

ALL CHILDREN LEFT BEHIND?

HOW FEDERAL EDUCATION
REFORM DRAMATICALLY ALTERS
THE PURPOSE AND CONTENT
OF PRESCHOOL TO HIGHER
EDUCATION AND BEYOND. . .

The following is to increase public awareness about federal systemic school reform and the impact on all our lives and future generations.

Information researched and compiled
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*(This is a work in progress. Comments welcome.
An expanded published version will be
forthcoming in later 2004.)*

ALL CHILDREN LEFT BEHIND?

"In a slave state, vocational training may be education enough.

For the education of free men, much more is required."

—William Pearson Tolley, Chancellor of Syracuse University; 1943

U.S. education is being transformed in purpose and content—propelled by federal laws such as the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (a reauthorization of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act*), *Goals 2000: Educate America Act of 1994*, and *Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Act Amendments*. This massive undertaking is commonly called School-to-Work (STW) or School-to-Careers (aka workforce training or human resource development).

While the *School-to-Work Opportunities Act* (STWOA) sunset on October 1, 2001 and the "seed money" vanished, the goals remain. As stated in the law, STWOA funds would serve "as venture capital, to underwrite the initial costs of planning and establishing statewide School-to-Work Opportunities systems that will be maintained with other Federal, State, and local resources." [Emphasis added].

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WHAT IS SYSTEMIC FEDERAL EDUCATION REFORM?

The following excerpts from a National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) report identify school restructuring components and indicate the intense focus on creating a workforce training system versus education. (Note: There has been no meaningful public debate and approval for the following demands to dramatically change all levels of education.)

■ *“Framework for the Future: Creating a School-to-Work System for Learning, Livelihood, and Life,”* Report of the NASBE School-to-Work Study Group, 1995.

...This report not only calls for a significant change in how and what we teach students...it underscores the pivotal role that state boards of education must play in promoting, designing, and implementing state school-to-work systems. This role requires state boards to 1) exercise strong leadership... and 2) examine the implications of a strong school-to-work system across a wide range of policy issues. School-to-work is a system, not a program. **It cannot be viewed in isolation from the broad blueprint of the state education policy framework.** [Emphasis added] (p. 3)

...The development and implementation of the school-to-work framework will result in the first major shift in the framework of our public education system since its inception ... (p. 4)

...It will require dramatic changes in curriculum design and instructional strategies and in the professional development of teachers and counselors. ...[including] new approaches to teaching and learning that impact all areas of K-12 and post-secondary education. (p. 5)

II. State boards of education must ensure that school-to-work systems are integrated into state education reforms to create a new education framework...

(1) State boards must ensure that the elements of school-to-work are integrated into state education reform plans, including those for Goals 2000 and the new Title I.

(2) State boards must ensure that SCANS and other work-related skills areas are incorporated into state performance standards, curricular frameworks and assessments, as well as the state accountability system. (p. 5)

Redefining Basic Skills—In 1990-91 the U.S. Department of Labor Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS)... identified what it termed the “workplace know-how” of “competencies” and “foundation skills” that workers in the high-performance workplace need

SCANS commissioners intended that states and school districts, ... could use this information to ensure that these skills were imbedded in curricula and integrated into performance standards and assessments. ...[involving all] American education, including colleges. (p. 10)

Redefining Vocational Education — ... The Carl D.Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Act (Perkins) amendments of 1990 called for the integration of academic and vocational instruction and emphasized ... applied learning. ... (p. 10-11)

1994: A New Education Framework: For All Students

In 1994, three federal initiatives were passed that sought to consolidate these discreet efforts, ...and address the issues in a comprehensive way. The **Goals 2000: Educate America Act, Improving America's Schools Act** (reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act), and the **School-To-Work Opportunities Act**, taken together, offered a blueprint for the creation of a new education paradigm. ...the creation of a system of standards-based academic education and skills-based preparation for all students. (p. 11-12)

...School-to-work should eventually involve every student at every level of education from elementary classrooms to university lecture halls. ... In addition, the Act identifies the basic program elements of the system and new types of partnerships—at the state and local levels. ...

...the School-To-Work Opportunities Act involves the commitment of federal venture capital to “jump start” the process of change and serve as an incentive to states. This occurs through 1) development grants, distributed to all states on a formula basis through the Perkins and JTPA federal appropriations, and 2) implementation grants, which are awarded on a competitive basis to those states where plans are well-developed and ready for implementation. To date, 27 states have received such grants that are renewable annually for five years or for as long as the School-To-Work Opportunities Act is funded. (p. 12)

...While federal legislation and initiatives have provided a vision and venture capital for local school-to-work systems, it is up to states to design and implement a system While the individual systems are likely to look somewhat different, their success will

Basic Programmatic Requirements for a School-to-Work System

Work-Based Learning

- Job Training
- Work Experience (Paid or Non-Paid)
- Workplace Mentoring
- Instruction in Workplace Competencies
- Instruction in All Aspects of an Industry or Business

School-Based Learning

- Career Counseling (not later than 7th grade)
- Selection of a Career Major
- Program of Study (based on high standards)
- Integration of Academics & Vocational Education
- Evaluation
- Secondary/Postsecondary Articulation

Connecting Activities

- Matching Students with Employers
- Establishing Liaisons between Education & Work
- Technical Assistance to Schools, Students & Employers
- Assistance to Integrate School-based & Work-based Learning
- Encourage Participation of Employers
- Job Placement, Continuing Ed. or Further Training Assistance
- Collection & Analysis of Post-program Outcomes of Participants
- Linkages with Youth Develop Activities & Industry

Source: *Framework for the Future: Creating a School-to-Work System for Learning, Livelihood, and Life*, 1995.