachers and facilities. (The bill also addressed colleges and universities, a subject for another time.) ²

In the 1830s there was a movement to create a public "common" school system. The schools would be free and paid for by the state. Common school advocates emphasized the knowledge, civic, and economic benefits of public schooling. Common schools would teach the "three R's" (reading, writing, arithmetic), along with other subjects such as history, geography, grammar, and rhetoric. A strong dose of moral instruction would also be provided to instill civic virtues. Educating children of the poor and middle classes would prepare them to obtain good jobs, proponents argued, and thereby strengthen the nation's economic position. In addition to preparing students for citizenship and work, education was seen by some reformers as a means for people to achieve happiness and fulfillment.

Advocates saw universal education as a means to eliminate poverty, crime, and other social problems. Some early leaders argued that the costs of properly educating children in public schools would be far less than the expenses of punishing and jailing criminals and coping with problems stemming from poverty. ¹

As a country we affirmed our commitment to educating our citizens with the Brown vs. Board of Education in 1954, and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. These rulings and laws were to ensure minorities, the poor, the disabled and girls received a proper education so that they would be productive in society.

Since the Constitution does not address education governance the responsibility therefore belongs to the states. They are responsible for education, attendance, teacher certification, testing and graduation. The federal government has no authority in education, but does influence the education system – most notably by bribery.

Today

The United States is first in money expended per student but, ranks a shameful 25th in the world in for educational quality. So, money is obviously not the solution. Teachers are not necessarily the problem. Teachers were underpaid professionals in the 40s, 50, 60s and the student performance then far exceeds today's graduates. Students graduate from high school today with limited abilities to read and comprehend the material, cannot write a coherent essay or do fundamental math problems. This decline started in the 70s. I know. I hired many people in the last fifty years and experienced the void in basic educational skills. My associate, on the other hand. was part of an experimental grammar and spelling curriculum. It was designed to afford a simpler approach to minorities. Today he lacks basic phonetic skillsets and is forever in debt to Bill Gates spell check.

Some of the problem is the pushing of curriculum that is too advanced for the majority of students. Or too boring for some. What is the need to teach algebra in middle school? Especially to every student. How about reading tomes from English writers of centuries past? Maybe the majority would be better off reading stories by current authors. It would probably improve their comprehension as the material would be more relevant than Shakespeare. The focus should be to educate the mainstream students to function in society when they leave school, even while in school.

School is expensive, education is tough. Talk to any home schooling parents. But why have they been successful? They teach to the student so that they learn. Grant that they have the luxury of focused time on one or two students.

Charter schools, for the great majority, are getting it right. The student body in the inner-city charter school are primarily black or Hispanic from poorer neighborhoods. There is evidence that some inner-city charter schools are outpacing the public schools in predominately wealthy and white communities. Most charter school graduates go onto college. What are they doing right? Most of the charter school naysayers are voices from teacher unions. Why? Because the unions cannot control the educational curriculum in the charters. The unions also cannot force

their social engineering agenda, which is stymying students to be literate in the 3Rs. The student outcome failure due to agenda versus curriculum.

Some states are abandoning the Advanced Programs as they are deemed racist or demeaning to students who are not able to comprehend the material. So, they punish the gifted students? Proof that the teacher unions and school boards are not out to generate quality graduates, but to create “socialized” graduates.

Federal funding in school districts comprises about ten percent of the budget. It may be more or less depending on the state. Schools are funded by the Local School Tax. Therefore, wealthier communities can generate more revenue for the local schools. But schools are like junkies looking for that ten percent and their backbone will bend in all directions to get that money.

Thomas Sowell, an economist and scholar, writes,

The educational success of these charter schools undermines theories of genetic determination, claims of cultural bias in the tests, assertions that racial “integration” is necessary for blacks to reach educational parity, and presumptions that income differences are among the “root causes” of educational differences.

Charter schools threaten the status quo. But that is what is needed to instigate change for improvement. The country needs to overhaul how we teach our children to function in society and improve our scholastic outcomes. We need to think outside the box to achieve greatness without increasing the costs to the taxpayer.

Recommended Action

We present the following as a platform to make a difference. It requires new thinking based on old methods. Remember the objective is to have every student graduate with a meaningful education that permits them to achieve employment or further their education upon graduating high school. Any other goal is a waste of time, money and human resources. Every student should walk out of high school with a fundamental education in one pocket and the ability to reason in the other.

Federal Government:

Collect Funds to Pay for a child’s education from kindergarten through twelfth grade.

Implement a tax on all wage earners and corporations that will be distributed to the states for every student enrolled in elementary and secondary schools.

Define an educational federal curriculum that provides:

Student can read and comprehend the material on grade 8 and 12 level to graduate.

Students read books of interest and current authors. Forget Shakespeare in this curriculum.

Student can do basic mathematics – add, subtract, multiply, divide, fractions and percentage by grade eight. By grade 12 algebra and geometry and balance a check book.

Student can write an essay and write an introduction letter to an employer or college.

American History from the Revolution to current.

Civics – concentrating on the Declaration of Independence, Constitution, Bill of Rights, Federalist and anti-federalist Papers, government structure.

Geography – USA, Western Hemisphere, Asia, Middle East, Africa, Europe. Countries, customs, Religions, natural resources.

Secondary Vocational training that supplies core competency in the building, construction, mechanical, culinary or domestic trades.

That's it – no more.

No federal money for any other studies, sports, drama clubs, newspapers, music, chess club, computer clubs, etc.

No federal money for buildings, maintenance, lunches that are not associated with core academic education or vocational training.

State and Local Level:

Reduce or eliminate Property taxes for basic elementary and secondary education and associated buildings, maintenance and schools lunches.

State and local taxing authorities need to consider senior citizens and people without children in schools in their tax algorithms. Every household in the community needs to contribute to the community based on the usage of the facilities.

Consider invoicing families directly for particular programs – sports, music.

Tax constituents to provide advanced academic programs.

Tax constituents to provide extracurricular activities such as sports programs, drama club, music, newspaper, chess, debate and computer clubs.

States and or local cities or towns must provide advance academic programs or vocational training that augments basic education.

Student can avail himself of advanced academic studies to satisfy their own educational goals:

Calculus, English literature, advanced writing, chemistry, physics, accounting, alternate language, video or digital arts, computer programming, word processing and spreadsheets.

Student can avail themselves to vocational or technical training related to skills for the job market:

Woodworking, welding, electronics, horticulture, auto repair, electrical wiring, baking, cooking, sewing.

A student must take at least one academic or vocational course along with the basic education to graduate from grade 12.

Special Needs:

There are students that will need special attention or aids based on physical or mental handicaps or challenges. This would include both teacher and physical environment accommodations.

Funding that is in excess of standard provisioning should be shared equally between federal, state and local governments.

Religion:

The federal government is not to use tax dollars to fund any activity or education that fosters a particular religion.

Federal funding will not be withheld if a school provides religious education as part of their advanced academic curriculum.

State and local schools should not use taxpayer funds to provide religious education.

State and local schools should not prohibit use of school facilities to provide religious education, if the local taxpayers approve of such use.

Financing and Distribution of Funds.

The Federal Government has no Constitutional authority over education, but it can be an influencer by collecting the funds on behalf of the students and school systems. The School Tax collected by the Federal Government are to be allocated to the taxpayer or taxpayer's dependent to spend on the education and school of their choice. No actual dollars are issued to the taxpayer, but a script. This script is redeemed by the school in behalf of the student. The script will be issued each year for the dependent listed on the parent's or guardian's annual tax return.

The IRS will provide the Department of Education a list of the taxpayers dependents ages, current grade level by state and local school districts. They will provide the total revenue collected via the Education taxes levied on taxpayers and corporations and partnerships.

The student voucher or script will be determined based on the revenue amount collected divided by the number of school enrollments. All students will receive the same education voucher or script amount based on the cost-of-living standard for the locale.

Once a student attains the age of 19 years, they will not receive a K-12 voucher script for school.

Each school will report to their state the number of students enrolled by grade.

The federal government will provide the state the revenue share by school district.

The states are responsible for managing the education program and funding allocation to ascertain that all students are being provided the basic education and the schools are being reimbursed properly for the voucher scripts.

School Days or Hours.

The state is to regulate the attendance requirements in terms of hours needed to be accredited and for scheduling classes and class size. Hours in school does not determine federal funding, only performance of graduates.

Schools can become ineligible for redeeming federal vouchers or scripts if graduating stats are less than 95%. The graduation eligibility will be based on test results at grade 6, 8, 10 and 12.

Teachers.

Certification of teachers is the responsibility of the state.

How do we fund the Common Education?

Consider the following U.S. Revenue statistics for 2019-20.

Gross National Product of corporations	\$21.6T
Gross Income	\$21.0T
Total Expenditure for Public and Secondary Education	\$762B
Tax on GNP of ½%	\$1.06B
Tax on Gross Income of 1/8%	\$0.26B
Education Tax Revenue	\$1.32B

Total expenditures included \$13,118 per pupil in current expenditures, which include salaries, employee benefits, purchased services, tuition, supplies, and other expenditures. Total expenditures per pupil also included \$1,376 in capital outlay (expenditures for property and for buildings and alterations completed by school district staff or contractors) and \$397 for interest on school debt.

Federal Department of Education (DOEd)

The role of the DOEd is to act as the revenue collector from the IRS who has levied the Education Tax on Income Earners and Corporations.

The DOEd will collect enrollment data from the states for all public elementary and secondary schools. The data collected is the student enrollment, by grade level, indicating any advance or vocational courses being taken in addition to the Basic or Common courses.

The DOEd will collect graduation statistics on the eighth and twelfth grades.

The DOEd will collect the administration (non-teaching positions essential to manage the school), infrastructure and or maintenance costs, teachers salaries. Teacher salaries for standard curriculum, advanced programs, vocational and non-education roles are to be kept separate.

The DOEd will dispense the Education Tax funds to the state indicating the student by name, SSN, school enrolled and the education benefit voucher amount.

The DOEd will issue a statement to the students guardian(s) as to the school enrolled and the amount of the education benefit voucher.

The DOEd will each summer convene a task force of 12 teachers for the elementary and 12 teachers for the secondary schools to review and adjust the basic education curriculum. The pool of teachers is to change every year. A teacher, likewise a state, can be on the task force only once every four years. The 12 teachers should represent a different state each cycle. The goal is to keep the curriculum current and give a teacher enough time to prepare their syllabus for the coming year.

The DOEd will on an annual basis review each state and school's performance as to testing scores, graduation outcomes and funding usage. This information will be used to determine school performance and eligibility for inclusion of future revenue allocation. Voucher redemption will not be honored for a student at a poor performing school. Child will have to transfer to an acceptable school.

The DOEd each year will determine if there are excess funds at a state. If the state has Expenditure money remaining, they are to return the amount to the Treasury. If the Education Fund Tax has an excess that exceeds ten percent of the Expenditure Costs, then they will advise that the Education Tax Rate be reduced for the next cycle. Education Tax Funds are not to be used or put in the General Fund.

State Department of Education.

The State DOE is to collect and report to the Federal DOEd student enrollment, test scores, graduation statistics, administration and teacher salaries.

The State DOE is to collect and report to the Federal DOEd infrastructure and maintenance costs of each school.

The State DOE will redeem the student vouchers, submitted by the school and transfer the voucher education benefit amount to the school.

The State DOE is responsible for teacher certification, evaluating a teacher's syllabus, and adherence to standards.

The State DOE is responsible for the Advance Academic Programs curriculum, sports, drama, chess, computer clubs and associated costs and personnel certifications or qualifications.

The State DOE is responsible that each school provides an Advanced Academic Program in elementary and secondary schools and Vocational training in secondary schools.

The State DOE is to monitor the redemption of the vouchers as a student may change schools before or during the year. The DOE will reconcile the funds between the schools involved.

SUMMARY

The goal is to generate high school graduates with the ability to move forward to a community college or university without having to waste money on remedial courses; or be able to enroll in a trade school and become at the very least a journeyman and earn a paycheck.

The federal government is not to be involved with the teachers, teacher methods, or teacher compensation. Graduate outcomes and proper use of funding are the only federal concerns.

The federal government is not to get involved with the school administration, unless there is criminal or seditious activity.

The federal government is not to get involved with the definition of advanced academic programs or vocational training courses.

The federal government will define and measure the standard basic education outcomes.

The federal government oversight will also include that a student graduation requires at least one of the academic or vocational courses, in addition to the basic education.

The federal government involvement with school administration is to dispense the funds to the states, evaluate testing scores and graduation rates.

The federal government is a partner with the states and local schools in regards to infrastructure construction, improvements and maintenance of such, only for the elementary and secondary academic and vocational education.

The federal government will define minimum basic education requirements to graduate from eighth grade and twelfth grade. The basic education requirements are to be developed by teachers, not unions, for each grade to achieve the goals outlined to have proud and eligible graduates.

School curriculums or a teachers syllabus are not to be part of any teacher union contract.

TwoSmartFarts.com

¹ Source: Center on Education Policy

² National Archive

