

No More Excuses



**WHAT BUSINESS
MUST DO TO HELP IMPROVE
FLORIDA'S SCHOOLS**

FLORIDA CHAMBER
Foundation

WorldClass

A WorldClass education system is essential to Florida's future. WorldClass recognizes that virtually no one is satisfied with Florida's public schools. Students are not gaining the skills they need for the jobs of the 21st century. Employers are not finding educated graduates who can help them compete. Taxpayers are not receiving an adequate return on their education investment. Many educators themselves are dissatisfied and frustrated at not having the flexibility, training or tools to teach our children well.

We must now use our business know-how to lead an education revolution in our own communities.

WorldClass provides the timely strategy for a new era of business-led school reform.

WorldClass will train business leaders to become "champions" for WorldClass schools in Florida's communities. These leaders will be in the vanguard of a new generation of business leaders who will accelerate the school restructuring process in Florida.

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WorldClass represents a new approach to school reform in Florida.

- Instead of working mainly at the state level, we'll focus on local action in our own communities.
- Instead of letting the debate be dominated by the special interests, we'll make sure everyone stays focused on our common interest, helping Florida's kids get the education they need.
- Instead of measuring input (how much time a child spends in class), we'll be measuring output (what do our students know and what can they do).
- Instead of giving up and accepting the status quo, we'll create a passion for change among business leaders, educators, parents and students.
- Instead of settling for mediocrity, we'll insist on higher standards for all students.

WorldClass schools have eight key components.

- High standards for all students
- Accurate assessments to measure what students know and can do
- Challenging curriculums with real-world applications
- Competent and inspired teachers
- Leading-edge instructional technology
- Culture of continuous improvement
- Accountability tools that measure school systems' performance
- Supportive communities

The Florida Chamber Foundation is focusing on this last component because none of the other changes will be made without *supportive communities* — leaders

of business and government, educators, parents, students and others who share a vision of what WorldClass schools look like and who are willing to do what it takes to make sure their community provides this kind of education for their children.

WorldClass activities are designed to build this kind of community support.

- Business "champions" who will make the case for WorldClass schools.
- A WorldClass Education Institute that will give champions the expertise they need to be catalysts for educational change.
 - Training
 - Communications
 - Research & development
- New accountability measures
 - Quality Indicator Index
 - Performance and Productivity Index

Research Support.

- WorldClass: *Establishing Education Standards in Florida*, Florida Chamber.
- WorldClass: *Establishing Education Standards in Florida Appendix*, Florida Chamber.
- WorldClass: *Benchmark for Education in Florida*, Florida Chamber.

Executive Summary



WorldClass

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Making it happen is the key to the Florida Chamber Foundation's WorldClass strategy.

This is not another report that will gather dust on your bookshelves. This is not a simple "get in-get out" project. This is an action plan — a strategy that will give business leaders throughout Florida the knowledge, skills, and tools to transform schools in their own communities.

"How do you do it?" is the question not only Jack Critchfield, but business people statewide have been asking. Their involvement with schools over the years has shown how today's education system condemns so many children to a dismal future, and how quickly the education reform effort must move to prevent another lost generation. But business involvement has also revealed that many educators and Florida residents do not appreciate this urgency. Too many programs are not even geared to begin until the year 2000, or even the year 2010, says Robert Morris, Florida Chamber Foundation co-chairman.

"Improving student skills and knowledge is not something that we can afford a decade to get in place," he argues.

For all the frustration that these experiences may have provoked, they have helped us arrive at the WorldClass strategy. We now know what must be done.

WorldClass recognizes that all parts of the system must change.

WorldClass schools will strive for quality and customer satisfaction through continuous improvement. The schools will provide eight key elements:

- Higher standards for all students
- Accurate assessments to measure what students know and can do
- Challenging curriculums with real-world applications
- Competent and inspired teachers
- Leading-edge instructional technology
- Culture of continuous improvement
- Accountability tools that measure school systems' performance
- Supportive communities

Chapters 1 and 2 of this report take you on a visionary tour of such a school and explain why a WorldClass education system is essential to Florida's future. WorldClass recognizes that virtually no one is satisfied with Florida's public schools. Students are not gaining the skills they need for the jobs of the 21st century. Employers are not finding educated graduates who can help them compete. Taxpayers are not receiving an adequate return on their education investment. Many educators themselves are dissatisfied and frustrated at not having the flexibility, training or tools to teach our children well. Florida residents

are already paying the price through high crime rates, few well-paid jobs, and a growing realization that the "American Dream" is in danger. Chapter 3 paints a stark picture of our current school system's failure and how the future could be even worse unless we act now.

WorldClass recognizes that more money is not the only answer to higher quality.

Research conducted for the Florida Chamber Foundation shows that Florida's expenditures per pupil are higher than the national average and higher than that of any of the major industrial countries in the world. Our research also shows that, in some cases, Florida student performance was higher in schools with lower per-pupil expenditures.

WorldClass understands that small-scale business involvement won't do.

Business has been too fragmented in its approach to school reform. Adopt-a-school partnerships and legislative policy changes are not enough. We must now use our business know-how to lead an education revolution in our own communities. We must put national and state policies into action at the local level. This is a great chance to make a difference for our children.

As employers, as Chamber members with experience in school reform attempts, and as parents and community members, we believe that WorldClass provides the

timely strategy for a new era of business-led school reform.

WorldClass has the right focus.

Focus on kids. We have seen too often that children are an afterthought in the school restructuring debate. Hammering out the specifics of reform issues — finances, or new curriculum guidelines, tests, textbooks, rules and report cards — many of us have forgotten that the purpose of these efforts is to help Florida's kids get

"The problem has been identified; there's no question about that. The proposed changes have pretty well been agreed upon. ... What has not occurred, however, is how do you do it? How do you make it happen?"

— Jack Critchfield, Chairman and CEO, Florida Progress Corporation, and a principal investor of the Florida Chamber Foundation's WorldClass strategy.



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**...TRAINING
BUSINESS
LEADERS TO
BECOME
"CHAMPIONS"
FOR
WORLDCLASS
SCHOOLS...**

the education they need to survive in the 21st century. Experience has shown us that the affected parties in school reform work hardest at protecting their own interests. Not enough people have been looking out for kids. The WorldClass strategy will shift the focus to the children.

Focus on local schools. We have learned that political gridlock at the local level can undermine even the best state-level reform

efforts, such as Blueprint 2000. School superintendents and school board members, who avoid supporting innovation and change out of fear for their political careers... teachers, who feel neither administrators nor parents understand the challenges they face in the classroom... business executives, who say educators don't understand the real world... and parents, who feel that the system shuts them out. As a recent national report points out, "Education reform has fallen victim to division, factionalism, and political gridlock. Groups that should work together seem continually pulled apart by suspicion, prejudice, and fear of losing hard-won gains."

To make our state and national education goals a reality, Florida businesses must help change the political climate for reform at the local level. Inside the schools, they must work with teachers and educators dedicated to change and break through the resistance that has slowed reform. Outside the schools, they must work with community groups and the media to overcome the complacency that so easily douses sparks of reform.

Focus on quality and continuous improvement. We have seen how a culture of distrust — administrators vs. teachers, educators vs. business executives, educators vs. parents — has undermined even the best-intentioned school reform efforts. In place of the current "win-lose" environment, WorldClass intends to use the culture of total quality and continu-

ous improvement to make sure all players have the same priority (improved student performance) and stay headed in the same direction.

WorldClass provides the right tools.

WorldClass will train business leaders to become "champions" for WorldClass schools in Florida's communities. These leaders will be in the vanguard of a new generation of business leaders who will accelerate the school restructuring process in Florida.

These business people know how to lead. They know how to empower people, get results, transform institutions and introduce new technology. Through the WorldClass strategy, our champions will have the specific tools needed to speed the pace of education reform.

WorldClass features — such as the WorldClass Education Center, a training academy for reform-minded executives, intensive instruction and expert assistance — will help business leaders become catalysts for change on school boards, school advisory councils and other influential groups. They'll learn to identify and work with champions inside the system — teachers, principals, superintendents and school board members — who agree that the status quo is no longer acceptable.

They'll work to implement total quality systems in schools and to bring new skills into the curriculum, especially those identified by the U.S. Department of Labor

Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) as essential for 21st century jobs. They'll also learn how to persuade community residents to initiate the sweeping changes so crucial to Florida's future.

We will start by targeting several school districts in 1994 and eventually expand to all 67 school districts. Chapter 4 defines the key ingredients of the WorldClass strategy and explains how they are uniquely suited to address the challenges described above.

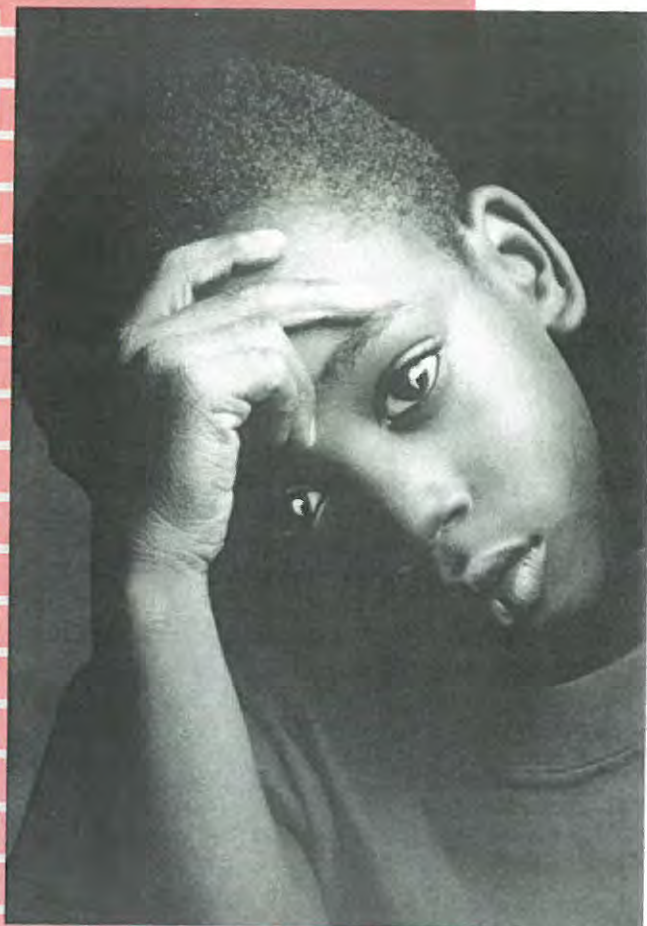
WorldClass has clearly-defined goals and a system to measure results.

Transforming Florida schools to WorldClass schools must move faster than previous reform efforts; there is no time to spare in preparing our children for the 21st century. We are committed to staying the course, continuously reviewing what we have accomplished, and setting tangible goals for the next steps forward. Chapter 5 spells out how we intend to implement our strategy through the WorldClass Action Plan. Chapter 6 elaborates on a key part of the Action Plan — new accountability and performance indicators that will help us measure how the WorldClass strategy is doing — and more important, how Florida's schools and students are doing.

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"This is the first project I've been involved in that I think has a chance to make a difference...to be at the table and to be a voice for the kids."

— Robert A. Morris, Co-Chair, WorldClass strategy.



WorldClass has assembled the right team by utilizing Chamber leadership. The Florida Chamber, with a national reputation for business-led school restructuring, takes another step forward by developing and guiding the WorldClass strategy. The Florida Chamber staff will oversee the plan's development and implementation.

A core group of committed businesses from around the state is a part of our team. Companies such as Walt Disney World, Florida Progress, First Union National Bank of Florida, Tropicana, Alamo Rent-A-Car, Barnett Banks Inc., NationsBank, Monsanto Corp., BellSouth Telecommunications, General Mills Restaurants, and Peat Marwick, along with 14 local Chambers, have supported us in developing this strategy.

We also have many supporters inside and outside the system. We are proud to have people such as Ocala business owner Whit Palmer, past chairman of the Florida Council of 100, who is looking to the WorldClass strategy as a way to let business and professional leaders directly participate in

education reform.

"It ties the public and private sectors to the school system...in a way that lets us get involved with the schools."

Pam Davis, president of PRIDE of Florida, sees WorldClass as a way to move from talk to real change.

"It is going to be a hands-on, tactical project," Davis says. "It offers a framework within which business leaders and concerned citizens can take action."

WorldClass is the necessary link between legislative ideals and real change says Kathy Adams, president and CEO of MediaReach Public Relations and chairman of Florida Cities in Schools.

"We fit into Blueprint 2000," she says. "We bring things together on a local level and make it work."

For school leaders, WorldClass will make a difference because it takes on all aspects of the system, says teacher union leader Doug Tuthill of Pinellas County.

"What's going to make this work is a culture of continuous improvement and total quality," he says. "Total quality gives us a way to revolutionize public schools, and we've never had that before. It's knowing who our customers are and exceeding their expectations. It's a complete, total, cultural transformation."

For those like Chamber Foundation Research Committee Co-Chairman Robert Morris, who've been involved in reform efforts for years, WorldClass finally switches the focus from

government policy change to individual school change.

"This is the first project I've been involved in that I think really has a chance to make a difference on the classroom level," Morris says. "The only way that business can get to the budget process, to the classroom, is to get down to the school district level where those important decisions are being made. To be at the table and to be a voice for the kids." And for local Chamber executives, WorldClass finally gives them a specific action plan, says Sarasota's Chief Staff Executive David May.

"Whether you've got corporate resources or you're a small business that wants to make a difference in your local school system, these materials are applicable," May says. "This gives business people the tools to use at the local level."

WorldClass wants your leadership.

The only missing link to the WorldClass strategy is you.

The Florida Chamber is calling the business community to action. Not simply to continue the isolated, education breakfast meetings or career-shadowing programs. And not simply lobbying for more legislative changes — you already made significant inroads two years ago with the passage of Blueprint 2000.

Now it's time for the hardest part of all: putting everything you've learned and worked for into practice. That means learning about national and state education

- ✓ Stay focused on the primary goal of helping children gain the skills and knowledge they will need for citizenship and work in the 21st century.
- ✓ Begin with several school districts, gradually extend to all 67 Florida districts.
- ✓ Identify business leaders to serve as "champions" of educational reform in their districts.
- ✓ Train champions in two intensive weekend sessions to tackle all fronts: public awareness, political gridlock, and systemic reform.
- ✓ Place champions and business leaders in the heart of school decision-making forums, school advisory councils and school boards.
- ✓ Utilize extensive public awareness campaigns to target educators, parents, businesses, community members and the media.
- ✓ Incorporate "total quality" tools and training techniques into schools as part of a "continuous quality" improvement culture.
- ✓ Transform all aspects of the education system including standards and assessment, curriculum, teaching methods, and accountability measures.
- ✓ Operate primarily on the local level, enlisting community support and targeting your own district's schools.
- ✓ Seek win-win solutions and commit to long-term, all-encompassing change.

WorldClass

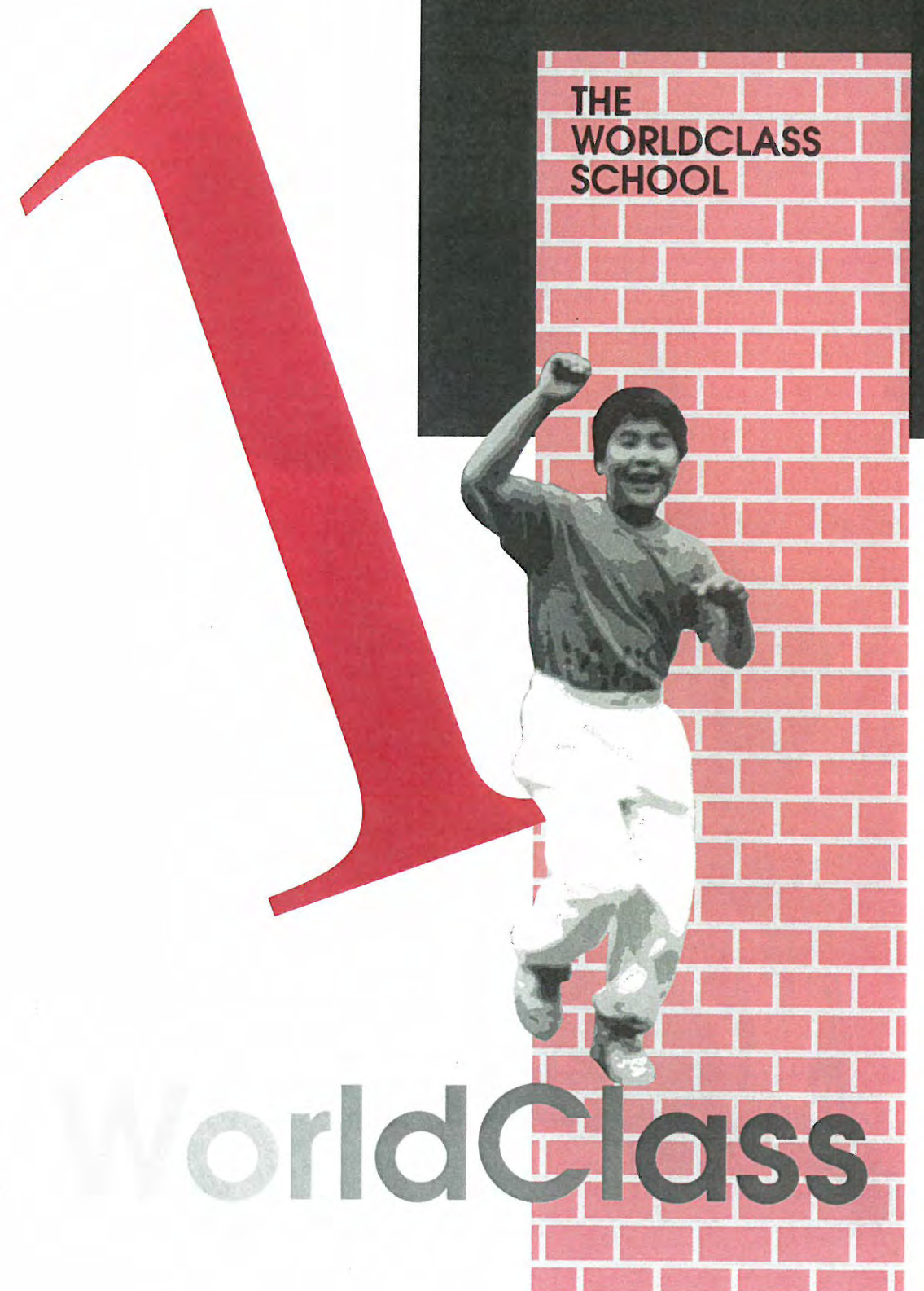
reform policies and making them work in your community. It means crafting your own community action plans that help people focus on student performance. And it means “stand-up, enlist-now, no-quitting-when-the-going-gets-tough” action. By everyone. Some of you will take the lead as WorldClass champions, spurring political change in your school districts and galvanizing community support to re-invent schools. All of you will be called upon to get the message to fellow employers, neighbors, parents and students to look at our society, look at our schools, and work toward change.

This is your chance to plunge in and turn this bureaucratic system around. This is your vehicle to prompt an education revolution. And this is your opportunity to fight for Florida’s kids.



Chapter One

THE
WORLDCLASS
SCHOOL



WorldClass

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Welcome to a WorldClass Florida classroom, year 2000.

It's pretty noisy in here. These ninth graders have been divided into teams for a debate over whether America should get involved in the latest world crisis.

The first team is advocating military action, based on a detailed explanation of the country's troubled history and the threat to our national security if the situation is ignored. They pull out maps produced from the computer graphics program and

handouts they have prepared, explaining the region's geography and political tensions.

The second team is pushing for economic sanctions. Look at the ramifications of U.S. military action during the past five decades, they argue, using a posterboard chart of the loss of American life in each conflict after World War II. Moreover, they continue, using their own computer-generated charts, consider the expense of previous military interventions and the public opinion polls showing that the economic recession is still a top concern.

The students take notes and ask questions, as teacher Mike Harrison keeps track of student participation and judges each team's research and presentation. Harrison is tough on the presenters. He wants to know the source of the economic data, for instance, and if it was the latest available. A student from that team walks to the computer at his desk and does a quick search to verify the month and year of the economic survey, and that the source was the Federal Reserve Board, as reported by Newsweek magazine.

From the group advocating military action, he wants to know how they think intervention in this latest hotspot will compare to previous U.S. involvement in Central Europe and Iraq.

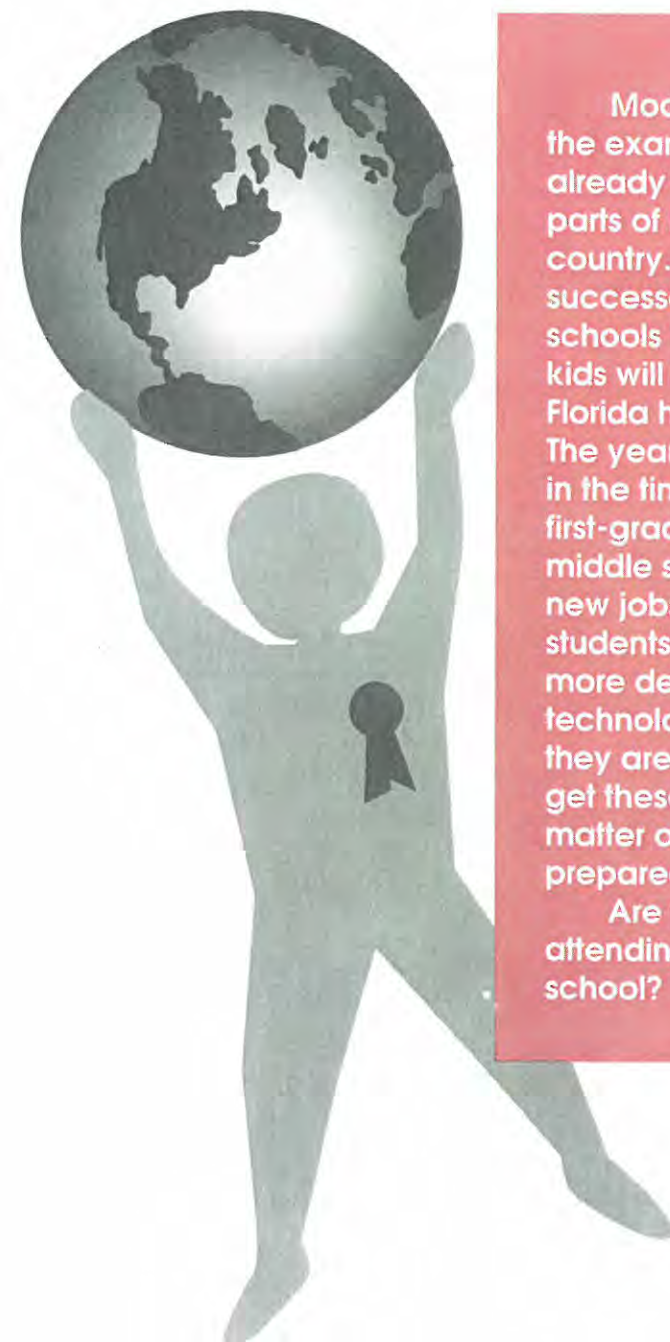


A student from another team raises her hand to say that she thinks intervention is good when it is a humanitarian mission, like ensuring food supply delivery to Bosnia. But a team member from the anti-military team responds that intervention will inevitably lead to military conflict. Another student raises his hand to ask what would have happened in World War II if no one had bothered to intervene militarily, and how many lives might have been saved if other countries had responded earlier.

Harrison is still taking notes, but he walks around the room, making sure that each question is heard and addressed by team members. He is thoroughly enjoying the lively discussions and the intensity in the faces of his young students. But he insists that the teams defend their stances with hard data and historical parallels, not just philosophical arguments. He is entering his data into a hand-held computer. The statistics are sent to a data bank and provides students with an assessment of their performance at the end of the day.

Vaguely, Harrison is aware of teacher Vicky Marks with her portable computer, entering her own notes. Harrison has petitioned to move up to the next promotion and pay level, and his work is regularly monitored by the principal and by teachers from other schools. This is the third class evaluation in the process, and he faces two more. His lesson plans and students' cumulative writing portfolios will also be examined.

But Harrison went through this the last time his teaching team was promoted, and he invites parents and local citizens into his class. In a way, he enjoys having teachers and parents see his class in action, and he likes monitoring classes himself in other



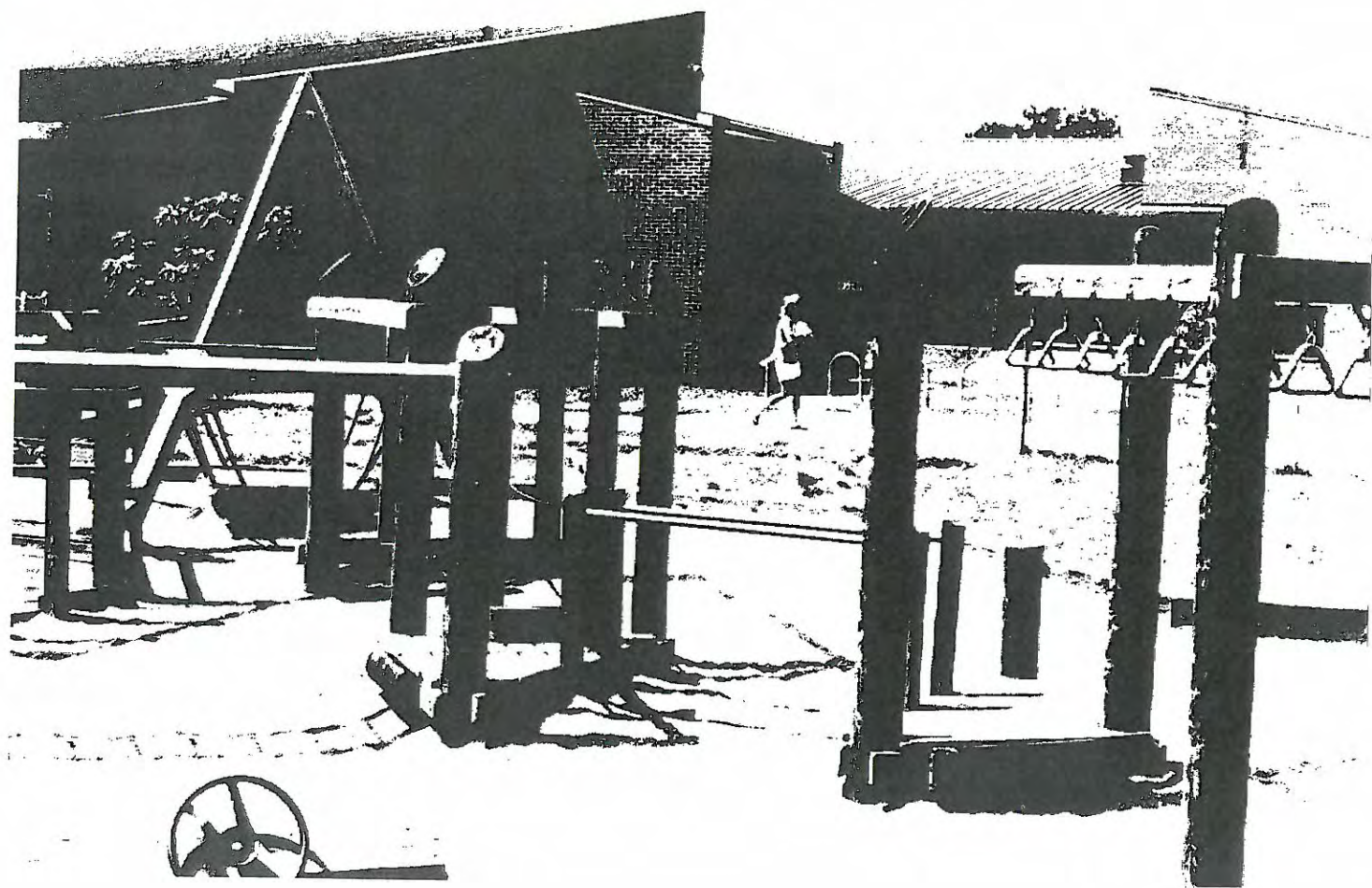
Model classrooms like the example given here already exist in isolated parts of Florida and the country. Using those successes to make all schools WorldClass for all kids will be the challenge. Florida has no choice. The year 2000 will be here in the time it takes today's first-graders to reach middle school, and the new jobs awaiting those students will be even more demanding and technology-oriented than they are now. Who will get these jobs will be a matter of who was better prepared.

Are your children attending a WorldClass school?

schools. It's helpful in gaining ideas for discussions on what works and what doesn't at the monthly teacher workshops.

Class is over when the project is completed. Each student is given some feedback on his or her performance. Harrison, meanwhile, jots down a few notes to himself: talk with the math teachers about using the local software developer for a map-making lesson, using the region under discussion. He also decides to have the students send some of their handouts to a business executive who spoke recently about marketing surveys and public opinion polls.

As one group of students leaves, another group of WorldClass students prepares to apply their knowledge and skills to real-world problems.



Chapter Two

WHY DO WE NEED WORLDCLASS SCHOOLS?



WorldClass

In Florida, a high school student must pass only a high school competency test and maintain a grade point average of 1.5 — that's a D+ — to graduate.

For many Floridians, it is not readily apparent why we need schools such as the one described in the previous chapter. In fact, many argue that they would be satisfied if today's schools simply did a better job of teaching the "3 Rs" that we adults learned. But, as the Florida Chamber and other experts around the nation have argued, that is not enough.

The world has changed, and education must change with it. How students learn must improve, and what skills they apply must increase. Florida schools, like schools in most states, simply have not kept up with society's needs.

The traditional school system was designed for early 19th-century needs and the industrial age, when jobs required workers who could memorize and follow directions to perform a single, isolated task. Problem-solving and critical thinking were left to top management.

A New Economy of High-Skilled Jobs

Obviously, America's workforce has changed since then. In 1900, agriculture accounted for 85 percent of America's workforce. Today, it accounts for three percent. Professional, technical, managerial, sales and service jobs, are expected to grow by 37 percent from now to the year 2000.

Meanwhile, the agricultural and manufacturing jobs that are available have become increasingly technical, demanding more know-how of their workers than ever before.

"A decade ago, a mechanic could get by with basic skills, a tool box and a simply written manual," the National Education Goals report states. "Today a mechanic needs to know statistical quality control, understand how to work with computers and read manuals written for someone with a 12th grade education."

These changes have been well recognized by Florida's leaders. In

1989, the Florida Chamber Foundation's *Cornerstone* and *Enterprise Florida* reports challenged the state's leaders to rethink their approach to future economic development. Their conclusion was to decrease dependence on low-cost, low-skill sectors such as agriculture and tourism, and make a dedicated, focused effort to build the high-skill, high-wage businesses of the future in areas such as information and health technology.

Workforce 2000: Choices for Florida's Future and Governor Chiles' Government by the People Commission echoed that assessment, noting that the state's economic forecast is grim unless its education system drastically improves.

The study found that while Florida's economy in 1950 accommodated a workforce that was nearly two-thirds unskilled, that is no longer possible. As of 1990, the percentage of unskilled jobs in America had fallen to 35 percent. By the year 2000, it is projected to drop to 15 percent.

"Florida's education system will have to at least double the percentage of skilled young people entering the workforce over the next 10 years in order to hold its own in the American economy," said business leader Jack Critchfield, who chaired the Commission.

Implications for Schools

What are the educational implications of this new economy? For one, schools will have to set higher standards. What was good enough for you will not be good enough for our children.

"Educators, students, parents, policymakers, employers and other community leaders allowed what was once an exemplary education system to stagnate and decay," states a recent report by the National Education Goals Panel. "Most students leave this system without ever being seriously challenged, without ever fully knowing what they are capable of learning and doing, and without having gained the tools and skills they need to survive and prosper."

Business executives agree. Only 10 percent, for instance, believe high school graduates are able to solve complex problems, according to a recent Lou Harris survey.

In addition, schools will have to teach differently. WorldClass workplaces increasingly depend on employees who can solve problems, communicate effectively,



think on their feet, and work in teams. But the model of education that has been used by most schools since the turn of the century makes no attempt to cultivate these qualities.

Instead, the typical classroom resembles the factory of the early 20th century. The teacher (boss) lectures, while students (the workers) take notes and parrot back memorized facts on a multiple-choice test (inspection) at the end of the term.

Finally, schools can no longer leave anyone behind. Earlier this century, Americans with limited skills and about an 8th grade education could get a decent job on an assembly line and make a middle-class wage. Schools tended to focus on the top 25 percent — those who intended to graduate from four-year colleges.

For a number of reasons — notably demographic changes and the changing nature of the workplace — schools are now being asked to do a better job of educating *all* students. As a result, the best schools are focusing increased attention on students that tended to be neglected in the past, including females, minorities, and the non-college bound. They will make up an increasingly large percentage of the future workforce and population.

The Bigger Picture

Business leaders aren't the only ones who are clamoring for WorldClass schools. Everyone is at risk unless the current system is improved drastically.

If WorldClass schools are the prerequisite for a strong economy, then a thriving economy is essential for the well-being of every Floridian. A healthy economy means good jobs that pay good wages, leaving employees with the disposable income needed to finance the kind of middle-class lifestyle that has become the hallmark of the "American Dream."

A healthy economy also means being able to afford all the other activities that many Floridians have tended to take for granted such as high-quality health care, clean air and water, good parks and accessible beaches, well-stocked libraries and — perhaps most important these days — safe streets.

WorldClass schools provide the foundation for a safe, healthy and prosperous future. Without them, the problems that already account for too many newspaper headlines — rising unemployment, falling wages, increasing crime — are likely to worsen.

Chapter Three

TODAY'S
FLORIDA
SCHOOLS ARE
FAR FROM
WORLDCLASS



WorldClass

By any number of indicators, Florida's schools are light years away from achieving WorldClass standards. Neither students, employers, taxpayers nor Florida communities are well-served by the current system. Unless current trends are reversed, Florida's future could be even worse.

I. FLORIDA STUDENTS FALL FAR SHORT OF THE NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS

The vast majority of Florida students do not know what they need to know to succeed in 21st-century jobs or otherwise be contributing members of society.

In 1989, President Bush and the National Governors' Association agreed on six national education goals toward which all American students should strive. In its latest report (September 1993), the National Education Goals Panel said that only about 1 in 5 American students are performing at levels that are necessary for success in today's world.

To the extent data are available, Florida students tend to do worse than the U.S. average.

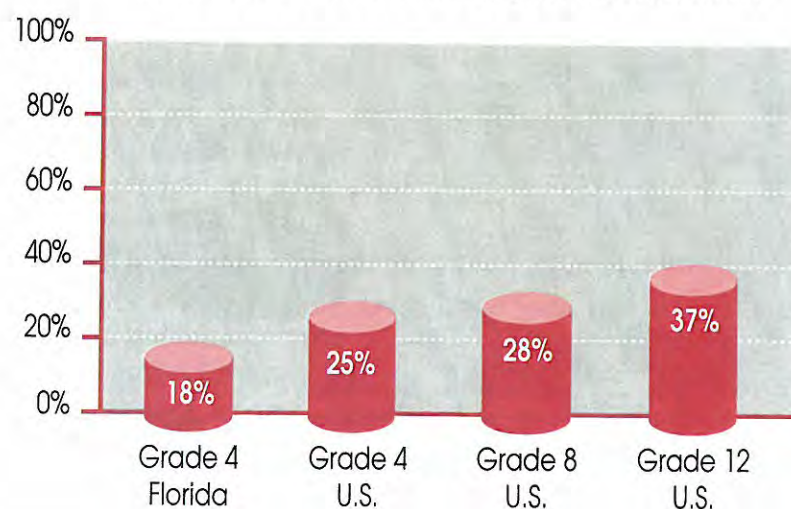
Specific indicators from 1992 and 1993 tests include:

Low Reading Proficiency

- Only 25 percent of American 4th-graders can read at the 4th-grade level. Only 18 percent of Florida 4th-graders can.
- Only 28 percent of American 8th-graders and 37 percent of 12th-graders can read at their grade levels.

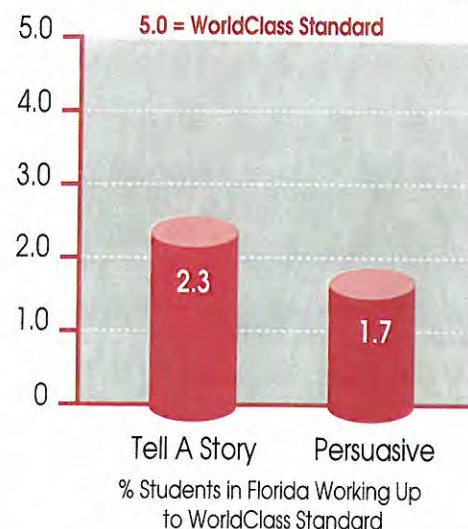
POOR READING PERFORMANCE

% Students in Florida and U.S. Working Up to WorldClass Standard

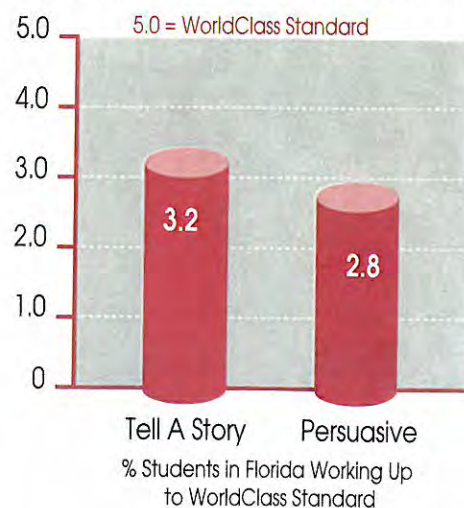


POOR WRITING PERFORMANCE

FLORIDA AVERAGE FOR 4th GRADERS



FLORIDA AVERAGE FOR 8th GRADERS



Low Writing Proficiency

- Florida's 4th- and 8th-graders fall far short of WorldClass standards in their ability to write well.

Low Math Proficiency

- Only 18 percent of American 4th-graders and 14 percent of Florida 4th-graders can do 4th-grade math.
- Only 25 percent of American 8th-graders and 18 percent of Florida 8th-graders can do 8th-grade math.
- Only 16 percent of American 12th-graders can do 12th-grade math.
- By comparison, students from Taiwan (41%), Korea (37%) and Switzerland (33%) performed much better than Florida students.

Low High School Completion Rate

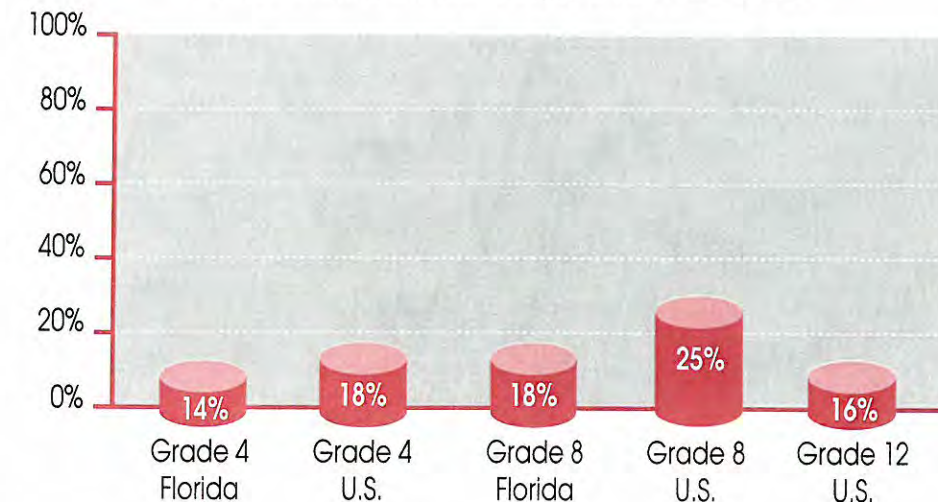
- Florida ranks 48th of 50 states in the percentage of its students who finish high school (79%, 12 points below the national average). Only Nevada and California do more poorly.

Few Challenging Courses

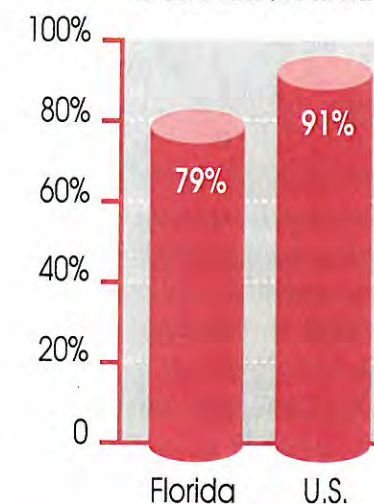
- Few Florida students take challenging courses. For instance, only:
 - 7 percent take calculus
 - 21 percent take physics
 - 46 percent take algebra
 - No foreign language courses are required.

POOR MATH PERFORMANCE

% Students in Florida and U.S. Working Up to WorldClass Standard



HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION RATE



MATHEMATICS PROFICIENCY

	Florida	National Average
Average proficiency	255	261
Numbers & operations	260	266
Measurement	251	258
Geometry	251	259
Data analysis, statistics & probability	262	255
Algebra & functions	255	260

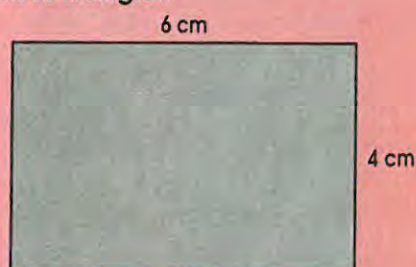
Source: 1993 National Education Goals Report

PUTTING THE DATA IN CONTEXT

All of us have seen data such as these. They paint a bleak picture. In its research, however, WorldClass pushes the data farther, placing the statistics in context. For instance, what does functional illiteracy look like? What kinds of questions are stumping our students?

The National Science Foundation reports that only 4.7 percent of American 12th-graders can do 12th-grade math and only 41 percent of 12th-graders can even do 7th-grade math. But what does a 7th- or 12th-grade math problem look like? How little do our students really know these days? The following two examples illustrate:

Problem 1. What is the area of this rectangle?



This is a problem typically covered in 7th- or 8th-grade math. Only 14 percent of American 8th-graders could give the correct answer (24 square cm). Only 41 percent of American 12th-graders could correctly answer similar problems. Scary, isn't it?

Problem 2. Suppose you have 10 coins and have at least one each of a quarter, a dime, a nickel and a penny. What is the least amount of money you could have?



This is a math problem typically covered in high school. Only 4.7 percent of American 12th-grade students could solve a problem like this (47 cents).

Source: 1992 Indicators of Science and Mathematics Education, National Science Foundation.

Little Use Of Technology

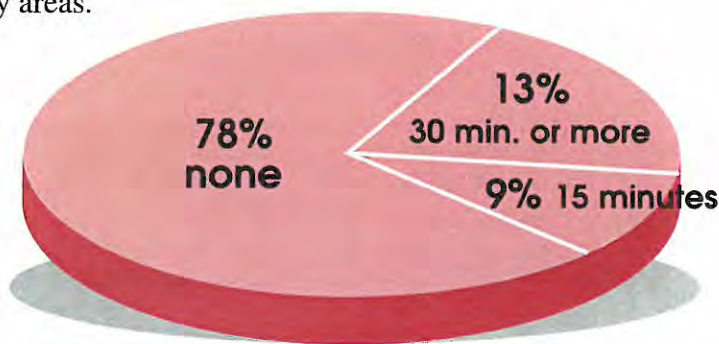
- Only about 13 percent of Florida students spend 30 minutes or more a week working with computers. About 80 percent spend no time at all with computers.

Not Ready For College

- Less than two-thirds of Florida high-school graduates are ready for community college (based on their performance on pre-enrollment tests in reading, writing and mathematics).

Florida Trails U.S. Norms

- Mathematics performance of eighth-grade public school students in Florida is below the national average in all six proficiency areas.



AMOUNT OF COMPUTER USE PER WEEK

II. FLORIDA EMPLOYERS ARE NOT SATISFIED

Florida employers are not being well-served by the state's schools. In order to compete against world-class companies from the other 49 states, Europe and Asia, Florida companies need the kind of WorldClass leaders and workers that Florida schools are not producing.

Business and industry are spending millions of dollars just to give workers the basic education and skills needed to perform adequately on the job. And it costs Florida's community colleges \$41.8 million a year to provide remedial courses to give students the "3 Rs" they should have received in high school.

It is not uncommon to hear of employers rejecting up to ten job applicants before finding one who meets the minimum requirements. A recent national survey conducted by Louis Harris Education Research demonstrates the extent of employer dissatisfaction:

Are high school graduates able to solve complex problems?

Yes _____ 10%

Can high school graduates write well? Yes _____ 12%

Do high school graduates have real discipline in their work habits? Yes _____ 19%

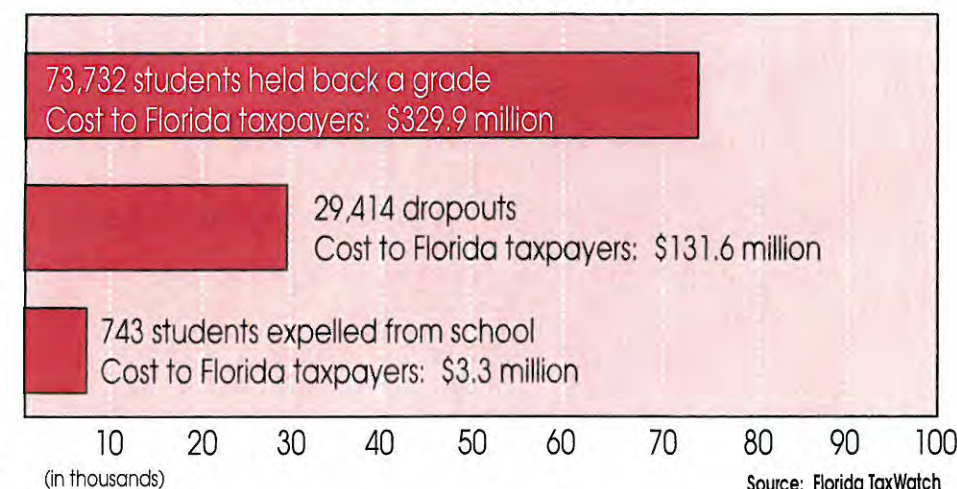
Are high school graduates able to read and understand verbal and written instructions? Yes _____ 36%

According to a 1991 survey by the National Association of Manufacturers, the average manufacturer rejects five out of every six job candidates. Two-thirds of companies regularly reject applicants as unfit for the work environment; a third regularly reject applicants because they cannot read or write adequately; and one-fourth reject applicants because of poor communications and math skills.

III. FLORIDA TAXPAYERS ARE NOT GETTING THEIR MONEY'S WORTH

In research conducted for WorldClass, Florida TaxWatch developed an indicator to measure the productivity of Florida's school system. The new measures dramatize the heavy price that all Floridians already are paying for unproductive schools. Unless the situation improves, the bills will only get higher.

WE'RE ALREADY PAYING THE PRICE FLORIDA STUDENTS, 1992-1993 SCHOOL YEAR

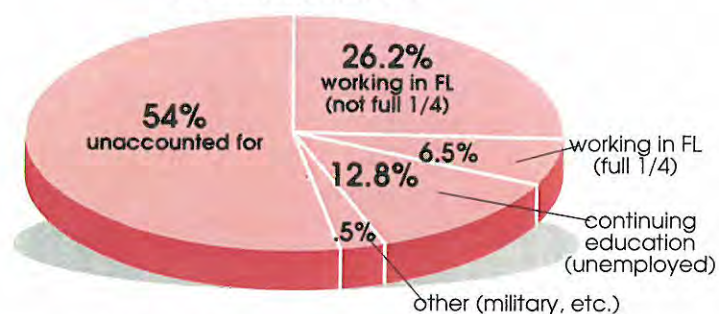


IV. CONSEQUENCES OF INACTION

The WorldClass strategy will make sure our audiences are constantly reminded that educational excellence has real-life benefits and illiteracy has real-life consequences. Again, data help tell the story — in this case, what inadequate skills mean for workers:

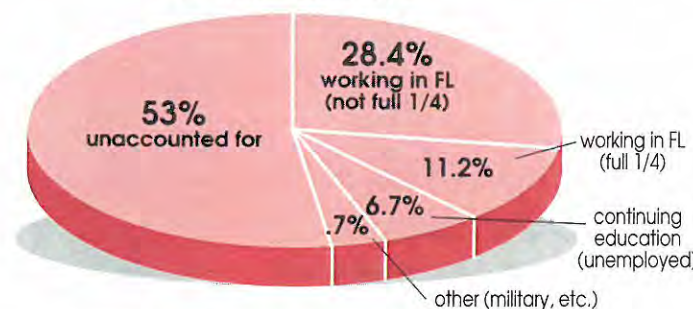
Less disposable income. In 1990, 36 percent of year-round, full-time Florida workers with less than a high school degree were earning below poverty-level wages (\$12,195 for a family of four). Poverty-level wages means less money to spend on the goods and services that Florida companies produce. Worse, this figure accounts only for the more fortunate dropouts — those with year-round, full-time jobs. Part-time workers and the unemployed have even less disposable income.

BY DECEMBER 1991



Average income for those working = \$1,116 per month

BY DECEMBER 1992

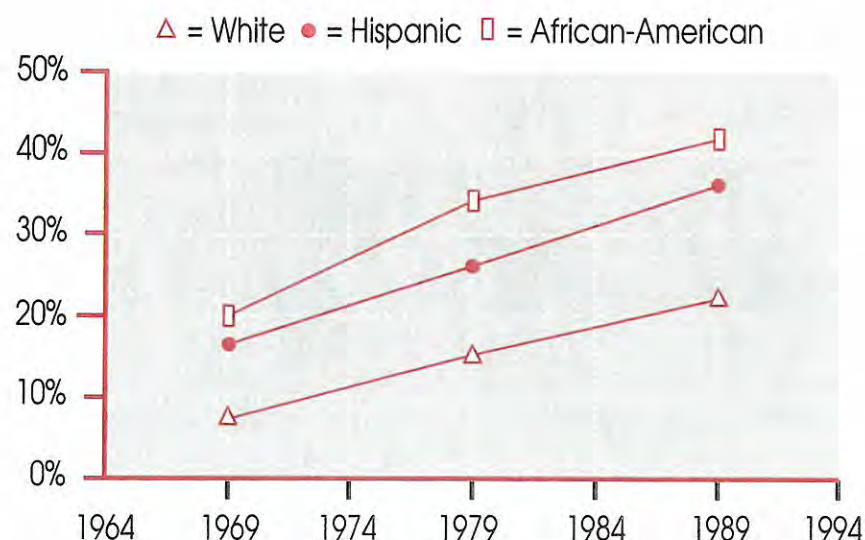


Average income for those working = \$1,132 per month

Dead-end futures. Of the 13,689 students who dropped out of Florida schools during the 1991 school year, only 33 percent had found jobs by December 1991, but less than 7 percent of these were full-time jobs. An additional 13 percent of the dropouts were back in school, and a handful more were in the military or working for the government. In all, less than half of the 1991 dropouts (46 percent) were working or going to school. For those working, their average salary was barely more than \$1,000 a month.

By December 1992, 18 months to two years after they left school, the dropouts' situation wasn't much better because only 46 percent were working or back in school. Their average salaries had climbed to only about \$1,100 a month. Clearly, these workers are in low-skill, low-wage jobs contributing little to the state's productivity and having little disposable

PROPORTION OF MALE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES UNABLE TO SUPPORT A FAMILY



income to buy goods and services produced by other Florida businesses.

Even a high school diploma is not enough. "The time when a high school diploma was a sure ticket to a job is within the memory of workers who have not yet retired; yet in many places a high school diploma is little more than a certificate of attendance," the U.S. Department of Labor Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) *Learning a Living* report observes. The number of male high school graduates between the ages of 25 and 54 unable to support a family has increased steadily in the past two decades; it now approaches 50 percent for some groups.

FUTURE SHOCK

Newspaper headlines scream the problems every day: kids killing tourists, kids killing kids, and society killing itself. The issues of juvenile crime out of control, prison overcrowding, economic recession and no jobs for those with low skills will not go away.

In many ways, Floridians already have had a glimpse of their future: a society divided between the educated "haves" and the uneducated "have-nots."

Increasing Crime. Many of the uneducated "have-nots" are turning to crime. For instance:

- In one Florida study group, four out of five "deep-end kids" — those repeatedly in trouble with the law — read at a level

of those among the lowest 10 percent nationally. (*U.S. News and World Report*, October 1993.)

- Shootings committed by Americans 15- to 19-years-old increased 61 percent in the 1980s and there has been a 1,740 percent rise in the number of children and teenagers treated for knife and gunshot wounds since 1986 at the Children's National Medical Center in Washington, DC. The American Psychological Association's Commission on Violence and Youth, which reported these figures, found that doing poorly and being stigmatized as "dumb" contribute to children becoming violent.
- Nearly two-thirds of Florida's prison inmates (62 percent) in 1986 had not completed high school. Over 19 percent of the prison population had not completed ninth grade.

"Right now, too many children have a better chance of getting a gun in their hands than a high school diploma."
— Gov. Lawton Chiles, *U.S. News and World Report*, October 1993.

"If the current pace of educational reform continues, our quality of life will significantly erode even before the year 2000."
— Governor's Select Commission on Workforce 2000 (1989)

Increasing Poverty. Teenage pregnancies, dropout rates and welfare costs ultimately affect everyone. As taxpayers, we foot the bill for escalating social service costs. As Florida residents, we watch our quality of life decline through the resignation and hopelessness of others. The Governor's Select Committee's *Workforce 2000* report spelled out the link between poverty and the lack of education, and it revealed the tragic implications of an inadequately skilled generation:

- The unemployment rate for young adults is triple the rate for the general population.
- The cost of just one year of

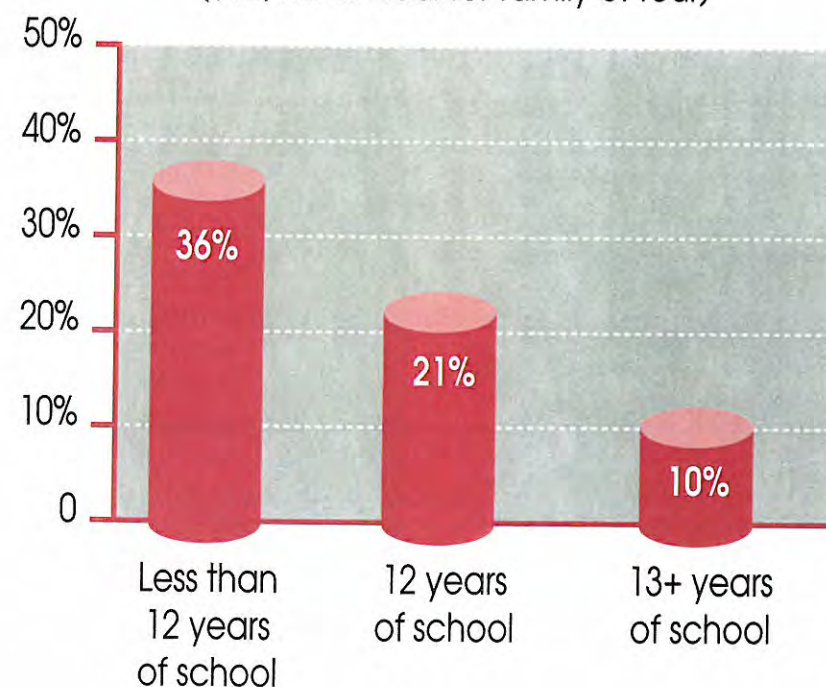
school dropouts will ultimately be \$2 billion to the state of Florida. Unchanged to the year 2000, the cost will be at least \$22 billion in lost tax revenues, welfare, unemployment, and crime.

- In the past, Florida's 25,000 known teenage parents have been seven times more likely than their schoolmates to spend their lives in poverty. Eighty-five percent have dropped out of school, with only 40 percent returning to obtain a General Education Diploma (GED).
- Sixty-four percent of those who participate in the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) welfare program lack high school diplomas. Of those, approximately 80 percent perform at a literacy competency level between the fourth and tenth grades; 11 percent perform below a fourth-grade level.

The *Workforce 2000* committee warned several years ago, "We can choose to respond effectively to the challenges presented by the changing demographics, declining educational performance and the emerging skills gap, and realize the great expectations for Florida we have all come to hold. On the other hand, if we fail to respond to these challenges, we can expect a deterioration of our quality of life, declining economic performance, increasing dropout rates, crime and recidivism, increased welfare rolls, and needs for other social services."

LIKELIHOOD OF POVERTY-LEVEL WAGES

(\$12,195 annual for family of four)



Chapter Four

HOW DO WE DEVELOP A WORLDCLASS SCHOOL SYSTEM IN FLORIDA?



WorldClass

Perhaps your business was one of the many that hopped on board the education reform movement in the 1980s, convinced that a can-do attitude and a few feel-good programs could spark a turnaround. Perhaps you were one of the many to set up partnerships with schools, offering speakers providing school materials, or working for higher graduation requirements.

You have probably felt good about your initial efforts. But have they increased student performance? Passage of Blueprint 2000 legislation in 1991 was a major accomplishment, but since then, many school districts have had trouble turning policy into action. The policy changed, but the attitudes and behavior of too many educators and communities stayed the same.

Most likely, you and school officials in your district are leery of any new "reform" effort. But you should realize that all these efforts have paid off; they've helped us develop the WorldClass strategy.

We now understand the obstacles and recognize the key components of a successful restructuring plan: focus on kids, strive for continuous improvement, link isolated interventions to transform the entire system, and create a grassroots movement that involves local businesses, schools and the entire community.

The plan

A System Overhaul

The Challenge

We know that previous efforts to improve the system one piece at a time have not been enough. How can standards be raised, if there are no ways to measure them? How can we expect superintendents and principals to be leaders if they've been trained to be bureaucrats? How can students be properly challenged if their teachers are not experts in their subjects or lack computer skills? And how can we reach consensus on these issues when each party — superintendents, principals, teachers, parents and business executives — is looking out for its own self-interest? As education reform has gathered steam throughout the years, the need for a systemwide transformation has become clear to business executives and educators alike.

One school superintendent, discussing the problems of piecemeal reform with Public Agenda Foundation researchers, put it this way: "In the mid-to-late 1980s, we were trying to do the latest, newest, most innovative thing that came along. Now, with the restructuring effort, we're really trying to talk about the long-term, not constantly shifting gears."

Such a long-term strategy requires a commitment to continuous improvement and a recognition

that all parts of the system must be continually upgraded. That is the only way to get change, says teacher union leader Doug Tuthill, who has headed Pinellas County's two-and-a-half-year effort to adopt a systemwide "Total Quality" philosophy. Quality starts by identifying the needs and expectations of children, then exceeding those needs and expectations — and continuing to improve them, no matter how good they appear to be.

"It really is a complete, cultural transformation," he says. "It's like Yeltsin in Russia. How do you change us from a top-down, militaristic system to a total quality system?"

The WorldClass Strategy

This level of change — change that can make classrooms like the one described in Chapter 1 a reality — focuses on long-term, systemic improvement by addressing eight central features of a WorldClass school:

- High standards for all students
- Accurate assessments to measure what students know and can do
- Challenging curriculums with real-world applications
- Competent and inspired teachers
- Leading-edge instructional technology
- Culture of continuous improvement
- Accountability tools that measure school systems' performance
- Supportive communities

Higher Standards for All Students

The Challenge

Students in a WorldClass school will work harder and develop critical skills that their parents and grandparents never had. Teachers will demand extensive participation, research, and critical thinking. They must, because today's complex job market and economy require much more than reading, writing, and arithmetic.

SCANS' *Learning a Living* report made it clear that rote memorization and passive listening in school were not going to prepare our children for the high-paying jobs of the 21st century. Along with the "3Rs," SCANS reported, students must become proficient in the following abilities:

Resources — They know how to allocate time, money, materials, space, and staff.

Interpersonal Skills — They can work on teams, teach others, serve customers, lead, negotiate, and work well with people from culturally diverse backgrounds.

"We need to transform a train into a supersonic plane."
— Doug Tuthill, Pinellas County teacher

"Communities need to address the politics of education head on. The problems will not be solved if participants try to distance themselves from the politics of education. The challenge is to keep politics from descending into pettiness and parochialism."
— *Divided Within, Besieged Without*, Public Agenda (1993)

WorldClass Strategy

Information — They can acquire and evaluate data, organize and maintain files, interpret and communicate, and use computers to process information.

Systems — They understand social, organizational and technological systems; they can monitor and correct performance; they can design or improve systems.

Technology — They can select equipment and tools, apply technology to specific tasks, and maintain and troubleshoot equipment.

WorldClass Strategy

Florida's education reform act, Blueprint 2000, was the first in the country to include the SCANS guidelines in its education standards. The WorldClass strategy picks up where Blueprint 2000 left off, insisting that community residents evaluate their own schools to ensure that students are learning essential skills at the highest levels.

Not that traditional school subjects are neglected in the WorldClass strategy; they are even more important than before. An in-depth understanding of geography,

world history, reading, writing and foreign languages is increasingly important for businesses trying to compete in a global economy. An exceptional base in math and science is essential for Americans to continue setting the pace in technological innovations.

Mastering only those subjects, however, is not enough. Thinking skills such as analysis, deduction and problem-solving are now required in nearly every job.

"It's not higher levels of the old-time religion that are required (reading, writing, arithmetic)," Curtis Plott, CEO of the American Society for Training and Development, has said, "it's new interpersonal skills, teamwork skills, logic skills, the ability to learn, problem-solving skills, critical thinking skills."

A WorldClass school will take advantage of the new, higher-level standards being developed by national teachers associations and professional organizations such as the New Standards Project (NSP), the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM).

Accurate Assessments To Measure What Students Know and Can Do

The Challenge

How well are students meeting the new standards? How well do students interpret data, apply technology to tasks or allocate resources? How well do they understand the implications of what they're learning? Those skills cannot be measured with a traditional multiple-choice or short-answer test.

Consider this test question: "What were the years of the Civil War?" The correct answer (1861-1865) demonstrates only that students can memorize. But do they understand more than that? Do they know how literature (notably *Uncle Tom's Cabin*) influenced the rise in abolitionist sentiment? Do they understand how the industrial revolution contributed to the North's success? To what extent do the issues that gave rise to the U.S. Civil War in the 1860s resemble the current tensions in nations such as the former Yugoslavia and Soviet Union? More importantly, do students understand that a question — just as a problem in life — can be approached in different ways and have more than one correct answer?

To see how well students can address questions such as these, the standards and assessment develop-

ment groups that are developing the new content standards described above also are working on new performance standards or assessments.

WorldClass Strategy

Drawing on the work of groups such as AAAS, NCTM and NSP, WorldClass schools will use tools such as skill-level "resumes," cumulative work portfolios, team exhibitions and joint projects that WorldClass schools will use to supplement the traditional tests and writing assignments.

A portfolio for an English class, for instance, might be a folder showing the child's writing assignments for an entire term, including several revisions for each paper. Evaluating this block of work will allow the teacher to measure a student's improvement over time, and it will motivate a student to continually exert more effort, instead of giving up in frustration after a bad grade.

These advanced assessments will yield additional benefits. Teachers can use them to improve their productivity; combined with the new standards, the new assessments will provide very clear signals about what it is important for students to learn.

Parents and business leaders will clearly understand the skills and knowledge students attain. In addition, this assessment data will provide a more accurate benchmark to measure the school system's productivity and to hold educators accountable for results.

"It's not higher levels of the old-time religion that are required (reading, writing, arithmetic)," Curtis Plott, CEO of the American Society for Training and Development, has said. "It's new interpersonal skills, teamwork skills, logic skills, the ability to learn, problem-solving skills, critical thinking skills."

A Challenging Curriculum

The Challenge

Raising standards and improving testing methods to improve student achievement, however, are only part of the WorldClass picture. Preparing students to meet these higher performance levels is the role of curriculum. In World-Class schools that will mean interdisciplinary studies, technology-oriented assignments, and applying knowledge to real-world situations.

The schools' challenging curriculum should address two of the six National Education Goals, which grew out of the 1989 Education Summit involving President Bush and the nation's 50 governors:

- By the year 2000, American students will leave grades 4, 8, and 12 having demonstrated competency in challenging subject matter, including English, mathematics, science, history, and geography: every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our modern economy.
- By the year 2000, American students will be the first in the world in science and mathematics achievement.

WorldClass Strategy

WorldClass schools will change the way students learn core subjects. They will not be viewing only math from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m., then only history from 11 a.m. to noon. They will learn how subjects interrelate and how they relate to real-life skills. For instance, students might learn to combine their knowledge of statistics and political science to more critically assess public opinion polls on issues ranging from crime prevention to healthcare costs. They will learn, for instance, how easily the wording of a survey question can influence people's responses and how the press and politicians manipulate these "scientific" surveys for their own purposes.

Developing computer graphics, charts and spreadsheets, along with using a computer to write and edit papers, provides students with employable skills while showing them how to evaluate and process information.

A matrix in the SCANS *Learning a Living* report shows how assignments in core subject areas such as math and history can incorporate various disciplines, computer graphics, word processing skills, and even mathematical models. (See page 34.)

These types of assignments require students to learn through hands-on, real-world applications. While using computers and calculators, students will utilize modern technology to tackle advanced math problems and calculate solutions. Students will learn in school in much the same way that

learning occurs outside school: through trial-and-error, hands-on experience and constant improvement.

Competent and Inspired Teachers

The Challenge

"As school is usually set up, kids are supposed to spit back to the teacher everything the teacher already knows," a New York teacher told the *Wall Street Journal*. "That would be considered a senseless waste of time in real life."

The "usual" set-up was designed at the turn of the century, when people assumed that a child's mind was a clean slate, and that a teacher was responsible for imprinting information on that slate. That assumption doesn't make sense, many experts argue. The challenge for teachers is to take advantage of children's natural curiosity and learning styles then help them acquire new information and ideas, while applying them to situations that resemble the real world.

WorldClass Strategy

In WorldClass schools, teachers will encourage interpersonal interaction and teamwork in student assignments. Hands-on learning and learning in context will be essential. Teachers will demand as much energy from their students as they do of themselves, and they will be intensely involved in class activities. Emphasis will

be placed upon individual learning styles of students.

Instead of re-working last year's lecture notes on Bastille Day, for instance, teachers could require a student presentation on the French Revolution and its role in establishing democratic government. To inspire students while challenging their facts, their sources, and the depth of their research, coaching all students into discussion, and grading based on each student's skill attainment and knowledge of the subject will be an intense job.

WorldClass teachers will encourage participation from all students, including females, minorities, and the non-college bound, who historically have been under-represented in advanced classrooms.

**HANDS ON
LEARNING
AND LEARNING
IN CONTEXT
WILL BE
ESSENTIAL.**



Assignments That Integrate The SCANS Competencies Into The Core Curriculum Areas

COMPETENCY	ENGLISH/ WRITING	MATHEMATICS	SCIENCE	SOCIAL STUDIES/ GEOGRAPHY	HISTORY
Resources	Write a proposal for an after-school career lecture series that schedules speakers, coordinates audio-visual aids, and estimates costs.	Develop a monthly family budget, taking into account family expenses and revenues and using information from the budget plan. Schedule a vacation trip that stays within the resources available.	Plan the material and time requirements for a chemistry experiment, to be performed over a two-day period, that demonstrates a natural growth process in terms of resource needs.	Design a chart of resource needs for a community of African Zulus. Analyze the reasons why three major cities grew to their current size.	Study the Vietnam War, researching and orally presenting findings on the timing and logistics of transporting materials and troops to Vietnam and on the impact of the war on the Federal budget.
Interpersonal	Discuss the pros and cons of the argument that Shakespeare's <i>Merchant of Venice</i> is a "racist" play and should be banned from the school curriculum.	Present the results of a survey to the class, and justify the use of specific statistics to analyze and represent the data.	Work in a group to design an experiment to analyze the lead content in the school's water. Teach the results to an elementary school class.	Debate the issue of withdrawing U.S. military support from Japan in front of a peer panel. Engage in a mock urban planning exercise for Paris.	Study the American Constitution and role-play the negotiation of the wording of the free states/slave states clause by different signers.
Information	Identify and abstract passages from a novel to support an assertion about the values of a key character.	Design and carry out a survey and analyze the data in a spread-sheet program using algebraic formulas. Develop a table and a graphic display to communicate the results.	In an entrepreneurship project, present statistical data pertaining to a high-tech company's production and sales. Use a computer to develop the statistical charts.	Using numerical data and charts, develop and present conclusions about the effects of economic conditions on the quality of life in several countries.	Research and present papers on the effect of the Industrial Revolution on the class structure in Britain, citing data sources used to arrive at conclusions.
Systems	Develop a computer model that analyzes the motivation of Shakespeare's Hamlet. Plot the events that increase or decrease Hamlet's motivation to avenge the death of his father.	Develop a system to monitor and correct the heating/cooling process in a computer laboratory, using principles of statistical process control.	Build a model of human population growth that includes the impact of the amount of food available, on birth and death rates, etc. Do the same for a growth model for insects.	Analyze the accumulation of capital in industrialized nations in systems terms (as a reinforcing process with stocks and flows).	Develop a model of the social forces that led to the American Revolution. Then explore the fit between that model and other revolutions.
Technology	Write an article showing the relationship between technology and the environment. Use word processing to write and edit papers after receiving teacher feedback.	Read manuals for several data-processing programs and write a memo recommending the best programs to handle a series of mathematical situations.	Calibrate a scale to weigh accurate portions of chemicals for an experiment. Trace the development of this technology from earliest uses to today.	Research and report on the development and functions of the seismograph and its role in earthquake prediction and detection.	Analyze the effects of wars on technological development. Use computer graphics to plot the relationship of the country's economic growth to periods of peace and war.

Leading-Edge Instructional Technology

Changing how teachers approach a classroom is certainly a primary feature of a WorldClass school. Using modern technology for everything from computers to satellites will be the norm in every classroom.

Technology frees up time for teachers to do what they do best — inspire students. For instance, teachers participating in a Florida State University project, SchoolYear 2000, are using a handheld computer to take attendance, keep records on students' progress and schedule conferences with parents. The new technology gives teachers instant access to up-to-date information about their students and reduces the administrative paper-shuffling that distracts from the real business of schools.

Technology opens new worlds of information to students, especially those in rural, isolated areas. Technology allows students to learn at their own pace and to experiment, explore and test what they know on a real-time basis.

Quality Culture Through Continuous Improvement

The Challenge

Building a total quality culture within schools will be a key part of the WorldClass revolution. It won't be easy changing the way schools have operated for more than a century, but this is one area where the experience of business leaders will be a particularly important asset.

The WorldClass Strategy

WorldClass champions will learn about bringing a total quality culture into schools, and they will see how places like Pinellas County and people like teacher union leader Doug Tuthill have been making change happen.

The Pinellas system, in winning the governor's 1993 Sterling Award for TQM achievement, has come so far that it beat not only other school systems, but also businesses.

For Pinellas, Tuthill says, business involvement has been an essential element in its efforts over the past two and a half years. Business leaders' participation in the individual school advisory councils established by Blueprint 2000 has been especially helpful.

"We have formed a partnership with the business community in Pinellas that has been absolutely critical," he says. "We're very much tied to their future and they're very much tied to ours."

"We have formed a partnership with the business community in Pinellas that has been absolutely critical," Doug Tuthill, Pinellas County teacher says. "We're very much tied to their future and they're very much tied to ours."

Florida's Seven Goals: How high does your community seek to raise each standard?

- ✓ **Readiness to Start School.** Communities and schools collaborate to prepare children and families for children's success in school.
- ✓ **Graduation Rate and Readiness for Postsecondary Education and Employment.** Students graduate and are prepared to enter the workforce and postsecondary education.
- ✓ **Student Performance.** Students successfully compete at the highest levels nationally and internationally and are prepared to make well-reasoned, thoughtful and healthy lifelong decisions.
- ✓ **Learning Environment.** School boards provide a learning environment conducive to teaching and learning.
- ✓ **School Safety and Environment.** Communities provide an environment that is drug-free and protects students' health, safety and civil rights.
- ✓ **Teachers and Staff.** The schools, districts and state ensure professional teachers and staff.
- ✓ **Adult Literacy.** Adult Floridians are literate and have the knowledge and skills needed to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

Part of making that partnership successful has been to avoid finger-pointing and stereotyping on both sides, Tuthill says. As president of the Pinellas Classroom Teachers Association, Tuthill has encountered some startled looks from business leaders when he talks about the benefits of "Total Quality."

"Business shouldn't assume that every labor leader and teacher is resistant to change, just as educators shouldn't assume that every business leader doesn't care about children," Tuthill says.

Accountability Tools That Measure the System's Performance

The Challenge

Just how will a WorldClass school know that it is improving teaching and assessment methods, curriculum, and standards?

As the 1993 National Education Goals report said of traditional schools: "We have no way of telling whether our current 'standards' for learning are as high as they should be because we have not clearly defined the results we seek from our system. The situation is like a runner beginning a race without knowing where the finish line is."

Fortunately, Florida is ahead of the pack in this race. Passage of Blueprint 2000 in 1991 clearly established the state's education goals. The WorldClass strategy, meanwhile, includes self-evaluation measures to help schools meet these goals by increasing productivity through existing resources. The challenge now is to turn ideals and philosophy into reality. (See sidebar, *Florida's education goals*.)

The seven Blueprint 2000 goals spell out Florida's educational priorities. Nearly identical to the National Education Goals, these can serve as a guide in explaining how and why an individual school system must improve.

Improving Blueprint 2000's accountability measures is a central feature of the WorldClass plan. The state's education reform act provided an excellent evaluation vehicle with the school system report card. However, the report card questions do not go far enough. Instead of asking how many computers are in the schools, for instance, they must ask how much time students spend using computers. And to what extent has computer use increased teacher productivity and improved student performance?

The WorldClass strategy builds on public reporting by developing a "Quality Indicator Index" and a "Performance and Productivity Index." The percentage of students completing high-level math and science courses, the number of schools retrofitted for

technology, the percentage of teachers trained in their field, the amount per student spent in direct instruction (not administration), and the employer satisfaction rating of graduate skills are just a few of the categories that will be measured.

While these new tools will enhance school accountability, traditional measurements will also be used and improved. Take the standard achievement test, for instance. It is often waved in educators' faces as evidence of what they are doing wrong. The WorldClass strategy believes that achievement tests should include data that helps principals, teachers, and parents make changes. A culture that supports continuous improvement places more emphasis on



orldClass

learning from mistakes than on assessing blame. In its previous report, "World Class: Establishing Education Standards in Florida," the Florida Chamber Foundation showed the type of information that can make a difference. (*See Normative vs. Criterion-Referenced Tests: A Comparison, below.*)

Accountability, however, is not just about targeting areas for improvements. It is also about highlighting methods that work and recognizes the teams of people who make them work. In today's schools, the business practices of

merit-based raises and promotions are extremely rare. WorldClass schools should recognize professionals' progress based on how well they meet or exceed their customers' expectations. Student performance will be the central criteria. The best teachers will not have to move to administration to advance professionally. They will be able to stay in the classrooms, working directly with students.

A WorldClass school system holds employees to higher standards because it is a system that values its children. No one will be satisfied with anything less than excellence.

Normative vs. Criterion-Referenced Tests: A Comparison

Jack is in the 12th grade. On a recent statewide mathematics test, he answered 75 of 100 questions correctly.

The Normative Model. The state finds that 50% of its 12th grade students answered more questions than Jack correctly, and 50% answered fewer questions than Jack correctly. Therefore, the state can report that Jack's performance is *average* for his grade level.

Question: But what does "average performance" mean? Regardless of others' performance, what does Jack actually know about mathematics? What can he do with his knowledge? Is a *relative* indication of success useful?

The Criterion-Referenced Model. Before administering its tests, the state has rated the difficulty of each item. It turns out that Jack was unable to answer any of the 25 items in the test that demanded a level of knowledge above the 8th grade.

Answer: We now have an *absolute* standard of what "average performance" means – it is performance at the 8th grade level. We can now ask if an 8th grade understanding of mathematics adequate for our graduates' success in the workplace or in college.

Supportive Communities

The Challenge

One lesson learned since Blueprint 2000 became law is the need for grassroots action. A state law changing the face of education is a significant achievement, but it will take committed champions in each district to truly transform schools. Champions must believe in everyone reaching their full potential; systems change and people thrive when they are treated in terms of their potential. For business leaders, the primary challenge will be identifying the school and community leaders who passionately believe in and will work toward establishing World-Class schools.

A key challenge for these champions will be to overcome the

"politics of gridlock" that has virtually paralyzed reform in many communities. A 1993 national report by the Public Agenda Foundation, *Divided Within, Besieged Without*, shed light on the general frustration that has stalled reform efforts nationwide. Interviewing teachers, administrators, superintendents and business people, the report described the distrust and skepticism that have grown out of reform program starts and stops.

Teachers generally felt they had no role in the decisions that directly affected them and their students. They saw so many policies and programs come and go, many told Public Agenda's researchers, they just learned to wait them out.

They saw superintendents and administrators as out-of-touch with the real issues facing their schools, just as administrators and superintendents saw business as removed from the politics and public meetings that are part of running a school system. One school board member told of trying to close a low-enrollment school in her area as a cost-saving measure for the whole district, only to meet with massive community resistance and the loss of her school board seat in the next election. The school remained open.

Overall, educators questioned business' motives. Many felt business involvement was simply a public relations stunt or an effort to replace history and literature curriculum with vocational education.

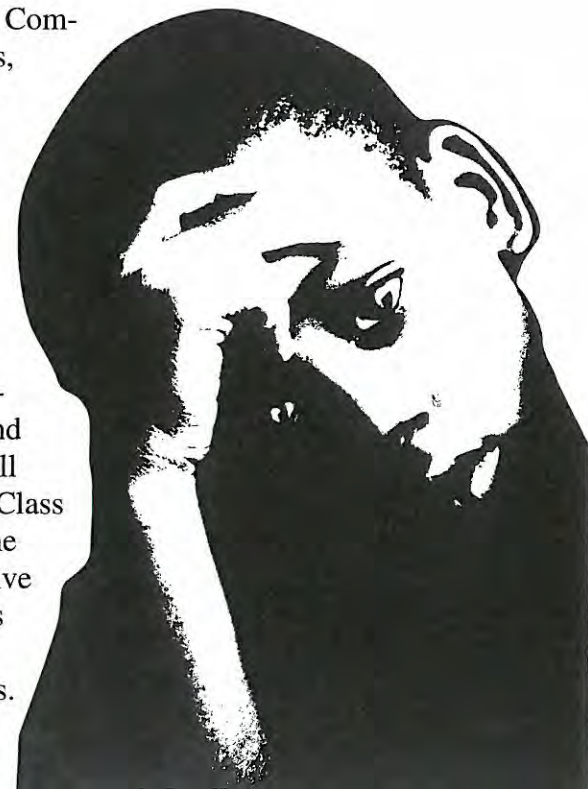
For their part, business leaders

were aghast at the lack of accountability in the schools. Where else, they asked, did people receive no reward for a job well-done and no consequences for poor performance? Nowhere else did people concentrate on how many resources they poured into the system (more teachers, more technology, etc.) while virtually ignoring what came out of it (educated students).

The WorldClass Strategy

This political gridlock must be overcome. That is why in each school district, a WorldClass "champion" will be trained to promote change. The champion will build alliances in his or her own district by identifying others in education and in the community who are willing to work for WorldClass schools. Public awareness efforts will be essential for moving people into action. Complacency, even from parents, will be a significant hurdle. So will the turf battles among different players in the school system: teachers, administrators, board members, etc.

Business champions will definitely be trooping into a battleground of suspicion, frustration, mistrust and mystery. However, they will have the benefit of a WorldClass training academy to learn the regulations, the administrative hierarchy, and the successes and failures of previous reform efforts of the schools. They will understand the obstacles educators face in



"It will not happen without business involvement," Tuthill says. "If they want to be in business in the 21st century, they had better be involved in the schools today."

pushing for change. They will be able to offer the resources and influence to overcome them.

WorldClass champions will understand the climate inside and outside the schools. They will have to galvanize many resistant people into moving forward. But they will know that educators, community and business leaders are out there, ready and willing to make a WorldClass system work. WorldClass champions already know how to communicate well enough to transform institutions and influence public opinion. With WorldClass training, they'll learn about the specific messages that can help build broad consensus on school reform, and they will know their role is crucial.

"It will not happen without business involvement," Tuthill says. "If they want to be in business in the 21st century, they had better be involved in the schools today."

Focus On Kids

The Challenge

Keeping focused on kids seems obvious and may sound trite to some. All too often, however, children are forgotten in discussions over how many computers a school should have or how dropout rates must come down.

The Public Agenda report pointed out how bitterness, hostility and suspicion among affected parties in school reform can easily blur the common goal of preparing children for life and work in the 21st century.

"The problem in getting education reform is not that malevolent individuals or groups stand in the way of progress," the report concluded. "Rather, stakeholders seem to be locked in a hyperactive, self-centered process they do not like but are powerless to control."

"There is a critical need for a different kind of political process, one that allows the general interest of communities to prevail over the narrow interests that currently dominate. All parties must never lose sight of the underlying common purpose of their efforts: what we must do to help children learn and how we will work together to do it."

The WorldClass Strategy

Building a WorldClass school system will mean reminding all those involved that a child's future is at stake. At school board meetings or PTA meetings, over backyard fences or across boardroom tables, this is the common ground for business, educators, parents, and community members. Communities will be educated about what it takes to transform schools and why it's important to the future of all Floridians. They'll be constantly reminded of what's at stake — a prosperous, secure future if our schools succeed or increased poverty, fear, and community disintegration if we fail. With that clearly focused motive, the WorldClass strategy will overcome apathy and political gridlock, and WorldClass schools can become a reality in Florida.

Chapter Five

IMPLEMENT AN ACTION PLAN



WorldClass

"All politics is local." —
Former U.S. House
Speaker Tip O'Neill

"The challenge is to address the political side — the human side — of education reform more directly, more effectively and more persistently."
— *Divided Within, Besieged Without*, Public Agenda (1993)

The Florida Chamber Foundation recognizes that preparing business leaders for the tough job of changing such a complex institution as a public school system calls for an intensive program, encompassing everything from media strategies to political savvy. This will take much more than a handbook or a one-day seminar.

The WorldClass Education Center, housed at the Chamber offices in Tallahassee, is the pillar of the WorldClass strategy, serving champions and WorldClass supporters in three major areas:

- Training
- Communication
- Research and Development

Training

This is the nerve center for training workshop development and a training academy, the place where the business leader "champions" can turn for guidance and expert advice on taking change home to their districts.

This is no think-tank; it's hands-on, how-to steps for people who will know how to use them. Champions will attend a weekend WorldClass Academy with intensive seminars on developing allies in the community and the school system, mastering the political agenda, and creating public awareness.

At the end of their training, champions will develop an action plan tailored to their own community. Action will take place at every level of the system, including school, school district, community, and state.

On the school level, for example, champions may serve on a school advisory council or school improvement team, and they are instructed to hold training sessions for other business representatives, encouraging them to serve as well. The champion may be responsible for identifying the key school administrators and educators who will be receptive to a "Total Quality" culture.

On a district level, champions may either run for a school board seat or find an influential WorldClass supporter to do so. They may also identify and support candidates and current board members who will fight for a WorldClass system and not sway with the political tide.

In their cities and towns, champions must seek out community organizations to explain the WorldClass system, why it is needed, and how residents can help implement it. Guest editorials, speaking engagements, and other public outreach efforts are all part of business leaders' responsibilities in getting the WorldClass message to their fellow residents.

At the state level, champions could be called to serve on statewide education panels or asked to support ongoing education policy improvements.

Communication

Without a communications center, the reform message would suffer the unfortunate fate of many other school reform plans. That's not going to happen with the WorldClass strategy.

The champions' action plan should have a communications component, including business, educational, and community marketing strategies. Local and state media attention and support will certainly be important in advancing public awareness, and the WorldClass manual's media strategies will help champions map out an effective plan.

The champions will be an invaluable part of the communications strategy. They are the ones carrying the message and, as influential and resourceful community leaders, they will reach out to all interested parties, including civic groups, teacher associations, and business roundtables. When people ask questions, these champions will not have to refer people to an overwhelming 50-page report. The Center will help develop a concise pamphlet on WorldClass schools to hand out at business, community, and education meetings. This tool will give people a quick explanation of WorldClass, as well as ideas on how they can help.

Helping champions and supporters with useful advice and inspiring success stories, the WorldClass Information Network will track Florida's education transformation as the WorldClass strategy grows.

Champions, however, will undoubtedly meet resistance from those who question business' motives in advocating change, those who don't see a WorldClass system as the answer and — likely the majority — those who are completely indifferent. That's why champions and WorldClass supporters will thoroughly understand the strategy and its necessity and be prepared to address concerns as well as complacency.

Strategies and defenses aside, building alliances and partnerships inside and outside of schools will depend on a champion's communication skills. These business leaders will know how to listen to people's concerns and identify a common ground. They will use their skills and the help of alliances and advocates to place WorldClass on the public agenda. With an ever-increasing ground-swell of support, they will see every school in their districts become WorldClass.



Research and Development

With the help of KSA Group in Arlington, Virginia and other material sources, the WorldClass Center will continually receive updates on the nation's best school reform programs.

Champions and their WorldClass supporters will be able to evaluate their successes against and gain useful insight from similar work underway by business-oriented groups such as the National Alliance of Business and the Business Roundtable.

The National Alliance for Restructuring Education and the New Standards Project are helping to build the political consensus for school change. The Public Education Fund Network and the Education Commission of the States can share their experiences and techniques for building broad community support for school reform.

KSA Group will also provide the Institute with expert advice from education reform leaders such as:

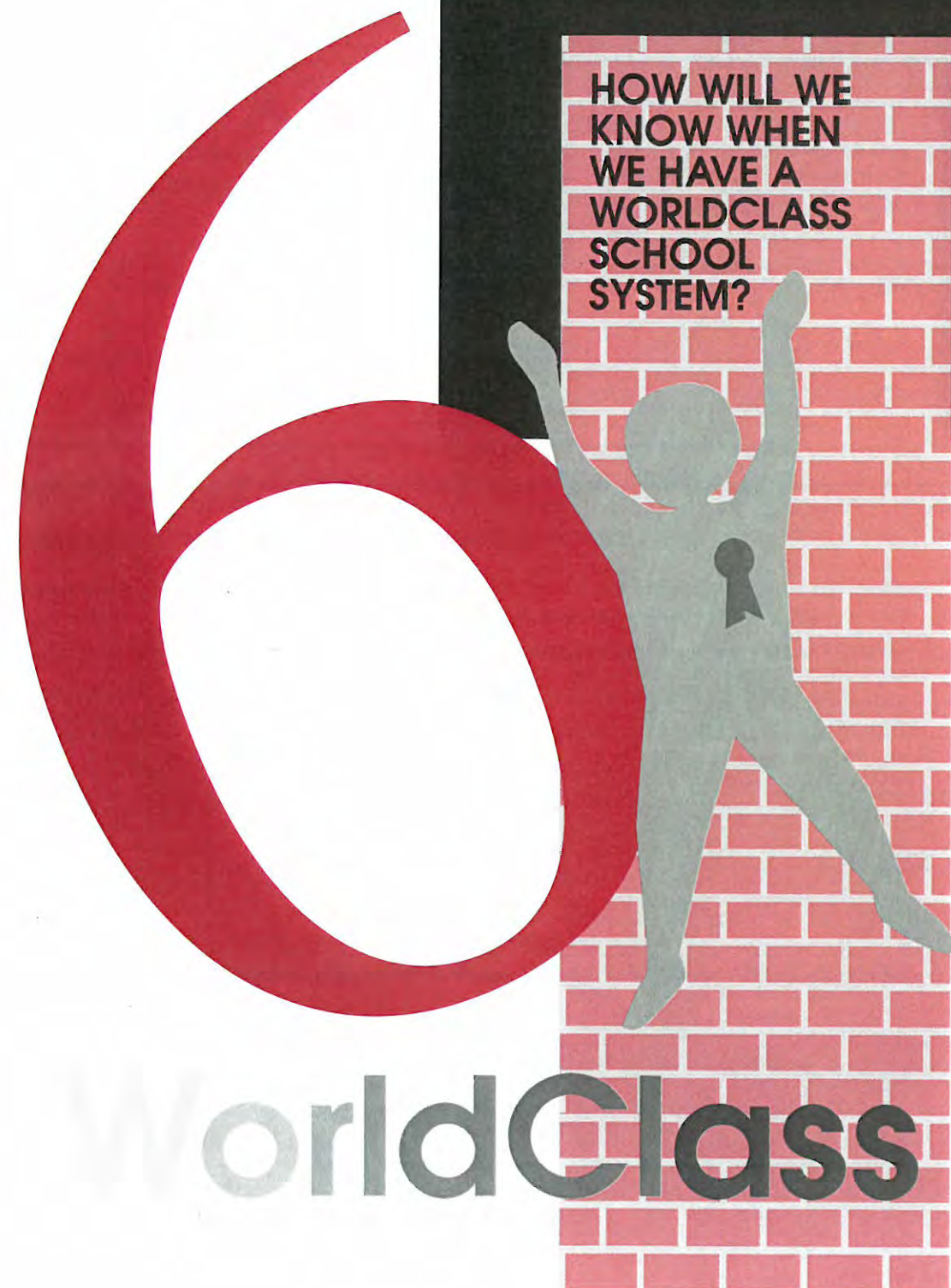
- Andy Plattner, of the National Center on Education and the Economy.
- Ernesto Cortes, of the Industrial Areas Foundation, which specializes in building community support for institutional change.
- The Rochester Partnership, a business-led alliance in Rochester, New York, that has struggled to generate community support for better schools.
- Paul Hill, of Rand Corporation, who authored a landmark report on the importance of mobilizing a community for school reform.

In addition to the latest information on school reform, the WorldClass plan recognizes that financial resources are also essential to its success. Core World-Class champions in each community will be working to secure the money and staff to make the strategy work. They will work primarily at the state and local levels. Matching grants from cities and towns are possible revenue sources, using the Chamber's drug-free workplace program as a likely model.



Chapter Six

HOW WILL WE
KNOW WHEN
WE HAVE A
WORLDCLASS
SCHOOL
SYSTEM?



Continuum

Using the Continuum

This tool is intended to help assess where a state stands on a continuum of change. It provides a road map based on explicit characteristics of change and of future activities.

It provides a basis for discussing both what constitutes systemic change in a state, and where a state is in the change process. It may not perfectly describe your particular situation so feel free to modify it – changing labels or even adding additional categories on the side. The key is to be as explicit as possible in creating a common understanding of systems change. People using this tool can then use their understanding to develop appropriate next steps.

Caution!

This tool is a working model. While it is fairly representative of what is happening in states, it should not be used to compare or rank states. Although similar patterns may exist, each state's path to systemic change is unique.

While this tool is in matrix form, it is not intended to convey systems change as a linear process. Systems change is a fluid and dynamic process.

May We Hear from You?

Would you write or call ECS and let them know how you are using this tool? They would be very interested in receiving information related to: (1) your state's stage(s) of systemic change, (2) what additional categories or modifications you have made to the tool, and (3) what strategies you plan to implement to move to the next stage. Would you write or call Gerrit Westervelt (303) 299-3612 or Jane Armstrong (303) 299-3632 at the Education Commission of the States, 707 17th St. Suite 2700, Denver, CO 80202 and share your information?

To Order Additional Copies

Copies of the *Continuum* are available for \$2 each by sending a check or purchase order to: Distribution Center, Education Commission of the States, 707 17th St. Suite 2700, Denver, CO 80202-3427, (303) 299-3692.

For orders under \$10 enclose \$2.50 for postage and handling, between \$10 and \$25 enclose \$3.90, between \$25 and \$50 enclose \$5.50, between \$50 and \$100 enclose \$8.00, between \$100 and \$150 enclose \$10.50.

	MAINTENANCE OF OLD SYSTEM
VISION	- Vision reflects: - learning based on seat time; teaching as lecture - mandates and inputs - education system separate from other systems and services
POLICY-MAKING & ALIGNMENT	- State and local policy emphasizes: - hierarchical structure - funding and resource allocation which is not connected to educational goals - program evaluation results which are used as basis for blaming and fault finding
TEACHING & LEARNING	- Standardization of instructional methods - Emphasis placed on using current curriculum, instruction, and assessment methods more rigorously - High attention paid to standardized test results for comparisons among schools on student achievement - Effective sanctions for poor performance not enforced
PUBLIC & POLITICAL SUPPORT	- Information only flows from educators to the public - Public is complacent about the current education system - Systemic education change is not a major part of the public policy agenda
NETWORKS, PARTNERSHIPS, & COLLABORATION	- Networking is rare and viewed as insignificant - Partnerships are one-shot and viewed as supplemental

Version 1.1

THE STATE EDUCATION SYSTEM – A CONTINUUM OF SYSTEMIC CHANGE



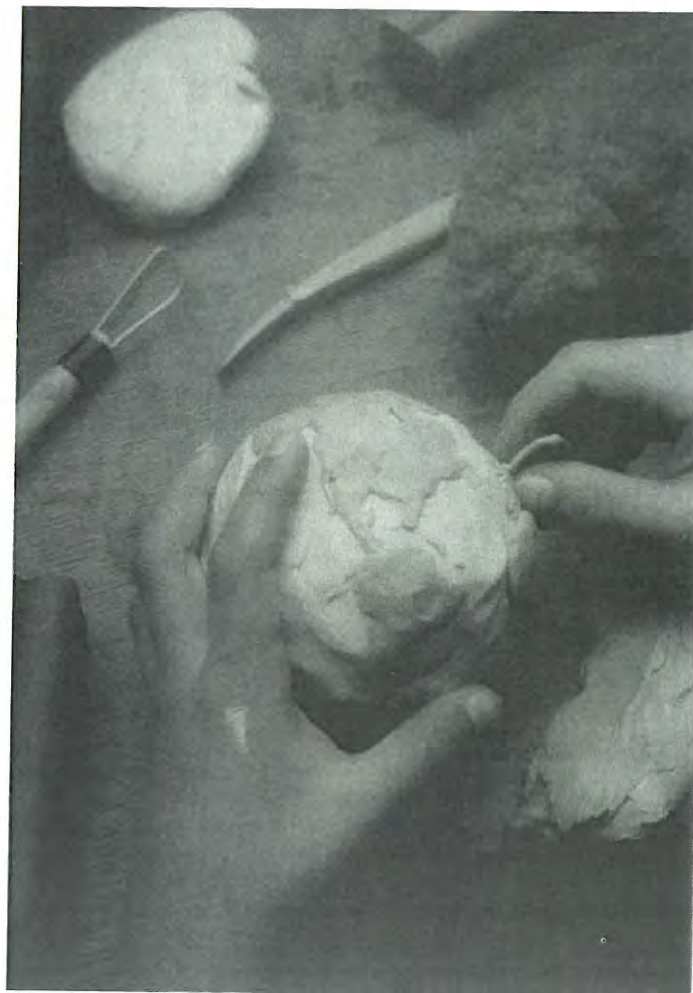
AWARENESS	EXPLORATION	TRANSITION	EMERGING NEW INFRASTRUCTURE	PREDOMINANCE OF NEW SYSTEM
- Multiple stakeholders realize need to change from old system, but unclear on what to create - Strategic plans and reports from influential groups call for fundamental changes, however, changes are not specified - Examples of better schools are recognized	- Alternatives to the old system begin to emerge in a piecemeal fashion - Stakeholder groups issue reports with new ideas about how to change parts of system - Dialogues, debates, and conflicts over what to change and how to involve growing numbers and types of stakeholders	- Policymakers are developing their own visions which have common characteristics: - emerging consensus on new system - boosters and barriers to creating a new system are identified - need for linking system components is understood	- Recognition of the need for continual refinement of the vision with expanded stakeholder involvement and support - Vision includes underlying values, student outcomes, and system structure - Integration of system components begins	- Board agreement that in desired system: - all students can learn at high levels; learning is achieving skills and knowledge; teacher may function as coach, critic, facilitator - vision-setting leadership and distributed decision making exist - connections made with other social systems and services
- Waivers to regulations are made available which promote experimentation, but they are not widely used - Recognition that funding streams limit experimentation and innovation - Program evaluation results identify areas that need improvement	- Minor resource allocations are used to explore innovation at state and local levels - Debates on how to emphasize incentives and flexibility, rather than mandates, to help lead reform - Consideration of ways to encourage efficiency and effectiveness at local and state levels	- Policies are enacted that give school leaders latitude to redesign their teaching and learning approaches - Recognition that all policies need review to determine what type of system they support - More resources allocated for innovation	- Resources for innovations are sustained with emphasis on meeting diverse student needs - Major review of policy for realignment to support new system - Policies across education, health, social services, etc., interconnected and mutually supportive	- Policymaking derives from a comprehensive strategy for promoting change: - locus of decision making closest to those affected - resource allocation based on new vision that supports student learning - policymakers and educators accountable to public and for student achievement
- Recognition that teaching and learning methods do not reflect current research on how students learn - Recognition that social and economic problems impact education, but are not being addressed in the education system - Recognition that standardized tests are not measuring desired learning outcomes	- Discussion of new curriculum frameworks with higher learning expectations for all students - Individual schools, teachers, districts debating and committing resources to new ways of learning and teaching - Schools, districts, and states explore and develop new modes of assessing student learning - Recognition that change is difficult and requires time and resources	- School, district, and state task forces define student learning outcomes informed by national standards - Policymakers support teachers, schools, and districts which are trying new approaches; all parties convinced it's not another fad - Multi-person and multi-year commitments to try new teaching and learning approaches - Results of changes being assessed	- For a significant number of schools in the state: - state, district teaching/learning assessments encourage continual improvement, and recognize uneven progress - graduation based on demonstrations of established learning outcomes - multiple means of measuring student learning are used	- For most schools in the state it is the norm to have: - students actively engaged in learning - diverse modes of student assessment which show continual improvement on skills and knowledge established in vision - teacher and administrator preparation programs that focus on outcomes - curriculum frameworks with high student standards; learning outcomes guide decisions at all levels of system including the classroom - flexible materials and methods that meet diverse student needs
- Reports on the need for changes in education are discussed among policymakers, and in news media - Public is informed, but not engaged by educators - Public recognition that the education system is not meeting the needs of all students	- Task forces formed to recommend changes for state, districts, schools - Political and public opinion leaders speaking out on reform - Public forums on need for change becoming more common - Public becoming involved in redefining desired student learning outcomes	- Public debates on specific changes receive mixed support - State policymakers actively campaign for change - Resistant groups voice objections to change	- Mechanisms that ensure continuity and evaluate progress are established - Broad consensus on strategies for achieving desired change - Public advocates system which serves the needs of all students	- Public is committed to and involved in on-going improvements - Information flows freely among policymakers, public, educators, business, etc.
- Recognition of value of networking as a way of learning new operations of education system - Realization that partnerships need to be longer term and more integral to educational goals	- Attempts made to understand existing networks, their common aspects, and the groups they serve - State and local leaders begin conversations with potential partners on educational policy issues	- Recognition that networks are a long term feature of less hierarchical system - Debates on how the state can support ongoing networks - Formal agreements are made to initiate and develop collaborative efforts	- Networks (including electronic) used to speed up sharing of information and new ideas - Networks developed across states and levels of government - Multiple partners support common vision and improved student learning - State supports infrastructure for networks	- Networks serve as communications and information channels - Collaboration among public, political, education, and business leadership is an essential feature of the system

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WorldClass is a strategy with its own accountability measures. It has built in indicators to monitor progress, target areas for improvement and check our progress against programs nationwide.

The chamber is currently developing unique, state-of-the-art school system accountability tools to pick up from Blueprint 2000's report cards. Our Quality Indicators Survey and Performance and

Productivity Indexes will help monitor areas such as student achievement in high-level math and science, school fiscal efficiency, quality culture, remedial education costs to taxpayers and utilization of



computers in the classroom.

Taxpayers foot the bill for both successful students and unsuccessful ones. They will have information, for instance, on the amount of money they spend on schools and the amount they lose when young people drop out, fail, or are suspended.

Even before the new data roll in, there are benchmarks for champions and WorldClass supporters. One is the Education Commission of the States' grid on educational reform. It is a heartening reminder that we in Florida are not alone; so many states and school systems have followed the same, rocky trail that the commission was able to plot it. Looking at the matrix on page 46-47, it is encouraging to see that Florida is making progress. We have passed from the 1980s' "Exploring" phase of piecemeal programs to the "Transition" phase of making education reform a state policy. Our challenge now is to keep moving forward into the "Emerging" phase and ultimately into "Predominance," where WorldClass schools are the norm in every community and not the exception.

Our own WorldClass matrices will also help champions plot their progress, their communities' progress and their school districts' progress in implementing a WorldClass school system.

Chapter Seven

WE WANT YOUR LEADERSHIP

No More Excuses

WorldClass



Getting the WorldClass strategy off the ground will require hard work from everyone. As champions approach business acquaintances, educators, community groups, friends and neighbors, people may ask what they can do to help. Community involvement is certainly crucial to turning each school into a WorldClass school, and the strategy provides a role for everyone.

Companies (small and large): Consider becoming champions for reform, or encourage someone you know to do so. If a champion is already designated for

your area, you should find out what he or she as an individual or their company can offer in support, from promoting public awareness, arranging meetings and speaker opportunities, or offering Continuous Quality Improvement guidance to local schools, for example.

Local Chambers: Study the WorldClass strategy and provide information to Chamber members through regularly scheduled meetings or a specific WorldClass Introduction meeting. Help identify champions and WorldClass supporters in your school district and assist in public awareness campaigns. Provide staff support and local fundraising guidance.

Teachers: Seek out the WorldClass champion in your area and arrange a meeting with your teachers' association. Become a teacher leader, attending a Continuous Quality Improvement workshop, implementing what you have learned and helping other teachers develop a Continuous Quality Culture in your school. Keep up-to-date on the new curriculum guidelines coming out of your representative national teacher association, and make sure your principal and other teachers in your subject area are aware of them. Stay in touch with reform-minded educators in your community, as well as with those in the state and

the rest of the country through conferences, electronic mail messages, and newsletters.

Other Educators (principals, superintendents, school board members): Seek out a WorldClass champion in your area and arrange a meeting with other administrators, your school staff or other school board members. Take part in a Continuous Quality Improvement workshop and help bring the Continuous Quality Culture to your school or school system. Keep up-to-date on the new national curriculum guidelines and education reform efforts, and share the information with other school officials at informal meetings and official school board meetings. Stay in touch with reform-minded educators and school officials in your community, as well as with those in the state and the rest of the country through meetings, electronic mail messages, and newsletters.

State and Local Policy Makers: Support the WorldClass strategy by supporting state and local policies that address the eight components of a WorldClass School. Use your leadership position to make Florida citizens aware of why change is needed and what steps must be taken.

Parents: Contact a WorldClass champion in your district. Arrange a meeting for your champion with your Parent-Teacher Association and any other community group to which you belong. With the help of your champion, obtain materials to help you become a parent leader on WorldClass schools by organizing meetings, arranging speakers, or writing letters to the editor of your local paper.

Students: Contact a WorldClass champion in your area and read all you can about school reform, generally, and the WorldClass system, specifically. Find out what your peers in other WorldClass schools — statewide and nationwide — are learning, and how they are learning it (debates, team projects or lectures, for instance). Follow media reports and ask one of your teachers if your class can debate education reform. Attend community, school board or PTA meetings that address the WorldClass schools issue. If the adults seem to steer off course, remind them that they are dealing with your future.

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Appendix I

FOUR SCENARIOS

To help illustrate how the Florida Chamber's WorldClass strategy will require an intense kind of involvement by local business leaders, we have developed four representative scenarios. Better yet, become a WorldClass Champion and write your own success story.

FLORIDA BUSINESS EXECUTIVE

Before

For the past six years, George has participated in a career-shadowing program sponsored by his local chamber of commerce. For two days each year, four students from the local high school spent time at George's company, watching him carry out his daily responsibilities. In addition, George participated in the school's annual Career Night. George felt confident that the participating students gained a helpful insight into his industry and began to see the connections between what they were learning in school and the kind of careers they might like to pursue. However, he knew he wasn't making much of a dent. In six years, he has only hosted two dozen students; during that time, he has read that the local high

school continues to have declining achievement scores and increasing dropout rates.

With WorldClass

Through his involvement with WorldClass, George has been elected to his high school's School Advisory Council. During his first meeting, the main topic on the agenda was the school's projected budget shortfall for the coming year. While George sympathized with the educators' concerns that some programs might have to be cut, he felt he didn't have enough information to make an independent judgment about the severity of the budget crisis.

He turned to the WorldClass Education Institute's Quality Indicator Form and WorldClass Productivity Index, which showed him how his school district matched up to other Florida districts in many different areas, including reading scores, college attendance, dropout rates, the use of technology in the classroom and per-pupil expenditures. The Indicator yielded two immediate benefits. First, it gave George the data he needed to ask school administrators the tough questions about the budget and, second, it showed George that a top priority was to raise the students' reading scores. As a result, he is now spending two hours a week leading a pioneering after-school reading program that is introducing 10th graders to the classics. And he has convinced four of his colleagues on his company's senior management team to do the same.

Students' reading and writing performance is improving. The dropout rate is declining even as the standards are going up.

LOCAL CHAMBER EXECUTIVE

Before

Cheryl's local chamber of commerce has been participating in an adopt-a-school program for several years. The program involves bimonthly breakfast meetings where teachers and principals spotlight an innovative school program for about a dozen local small business executives. In addition, the chamber annually sponsors trips for the middle school band and track team. Based on these meetings, Cheryl had thought relationships between the business and education sectors were relatively healthy.

But juvenile crime was on the rise, much of it caused by school dropouts, and the community was approaching a crisis.

With WorldClass

As a WorldClass champion committed to local school reform, Cheryl attended a three-day academy sponsored by the Florida Chamber Foundation's WorldClass Education Institute. There she learned from national experts that all sides in the school reform movement are being polarized by suspicion, distrust, and turf fights to protect their hard-won gains. Cheryl began to wonder if the local Chamber had really been discussing the issues at the center of school reform, including higher

standards, better assessments, interdisciplinary curriculum, and more accountability. Has the Chamber been participating on the periphery, ducking the big issues, mainly because we business people don't have enough time or expertise to get involved?

Cheryl was inspired by the example of a central Florida Chamber taking the lead in its community. She was also encouraged that the WorldClass Institute would send on-site experts to help her through the tough questions. Cheryl then asked her Chamber board to let her work closely with the four other WorldClass Champions in her local community. For her initial assignment, she wanted to schedule a meeting of all the key players including the superintendent, teachers, school board members, parents, business people, and maybe even some students. Cheryl wanted to address the challenge of listening and talking to each other more seriously and consistently about such core issues as standards and assessments and focusing on student performance.

Working through her school advisory committee (SAC), Cheryl led a community visioning process on these issues. As a result, she helped get all partners focused on the eight key components of a WorldClass school. Over the ensuing months, barriers started to fall as the focus shifted from protecting turf to helping kids.

LOCAL BANKER

Before

John is the COO of the largest bank in his community — an institution with branches throughout the Southeast and an institution that customarily receives national awards for its exemplary commitment to volunteer activities. Each employee is given two hours a week to volunteer in his or her local school. But John is concerned by newspaper reports that show virtually no improvement on the high dropout rates. He's not sure how to help the schools deal with the problem, but he's convinced that more money is not the answer.

With WorldClass

Thanks to the WorldClass Productivity Index, John learns that dropouts are costing his community thousands of dollars a year, while holding students back a grade costs thousands more. He also learns that the district has had a very difficult time tracking its costs and managing its finances. As a result, he decides to have his bank offer to establish a better system for tracking resources and managing the school district's investments. He also offers to include school district leaders in the bank's total quality training programs.

One year later, the district offices have become the center for quality in the community. The school board and superintendent are committed to a philosophy of continuous improvement. New data are collected that show where the specific problems are and identify the specific changes needed to solve them.

PARENT

Before

Jean has been concerned since the passage of Blueprint 2000 called on her local schools to significantly upgrade its curriculum and begin exploring new ways of testing students. She has two children — one in fourth grade, the other in second — and she doesn't want them to be used as guinea pigs in experiments being run by Ph.D. researchers. She thinks that the neighborhood school she attended in the late 1950s gave her a good grounding in the basics and wonders why her kids can't just go to a school like that.

With WorldClass

As a member of her School Improvement Team, Jean became aware of the Florida Chamber's WorldClass effort. She learned, for instance, that a lot of people — not just education researchers, but business leaders and parents who were active in the PTA — believe that today's students need to learn a lot more than their parents did. What was good enough in the 1950s for Florida won't cut it today, not when employers can so easily move their operations to states like Kentucky (which is restructuring its schools from top to bottom) or overseas (where students are particularly strong in science and math). Jean isn't quite convinced, and she remains concerned that these new standards and assessments might simply be the latest educational fad. But through WorldClass, she now has a place to go for answers.

Appendix II

RECOMMENDED READING

America's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages! 1990, National Center on Education and the Economy.

Creating Quality Schools, 1993, American Association of School Administrators.

Crosstalk: The Public, The Experts and Competitiveness, 1991, Public Agenda Foundation and Business-Higher Education Forum.

Divided Within, Besieged Without: The Politics of Education in Four American School Districts, 1993, Public Agenda Foundation for the Charles F. Kettering Foundation.

"From Risk to Renewal: Charting a Course for Reform," 1993, *Education Week*.

Help Wanted: Education for a Changing World, 1993, Public Agenda Foundation and Business-Higher Education Forum.

Learning a Living: A Blueprint for High Performance, April 1992, U.S. Department of Labor Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS).

The National Education Goals Report, 1993, the National Education Goals Panel.

Prisoners of Time, 1994, Report of the National Education Commission on Time and Learning.

Restructuring Florida's Schools: Strategies for Business Involvement, September 1991, Florida Chamber Showcase Report.

"A Special Report: Education," September 11, 1992, *The Wall Street Journal*.

WorldClass: A Business Vision for Education in Florida, 1993, Florida Chamber.

WorldClass: Establishing Education Standards in Florida, 1993, Florida Chamber.

WorldClass: Establishing Education Standards in Florida, 1993, Appendix, Florida Chamber.

Workforce 2000: Choices for Florida's Future, January 1990, report from the Governor's Select Committee.

CONSULTANTS

WorldClass assembled top national consultants. Pelavin Associates, which developed the highly acclaimed SCANS report on workforce skills, conducted the research supporting this effort. Dennis Doyle and Scott Widmeyer also provided assistance. Florida TaxWatch and Evaluation Systems Design, Inc. developed new indicators to better gauge school and student performance. Dick Clark, a 22-year veteran of local Chamber leadership, including his role as president of the Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber, assisted in designing the training and community support strategy. Phil Bunnell of Vision Advertising & Design created the images. KSA Group, which specializes in helping national and state business and education groups communicate more effectively about school reform, worked with us to craft our messages.

Notes