

**Annotated Bibliography: Takeovers and Accountability**

**KEY**

\*\*\*\* very useful  
\*\*\* useful  
\*\* relevant  
\* may be of interest

**I. TAKEOVERS**

**BOOKS**

**Beverly Hall, *Creative Solutions for Essential Change: Newark Public Schools, in Of Course It Matters 1*, (1998).**

**11 pgs.**

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Beverly Hall wrote this chapter in a book to consider recommendations contained in *What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future*, a report released by the National Commission on Teaching & America's Future in September 1996. The chapter describes reform efforts made in Newark after the state takeover. For example, it highlights Newark's efforts to reform its schools through emphasis on teacher recruitment and professional development.

## JOURNALS

**Carolyn L. Bennett, *Who Shall Determine the Means and Ends of American Education?*, 59 J. of Negro Educ. 115 (1990)**

**4 pgs.**

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In 1989, Boston University took over the Chelsea school district. John Silber, the president of Boston University, promised to increase the school's budget by soliciting funding from foundations, corporations and state and federal governments, lengthening the school day, providing meals to students, renovating buildings, retraining teachers, redesigning curriculum, increasing technology, and implementing other programs. The author suggests that there will be resistance to reforms when the individuals who will eventually implement the reforms and the individuals who will benefit from them are excluded from the decision-making process. Business principles applied to education will lead to similar results found in business: advertising aimed at unsuspecting consumers, fierce competition, padded proposals, etc.

**Kevin Bushweller, *Under the Shadow of the State*, 185 The Am. Sch. Board J. 16 (1998).**

**4 pgs.**

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This article examines takeovers in three school districts to answer the question of whether they work. In Logan County, West Virginia test scores and attendance rates have improved since four years of state control. The state-appointed superintendent focused on eight to ten problems a year with an eye toward improving student achievement. After those problems were fixed, he focused on eight to ten new ones. A contributor to Logan County's success is that it did not eradicate the local school board. The superintendent valued its advisory role and allowed it to make decisions regarding school closings, transportation and maintenance. In Compton, California there have been problems since the state took control of the district in 1993. Under Randolph Ward's tenure, the latest of five new state superintendents in five years, there have been some improvements. However, improved test scores do not diminish the fact that more than half of Compton's teachers have left since the takeover. Also, contentious board meetings and resentment by local official over state control have hampered reform efforts. In Jersey City, New Jersey, a ten-year old state takeover has led to better scores on reading and math but a decline in eight-grade performance on writing. Some critics say the state focused too much attention on corruption and management in the early years of the takeover rather than student achievement. The article ends with a list of eight lessons learned from the three districts.

**Kathleen Conn, *For Profit School Management Corporations: Serving Two Masters*, 31 J.L. & Educ. 129 (April 2002).**

**20 pgs.**

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This paper delves into the inherent conflict presented by turning over public schools to private corporations. Though largely ignored by state legislatures, corporations must deliver profits for shareholders and meet the corporate bottom line. Their fiduciary

obligations and loyalty are with shareholders and profits, not necessarily those whom they are entrusted to educate. From this, questions about who actually benefits from such takeovers emerge. In addition, evidence suggests that for-profit education management corporations face high costs. The author concludes that for-profit school management corporations should be prohibited, or state legislatures must enact other constituent statutes and mandate escrow accounts for possible harms to students – neither of which seems forthcoming. And, courts must allow for new tort causes of action that protect children whose education depends on for-profit corporations.

**Saul Cooperman, *We Prefer to Motivate Deficient Schools, But – If Pushed – We’ll Regulate Them, Too*, 175 *The Am. Sch. Board J.* 24 (1988).**

**3 pgs.**

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Saul Cooperman, the New Jersey State Commissioner of Education, described the process of state takeover in this article. He emphasized that it is a measure of last resort when schools cannot guarantee a good education. Although he believes that motivation is more effective than regulation, as State Commissioner he decided that state intervention was necessary once schools failed to correct deficiencies. He pointed out that takeovers do not threaten responsible local control of schools. He detailed the levels of monitoring schools to determine if minimum standards for certification were met. Lastly, he described how a takeover works.

**Council of the Great City Schools, *Chicago Schools Report Progress Since Mayor’s Takeover*, 5 *Urb. Educator* (April 1996).**

**1 pg.**

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When Mayor Richard M. Daley took over Chicago’s public schools, he emphasized that four conditions must be met: (1) improve classroom performance; (2) eliminate the budget deficit and do not incur additional expenses; (3) reduce bureaucracy; and (4) do not divide the city. A report that the school released stated that the new management team eliminated a \$1.3 billion budget deficit, negotiated a four-year contract with the Chicago Teachers Union, introduced a five-year capital improvement plan, and proposed an educational initiative to improve academic achievement.

**Robert L. Green & Bradley R. Carl, *A Reform for Troubled Times: Takeover of Urban Schools*, 569 *Annals Am. Acad. Pol. & Soc. Sci.* 56 (2000).**

**11 pgs.**

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This article objectively evaluates the pros and cons of takeovers of low-performing schools. Some of the advantages are improved academic performance, better efficiency and accountability, less politics in school governance, and admission of a failing system. Some of the disadvantages are: lack of specific criteria upon which to launch and terminate a takeover, doubts about depoliticizing school governance, creation of an overwhelming task for mayors, and a lack of social change. The authors examine the crucial role that race plays in takeovers. They do not arrive at a conclusion about the effectiveness or lack thereof of takeovers. Rather they suggest that more research and

data by mayors who run school systems as well as outside evaluators are necessary to determine the effectiveness of takeovers. Lastly, they emphasize the importance of analyzing the role that race plays in takeovers without either side using the race card to advance its goal.

**Richard C. Hunter, *The Mayor Versus the School Superintendent: Political Incursions Into Metropolitan School Politics*, 29 *Educ. & Urb. Soc'y* 217 (February 1997).**

**16 pgs.**

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The article examines the role that mayors and other politicians have in controlling public education. The author lists seven historical, cultural, political and economic factors that have led to greater mayoral and political control over public schools. By examining his experience as an administrator in Baltimore, he concludes that the political system cannot make substantive educational reform because they focus on short-term economic and power interests. The article discusses ways in which elected officials who are eager to reform public education can work with school boards officials without usurping their power.

**Richard C. Hunter & Jeff Swann, *School Takeovers and Enhanced Answerability*, 31 *Educ. & Urb. Soc'y* 238 (February 1999).**

**17 pgs.**

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This article begins by reviewing the school reform movement in the United States. As for takeovers, the authors state that they can create more problems for a state government than they solve. Because of their failure to focus on inherited systemic problems, takeovers are detrimental. However, takeovers can improved academic achievement if they include the following components: specific measurable performance standards in the planning and operations of the entire public educational system; school-based management and school improvement planning systems; professional development; integration of the evaluation and student-testing systems in the planning model and using the same criteria at all levels; a plan that involves parents, students and the community; and a monetary incentive program that pays teachers and staff members at schools that exceed the performance goals.

**Richard C. Hunter & Frank Brown, *School Takeovers: The New Accountability Strategy*, 65 *Sch. Bus. Affairs* 22 (November 1999).**

**7 pgs.**

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This article provides an overview of state takeovers of public schools, including financial and legal implications. There is a description of North Carolina's Accountability Program that uses state performance standards to reward high-performing schools, identify low-performing schools, and develop a plan to improve academic performance. The authors believe that the success of takeovers depends on the amount of resources invested in school districts. Although takeovers are the new reality in many districts, it is

possible that they are “merely symbolic political gestures meant to silence the clamor for education reform for the poor and disadvantaged.”

**Ronald T. Hyman, *State-Operated Local School Districts in New Jersey*, 96 Ed. Law Rep. 915 (March 1995).**

**18 pgs.**

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This article analyzes the legal framework in New Jersey for state takeover of local districts. Although it only focuses on New Jersey, the author states that it is relevant in other states due to the fact that New Jersey has always been at the forefront of education reform. The model for state takeover is modeled after corporate procedures for takeovers, which does not automatically translate into the field of education. For example, unlike the situation in corporate takeovers, the state department of education is not a neutral party. The author proposes a “bubble-up” approach that includes parents, teachers and people in daily contact with the students. He suggests phasing in a reconstructed, voting board of education. He also suggests some combinations of merger, regionalization or splitting up larger districts into mini-districts. This article is an excellent overall analysis of the legal framework of takeovers. The author points out deficiencies in the law and suggests alternative approaches.

**Marcia Reecer, *Yes, Boards are Under Fire, but Reports of Your Death are Greatly Exaggerated*, 176 The Am. School Board J. 31 (March 1989).**

**4 pgs.**

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This article, published when states first took over local school districts, discusses the threat that school boards face to their autonomy in light of state takeovers. It contains a summary of comments from school board watchers about how school boards must reassess to meet challenges like school size, school choice and board member qualifications.

**Marcia Reecer, *Jersey City Stands Firm Against Charges of “Academic Bankruptcy,”* 175 The Am. School Board J. 21 (1988).**

**3 pgs.**

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This article is about the state of Jersey City’s schools on the eve of takeover. The article highlights 70 years of problems in the district and actions taken by the state and the district prior to takeover to reform the schools. The focus of the article is Franklin Williams, the fourth superintendent appointed in two years. Although admitting problems in the school system, Williams maintains that he needs time and help to make changes. He vowed to challenge the takeover to the Supreme Court if necessary.

**Aaron Saiger, Note, *Disestablishing Local School Districts as a Remedy for Educational Inadequacy*, 99 Colum. L. Rev. 1930 (1999).**

**38 pgs.**

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This note argues that state takeover of local districts based on statutes, rather than court ordered remedies, is a more effective way to reform low-performing schools. The first section discusses the incapacity of judges to define meaningful remedies and, consequently, treating educational adequacy as a political question. The second section analyzes state takeover legislation. The third section uses theoretical and structural reasons to argue that takeovers provide incentives to school districts to improve schools. The fourth section refutes the argument that takeovers are undesirable because they usurp local control over education.

**Alicia M. Sikkenga, Note, *Detroit School Reform: A Necessary Means to Improve the Schools and End the Cycle of Mismanagement*, 77 U. Det. Mercy L. Rev. 321 (2000) 16 pgs.**

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In 1999, Michigan enacted the Detroit School Reform Act that transferred power in the Detroit Public Schools away from the elected school board to the mayor. The takeover has been challenged under the Equal Protection Clause and the Voting Rights Act. This note provides a background of the problems in the Detroit Public Schools and an analysis of the Detroit School Reform Act in terms of the Equal Protection Clause and the Voting Rights Act. The author concludes that the Reform Act will survive judicial scrutiny for three reasons. First, if the Detroit School Reform Act altered the elections rather than eliminated them, it would be subject to strict scrutiny and could be deemed a violation of the Equal Protection Clause. Second, there is no constitutional right to vote in local elections. Third, Michigan created the right to vote in local elections and was within its legal rights to take away that right.

**Kenneth J. Tewel, *The New Jersey Takeover Legislation: Help or Hindrance to Improvement in Troubled School Districts*, 23 The Urb. Rev. 217 (1991).**

**13 pgs.**

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This article traces the three-years before the state takeover in Jersey City, New Jersey. The author questions the intelligence of using the extreme sanction of takeovers to improve failing districts. The author describes what happened between the New Jersey Department of Education and the Jersey City School District as “the equivalent of war.” The confrontations between the two did not focus on the academic needs of students in the classroom but rather focused on compliance.

**Anne Marie Vassallo, Note, *Solving Camden’s Crisis: Makeover or Takeover?*, 33 Rutgers L.J. 185 (Fall 2001).**

**34 pgs.**

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This note examines Camden’s social and fiscal history to assess what type of state intervention in the local school district is justified. The author presents a discussion of “home rule,” both traditionally and as experienced in New Jersey, as well as a chronicle of proposed-but-defeated legislation to address failing schools in Camden.

**Laval S. Wilson, *Takeover: The Paterson Story*, 181 The Am. Sch. Board J. 22 (1994).**

**5 pgs.**

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Laval Wilson wrote an article about his experiences as the state district superintendent of Paterson, New Jersey. He detailed what steps are taken when a school district is taken over in the first six months. Then, he discussed reforms that he initiated in Paterson including new libraries, residential summer programs for high school students, school evaluations, technological improvements, and parent participation. Laval argues that the reforms made in Paterson's schools would not have been possible without state intervention. He cites the following problems as examples of what can sabotage school systems: "bickering school board members, poor board-superintendent relations, shoddy business affairs, and ineffective or incompetent employees." Lastly, Laval stated the following lessons for all school districts. First, money is not always a necessity for school reform. Second, better leadership, effective management of resources, coordination among departments, and teamwork can go a long way to improve schools. Third, Paterson is an example that public bickering, nepotism, contracts based on favoritism, and curriculum based on personal agendas are all practices that must stop before they severely alter the way public education is governed.

**Laval S. Wilson, *Yes, Takeovers Work*, 185 *The Am. Sch. Board J.* 19 (1998).**

**3 pgs.**

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Wilson Laval argues that takeovers work, however, the danger of undoing the positive efforts occurs when the district is returned to local control. Under takeover law, the education commissioner appoints 13 members of the local community to an advisory board where they learn about policies, negotiations, fiscal matters, curriculum matters, legal matters, etc. During the fourth year of takeover, the board is reduced from fifteen to nine members and during the fifth year it is open for general elections. Due to election politics, the resulting board lacks original board members who went through the training process and takes on the appearance of pre-takeover operations.

## **POLICY BRIEFS**

### **AFT Educational Issues Policy Brief, Survey of State Legislation on School Takeovers (October 1997).**

**6 pgs.**

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This policy brief examines legislation regarding student test data in terms of the state's authority to takeover schools. First, there is an analysis of Title I legislation. Second, there is an analysis of state law on takeovers. Third, there is an analysis of proposed legislation on takeovers

### **Amy Berk Anderson & Anne C. Lewis, Academic Bankruptcy (Education Commission of the States, 1997).**

**13 pgs.**

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This policy brief provides a general overview of academic bankruptcy and a comparison of state takeover policies. The brief lists the pros and cons of four key themes in the takeover literature: changes in governance; impact on teaching and learning; incentives and sanctions; and effects on attitude. There is also a discussion of what happened in Maryland, Ohio and New Jersey. Lastly, the authors makes recommendations to districts under state control as well as failing districts that have not been taken over. For example, they suggest that failing districts implement policies that worked or are working in districts that have been taken over. As for districts that have been taken over, they recommend developing training for the new leadership, providing additional financial support, and positioning themselves as partners rather than the "bad guys."

### **Ten Lessons About Regulation and Schooling, (Consortium for Policy Research in Education, 1992).**

**13 pgs.**

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This report summarizes several years of research conducted by the Consortium for Policy Research in Education on state regulation of schools. The report lists the following ten lessons learned: (1) "Lack of clarity about the nature and source of external restrictions hinders discussions about the relationship between regulation and constraints on practice. (2) The relationship between regulation and school improvement is uncertain. (3) Because regulation is hard to relate to good practice and difficult to enforce, many policy makers are considering ways to focus standards around outcome expectations and to limit regulations about process. (4) Tying deregulation to high performance seems plausible, but may have perverse consequences. (5) Policymakers are reluctant to remove regulations for persistently troubled districts and schools, opting instead for enhanced enforcement of regulation through state takeover. However, takeover programs may not solve the troubles and must be carefully designed. (6) Regulation is often not the barrier it seems. (7) Even though regulation is frequently not a serious hindrance to good practice, under certain conditions, deregulation helps stimulate school improvement. (8) Deregulation will be difficult to achieve through rule-by-rule waiver offers. (9) Blanket deregulation appears more promising than rule-by-rule waivers on request. (10)



Deregulation is best pursued in combination with an overall state strategy to improve schools.”

**Todd Ziebarth, State Takeovers and Reconstitutions Policy Brief (Education Commission of the States, April 2002).**

**16 pgs.**

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This policy brief looks at state takeovers and reconstitutions as two accountability approaches enacted by states and school districts. The brief provides an overview of these approaches, briefly discusses opposing perspectives, examines effects and offers questions for policy makers. The brief states that there is a scarcity of research on the effects of state takeovers, and in large part, the research shows that there have been more gains in central office activities than in classroom instructional practices. The brief notes two promising experiences among the various state takeovers, namely Logan County, West Virginia, and Chicago, Illinois. West Virginia’s Superintendent of School believes that the decision to keep the school board in place during the takeover was an important part of their success.

## REPORTS

**Margaret Dolan, State Takeover of a Local District in New Jersey: A Case Study (Consortium for Policy Research in Education, April 1992).**

**34 pgs.**

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This report analyzes the takeover in Jersey City during its first year. It describes the monitoring that led to takeover, the reasons for the takeover, the accomplishments in the first year of takeover and the external forces that affect takeover. Dolan addresses the details of the takeover of Jersey City – the politics, what happened during the first year, improvements that were made, impediments (e.g. lack of funding), etc.

**Patricia Fry et al., Kentucky's Program for Educationally Deficient School Districts (Consortium for Policy Research in Education, April 1992).**

**30 pgs.**

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This case study reports on Kentucky's Program for Educationally Deficient School Districts, enacted in 1984 but not invoked until 1987. Under the deficiency program legislation, deficient districts were required to meet certain standards or face the ultimate sanction of takeover. Part of the report analyzes the state takeover of Floyd County and Whitley County. In Floyd County, corruption was rampant and an accreditation review revealed that the county was non-compliant in over 90 criteria relating to curriculum and instruction, student services, school facilities and finances. In Whitley County, the patronage system was worse than in Floyd and curriculum findings were very negative. In both counties, takeover did not effectively deal with corruption. The state worked more with the district and building-level administrators rather than teachers. Eventually, the state's presence in both counties was ended by a legal challenge.

**Susan H. Fuhrman & Richard F. Elmore, Takeover and Deregulation: Working Models of New State and Local Regulatory Relationships (Consortium for Policy Research in Education, April 1992).**

**37 pgs.**

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This report examines regulatory treatment among districts and schools through an analysis of the following four state programs which focus on either takeover or deregulation: Kentucky's Educational Deficiency Program; New Jersey's Plan to Intervene in Deficient School Districts; South Carolina's Flexibility through Deregulation Program; and Washington's Schools for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Program, which includes regulatory waivers. The paper examines the development of the four state models, their implementation and some benefits. As for takeovers, the authors concluded that they can have very little effect on long-term educational improvement. On the other hand, deregulation efforts appear to contribute to school improvement.

**Tanya M. Suarez et al., The Use of Sanctions With Low Performing School Districts (North Carolina Educational Policy Research Center, Jun 5, 1991).**

**19 pgs.**

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This report provides background information on sanctions and recommendations for schools with poor performance. Regarding state policies and experiences with sanctions leading to takeover, the authors briefly describe the following five areas: criteria for low performance; analysis of problems; strategies for improvement; technical or other assistance; and exercising ultimate sanctions. An analysis of takeovers in Kentucky and a national study on takeovers reveals that takeovers are more about compliance and management than long-term educational improvement. The authors conclude by recommending steps for the North Carolina State Board of Education which include: assuring fairness and equity; addressing school building level failures; establishing an improvement-oriented sanctions process; maintaining local control of schools; and establishing quality control of the sanctions process.

## PRESS ARTICLES

**Gail Russell Chaddock, *Mayors, states push school boards aside; San Francisco and New York City schools are only the latest targets.*, Christian Science Monitor, Feb. 26, 2002.**

**3 pgs.**

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Mismanagement of school funds by school boards continues, prompting mayoral control to gain popularity in urban centers. For example, both San Francisco and New York City attempted to follow Cleveland's lead by calling for dissolution of the school boards in favor of mayoral control. Yet, critics remain concerned that this shift away from local control will further alienate poor and minority voters.

**Marjorie Coeyman, *Troubled system radical response; A plan in Philadelphia would create the country's largest experiment with private control of public schools.*, Christian Science Monitor, Nov. 13, 2001.**

**5 pgs.**

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This article describes Philadelphia's failure to produce student achievement and generate sufficient funding to adequately run its public schools. However, the city's proposal to turn to a private education management corporation has been less than favorably received by the public. From the limited benefits of for-profit corporations to job loss and accusations of racism, Philadelphia faces an uphill battle to garner public support for privatization.

**Karen DiegmueLLer, *Progress, Problems Outlined in State-Run N.J. District*, Education Week, Nov. 16, 1994, at 5.**

**2 pgs.**

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This article reveals results of the first independent audit conducted by Arthur Andersen & Company of Paterson public schools after a takeover in 1991. The audit determined that standardized scores remained low and buildings continue to deteriorate. For example, only 59% of the juniors passed the reading portion of the high school proficiency test. On the other hand, the audit does maintain that the schools are "qualitatively and quantitatively better today than they were four years ago." For example, the learning environment has improved.

**Dina El Boghdady, *D.C. School Chief's Vision, Bold Moves Pay Off: Deficit Eliminated in 10 Months: Scores Start Heading North*, The Detroit News, Mar. 21, 1999.**

**5 pgs.**

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This article describes the status of Washington D. C.'s public schools ten months after Arlene Ackerman became the city's newest school superintendent. She eliminated the deficit and opened the school on time for the first time in three years. In addition, student scores on the Stanford 9 test improved.

**Caroline Hendrie, *Ill Will Comes With Territory In Takeovers*, Education Week, June 12, 1996, at 1.**

**6 pgs.**

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This article explores challenges that state officials face when taking over local districts. The article focuses on bitter clashes that have occurred in Letcher County, Kentucky, East St. Louis, Illinois, Roosevelt, New York, and Compton, California. The author writes about the “tug of war” for power between local and state officials.

**Caroline Hendrie, *Pa. Lawmakers Pass a Takeover Bill for Phila.*, Education Week, April 29, 1998.**

**3 pgs.**

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On April 21, 1998, Pennsylvania lawmakers authorized legislation allowing the state schools chief to takeover Philadelphia schools. Pursuant to the legislation, the education secretary could declare Philadelphia’s schools “financially distressed” commencing a process that would remove the superintendent and put a five-member “school reform commission” in charge.

**Kalman R. Hettleman, *A Fair Test of State Privatization?*, Education Week, Sept. 13, 2000.**

**6 pgs.**

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This article describes Maryland’s controversial plan of combining state takeovers with privatization. Starting this month, Maryland has contracted with Edison Schools, Inc., a national for-profit company, to improve scores in low-performing Baltimore schools. Educators, parents, and advocates have expressed opposition to the privatization plan.

**David J. Hoff, *W.Va. Leaves District Better Than It Found It.*, Education Week, Sept. 18, 1996, at 17.**

**2 pgs.**

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This article relays a takeover success story in Logan County, West Virginia. After four years of control by the state board, there are higher test scores, better management, and local acceptance. The district attributes part of its success to the local board remaining in place during the takeover to administer tasks, such as transportation and maintenance. The state board oversaw curriculum, budget, personnel and the school calendar.

**Vaishali Honawar, *Takeover Test; PG schools join Baltimore, others in mixed bag of state control*, The Washington Times, May 26, 2002.**

**8 pgs.**

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Faced with bickering among county administrators, Prince George’s County is headed for a similar fate as Baltimore schools, and 40 other school districts nationwide, namely state takeover. However, this is “far from a magic bullet” as state run schools have achieved

little improvement in most cases (i.e. Newark and Jersey City). In Baltimore, progress has been made in state run schools but there remains a far way to go. However, three Baltimore schools turned over to Edison Schools, Inc., have made significant progress in the past two years. In addition, return to local control has been much less successful than anticipated as schools on the reconstitution-eligibility list, a Maryland watch list to identify struggling schools, remain disadvantaged.

**Mark Hornbeck & Brian Harmon, *Reform Can Work in Big City Schools: News Analysis: Progress is Slow and Controversial*, The Detroit News, Mar. 21, 1999.**

**4 pgs.**

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This article highlights reform changes in Chicago, Cleveland, Milwaukee, Baltimore, Washington, D.C., and Kentucky.

**Robert C. Johnston, *N.J. Takeover of Newark Found to Yield Gains, But Lack Clear Goals*, Education Week, May 31, 2000.**

**3pgs.**

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This article reviews the findings of a recently released study conducted by the Community Training and Assistance Center, a nonprofit group in Boston, of the takeover of Newark schools. The study revealed that there is a lack of clearly defined priorities and effective leadership, as well as financial problems in Newark since the takeover. In addition, the research found a lack of accountability measures to track the progress of individual students over a long-term period. On the other hand, some positive effects of the takeover include higher test scores and an increase in attendance.

**Robert C. Johnston, *Pa. Targets 11 District for Takeover*, Education Week, May 17, 2000.**

**6 pgs.**

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Governor Tom Ridge signed the Education Empowerment Act on May 10, 2000 making Pennsylvania the twenty-third state to allow the state to take over academic bankrupt schools. Nine of the districts listed in the act have three years to improve reading and math scores or face takeover.

**Robert C. Johnston, *State Audits Find New Budget Shortfalls in Newark*, Education Week, Apr. 26, 2000, at 3.**

**2 pgs.**

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Auditors of Newark's schools have discovered a \$70 million shortfall. A spokesperson for David C. Hespe, New Jersey's Commissioner of Education, stated that the shortfall is from money spent on programs and services that were not in the budget. There does not appear to be any criminal wrongdoing.

**Bess Keller, *West Virginia Seizes Control of its Third School District*, Education Week, June 21, 2000.**

**3 pgs.**

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The West Virginia Board of Education took over a third district this month due to deficient financial and hiring practices, curriculum and instruction, and facilities. The power to make major decisions was taken away from the five-member local school board and the superintendent was removed and assigned to her former position as principal of a local high school.

**Bess Keller, *Red Ink in Newark Mars State Takeover*, Education Week, Feb. 2, 2000.**

**4 pgs.**

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Newark has a \$58 million budget deficit. A spokesperson for the State Commissioner of Education, David C. Hespe, said that the business office was not run efficiently. This deficit mars previous comments about improved budget and management practices in Newark, Jersey City, and Paterson.

**Jessica Kowal, *Rules for Schools: Bloomberg's takeover plan would shift roles, emphasize results*, Newsday, May 28, 2002.**

**8 pgs.**

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Mayor Bloomberg's plan to help save failing schools in NYC involves raising test scores, dropping extracurricular activities that do not advance test scores, establishing mayoral control, abolishing all Community School Boards and other bureaucracies, establishing English immersion courses, creating public-private partnerships, and boosting parental involvement. In addition, Bloomberg wants to give the chancellor, superintendents, and principals more power to run schools and, in turn, hold them accountable for school progress. However, Albany is not yet convinced that such measures are warranted.

**Douglas Martin, *In Troubled Roosevelt, A Takeover Still Awaits a Makeover*, The New York Times, Oct. 10, 1999, § 14 at 1.**

**7 pgs.**

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This article highlights problems still facing the Roosevelt school district four years after the state seized control. Most people agree that the takeover led to "few new ideas and even less new money."

**Cameron McWhirter & Sheryl Kennedy, *Windy City Shines as School Reform Success*, The Detroit News, Mar. 21, 1999.**

**6 pgs.**

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Chicago's Mayor Richard Daley took control over its public schools in 1995. The schools have been hailed as a school reform success story. In 1987, the United States Secretary of Education William J. Bennett declared that they were the worst public schools in the nation. In 1997, they are drastically different. The changes include higher test scores, lower truancy rates, building repairs, tightened security, and happier teachers.

In addition to the takeover in 1985, seven high schools were reconstituted, resulting in a “public relations flop.” The board has agreed not to reconstitute other schools.

**Barbara Miner, *Business goes to school: The for-profit corporate drive to run public schools.*, Multinational Monitor, Jan. 1, 2002.**

**9 pgs.**

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Claiming they can improve student performance while making a profit, Educational Management Organizations, EMO’s, are being called in by frustrated school systems to run public schools. Yet, EMO’s are not producing the anticipated results in either student performance or profits. Specifically, the article cites problems experienced in school districts run by Edison Schools, Inc, such as saving money by hiring young, inexperienced teachers and not providing for special needs students. However, as the promise for profits remain, the author believes EMO’s are here to stay.

**Maria Newman, *New Jersey Finds No Simple Solutions in School Takeovers*, The New York Times, Mar. 21, 1999, §1, at 37.**

**2 pgs.**

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The Department of Education is running New Jersey’s three largest school districts and still there is no plan to return them to local control. This article mentions some beneficial reforms resulting from takeover, including the eradication of corruption and mismanagement, and improved test scores in Newark. However, takeovers are not a popular method of reforming schools and the author explains why.

**Philip Y. Nicholson, *Long Island Topic: A Marshall Plan for Roosevelt Schools - The district needs more than money. It needs a rescue team from colleges to nurse schools back to health.*, Newsday, Feb. 3, 2002.**

**4pgs.**

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The answer to save the failing Roosevelt schools is not state takeover. Rather, the state must provide all-around support, including increased funding, involvement of colleges as done in Chelsea, MA, and technical support. Specifically, the author believes legislators and educators can learn how to save failing schools by studying and mimicking the Marshall Plan.

**Lynn Olson, *State Takeovers Run Afoul of Voting Rights Act*, Education Week, Sept. 11, 1996, at 22.**

**2 pgs.**

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This article focuses on legal challenges to state takeovers. Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act requires clearance from the Justice Department for any actions that might affect the voting rights of racial, ethnic, or language minorities. The Justice Department has sixty days to respond to a request for clearance. The article focuses on delays in improving local districts through takeover in Texas and Mississippi because of delay in approval from the Justice Department.



***Race and Takeovers, Education Week, Jan. 14, 1998.***

**1 pg.**

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This is an Education Week survey of twenty-one school districts where state or city officials have intervened. All except three of the twenty-one districts have a majority of minority students. Most of the districts are at least 80% nonwhite. The survey also reveals that six out of eight school districts that were threatened with takeover also have a majority of minority students. Three of those threatened school districts are at least 93% nonwhite.

**Beth Reinhard, *Racial Issues Cloud State Takeovers*, Education Week, Jan. 14, 1998, at 1.**

**2 pgs.**

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This article highlights the role race plays in state takeovers. Some people living in minority communities where takeovers occur argue that takeovers reflect the attitude that minorities cannot be trusted to elect their own officials and run their own schools. Lawsuits have been filed throughout the country alleging that takeovers violate an individual's right to choose local education policymakers. The article details court battles taking place in Texas and in Cleveland, Ohio. State officials deny that race is the reason for takeovers, citing poor academic performance, corruption, and patronage by board members as the reasons for takeovers.

**Beth Reinhard, *Signs of Progress Slowly Emerge After Takeover in Compton, Calif.*, Education Week, Jan. 21, 1998.**

**3 pgs.**

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This article highlights changes made in Compton schools after four and a half years of state control. Some of those signs of progress include new language arts books and building renovations. However, the biggest challenge to enacting widespread renovation is convincing voters to pass a \$107 million bond measure in April.

**Sarah Schmidt, *Privatizing the classroom: A plan to hand over the management of Philadelphia's 60 poorest-performing public schools to a for-profit company tomorrow has generated outrage in the city. But proponents say it is the way of the future.*, National Post, Nov. 29, 2001.**

**8 pgs.**

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As Philadelphia prepares to become the next privatized school system, many remain critical of for-profit education corporations. Education researchers at Western Michigan University found that under the management of Edison Schools, Inc., students are not performing as well as the company claims. And, Edison is accused of turning away special education students and expelling bothersome students. While parents remain concerned about accountability, corporate leaders suggest that accountability is ensured by the company's desire to keep its customers.

**Peter Schrag, *Edison's Red Ink Schoolhouse: The biggest name in for-profit education in floundering. It turns out what's good for children is bad for business: Spending money on schools.*, The Nation, June 25, 2001 (Vol. 272, Issue 25).**

**6 pgs.**

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Edison Schools, Inc. offers a cohesive program coupled with cleaner, brighter buildings leading some of its schools to have a waiting line for admittance. However, Edison is facing troubled financial waters, as profits are non-existent and public backlash for exaggerated student achievement is prevalent. But, as Edison focuses on the worst of America's schools, the author seems unconvinced that public-run schools can do any better. And, despite arguments to the contrary, the author argues that there is accountability with companies like Edison because a city may terminate its contract – a level of accountability uncommon in the typical public education system.

**Ronald Smothers, *In Newark, Changes for School Open Old Wounds and New Hopes*, N. Y. Times, Feb. 28, 1999, § 14 at 7.**

**3 pgs.**

**\*\***

This article describes the opinions and feeling of politicians, educators and community advocates after the announcement of the departure of Beverly Hall, the state-appointed Newark School Superintendent.

**Ronald Smothers, *Perception of Newark Schools Has Improved, Study Finds*, N. Y. Times, May 25, 2000, at B6.**

**\*\***

A study performed by the Community Training and Assistance Center in Boston concluded that parent, teacher and student perceptions of the Newark schools have improved. The only data tracking student and staff performance included in the study were state-administered tests.

**Ronald Smothers, *Rescuers of Schools Now Need Rescuing*, N. Y. Times, Feb. 13, 2000, § 14 at 8.**

**4 pgs.**

**\*\***

This article highlights the \$58 million budget deficit in Newark schools and the opinions of educators and policy experts from around the state regarding the deficit.

**Paul Vitello, *A Slippery Ladder of Success*, Newsday, Jan. 6, 2002.**

**4 pgs.**

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The Roosevelt School district is in a difficult position. With little commercial property to help raise revenues for school funding, the district must rely on the state for 60% of its funding. What's worse, New York State's Department of Education has proposed many budget cuts. Among the proposed cuts are the athletics department, most of the custodial staff, the kindergarten program, and 25 teachers' aides.

**Alice Warchol and Susan White, *Few Endorse VA Takeover of Schools in Portsmouth, The Virginian-Pilot, May 21, 2002.***

**4pgs**

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As Portsmouth, VA, contemplates state takeover, elected officials and local residents do not believe state control will solve their school crisis. Evidence from a 2001 study by Professor Kenneth Wong of Vanderbilt University and Francis X. Shen of Harvard University shows mixed results in state takeovers generally. More specifically, it found that students suffer from administrative and political tension in the community, and that while mayoral control benefits elementary schools, it is much less successful in upper grades.

**Kenneth K. Wong and Francis X. Shen, *Rethinking the Fiscal Role of the States in Public Education, Government Finance Review, Oct. 1, 2001 (Vol. 17, Issue 5).***

**15 pgs.**

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This article looked at the variance in state funding responsibility for K-12 education (percentage of annual K-12 funding provided by the state) and its impact on equity (distribution of funds to districts) and innovation (standards and accountability measures, charter schools, and school district takeovers). The study found a number of interesting points, including: funding levels in accountability states and funding levels in takeover states tend to be the same or similar; state population tends to be a key determinant in whether a state opts for takeover; state education policy, and not state funding, is the prime motivator behind whether a state will adopt innovative education techniques; because of the importance politics plays in education policy, state governments hold the key to improving equity in education.

## **PAPERS**

### **Saul Cooperman, Intervention in Deficient School Districts: Re-Establishing Effective Local Control (March 1989).**

**11 pgs.**

**\*\***

This paper, presented at the annual meeting of the American Association of School Administrators, describes New Jersey's three-tier monitoring system of school district educational standards. First, school districts are evaluated in ten essential areas that include curriculum and instruction, staff, student attendance, basic skills, mandated programs, planning and financial management. Districts that fail the first level develop an improvement plan to overcome their problems in the second level. If a district fails to earn certification after the second level, the Department of Education's Division of Compliance conducts a preliminary review to determine what the districts have to do to achieve certification. Corrective action must be implemented during the third stage to avoid a state takeover. The paper goes on to describe what happens in a takeover and what happened specifically in Jersey City.

### **Eloise M. Forster, State Intervention in Local School Districts: Educational Solution or Political Process? (1996).**

**52 pgs.**

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This paper, presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, analyzes the results of a study conducted of the Jersey City Public Schools during the first two years of state takeover. Forster drew five main conclusions after reviewing the results of the study and related literature and research. "First, state intervention in local school districts has not developed spontaneously and in isolation at state levels. It is an outgrowth of a long history of numerous unsuccessful attempts at educational reform in failing school districts and a steady decrease in public confidence in the system of public education. Second, state takeover is perceived as the ultimate reform initiative. However, the internal barriers to successful reform, those which abused previous reform efforts to fail, still exist after a district is taken over. Third, states tend to take a bureaucratic approach to educational accountability and school improvement . . . that will not bring about the systemic changes needed to reverse failing school districts and improve student performance. Fourth, the key to understanding any organization lies in understanding its human and social dimensions. Fifth, how the new leadership approached the organization and its members is critically important. The leaders must gain control and commitment, create an organization climate that promotes problem-solving and productivity, and develop as a healthy organization atmosphere which meets the self-actualization needs as well as the basic human needs of the members." Lastly, Forster made recommendations related to policy, management and leadership.

### **Thomas R. Guskey, Policy Issues and Options When States Take Over Local School Districts (April 1990).**

**14 pgs.**

**\*\***

This paper, presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, traces the developments leading to state intervention in the operation of local school districts. It highlights three main developments, including concern about the variation of student performance from school to school, ineffective schools, and a greater call for accountability in education. A discussion on the legitimacy of state intervention concludes that states have the right and responsibility to operate public schools. However, questions remain about the extent of the responsibility that power carries with it, and the answers to that are less clear. The authors recommend enhancing education when takeovers occur.

**Beverly Hall, State Intervention in the Newark Public Schools (1998).**

**8 pgs.**

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The state-appointed school district superintendent wrote a paper describing the condition of Newark schools before takeover, the conditions of the state intervention, and the state's strategic plan to reform schools. The paper outlines the Strategic Plan, which strives to implement reform, monitor progress, and identify areas where "capacity building must occur." The paper also focuses on governance as a key element of school reform, school-based planning, parental involvement, community partnerships, and the advisory board.

**Joan McRobbie, Can State Intervention Spur Academic Turnaround? (1998).**

**12 pgs.**

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This paper examines the machinery that must be implemented to effectively take over local schools. The author suggests that standards must be central and must be set at the local level. Furthermore, the legislation must clearly articulate measures, rewards and sanctions, and triggers for sanctions. This paper also looks at cross-cutting issues including fairness, focus, coherence, understandability, capacity building and legal defensibility. Kentucky's five year old accountability system is often used as a model. The associate commissioner of education offers the following advice: (1) throw all guns at the new program; (2) expand and market successes; (3) examine and re-examine intervention; (4) use a common set of strategies across all schools so you can talk about the program coherently; (5) keep the management system simple; (6) focus on measuring what's important; (7) identify and fix structural problems; (8) expect that the costs will be high.

**Michael D. Rettig, Policy Adaptation and Change: The Case of the State Takeover of the Jersey City Public Schools (April 1992).**

**39 pgs.**

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This report examines the first two and a half years of the takeover of the Jersey City Public Schools. The author first describes the history preceding the takeover. The following six implementation problems are explored in detail: time; the politics of waiting; expectations; insider-outsider conflict; communication; and scope. The author concludes with a suggestion of another form of takeover as an alternative policy model.

**Angela Maynard Sewall, New School Governance: The School Board and Its Future (1996).**

**11 pgs.**

**\*\***

This paper describes the changing nature of school boards, particularly how legislation and court decisions are threatening their governing role.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

**Bruce C. Bowers, State-Enforced Accountability of Local School Districts (ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management, 1989).**

**2 pgs.**

**\*\***

This article reviews a state-imposed accountability system taking place in several states. Financial incentives are awarded to districts with high performance levels. On the other hand, districts with low performance levels are punished with decertification resulting in non-complying districts merging with neighboring districts. The article discusses the attempted state takeovers in New Jersey and Kentucky.

**Paul Socolar, Where Does “Getting Tough” Get Us? A Look at the DC Public Schools Crisis (National Coalition of Education Activists, 1998).**

**7 pages**

**\*\*\***

This article is about the crisis in DC public schools after the appointment in November 1996 of a federal control board to take over the school system. During the sixteen-month tenure of the retired Army general, his “getting touch” meant the implementation of the following accountability measures: top-down decision making; threatening teachers’ jobs; high-stakes testing; mandatory summer school and cuts in programs like arts and music. Test preparation has become the primary focus instead of staff development, counselors and social workers in every school, smaller class sizes, and books for all students.

## II. ACCOUNTABILITY

### JOURNAL ARTICLES

**Gerald W. Bracey, *The 11<sup>th</sup> Bracey Report on the condition of public education*, 83 *Phi Delta Kappan* 2 (2001).**

**21 pgs.**

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This report discusses the U.S. student testing culture, comparing it to international education systems. In addition, the author discusses a variety of issues, including the effect EMOs have on charter schools and the hope for innovative curriculum, as well as vouchers and misleading public opinion polls concerning its popularity.

**Ulrich Boser, *Pressure Without Support*, 20 *Educ. Week* 68 (January 11, 2001).**

**3 pgs.**

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This article provides a brief overview of a 50-state survey conducted by Education Week for Quality Counts 2001. The article focuses on assessment, accountability, rewards, and building capacity.

**Arthur L. Coleman, *Excellence and Equity in Education: High Standards for High-Stakes Tests*, 6 *Va. Soc. Pol'y & L.* 81 (1998).**

**24 pgs.**

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This article examines some issues that arise when high-stakes tests are implemented to promote high standards. It focuses on due process and discrimination concerns in high-stakes tests. The article describes the educational foundations upon which legal standards are premised and the role that the determination of a test's validity affects legal conclusions.

**Dan French, *The State's Role in Shaping a Progressive Vision of Public Education*, 80 *Phi Delta Kappan* 184 (1998).**

**9 pgs.**

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This article explores curriculum frameworks and state assessment tests as methods for accountability and student achievement. Using Massachusetts as a case study, the following lessons were learned: teachers should not be excluded from the process; prescriptive academic standards preclude in-depth analysis of essential concepts; high-stakes testing does not necessarily improve learning or instruction; and conditions other than academic standards and high-stakes assessment are necessary to create nurturing learning environments. The author offered six guidelines for state education agencies to promote successful schools that include (1) philosophies and practices based on democracy and equity; (2) broad standards, not standardization; (3) a multi-level assessment system focused on improving student learning; (4) commitment to the professionalism of teachers; (5) support for diverse networks of like-minded schools committed to working together on whole-school reform to achieve excellence; and (6)



opportunities and incentives to districts to grant increased autonomy and flexibility to schools.

**Donna Harrington-Lueker, *Now local school districts are accountable for results*, 85 The Am. Sch. Board J. 17 (1998).**

**5 pgs.**

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This article relates that most states have or are implementing statewide standards. The challenges facing districts moving beyond standards to rewards and sanctions is aligning curriculum with the new state standards, training teachers to implement the standards, developing programs for students who fall behind; and making other relevant changes in instruction. The director of a nonprofit group committed to standards-based reform stated that the hardest challenge is going from the adoption of standards into actual changes in the classroom. The article describes what is happening in Los Angeles and Boston, two districts in the early stages of standards-based reform. Some of the problems facing schools working on standards-based reform include learning how to analyze student data on achievement, professional development, staying focused, and testing.

**Richard A. King & Judith K. Mathers, *Improving Schools Through Performance-Based Accountability and Financial Rewards*, 23 J. of Educ. Finance 147 (1997).**

**29 pgs.**

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This article examines the effect of performance-based school finance programs in Indiana, Kentucky, South Carolina, and Texas. The author suggests recommendations for improving these programs that include rewards and sanctions, assessments, and state standards.

**Kelly C. Rozmus, *Education Reform and Education Quality: Is Reconstitution the Answer?*, 1998 B. Y. U. Educ. & J. 103 (Spring 1998).**

**29 pgs.**

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This article begins by examining the history of educational reform efforts, particularly desegregation. The author defines reconstitution, describes its evolution, and uses San Francisco as a case study. Later, there is a description of reconstitution efforts in other parts of the country like Philadelphia, Oakland, Chicago, and other cities. The perspectives of administrators, parents, teachers, and students are included.

## REPORTS

**Charles Abelmann et al., When Accountability Knocks, Will Anyone Answer? (Consortium for Policy Research in Education, 1999).**

**52 pgs.**

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This report analyzes accountability from the school's perspectives rather than from an external political perspective. The report's goal was to examine how schools think about accountability in their everyday work. "This study confirms the view that schools develop internal normative structures that are relatively immune to external influences."

**Carol Ascher et al., Standards-Based Reform and the Charter School Movement in 1989-99: An Analysis of Four States (Institute for Education and Social Policy, August 1999).**

**32 pgs.**

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This analysis is about the relationship between the charter school movement and standards-based reform in Texas, Massachusetts, California, and Louisiana. The report focuses on the following: the effect of state assessments on charter school accountability; how charter school staffs view the effects of the standards movement on their autonomy; how charter school staffs view the effects of standards on school curriculum and instruction; the professional development about standards offered to charter school staff; information disseminated about standards to charter schools; and information disseminated about standards to parents. Charter school staff's implementation of state standards was influenced by four factors: experienced administrators who were more critical of state standard than new teachers; school staff with public school experience who did not view the standards as intrusively as their private school counterparts; the alignment of state standards with the schools' educational philosophy; and the student body and its resources. Charter school funding may be replicating the same disparities experienced in traditional public schools. In sum, commitment to resources and professional development is imperative to achieve high standards in charter schools rather than just lessening autonomy with yet another reform.

**Kathryn Doherty & Sarah Abernathy, Turning Around Low-Performing Schools: A Guide for State and Local Leaders (U.S. Department of Education, 1998).**

**90 pgs.**

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This is a guide produced by the Department of Education outlining methods that states and local districts are using to improve failing schools. It focuses on standards, strategies to improve student achievement, support for schools, and intervention in low-performing schools.

**Patricia Fry et al., Schools for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Program in Washington State: A Case Study (Consortium for Policy Research in Education, April 1992).**

**18 pgs.**

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This case study examines a 1989 program enacted in Washington entitled Washington State's Schools for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The program grants schools waivers from state rules to encourage innovation. This paper describes the politics and demographics of the program as well as program development, implementation, and provisions. In addition, the paper examines specific projects in three schools.

**Susan H. Fuhrman, The New Accountability (Consortium for Policy Research in Education, January 1999).**

**11 pgs.**

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This report examines ways in which schools and districts are held accountable. The report examines the following issues: how performance is measured; what is satisfactory progress; holding schools accountable for value-added; perverse incentives; complexity and trade-offs with fairness; the middle of the distribution; state capacity for remedy; stability and credibility; process regulations don't go away; public understanding student incentives. Fuhrman provides details on perverse incentives, complex indices of progress, what to do with students in the middle of the distribution, states' capacity to remedy problems, stability and credibility of program, public understanding, and student incentives. Accountability systems that are well designed can lead to improvement in academic performance and more motivated teachers.

**Susan H. Fuhrman & Richard F. Elmore, Ruling Out Rules: The Evolution of Deregulation in State Education Policy (Consortium for Policy Research in Education, March 1995)**

**34 pgs.**

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This report examines the evolution of deregulation. It focuses on limited waiver programs, charter programs and performance-based accountability systems. One of the most important effects of waivers was the elimination of regulation as an excuse to maintain the status quo. Recommendations include: (1) view deregulation as one of many policy approaches; (2) develop accountability and incentive structures to promote continual progress; (3) develop criteria for the rationing of regulations; (4) develop a broader toolbox of policy approaches; (5) create new approaches to help problem schools; and (6) study the political, technical, and ethical issues that influence regulation.

**Susan H. Fuhrman et al., South Carolina's Flexibility through Deregulation Program: A Case Study (Consortium for Policy Research in Education April 1992).**

**24 pgs.**

\*

In an effort to foster quality education, some states are treating districts differently by intervening in some districts and granting broad flexibility to others. This paper examines South Carolina's flexibility program which granted blanket waivers and exemptions from regulations to high-performing schools.

**Futures Denied: Concentrated Failure in the New York City Public School System**

**(Industrial Areas Foundation-Metro New York and Public Education Association, March 1997).**

**29 pgs.**

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In 1996, the New York State Legislature changed the governance of New York City schools by shifting the power into a central system where the chancellor bears accountability. In 1997, Governor Pataki announced his support for legislation creating charter schools. In addition, a privately sponsored scholarship initiative, possibly a precursor to vouchers, was announced shortly before this report was published. This report outlines the problems in New York City's schools in an attempt to provide information in the ongoing debate about how to reform the education problem in New York City. Data in the report reflect budget and enrollment, student achievement in reading and math, dropout and graduation rates, attainment of Regents diplomas, college attendance rates, and Regents exams. The data show that the "education crisis" in New York City is concentrated in identifiable neighborhoods.

**Paul T. Hill & Robin J. Lake, Toward a K-12 Education Accountability System In Washington State (Institute for Public Policy and Management, December 1997).**

**27 pgs.**

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In 1993, Washington passed an Education Reform Act that created new academic standards for K-12 education, statewide goals, and exams to measure student performance. The law required Washington to create an accountability system. This report is a proposed accountability system for Washington. One section provides an overview of accountability issues that says a performance based accountability system must change what the schools are held accountable for, create new incentives and clarify roles and responsibilities. The section on lessons from other states lists four suggestions: (1) locate freedom of action and responsibility at the school; (2) provide struggling schools with help; (3) strengthen the role of school boards; and (4) provide external checks on the public school bureaucracy. As for measuring, judging, rewarding and sanctioning schools, the authors suggest: (1) reporting direct measures of student learning; (2) looking beyond the numbers and (3) rewarding schools for success and giving failing schools help. Lastly, the report suggests six elements that Washington's should have in its accountability system.

**Investing in Oklahoma: The Progress of Education Reform (Oklahoma State Department of Education, January 1996).**

**173 pgs.**

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This report describes the educational reforms mandated by Oklahoma's Education Reform and Funding Act of 1990. Volume 1 focuses on state-appropriated funds for education and per-pupil expenditures. Volume 2 examines academic standard's enrollment figures, teachers' salaries, the basic-skills curriculum, accountability benchmarks, alternative education, character education, and community involvement. Volume 3 highlights the increases in state appropriations for public schools, the number of graduating high-school seniors who took the ACT college-entrance exam in 1997, how

Oklahoma's students compare to students in other southern states, the success of the Reader Leaders' program, and the rise in alternative education. Volume 4 describes how although state funding increased, Oklahoma's national ranking in per-pupil spending actually fell, from 47<sup>th</sup> in 1996 to 48<sup>th</sup> in 1997.

**Robin J. Lake et al., Making Standards Work: A Case Study of Washington State (Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, July 1999).**

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This report looks at standards-based reform in Washington. The researchers studied forty schools with similar demographics and concluded that all schools could improve student learning, irrespective of outside factors, when the faculty worked together, implemented skills-targeted instruction and performed self-evaluations. The following are the report's key seven key conclusions. "(1) Effective changes in teaching methods and materials are focused and school-wide, not random and fragmented. (2) Improving schools operate as teams, not loose association. (3) Professional development is designed to remedy particular instructional weaknesses. (4) Performance pressure helps when it fosters determination, not fear. (5) Improving schools don't wait for help, they seek it out. (6) Improving schools use limited resource strategically. (7) Parents can help."

**Diane Massell et al., Persistence and Change: Standards-Based Reform in Nine States, (Consortium for Policy Research in Education, 1997)**

**97 pgs.**

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This report focuses on the creation and the progress of standards-based reform in the following nine states: California, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Minnesota, New Jersey, South Carolina, and Texas. The report has twelve major findings. "(1) In 1994-95, versions of standards-based, systemic change remained a key feature in all our states' education policies, and an integral part of at least eight states-future plans. Twenty of our 25 districts have been using standards-based reforms as elements of their strategies of improving curriculum and instruction. (2) Discussion in 1994-95 of state-level education policy or the broad framework of standards-based reform was not as partisan as might be expected given political turnover in the states. (3) When standards development was slowed, it was often due to difficulties in achieving professional and/or public consensus over the nature and design of particular standards, as well as to turnover in leadership and resource constraints. (4) The nature of the standards, as reflected both in the documents delineating what students should know and be able to do and in statewide testing programs altered considerably since these reform movement first began. (5) For both political and pedagogical reasons, state policymakers defined their standards broadly, intentionally leaving the operational details of curricula to districts and schools. However, district administrators and teachers often wanted *more* guidance and support than the states offered. (6) Many district attempted to match or exceed state initiative in instructional guidance. (7) However, state government were not the only-and sometimes not even the most important – source of ideas for standards-based reform at the local level. (8) [The] expanded array of actors, each with its own variant of standards-based reform and with its own resources and influence, raises anew our earliest questions about the coherence of the messages local officials receive about good practice. (9) Several

years into the reform, policy makers have begun to address these capacity questions and tie licensure and professional development activities to reform, although the numerous steps they have taken are still, at best, incremental. (10) While all of our states made some attempt to address equity issues, their efforts for the most part were fragmented or loosely connected, if at all, to standards reform. (11) While our state increased revenues for schooling, they only kept pace with inflation at a time when local educational responsibilities and costs were growing. (12) Lack of public support and understanding of standards-based reform remained major obstacles to the stability of standards.” The rest of the report elaborated on these twelve findings.

**Notes from the Field: KERA in the Classroom (AEL, Inc. 2000).**

**23 pgs.**

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This report is part of an ongoing project studying the effects of the Kentucky Education Reform Act in four rural Kentucky school districts. This volume focuses on teaching and learning in the elementary schools. The research team noted the following three observations. First, students have benefited from KERA. Second, key components of the reform have not yet been implemented in the study schools. Third, certain aspects of KERA call for more attention.

**Mitchell B. Pearlstein, Strange Brew: Minnesota’s Motley Mix of School Reforms (Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, January 2000).**

**25 pages**

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This report analyzes Minnesota’s landmark educational reforms including statewide open enrollment, charter schools, tax credits for parents, and a program allowing high-school junior and seniors to take college courses paid for by the government. The author found that governors play a crucial role in school reform. This report includes an examination of how the political debates unfolded in creating educational reform in Minnesota.

**Timothy C. Pitta & Edward B. Reeves, A Spatial Analysis of Contextual Effects on Educational Accountability in Kentucky (1999).**

**14 pgs.**

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The Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990 created high-stakes performance assessment program called the Kentucky Instructional Results Information System (KIRIS). KIRIS rewarded schools financially when student test scores improved and levied sanctions when test scores declined. This report analyzes the spatial relationship between socioeconomic factors and educational outcomes. The authors conclude with two policy prescriptions. First, socioeconomic factors should be part of the assessment program for middle and high school students. Second, geographical context must also be factored into the equation.

**Emma P. Popwell et al., Walden International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme, 1996-97 (Atlanta Public Schools, 1997).**

**59 pgs.**

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This report is an analysis of the reconstitution of a middle school in Atlanta during its first year. The report describes student and teacher characteristics, professional-preparation activities, the development of partnerships, parent and community involvement, and the Computer Curriculum Corporation Pilot Project.

**The Progress of Education Reform 1999-2001: Accountability, (Education Commission of the States June-July 2000).**

**6 pgs.**

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This is the third part of a three-part series on standards-based reform. This edition focuses on teacher, student, and school accountability. Many schools are holding students accountable by “promotion gates and graduation hurdles.” For example, schools require students to pass a test to graduate from high school. The reports states that the research on the effectiveness of these measures yields mixed results. The report goes on to discuss teacher accountability measures including performance-based pay. Lastly, there is a brief analysis of rewards and sanctions aimed at improving school performance.

**Raising the Bar: An Overview of Washington’s School Improvement Strategy (Washington State Commission on Student Learning, 1997).**

**40 pgs.**

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This brochure describes Washington’s plans to improve education by describing its goals, standards and assessments. It defines specific goals for reading, writing and math. The brochure is in English and in Spanish.

**Results Matter: A Decade of Difference in Kentucky’s Pubic Schools (Kentucky State Department of Education, 2000).**

**95 pgs.**

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This report is a summary of reform efforts in Kentucky ten years after the enactment of the Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990. The report analyzes the impact that reform efforts have had on students in Kentucky. It is divided into four sections. First, there are school profiles of a dozen Kentucky schools that vary in geography and demographics. Although the schools approached reform in different ways, all are “scoring well” on Kentucky’s Core Content Tests. Second, there is a data section documenting implementation including extended school services, youth services, professional development, and others. Third, there is a discussion of the results showing students improvement in many different graphs and results of the reforms. There is a timeline highlighting major events during the reform movement. Lastly, there is a discussion about what steps to take in the future.

**School-Based Management & Accountability Procedures Manual (North Carolina State Board of Education, 1996).**

**131 pgs.**

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In 1996, the North Carolina General Assembly promulgated The School-Based Management and Accountability Program (the ABCs plan) to improve student performance. It is an accountability model that focuses on math, reading, and writing in addition to increasing local control and flexibility. The manual goes into explicit detail regarding how to implement the ABCs. There is a glossary and list of contact resources. The appendices contain sample form, worksheets, suggested actions and procedures, sample teacher and student evaluation systems, and a copy of Senate Bill 1139.

**Mary Lee Smith, *The Politics of Assessment: A View from the Political Culture of Arizona* (National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing, November 1996).**

**20 pages**

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In 1992, Arizona created the Arizona Student Assessment Program (ASAP) to make schools more accountable for academic achievement. ASAP added a performance assessment test to other state mandated tests. This paper analyzes the existence of ASP during its four-year existence. The author found that it served primarily a political function.

**Brian M. Stecher et al., *Important Features of State Assessment Systems from the Local Perspective* (National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing, July 1997).**

**29 pgs.**

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This report is the first in a five-year study of the effects of state assessment reforms on classroom practices. It examines the Kentucky Instructional Results Information Systems as created by the Kentucky Educational Reform Act of 1990. The authors compare the perspectives of researchers and educators on the following eleven issues: purposes; content; logistics; inclusion and accommodation; accountability; meaningfulness; stability; training and support; classroom practices; performance standards; and commitment.

**Student Achievement and Reform Trends in 13 Urban Districts (McKenzie Group, November 1999).**

**6 pgs.**

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This paper is a summary of a study of thirteen large urban districts that receive money from Title 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The districts were chosen based on the following four criteria: the largest school districts in the country; student populations with at least 35% minority or at least 50% of the students eligible for free or reduced-price lunches; geographic diversity; and at least three years of student achievement data on the same assessment and across the same grades in reading and mathematics for elementary and middle school students. Some of the results are the following: ten districts increased the amount of elementary students meeting the district or state proficiency standard in either math or reading; seven of those ten showed a decrease in the achievement gap between students in the highest-poverty and low-poverty



schools; and increases in middle-school achievement. Senior district administrators stated that they were implementing accountability policies to improve schools and student achievement. The administrators cited the following factors as inhibitors to their success: lack of resources; problems coordinating district and state goals and policies; difficult-to-serve student populations; and professional development for teachers as well as retaining teachers. Overall, student achievement is lagging and there is a gap between students in the highest poverty and low-poverty schools. On other hand, schools with low-income students have raised standards and implemented standards-based reforms as a step toward progress.

**Washington State Academic Achievement and Accountability Commission:  
Accountability System Recommendations (November 2000).**

**41 pgs.**

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This report was created by the Academic Achievement and Accountability Commission whom the Washington Legislature charged with the task of creating an accountability system for students, schools, and school districts. The report focuses on the following three areas: rewards for successful schools and districts; assistance for students and schools; and intervention strategies and statutory changes for low-performing schools. The commission recommended an accountability system with has the following components: improvement goals and plans; general assistance; annual performance analysis; recognition awards; focuses assistance based on a performance agreement; performance analyzed; and more intensive intervention strategies.

## PAPERS & SPEECHES

### **Eugene P. Adcock & Leonard Winkler, *Jump Higher or Else! Measuring School Reconstitution (1999).***

**19 pgs.**

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This paper describes the reconstitution program in Prince George's County Public Schools in Maryland. The authors suggest that evaluating the reform method by only analyzing student test scores is a flawed methodology. Teachers and class size should also be factors that are considered. The paper presents data specifications for creating a school reconstitution analysis model with student, teacher, and school level variables.

### **Jason Berv, *Charter Schools and the Compromise of Equity: An Evaluation of Colorado's Charter School Legislation (1998).***

**14 pages**

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This paper highlights Colorado legislation authorizing the establishment of charter schools. Colorado's Charter School Act focuses on adequacy, accountability and autonomy. However, accountability is most emphasized in practice. The author suggests that Colorado fails to address equity concerns when implementing charter school legislation.

### **Dennis W. Cheek, *A State Accountability System as a Technology of Social Control: The Case of RI (April 2000).***

**15 pgs.**

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In 1996, Rhode Island formed a Comprehensive Education Strategy ("CES"), which established an agenda for standards, assessment and accountability for school improvement. The two main goals are improving teaching and learning, and creating responsive and supportive systems. In 1997, Rhode Island passed a law enumerating many of the principles announced in CES. This article provides an overview of Rhode Island's new accountability system, along with a thorough discussion of technology as a means of measuring accountability. Ramifications of such technologies and uncertainty with accountability systems are discussed.

### **James G. Cibulka & Roberta L. Derlin, *State Educational Performance Reporting Policies in the U.S.: Accountability's Many Faces (1995).***

**21 pages**

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This paper examines state-level performance reporting in the United States, an area the authors found to be an important part of state education policies striving for greater accountability. There is an overview of the pressure for accountability, as well as roadblocks to its success. The author mentions the following five issues needing further study: performance reporting as an isolated or interlocking policy tool; performance reporting as external accountability or internal improvement; performance reporting as

contextually-drive date or prescribed data; performance reporting as a comprehensive or selective performance indicator system; and performance reporting as an equity tool.

**David T. Conley & Paul Goldman, How Educators Process and Respond to State-Level Education Reform Policies: The Case of Oregon (1998).**

**29 pgs.**

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This paper reports the findings of the reactions of educators to state level education reform initiatives in Oregon. More teachers agreed than disagreed that the primary effects of reform have (1) increased teacher workload, (2) focused curriculum on state standards, (3) increased accountability for schools, (4) increased curriculum integration, (5) increased teacher collaboration, and (6) increased social service integration into schools. Teachers felt that more funding was necessary to implement reform, changes in education are too many too fast, the current system does not work for many students, the intent is to judge schools based on student achievement and meet business needs, and fundamental changes are needed in education. As a result of reform, teachers said that they developed curriculum, participated in in-services and developed improvement plans. Benchmarks for student performance, tests, and work samples had the most effect on teaching methodologies. Their own value systems and an understanding of what they are supposed to do are the elements that most affect their support for reform.

**Elizabeth H. DeBray, Incentives in States' Educational Accountability Systems: Is the Assumption of Continuous Improvement Included? (April 1999).**

**22 pages**

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This paper discusses state-level accountability systems, starting with the premise that in a few years state policy-makers will be faced with the reality that a substantial amount of schools will have failed to meet academic standards. The first section is on performance-based systems and state policies. The author suggests that rewards and sanctions only trigger short-term rewards and fail to stimulate improvement. For example, deregulation and flexibility is mostly about management and not instruction. The second section discusses schools in the middle range, through an analysis of Mississippi, Kentucky, and Maryland, and how they compare under different accountability policies. In the last section, the author outlines her three strategies for supporting continuous school improvement in schools as differentiating and targeting policies, building state policies to build capacity, and developing shared visions of instruction in standards-based systems.

**Corrie Giles, Contradictions in Accountability: Planning and Target Setting in Schools. Doing Things Right or Doing the Right Things? (October 1999).**

**9 pgs.**

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This paper suggests that planning and development in school administrations dealing with accountability standards results in doing the "right things" as opposed to doing "things right." There are five contradictions relative to assumptions about planning: "(1) Short time-lines and multiple innovations will defeat rational planning every time; (2) Long-term planning is not the same as strategic planning; (3) Planning is conceived and

operationalized differently by the school improvement and school effectiveness movements; (4) Planning is part of the change process, not an administrative adjunct to the change process; (5) There is not a clear view of what planning should look like in practice when faced with multiple innovations in very unstable planning contexts.” The paper analyzes rational planning, long-term planning versus strategic planning, school improvement versus school effectiveness, planning and the change process, planning in practice, and planning as an emotional experience. The author concludes by suggesting three areas to further research in the field of accountability driven planning: whether the push for site-based planning and a target setting process disenfranchise schools trying to maintain their own individual improvement plans; what the fundamental difficulties are with site-based planning when outside accountability issues permeate the planning agenda; and what information is needed for teachers and administrators to support site-based planning.

**Jennifer Goldstein et al., Reconstitution in Theory and Practice: The Experience of San Francisco (April 1998).**

**45 pgs.**

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This paper presented at the Annual Meeting of American Educational Research Association describes the history and theory behind reconstitution through an analysis of San Francisco Unified School District (“SFUSD”) where it was first implemented. This paper aims at accomplishing three tasks. First, it explains the goals of reconstitution in SFUSD, including its original goals of providing a remedy for racial segregation and school failure and its use as an incentive to improve schools. Second, the paper provides a theory of effective accountability. Third, there is an analysis of recent political changes related to reconstitution. The authors conclude that reconstitution has had some success, especially in improving test scores of African American students. However, they do not attribute the success to “vacating the adults,” but rather to the implementation of interventions. Also, some schools have improved due to the threat of reconstitution. On the other hand, reconstitution has had a devastating effect on teachers’ morale, their relationship with the district, and their sense of professionalism. The authors state that it is an improvement process “doomed from the outset.”

**Nancy S. Grasmick, The Politics of Large Scale Assessment (June 1997).**

**7 pgs.**

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This speech highlighted Maryland’s experience with school reform. In 1987, the governor created a Commission on School Performance, the first time that the local educational community was not directing school reform. Some of the issues that confronted Maryland during the implementation of its education reform were the changing nature of learning, changing expectations of the public, increasingly large amounts of state and local money needed to fund education, changes in the student population, and the national politicization of education. Strategies that Maryland used to obtain political support included emphasizing reform with accountability, focusing on public understanding and support, working closely and continually with the state legislature, establishing and maintaining committees with divergent viewpoints to

provide a forum for the substantive exchange of ideas involving the teachers, and sustaining the efforts.

**Carolyn Kelley & Angela Smithmier, Aligning Organizational Features and School Reform: An Examination of Two Recent Reforms (October 1998).**

**35 pgs.**

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This paper reveals the results of a study examining organizational features in two types of educational reforms: community-based collaborative services initiative and state accountability program. The evidence suggests that reform initiatives are more successful in elementary schools because they are less complex, have higher levels of professional communities, and the school is the primary organization, unlike high schools where departments are. As a result, the authors suggest two methods to implement policy reforms. First, schools could be restructured and organizational structures simplified to provide time for teachers to collaborate and integrate reform methods. Second, reform methods could focus more on school-level differences to achieve greater efficacy.

**Rosemarie Kopacsi & Elaine M. Walker, Multiple Voices and Mixed Methodologies To Support Comprehensive School Reform (April 2000).**

**31 pgs.**

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This paper describes program evaluation models and designs in Newark Public Schools that have been implemented since the takeover in 1995. The models are collaborations between community groups and the school district to provide services to schools. The programs evaluated are: Principals' Leadership Institute (professional development for teachers); Project Grad-Newark (academic support for students); New Beginnings Kindergarten Program (kindergarten restructuring); School Based Health Care Clinics (health care for students); and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (extended-day academic and enrichment programs for at risk students). The authors cite multiple benefits of collaboration, including identifying unmet needs, clarifying the division of labor, and strengthening resources. They suggest that these evaluation models are representative of the changing nature of educational reform and the need for broader based participation.

**Betty Malen et al., Uncovering the Potential Contradictions in Reconstitution Reforms: A Working Paper (October 1999).**

**34 pgs.**

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This paper analyzes the "theories of action" in reconstitution based on a two-year study. The findings reveal contrasts between the "theories of action" in the reform and the actual reform experiences.

**Timothy C. Pitts & Edward B. Reeves, A Spatial Analysis of Contextual effects on Educational Accountability in Kentucky, (1999).**

**14 pgs.**

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This paper analyzes socioeconomic factors and educational achievement. The study shows that socioeconomic factors have a “spatial distribution that is spatially autocorrelated.” Furthermore, these factors are more influential in middle and high school than in elementary school. The author suggests that socioeconomic factors and geographic context be taken into account when assessing schools.

**Judy R. Wilkerson, Standards-Based Accountability as a Tool for Making a Difference in Student Learning. A State and an Institutional Perspective on Standards-Based Accountability (2000).**

**10 pgs.**

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This paper explores Florida’s System of School Improvement and Accountability which has developed three sets of standards: Sunshine State Standards (standards for K-12 students); The Accomplished Practices (teacher standards); and The Subject Matter Content Standards (additional teacher standards). As per the Sunshine State Standards, statewide tests were developed to measure student achievement, ability to progress to a new grade, and ability to eventually graduate. Schools receive grades based on student pass rates, and failing schools are subject to remediation programs. The rest of the paper mainly focuses on teacher preparation.

**Priscilla Wohlstetter, Accountability Mechanisms for State Education Reform; Some Organizational Alternatives, (1989).**

**51 pgs.**

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This paper first analyzes different state accountability mechanisms and the ways in which states approach accountability. Next, the paper examines the success of accountability mechanisms through an analysis of their uses and consequences. The conclusion states that an effective accountability mechanism should (1) be empowered by state government; (2) have monitoring or oversight as a primary mission; (3) be independent from implementors; (4) have strong relationship with other policy actors and with leaders outside government; and (5) communicate findings to multiple constituencies.

## **PRESS ARTICLES**

**Caroline Hendrie, *A Mixed Record for Reconstitution Flashes a Yellow Light for Districts*, Education Week, July 8, 1998.**

**6 pgs.**

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Almost none of the districts that reconstituted schools last year is planning to do it again. The article focuses on the deleterious effects of this powerful accountability measure that is quick to implement and slow to show results.

**Caroline Hendrie, *Reconstitution Gaining New Momentum*, Education Week, September 24, 1997.**

**7 pgs.**

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This article describes the increase in the amount of schools implementing reconstitution as a way to resuscitate failing public schools. The article mentions schools in Cleveland, Chicago, Denver, Maryland, and San Francisco.

**Tamar Lewin, *Schools Taking Tougher Stance With Standards*, New York Times, Sept. 6, 1999, at A1.**

**4 pgs.**

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Almost every state has standards-based programs. This article examines schools' harsher approach to penalizing students who do not meet specific state academic standards.

**Andrew Trotter, *Wash. Panel Recommends Tougher Accountability*, Education Week, Nov. 22, 2000.**

**3 pgs.**

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The Academic Achievement and Accountability Commission concluded that schools that consistently perform poorly should be subject to state takeover, monetary penalties, or other consequences. The Commission made this recommendation after spending a year considering accountability measures.

## MISCELLANEOUS

**A Special Session Guide to K-12 Reform (Legislative Analyst's Office, January 1999).**

**16 pgs.**

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This document was drafted by California's Legislative Analyst's Office to assist the legislature in deciding state strategies to improve education. The first part describes fundamental reform principles of their suggested K-12 Plan. The second part discusses issues that the legislature will confront when attempting to improve K-12 education.

**Bruce C. Bowers, State Efforts To Deregulate Education (ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management, 1990).**

**2 pgs.**

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More than twenty states have some type of legislation granting relief from regulation. Two issues arise with deregulation. The first is that few schools opt for deregulation. The second is whether it is successful.

**Carolyn Kelley, A Look at Kentucky's Accountability Program – School Reform Efforts Bear Fruit (Education Commission of the States, June 1998).**

**3 pgs.**

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This article focused on Kentucky's accountability program. The author included strategies for meeting accountability goals and motivation factors for teachers.