

## PODCAST #2—WHAT IS THE CURRENT MESSAGE ABOUT PUBLIC EDUCATION AND HOW CAN WE CHANGE IT?

WELCOME TO VIEWS AND VOICE: ABOVE THE NOISE, THE PODCAST HOSTED BY MASA. I AM JANE SIGFORD, YOUR CONVENER. TODAY'S PODCAST IS THE BEGINNING OF A SERIES DEVELOPED IN RESPONSE TO AN ITEM ON THE LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM OF MASA. AT THE RECENT SPRING CONVENTION IN MARCH, I WAS INVITED TO ADDRESS THE MASA BOARD TO INTRODUCE THEM PERSONALLY TO THIS NEW BENEFIT, OUR PODCAST. AT THAT MEETING, I SOLICITED SOME IDEAS FROM THE BOARD MEMBERS ABOUT WHAT TOPICS WOULD BE INTERESTING AND BENEFICIAL TO THEM. THE ANSWER WAS THAT PEOPLE WANTED TO EXPLORE TOPICS THAT OFTEN GET PUT ONTO THE "BACK BURNER", SUCH AS THE PURPOSE OF PUBLIC EDUCATION, HOW TO CHANGE THE PUBLIC MESSAGE ABOUT EDUCATION, AND HOW TO SHAPE OUR HIGH SCHOOLS INTO SOMETHING MORE FLEXIBLE AND RESPONSIVE TO THE NEEDS OF OUR STUDENTS, TO NAME A FEW. TOO OFTEN WE DO NOT HAVE TIME TO TALK AND THINK ABOUT SUCH TOPICS BECAUSE OF THE DAILY DEMANDS OF OUR JOBS. YET THESE TOPICS ARE WHAT HELP SHAPE OUR PURPOSE AND VISION FOR WHAT WE DO. SO THEY ARE VERY IMPORTANT.

TO THIS POINT GARY AMOROSO, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SHARED AN ITEM FROM THE MASA LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM WHICH IS "PROVIDE PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARDS THE FLEXIBILITY TO DETERMINE THE COURSE WORK AND EXPERIENCES NECESSARY TO MEET GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS." WHEN LEGISLATORS HEARD THIS IDEA, THEY ASKED WHAT THAT WOULD ACTUALLY LOOK LIKE.. IN THE RICH TRADITION OF EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION AND SUPPORT IN OUR STATE OF MINNESOTA., WE WILL USE THIS PODCAST TO BEGIN THE DISCUSSION ABOUT HOW TO HELP FLESH OUT THIS SLATE OF THE PLATFORM. I, FOR ONE, AM THRILLED TO BE TALKING ABOUT SOMETHING SO NECESSARY, CREATIVE, THOUGHT-PROVOKING, AND PERTINENT.

ONE SUPERINTENDENT AT THE BOARD MEETING SHARED THAT HE HAD BEEN HOPING AND WISHING HE COULD DO SOMETHING DIFFERENTLY FOR HIS JUNIORS AND SENIORS BUT DIDN'T THINK HE'D EVER LIVE TO SEE A MAJOR CHANGE. I SINCERELY HOPE HE'S WRONG. I HOPE HE GETS TO HELP SHAPE IT!

THIS PODCAST WILL BE THE FIRST IN A SERIES AND WILL BEGIN WILL BY TALKING ABOUT THE CURRENT PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF

EDUCATION, WORK AT DISPELLING THE MYTHS PERPETUATED BY THE "FAKE NEWS" WE HEAR AND READ, QUESTION THE ISSUE OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND HOW IT'S MEASURED, AND GIVE POSSIBLE WAYS TO BEGIN CHANGING THE PUBLIC MESSAGE. OTHER PODCASTS WILL TALK ABOUT THE ISSUE OF HIGH SCHOOLS, THE GOALS OF EDUCATION BY LEVEL, HOW CHANGE WORKS IN THIS TIME OF "ACCELERATIONS" TO USE A THOMAS FRIEDMAN TERM.

SO THIS IS THE FIRST IN A SERIES WHERE WE EXAMINE THE CURRENT CLIMATE AND PUBLIC MESSAGE ABOUT EDUCATION. OUR PRESENT REALITY IS COLORED BY THE PUBLIC PERCEPTION THAT PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE UNSUCCESSFUL WHICH IS, TO USE A TERM IN THE NEWS A LOT TODAY, IS "FAKE NEWS". PUBLIC EDUCATION IS NOT FAILING AND THE TOP-DOWN MEASURES PUT INTO PLACE TO SUPPOSEDLY MEASURE SUCCESS AND ESTABLISH SO-CALLED ACCOUNTABILITY ARE NOT THE RIGHT TOOLS. NOT EVERY STUDENT IS SUCCESSFUL TO THE DEGREE HE/SHE SHOULD BE BUT WE HAVE TO BE HONEST AND PROUD THAT AS A MAJOR INSTITUTION THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN THE US HAS, HISTORICALLY AND STILL CURRENTLY, IS NOT FAILING. HOW DO I KNOW THIS? IN SEVERAL WAYS....

IF YOU HAVE TRAVELED OUTSIDE OF OUR BORDERS, AND GONE TO PLACES NOT NECESSARILY IN WESTERN COUNTRIES, YOU WILL SEE THAT WE TAKE OUR SYSTEM FOR GRANTED AND WE SHOULDN'T. IN A COUNTRY WHERE I WAS RECENTLY IN SOUTH AMERICA, ONLY 1/3 OF THE KIDS GO TO SCHOOL. ONLY 1/3 OF THOSE GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL. SOMEONE WITH A MASTER'S DEGREE IS  $\frac{1}{2}$  OF 1% OF THE POPULATION. IN ANOTHER COUNTRY I VISITED IN AFRICA, KIDS WALK MILES TO SCHOOL AND RELY ON THE LUNCH THEY GET BECAUSE THAT IS THE FOOD THEY RECEIVE FOR THE DAY. MUCH OF WHAT THEY LEARN IS THROUGH TEACHER INSTRUCTION BECAUSE THE BOOKS, IF THERE ARE SOME, ARE OFTEN OUTDATED AND DISCARDED FROM OTHER COUNTRIES, OFTEN THE US. THIS PARTICULAR SCHOOL HAD A ROOM OF DONATED USED COMPUTERS BUT THEY HAD NO ELECTRICITY. THE COMPUTERS MERELY GATHERED DUST OF WHICH THERE WAS PLENTY.

GERALD BRACEY, AUTHOR OF *SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT: RESPONSES TO MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT PUBLIC EDUCATION IN THE US*, HAS WRITTEN REPEATEDLY TO COUNTERACT THE NEGATIVE SPIN. HIS BOOKS AND ARTICLES IN *THE KAPPAN* HAVE REPEATEDLY EXAMINED THE PUBLIC SURVEYS ABOUT ATTITUDES TOWARD PUBLIC SCHOOLS; HOW DATA FROM PISA, SAT, HAVE BEEN USED INCORRECTLY; THE EFFECT OF HANDING SCHOOLS OVER TO BUSINESS, TO NAME A FEW OF THE ISSUES. HIS

EXAMINATION OF DATA FROM MANY SURVEYS, INCLUDING GALLUP AND A PAPER PRESENTED BY OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT FROM THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AT BOSTON COLLEGE, VALIDATED THAT "TRUST IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS REMAINS LITTLE CHANGED. FORTY-THREE PERCENT OF THE PUBLIC SAID THEY TRUSTED PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN 1990; 40 PERCENT SAID SO IN 2003. P. 1 IMPORTANTLY, HE FOUND THAT NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS WERE TRUSTED MORE HIGHLY THAN THE GENERAL SYSTEM BECAUSE PARENTS BELIEVE IN THE WORTH OF "THEIR" SCHOOL.

BUT WE HAVE A CADRE OF POLITICAL AND BUSINESS NAYSAYERS THAT I CALL "CHICKEN LITTLES" THAT HAVE BEEN USING EDUCATION AS A POLITICAL PLATFORM SINCE THE COLEMAN REPORT, A NATION AT RISK, NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND, ETC. THERE ARE THREE MAJOR PROBLEMS WITH THE MANTRA THAT HAS DEVELOPED IN THE MEDIA. ONE, THE MYTH, THE "UNTRUTH" OR "FAKE NEWS" THAT THE ECONOMIC SKY WILL CAVE IN BECAUSE OF POOR RESULTS IN PUBLIC EDUCATION HAS NOT OCCURRED IN THE PAST 40 YEARS. TWO, THE MEDIA NEGLECTS TO POINT OUT THAT THE US CONTINUES TO GROW AND ENCOURAGE SMART, CREATIVE, TALENTED PEOPLE AS DEMONSTRATED BY THE NUMBER OF NOBEL LAUREATES. THREE, WE HEAR VERY LITTLE ABOUT THE FACT THAT WE CONTINUE TO LEAD THE WORLD IN CREATIVE ENDEAVORS SUCH AS WITH OUR MOVIES, MUSIC AND OTHER CULTURAL EXPORTS. SUCH INFORMATION IS DISCUSSED MORE THOROUGHLY IN RICHARD FLORIDA'S BOOK, *THE RISE OF THE CREATIVE CLASS* AND THE SECOND EDITION *RISE OF THE CREATIVE CLASS REVISITED AND REVISED*.

IN THE ALLURE OF ORDER: HIGH HOPES, DASHED EXPECTATIONS, AND THE TROUBLED QUEST TO REMAKE AMERICAN SCHOOLING, AUTHOR JAL MEHTA STATED THAT, "SUCH VALUES OF SCHOOLING AS PERSONAL GROWTH, CRITICAL THINKING, SOCIAL JUSTICE, AND CHARACTER EDUCATION...LOST GROUND TO A SKILL-BUILDING VISION..." P. 116 "THE ELEVATION OF AN ECONOMIC VIEW OF SCHOOLING HAS ENSURED WIDE POLITICAL SUPPORT AND CONTINUED PRIORITY IN BUDGETARY ALLOCATIONS." P. 116 THIS DIRE ECONOMIC CAUSE/EFFECT RELATIONSHIP IS A VERY NARROW VIEW OF OUR PURPOSE.

IF IT WERE TRUE THAT OUR SCHOOLS HAD BEEN FAILING FOR 40 YEARS, WOULDN'T IT BE LOGICAL THAT OUR ECONOMY WOULD BE IN DIRE STRAITS? YET OUR CURRENT GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE US BELIEVE THAT WE ARE BETTER THAN EVER. A REPORT IN THE MARCH 10, 2018 MINNEAPOLIS STAR TRIBUNE SAID THAT UNEMPLOYMENT IS DOWN AND THE JOB HIRING RATE WAS THE STRONGEST IT HAS BEEN IN 1½ YEARS.

THE JOBLESS RATE SHOWED THE "BIGGEST SURGE IN 15 YEARS IN THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE EITHER WORKING OR LOOKING FOR WORK. THE ECONOMY HAS EXPANDED FOR 104 CONSECUTIVE MONTHS, OR NEARLY NINE YEARS, THE THIRD LARGEST EXPANSION ON RECORD..." STRIB, MARCH 10, 2018.

ANOTHER SIGN OF A SUCCESSFULLY EDUCATED POPULATION IS THE NUMBER OF NOBEL LAUREATES IN A COUNTRY. THE US IS NUMBER ONE IN THE NUMBER OF NOBEL PRIZES AWARDED. THE TOP 5 COUNTRIES ARE THE US, UK, GERMANY, FRANCE, AND SWEDEN. THE US HAS THE MOST PRIZE WINNERS WITH 336, MOST SUCCESSFUL IN THE AREAS OF PHYSIOLOGY OR MEDICINE. THE UK HAS 117 PRIZES, WINNING IN CHEMISTRY AND PHYSIOLOGY OR MEDICINE. WE ARE #1 IN ALL AREAS EXCEPT LITERATURE, WHERE THE UK EXCELS. WHAT THIS SUGGESTS IS THAT THE US RANKS HIGH IN THINKING, PROBLEM-SOLVING, CREATIVITY, SCIENCE, ECONOMICS, WHICH ARE AREAS WHERE THE MEDIA, POLITICIANS, BUSINESS LIKE TO SAY THAT PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE FAILING. LOGICALLY, IT DOES NOT FOLLOW THAT ALL OF THESE GREAT MINDS ARE EDUCATED ONLY IN PRIVATE SCHOOLS. IN FACT, 9 OUT OF 10 STUDENTS ARE EDUCATED IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS. WE MUST BE DOING SOMETHING VERY WELL.

THREE, OUR CREATIVITY IS ADOPTED AND IMITATED WORLDWIDE. OUR MOVIES, MUSIC, ART, FASHION ARE WHAT PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD WATCH, LISTEN TO, WEAR, AND IMITATE. WHEN IN AFRICA, FOR EXAMPLE, OUR GUIDE SAID HIS FAVORITE SINGER WAS TAYLOR SWIFT OF ALL PEOPLE. REALLY?

NOT ONLY ARE WE THE VICTIM OF FALSE NEWS, BUT SUCCESS AND FAILURE ARE BEING DETERMINED BY THE WRONG TOOLS AS MEASURES. FOR EXAMPLE, THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT MEASURES OF ECONOMIC HEALTH AND GROWTH. YOU CAN FIND REPORTS TO SUPPORT WHATEVER YOU BELIEVE. HOWEVER, HOW DOES ONE REALLY JUDGE? FOR EXAMPLE, WHY DO WE CONTINUE TO USE HOUSING STARTS AS AN INDICATOR OF ECONOMIC HEALTH WHICH IS A STANDARD LEFT OVER FROM WORLD WAR II WHEN HOME OWNERSHIP WAS A SIGN OF SUCCESS IN ACHIEVING THE AMERICAN DREAM. HOWEVER, WE NOW HAVE A GENERATION OF MILLENIALS WHO DO NOT ALWAYS ASPIRE TO OWNING A HOME. ALSO, ARE WE GOING TO BUILD HOUSES UNTIL WE COVER THE PLANET? WHY DON'T WE USE HOME RENOVATIONS AS AN INDICATOR? OR BETTER YET, USE INDIVIDUAL FISCAL HEALTH OF ADEQUATE AMOUNTS OF MONEY IN SAVINGS ACCOUNTS, OR MINIMUM PERSONAL DEBT, ETC AS A SIGN

BECAUSE IF INDIVIDUALS ARE ECONOMICALLY HEALTHY, WOULDN'T IT FOLLOW THAT THAT IS A SIGN THAT THE COUNTRY IS MORE ECONOMICALLY SECURE?

ANOTHER INAPPROPRIATE TOOL OF MEASURING SUCCESS IS THE USE OF STANDARDIZED TESTS AS A MEASURE OF SUCCESSFUL TEACHING AND LEARNING. SUGATA MITRA , PROFESSOR OF EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY AT THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE SCIENCES AT NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY, (WHEW, WHAT A TITLE. TOUGH TO PUT ON A LITTLE BUSINESS CARD) SAID "IF ALL THIS STUFF IS IN GOOGLE, WHY DO WE HAVE TO "STUFF" IT INTO OUR HEADS?" THINK ABOUT THAT....IF A STUDENT CAN GET A PERFECT SCORE ON A STANDARDIZED TEST BY USING HIS/HER PHONE AND GOOGLE, WHAT IS IMPORTANT? THE QUICK RECALL OF THE FACTOIDS? THE ABILITY TO POSE QUESTIONS ON GOOGLE AND FIND THE ANSWERS? THE ABILITY TO USE RESOURCES? WHICH IS IT? AT ONE TIME STUDENTS COULD MEMORIZE DATES OF US HISTORY AS A KEY INDICATOR OF KNOWLEDGE. NOW, HOWEVER, US HISTORY IS NOT JUST CONTAINED IN NORTH AMERICA, BUT IT LIVES IN A GLOBAL SOCIETY. OUR COUNTRY IS ENMESHED WITH OTHER COUNTRIES ALL OVER THE WORLD. HOW CAN ONE MEMORIZE ALL THE IMPORTANT DATES, PRESIDENTS, WARS FROM THE US TO AFGHANISTAN TO CHINA? IF KNOWLEDGE IS INCREASING AT THE RATE WE KNOW IT IS, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO STUFF IT ALL IN OUR HEADS. SO WHY DO WE CONTINUE TO RELY ON STANDARDIZED TESTS AS A MEASURE OF ACADEMIC ACQUISITION AND ACCOUNTABILITY?

HOW DID IT EVEN BECOME ACCEPTED THAT SCHOOLS NEEDED TO BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE AND THAT STANDARDIZED TESTS WERE THE APPROPRIATE WAY TO DO THIS? OUR WESTERN CULTURE IS BASED ON A FOUNDATION IN THE BELIEF IN SCIENTIFIC, RATIONAL, AND LINEAR THOUGHT. WE BELIEVE THAT WE CAN DIAGNOSE A PROBLEM, ASSESS THE DEGREE OF THE ISSUE, POSE SOLUTIONS AND THEN MEASURE THE SUCCESS OF TACKLING THE PROBLEM BY SOME ASSESSMENT. THAT IS A VERY LINEAR WAY OF THINKING THAT HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN SOME BUSINESS SECTORS AND THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT, WHERE SOME OF OUR PRACTICES HAVE ORIGINATED. MEHTA, P. 3. ONE DIMENSIONAL FLOW CHARTS ARE OFTEN USED AS GRAPHICS TO DEMONSTRATE SUCH THINKING.

HOWEVER, LEARNING DOES NOT OCCUR IN A LINEAR, EVEN FASHION. SOMETIMES IT'S CYCLICAL. SOMETIMES IT LEAPFROGS,

SOMETIMES IT BACKTRACKS, NONE OF WHICH CAN BE DESCRIBED BY A LINEAR DIAGRAM.

HOWEVER, IN TODAY'S WORLD, LEARNING, PROBLEM-SOLVING AND CHANGE EFFORTS ARE MORE FRACTAL IN NATURE, MORE LIKE BROCCOLI THAN A FLOW CHART. [ THERE WILL BE MORE ABOUT THIS IN A PODCAST ON CHANGE, WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE, HOW TO LEAD THROUGH CHANGE.]

BECAUSE STANDARDIZED TESTS DO NOT MEASURE THE FRACTAL NATURE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING, USING THEM IS LIKE MEASURING THE AMOUNT OF WATER IN AN OCEAN WITH A YARD STICK. THE TOOL DOESN'T WORK; NOR DOES IT GIVE ACCURATE DATA.

AGAIN ACCORDING TO MEHTA, WHEN WORK IS HIGHLY ROUTINE AND STANDARDIZED, CONTROL STRATEGIES [SUCH AS STANDARDIZED ASSESSMENTS] ARE MORE EFFECTIVE. WHEN WORK [SUCH AS TEACHING AND LEARNING] REQUIRES SKILL AND DISCRETION, CONTROL AND REGULATION DOES NOT EFFECT CHANGE. NOR DOES IT GIVE ONE INFORMATION ABOUT THE SUCCESS OF THE APPLIED WORK. TO USE THE WORDS OF JAL MEHTA, "THE CORE OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROBLEM IS THAT WE HAVE BEEN TRYING TO SOLVE A PROBLEM OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE BY BUREAUCRATIC MEANS. " P. 270

THE US IS THE WORLD'S LEADER IN ASSESSMENTS AND ACCOUNTABILITY; FINLAND AND SHANGHAI ARE THE LEADERS IN STUDENT PERFORMANCE, AND THEY GET THERE IN AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT WAY." P. 7 THEY DRAW TEACHERS FROM THE MOST TALENTED COLLEGE STUDENTS, PREPARE THEM EXTENSIVELY AND WITH CLOSE ATTENTION TO ACTUAL PRACTICE, PUT THEM IN SCHOOLS THAT BUFFER THEM FROM THE DELETERIOUS EFFECTS OF POVERTY BY PROVIDING SUPPORTS, AND GIVE THEM TIME DURING THE DAY TO DEVELOP AND IMPROVE THEIR SKILLS. P. 7" MEHTA WOULD ARGUE THAT OUR SYSTEM IS PUT TOGETHER BACKWARDS—THE PEOPLE WE DRAW INTO TEACHING ARE NOT THE MOST TALENTED; WE GIVE THEM LITTLE TRAINING, SEND THEM TO SCHOOLS WITH HIGH NEEDS WITHOUT MUCH SUPPORT; AND WE INCREASE EXTERNAL PRESSURE AND ACCOUNTABILITY THROUGH THE PRESSURE OF AND PUBLIC REPORTING OF ASSESSMENTS.

IN ADDITION, THIS PRESSURE AND IDEA OF ACCOUNTABILITY HAS COME TOP-DOWN STARTING WITH THE NATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION DOWN THROUGH STATE AND LOCAL BUREAUCRACIES. TOP-DOWN PRESSURE TRYING TO EFFECT CHANGE IS LIKE TRYING TO NAVIGATE AROUND AN ICEBERG—2/7 OF THE BERG IS VISIBLE ABOVE THE

WATER, BUT THE BULK OF THE ORGANIZATION THAT ACTUALLY DOES THE WORK AND SUPPORTS THE TOP IS BELOW THE SURFACE. JUST ASK THE TITANIC!

THE QUESTION IS WHY DO WE ACCEPT THE NOTION THAT SCHOOLS ARE FAILING. WHY DON'T WE EDUCATORS TALK BACK TO THE PRESS? WOULD THE PUBLIC EVEN BELIEVE US? PART OF THE REASON THAT THE NEGATIVE MESSAGE IS MORE MEMORABLE, THEREFORE GETS MORE AIR TIME, LIES IN THE WAY OUR BRAINS ARE HARD-WIRED. DANIEL KAHNEMAN, AUTHOR OF THINKING FAST AND SLOW, SAYS THAT EMOTIONALLY CHARGED WORDS ATTRACT ATTENTION FASTER THAN HAPPY WORDS. [THERE ARE BOOK NOTES ABOUT THIS BOOK ON THE MASA WEBSITE ON THE "WHAT WE ARE READING" BLOG. ]P. 301 THEREFORE, WHEN THE WORK OF SCHOOLS IS LINKED TO THE FEAR OF ECONOMIC FAILURE, PEOPLE ARE MORE LIKELY TO REMEMBER THIS BAD NEWS. PEOPLE ARE NOT AS LIKELY TO REMEMBER GOOD NEWS SUCH AS A DISTRICT HAVING A GRADUATION RATE OF 95%. BAD STEREOTYPES AND IMPRESSIONS ARE QUICKER TO FORM AND MORE RESISTANT TO DISCONFIRMATION THAN GOOD ONES. P. 302. NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES ARE MORE MEMORABLE TO OUR BRAINS BECAUSE AT ONE TIME IT WAS LIFE-SAVING KNOWLEDGE TO REMEMBER THAT FIRE BURNS, OR THAT A SABER-TOOTHED TIGER WAS DANGEROUS. OUR BRAINS STILL WORK THAT WAY. THERE IS AN ADAGE THAT IT TAKES FIVE POSITIVE WORDS TO UNDO THE EFFECT OF ONE NEGATIVE ONE. WE KNOW THAT NEGATIVE NEWS SELLS NEWSPAPERS. SCHOOL SHOOTINGS GET MORE FRONT PAGE SPACE, THAN THE NUMBER OF NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARS. SO THE CHICKEN LITTLES OF THE WORLD GET MORE ATTENTION THAN DO THE WINNIE THE POOHS.

TO SUM IT UP, THERE IS A GENERALLY ACCEPTED BELIEF THAT PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE NOT WHAT THEY USED TO BE, THAT THEY ARE NOT DOING THEIR JOB, THAT TEACHERS ARE SEMI-PROFESSIONALS, AND THAT EXTERNAL CONTROLS SUCH AS STANDARDIZED TESTS CAN LEGISLATE, REGULATE, AND IMPROVE PERFORMANCE. THIS IS SO NOT TRUE.

SO IF WE TALK ABOUT CREATING A NEW PUBLIC MESSAGE FOR EDUCATION SO WE CAN CREATE NEW SYSTEMS, ONE QUESTION IS HOW DO WE COUNTERACT THE FACT THAT NEGATIVE NEWS SELLS. ANOTHER ISSUE IS HOW DO WE GET THE PUBLIC TO BELIEVE THE VOICE OF EDUCATORS BECAUSE THERE IS A PERCEPTION WE ARE MERELY BLOWING

OUR OWN HORN WITHOUT PROVIDING RESULTS. HOW DO WE CHANGE THIS?

SOME POSSIBLE WAYS TO CHANGE THE PUBLIC MESSAGE ABOUT EDUCATION:

- 1) ESTABLISH IDENTIFIABLE GOALS FOR EDUCATION THAT ARE UNDERSTANDABLE BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC AND PROVIDE TRAINING AND SUPPORT FOR TEACHERS TO MAKE THEM HAPPEN.
- 2) ESTABLISH NON-NEGOTIABLE EDUCATIONAL GOALS BY LEVEL (ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE, HIGH). PROVIDE TRAINING AND SUPPORT FOR TEACHERS TO ENSURE SUCCESS
- 3) [THE NEXT TWO RELATE TO THE PLATFORM OF MASA] CHANGE HIGH SCHOOLS SO THEY ARE NO LONGER "HOLDING PENS" BUT TIMES OF EXCITING, EDUCATIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES TO PREPARE OUR STUDENTS FOR THEIR WORLD, NOT OURS.
- 4) CREATE HIGH SCHOOLS THAT ELIMINATE DATED RULES ABOUT GRADUATION. MAKE THE EXPERIENCE ABOUT STRANDS OF KNOWLEDGE, PRACTICES, AND EXPERIENCES, NOT ABOUT SEAT TIME. (THIS WILL BE THE SOLE TOPIC OF THE NEXT PODCAST.)
- 5) WORK WITH TEACHER UNIONS TO CHANGE THE ROLE OF UNIONS FROM BUREAUCRATIC LABOR MANAGEMENT, TO TEACHER SUPPORT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT. (HOPEFULLY, CHANGE THE SLANTED VIEWPOINT OF UNIONS TOO.)
- 6) ACCOMPLISH OUR GOALS. DO NOT LET STUDENTS MOVE FORWARD IF THEY HAVE NOT MASTERED THE STANDARDS OF WHAT THEY ARE SUPPOSED TO KNOW, IF THESE STANDARDS ARE TRUE INDICATORS OF NECESSARY LEARNING .
- 7) WORK WITH LEGISLATORS TO CHANGE THE FUNDING STREAM FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION. RIGHT NOW WE ARE PAID ON STUDENT ATTENDANCE (SEAT TIME). SCHOOLS SHOULD BE PAID WHEN STUDENTS MASTER THE REQUIRED STANDARDS FOR A DISCIPLINE, PARTICULARLY IN READING, MATH, SCIENCE, AND TECHNOLOGY. THEN SCHOOLS WOULD TRULY BE ABOUT LEARNING; TEACHERS WOULD REALLY BE MOTIVATED TO ENSURE THEIR STUDENTS HAVE MASTERED IDEAS. THERE WOULD BE NO ACHIEVEMENT GAP, AND GIFTED STUDENTS WOULD PROGRESS AT THEIR INSTRUCTIONAL LEVEL. THOSE WHO NEED MORE TIME IN SCHOOL WOULD GET IT, ALL OF WHICH ARE VERY GOOD THINGS.
- 8) PROVIDE TIME IN TEACHERS' DAYS FOR COLLABORATION AND COLLECTIVE PROBLEM-SOLVING ON INSTRUCTIONAL MATTERS.



9) ENHANCE OUR TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS SO THERE IS MORE TIME ON PEDAGOGICAL EXPERTISE, MORE COLLABORATION, MORE SUPPORT.

I WOULD BE VERY INTERESTED IN WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT THIS ABOUT CHANGING THE PUBLIC MESSAGE. THE NEXT PODCAST IS A FOLLOW-UP AND PROBES THE HIGH SCHOOL ISSUE IN MORE DEPTH. I'D BE INTERESTED IN WHAT YOUR LEADERSHIP TEAMS THINK COULD BE DONE. PLEASE EMAIL ME AT [JLSIGFORD@COMCAST.NET](mailto:JLSIGFORD@COMCAST.NET) OR LEAVE A MESSAGE ON THE MASA WEBSITE.

I HAVE INCLUDED A LINK TO THE "SCRIPT" OF THIS PODCAST IN CASE YOU WANT TO READ FURTHER IN THE RESOURCES I NAMED. I HOPE THAT IS HELPFUL.

I LEAVE YOU AGAIN WITH A QUOTE FROM THE FAMOUS PHILOSOPHER, DR. SEUSS. " IT'S NOT ABOUT WHAT IT IS, IT'S ABOUT IT CAN BECOME"

THANKS AGAIN FOR LISTENING. PLEASE FEEL FREE TO EMAIL ME AT [JLSIGFORD@COMCAST.NET](mailto:JLSIGFORD@COMCAST.NET) WITH ANY AHAS AND WONDERMENTS.