

Chapter 6

Re-Evaluating Schools: Issues, Questions, and Opportunities

ABSTRACT

Being educated to compete in a global workplace means developing informed citizens capable of making informed choices and decisions. Education today involves preparing students for uncertain futures, a priority for educators, school administrators, policymakers, and stakeholders. The call for schools to focus on developing student's cooperative habits while also acquiring the ability to adapt and learn how to learn has been a central theme of this book and of educators for the last several decades. Learning how to learn is a basic tenet of Dewey's philosophy on education and needs to continue as a basic premise of education in the 21st century. This chapter will look to the current trends in education delivery, highlighting recent developments and noting present-day education delivery challenges that are still waiting to be resolved.

INTRODUCTION

As noted throughout this book, planning forward for education in the 21st century requires also looking to the past to ensure successes are built upon and solutions to challenges not lost in the rush to create a new type of education delivery, digital and online, with the same barriers in the U. S.'s K-12 public school system as the past two centuries. Education today involves preparing students for uncertain futures, a priority for educators, school administrators,

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policymakers, and stakeholders. The call for schools to focus on developing student's cooperative habits while also acquiring the ability to adapt, and learn how to learn, has been a central theme of this book and of educators for the last several decades (Davis McGaw, 2016; 2019, 2020).

Research has extensively provided insight regarding best practices for designing distance learning courses at U.S. institutions of higher education (Wendt, Nisbett & Rockinson-Szapkiw, 2018).

Being educated to compete in a global workplace means developing informed citizens capable of making informed choices and decisions (Stobie, 2016). This is not a new concept. John Dewey, in *Democracy and Education* (1916), states, “*Education is a process of living and not a preparation for future living.*” Learning how to learn is a basic tenet of Dewey's philosophy on education and needs to continue as a basic premise of education in the 21st century (Davis-McGaw, 2016; 2019).

David Gamberg, superintendent of both the Southold Union Free School District and the Greenport Union Free School District, N.Y., previously a classroom teacher, an elementary school principal, and an assistant superintendent, aptly describes schools engaging learners in more than college and career readiness:

The call to have children as young as 8 or 9 years old “college- and career-ready” does not create the same narrative as building a sound foundation in childhood filled with play and creativity. Among the many other more important ways to engage the hearts and minds of our youngest students, we must promote the childhood experience in all its wonder.’

All members of a community, from custodians to teachers and principals to kindergartners, are the learners of a true school. ...Schools of the future—no matter their size, technological sophistication, or cost-effectiveness—should always begin with the best qualities of our humanity (Gamberg, 2016).

When reviewing the research literature surrounding K-12 urban STEM learning, three main areas of concern are noted: poverty and access to STEM resources, the unequal participation between males and females, and unequal participation of minorities (Wendt & Apugo, 2019). As education and schools move forward into innovative methods of education delivery, there are basic

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