

SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY AND THE PROFESSIONALIZATION OF TEACHING

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Two conflicting trends have emerged in American education. On one hand we witness a considerable expansion of statewide controls of education including new statewide accountability schemes. On the other, there is a resurgence of interest in the professionalization of teaching. These trends are conflicting—at least for the moment—because state accountability has tended to bureaucratize education and not pay sufficient attention to its impact on the professional dimension of teaching. This is the theme of this article.

There has been much discussion of educational accountability since the sixties and seventies (Lennon, 1971; Lessinger, 1970; Lessinger and Tyler, 1971; McDonald and Forehand, 1973). Several authors have discussed problems and limitations of accountability (Bacon, 1978; Barro, 1970; Browdy, 1977; Duncan, 1971; Guthrie, 1979; Olmsted, 1972; Ornstein and Talmage, 1973; Spencer and Wiley, 1981). This article focuses on the impact of state accountability schemes on the professional role of teachers including statewide minimum proficiency tests for teachers and the widespread use of school wide assessment testing programs based on standardized testing.

I am quite convinced that statewide accountability is here to stay. It is not possible to imagine that state legislatures can assume an increasing share of the financial burden of public education without also requiring some control of what happens in the schools. But the issue is to design state accountability schemes that enhance the ability of teachers to perform their task effectively and efficiently.

American experience with statewide accountability is, in many ways, quite unique. American education is in the process of centralizing. This is happening rather rapidly, in a matter of a decade or two. In this process certain controls are being used because they are available and

they seem to protect some of the autonomy that American school districts have enjoyed historically. American education is using standardized testing to provide a method of controlling the schools because standardized testing allows the central authority—the State Educational Departments—to appear not to meddle with the detailed curriculum offered by independent districts. One of my purposes in this article is to show that standardized testing has high costs, that it affects the way teachers and schools are perceived, it affects the prestige of the profession, and it is not a long-term solution for state accountability in American education.

Other education systems, particularly those of western Europe, do not use standardized testing the way we do. They use standardized testing for what it was intended for in the first place: as a diagnostic and predictive instrument to determine the potential and weaknesses of individual pupils. Generally, they do not use standardized testing to control the schools. They do not use school incentive schemes designed to reward schools that show increased scores on standardized tests.

There are several reasons for these differences between Europe and the United States. European systems, particularly on the continent, have been centralized for a much longer historical time. Ministries of education have accepted the political responsibilities that are inevitably associated with centralized financing. One reason most of these systems do not use standardized tests for state accountability is that standardized testing removes too much responsibility for the curriculum away from the central authority. European educational systems still use examinations based in part on essay-type questions and problems. These examinations are closely aligned to the curriculum. They set a minimum standard to define who passes and who fails. Choosing the standard allows the examination designers to determine what knowledge is important. It also allows them to relate the level of difficulty with desirable targets of passes and failures. Thus they are able to build incentives for students and teachers in the design of the examinations. They are also able to set targets for improvements and use the examinations to increase expectations.

In Europe these examinations and curricular decisions are generally made by a professional corps of elite teachers familiar with school reality who have considerably more prestige and autonomy than American educators. One reason they have more prestige has to do with their role in setting these examinations. European teachers and educators have kept for their profession the responsibility for making

curricular decisions. We will come back to these issues later, but one important argument in this article is that state accountability schemes that tie incentives to increased school test scores inevitably remove some curricular responsibility from local schools and districts and place it in the hands of the designers of these tests.

Good teaching depends on good teachers. Today there is considerable awareness in the United States that teaching has become a less attractive profession than it used to be. There are the problems of salaries, the difficulty of attracting talented young men and women who find better employment opportunities elsewhere, and there are problems associated with the absence of a career structure within the profession. There are the problems associated with the bureaucratization of education. We know that teachers face a difficult task, that many teachers are demoralized, and that the public is concerned about the quality of education. Yet teaching is an exciting enterprise, and it could become an exciting enterprise for many more talented people who now seek employment in business or elsewhere in government.

Improving the professionalization of teaching is directly tied to increasing the flow of capable young people into education. This article reflects thinking emerging from an ongoing School of Education research program at the University of California, Berkeley. This program is centered on discussing practical ways of increasing the professionalization of teaching. We have been interviewing teachers in local school districts to obtain a better perception of the factors that hinder their ability to play a more professional role. In our research, we are concerned with issues of discretion, peer review, better training, the ability teachers have to govern the affairs of their profession, and issues of professional prestige and ethos. These explorations have revealed the importance of teachers' professional status. Let us explore how current ideas about statewide accountability affect the status of the profession.

STATUS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Status derives from perceptions. Certain professions are perceived to be more desirable than others. The perceived societal importance of the work, the complexity and difficulty of the task, the specialized knowledge needed are all important dimensions of professional status. Salaries come into the picture together with the existence of opportu-

nities for advancement within the profession. The level of discretion and responsibility given to professionals makes some professions more attractive than others. The way professionals are selected, the way they are credentialed and allowed to practice also affect the status they have. The apparent overall success or failure achieved by various professions affect their status.

State accountability systems can affect the status of the teaching profession in several ways:

- by increasing or decreasing the professional responsibilities and discretion given to teachers;
- by making more or less visible the special knowledge and experience needed to become a teacher;
- by providing new opportunities for teachers to play significant roles in establishing and reviewing state curriculum, setting state standards for pupil achievement, and setting professional standards for themselves;
- by providing output measures of educational achievement that enhance or embarrass the profession; and
- by setting new role opportunities tied to career paths that enhance the attractiveness of the profession.

Good accountability design has to depart from a concern with the status of the profession and with an interest in increasing opportunities for the professionalization of teaching. We have to ask ourselves what we expect from teachers, why education is a profession, and how accountability can enhance the profession.

TEACHING AS A PROFESSION

Is teaching a profession? Much has been written on the subject (Cox and Elmore, 1976; Dorros, 1968; Lam, 1982; Lortie, 1975; McPeak and Sanders, 1974; Stinnett, 1968). Depending on the criteria used, teaching tends to be ranked as a semiprofession (Etzioni, 1969; Goode, 1969). Teaching is usually ranked as a semiprofession because teachers do not administer their own activities, do not evaluate their peers, and there is not much training required for practice. It is also interesting to note that teaching became increasingly bureaucratized and routinized at a time when the task of teaching was becoming more difficult. In the sixties and seventies, the needs of students became more diversified, new programs

to reach ethnic, linguistic, and disabled minorities added complexity to the student population. The politics of education became more participatory making the needs of many sectors of the population more visible. Moreover, our understanding of teaching evolved and now points to the need for adaptability. Pupils vary considerably among themselves—even within homogeneous age cohorts of similar social classes and ethnic groups. The “good” teachers are those who know how to adapt their teaching techniques to meet the learning variety present in their pupils. We have therefore become aware that good teaching requires considerable discretion. This implies that teachers should become better professionals, in the sense they should be trained, have more knowledge, and, in time, be given far more discretion than they now have.

In contrast, bureaucratization and routinization depend on curtailing discretion. In education, it means using controls that ensure that even the poorest teachers will perform adequately. The notion of a “teacher-proof” curriculum suggests the use of teaching materials combined with detailed instructions to allow even the most poorly trained and poorly prepared teacher to manage.

Given a state of comparative economic scarcity, it is not surprising to discover a trend toward the deprofessionalization of teaching. I believe it to be the wrong strategy but it can be argued that with the right mix of technology and teaching materials, batches of pupils can be routinely processed by relatively inexperienced and poorly prepared teachers. The bureaucratization of teaching may reflect or contribute to the low level of salaries for teachers. In any case, deprofessionalized teaching depends on controls to maintain quality.

A vicious circle is engendered: Poorly trained teachers, who are not knowledgeable, need to be controlled. Controls are established. But these tend to hamper good teaching. Teaching becomes less attractive and fewer talented individuals move into teaching. As teaching attracts less good talent, the need for routinization increases.

Accountability schemes can be designed for mediocre and bad teachers, and they can be designed to encourage good teachers. If one assumes that all teachers are ill-prepared and incapable of making wise choices, one attempts to limit their discretion. Controls are intended to cope with their weaknesses. Controls, however, mean that good teachers are hampered and are treated as if they were not better than the bad ones. Moreover, as just mentioned, we now understand the learning process to be too complex for routines. Therefore, routines, however well intentioned, do not even help bad teachers. The more serious issue

is that all these controls and routines divert attention from the more fundamental issues. What is needed is better prepared, more competent, and more self-confident teachers. The vicious circle has to be broken.

Teachers are aware of the problem. When we interview and ask them if teaching is a profession they do not simply say yes. They say yes—but. They are aware that their work is not entirely professional. Many decisions in their task environment are made in a bureaucratic context. They do agree that teaching should be more professional but they are not always sure what that means. They seem unsure about what their roles might become. For example, they do not readily understand that peer evaluation is an important dimension of any profession. Many teachers have accommodated the notion that administrators select and evaluate teachers. They are reluctant to think too much about a new kind of teacher responsibility for evaluating themselves. Similarly, if you ask them whether good teachers should have more discretion than bad teachers, they are not too sure about such differences. They sense the problems associated with having to decide and differentiate who is a good or a bad teacher. They realize the potential for internal stress among themselves if they have to make these decisions. In contrast, they feel more strongly about other issues. They feel strongly about teacher certification practices. They believe that state controls do not enhance the professional status of teachers and they feel strongly that teachers should have a strong role in the certification process. They also feel they should have a greater role in enforcing standards of the profession. They agree that there should be more opportunities for career advancement and more opportunities for teachers to work with other teachers, to attend workshops, and to share professional knowledge.

Teachers have come to accept some of the advantages of bureaucratization. They realize that increased professionalization also means increased responsibilities. They perceive the convenience of keeping everyone equal, in not having to decide who is really doing well and who is not, in having administrators decide who should be promoted or who should be assigned elsewhere. Teachers have adapted to their environment and have begun to behave as members of a very weak profession. The vicious cycle feeds on itself and does not provide easy remedies.

This is why the design of state accountability schemes is so important. Accountability can enhance or deter the professionalization of teaching. Given a situation where teachers vacillate and respond to external pressures—it is worth examining how and when accountability makes a difference.

Cox and Elmore suggest that the basic difficulties that teachers have in attempting to arrive at full professional status center on four variables: (1) the need for a systematic theory or knowledge base, (2) community sanction, (3) authority, and (4) a code of ethics (Cox and Elmore, 1976: 245).

Our concern here is with the first three variables. We will examine the impact of minimum proficiency examinations, the need for a career ladder within the profession, the impact of standardized testing, the need for parsimony in controlling teachers, and the possibility of greater participation of teachers in managing public education.

MINIMUM TEACHER PROFICIENCY EXAMINATIONS

What kind of accountability measures enhance the public's awareness of the knowledge base teachers use? When states establish minimum teacher proficiency examinations to eliminate those who can hardly read, write, or count, these states also reduce the professional status of all teachers. This does not mean that teachers who cannot properly read, write, or count should be allowed to teach. It means that a test that can be passed by any talented ninth grader or by the educated among the lay public does not differentiate the special knowledge teachers use.

Status is acquired when roles are differentiated. If teachers had to pass the equivalent of a law bar examination or even the equivalent of the examinations required of real estate agents, they would begin to acquire more status. A specialized knowledge base implies knowledge that differentiates the profession from the rest of the population. It implies knowledge acquired during the education and training of teachers. This can only mean pedagogical and subject matter knowledge.

The transformation of minimum proficiency examinations into bona fide state teacher certification examinations requires the simultaneous transformation of teacher training procedures and the creation of a new career structure for teachers. If teachers are to be examined on a common set of knowledge, this knowledge has to be acquired in school and through experience. One can readily conceive the reshaping of teacher preparation involving the acquiring of a master's degree and the acquiring of experience in a situation where teachers attain greater knowledge and responsibility throughout their career.

Education has many committed schools of thought and a consensual view of good education does not exist. There are many accounts and reports on the subject and yet, at the extremes, we still have those who believe that good teaching requires discipline, drill, and practice, and those who believe that understanding requires careful tailoring of material to specific characteristics of the child (Glaser, 1984). We repeat: What we now know about learning theory suggests that good teaching has to be adaptive because learners learn in different ways. There is not a single best way to teach, neither is there any single best way to learn. Teaching and learning are adaptive and teachers have to use differentiated strategies to achieve learning gains.

What does this mean in terms of the preparation of teachers? It means that content knowledge is important. It also means that awareness of learning styles and teaching strategies is as important. Content knowledge means knowledge of what is taught. Teachers who teach mathematics need to know mathematics. This is obvious. What is much less obvious is that they need to know how to teach mathematics to different groups of pupils. This implies knowledge of developmental psychology: Teachers need to know how to teach sophisticated materials to specific age groups and to specific ethnic and linguistic groups. This kind of knowledge can be acquired in schools of education, certainly at the master level. Being tested on this kind of knowledge would also sharply differentiate the teaching profession from the rest of the population. This would be a first step toward professional identity and status.

Good accountability starts with the training certification of teachers. They should insist on much higher standards than now prevail. No one in their right mind should approve of minimum proficiency tests that lower the status of the profession. Good accountability would use examinations that focus on the specialized knowledge teachers have acquired. In so doing it would make visible both the complexity and distinctiveness of teaching. I would argue that this would make the profession that much more attractive, it would distance teachers from the lay public, it would give them a sense of identity, it would provide a basis for increased pay, and it would enhance the professionalization of teaching.

CAREER LADDER AND STATUS

A profession without internal career incentives has little status because no one is motivated once in it. When we conduct our interviews

and ask teachers whether despite relatively low salary levels, the professional rewards of teaching make it worthwhile, their answers are not positive. They do not strongly agree. They do not sense it that way. If one pursues questioning, sooner or later this answer comes out: "We all do the same thing. You start as a teacher and remain a teacher all your life. The only way out is administration. There is no incentive. It is a depressing thought."

There is no incentive within the career. Teachers do not progress in a career ladder and it is therefore difficult to get them interested in improving their professional performance or the overall performance of the profession. When we question teachers we find relative uninterest on issues of individual or group improvement. "I see no use in going back to school unless it does something for me. Today the only thing that matters is what happens in my classroom. Most of what is taught in school does not immediately help in the classroom situation. What can I do with it if I cannot apply it?"

Part of the problem has to do with what is taught in schools of education. But the more important problem is that teachers are poorly trained and there is little incentive to use more sophisticated knowledge. Teachers do not really have a personal career advantage in improving their performance.

It is useful to make a comparison again with European practices. As we said earlier, European teachers generally enjoy far more status than American teachers. There are cultural reasons for this, but one factor is that in most European countries the careers of teachers are diversified and a status ladder exists. In several countries the careers of secondary school teachers are linked to those in higher education. Once one has obtained the higher education degree needed to teach, it is possible to teach both in secondary schools and in universities. Even if few can achieve this, some secondary school teachers can gradually rise in the academic ladder and ultimately be promoted to university appointments. The fact that this is possible increases the status of teachers. Other ladders and roles exist. In most European countries, including England, there exists an upper cadre on school inspectors who play a special role in the control and promotion of teachers, and also in the design of curriculum and examinations. The inspectorate is generally recruited from the ranks of the teaching profession. Thus, European systems, in contrast to the American pattern, seem to have far more diversified teacher career structures and more opportunities for teachers to play differentiated roles. Moreover, these elite teachers have much wider responsibilities and are, therefore, far more visible in their own

societies than the equivalent American teachers. The result is increased status for the profession.

CAREER STRUCTURE AND INTERNAL INCENTIVE

The design of state accountability schemes in education have to be concerned with the career structure of teaching for another important reason. This is the issue of internal incentive that is needed for the success of the accountability scheme itself.

If accountability is tied to positive incentives (i.e., if there is a career path, teachers are motivated to do better) the accountability scheme will have positive impact because there is teacher motivation to do better. If the accountability scheme is not related to teacher careers, it will tend to be perceived as irrelevant to classroom performance and to a teacher's own interest. Without positive incentives accountability contributes to lower teacher morale. In time this can even result in teacher manipulation as when teachers attempt to show good results by manipulating the performance indicators in the state accountability scheme.

Good state accountability schemes require a career structure for teachers that provides visible opportunities for advancement that can be harnessed to provide leverage incentives for teacher achievement. Interesting recommendations along these lines were made in *Some Reflections on the Honorable Profession of Teaching* (Stoddard, Losk, and Benson, 1984). These authors recommend restructuring of teacher training, licensing through state examinations, and the creation of new career paths within the profession so that teachers might start as interns, become junior teachers, and move on to become professional teachers with the best becoming specialized teachers and mentor teachers. Different accountability strategies can easily be invented and put in place (McLaughlin, 1983) but accountability can improve the professionalization of teaching by providing new elite roles for teachers. Elite teachers can become responsible for defining how teachers are credentialed, for setting state curriculum and examinations, and for other roles that can become part of a new and visible career structure.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

Most state accountability schemes rely on widespread use of standardized testing to measure pupil achievement. There is a natural and quite justifiable propensity to want to measure pupil achievement. However, as it seems difficult to create statewide examinations that reflect the varied curriculum of different school districts, as it is difficult to reach a consensus about what kind of knowledge all school levels should have, and as it is expensive to administer and properly evaluate examinations that use problems and long essay questions—as is practiced in many European countries—standardized true and false tests are designed to measure certain kinds of achievement.

These tests are standardized, which means that the questions are tested on small samples of pupils and are made more or less difficult until the population taking the tests is distributed “normally.” This means that half of those taking the tests will be doing better than average and half will be doing less than average. Very few will be doing very well, very few will be doing very poorly, and the median and mean will be at the top of the curve.

In general, standardized tests do not tell us whether pupils know what the curriculum intends them to know. They only tell us that our pupils are doing better or less well than other pupils, without reminding us that this is to be expected as this is what these tests are designed to do. The tests only give us comparative information about the ability of pupils to understand and answer selected questions.

To be sure, standardized tests can be used over the years and score improvements or losses can be observed. These changes may be due to better or worse education. They may also be due to many other factors: cultural, social, or economic shifts in the population taking the tests; the children may be better or less adapted to taking tests; they may have experiences that allow them to better understand questions; and they may be more or less motivated to answer them. In any case, as the tests are not linked to the curriculum we really do not have a sense of what a desirable score is. Moreover, higher scores cannot continually be higher unless the tests no longer differentiate. Therefore, if we train our pupils to take the test, and if they do better, the distribution will change. But, if the test is restandardized, if the questions are redesigned so that population will again distribute normally, the same differences will again reappear.

How does standardized testing affect the professionalization of teaching? When we ask our teachers about standardized testing tied with rewards for schools showing improved scores, they are invariably opposed to such uses of testing. Is it because teachers are afraid of achievement measures? Good teachers do not fear achievement measures and good teachers are opposed to these tests. The more common reasons for teachers' opposition have to do with (1) the irrelevance of the tests to the curriculum, (2) the irrelevance of the results to teacher or pupil effort, and (3) the excessive use of negative sanctions implicit within a normal distribution of scores. The first two reasons are often discussed (Cuban, 1985) but the third is not.

When we interview our teachers they discuss the first two and sometimes allude to the third. Many teachers feel that the tests are irrelevant to what is important in education. They stress the gradual encroachment of a "true-false" mentality and the problems associated with these tests—the lack of emphasis on essay writing, conceptual thinking, and problem solving. These criticisms are common. Teachers in schools serving disadvantaged children stress the negative sanction aspect of the tests. They mention how the tests discourage those who try and why they do not like testing that penalizes too many pupils: "Sure, we give them the tests—but they are unfair because they discourage most of our students and their families. What's the use of telling them over and over that they score too low? When they try to do better they need to be patted on the back. I like to tell them they are doing better, to help them along."

The third problem is rarely mentioned but is as important: Normal distributions penalize half of those tested. In that sense, standardized testing relies on negative sanctions and thus downgrades incentives and reduces community sanction of professional authority.

Why are incentives important? Because to reorient action, accountability needs to be linked with positive rewards or with negative sanctions. It is generally recognized that positive rewards are much stronger motivators of action than negative sanctions. Unfortunately, in a world of scarce resources, the availability of positive rewards is far less than the availability of negative sanctions. Consequently, we already tend to invent accountability systems that, more often than not, rely heavily on negative sanctions.

Standardized testing exacerbates this trend: Standardized testing is designed so that the population taking the test will distribute as close as possible to a normal distribution. When the mean and median coincide, it implies that half of those tested will do less well than average, and the

other half will do better. We design the test, and, therefore, design our principal accountability system in education to tell half of the population taking the test that they are doing poorly and only half are encouraged to know they are above average. We do not treat other human activities that way. We do not do this in higher education. We do not ask our colleges and universities to tell half our students they are below average, and we certainly do not fail half our students. Colleges and universities may have suffered from grade inflation, but grade inflation may also have to do with designing incentives for good work.

One does not encourage better learning or better teaching by over-relying on negative clues. Most noneducational organizations and institutions who use rewards and sanctions tend to use negative sanctions for only a small portion of the populations they control. They usually use negative sanctions for the lower 10% or 20% of the target population, and use differentiated encouragement for the remainder. There is no better evidence of this than the reported lessons from America's best-run private corporations. The authors of *In Search of Excellence* point to the importance of incentives and support in successful American corporations. When norms are set for achievement expectations, they are invariably set so that most can succeed. Those who succeed best, the "champions," are constantly encouraged and supported (Peters and Waterman, 1982: 223-234). These successful corporations even know how to tolerate failure, but more importantly, they rely on their people, they infuse a spirit of success based on a constant affirmation of excellence that defines success in ways that are achievable.

These companies certainly do not use standardized tests and normal distributions to judge success and excellence. They use well-understood standards that are considered to be important, and they also select these standards to create incentives through rewards. The standards are not self-defeating; the companies select them so as to encourage greater effort by making success visible and understood.

Disenchantment with standardized educational testing in state accountability is emerging. It is obvious that the long-term trend is toward state examinations tied to the curriculum along the lines of the examinations still used in western Europe. There are four main advantages to these examinations.

- (1) They are designed to respond to the curriculum instead of being "curriculum free." The problem with "curriculum-free" tests in state

accountability is that such tests cannot remain "curriculum free." If the state ties incentives to test results, sooner or later these tests will be driving the curriculum. It is far more preferable to decide what curriculum is important instead of having a curriculum that responds to narrow tests.

- (2) The examinations can be graded according to an overt policy regarding rates of pass and fail. State accountability does not have to discourage 50% of the population. Standards of pass and fail can be set on the basis of educational judgments combined with the desire to use the tests as an incentive system. Maybe the tests encourage 80% of the population and ask 20% to take remedial steps.
- (3) Such examinations can use essay type and problem-solving questions, which are far more relevant for assessing the effect of schooling than true and false questions.
- (4) Such testing brings teachers back into the picture—not only as designers of the examinations, but also as evaluators and graders. This would reinforce the status of the profession.

The reaction against standardized testing is beginning to appear in different sectors of American education. Some graduate schools are no longer using standardized tests for admission purposes. At the state accountability level, the reaction is slower but still visible. For example, this trend is already incipient in California, where the state superintendent of education is currently urging testing reforms that would rely on: (1) an agreed-upon state definition of curriculum standards, and (2) a testing program that includes more history, science, literature, writing, and problem solving that *derives* from the agreed-upon state definition of curriculum standards (Honig, 1985: 679).

In the long run, standardized testing should be used for what it was designed for. Standardized testing works well for individual diagnostic purposes because the tests are curriculum free and can therefore be used as a tool to assist teachers in designing individualized instructional strategies. They are not useful anytime they come to drive the curriculum and serve to lower the morale and status of teachers.

CONTROL PARSIMONY

Professional status is related to trust. If society trusts a profession, it will allow it considerable discretion. To be sure, some control has to be exercised but it is exercised with parsimony. In general, in the world of

work, status is differentiated by levels of discretion. In most work situations, those who begin on the job are far more controlled than those with more experience. When one starts in a work situation, one punches a card—this is a daily control on time. As one climbs the status ladder, control on time spent is gradually relaxed. At higher levels there is greater responsibility and greater trust invested. As one acquires more status, one acquires more discretion. Or the other way around, as one acquires discretion one acquires status. We do not have a differentiated discretionary structure in education today. We could have one if teachers were more involved in setting normative standards for themselves and for their pupils. Even if few teachers could reach the upper echelons and responsibilities of their professions, we would also have a status ladder within the profession if teachers were evaluated less often, that is, only when they progress upward on the status ladder. But this is not the case with testing.

Americans are abusing the frequency of testing in their schools. Pupils, teachers, and entire schools are constantly being evaluated. This is the equivalent of low-level, no discretion, routinized control. Routinized control works well in industrial processes that are well understood, where there is little need for problem solving and adaptability. This kind of control is not intended for professional work. There is not enough time to experiment, to innovate, and to research new approaches. Such controls lower the status of workers and hamper their ability to perform.

One lesson we can glean from Japanese management practices underscores this point. Japanese management trust their employees. They do not evaluate them as often as American firms are prone to do. They use instead in-depth evaluations and important stages in the career. They are parsimonious. They know that constant evaluations reduce discretion and status and therefore reduce opportunities for innovations, creativity, or risk taking.

Today, teachers tend to be reluctant to participate in peer reviews. This may have to do with their fear of having to judge each other and of the interpersonal conflicts that may arise. It also has to do with superficial nature of current teacher evaluations. Constant evaluations inevitably translate into superficial evaluations. The profession would be far better served if teacher evaluations were far more thorough, based on peer assessment, and scheduled to coincide with relevant promotions.

In-depth peer evaluations using many objective and subjective measures could be used not only by principals but also by elite teachers coming from different schools for this purpose. Similarly, American

education would be far better served if pupils were tested only for diagnostic purposes and examined at important stages of their student careers.

PARTICIPATION IN THE MANAGEMENT OF EDUCATION

The professionalization of teaching in America is hampered by the low level of participation of American teachers in the overall management of education. American teachers do not have a sufficient voice in deciding what should be taught. They do not have a sufficient voice in defining how their pupils should be examined and they do not evaluate themselves sufficiently. Those are the three key areas where reform is needed. These reforms are tied to teacher training and credentialing.

Various themes in this article now come together. The easiest way to present them is to depict a utopian scenario of what is desirable.

Our utopian scenario has seven steps:

First, we should revamp teacher training to insist on a master's degree combining greater subject matter proficiency (particularly for secondary level teachers) and better preparation in how to teach subject matter to specific children of different age cohorts, and ethnic and class groups.

Second, we should revamp teacher certification by establishing the equivalent of a state bar examination for teachers that would examine teachers on their subject matter proficiency and their knowledge of pedagogy relevant to their subject matter and level of instruction. These state examinations would be designed and graded by an elite group of senior teachers.

Third, we should establish a corps of senior teachers and other consultants including people from higher education, science, the humanities, and so on to develop and maintain the state standard curriculum for various educational streams. This curriculum would serve as the basis for assessing pupil performance.

Fourth, we should revamp pupil testing for accountability purposes by asking teachers to design statewide examinations that would set minimum requirements and evaluate higher accomplishments. There could be examinations for the end of elementary, middle, and high schools. Some of these examinations might be evaluated differentially for different categories of schools. Or we might find that some portions

of those examinations would be differentiated and adapted to the needs of pupils with different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. For example, we might have different portions of the examination for high academic achievers and for vocationally oriented students. We might correct or take into account whether English is a first, second, or later language. We might design different portions to fit what is desirable preparation for college or work. Certain sections of the examination might be optional. We might centralize certain portions of the exams and decentralize others. Obviously, the opportunities for implementation are many and much work would have to go into the elaboration and testing of such examinations. We would expect teachers to play a dominant role in this process. We would also expect them to play a dominant role in administrating and grading the examinations.

Fifth, we should invent incentive schemes that would reward all relevant teachers and schools for the higher achievements of their pupils in these examinations. For example the scores of all students could be used in weighted incentive schemes that would allocate results across all the schools that had been attended by each student. One purpose might be to create new incentives for greater collaboration between high schools and their feeder schools. A student with high scores could provide credit both to the high school, the junior high, and the elementary schools attended.

Sixth, we should create a professional career structure for teachers and we should evaluate them more often at lower levels of the career ladder and much less often as they acquire greater professional responsibilities. The career ladder would lead to elite roles including special assignments to set state curriculum, design and administer teacher certification examinations, design and administer pupil examinations, and participate in teacher peer review. Major evaluations would be conducted at transition from the various levels of the profession.

Seventh and last, we should give back to educators the prestige, the excitement, and the incentives needed to attract the better and more talented to the profession.

CONCLUSION

What do we expect from a good state accountability scheme? We expect it to affect teachers.

What do we expect from teachers? We expect teachers to act as professionals. We expect them to be highly adaptive and innovative; to have a calling and a sense of mission; not to fear learning and improving their professional skills. We expect them to exercise professional discretion and know how to design learning experiences to fit the varying needs of learners.

We expect teachers to be task oriented, to enjoy their work, and to be committed to the teaching endeavor. Given many different abilities and interests among the school children they happen to encounter, we expect them to be wise, involved, and to do their best for each pupil.

We expect teachers to be knowledgeable, to have access to information and to relevant experiences. We expect them to cooperate with other teachers as the overall learning experience of their pupils can benefit if their efforts are integrated.

We expect teachers to put in time and effort. We know that the quality of education appears to be related to the amount of exposure learners have to instruction. We prefer that teachers spend time teaching; and we are against the encroaching bureaucratization of the schools, which results in more time spent filing forms, preparing plans and reports, and, generally, documenting procedures and outcomes. We therefore want to be parsimonious in designing accountability schemes.

We want teachers to feel they are members of a strong profession, one that has enough status to make teaching attractive. We therefore want to design state accountability schemes that enhance the professionalization of teaching.

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